



# Americans' Use and Perceptions of Local Recreation and Park Services: A Nationwide Reassessment

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# Executive Summary

## Study Background and Purpose

What do local parks, playgrounds, and open spaces mean to the typical American? What importance do Americans place on organized recreation programs in their community? How do Americans use and value these local parks and services? Are these resources a luxury or an essential government service? This study answers these questions, and more. The results will help guide local and national policy makers as they address important issues, concerns facing local communities and future investment in parks and recreation.

This research project is a partial replication of a study conducted in 1992 by Pennsylvania State University researchers Geoffrey Godbey, Alan Graefe, and Stephen James. This original landmark nationwide study (Godbey, Graefe, & James, 1992) found that a high percentage of Americans use local parks and perceive these parks to provide a high level of personal, household, and community benefit. The study also found that Americans associate a wide variety of specific benefits with local parks as well as local recreation and park services/programs. Finally, the study found that Americans believed local recreation and park services were well worth the average taxation amount of \$45 per household member per year.

Nearly 25 years after publishing this groundbreaking study much has changed within the United States. These changes include a population that is older, better educated, and more racially/ethnically diverse. Americans now spend their leisure time differently, specifically in regards to the rise in electronic, screen-related media. Considering these demographic and societal changes, have Americans' perceptions and use of local parks/local recreation and park services likewise changed?

The 2015 study questionnaire asked many of the same questions as the 1992 study. That is, the wording, the order, and the administration of most questions was consistent between the two surveys. The 2015 telephone survey, following the 1992 study parameters, surveyed a nationally representative sample of 1,250 individuals aged 15 years and older. The researchers then compared responses for the 2015 and the 1992 studies to identify the major findings of this report.



## Key Findings from the 2015 Study

### *Perception of Park Proximity*

- Nearly seven out of ten respondents said that there was a park, playground or open space within walking distance of their home. Rural respondents were significantly less likely to live within walking distance of a park area (52%) compared to respondents from towns (74%), cities (78%), and metropolitan areas (76%).

### *Use of Local Park Areas*

- Seventy percent of respondents said that they personally used local park areas, 44% using them occasionally and 26% using them frequently. Younger respondents were more likely to report using local parks than older respondents. Black respondents were much less likely to report using a local park than white and Hispanic respondents. Only 58% of black respondents reported using local park areas occasionally or frequently compared to 71% for whites and 76% for Hispanics.
- Seventy-six percent of respondents stated that other members of their household used local parks occasionally (47%) or frequently (29%).

### *Perceived Benefits of Local Park Areas*

- Respondents were asked the extent of benefit they perceived local parks to provide at the individual, household, and community level. The vast majority of respondents perceived benefits from local parks at all three levels. Most notably, the belief that local parks provided community benefits was nearly unanimous among respondents. Only 8% of respondents believed that local parks do not provide community benefits. On top of this finding, an impressive 63% of respondents said that local parks provide a great deal of community benefits.
- Eighty-three percent of respondents said that they personally benefit somewhat or a great deal from local park areas. Respondents between the ages of 21-35 and 36-55 were the most likely to report a great deal of personal benefit from local parks. Black respondents perceived the lowest levels of personal benefit provided by local park areas (33% a great deal compared to 49% for whites, and 44% for Hispanics)
- The vast majority of respondents (81%) believed local parks provide benefits to other members of their household. Of that, forty-one percent said that other members of their household received a great deal of benefit. The percentage of respondents who said that other members of their household did not benefit from local park areas decreased as the size of a respondent's household increased.

- Ninety-two percent of respondents said that their community benefited somewhat or a great deal from local park areas. Respondents from towns, cities, and metropolitan areas were more likely than rural respondents to report a great deal of community benefits from local parks. Black respondents were again much less likely to report a great deal of community benefits (50%) compared to white (65%) and Hispanic (58%) respondents.
- At all three levels (individual, household, and community) the extent of benefits respondents believed local parks provided was statistically related to the extent that they personally used local parks. Therefore, as personal use of parks increased, so did the extent respondents believed local parks provided benefits at the personal, household, and community level.

#### *Non-User Perceptions of Local Park Benefits*

- Even non-users of local parks believed that they and their community benefit from having these parks, playgrounds, or open space in their area. Fifty-six percent of non-park-users believed that local park areas provided a benefit to them. Even more striking is that 80% of non-park-users believed that local park areas provided benefits to their community (with 48% of them saying local park areas provided “a great deal” of benefit).

#### *Types of Benefits from Local Parks*

- “Exercise – fitness & conditioning” was the most frequently mentioned specific benefit of local parks at the individual, household, and community level.
- At all three levels, the highest percentage of local park benefits fell under the facility/activity-oriented benefit category. This indicates that respondents strongly associated local parks with areas and activities where they can participate in recreation/leisure opportunities. Personal benefits were mentioned frequently at the individual and household level. At the community level, social benefits were cited more frequently than all other benefit types (except facility/activity-oriented). Finally, economic benefits were mentioned less frequently than any other type of benefit at all three levels. This indicates that the public does not generally associate local parks with economic benefits.

#### *Participation in Local Recreation and Park Services*

- Respondents were asked if they had participated “in any recreation activities organized by your local government’s recreation and parks department” during the last 12 months. Thirty-two percent of respondents said that they had utilized local recreation and park services during the previous year. Of those who had not participated in the last 12 months, 41% said that they had participated in these

services at some time in the past. The current and past users combined represent nearly 60% of the respondents surveyed that had used local recreation and park services at one time in their lives.

- There were statistically significant relationships between individual participation in locally sponsored programs in the last twelve months based on age, education level, income level, marital status, household size, and personal disability status.
- Respondents were asked if other members of their household had participated in “any recreation or leisure activity during the last 12 months that was sponsored by or took place on areas or facilities managed by their local recreation and parks department.” Twenty-nine percent said that other members of their household had participated in these programs and services in the last 12 months.
- Age, education level, marital status, and race/ethnicity were related to other household members’ participation in activities sponsored by local recreation and parks departments.
- Cultural and team sports activities were the most popular activities at both the individual and household levels. Frequently mentioned cultural activities included activities such as festivals, fairs, concerts, and other artistic performances. Team sports activities included playing soccer, baseball, basketball, volleyball, or any other type of team-related sport. Cultural activities were the most frequently mentioned activity at the individual level, with team sports activities placing second. At the household level, the order of these two activities was reversed, with team sports being #1 and cultural activities #2.

#### *Non-Participation in Recreation and Park Services*

- Non-users of recreation and park services mentioned not having enough time as the primary reason why they chose not to participate in local recreation and park services over the past 12 months. Others cited concerns about poor health and old age. Of note is that very few respondents mentioned that local recreation and park services offered no benefit to them or were too expensive.
- Non-users of recreation and park services were asked, “Even though you haven’t participated directly in any services of your local recreation and parks department during the last year, do you think you receive any benefit from the fact that your community has such services?” A majority (60%) of non-users said that they did. This indicates that one does not have to directly participate in local recreation services (e.g., programs) to believe they received benefits from the fact their community has such services.
- Non-participants of programs were asked to state in their own words the most important benefit that they received from such services. The most frequently



mentioned benefit non-users mentioned was increased community awareness and sense of community.

#### *Types of Benefits Received from Local Recreation and Park Services*

- Among respondents who had participated in local recreation and park services during the past 12 months, the most commonly mentioned benefits of local recreation and park services were either personal or social in nature. Only at the community level did personal benefits drop off somewhat and facility/activity-oriented benefits become more prevalent. Respondents did not generally associate organized recreation programs with environmental or economic benefits at the individual, household, or community levels.
- Participants in local recreation services identified the activities that they had participated in as well as the benefits they derived from those specific activities. Respondents primarily received personal benefits (46%) and social benefits (46%) from their participation in these specific activities. Facility/activity (4%), environmental (3%), and economic (2%) benefits were mentioned much less frequently.

#### *Patterns of Park Use and Participation in Recreation and Park Programs*

- In total, nearly 75% of the American public claimed to have used either local parks or local recreation and park services during the past twelve months. The largest percentage of respondents, 42%, said that they used only local parks. Another 28% of respondents said that they have used both parks and have participated in local recreation and park services. Only 4% of respondents said that they have not used local parks, but have participated in these local recreation and park services. Twenty-six percent of respondents said that they didn't use parks nor did they participate in local recreation services in the past year.

#### *Priorities for Local Recreation and Park Services Based on NRPA's Pillars*

- Respondents were asked how important certain priorities should be for their local park and recreation agency. These priorities were based on NRPA's three pillars of conservation, health and wellness, and social equity. Items were also included related to youth development and economic priorities.
- Youth development, along with the three NRPA pillars of conservation, social equity, and health and wellness, were all perceived as very important priorities for respondents' local park and recreation agency. Respondents placed a significantly lower level of importance on the economic priority, signifying that they did not view

economics to be as comparatively important a priority for their local park and recreation agency.

#### *Perceived Value of Local Recreation and Park Services*

- Respondents were asked if they felt their local recreation and park services were worth the average of \$70 per member of their household per year (the national average tax expenditure for local recreation services according to NRPA's PRORAGIS database). A resounding percentage said that they did. Nearly four fifths of respondents (79%) agreed that local recreation and park services were worth \$70 per member of their household per year.
- Even two-thirds of non-park users and non-program users believed these services were worth the average investment.
- Taken a step further, almost half of all respondents (48%) said that these services were worth exactly \$70 per household member per year, and nearly one-third (31%) of all respondents said that they were worth more than \$70 per household member per year.

#### **Comparing the Key Variables between the 1992 and 2015 Studies**

A primary purpose of this study was to compare responses to key variables across the two surveys. This was done to understand how Americans' use and perceived benefits of local park and recreation services has changed or remained the same over the past quarter century.

#### *Perception of Park Proximity*

- The majority of Americans still believe they live in close proximity to a local park area. Over two-thirds of the respondents in both 1992 and 2015 stated that they live within walking distance of a park, playground, or open space, although between 1992 and 2015 this percentage declined slightly from 71% to 68%.

#### *Use and Perceived Benefits of Local Park Areas*

- Personal and household use of local park areas have remained relatively constant from 1992 to 2015. Seventy percent of Americans in 2015 said that they personally use local parks occasionally or frequently compared to 75% in 1992. In 2015, respondents were slightly more likely to have said that they use parks "frequently."

However, a higher percentage of respondents in 2015 also said that they do not use parks at all.

- Household use of parks increased slightly from 1992 to 2015, with a higher percentage of respondents saying other members of their household use local parks “frequently,” but this increase was not statistically significant.
- Even though there was little change in personal and household use of local parks between 1992 and 2015, the level of perceived benefits provided by local parks increased dramatically. Compared to 1992, respondents in 2015 were 9% more likely to say that they personally benefited “a great deal” from their local park areas (37% in 1992 compared to 46% in 2015).
- There was a large increase in the percentage of respondents who said that members of their household benefited “a great deal” from local parks (31% in 1992 to 41% in 2015).
- Overall, respondents in 1992 and 2015 continued to believe that their communities benefited “a great deal” from local park areas (61% in 1992 and 63% in 2015).

#### *Participation in Local Recreation and Park Services*

- Between 1992 and 2015, there was no significant change in the percentage of respondents who had participated in any recreation or leisure activity that was sponsored by or took place on areas or facilities managed by their local government’s recreation and parks department. The percentage who said “yes” they had participated in the last 12 months did not vary significantly between 1992 and 2015 (30% vs. 32%).
- Among non-users of local park and recreation areas and programs, there was a decrease from 1992 to 2015 in the percentage of respondents who believed that they personally benefitted just by the fact that their community had such services. This percentage dropped from 71% in 1992 to 60% in 2015.
- Between 1992 and 2015, the percentage of respondents who said that any other members of their household participated in any recreation or leisure activity during the past 12 months that was sponsored by or took place on areas or facilities managed by their local recreation and parks department also declined significantly from 37% to 29%.

### *Perceived Value of Local Recreation and Park Service*

- Respondents in both 1992 and 2015 had high levels of agreement that local recreation and park services were worth the average amount of \$45 (for 1992 respondents) or \$70 (for 2015 respondents) in local taxes for recreation and park services (76% in 1992 vs. 79% in 2015).
- Compared to 2015, respondents in 1992 were significantly more likely to believe that local park and recreation services were worth more than the baseline of \$45/\$70.

### **Conclusion and Study Implications**

The implications of study findings are clear. Despite the tight fiscal environment, local, state and national leaders should allocate financial resources to support, sustain and expand local governmental park and recreation agencies and services. Based on the evidence gathered in this national study, Americans do not perceive their local park and recreation services as a luxury, but rather view them as a vital part of what makes their community vibrant, livable, and worth the investment. This widespread support suggests that local investment in parks and recreation should receive priority. Such investment could come from a range of local sources (e.g., property, real estate transfer, sales, bed taxes, and bonds).

Local park and recreation directors, advocates, and interested community members are encouraged to share findings from this study with their local decision makers (both appointed and elected officials). In addition to this full report, there is also a summary report available on NRPA's website, which highlights the major study findings/conclusions to a broader, lay audience. Finally, local governments and/or park and recreation agencies who are in the process of developing a new master plan (or are conducting public surveys for other purposes) are encouraged to use the same questions included in this study. Doing so could facilitate benchmarking and comparisons with national statistics. Such comparisons could be helpful in identifying future needs and priorities for local communities.

# Introduction

## Background and Study Purpose

Local recreation and park services have been, and remain, a service which has not been systematically studied nor understood as part of a national system of facilities and programs. It is likely that more people visit local government park and recreation areas and facilities in one day than visit the National Park Service sites in one year. Yet, local government recreation and park services in the US are rarely perceived as part of a greater system. Historically, evidence of issues such as use, characteristics of users, onsite behaviors and benefits sought and obtained have been primarily anecdotal or at the community or statewide level. In the late 1980's, the recreation and park profession began to recognize and promote the diverse benefits associated with recreation and park services (Driver, 1991). However, at that time, there was no comprehensive nationwide assessment to benchmark public attitudes and position the profession. To respond to these concerns, the National Recreation and Park Association worked with The Pennsylvania State University to conduct a landmark 1992 study titled: "The Benefits of Local Recreation and Park Services: A Nationwide Study of the Perceptions of the American Public," with funding provided by the National Recreation Foundation.

Some key findings from that study included:

- 70% reported a park or playground within walking distance to their home
- 75% of the population visited local parks and playgrounds
- 30% of the population participated in local government recreation programs
- Use of local parks was related to a number of demographic characteristics
- 71% of non-park users reported they received benefits from the existence of parks and recreation, reinforcing the notion that use and benefit are not necessarily linked
- Over 75% felt that park and recreation services were worth \$45 per person per year or more (the national expenditure average at that time).

This study was a landmark in identifying the purposes of the local recreation and park system, as interpreted by the general American public — both users and non-users. It was also a landmark in identifying who the users were and their reasons for participation. In general, the findings of this study supported recreation and parks as a function of local government. That is, the vast majority of public used such services, attributed a number of benefits to such use, mostly dealing with various health issues such as physical activity and stress reduction, and supported local government expenditures for recreation and parks. The 1992 study was also significant in that its findings were documented, reported, cited, and used by a wide range of recreation and park stakeholders to advocate and advance the cause of professional recreation and park services. Findings from this study were used by NRPA to develop its “Benefits are Endless Campaign” and spawned similar national and state-wide association benefit and repositioning initiatives.

However, since the completion of that study, there have been a number of significant economic and societal changes nationally. The United States is a demographically different country than it was in the early 1990s. It is older, more ethnically diverse and has a lower portion of families in households. The middle class has shrunk dramatically. It is a nation where obesity and mental health concerns have increased dramatically. For local recreation and park services to effectively respond to these health challenges, it is critical to know the extent Americans currently use these services, activities in which they (and their household) participate, benefits they derive from such participation, constraints that hinder their participation, and their perceptions of the monetary value of local recreation and park services.

Amazingly, while local government services such as police and fire departments maintain sophisticated records of their operations, there is currently no national level data concerning the use, extent of use, benefits of use, and values associated with local governmental recreation and park services. When allied professions and partners ask the question, “To what extent does today’s American use local park and recreation services?”, we simply cannot answer that question with reliable and recent national-level data. Given these concerns, the current study sought to replicate and update the original study to provide trend analysis concerning changes in the use, onsite activities and benefits ascribed to this system, thus making trend analysis possible. Such trends help us



understand changes in everyday life in the United States and the role of recreation and parks in shaping its present and future. As with the prior 1992 study, this research surveyed Americans' perceptions and use of local recreation and park services. Evidence gathered in this updated assessment included perceptions of both users and non-users and benefits/pillars that respondents deemed most important for recreation and park services. Reassessment of these issues with comparisons to the 1992 data provided insights into the changes and/or consistencies in the use of local recreation park services as well as the benefits that they offer over this quarter century time-frame.

## Research Questions

This study addressed the following research questions:

1. Do respondents believe that they live within walking distance of a park, playground, or open space?
2. How frequently do respondents personally use local park areas? How often do other members of a respondent's household use local park areas?
3. What level of benefit do respondents believe local park areas provide at the individual, household, and community level?
4. Do non-users of local parks believe that parks provide personal, household, and community benefits?
5. What are the specific benefits respondents associate with local park areas?
6. Do respondents participate in local recreation and park services (such as programs and activities)?
7. What are the important individual, household, and community benefits of local recreation and park services?
8. What percentage of non-users of local recreation services believe that these services provide them personal benefits?
9. What specific activities have respondents participated in that were sponsored by or took place on areas managed by their local recreation and park agency?

10. How important do respondents believe conservation, health and wellness, social equity, youth development, and economic priorities are for their local park and recreation agency?
11. Are respondents willing to pay the national average of \$70 per household member per year for local recreation and park services?
12. How do respondents' socio-economic and demographic qualities relate to level of use/participation and perceived benefits of local parks and local recreation services?
13. What is the relationship between perceived benefits, use of local recreation and park services, and economic valuation of such services?
14. Being that this is a replication of the landmark 1992 study, what changes have occurred over time in regards to Americans' use/participation, perceived benefits, and economic valuation of local recreation and park services? What are the similarities between the surveys? What are the differences between the surveys?

## Telephone Questionnaire

The 2015 survey development was a collaborative effort between the Penn State research team, National Recreation and Park Association staff, and the survey research firm Left Brain Concepts Inc. Included in the Penn State research team were two members from the original 1992 study, Drs. Geoffrey Godbey and Alan Graefe, who provided critical guidance on how to replicate the landmark study. Dr. Andrew Mowen and Mr. Austin Barrett also provided further commentary on the development of the survey instrument. Mr. Bill Beckner and Mr. Travis Smith of NRPA provided input concerning study purpose and design. Finally, Mr. Jeff Haugen of Left Brain Concepts Inc. helped to revise and operationalize the telephone questionnaire.

The telephone survey used in this current study mirrored the original 1992 survey instrument. Therefore, the wording, order, and administration of the key comparison variables replicated the original survey. Variables were translated from the original 1992 survey to the 2015 survey and are summarized below in Table 1. Several other original survey questions were also modified. One of these modifications related to the reasons

why respondents chose not to participate in local recreation and park services over the past 12 months. In 1992, the survey asked six closed-ended questions about constraints that kept respondents from participating in local recreation and park services. In 2015, the survey asked an open-ended question to non-users of local recreation services asking them if there were “any particular reasons why you have not participated during the past 12 months?” This gave respondents the opportunity to voice, in their own words, why they did not participate in local recreation and park services during the past year.

The 2015 study also modified the way that the willingness to pay for recreation benefits questions were asked. The 2015 survey simplified the respondent’s burden by identifying exactly what these services were worth per household member per year. This new approach still allowed for comparison between the two surveys. For further information, see Appendix A, question #18 in 1992 survey and question #14 in 2015 survey for a visual representation of how this line of questioning slightly differed.

One new addition to the 2015 survey was the inclusion of questions about the importance respondents placed on various priorities for their local recreation and park agency. These priority items included NRPA’s three pillars of conservation, health and wellness, and social equity. Two survey items for each pillar were included. Additionally, two items were included for both youth development and economic-related priorities. A number of variables from the 1992 survey were not included in the 2015 survey. These questions were tangential to the core purpose of the 2015 study. They included “Section Two: Recreation Participation Patterns,” “Section Five: Evaluation of Local Services,” and selected demographic variables.

The 2015 study asked a few demographic questions differently than the 1992 study. These included the ways that age, number of individuals in the household, disability status, and household income level were measured. Appendix A contains the 2015 and 1992 survey instruments that include baseline data for both studies.

**Table 1. Key Variables Maintained Across the Two Surveys**

<b>Topic of Question</b>	<b>1992 Question Number and Description</b>	<b>2015 Question Number</b>
Proximity of parks, playground, or open space within walking distance of home	#5	#1
Use of local park areas	#6 – Personal Use #8 – Household Use	#2 #4
Perception of benefit from local parks	#7 – Personal Benefit #9 – Household Benefit #10 – Community Benefit	#3 #5 #6
Use/non-use of local recreation and park services	#11 – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate during the last 12 months?</li> <li>• Ever participated in local recreation services? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ If yes, what were those activities?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Non-user benefit perceptions</li> </ul>	#7/#7a
Local recreation and park services activities and benefits	#12 – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What activities have you participated in?</li> <li>• Benefits provided by each specific activity</li> </ul>	#8
Most important benefits from local recreation and park services	#13 – Personal #15 – Household #16 – Community	#9 #11 #12
Household participation in recreation and park activities	#14 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If yes, what activity?</li> </ul>	#10
Willingness to pay the average amount per person per year in local taxes for recreation and park services	#18 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If yes, do you feel these services are worth more than this amount annually?</li> </ul>	#14
Demographics	#20 – Area where respondent lives #23 – Comparative health of respondent to others #25 – Marital status #26 – Highest level of formal education #28 – Employment categories #29 – Race/ethnicity status #31 – Political affiliation #32 – Total household income	#15 #17 #18 #19 #20 #21 #23 #24

## Administration of the Questionnaire

This study used randomized household sampling parameters, as did the 1992 study. This meant securing a nationally representative, multi-stage probability sample of all households in the continental United States. Additionally, cell-phone numbers were included in the call list. Survey Sampling Incorporated, a premiere survey research firm, provided the sample. The National Recreation and Park Association then contracted with Left Brain Concepts Inc. of Lakewood, Colorado to complete the phone interviews and provide a clean dataset to merge with data from the 1992 study. The results of the first 150 interviews were sent to the Penn State research team for review. Upon examination, the Penn State team deemed that no changes were needed to the survey or the survey administration protocol. Of the 3,290 voice-to-voice contacts made over the telephone, 1,250 interviews were completed during February and March of 2015 for a response rate of 38%. Phone interviews took on average of just over 13 minutes to complete. A copy of Left Brain Concept's call disposition summary is provided in Appendix B.

## Data Analysis

Left Brain Concepts Inc. delivered the data from the 2015 telephone survey to the Penn State research team in ASCII file format. Using IBM's Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (Version 22), the data was delimited and compiled into a database. Next, calculations of frequency distributions and means were made for the 2015 data. These descriptive results are included within the survey instrument as illustrated in Appendix A. Initial analyses of demographic variables revealed that respondents in the 2015 sample were much older than the current average age of adults in the United States. Therefore, the 2015 sample was weighted based on US Census information for the estimated average age of the United States adult population (15 years of age and older) in 2014 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). The weighting procedure helped to make the 2015 sample more representative of the actual age distribution of American adults 15 years and older. Specifically, this procedure slightly suppressed the response of older respondents (who were over-represented) and slightly boosted the response of younger respondents (who were under-represented). A number of respondents in the 2015 sample refused to provide their age. Therefore, because the weighting procedure was based on how a respondent

answered the age variable, these respondents were left out of further analyses. This reduced the useable 2015 sample size from  $N = 1,250$  to  $N = 1,144$ . No weighting procedures were utilized to adjust the 1992 sample, which was more reflective of the national population. See Appendix C for more information about the 2015 and 1992 samples.

The merger of the 1992 data and the 2015 data allowed for detailed comparisons between the surveys. The Penn State research team then coded the 2015 open-ended responses to the survey based on the coding schemes from the 1992 study. These open-ended responses included the benefits respondents derived from local parks as well as local recreation services, constraints respondents faced that kept them from participating in local recreation services, and activities respondents had participated in that were sponsored by or took place on areas managed by their local park and recreation agency.

The vast majority of comparisons used in this study were cross-tabulations using chi square statistics to test for significant associations. Chi-square analyses test the relationship between categorical variables, such as the extent of personal use of local parks and respondent's gender. All statistically significant comparisons were set at the  $p < .05$  level. This means that there was less than a five percent chance that the difference between variables occurred by chance.

The tables display statistically significant comparisons with asterisk superscripts. A single asterisk (\*) represents comparisons where we can be 95% confident the difference between the variables was not due to chance. Double asterisks (\*\*) represent comparisons where we can be 99% confident the difference did not occur due to chance. Triple asterisks (\*\*\*) indicate that there is less than a 99.9% chance that the difference between the variables occurred due to chance. Comparisons that did not yield a significant difference between variables were marked with an "NS," meaning there was no statistically significant difference between the variables of interest. As a final note, in some instances, percentage totals within tables will not equal exactly 100% due to rounding.



## Structure/Layout of this Report

This report contains four major sections and six supporting appendices. The first two sections of the report are the Executive Summary and Introduction. These sections require little elaboration. The third section of the report is the Findings. This section is the primary focus of the report and presents the findings in textual and tabular form. The sub-sections within the overall Findings section largely follow the format of the original 1992 study. These sub-sections include:

1. Perception of local park proximity
2. Use of local parks
3. Perceived benefits of local parks
4. Use of local recreation and park services
5. Benefits of local recreation and park services
6. Priorities for local recreation and park services based on NRPA's pillars
7. Perceived value of local recreation and park services

In each sub-section, the 2015 survey findings are presented first. This includes descriptive findings (percentages and mean scores) for the overall 2015 sample. Next, responses to the questions were compared based on socio-economic and demographic variables (e.g. gender, age, level of education, etc...). Finally, when possible, data from the 2015 and 1992 studies are compared. Two types of comparisons were made between the 1992 and 2015 studies. First were comparisons between the overall samples from 1992 and 2015. This allowed us to understand how responses to the questions had changed (or had not changed) over the past 25 years. The second type of comparison looked to understand the similarities and differences between the two surveys. Comparisons made within each survey iteration identified the influence of various socio-economic and demographic variables on response. If the influence of the sociodemographic variables on response was the same in both survey iterations (i.e. younger respondents used parks more often than older respondents in both 1992 and 2015), this was considered a similarity between the surveys. If the influence of sociodemographic variables on response was not the same in both survey iterations, this was considered a difference between the two surveys.

The fourth section of the report is the Conclusions and Implications. This section lists out the twelve major findings from this study and discusses their implications for the park and recreation profession. This section also includes a summative reflection on how the American public continues to use, perceive benefits, and value their local parks and local recreation services.

Finally, six appendices provide supporting information. Appendix A includes the telephone instrument used in the 1992 and 2015 surveys. The descriptive results for both surveys are embedded within the survey instruments. Appendix B contains the call disposition summary provided by Left Brain Concepts Inc. Appendix C describes the socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of the 2015 sample. The appendix also includes a comparison of the 2015 sample to the 1992 sample. Appendix D contains the cross-tabulation comparison tables for the core study variables. This appendix presents the data in tabular form for both the 1992 and 2015 surveys. Appendix E presents the benefit coding scheme and the frequency of response for each specific benefit-related question. Appendix F contains the local recreation and park activity codes as well as the frequency of response for each activity-related question.

## Findings

### Existence of Park or Playground within Walking Distance

Nearly seven out of ten respondents said that there was a park, playground or open space within walking distance of their home (Table 2). Younger respondents were more likely to live within walking distance of a park than older respondents. Over seventy percent of respondents between the ages of 15-20 and 21-35 reported a park within walking distance of their home. In general, the likelihood of living within walking distance of a park declined with each older age group.

The higher the level of educational achievement, the greater the likelihood a respondent lived within walking distance of a park. Sixty-three percent of respondents who reported high school or less had a park within walking distance. Comparatively, 80% of respondents who possessed a graduate degree said they had a park nearby. Additionally, the higher the income a person reported, the more likely they were to live within walking distance of a park. Respondents who had a total household income of less than \$40,000 per year were less likely to have a park nearby than those who had a household income over \$80,000 per year (67% vs. 75%).

Response to this question differed by the size of a respondent's household. The more people that lived in a household, the more likely respondents reported living within walking distance of a park. While 58% of respondents from single households said they lived within walking distance of a park, over 75% of respondents with three or more people in their household reported living within walking proximity of a park.

In terms of community size, rural respondents (who live in an area with a population under 10,000 people) were significantly less likely to live within walking distance of a park (52%) compared to respondents from other areas. Respondents who lived in towns of 10,000 to 50,000 (74%), cities of 50,000 to 100,000 (78%), and metropolitan areas over 100,000 (76%) were significantly more likely to live near a park.

Whether a person lived within walking distance of a park also differed by race/ethnicity. Non-white respondents were significantly more likely than whites to live

near a park (72% vs. 66%). In terms of ethnicity, Hispanic and “Other” races/ethnicities (including American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian or Pacific Islander, and a distinct “other” response option) were the most likely to live near a park. Respondents who were either “black” or “white” were less likely to live within walking distance of a park.

There was no significant difference in response to the existence of a park or playground within walking distance based on gender, political affiliation, or personal disability status. Males were slightly more likely to believe they had a park within walking distance (70%) compared to females (65%), but this difference was not statistically significant. A large percentage of Republicans (69%), Democrats (67%), and Independents (71%) all believed that they live within close proximity of a park. Those who reported a personal disability were equally as likely as those who didn’t to live within a close proximity of parks.

**Table 2. Respondents Demographic Characteristics by Whether or Not Respondents Lived Within Walking Distance of a Park, Playground, or Open Space**

	Live Within Walking Distance of Park/Playground	
	% No	% Yes
<b>Total Sample</b>	32	68
<b>Gender - NS</b>		
Male	30	70
Female	35	65
<b>Age - *</b>		
15-20	25	75
21-35	28	72
36-55	32	68
56-65	33	67
66-75	38	62
76-95	45	55
<b>Level of Education - ***</b>		
High school or less	37	63
Some college to college graduate	34	66
Graduate degree	20	80
<b>Income - *</b>		
\$0 to \$40,000	33	67
\$40,000 to \$80,000	34	66
Over \$80,000	25	75
<b>Political Affiliation - NS</b>		
Republican	31	69
Democrat	33	67
Independent	29	71
Other	34	66
<b>Size of Household - ***</b>		
Single Person	42	58
Two people	33	69
Three to four people	23	77
Five or more people	24	76
<b>Size of Community - ***</b>		
Rural area/Village under 10,000	48	52
Town of 10,000 to 50,000	26	74
City of 50,000 to 100,000	22	78
Metropolitan area (over 100,000)	24	76
<b>Race/Ethnicity - **</b>		
White	34	66
Black	37	63
Hispanic	24	76
Other	19	81
<b>Personal Disability Status - NS</b>		
Yes	37	63
No	32	68

Crosstab significance levels: \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001, NS = Not significant

## *Comparing Park Proximity across Time*

### Overall Comparison

Overall, between 1992 and 2015 there was a slight decline in the percentage of respondents who said that they lived within walking distance of a park, playground, or open space (Table 3, also see Appendix D – p. 149-150). However, this decline was only three percentage points (from 71% in 1992 to 68% in 2015). Though statistically significant, this finding does not negate the fact that over two-thirds of Americans still believe that they live close to a park. Comparison of responses to this question across time, as well as comparison of demographic relationships to this response are provided in Table 3 and discussed further in the section that follows. Demographic comparisons are presented according to the similarities and differences across the two survey periods. Subsequent report sections (e.g. Use of Parks) will present these demographic comparisons in the same manner.

### Similarities

In both 1992 and 2015, response to the proximity question differed based on the respondents' age. In both samples, younger respondents were more likely to say they lived within close proximity of a park than older respondents. The influence of education level and household income level followed a similar pattern in both 1992 and 2015. In both studies, the higher education and income level respondents were more likely to live within walking distance of a park. In both 1992 and 2015, respondents from rural areas were less likely than respondents from other types of communities to say they lived within walking distance of a park.

### Differences

In 1992, there was a significant difference in response to this proximity question based on gender, wherein a higher percentage of males said that they live within walking distance of a park than females. The 2015 data did not indicate a difference between males and females in regards to perceived park proximity. In 1992, response differed based on political affiliation. Republicans and Independents were significantly more likely to live



within walking distance of local park areas. In 2015, there was no difference in response based on political affiliation.

The size of a respondent's household did not influence response to perceived park proximity in 1992. Size of household did significantly influence response in 2015. Those respondents who lived in larger households were more likely to say that they lived within walking distance of a park. In 1992, there was no significant difference in response to the park proximity question based on race/ethnicity. All four race/ethnicity response categories (black, white, Hispanic, "other") had over 70% of respondents say they lived within walking distance of a park. This was not the case in 2015. White and black respondents were less likely than Hispanic and "other" race/ethnicity respondents to say they lived within walking distance of a park.

Finally, access to a park within walking distance differed by personal disability status in 1992, but not in 2015. In 1992, those who reported a personal disability were less likely to live within walking distance to a park. This was not the case in 2015, wherein disabled and non-disabled respondents reported similar levels of access to a park within walking distance.

**Table 3. Change Over Time: Whether or Not Respondents Lived Within Walking Distance of a Park, Playground, or Open Space**

Overall Sample Comparison*			
1992		2015	
%Yes	%No	%Yes	%No
71%	29%	68%	32%
Similarities		Differences	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Age:</b> Younger respondents more likely</li> <li>• <b>Education level:</b> Higher educated more likely</li> <li>• <b>Income level:</b> Higher household income more likely</li> <li>• <b>Type of area:</b> Rural residents less likely</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Gender:</b> 1992 – Males more likely 2015 – No difference</li> <li>• <b>Political affiliation:</b> 1992 – Republicans and Independents more likely 2015 – No difference</li> <li>• <b>Size of household:</b> 1992 – No difference 2015 – Larger households more likely</li> <li>• <b>Race/ethnicity:</b> 1992 – No difference 2015 – White and black respondents less likely</li> <li>• <b>Personal disability:</b> 1992 – Disabled less likely 2015 – No difference.</li> </ul>	

Crosstab significance levels: \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001, NS = Not significant

## Use of Parks

### Personal Use of Local Parks

Respondents indicated the extent that they personally used or did not use public parks, playgrounds, and other open space within their community. Seventy percent of respondents said that they personally used these areas, 44% using them occasionally and 26% using them frequently (Table 4). In terms of demographic comparisons, younger respondents were more likely to report using local parks than older respondents. In particular, respondents over 65 years of age were less likely to report using parks at all compared to respondents in the other age groups. Nevertheless, a sizeable percentage of respondents over 65 years of age stated that they occasionally or frequently use local park areas (57% for 65-75 and 47% for 76-95), indicating that parks are used by people across all age brackets.

Personal park use was related to education level. Those with a higher level of educational attainment were more likely to use local parks occasionally or frequently. To illustrate, 19% of those with a high school degree or less stated they visited local parks frequently, compared to 33% of those respondents who possessed a graduate degree. Respondents with higher income levels were also more likely to use local parks. While 34% of respondents with incomes of \$40,000 or less didn't use local parks at all, only 20% of those with incomes over \$80,000 said they didn't use them.

Use of parks was related to the respondent's household size. While 40% of respondents who lived alone said that they never visit local parks, only 13% of respondents who live in a household with five or more people said they didn't use local parks. Respondents with two people in their household were the most likely to say that they use local parks frequently (28%). Use of local parks was related to the size of community a respondent was from. Use increased as the size of community increased. Rural respondents were the least likely to report that they used local parks (38% "not at all"). Conversely, respondents from metropolitan areas were the most likely to say they used local parks frequently (29%).

There was a difference in personal use of parks based on race/ethnicity. Alarming, black respondents were much less likely to report using a local park than

white, Hispanic, or respondents of “other” race/ethnic backgrounds. Only 58% of black respondents reported using local park areas compared to 71% for whites, 76% for Hispanics, and 74% for other racial/ethnic groups. This difference between blacks and all other respondents is pronounced and consistent with findings presented later in this report.

In terms of disability status, respondents who reported a personal disability were less likely to say they used local parks. Only 51% of respondents who said they had a personal disability used local parks occasionally or frequently. By contrast, 73% of respondents who reported no personal disability said they used local parks occasionally or frequently.

Personal park use was not related to gender. Males and females used local park areas at a very similar level. Seventy-one percent of males and 69% of females reported using local parks occasionally or frequently. There was also no difference in personal use of parks based on political affiliation. Republicans, Democrats, and Independents all used local park areas at comparable levels.

**Table 4. Respondents Demographic Characteristics by Extent of Personal Use of Local Park Areas**

	Extent of Personal Local Park Use		
	% Not at All	% Occasionally	% Frequently
<b>Total Sample</b>	30	44	26
<b>Gender - NS</b>			
Male	29	46	25
Female	31	43	26
<b>Age - ***</b>			
15-20	25	48	26
21-35	21	45	34
36-55	29	47	25
56-65	32	46	22
66-75	43	37	20
76-95	53	35	12
<b>Level of Education - ***</b>			
High school or less	35	45	19
Some college to college graduate	31	42	27
Graduate School	16	51	33
<b>Income - **</b>			
\$0 to \$40,000	34	41	25
\$40,000 to \$80,000	24	47	29
Over \$80,000	20	50	30
<b>Marital Status - ***</b>			
Single (never married)	27	48	25
Married or in a long-term partnership	26	47	27
Divorced/separated	36	33	31
Widow or widower	56	29	15
<b>Political Affiliation - NS</b>			
Republican	29	46	25
Democrat	31	43	26
Independent	27	43	30
Other	22	43	35
<b>Size of Household - ***</b>			
Single Person	40	37	23
Two people	26	45	28
Three to four people	31	45	24
Five or more people	13	63	24
<b>Size of Community - **</b>			
Rural area/Village under 10,000	38	40	22
Town of 10,000 to 50,000	25	50	25
City of 50,000 to 100,000	27	45	27
Metropolitan area (over 100,000)	28	43	29
<b>Race/Ethnicity - *</b>			
White	29	44	27
Black	42	44	14
Hispanic	24	47	29
Other	26	45	29
<b>Personal Disability Status - ***</b>			
Yes	49	33	19
No	27	46	27

Crosstab significance levels: \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001, NS = Not significant

## *Comparing Personal Park Use across Time*

### Overall Comparison

Overall, comparisons between 1992 and 2015 surveys indicated a significant difference in respondents' personal use of local park areas (Table 5, also see Appendix D – p. 151-152). In 2015, a slightly higher percentage of respondents said that they didn't use local parks compared with 1992 respondents. Additionally, a higher percentage of 2015 respondents said they frequently used local parks than did respondents in 1992. The main difference between the two survey years was the decrease in percentage of people who said that they "occasionally" used local parks, and thus the increase in the percentage of people who personally use parks frequently, or not at all. Collectively, these findings indicate a fairly consistent personal use of local parks (75% occasional/frequent use in 1992 compared to 70% occasional/frequent use in 2015).

### Similarities

There were more similarities between the two surveys than differences. The two surveys share similarities related to the influence of gender, age, education level, political affiliation, and size of household on personal use of local parks. In both 1992 and 2015, gender was not related to personal use of parks. There was no difference in personal use of parks whether the respondent was male or female. There was also no difference in personal use of parks based on political affiliation in 1992 and 2015.

Age influenced personal use of parks in both 1992 and 2015. In both surveys, younger respondents tended to use local parks more frequently than older respondents, with the 21-35 year old respondents reporting the highest percentage of occasional or frequent use. Education level was also related to personal use of local parks. In both 1992 and 2015, more educated respondents reported higher levels of occasional and frequent use of local parks. Finally, the size of a respondent's household also related to personal use of parks in a similar way in both 1992 and 2015. Respondents who lived in larger households were more likely to respond that they use local parks occasionally or frequently.



## Differences

There were four primary differences revealed over time based on demographic characteristics. These include differences based on the influence of income level, size of community, race/ethnicity, and personal disability status on personal use of parks. In 1992, there was no difference in level of personal use of parks based on annual household income. In 2015, respondents with higher levels of household income were significantly more likely to say they used local parks occasionally or frequently. The size of a respondent's community also did not influence personal use of parks in 1992. In 2015 however, respondents from non-rural areas (towns, cities, and metropolitan areas) were significantly more likely to say they used local parks occasionally/frequently. Additionally, as community size increased, the percentage of respondents who said they use local parks frequently also increased.

In 1992, personal use of parks did not differ significantly based on a respondent's race/ethnicity. In 2015, there were significant differences based on race/ethnicity. White, Hispanic, and "other" respondents were significantly more likely to say that they used local parks occasionally/frequently than Black respondents. Finally, in 1992 there was no difference in personal use of parks based on personal disability status. In 2015, respondents who reported no personal disability were more likely to use local parks occasionally/frequently compared to respondents who said they have a personal disability.

**Table 5. Change Over Time: Personal Use of Local Park Areas**

Overall Sample Comparison**					
1992			2015		
Not at all	Occasionally	Frequently	Not at all	Occasionally	Frequently
25%	51%	24%	30%	44%	26%
Similarities			Differences		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Gender:</b> No difference in use</li> <li>• <b>Age:</b> Younger respondents use parks more frequently</li> <li>• <b>Education level:</b> Higher educated respondents use parks more frequently</li> <li>• <b>Political affiliation:</b> No difference in use</li> <li>• <b>Size of household:</b> Larger households use more occasionally/frequently</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Income level:</b> 1992 – No difference 2015 – Higher income, use more frequently</li> <li>• <b>Size of Community:</b> 1992 – No difference 2015 – Larger communities use more</li> <li>• <b>Race/ethnicity:</b> 1992 – No difference 2015 – Black respondents use less</li> <li>• <b>Personal disability:</b> 1992 – No difference 2015 – Non-disabled use more</li> </ul>		

Crosstab significance levels: \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001, NS = Not significant

## Household Use of Local Parks

Respondents were next asked how often other members of their household used local park areas. Seventy-six percent of respondents stated that other members of their household use local parks occasionally or frequently (47% occasionally, 29% frequently; Table 6).

Younger respondents were more likely than older respondents to say that members of their household used local parks. Those between the ages of 21-35 and 36-55 had the highest percentage indicating that other members of their household used local parks. Household use of parks was also related to educational attainment and household income. The higher the level of education a respondent had, the more likely they reported that other members of their household used local parks. The higher the level of respondents' household income, the more likely that other members of a respondent's household used local park areas.

Married respondents were more likely to report that other members of their household used local parks compared to those who were single, divorced, or widowed. Additionally, household use of local parks varied by the number of people that lived in a respondent's home. Respondents with five or more people in their household were the most likely to say that members of their household used local park areas occasionally or frequently. Similarly, the larger the respondent's community, the higher the percentage of respondents who said household members use local parks. Respondents from metropolitan areas had the highest percentage of respondents who stated that other members of their household use local parks frequently (34%).

A respondent's race/ethnicity was related to household use of local parks. Black respondents were significantly less likely to say other members of their household use local parks frequently (16%), compared to white (28%) and Hispanic (40%) respondents. Personal disability status was also related to household use of parks. Respondents who did not report a personal disability were significantly more likely to say that members of their household used local parks occasionally (48%) and frequently (30%) than respondents who did report a personal disability (43% "occasionally," 21% "frequently").

Finally, gender was not related to household use of local park areas. Males were just as likely to report occasional or frequent use of local parks by other household members (78%) as females (74%). There was also no significant difference in household use of parks based on respondents' political affiliation.

**Table 6. Respondents Demographic Characteristics by Extent of Use of Local Park Areas by Other Household Members**

	Extent of Local Park Use by Household Members		
	% Not at All	% Occasionally	% Frequently
<b>Total Sample</b>	24	47	29
<b>Gender - NS</b>			
Male	22	50	28
Female	26	45	29
<b>Age - ***</b>			
15-20	23	44	33
21-35	19	51	30
36-55	19	51	30
56-65	28	42	29
66-75	43	35	23
76-95	47	42	12
<b>Level of Education - ***</b>			
High school or less	33	49	19
Some college to college graduate	22	48	30
Graduate degree	15	45	41
<b>Income - **</b>			
\$0 to \$40,000	30	43	26
\$40,000 to \$80,000	22	46	32
Over \$80,000	15	50	35
<b>Marital Status - ***</b>			
Single (never married)	26	50	25
Married or in a long-term partnership	20	50	29
Divorced/separated	32	27	40
Widow or widower	44	31	25
<b>Political Affiliation - NS</b>			
Republican	28	47	25
Democrat	19	53	28
Independent	23	46	31
Other	14	48	38
<b>Size of Household - ***</b>			
Single Person	32	38	30
Two people	24	48	28
Three to four people	27	44	29
Five or more people	4	68	28
<b>Size of Community - *</b>			
Rural area/Village under 10,000	29	47	24
Town of 10,000 to 50,000	26	48	27
City of 50,000 to 100,000	15	53	32
Metropolitan area (over 100,000)	20	46	34
<b>Race/Ethnicity - **</b>			
White	24	48	28
Black	23	61	16
Hispanic	21	39	40
Other	23	38	39
<b>Personal Disability Status - *</b>			
Yes	36	43	21
No	22	48	30

Crosstab significance levels: \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001, NS = Not significant

## *Comparing Household Park Use across Time*

### Overall Comparison

Overall, there was no statistical difference between the level of household use of local park areas between the 1992 and 2015 surveys (Table 7, also see Appendix D – p. 155-156). In 1992, 74% of respondents said other members of their household use local parks occasionally or frequently compared to 76% in 2015. Household use of parks has remained prevalent and steady over the past 25 years.

### Similarities

In both 1992 and 2015, younger respondents between the ages of 21-55 reported the highest level of household use of local park areas. Additionally, household use of parks tended to decline after 66 years of age. In both samples, respondents 76-95 were the least likely to report that other members of their household used local parks.

Marital status influenced household use of local parks in similar ways in the two samples. Married respondents were far more likely than other respondents to say members of their household used local park areas occasionally or frequently (77% in 1992, 79% in 2015). In both 1992 and 2015, respondents who had five or more people living in their household were the most likely to say that other members of their household used local parks occasionally or frequently. Understandably, in both samples, single person household respondents were the least likely to say that other members of their household used local park areas. Finally, the size of a respondent's community was related to the level of household use in both the 1992 and 2015 samples. Rural respondents in 1992 and 2015 were the least likely to say other members of their household used local parks occasionally or frequently.

### Differences

There were five primary differences revealed over time between the two surveys based on demographic characteristics. These include differences in trends related to gender, income, political affiliation, race/ethnicity, and personal disability status. In 1992, females reported a significantly higher level of household use of local parks than males. In 2015, there was no difference in household use of local parks based on gender. Household

income level did not influence household use of local parks in 1992. This was not the case in 2015. In 2015, higher income levels related to higher household use of local parks.

Respondents who considered their political affiliation as “Independent” in 1992 reported more frequent household use of local parks compared to other respondents who identified themselves as Democrats, Republican, and “other” political affiliations. In 2015, household use of local parks was not significantly different based on political affiliation. In 1992, there was no difference in household use of local parks based on a respondent’s race/ethnicity. Race/ethnicity did influence household use of parks in 2015. Black respondents in 2015 were by far the least likely to report frequent use of local park areas by other household members. Personal disability status did not influence household use of parks in 1992. By contrast, household use of parks did vary by personal disability status in 2015. Respondents who did not claim a personal disability were more likely to report occasional and frequent use of local parks by other members of their household.

**Table 7. Change Over Time: Household Use of Park Areas**

Overall Sample Comparison – NS					
1992			2015		
Not at all	Occasionally	Frequently	Not at all	Occasionally	Frequently
26%	49%	25%	24%	47%	29%
Similarities			Differences		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Age:</b> Younger respondents (21-55) reported the highest household use</li> <li>• <b>Marital Status:</b> Married respondents have higher household use</li> <li>• <b>Size of Household:</b> Bigger households have higher household use</li> <li>• <b>Size of Community:</b> Bigger communities have higher household use</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Gender:</b> 1992 – Female household use higher 2015 – No difference</li> <li>• <b>Income:</b> 1992 – No difference 2015 – Higher income, higher household use</li> <li>• <b>Political Affiliation:</b> 1992 – Independents have more frequent household use 2015 – No difference</li> <li>• <b>Race/Ethnicity:</b> 1992 – No difference 2015 – Black respondents have lower household use</li> <li>• <b>Personal Disability Status:</b> 1992 – No difference 2015 – No personal disability have higher household use</li> </ul>		

Crosstab significance levels: \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001, NS = Not significant



## Perceived Benefits from Local Parks

### Level of Benefit from Local Parks

Respondents were asked the extent or degree of benefit received from public parks at the personal, household, and community level. The survey clarified what was meant by benefits stating: “by benefits, we mean anything good that happens because public parks are there.” First, respondents were asked about the level of personal benefit they received from local park areas with response options ranging from “not at all,” “somewhat,” to “a great deal.” Subsequently, they were asked about the level of benefits accruing to other members of their household and to the community at large because of local parks.

Results indicate a majority of respondents believed local parks provide personal, household, and community benefits (Table 8). The percentage of respondents who said local parks provide “a great deal” of personal, household, and community benefits exceeded 40%. Most notably, the belief that local parks provide community benefits was nearly unanimous among respondents. Only 8% of respondents believed that local parks do not provide community benefits. On top of this finding, an impressive 63% of respondents said that local parks provide “a great deal” of community benefits.

**Table 8. Level and Degree of Benefit from Local Parks**

	Personal	Household	Community
<b>% Not at all</b>	17	19	8
<b>% Somewhat</b>	37	40	29
<b>% A great deal</b>	46	41	63

### Individual Benefits

Overall, only 17% of all respondents stated that they did not receive any personal benefits from local parks. Forty-six percent of respondents received a great deal of personal benefits and 37% said that they somewhat benefited from local park areas (Table 9). Remarkably, over half of respondents who did not use local parks still believed that

they personally benefited from having these parks in their local area. Fifty-six percent of non-park-users believed that these parks provided them some form of benefit (36% somewhat, 20% a great deal). This finding shows that Americans do not have to personally use local parks to believe that these parks provide direct or indirect benefits to them.

Respondents between the ages of 21-35 and 36-55 were the most likely to report a great deal of personal benefit from local parks (52% and 51% “a great deal” respectively). Perceived level of personal benefit from local parks decreased with age. Respondents 66 years and older were significantly less likely to report high levels of personal benefit compared to respondents in the younger age brackets.

There was a positive relationship between educational achievement and perceived level of benefits received by local park areas. Respondents who were more highly educated were more likely to perceive that local parks provide a high level of personal benefits compared to respondents with lower levels of educational attainment. Only 34% of respondents who had a high school education or less stated that they receive a great deal of benefit from local parks. Sixty-eight percent of respondents who possessed a graduate degree said that they received a great deal of personal benefit from parks. As will be shown later in this report, this trend remained true in regards to perceived level of household and community benefits provided by local park areas. Similarly, respondents with a higher level of household income were more likely to report a great deal of benefit provided by local park areas. Fifty-six percent of respondents who made over \$80,000 said that they receive a great deal of personal benefit from local park areas compared to 41% of respondents who made less than \$40,000.

A respondent’s political affiliation also influenced the level of personal benefit they received from local park areas. Respondents who identified as Democrats, Independents, and “Other” political affiliations were significantly more likely to perceive personal benefit compared to Republicans. Forty percent of Republicans stated they receive a great deal of personal benefit from local park areas compared to 51% for Democrats, 49% for Independents, and 63% for “other” political affiliations.

Marital status, the size of a respondent’s household, size of community, race/ethnicity, and personal disability status were all related to perceived level of personal benefit. Married respondents were more likely than those who were single, divorced, or

widowed to say that they personally benefit a great deal from local park areas.

Respondents who lived in a household with two people or three to four people were the most likely to report a great deal of personal benefit. Those who lived in non-rural areas (towns, cities, and metropolitan areas) were the most likely to respond that they received a great deal of benefit.

Black respondents perceived the lowest levels of personal benefit provided by local park areas. Only 33% of black respondents said that they received a great deal of benefit. Comparatively, white, Hispanic, and respondents of “other” races/ethnicities were much more likely to perceive high levels of benefit (49% a great deal for whites, 44% for Hispanics, and 43% for “other” races/ethnicities). Finally, respondents who did not report a personal disability were significantly more likely to perceive a great deal of personal benefit from local park areas (47%) than those who did report a personal disability (40%).

Gender was the only demographic variable that did not influence the level of personal benefit derived from local parks. Both males and females perceived similar amounts of personal benefit from local park areas.

**Table 9. Respondents Demographic Characteristics by Extent of Perceived Personal Benefits from Local Park Areas**

	Extent of Personal Benefits		
	% Not at All	% Somewhat	% A Great Deal
<b>Total Sample</b>	17	37	46
<b>Gender – NS</b>			
Male	16	40	44
Female	18	34	48
<b>Age - ***</b>			
15-20	12	48	40
21-35	10	39	52
36-55	20	30	51
56-65	15	39	45
66-75	24	39	37
76-95	35	36	29
<b>Level of Education - ***</b>			
High school or less	24	42	34
Some college to college graduate	16	39	46
Graduate degree	9	23	68
<b>Income - **</b>			
\$0 to \$40,000	19	39	41
\$40,000 to \$80,000	14	36	50
Over \$80,000	13	31	56
<b>Marital Status - ***</b>			
Single (never married)	11	45	44
Married or in a long-term partnership	16	33	50
Divorced/separated	21	34	46
Widow or widower	39	31	30
<b>Political Affiliation - ***</b>			
Republican	23	37	40
Democrat	18	31	51
Independent	12	39	49
Other	13	24	63
<b>Size of Household - ***</b>			
Single Person	26	36	37
Two people	13	37	51
Three to four people	17	33	50
Five or more people	11	50	39
<b>Size of Community - ***</b>			
Rural area/Village under 10,000	23	41	36
Town of 10,000 to 50,000	12	36	53
City of 50,000 to 100,000	14	35	51
Metropolitan area (over 100,000)	17	36	48
<b>Race/Ethnicity - *</b>			
White	17	35	49
Black	22	44	33
Hispanic	15	41	44
Other	13	43	43
<b>Personal Disability Status – *</b>			
Yes	26	34	40
No	16	37	47
<b>Local Park User Status - ***</b>			
Local Park User	5	37	58
Local Park Non-user	44	36	20

Crosstab significance levels: \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001, NS = Not significant

## *Comparing Personal Benefits of Local Park Use across Time*

### Overall Comparison

Overall, there was a significant difference in the level of personal benefit derived from local park areas between 1992 and 2015 (Table 10, also see Appendix D – p. 153-154). Most notably, there was a nine-point increase in the percentage of respondents who said they benefited a great deal from their local parks. This increase (from 37% in 1992 to 46% in 2015) represents significant gains in the national consciousness about the perceived personal benefits provided by local parks over the past quarter century.

The percentage of respondents who said that they did not personally benefit from local parks remained constant between 1992 and 2015 (16% and 17%). Between 1992 and 2015, the percentage of respondents who said that they benefited somewhat from local parks declined dramatically (47% in 1992 compared to 37% in 2015). This decline (-10%) is explained by the increase in percentage of respondents who said they personally benefited a great deal (+9%).

### Similarities

In both 1992 and 2015, there was no difference in level of personal benefit provided by local parks based on gender. In 1992 and 2015, younger respondents were more likely to perceive higher levels of personal benefit from local parks compared to older respondents. In both surveys, those between the ages of 21-35 and 36-55 had the highest percentage of respondents who said they benefited a great deal from their local park areas. A respondent's level of education similarly related to their level of personal benefit derived from local parks in both 1992 and 2015. The more educated a respondent was, the more they said they benefited from local park areas. Though this relationship was true in 1992, it was even stronger in 2015.

Married respondents were the most likely to say that they benefited a great deal from local parks in both 1992 and 2015. Additionally, the size of a respondent's household also related to their level of personal benefit provided by local parks in 1992 and 2015. In both surveys, single respondents were the most likely to say that they did not benefit from local park areas. Additionally, respondents who had three to four people living in their

household also perceived a high level of personal benefit. Finally, the size of a respondent's community influenced the perceived level of personal benefit provided by local park areas. In both samples, respondents from rural areas were the least likely to say they benefited from local parks.

### Differences

There were four primary differences between the two surveys based on demographic characteristics. These included differences related to income, political affiliation, race/ethnicity, and personal disability status. In regards to all of these differences in trends, there were no differences in 1992, but significant differences in 2015.

In 1992, there was no difference in level of benefit provided by local park areas based on income level. In 2015, the higher a respondent's income level, the higher their perceived level of personal benefit from local parks. Political affiliation did not influence the level of personal benefit a respondent received from parks in 1992. In 2015, level of personal benefit was related to a respondent's political affiliation. Democrats were most likely to say that they received a great deal of personal benefit from local parks (51%). Republicans were the least likely to say they benefited a great deal from parks (40%).

Again, in 1992, race/ethnicity did not influence perceived level benefit provided by local parks. White, black, Hispanic, and "other" respondents were equally likely to say they benefited a great deal from local park areas. In 2015, white, Hispanic, and other ethnicity respondents were more likely than black respondents to say that they personally benefited from local park areas. Notably, compared to other respondents, black respondents had the highest percentage of respondents who said they do not benefit from local parks (21%) and the lowest percentage of respondents who said they benefit a great deal (33%). Finally, in 1992, personal disability status did not relate to level of personal benefit derived from local park areas. In 2015, those who did not report a personal disability were more likely to perceive higher levels of personal benefits from local park areas.

**Table 10. Change Over Time: Personal Benefit of Local Park Areas**

Overall Sample Comparison***					
1992			2015		
Not at All	Somewhat	A Great Deal	Not at All	Somewhat	A Great Deal
16%	47%	37%	17%	37%	46%
Similarities			Differences		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Gender:</b> No difference</li> <li>• <b>Age:</b> Younger respondents (especially middle-aged) have higher level of personal benefit</li> <li>• <b>Education Level:</b> The higher the education level, the higher level of personal benefit</li> <li>• <b>Marital Status:</b> Married respondents reported the highest level of personal benefit</li> <li>• <b>Size of Household:</b> Respondents from medium sized households perceived higher level of personal benefits.</li> <li>• <b>Size of Community:</b> Respondents from non-rural communities perceived higher level of personal benefits</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Income:</b> 1992 – No difference 2015 – Higher income, higher level of personal benefit</li> <li>• <b>Political Affiliation:</b> 1992 – No difference 2015 – Republicans perceive lower level of personal benefit</li> <li>• <b>Race/Ethnicity:</b> 1992 – No difference 2015 – Black respondents perceived lower level of personal benefits</li> <li>• <b>Personal Disability Status:</b> 1992 – No difference 2015 – Respondents with no personal disability perceive a higher level of personal benefit</li> </ul>		

Crosstab significance levels: \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001, NS = Not significant

### *Household Benefits*

Respondents were also asked to indicate the level of benefit they believe other members of their household receive from local park areas. Forty-one percent of respondents said that other members of their household receive a great deal of benefit

from local park areas (Table 11). Another 40% believed that other members of their household somewhat benefit from local park areas. Only 19% said that their household does not benefit from local parks. These percentages indicate that the vast majority of respondents (81%) believe local parks provide benefits to other members of their household. Even the majority of non-park-users believed that other members of their household benefited from local park areas. Among non-users, 53% believed that their household benefits somewhat or a great deal from local parks.

Females were more likely than males to perceive a great deal of household benefit. Forty-four percent of females compared to 39% of males said that other members of their household benefit a great deal from local park areas. Middle-aged respondents were the most likely to say their household benefited a great deal from local park areas. Those between 36-55 were more likely than others to perceive a great deal of benefit to other members of their household (49%).

Those with higher levels of education were more likely to perceive household benefits than those with lower levels of education. For example, 28% of respondents with a high school degree or less said local parks provide a great deal of household benefit compared to 58% of respondents with graduate degrees. A respondent's level of household income also influenced the level of perceived benefits for other members of their household. Higher income respondents were more likely than lower income respondents to perceive benefits to their household from local park areas.

Married respondents (45%) and divorced/separated respondents (43%) were more likely than single respondents (35%) to perceive a great deal of benefit provided to other members of their household because of local park areas. Political affiliation also influenced level of perceived household benefit. Respondents who identified as Democrats, Independents, and "Other" political affiliations were more likely than Republicans to have said that local park areas provide a great deal of benefit to other members of their household.

The larger a respondent's household, the higher the level of perceived household benefit provided by local park areas. Stated a different way, the percentage of respondents who said that other members of their household did not benefit from local park areas decreased as the size of the household increased. Generally, respondents from larger



communities said that other members of their household benefited somewhat or a great deal more than respondents from smaller communities (especially rural areas). Whereas only 33% of respondents from rural areas/villages said that the other members of their household benefit a great deal, 43% of respondents from towns, 49% of respondents from cities, and 44% of respondents from metropolitan areas said that other members of their household benefit a great deal from local park areas.

Finally, respondents who reported a personal disability were significantly less likely to say that other members of their household received a great deal of benefit from local park areas (30% a great deal for disabled respondents vs. 43% a great deal for non-disabled respondents).

There was no overall significant difference in the level of household benefit provided by local park areas based on a respondent's race/ethnicity. Whites, blacks, Hispanics, and other races/ethnicities all had similar percentages of respondents who said that other members of their household do not benefit from local park areas.

**Table 11. Respondents Demographic Characteristics by Extent of Perceived Household Benefits from Local Park Areas**

	Extent of Benefits to Household Members		
	% Not at All	% Somewhat	% A Great Deal
<b>Total Sample</b>	19	40	41
<b>Gender - *</b>			
Male	17	44	39
Female	20	36	44
<b>Age - ***</b>			
15-20	11	65	24
21-35	17	38	45
36-55	16	35	49
56-65	20	38	42
66-75	32	36	31
76-95	37	47	16
<b>Level of Education - ***</b>			
High school or less	26	47	28
Some college to college graduate	17	40	44
Graduate degree	11	31	58
<b>Income - ***</b>			
\$0 to \$40,000	26	42	32
\$40,000 to \$80,000	16	35	49
Over \$80,000	10	41	50
<b>Marital Status - ***</b>			
Single (never married)	19	46	35
Married or in a long-term partnership	15	39	45
Divorced/separated	25	32	43
Widow or widower	41	34	25
<b>Political Affiliation - **</b>			
Republican	21	45	34
Democrat	17	37	46
Independent	16	39	45
Other	16	26	58
<b>Size of Household - **</b>			
Single Person	30	39	32
Two people	18	38	44
Three to four people	18	43	39
Five or more people	8	48	44
<b>Size of Community - *</b>			
Rural area/Village under 10,000	23	44	33
Town of 10,000 to 50,000	19	38	43
City of 50,000 to 100,000	14	37	49
Metropolitan area (over 100,000)	15	41	44
<b>Race/Ethnicity - NS</b>			
White	18	39	43
Black	18	51	31
Hispanic	14	40	46
Other	23	41	36
<b>Personal Disability Status - **</b>			
Yes	29	41	30
No	17	40	43
<b>Local Park User Status - ***</b>			
Local Park User	9	41	51
Local Park Non-user	47	38	15

Crosstab significance levels: \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001, NS = Not significant

## *Comparing Household Benefits of Local Park Use across Time*

### Overall Comparison

Overall, there was a significant difference in perceived household benefits from local park areas between the 1992 survey and the 2015 survey (Table 12, also see Appendix D – p. 157-158). Most importantly, there was a ten-point increase in the percentage of respondents who said that other members of their household benefited a great deal from local parks (31% in 1992 vs. 41% in 2015). There was also a two-point decrease in the percentage of people who said that other members of their household do not benefit from local park areas (21% in 1992 vs. 19% in 2015). These changes in percentage between the two survey years indicate that 2015 respondents believe that local park areas provide a significantly higher level of benefit to other members of their household than 1992 respondents.

### Similarities

There were six primary similarities between the two surveys based on demographic characteristics. These demographic similarities relate to the influence of gender, age, education level, marital status, size of household, and race/ethnicity on response to the perceived level of household benefit provided by local park areas. In both 1992 and 2015, females perceived higher levels of household benefit than males. In both surveys, females had a higher percentage of respondents who said that their household benefits a great deal from local park areas. This difference was especially pronounced in the 1992 sample, wherein 36% of females said their household benefits a great deal compared to 25% of males. Though the difference between females and males was still statistically significant in 2015, it was much less pronounced. In 2015, 44% of females perceived a great deal of household benefit compared to 39% of males.

Age also related to level of household benefit in a similar way in 1992 and 2015. In both iterations, middle-aged respondents (21-35, 36-55) perceived a higher level of household benefit than respondents of other ages. The influence of education level was also similar in 1992 and 2015. The more educated a respondent was, the higher the level of household benefit they perceived to be provided by local park areas. In particular, as

education level increased, the percentage of respondents who said that their household did not benefit from local park areas decreased.

Married respondents and divorced/separated respondents were the most likely to report a great deal of household benefits provided by local park areas in both 1992 and 2015. In both 1992 and 2015, respondents from progressively larger household were less likely to say that other members of their household did not benefit from local park areas. Additionally, in both 1992 and 2015, respondents who lived in a household of five or more people were the most likely to say that other members of their household benefited a great deal from local parks (41% in 1992 and 44% in 2015).

One final similarity between the two surveys was that race/ethnicity did not influence level of household benefit provided by local park areas. Statistically, white, black, Hispanic, and respondents of “other” races/ethnicities perceived similar levels of benefits provided to other members of their household by local park areas.

## Differences

There were four primary differences between the two surveys when response to the level of household benefit question was compared based on demographic characteristics. These differences related to the influence of income level, political affiliation, size of community, and personal disability status. In 1992, there was no difference in perceived level of household benefit provided by local parks based on a respondent’s income level. In 2015, respondents who had a higher income level perceived a higher level of household benefit.

A respondent’s political affiliation in 1992 did not influence level of perceived household benefit. In 2015, Republicans perceived a significantly lower level of household benefit provided by local park areas. Comparatively, Democrats, Independents, and respondents of “other” political affiliation were much more likely to say that local parks provided a great deal of benefit to other members of their household (Republicans – 34% vs. Democrats – 46%, Independents – 45%, and respondents with “other” political affiliations – 58%).

One last difference between the surveys relates to the influence of personal disability status on perceived level of household benefit provided by local parks. In 1992, there was no difference in response based on personal disability status. In 2015, respondents who did not report a personal disability were more likely to perceive a great deal of household benefit provided by local park areas compared to respondents who did report a personal disability (43% vs. 30%).

**Table 12. Change Over Time: Household Benefit of Local Park Areas**

Overall Sample Comparison***					
1992			2015		
Not at All	Somewhat	A Great Deal	Not at All	Somewhat	A Great Deal
21%	48%	31%	19%	40%	41%
Similarities			Differences		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Gender:</b> Females perceive higher level of household benefit</li> <li>• <b>Age:</b> Middle-aged respondents perceive higher level of household benefit</li> <li>• <b>Education Level:</b> The higher the education level, the higher level of household benefit</li> <li>• <b>Marital Status:</b> Married and divorced/separated respondents reported the highest level of household benefit</li> <li>• <b>Size of Household:</b> Generally, respondents from larger household perceive higher level of household benefits.</li> <li>• <b>Race/Ethnicity:</b> No difference</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Income:</b> 1992 – No difference 2015 – Higher income, higher level of household benefit</li> <li>• <b>Political Affiliation:</b> 1992 – No difference 2015 – Republicans perceive lower level of household benefit</li> <li>• <b>Personal Disability Status:</b> 1992 – No difference 2015 – Respondents with no personal disability perceive a higher level of household benefit</li> <li>• <b>Size of Community:</b> 1992 – No difference 2015 – Non-rural respondents perceive higher level of household benefit</li> </ul>		

Crosstab significance levels: \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001, NS = Not significant

## *Community Benefits*

Finally, respondents were asked to indicate the degree to which they felt their community as a whole benefited from local park areas. The belief that local parks provide some type of benefit to their communities was nearly unanimous. Ninety-two percent of respondents said that their community benefited somewhat or a great deal from local park areas (Table 13). Even more impressive is that 63% of respondents said their community benefited a great deal from local park areas.

Another remarkable finding was that even among respondents who did not personally use local parks, 80% of non-park-users believed that their community benefited from having these parks in their areas. Thirty-two percent believed that their local community somewhat benefited and another 48% believed that their local community benefited a great deal. This finding indicates that respondents do not have to personally use local parks to believe that they offer benefits to their community.

A respondent's perceived level of community benefit was influenced by their level of education as well as their level of annual household income. In the case of both variables, the more highly educated a respondent was and the higher their level of household income, the more likely they were to report a great deal of community benefit provided by local parks. For example, those who had a graduate degree were more likely to report a great deal of community benefit from local parks (79%) compared to those with a high school degree or less (54%). Additionally, respondents who had an annual household income of over \$80,000 were significantly more likely to believe that local parks provided a great deal of community benefit compared to those respondents who had an annual household income of under \$40,000 (70% vs. 61%).

Widows/widowers were the least likely to perceive a great deal of community benefit provided by local park areas. Only 47% of widows/widowers perceived a great deal of community benefit compared to 67% for married respondents and 62% for both single and divorced/separated respondents. The size of a resident's household also influenced the level of community benefit respondents perceived to be provided by local parks. Respondents with three to four people in their household were the most likely to report that their local community benefits a great deal from local parks (75%).

Comparatively, only 53% of single person household respondents said that they believe their community benefits a great deal from local parks. Finally, 99% of respondents who lived in a household of five or more people believed local parks provide some type of benefit to their community.

In terms of community size, respondents living in non-rural areas were the most likely to report a great deal of community benefit provided by local parks. Only 54% of rural respondents said their community received a great deal of community benefit from local parks compared to 67% of respondents from towns, cities, and metropolitan areas. Additionally, rural respondents had the highest percentage of people that said local parks do not provide any benefits to their community.

Black respondents were significantly less likely than all other respondents to state that local parks provided a great deal of benefit to their communities. Only 50% of black respondents believed parks provided a great deal of community benefit compared to 65% for white respondents, 58% for Hispanic respondents, and 62% for respondents with other race/ethnic backgrounds.

Finally, there was no difference in perceived community benefit based on gender, political affiliation, and personal disability status. Males and females perceived similar levels of community benefit provided by local park areas (91% somewhat or a great deal for males, 92% for females). Even though this difference was not statistically significant, females were six percentage points more likely than males to say that local parks provided a great deal of community benefit.



**Table 13. Respondents Demographic Characteristic by Extent Perceived Benefits to the Community from Local Park Areas**

	% Not at All	% Somewhat	% A Great Deal
<b>Total Sample</b>	8	29	63
<b>Gender – NS</b>			
Male	9	32	60
Female	8	26	66
<b>Age - *</b>			
15-20	6	37	58
21-35	5	33	62
36-55	10	24	66
56-65	7	26	66
66-75	13	25	62
76-95	13	30	57
<b>Level of Education - ***</b>			
High school or less	11	36	54
Some college to college graduate	8	30	63
Graduate degree	5	16	79
<b>Income - *</b>			
\$0 to \$40,000	10	29	61
\$40,000 to \$80,000	6	30	63
Over \$80,000	5	25	70
<b>Marital Status - ***</b>			
Single (never married)	5	33	62
Married or in a long-term partnership	7	26	67
Divorced/separated	12	26	62
Widow or widower	16	37	47
<b>Political Affiliation – NS</b>			
Republican	9	33	58
Democrat	6	25	69
Independent	7	27	66
Other	8	28	64
<b>Size of Household - ***</b>			
Single Person	13	33	53
Two people	7	30	63
Three to four people	7	18	75
Five or more people	1	39	59
<b>Size of Community - ***</b>			
Rural area/Village under 10,000	12	34	54
Town of 10,000 to 50,000	7	26	67
City of 50,000 to 100,000	5	28	67
Metropolitan area (over 100,000)	6	26	67
<b>Race/Ethnicity - **</b>			
White	8	26	65
Black	11	38	50
Hispanic	4	37	58
Other	4	34	62
<b>Personal Disability Status – NS</b>			
Yes	10	29	62
No	8	29	64
<b>Local Park User Status - ***</b>			
Local Park User	3	27	70
Local Park Non-user	20	32	48

Crosstab significance levels: \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001, NS = Not significant

## *Comparing Community Benefits of Local Park Use across Time*

### Overall Comparison

Overall, there was a slight, yet significant difference in perceived level of community benefits derived from local park areas between the 1992 survey and the 2015 survey (61% vs. 63%; Table 14, also see Appendix D – p. 159-160). There was a two-point increase in the percentage of respondents who said their community benefits a great deal from local parks. There was also a two-point increase in the percentage of people who said that their community does not benefit from local park areas (6% in 1992 vs. 8% in 2015). A key takeaway from this is over the past twenty-five years, Americans still perceive local park areas to provide a great deal of benefit to their local communities. In both 1992 and 2015, respondents perceived a higher level of benefit provided at the community level compared to the individual and household level.

### Similarities

There were five primary similarities between the two surveys based on demographic characteristics. These demographic similarities relate to the influence of age, education level, political affiliation, size of community, and personal disability status on response to the perceived level of community benefit provided by local park areas.

In both 1992 and 2015, age had a similar influence on response. In both surveys, the youngest and oldest respondents (15-20 and 76-95) were the least likely to say that local parks provided a great deal of community benefit. The influence of education level was also similar in 1992 and 2015. The more educated a respondent was, the higher the level of community benefit they perceived to be provided by local park areas. Specifically, as education level increased, the percentage of respondents who said that their community benefited a great deal increased. Furthermore, as education level increased, the percentage of respondents who said their community did not benefit decreased.

A respondent's political affiliation did not influence perceived level of community benefit in both the 1992 and 2015 surveys. Additionally, in 1992 and 2015, a respondent's personal disability status was not related to level of perceived community benefit provided by local parks. Finally, in both 1992 and 2015, respondents from rural areas were the least

likely to perceive that local parks provide a great deal of community benefit. In 1992, and particularly in 2015, respondents from towns, cities, and metropolitan areas were generally uniform in their belief that local park areas provide a great deal of community benefit.

### Differences

There were five primary differences between the two surveys when response to the level of community benefit question was compared based on demographic characteristics. These differences related to the influence of gender, income, marital status, size of household, and race/ethnicity. In 1992, females perceived local park areas to provide a higher level of community benefit than males (64% a great deal for females vs. 58% for males). In 2015, there was no significant difference in response based on gender.

Level of household income did not influence perceived community benefit of local parks in 1992. In 2015, respondents who had a higher level of income were significantly more likely to report that local parks provide a great deal of community benefits. Additionally, in 1992, there was no difference in response based on a respondent's marital status. In 2015, widows/widowers were significantly less likely than other respondents to say that their community benefited from local parks. Specifically, they were much less likely to say that local parks provide a great deal of community benefit (47%) compared to single respondents (62%), divorced/separated respondents (62%), and married respondents (67%). The size of a respondent's household did not influence respondents' perceived level of community benefit provided by local park areas in 1992. In 2015, respondents from progressively larger households were less likely to say that their community did not benefit from local park areas.

One final difference between the two surveys is the influence of race/ethnicity on response to the perceived level of community benefit provided by local park areas. In 1992, there was no difference based on race/ethnicity. In 2015, black respondents were significantly less likely to report that local parks provide a great deal of community benefits. Black respondents were also the most likely to state that local parks do not provide any benefit to their communities.

**Table 14. Change Over Time: Community Benefit of Local Park Areas**

Overall Sample Comparison**					
1992			2015		
Not at All	Somewhat	A Great Deal	Not at All	Somewhat	A Great Deal
6%	33%	61%	8%	29%	63%
Similarities			Differences		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Age:</b> Respondents 15-20 and 76-95 were the least likely to perceive a great deal of community benefits</li> <li>• <b>Education Level:</b> The higher the education level, the higher level of community benefit</li> <li>• <b>Political Affiliation:</b> No difference</li> <li>• <b>Size of Community:</b> Rural respondents perceived the lowest level of community benefit</li> <li>• <b>Personal Disability Status:</b> No difference</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Gender:</b> 1992 - Females perceived higher level of household benefit 2015 - No difference</li> <li>• <b>Income:</b> 1992 - No difference 2015 - Higher income, higher level of community benefit</li> <li>• <b>Marital Status:</b> 1992 - No difference 2015 - Widow or widowers perceive lower community benefit</li> <li>• <b>Size of Household:</b> 1992 - No difference 2015 - Households of three to four people perceive highest level of community benefit</li> <li>• <b>Race/Ethnicity:</b> 1992 - No difference 2015 - Black respondents least likely to report a great deal of community benefit</li> </ul>		

Crosstab significance levels: \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001, NS = Not significant

## Types of Benefits from Local Parks

Respondents also answered a series of questions about the types of benefits they received from local parks at the individual, household, and community level. Those respondents who indicated that they received some type of benefit were asked “What is the most important benefit you feel you received from your local parks?” Respondents were

then prompted to list any additional important benefits they received from local parks. Responses were coded verbatim according to the same coding scheme from the original 1992 study. This coding process created two codes: an individual benefit code, and an overall type of benefit code.

The coding scheme is presented in Table 15. Verbatim responses were originally coded into one of 83 categories. Then, these individual benefit codes were collapsed into five major categories, identical to the categories in the 1992 report (see Godbey, Graefe, & James, 1992, p. 44). The benefit categories included:

- **Personal:** “referring to benefits which directly pertained to the respondent”
- **Environmental:** “which dealt with any aspect of the natural environmental in a positive way”
- **Social:** “which was concerned with some aspect of group behavior”
- **Economic:** “which dealt with some positive monetary outcome”
- **Facility/Activity-Oriented:** “which related to the benefits of the activity itself”

**Table 15. Codes for Recreation and Parks Benefits**

<b>Personal Benefits</b>	<b>Social Benefits Continued</b>
Enjoy being outdoors/natural resources	Group participation
Escape	Helping
Exercise – Fitness & Conditioning	Keeping in touch with friends
Feel good because they (parks) are there	Kids – get pleasure from it
Freedom	Kids – good for them
Fun/Entertainment	Kids – keep busy – occupied
Getting out of the house	Kids – keep off street
Health	Kids – keep out of house
Involvement – getting more involved	Kids – place to go
Keeping mind occupied	Interaction – kids and adults
Learning – education	Learning discipline/following instructions
Mental benefits	Place for elderly to socialize
Passing the time – providing something to do	Place to meet people
Peace and quiet	Place to take children
Pursuit of happiness	Place to take grandchildren
Relaxation – place to relax	Respect for others
Rest	See Others enjoy themselves
Safety – fell safe – secure environment	Team spirit – being on a team
Stress Release	<b>Economic Benefits</b>
Time alone/place to be alone	Availability
<b>Environmental Benefits</b>	Affordable – inexpensive – low cost
Aesthetics	Bring dollars into the community
Fresh Air	Convenience
Green area	Influence property values
Land preservation	<b>Facility-Activity Oriented Benefits</b>
Nature	Activities
No buildings	Arts
Open Space	Exposure to different crafts
Out of City	Facilities – play area for children
Place for Kids that isn't asphalt	Instructional classes
Place to be outdoors	Joy of playing
Scenery	New forms of activities
Wildlife – habitat – place for wildlife	New sports
Wildlife – place for seeing	Place for picnics
<b>Social Benefits</b>	Place for recreation
Competition	Place to exercise pets
Cooperation	Place to go
Community awareness/sense of community	Planned activities
Cultural awareness – heritage	Play – Place to play
Exposure to role-models	Play organized sports
Family time-togetherness	Provide activities not otherwise available
Fellowship	Special events
Gathering Place – hang out with friends	Watch organized sports
Getting to know people	

Table 16 details the percentage of respondents whose stated benefits fell underneath the five broad categories at the individual, household, and community level.

**Table 16. Type of Benefit Received at the Individual, Household, and Community Level from Local Parks**

	Percentage				
	Personal	Environmental	Social	Economic	Facility
<b>Individual</b>	29.7	16.0	20.7	3.7	29.9
<b>Household</b>	29.0	10.8	21.9	2.5	35.8
<b>Community</b>	18.4	10.9	28.9	4.6	37.2

At the individual, household, and community level, the highest percentage of benefits fell under the facility/activity-oriented benefit category. Beyond that, personal benefits were mentioned frequently at the individual and household level. At the community level, social benefits were mentioned more frequently than all other benefit types (except facility/activity-oriented). At all three levels, economic benefits were mentioned less frequently than any other type of benefit. Furthermore, less than five percent of responses at any level referred to economic benefits. At all levels, environmental benefits were mentioned more often than economic benefits, but still lagged significantly behind facility/activity-oriented, social, and personal benefits.

Of the 2,005 specific benefits mentioned, the top ten most frequently mentioned individual benefits of local parks are listed in Table 17.

**Table 17. Most Frequently Mentioned Specific Individual Benefits of Local Parks**

<b>Individual Benefit</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Exercise – Fitness & Conditioning	226	11.3
Place for Recreation	120	6.0
Enjoy Being Outdoors	100	5.0
Play Organized Sports	79	3.9
Place to Exercise Pets	78	3.9
Play – Place to Play	76	3.8
Family Time – Togetherness	71	3.6
Open Space	71	3.5
Activities	56	2.8
Fresh Air	53	2.6

The most frequently mentioned individual benefits were “exercise – fitness & conditioning” and “place for recreation.” Exercising is an example of a personal benefit and place for recreation is an example of a facility/activity-oriented benefit. Other facility/activity-oriented benefits rose to the top as well. These included: “play organized sports,” “place to exercise pets,” “place to play,” and “activities.” The social benefits of “family time,” “gathering place,” and “sense of community,” were also frequently mentioned benefits of local parks at the individual level. Appendix E contains the frequency of response of all individual, household, and community benefits respondents reported local parks to provide.

In total, 1,464 specific household benefits were mentioned. The ten most commonly mentioned household benefits of local parks are listed in Table 18.



**Table 18. Most Frequently Mentioned Specific Household Benefits of Local Parks**

<b>Household Benefit</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Exercise – Fitness & Conditions	210	14.4
Place for Recreation	91	6.2
Place to Play	81	5.5
Play Organized Sports	73	5.0
Family Time – Togetherness	72	4.9
Activities	63	4.3
Facilities Play Area Kids	63	4.3
Place to Exercise Pets	48	3.3
Fellowship	40	2.7
Fresh Air	38	2.6

Many of the most frequently mentioned household benefits of local parks were also frequently mentioned individual benefits. Most notably, “exercise – fitness & conditioning” again was the most frequently mentioned household benefit and individual benefit. As before, “place for recreation” was also the second most frequently mentioned household benefit. Along with these two benefits, “place to play,” “play organized sports,” “family time togetherness,” “activities,” “place to exercise pets,” and “fresh-air” were among the top ten benefits at both the individual and household levels. Only two of the top ten household benefits (“facilities – play areas for kids” and “fellowship”) were not included in the top ten list of individual benefits. In summary, there is a great deal of commonality between perceived individual and household benefits provided by local park areas.

A total of 1,982 community benefits were mentioned by respondents. The top ten most commonly mentioned community benefits of local parks are listed in Table 19. Exercise – fitness and conditioning again rose to the top of the list of most frequently mentioned community benefit of local parks. The themes of playing organized sports, having a place for recreation/play, and family time were also reinforced in this list of top ten community benefits. In addition to these themes, other social benefits were mentioned

as community benefits of local parks. These included the perception of local parks to be a “gathering place” and a catalyst for “community awareness/sense of community.”

**Table 19. Most Frequently Mentioned Specific Community Benefits of Local Parks**

<b>Community Benefit</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Exercise – Fitness & Conditioning	133	6.7
Play Organized Sports	133	6.7
Place for Recreation	122	5.1
Place to Play	101	5.0
Family Time – Togetherness	99	4.9
Gathering Place	97	4.6
Special Events	92	4.2
Community Awareness/Sense of Community	84	3.6
Place to Go	71	3.4
Activities	67	3.0

#### *Comparison over Time: Types of Benefits from Local Parks*

There was a desire to compare the 1992 and 2015 surveys in regards to the types of benefits respondents said they received from local park areas. These findings should be interpreted with caution. Although the 2015 open-ended benefit responses were coded using the same coding scheme and methodology as the 1992 study, different individuals completed the actual coding for the two survey iterations. Therefore, the open-ended coding is suspect to unknown and possibly low inter-rater reliability across the two surveys. The following tables compare the overall percentage of respondents who mentioned various types of benefits at the individual, household, and community level in 1992 and 2015. Additionally, a comparison of the most frequently mentioned specific benefits at the individual, household, and community level in 1992 and 2015 is provided.

**Table 20. Type of Benefits Received at the Individual, Household, and Community Level from Local Parks in 1992 and 2015**

	Personal		Environmental		Social		Economic		Facility	
	1992	2015	1992	2015	1992	2015	1992	2015	1992	2015
% Individual	35.5	29.7	20.1	16.0	23.5	20.7	3.2	3.7	17.7	29.9
% Household	36.5	29.0	12.6	10.8	27.4	21.9	3.1	2.5	20.4	35.8
% Community	20.4	18.4	12.5	10.9	36.9	28.9	4.8	4.6	25.4	37.2

The most notable difference between the two survey years was the increase in percentage of respondents who mentioned facility/activity-oriented benefits in 2015 compared to 1992 (Table 20). Other than this difference, the distribution of individual, household, and community benefits remained relatively consistent. Moving beyond facility/activity-oriented benefits, personal benefits were the most frequently mentioned benefits at the individual and household level in 1992 and 2015. Continuing to exclude facility/activity-oriented benefits, social benefits were the most frequently mentioned benefits at the community level in both surveys. The distribution of environmental and economic benefits was relatively similar in 1992 and 2015. Furthermore, respondents mentioned a nearly identical low percentage of economic benefits provided by local park areas.

Table 21 compares the most frequently mentioned specific individual benefits of local parks in 2015 and their respective rank in 1992. Exercise – fitness and conditioning was the most frequently mentioned individual benefit of local parks in both 1992 and 2015 by a wide margin. Other frequently mentioned individual benefits of local parks that were mentioned in the top ten of both surveys were “place for recreation,” “enjoy being outdoors,” “family time togetherness,” and “open space.” Individual benefits of local parks that were in the top ten of most frequently mentioned benefits in 2015, but not in the top ten of 1992, were “play organized sports,” “place to exercise pets,” “place to play,” “activities,” and “fresh air.” The most notable movement in regards to specific individual benefit of local parks between the two surveys was the benefit of “place to exercise pets” (2015 Rank: 5, 1992 Rank: 36). This could be explained by the rise in the availability and use of dog parks in local communities across the United States.

**Table 21. Comparing the Most Frequently Mentioned Specific Individual Benefits of Local Parks in 2015 and 1992**

<b>2015 Rank</b>	<b>1992 Rank</b>	<b>Individual Benefit</b>
<b>1</b>	1	Exercise – Fitness & Conditioning
<b>2</b>	9	Place for Recreation
<b>3</b>	8	Enjoy Being Outdoors
<b>4</b>	20	Play Organized Sports
<b>5</b>	36	Place to Exercise Pets
<b>6</b>	18	Play – Place to Play
<b>7</b>	6	Family Time – Togetherness
<b>8</b>	3	Open Space
<b>9</b>	13	Activities
<b>10</b>	12	Fresh Air

Table 22 compares the most frequently mentioned specific household benefits of local parks in 2015 and their respective rank in 1992. Exercise – fitness and conditioning was again the most frequently mentioned household benefit of local parks in 1992 and 2015. Other frequently mentioned household benefits in 2015 and 1992 were “place to play,” “family time togetherness,” and “play area for kids.”

There was not as much overlap in specific household benefits between the two surveys. Having a place for recreation and to play organized sports increased in importance from 1992 to 2015. Additionally, the benefit of having a place to exercise pets was much more frequently mentioned in 2015 compared to 1992. Finally, the social benefit of fellowship was more prevalent in 2015 compared to 1992.

**Table 22. Comparing the Most Frequently Mentioned Specific Household Benefits of Local Parks in 2015 and 1992**

<b>2015 Rank</b>	<b>1992 Rank</b>	<b>Household Benefit</b>
<b>1</b>	1	Exercise – Fitness & Conditioning
<b>2</b>	18	Place for Recreation
<b>3</b>	5	Place to Play
<b>4</b>	13	Play Organized Sports
<b>5</b>	7	Family Time – Togetherness
<b>6</b>	11	Activities
<b>7</b>	6	Facilities Play Area Kids
<b>8</b>	47	Place to Exercise Pets
<b>9</b>	39	Fellowship
<b>10</b>	20	Fresh Air

Table 23 compares the most frequently mentioned specific community benefits of local parks in 2015 and their respective rank in 1992. Exercise – fitness and conditioning was again among the most frequently mentioned community benefits of local parks in 1992 and 2015. There was more uniformity between the two surveys in regards to specific community benefits of local parks compared to specific household benefits. Seven of the top ten most frequently mentioned community benefits in 2015 were also mentioned in the top ten in 1992. In addition to exercise – fitness and conditioning, these include: “place for recreation,” “family time togetherness,” “gathering place,” “community awareness/sense of community,” “a place to go,” and “activities.” The three specific benefits that were not in the 1992 top ten, but were included in the 2015 top ten were “play organized sports” (#11 in 1992), “place to play,” and “special events.” The most notable movement in regards to specific community benefits of local parks between the two surveys was the benefit of “special events” (2015 Rank: 7, 1992 Rank: 33).

**Table 23. Comparing the Most Frequently Mentioned Specific Community Benefits of Local Parks in 2015 and 1992**

<b>2015 Rank</b>	<b>1992 Rank</b>	<b>Community Benefit</b>
<b>1 – Tie</b>	1	Exercise – Fitness & Conditioning
<b>1 – Tie</b>	11	Play Organized Sports
<b>3</b>	6	Place for Recreation
<b>4</b>	17	Place to Play
<b>5</b>	8	Family Time – Togetherness
<b>6</b>	3	Gathering Place
<b>7</b>	33	Special Events
<b>8</b>	5	Community Awareness/Sense of Community
<b>9</b>	10	Place to Go
<b>10</b>	4	Activities

### **Relationship between Perceived Benefits and Use of Local Parks**

The extent of benefits a respondent perceived at the individual, household, and community levels were assessed in relation to level of personal and household use of parks. Table 24 provides the results of this analysis. In both analyses, the level of perceived benefit was related to the level of park use.

As personal use of local parks increased, so did the extent of perceived personal, household, and community benefits provided by local parks. To illustrate, respondents who used local parks frequently were significantly more likely to say that they personally benefited a great deal (83%) compared to those who occasionally used parks (43%) and those who didn't use parks at all (20%). The same trend held true for the influence of personal use of parks on the perceived extent of household benefits. Frequent users of local parks perceived a higher level of household benefit (70% a great deal) than occasional park users (39% a great deal) and non-users (16% a great deal). Extent of personal park use also significantly influenced the level of perceived community benefit as well, but not as strongly. Frequent and occasional park users both perceived high levels of community benefits (77% and 65% a great deal, respectively). Respondents who do not use local park

areas were less likely to perceive a great deal of community benefits (48%). However, having nearly 50% of non-users saying that their community benefits a great deal from local park areas reinforces that people do not even have to use local parks to believe that they provided a great deal of community benefit.

A similar trend is observed when level of park use by other household members is compared to personal, household, and community benefit perceptions. As household use increased, so did the perceived level of personal, household, and community benefits. Respondents who said other members of their household used local parks frequently were significantly more likely to say that their household benefits a great deal (84%) compared to respondents who said no one in their household used local parks (7%). As seen before, a high percentage of respondents perceived a great deal of community benefits provided by local parks regardless of level of household use of parks.

These findings remain quite consistent with the findings from the 1992 report. As personal and household use of local parks increased, so did the perceived extent of benefit provided at the personal, household, and community level. In 1992, there was less of an influence of personal or household use on extent of perceived community benefits. In that sample, respondents who said that they or other members of their household occasionally used local parks were just as likely as frequent users of local parks to perceive a great deal of community benefits. This trend was not as pronounced in the 2015 data, but the general finding remains the same: regardless of personal or household use, respondents perceive local parks to provide a great deal of benefit to their communities.

**Table 24. Perceived Extent of Benefits From Local Parks by Extent of Use of Local Park Areas**

	Extent of Personal Park Use		
	% Not at All	% Occasionally	% Frequently
<b>Extent of Personal Benefits</b>			
Not at all	44	8	1
Somewhat	36	49	16
A great deal	20	43	83
<b>Extent of Household Benefits</b>			
Not at all	47	11	5
Somewhat	38	50	25
A great deal	16	39	70
<b>Extent of Community Benefits</b>			
Not at all	20	4	2
Somewhat	32	31	21
A great deal	48	65	77

  

	Extent of Park Use by Household Members		
	% Not at All	% Occasionally	% Frequently
<b>Extent of Personal Benefits</b>			
Not at all	36	8	4
Somewhat	37	50	16
A great deal	27	42	79
<b>Extent of Household Benefits</b>			
Not at all	69	3	1
Somewhat	25	64	14
A great deal	7	33	84
<b>Extent of Community Benefits</b>			
Not at all	22	2	2
Somewhat	26	34	19
A great deal	53	64	78

Note: Column totals. Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding.



## Use of Local Recreation and Park Services

### Individual Participation

Consistent with the 1992 survey, respondents were asked if during the last twelve months they had participated “in any recreation activities organized by your local government’s recreation and parks department. This would include such things as sports leagues, educational or instructional classes, and special artistic or cultural events in your community. During the last twelve months have you participated in any recreation or leisure activity that was sponsored by or took place on areas or facilities managed by your local government’s recreation and parks department?”

Thirty-two percent of respondents said that they had utilized local recreation and park services during the previous year (Table 25). Of those who had not participated in the last 12 months, 41% said that they had participated in these services at some time in the past. When these two variables were combined, nearly 60% of the respondents surveyed said that they had used local recreation and park services at one time in their lives.

There were statistically significant relationships between individual participation in locally sponsored programs in the last twelve months based on age, education level, income level, marital status, household size, and personal disability status. The youngest (15-20) and oldest (76-95) respondents were the least likely to have participated in locally sponsored programs over the past twelve months. Respondents between the ages of 36-55 were the most likely to say they had participated (41%).

The higher a respondent’s level of education, the more likely they were to say they had participated in local recreation and park services over the past year. Only 25% of respondents who had a high school degree or less said that they had participated in such services, while 52% of respondents with a graduate degree had done so. A similar trend was observed in regards to level of household income. Respondents who had a higher level of household income were more likely to have participated in local recreation and park services than those respondents with lower levels of income.

Respondents who were married were the most likely to have participated in local recreation and park services during the past year (38% - yes) compared to single (26%),

divorced (26%), and widowed (20%) respondents. Individuals who lived alone were the least likely to have participated in such services over the past year (24%). Those who had a total of two people in their household were the most likely to say they had participated in local park and recreation services (36%). Finally, respondents who said that they had a personal disability were less likely than those without a personal disability to say that they had participated in local recreation and park services over the past year (22% yes vs. 34% yes).

Individual participation in local recreation and park services over the last year did not differ based on gender, political affiliation, size of community, or race/ethnicity. Males and females participated at similar levels, as did Republicans, Democrats, and Independents. Though rural respondents were less likely than respondents from towns, cities, and metropolitan areas to say that they had participated in local recreation and park services during the past year, this difference was not statistically significant. Race/ethnicity also did not significantly influence participation in such services. Though the difference was not statistically significant, black respondents again expressed a lower level of participation in local recreation and park services compared to white, Hispanic, and respondents of “other” races/ethnicities.

**Table 25. Respondent Demographic Characteristics by Personal Participation in Locally Sponsored Recreation Programs During the Past Twelve Months**

	% No	% Yes
<b>Total Sample</b>	68	32
<b>Gender – NS</b>		
Male	70	30
Female	66	34
<b>Age - ***</b>		
15-20	81	19
21-35	69	31
36-55	59	41
56-65	69	31
66-75	70	30
76-95	82	18
<b>Level of Education - ***</b>		
High school or less	75	25
Some college to college graduate	70	30
Graduate degree	48	52
<b>Income - **</b>		
\$0 to \$40,000	72	28
\$40,000 to \$80,000	62	38
Over \$80,000	61	39
<b>Marital Status - ***</b>		
Single (never married)	74	26
Married or in a long-term partnership	62	38
Divorced/separated	74	26
Widow or widower	80	20
<b>Political Affiliation – NS</b>		
Republican	67	33
Democrat	68	32
Independent	67	33
Other	64	36
<b>Size of Household - **</b>		
Single Person	76	24
Two people	64	36
Three to four people	69	31
Five or more people	66	34
<b>Size of Community – NS</b>		
Rural area/Village under 10,000	71	29
Town of 10,000 to 50,000	64	36
City of 50,000 to 100,000	65	35
Metropolitan area (over 100,000)	70	30
<b>Race/Ethnicity – NS</b>		
White	67	33
Black	75	25
Hispanic	67	33
Other	70	30
<b>Personal Disability Status - **</b>		
Yes	78	22
No	66	34

Crosstab significance levels: \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001, NS = Not significant

## *Comparing Personal Participation in Local Recreation in Park Services During the Past 12 Months Across the Two Surveys*

### Overall Comparison

Overall, there was no significant difference between the two surveys in regards to participation in local recreation and park services during the past 12 months (Table 26, also see Appendix D – p. 161-162). There was a two-point increase in the percentage of respondents who said that they had participated in local recreation and park services during the previous 12 months (30% yes in 1992 vs. 32% yes in 2015). Taken as a whole, these findings indicate that annual participation in local recreation and park services has remained steady over the past 25 years.

### Similarities

In regards to demographic comparisons, there were more similarities between the two surveys than there were differences. These similarities related to the influence of gender, age, education level, political affiliation, size of household, size of community, and race/ethnicity on participation in local recreation and park services during the past 12 months. In both 1992 and 2015, gender had no influence on participation in such recreation and park services. Similarly, a respondent's participation level did not vary by political affiliation, size of community, or race/ethnicity in either survey.

Age had a similar influence on participation in both 1992 and 2015. In both surveys, the youngest (15-20) and the oldest respondents (76-95) were the least likely to have participated in local recreation and park activities during the past year. Additionally, in both surveys, higher educated respondents were more likely than lower educated respondents to have participated in locally sponsored activities or programs in the past year. As education level increased, so did the percentage of respondents who said they had participated in local services over the past year. Finally, in both surveys, respondents from single person households were the least likely to state that they had participated in local recreation and park services during the past 12 months.

## Differences

There were three primary differences between the two surveys when response to individual participation in locally sponsored programs in the last 12 months was compared based on demographic characteristics. These differences related to the influence of income level, marital status, and personal disability status. In 1992, respondents whose household income was between \$40,000 and \$80,000 were the most likely to have participated in local recreation and park programs/services during the past 12 months. In 2015, respondents who made over \$80,000 were barely more likely than respondents who made between \$40,000 and \$80,000 to have participated in local recreation services during the past 12 months. The main difference between the two surveys was that respondents who made over \$80,000 in 1992 were less likely than respondents who made over \$80,000 in 2015 to have participated in local recreation and park services during the past 12 months (28% yes in 1992 vs. 39% yes in 2015)

In 1992, divorced/separated respondents were the most likely to have participated in local recreation and park services. This was not the case in 2015, wherein married respondents were the most likely to have participated. Also, in 1992, there was no difference in participation in local recreation services during the past 12 months based on a respondent's personal disability status. Non-disabled respondents in 2015 were more likely to say that they had participated in local recreation and park services during the past 12 months compared to non-disabled respondents.

**Table 26. Change Over Time: Respondent Demographic Characteristics by Personal Participation in Locally Sponsored Recreation Programs During the Past Twelve Months**

Overall Sample Comparison – NS			
1992		2015	
%Yes	%No	%Yes	%No
30%	70%	32%	68%
Similarities		Differences	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Gender:</b> No difference</li> <li>• <b>Age:</b> Youngest and oldest less likely</li> <li>• <b>Education Level:</b> Higher educated more likely</li> <li>• <b>Political Affiliation:</b> No difference</li> <li>• <b>Size of Household:</b> Single person household least likely</li> <li>• <b>Size of Community</b> No difference</li> <li>• <b>Race/ethnicity:</b> No difference</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Income Level:</b> 1992 – \$40K to \$80K most likely 2015 – Higher income more likely</li> <li>• <b>Marital Status</b> 1992 – Divorced/separated most likely 2015 – Married most likely</li> <li>• <b>Personal Disability:</b> 1992 – No difference 2015 – Non-disabled more likely</li> </ul>	

Crosstab significance levels: \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001, NS = Not significant

## Household Participation

Respondents were also asked if other members of their household had participated in “any recreation or leisure activity during the last 12 months that was sponsored by or took place on areas or facilities managed by their local recreation and parks department.” Twenty-nine percent of respondents said that other members of their household had participated in these programs and services in the last 12 months (Table 27).

A respondent's age, education level, marital status, and race/ethnicity were related to other household members' participation in activities sponsored by local recreation and parks departments. Respondents between the ages of 36-55 and 56-65 were the most likely to have said other members of their household had participated in local recreation programs and services during the last 12 months. Highly educated respondents were more likely than respondents with lower levels of education to say that other members of their household participated in local recreation programs and services. For example, 20% of respondents who received a high school diploma said that other members of their household had participated. Comparatively, 36% of respondents with a graduate degree said other members of their household had used local recreation and park services within the past year.

Married and divorced respondents were the most likely to have said other members of their household had participated in local park and recreation services in the past year (34% and 37% yes). Finally, Hispanic respondents were the least likely to say other members of their household had participated in local recreation services during the past year. Only 17% of Hispanics said "yes," compared to 31% for white respondents, 30% for black respondents, and 25% for respondents of other races/ethnicities. This finding runs counter to the trend that has been observed thus far, wherein black respondents have consistently lower levels of use and benefit perceptions related to local parks as well as local recreation services.

There were a number of demographic variables that did not influence whether or not other members of a respondent's household participated in local recreation and park services/programs during the past year. These included: gender, income, political affiliation, size of community, and personal disability status.

**Table 27. Respondent Demographic Characteristics By Participation of other Household Members in Locally Sponsored Recreation Programs During the Past Twelve Months**

	% No	% Yes
<b>Total Sample</b>	71	29
<b>Gender - NS</b>		
Male	73	27
Female	70	30
<b>Age - ***</b>		
15-20	92	8
21-35	74	26
36-55	64	36
56-65	65	35
66-75	74	26
76-95	81	19
<b>Level of Education - ***</b>		
High school or less	80	20
Some college to college graduate	69	31
Graduate degree	64	36
<b>Income - NS</b>		
\$0 to \$40,000	73	27
\$40,000 to \$80,000	71	29
Over \$80,000	64	36
<b>Marital Status - ***</b>		
Single (never married)	84	16
Married or in a long-term partnership	66	34
Divorced/separated	63	37
Widow or widower	72	28
<b>Political Affiliation - NS</b>		
Republican	72	28
Democrat	71	29
Independent	69	31
Other	73	27
<b>Size of Household - NS</b>		
Single Person	79	21
Two people	69	31
Three to four people	74	26
Five or more people	65	35
<b>Size of Community - NS</b>		
Rural area/Village under 10,000	74	26
Town of 10,000 to 50,000	67	33
City of 50,000 to 100,000	68	32
Metropolitan area (over 100,000)	75	25
<b>Race/Ethnicity - *</b>		
White	69	31
Black	70	30
Hispanic	83	17
Other	75	25
<b>Personal Disability Status - NS</b>		
Yes	66	34
No	72	28

Crosstab significance levels: \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001, NS = Not significant



## *Comparing Household Participation in Local Recreation in Park Services During the Past 12 Months Across the Two Surveys*

### Overall Comparison

Overall, there was a significant difference between the two surveys in regards to other household members' participation in local recreation and park services during the past 12 months (Table 28, also see Appendix D – p. 167-168). From 1992 to 2015, there was an eight-point decrease in the percentage of respondents who said that other members of their household had participated in local recreation and park services during the previous 12 months (37% yes in 1992 vs. 29% yes in 2015).

### Similarities

There were a number of similarities between the two surveys based on demographic comparisons. These similarities related to the influence of gender, age, education level, marital status, size of community, and personal disability status on household participation in local recreation and park services during the past 12 months. In both 1992 and 2015, gender had no influence on household participation in such recreation and park services. Similarly, participation in local recreation services by other household members did not vary in either survey based on marital status, the size of a respondent's community, race/ethnicity, or their personal disability status.

Age had a similar influence on household participation in both 1992 and 2015. In both surveys, respondents between the ages of 36-55 were the most likely to say that other members of their household have participated in local recreation and park activities during the past year. In both surveys, respondents who had a higher level of education were more likely than lower educated respondents to say other members of their household had participated in locally sponsored activities or programs in the past year. As education level increased, so did the percentage of respondents who said household members had participated in local services during the past year.

## Differences

There were four differences between the two surveys when response to household participation in locally sponsored programs in the last 12 months was compared based on demographic characteristics. These differences related to the influence of income level, political affiliation, size of household, and race/ethnicity on household use of such services. In 1992, respondents who had a household income of below \$40,000 were the least likely to say other members of their household participated in local recreation programs/services in the past year. In 2015, there was no difference in household use of local recreation services based on income level.

Republican respondents in 1992 were the most likely to say that other members of their household used local recreation and park services (44%), compared to Independents (38%), and Democrats (30%). In 2015, there was no difference in household use of recreation services based on a respondent's political affiliation. Additionally, in 1992, respondents from larger households were more likely to say that other members of their household had participated in local recreation services during the past 12 months. This was not the case in 2015, wherein there was no difference in household participation in local recreation services based on the size of a respondent's household. Finally, in 1992 there was no difference in household use of local recreation services based on a respondent's race/ethnicity. In 2015, Hispanic respondents were the least likely to say that other members of their household have participated in local recreation services in the past 12 months.

**Table 28. Change Over Time: Respondent Demographic Characteristics by Participation of Other Household Members in Locally Sponsored Recreation Programs During the Past Twelve Months**

Overall Sample Comparison***			
1992		2015	
%Yes	%No	%Yes	%No
37%	63%	29%	71%
Similarities		Differences	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Gender:</b> No difference</li> <li>• <b>Age:</b> 36-55 most likely</li> <li>• <b>Education level:</b> Higher educated more likely</li> <li>• <b>Marital Status:</b> Married and divorced respondents most likely</li> <li>• <b>Size of Community:</b> No difference</li> <li>• <b>Personal Disability:</b> No difference</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Income level:</b> 1992 – Lowest income least likely 2015 – No difference</li> <li>• <b>Political Affiliation:</b> 1992 – Republicans most likely 2015 – No difference</li> <li>• <b>Size of Household:</b> 1992 – Larger household more likely 2015 – No difference</li> <li>• <b>Race/Ethnicity:</b> 1992 – No difference 2015 – Hispanic respondents least likely</li> </ul>	

Crosstab significance levels: \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001, NS = Not significant

## Specific Activities Participated in at the Individual and Household Levels

Respondents who had participated in local recreation and park services within the past year were asked to state which activities they had taken part in. Additionally, respondents who said that other members of their household had participated in local recreation and park services during the past year were asked to say which activities other members of their household had participated in. Table 29 summarizes these activities participated in by respondents as well as other members of respondents' households.

Cultural and team sports activities were the most popular activities at both the individual and household levels. Cultural activities included activities such as festivals, fairs, concerts, and other artistic performances. Team sports activities included playing soccer, baseball, basketball, volleyball, or any other type of team-related sport. Cultural activities were the most frequently mentioned activity at the individual level, with team sports activities placing second. At the household level, the order of these two activities was reversed, with team sports being #1 and cultural activities #2.

Besides cultural activities and team sports activities, respondents also frequently said that they had participated in sponsored activities (such as community events, fundraisers, footraces), classes, and non-consumptive outdoor activities (such as walking, biking, hiking). Respondents also said that other members of their household participated in the same activities frequently, although in a slightly different order. Regardless, the top five activities at both the individual and household level were the same.

These results are remarkably consistent with the results from the 1992 study (see Godbey, Graefe, & James, 1992, p. 58). At the individual level, the 1992 study identified the same top five most frequently participated in activities (although in a slightly different order). At the household level, four of the top five activities in participated in by other household members in 1992 were the same in 2015. The only difference was that swimming was mentioned more frequently in 1992, and classes mentioned more frequently mentioned in 2015. The remarkable similarities between the two surveys shows that both individuals and other household members continue to participate in cultural activities, team sports activities, sponsored activities, classes, and non-consumptive outdoor activities hosted by their local recreation and park agency.

**Table 29. Park and Recreation Activities Participated in by Individual Respondents and Household Members**

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Individual</b>		<b>Household</b>	
	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Culture	130	26.6%	98	21.3%
Team Sports	89	18.3%	146	31.6%
Sponsored Activities	73	15.0%	39	8.5%
Classes	38	7.7%	23	4.9%
Outdoor Non-Consumptive	28	5.8%	26	5.6%
Facility Related Use	20	4.1%	12	2.7%
Volunteers	19	3.9%	10	2.2%
Exercise	17	3.5%	21	4.5%
Swimming	14	2.8%	23	5.0%
Hunting and Fishing	9	1.9%	13	2.8%
Children's Programs	9	1.9%	11	2.4%
Tennis	6	1.3%	10	2.3%
Miscellaneous	6	1.2%	10	2.2%
Clubs	4	0.8%	1	0.3%
Individual Sports	4	0.8%	2	0.5%
Table Games	4	0.8%	0	0.0%
Water Sports & Events	4	0.8%	3	0.7%
Seniors	3	0.6%	1	0.3%
Spectator	3	0.7%	2	0.4%
Animal Related	3	0.6%	3	0.7%
Golf	2	0.5%	1	0.3%
Hobbies	1	0.2%	0	0.1%
Skiing	1	0.1%	0	0.1%
Special Population Programs	0	0.1%	1	0.3%
House Related Activities	0	0.0%	2	0.4%

## Patterns of Park Use and Participation in Recreation and Park Programs

When responses to the personal use of local parks question and the participation in activities sponsored by local recreation and parks department question were combined, it became possible to identify the percentage of the population who used either, both, or neither of these services.

Nearly 75% of the American public claimed to have used either local parks or local recreation and park services during the last 12 months (Table 30). The largest percentage of respondents, 42%, said that they used only local parks. Another 28% of respondents said that they have used both parks and have participated in local recreation and park services. Only 4% of respondents said that they have not used local parks, but have participated in these local recreation and park services. Twenty-six percent of respondents said that they did not use either parks or local recreation services in the past year.

Table 30 also shows the comparison of use of parks and local recreation and park services across the two surveys. Overall, there was a statistically significant difference between the two surveys. Respondents in 1992 were slightly more likely to have used local parks and participated in local recreation and park services during the past 12 months. This difference was only five percentage points (79% made use of at least one of these services in 1992 compared to 74% in 2015). These percentages, hovering around three out of four, further substantiates the finding that the majority of the American public continue to use local parks and local recreation and park services at a similar level today that they did in 1992.

**Table 30. Use of Parks and Local Recreation and Park Services**

Type of Use*	Percent	
	1992	2015
Used Only Parks	49	42
Used Both Parks and Services	26	28
Used Only Recreation Services	4	4
No Use Made of Either	21	26

\*p < .05

## Non-Use of Recreation and Park Services

Respondents who had not participated in local recreation and park services during the past twelve months were asked if they had any particular reasons why they did not do so. This question was posed in an opened-ended format. This differed from the way the non-participation question was asked in 1992. The 1992 survey included six closed-ended questions about reasons for non-participation, asking respondents to either agree or disagree with the following statements:

1. I'm not interested in local recreation and park services
2. I don't participate in local recreation and park services because I don't have enough information about them
3. Park and recreation services aren't planned for people like me
4. I don't have enough time to participate
5. Local recreation and park services are too expensive
6. There aren't other people for me to participate with

When creating the coding scheme for the 2015 open-ended responses, these six reasons for non-participation were included as the first six codes. As the research team coded the open-ended responses, thirteen more codes were added to the coding scheme. Table 31 below presents the coding scheme created to classify the open-ended responses.

**Table 31. Codes for Reasons for Non-Use of Local Recreation and Park Services During Last 12 Months**

<b>Constraint Codes</b>	
1	Not interested
2	Don't know enough about them
3	They aren't planned for people like me
4	Don't have enough time/been busy
5	Too expensive
6	Aren't other people for me to participate with
7	Too old to participate
8	Health inhibits participation
9	I don't have access
10	I go elsewhere
11	Children have grown up and I do not participate anymore
12	Programs are not offered in my area
13	I do participate
14	Too far away
15	I choose not to go
16	Environmental reasons (weather, too cold/hot)
17	Not safe
18	No benefit to me
19	Reason is unclear

Not having enough time was the most frequently mentioned reason why non-users chose not to participate in local recreation and park services (Table 32). Respondents in 1992 also perceived the lack of time to be the most important barrier to their participation in local recreation and park services (see Godbey, Graefe, & James, p. 60). This finding is also consistent with previous research about constraints to participation in recreation/leisure activities at other settings (Kerstetter, Zinn, Graefe, & Chen, 2002).

Many respondents also stated the belief that their health limits their ability to participate in local recreation and park services. Similarly, a sizeable percentage of respondents said that they are too old to participate in these services. Not knowing enough about local recreation and park services and not being interested in the services were also included in the top five reasons why respondents did not participate in local recreation and park services during the past year. Other less frequently mentioned reasons for not participating included that respondents go elsewhere for similar experiences, that programs/services are not offered in their area, and that they don't have access to services.



Of note is the finding that very few respondents mentioned that local recreation and park services offered no benefit to them or were perceived as too expensive. Few respondents also mentioned the belief that local recreation and park services were unsafe.

**Table 32. Reasons for Non-Use of Local Recreation and Park Services During Last 12 Months**

<b>Reasons</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Don't have enough time/been busy	254	32.7%
Health inhibits participation	100	12.9%
Don't know enough about them	69	8.9%
Too old to participate	64	8.2%
Not interested	56	7.3%
I go elsewhere	47	6.0%
Programs are not offered in my area	41	5.3%
I don't have access	34	4.4%
Too far away	20	2.6%
I choose not to go	20	2.6%
Children have grown up and I do not participate anymore	19	2.4%
Aren't other people for me to participate with	11	1.4%
They aren't planned for people like me	10	1.3%
Environmental reasons (weather, cold, hot)	9	1.2%
Not safe	8	1.0%
I do participate	7	0.9%
No benefit to me	5	0.6%
Too expensive	2	0.3%

As had been seen before in Table 25, non-participants in local recreation services differed from participants in regards to a number of demographic variables. To summarize, respondents who had participated in local recreation and park services in the past 12 months tended to fall primarily within the 36-55 age bracket. Non-users of these

services were more spread out in age (both younger and older). Participants were also more highly educated and had a higher household income than non-participants. The size of a respondent's household was also a distinguishing factor; wherein non-participants were more likely to live in a single-person household than participants. Participants were also less likely to report a personal disability than non-participants. Finally, participants were more likely to be married or in a long term partnership than non-participants. These trends were generally reflected in the 1992 data as well, wherein participants tended to be middle aged, more highly educated, have a higher income, and live in a non-single household.

## **Benefits of Local Recreation and Park Services**

Users and non-users of local recreation and park services were asked about the benefits they believed these services provided. Non-users of these services were asked, "Even though you haven't participated directly in any services of your local recreation and parks department during the last year, do you think you receive any benefit from the fact that your community has such services?" A majority (60%) of non-users said that they did.

Non-users who were more educated and lived in larger household were more likely to say that recreation services provided them personal benefits despite the fact that they do not participate. Additionally, non-users from rural communities were less likely to believe recreation services provided them personal benefits compared to non-users from towns, cities, and metropolitan areas.

Between the two surveys, the percentage of non-users who believed that they received a benefit from the fact that their community has local park and recreation services declined from 71% in 1992 to 60% in 2015. This decrease is difficult to account for. One explanation for this decline could be that private and non-profit organizations have increasingly offered similar recreation and parks services over the past 25 years. Respondents in 2015 would therefore be less likely to believe that they benefit from services provided by local recreation and parks departments than respondents in 1992. Regardless, the finding that 60% of non-users who haven't used local recreation and park services still believed that they benefit from the fact that their community has such services

is substantial. This furthers the idea that perceived benefits of local recreation services are not explicitly linked to use of those services.

Non-participants were also asked to state in their own words the most important benefit that they received from these services. The overall benefit categories that non-users mentioned were: Social benefits (37%), Facility/activity benefits (25%), Personal benefits (24%), Economic benefits (7%), and Environmental benefits (6%). More specifically, non-users identified 555 individual benefits that they received from the fact that their community had local recreation and park services. The top ten most frequently mentioned specific benefits are presented in Table 33.

**Table 33. Most Frequently Mentioned Specific Non-User Benefits for Local Parks and Recreation Services**

<b>Benefits</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Community Awareness/Sense of Community	41	7.4%
Activities	33	5.9%
Place to Go	25	4.5%
Feel Good Because They're There	23	4.2%
Kids Place to Go	22	3.9%
Play Organized Sports	21	3.7%
Health	19	3.4%
Exercise – Fitness and Conditioning	18	3.3%
Place for Recreation	18	3.2%
Passing Time	17	3.0%

The most frequently mentioned non-user benefit was community awareness/sense of community, indicating that even though they did not participate in local recreation and park services, they still believed that local recreation and park services provided them a sense of community. Non-users also indicated that local recreation and park services provided the opportunity for them to participate in a variety of activities or could be a place for them to go should they choose to partake in these services. Finally, some non-

users also said that local park and recreation services made them feel good just because they are there.

The specific non-user benefits of local recreation and park services were quite different in 1992 (see Godbey, Graefe, and James, 1992, p. 64). In 1992, five of the top ten non-user personal benefits were related to the benefits these services provided to children. Benefits to kids were not as commonly mentioned in the 2015 survey. Additionally, the #1 non-user benefit of local services in 1992 was availability. The availability of these services did not come up as frequently in 2015 (ranked #12).

Respondents who had participated in local recreation and park services during the previous twelve months were asked a range of follow-up questions. These included the most important benefits they received from their participation. Those who had other members of their household who participated in such services were also asked about the benefits those household members received from local recreation and park services. Finally, all respondents were asked about the most important benefits they thought that their community received from such services. These specific benefits were collapsed into the broader benefit categories as previously described. The percentage of personal, environmental, social, economic, and facility/activity benefits of local recreation and park services are presented in Table 34 at the individual, household, and community level for both 2015 and 1992. Appendix E contains the frequency of response for all the individual, household, and community benefits, as well as the non-user benefits respondents perceived local recreation services to provide.

In the current survey, the most commonly mentioned benefits of local recreation and park services were either personal or social in nature. Only at the community level did personal benefits drop off somewhat and facility/activity-oriented benefits become more prevalent. Respondents did not often associate local recreation and park services with environmental or economic benefits at the individual, household, or community levels.

The distributions of important individual, household, and community benefits were generally the same in 1992 and 2015. In both surveys, personal and social benefits prevailed as the most commonly mentioned benefits at all three levels (except for personal benefits at the community level). Environmental and economic benefits were not frequently mentioned at all three levels in both surveys. Finally, facility/activity-oriented

benefits were mentioned more frequently at the household and community level compared to the individual level.

**Table 34. Most Important Individual, Household, and Community Benefits From Local Recreation and Park Services in 1992 and 2015 (Percent)**

	Personal		Environmental		Social		Economic		Facility	
	1992	2015	1992	2015	1992	2015	1992	2015	1992	2015
% Individual	43.5	39.3	7.0	5.4	33.8	41.4	4.1	6.1	11.6	7.7
% Household	40.5	38.7	3.2	4.7	39.0	33.3	4.2	5.8	13.1	17.5
% Community	19.3	20.5	5.9	7.9	48.9	41.1	8.9	7.5	17.0	23.0

Respondents who had participated in local recreation and park services during the past year were asked to list the activities that they had participated in. For each activity that a respondent mentioned, they were prompted with: “You mentioned \_\_\_\_\_. What is the most important benefit you feel you received from participating in \_\_\_\_\_? Any other benefits?” The specific benefits were coded according to the previously mentioned categories. Table 35 displays a summary of each benefit type for all activities that respondents had participated in.

**Table 35. Frequency and Percentage of Benefit Type From Recreation Activities Sponsored by Local Recreation and Parks Departments**

Benefit Type	Percent	Count
Personal	46	216
Social	46	216
Facility/Activity	4	18
Environmental	3	15
Economic	2	9

The vast majority of benefits respondents associated with specific activities sponsored by local recreation and parks departments were either personal or social in nature. Together, personal and social benefits accounted for 92% of all responses. These findings are similar to the level of personal and social benefits respondents provided at the

individual, household, and community level when asked in a generic sense (see Table 34). The one difference is that respondents mentioned facility/activity benefits less frequently when referring to specific recreational activities than when referring to the benefits of generic recreation and park services.

The most frequently mentioned personal benefits of specific local recreation and park activities were: exercise fitness and conditioning (56), fun and entertainment (49), health (42), and learning and education (21). The most commonly mentioned social benefits were community awareness (53), family time togetherness (24), fellowship (23), helping (20), place to meet people (18), and developing team spirit (16). Facility/activity-oriented benefits included new forms of activities (4), place for recreation (3), and place to play (3). Environmental benefits included open space, nature, place to be outdoors, and place to see wildlife (all receiving 3 mentions each). Local recreation services being affordable (7) and bringing dollars into the community (2) were mentioned as important economic benefits of these services.

Personal and social benefits were also the two most frequently mentioned benefit types respondents in 1992 derived from specific recreation activities sponsored by local recreation areas (42% personal, 38% social; Godbey, Graefe, & James, p. 65). The only variation between the two surveys was the decline in frequency of facility/activity-oriented benefits from 1992 to 2015 (12% to 4%).

The relationship between the type of activities respondents participated in and the types of benefit they received from those activities was also examined. This allowed for a better understanding of the types of benefits that were derived from various types of activities. Table 36 presents data about the types of benefits respondents associated with specific activities they have participated in that were provided by their local recreation and parks department.

**Table 36. Type of Benefit Received From Activities Sponsored by Local Government Recreation and Park Services by Type of Activity Participated In by Respondent**

Programs	Frequency of Benefit Types*					Row Totals
	Personal	Environmental	Social	Economic	Facility	
Classes	25	3	7	0	1	36
Culture	35	3	75	6	5	124
Exercise	15	2	0	0	0	17
Hobbies	1	0	0	0	0	1
Clubs	1	0	3	0	0	4
Sponsored Activities	23	2	45	0	0	70
Seniors	1	0	2	0	0	3
Skiing	1	0	0	0	0	1
Special Population Programs	0	0	0	0	0	0
Spectator	0	0	3	0	0	3
Team Sports	47	0	35	0	5	87
Hunting and Fishing	7	1	1	0	0	9
Volunteers	5	0	14	0	0	19
Individual Sports	3	0	1	0	1	5
Outdoor Non-Consumptive	15	1	6	0	3	25
Swimming	11	0	3	0	0	14
Tennis	4	0	3	0	0	7
Table Games	3	0	1	0	0	4
Golf	2	0	0	0	1	3
Water Sports & Events	4	0	0	0	0	4
Children's Programs	1	2	7	0	0	10
Animal Related	2	0	1	0	0	3
Facility Related Use	10	0	7	3	0	20
Miscellaneous	2	0	2	0	1	5
<b>Total</b>	218	14	216	9	17	474

\*Note: Due to the weighting procedures, this cross-tabulation presents a slightly modified total number of times each benefit type was mentioned compared to the overall frequency of each benefit type presented in Table 35.

Cultural activities/events were the most frequently mentioned source of benefit. The benefits associated with cultural activities were primarily socially oriented, such as sense of community, family time togetherness, and fellowship. Team sports were also perceived to provide a high level of benefit to respondents. The benefits from team sports were both personal (in the form of exercise and health) as well as social (e.g. developing team spirit). Sponsored activities provided primarily social benefits such as sense of community, helping, and fellowship. Not surprisingly, classes provided a high level of personal benefit in the form of learning and education.

## **Priorities for Local Recreation and Park Services**

### **Based on NRPA's Pillars**

Some new questions were included that assessed respondents' opinions of how important certain priorities should be for their local park and recreation agency. These priorities were modeled after the three National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) pillars: conservation, health and wellness, and social equity. Two items per pillar were included within the survey. NRPA defines local park and recreation's role in conservation to be "protecting open space, connecting children to nature, and providing education and programming that helps communities engage in conservation practices" ("About NRPA", n.d.). The health and wellness pillar refers to "improving the overall health and wellness of communities" by "combating some of the most complicated and expensive challenges our country faces – poor nutrition, hunger, obesity, and physical inactivity" ("About NRPA, n.d.). Finally, NRPA defines local park and recreation's role in addressing social equity to be providing "universal access to public parks and recreation" ensuring that all members of communities have access to resources and programming ("About NRPA, n.d.).

In addition to items based on the NRPA pillars, four more items were included centered on youth development and economic priorities. A summary of the ten priority items and their corresponding categories is presented in Table 37.



Respondents were asked to state the level of importance they believed these priorities should be for their local park and recreation agency on a scale from 1 = “Extremely Unimportant” to 5 = “Extremely Important.”

**Table 37. List of Priority Categories and Items for the NRPA Pillar Analyses**

<b>Priority Categories</b>	<b>Priority Items</b>
Conservation*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserving the natural environment</li> <li>• Protecting open space</li> </ul>
Health and Wellness*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offering facilities and services to reduce stress and improve mental health</li> <li>• Offering facilities and services to improve physical health</li> </ul>
Social Equity*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addressing the needs of disadvantaged populations</li> <li>• Ensuring that quality programs and facilities are equally accessible to all members of the community</li> </ul>
Youth Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting positive youth development</li> <li>• Preventing youth crime</li> </ul>
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stimulating economic development in the community</li> <li>• Enhancing real-estate property values</li> </ul>

\*NRPA Pillars

Respondents placed a very high level of importance on the vast majority of these priorities for their local park and recreation agency (Table 38). The items with the highest level of importance were “promoting positive youth development,” “ensuring that quality programs and facilities are equally accessible to all members of the community,” and “conserving the natural environment.” All three items had nearly identical percentages of respondents (86%-88%) who said that these were important/extremely important priorities for their local recreation and park agencies. Additionally, their mean scores were either 4.4 or 4.5 on a five-point scale.

The next four priorities received a very similar level of support. These included: “offering facilities and services to improve physical health,” “protecting open space,”

“preventing youth crime,” and “offering facilities and services to reduce stress and improve mental health.” All four of these items had a mean of 4.3. “Addressing the needs of disadvantaged populations” was nearly as important to respondents as the other priorities (Mean = 4.2).

Most noticeably, the economic priorities of “stimulating economic development in the community,” and “enhancing real-estate property values” were not considered as important priorities for respondents’ local park and recreation agencies. These two items had the lowest mean scores of all ten items (Mean = 3.8 and 3.7). Although, these two mean scores were still above the mid-point indicating respondents felt they were slightly important priorities for their local park and recreation agency.

When individual priority items were combined with similar items to create indexes (based on the groupings in Table 37) additional findings came to light (Table 39). Respondents considered four of the five priority indexes to be highly important priorities for their local park and recreation agency (Mean > 4.3). Youth development, along with the three NRPA pillars of conservation, social equity, and health and wellness, all were perceived as very important priorities for respondents’ local park and recreation agencies. Respondents placed a significantly lower level of importance on the economic index, signifying that they did not view economics to be as comparatively high of a priority for their local park and recreation agency.

In conclusion, respondents believed that youth development, conservation, social equity, and health should be important priorities for local recreation and park services. The findings from this survey reinforced the relevance of NRPA’s Pillars of conservation, health and wellness, and social equity across the American public. In addition, the priority of youth development also resonated with respondents. Together, these four priorities represent the critical role local park and recreation agencies play in their communities.

**Table 38. Importance of Priorities for Local Park and Recreation Agencies**

<b>Priority</b>	<b>% 1 &amp; 2 Unimportant</b>	<b>% 3 Neutral</b>	<b>% 4/5 Important</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
Promoting positive youth development	3.5	8.9	87.6	4.5	0.9
Ensuring that quality programs and facilities are equally accessible to all members of the community	4.0	8.3	87.7	4.5	0.9
Conserving the natural environment	4.9	9.0	86.1	4.4	0.9
Offering facilities and services to improve physical health	4.8	10.8	84.4	4.3	0.9
Protecting open space	6.1	14.1	79.8	4.3	1.0
Preventing youth crime	7.6	12.9	79.4	4.3	1.0
Offering facilities and services to reduce stress and improve mental health	4.8	15.2	80.1	4.3	0.9
Addressing the needs of disadvantaged populations	6.9	16.2	76.9	4.2	1.0
Stimulating economic development in the community	12.6	21.1	66.3	3.8	1.1
Enhancing real-estate property values	17.8	25.9	56.3	3.7	1.2

**Table 39. Importance of Priority Indexes**

<b>Priority Index</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
Youth Development Index	4.4	0.8
Conservation Index	4.4	0.9
Social Equity Index	4.3	0.8
Health and Wellness Index	4.3	0.8
Economics Index	3.7	1.0

## Perceived Value of Local Recreation and Park Services

### Local Recreation and Park Services Worth the National Average Tax Expenditure

Respondents were asked about their willingness to pay for local recreation and park services. According to NRPA's PRORAGIS database, Americans pay an average of \$70 per person per year in local taxes for recreation and park services. Respondents were asked if they felt their local recreation and park services were worth \$70 per member of their household per year. A resounding percentage said that they did. Nearly four-fifths of respondents (79%) agreed that local recreation and park services were worth \$70 per member of their household per year (Table 40). Remarkably, two-thirds of both non-program users and non-park users also believed that these services were worth \$70 per household member per year. Sixty-seven percent of non-program users and non-park users believed these services were worth the investment.

The belief that local recreation and park services were worth \$70 per household member per year differed based on age. The youngest respondents (15-20) were the least likely to agree that local recreation and park services were worth \$70 per household member per year. Respondents from all other age brackets were similarly likely to agree that these services were worth the average amount. Agreement was also influenced by the respondents' level of education and household income. Those who were more highly educated and had a higher income were more likely to believe that local recreation and park services were worth \$70 per household member per year.

Married respondents were the most likely to say that these services were worth the average amount compared to single, divorced, and widowed respondents. Additionally, respondents from non-single households were significantly more likely than respondents from single households to agree that these services were worth \$70 per household member per year. Respondents from the largest and smallest communities (metropolitan and rural areas) were less likely than respondents from towns and cities to have said that local recreation services were worth \$70 per household member per year. Finally, willingness to pay \$70 per household member per year also differed based on a respondent's

race/ethnicity. White respondents (82% - yes) were more likely than black (74%), Hispanic (69%), and respondents of other races/ethnicities (74%) to say that these services were worth the average amount per person per year.

Willingness to pay for local recreation and park services did not differ based on gender and personal disability status. Interestingly, political affiliation also did not influence respondents' willingness to pay the average amount per household member per year. Republicans (78%), Democrats (80%), Independents (80%), and respondents of other political affiliation (83%) all similarly agreed that local recreation and park services were worth this investment.

**Table 40. Respondent Demographic Characteristics by Agreement that Recreation and Park Services Are Worth \$70 Per Household Member Per Year**

	% No	% Yes
<b>Total Sample</b>	21	79
<b>Gender – NS</b>		
Male	22	78
Female	21	79
<b>Age - ***</b>		
15-20	38	62
21-35	23	77
36-55	18	82
56-65	16	84
66-75	19	81
76-95	22	78
<b>Level of Education - ***</b>		
High school or less	29	71
Some college to college graduate	21	79
Graduate degree	9	91
<b>Income - **</b>		
\$0 to \$40,000	24	76
\$40,000 to \$80,000	18	82
Over \$80,000	14	86
<b>Marital Status - ***</b>		
Single (never married)	29	71
Married or in a long-term partnership	16	84
Divorced/separated	23	77
Widow or widower	25	75
<b>Political Affiliation – NS</b>		
Republican	22	78
Democrat	20	80
Independent	20	80
Other	17	83
<b>Size of Household - ***</b>		
Single Person	31	69
Two people	17	83
Three to four people	20	80
Five or more people	18	82
<b>Size of Community - ***</b>		
Rural area/Village under 10,000	28	72
Town of 10,000 to 50,000	15	85
City of 50,000 to 100,000	14	86
Metropolitan area (over 100,000)	26	74
<b>Race/Ethnicity - **</b>		
White	18	82
Black	26	74
Hispanic	31	69
Other	26	74
<b>Personal Disability Status – NS</b>		
Yes	24	76
No	21	79
<b>Program User – Non-User - ***</b>		
Has ever participated in programs	13	87
Have never participated in programs	33	67
<b>Local Park User Status - ***</b>		
Local Park User	16	84
Local Park Non-user	33	67

Crosstab significance levels: \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001, NS = Not significant

## *Comparing Willingness to Pay for Local Recreation and Park Services across the Two Surveys*

### Overall Comparison

Respondents in 1992 were also asked to state how willing they were to pay for local recreation and park services. At that time, the average amount that Americans paid in local taxes for recreation and park services was \$45 per household member per year. Therefore, when we compared agreement to pay for local recreation and park services, we are comparing people's willingness to pay \$45 per household member per year for the 1992 sample, and \$70 per household member per year for the 2015 sample.

Overall, there was no significant difference between the two surveys in regards to willingness to pay for local recreation and park services (Table 41, also see Appendix D – p. 169-170). There was a three-point increase between 1992 and 2015 in the percentage of respondents who said that they were willing to pay the average amount. (76% yes in 1992 vs. 79% yes in 2015). Taken as a whole, both surveys found a high level of agreement that local recreation and park services were worth the average investment per household member per year.

### Similarities

In regards to demographic comparisons, there were six main similarities between the two surveys. These similarities related to the influence of education level, political affiliation, race/ethnicity, personal disability status, program user/non-user distinction, and park user/non-user distinction on willingness to pay for local recreation and park services in their local area. In both 1992 and 2015, political affiliation had no influence on willingness to pay the average amount in local taxes per household member per year for recreation and park services. This finding shows that despite the changing political spectrum over the past 25 years, respondents from divergently different political perspectives similarly believe that local recreation and park services are worth the investment regardless of their political persuasion.

Personal disability status did not influence respondents' willingness to pay in either 1992 and 2015. Respondents in both surveys were willing to invest in local recreation and

park services regardless of if they reported a personal disability or not. In both 1992 and 2015, more educated respondents were more likely to state that local recreation and park services were worth the average amount per household member per year. This difference was particularly pronounced in 2015, wherein 71% of respondents with a high school degree or less said that local recreation and park services were worth the investment compared to 91% of respondents with a graduate degree.

White respondents were more likely than black and Hispanic respondents to say that these services were worth the investment in both 1992 and 2015. However, a much higher percentage of black respondents in 2015 said that these services were worth the investment compared to black respondents in 1992. In both 1992 and 2015, Hispanic respondents expressed a consistently lower level of agreement that these services were worth \$45/\$70 per household member per year.

In both 1992 and 2015, users of recreation programs and users of local parks were more likely than respondents who did not use these services and parks to agree that these services were worth the investment. Interestingly, service/program non-users in 1992 and 2015 expressed high levels of agreement that these services were worth the average amount per household member per year (71% yes in 1992, 67% yes in 2015). Additionally, non-users of local parks in 1992 and 2015 also expressed consistent agreement that these services were worth the average investment (64% yes in 1992, 67% yes in 2015). These findings show that even among non-users of recreation services/programs and local parks, a high percentage of respondents in both 1992 and 2015 believed that these services were worth the average of \$45/\$70 per household member per year.

## Differences

There were six primary differences between the two surveys when response to the willingness to pay for local recreation and park services was compared based on demographic characteristics. These differences related to the influence of gender, age, income, marital status, size of household, and size of community. In 1992, males were more likely than females to agree that recreation and park services were worth the



investment. This was not the case in 2015, wherein both males and females were equally likely to agree to these services were worth the average amount per household member per year. Also, in 1992, there was no difference in agreement that local recreation and park services were worth the investment based on a respondent's age. In 2015, the youngest respondents were significantly less likely to believe that these services were worth the average investment per household member per year in local taxes.

A respondent's household income level did not influence support for investing in local recreation and park services in 1992. In 2015, respondents who had a higher income were more likely to agree that these services were worth the average investment per household member per year. In 1992, there was no difference in level of support for investing in recreation and park services based on a respondent's marital status. In 2015, respondents who were married were significantly more likely to say that they believed local recreation and park services were worth the average amount per member of their household each year.

The influence of household size had opposite effects on respondents' willingness to invest in local recreation and park services in 1992 and 2015. In 1992, respondents from single person households were the most likely to believe these services were worth the cost. By contrast, single person household respondents in 2015 were the least likely to say local recreation and park services were worth the average amount. Finally, the size of a respondent's community in 1992 did not influence their agreement that local recreation and park services were worth the investment per household member per year. In 2015, respondents from rural and metropolitan area were less likely to agree that local recreation and park services were worth the investment. Respondents in 2015 who lived in towns and cities (10,000 – 100,000) were the most likely to agree that these services were worth the average value.

**Table 41. Change Over Time: Agreement that Recreation and Park Services Are Worth \$70 Per Household Member Per Year**

Overall Sample Comparison - NS			
1992		2015	
%Yes	%No	%Yes	%No
76%	24%	79%	21%
Similarities		Differences	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Education Level:</b> Higher educated express higher agreement</li> <li>• <b>Political Affiliation:</b> No difference</li> <li>• <b>Race/Ethnicity:</b> White respondents highest agreement</li> <li>• <b>Personal Disability Status:</b> No difference</li> <li>• <b>Program User/Non-User:</b> Programs users express higher agreement</li> <li>• <b>Local Park User/Non-User:</b> Local park users express higher agreement</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Gender:</b> 1992 – Males higher agreement 2015 – No difference</li> <li>• <b>Age:</b> 1992 – No difference 2015 – Youngest respondents lowest agreement</li> <li>• <b>Income:</b> 1992 – No difference 2015 – Higher income, higher agreement</li> <li>• <b>Marital Status:</b> 1992 – No difference 2015 – Married respondents highest agreement</li> <li>• <b>Size of Household:</b> 1992 – Single person household highest agreement 2015 – Single person household lowest agreement</li> <li>• <b>Size of Community:</b> 1992 – No difference 2015 – Town and city respondents highest agreement</li> </ul>	

Crosstab significance levels: \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001, NS = Not significant

## Local Recreation and Park Services Worth More, Less, or Exactly the National Average Tax Expenditure

If a respondent said that they did feel local recreation and park services were worth \$70 per person per year, they were asked if they felt these services were worth more than \$70 annually. If they said yes, respondents were asked to state how much they believed these services were worth per household member per year. For those who said local recreation and park services were not worth \$70 per person per year, they were asked to state how much they believed these services were worth to them. With these responses, a new comparison variable was created that identified the percentage of respondents who said local recreation and park services were worth less than \$70, were worth exactly \$70, and were worth more than \$70. Table 42 shows the distribution of respondents within these three response categories.

As seen before, seventy-nine percent of respondents believed that local recreation and park services were worth \$70 or more per household member per year. Almost half of all respondents (48%) said that these services were worth exactly \$70 per household member per year, and nearly one third (31%) of all respondents said that they were worth more than \$70 per household member per year (Table 42).

Respondents who had participated in local recreation programs and those who had used local parks were much more likely than their non-user counterparts to say that local recreation and park services were worth more than \$70 per household member per year. Thirty-nine percent of program users believed these services were worth more than \$70 compared to 19% of non-program users. Similarly, 37% of park users felt these services were worth more than \$70 compared to 17% for non-park users. It should be noted though, that both types of non-users had a low percentage of respondents who said these services were worth less than \$70 per household member per year (33% for both non-program-users and non-park users).

Consistent with previous trends, respondents who have achieved a higher level of education and have a higher level of household income were more likely to have said that local recreation and park services were worth more than \$70 per household member per year. For example, 19% of respondents who had a high school degree or less said that they believed these services were worth more than \$70 per household member per year.

Contrast this with the 48% of respondents with graduate degrees who said recreation services were worth \$70 or more. Additionally, married respondents were the most likely to believe that local recreation services were worth more than \$70 per household member per year. They were also the least likely to say that recreation services were worth less than \$70 per household member per year. Respondents who identified themselves as Republicans were the least likely to say that local recreation and park services were worth more than \$70 per household member per year. Democratically affiliated respondents, as well as those respondents who stated an “other” political affiliation, were the most likely to say that these services were worth more than \$70 per household member per year.

As the size of a respondent’s household increased, so did their perception that local recreation and park services were worth more than \$70 per household member per year. Additionally, as household size increased, the percentage of respondents who said local recreation services were worth less than \$70 decreased. Respondents from rural communities were less likely to believe that local recreation services were worth more than \$70 per household member per year (24%), compared to residents of towns (34%), cities (35%), and metropolitan areas (33%). Interestingly, respondents in rural areas and metropolitan areas were similarly likely to say that park and recreation services were worth less than \$70 per household member per year.

White respondents and those of “other” racial/ethnic backgrounds were more likely than Hispanic and black respondents to say that local recreation and park services were worth more than \$70 per household per year. White respondents were also less likely to say that these services were worth less than \$70 per household member per year (18%), compared to black (26%), Hispanic (31%), and respondents of other races/ethnicities (26%).

There was no difference in response based on gender and personal disability status. Middle-aged respondents (36-55, 56-65) and respondents between 66-75 were the most likely to say that local recreation and park services were worth more than \$70 per household member per year. Respondents in the oldest demographic (76-95) were the least likely to say they were worth more than \$70. Of note is that the youngest respondents (15-20) were the most likely to say that recreation services were worth *less* than \$70 per household member per year.

**Table 42. Respondent Demographic Characteristics by Local Recreation and Park Services Worth Less, More, or Exactly \$70 Per Household Member Per Year**

	% Worth less than \$70	% Worth \$70	% Worth more than \$70
<b>Total Sample</b>	21	48	31
<b>Gender – NS</b>			
Male	22	44	34
Female	21	51	29
<b>Age - ***</b>			
15-20	38	38	25
21-35	23	52	26
36-55	18	45	37
56-65	16	48	36
66-75	19	47	35
76-95	22	60	18
<b>Level of Education - ***</b>			
High school or less	29	52	19
Some college to college graduate	21	46	33
Graduate degree	9	43	48
<b>Income - ***</b>			
\$0 to \$40,000	24	54	22
\$40,000 to \$80,000	18	45	37
Over \$80,000	14	42	44
<b>Marital Status - ***</b>			
Single (never married)	29	40	31
Married or in a long-term partnership	16	50	34
Divorced/separated	23	49	28
Widow or widower	25	54	20
<b>Political Affiliation - **</b>			
Republican	22	54	24
Democrat	20	41	38
Independent	20	45	34
Other	17	43	41
<b>Size of Household - ***</b>			
Single Person	31	47	23
Two people	17	49	34
Three to four people	20	47	33
Five or more people	18	44	38
<b>Size of Community - ***</b>			
Rural area/Village under 10,000	28	48	24
Town of 10,000 to 50,000	15	51	34
City of 50,000 to 100,000	14	51	35
Metropolitan area (over 100,000)	26	41	33
<b>Race/Ethnicity - *</b>			
White	18	48	33
Black	26	46	27
Hispanic	31	42	27
Other	26	44	30
<b>Personal Disability Status – NS</b>			
Yes	24	51	25
No	21	47	33
<b>Program User – Non-User - ***</b>			
Has ever participated in programs	13	48	39
Have never participated in programs	33	48	19
<b>Local Park User Status - ***</b>			
Local Park User	16	47	37
Local Park Non-user	33	50	17

Crosstab significance levels: \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001, NS = Not significant

## *Comparing Local Recreation and Park Services Worth More, Less, or Exactly the National Average Tax Expenditure Across the Two Surveys*

### Overall Comparison

Using responses from the 1992 survey, a similar comparison variable was created that identified the percentage of respondents who said local recreation and park services were worth less than \$45, were worth exactly \$45, and were worth more than \$45. Based on the data, there was a significant difference in the percentage of respondents who said local recreation and park services were worth less, exactly, or more than \$45 (for 1992) or \$70 (for 2015, Table 43, also see Appendix D – p. 171-172). 1992 respondents were much more likely to say that local recreation services were worth more than the average amount (46%) than 2015 respondents (31%). Conversely, a higher percentage of respondents in 2015 said that these services were worth the average amount (48%) compared to respondents in 1992 (30%). A similar percentage of respondents in 1992 and 2015 said that local recreation and park services were worth less than the average amount (24% in 1992 vs. 21% in 2015). The data indicates that more respondents were willing to pay more for local recreation services in 1992 than in 2015. However, both survey years had a similar percentage of respondents who said these services were worth the average amount or more (76% in 1992, 79% in 2015).

### Similarities

In regards to demographic comparisons, there were eight similarities between the two surveys. These similarities related to the influence of age, education level, income, size of community, race/ethnicity, personal disability status, program user/non-user distinction, and local park user/non-user distinction on a respondent's opinion that local recreation and park services were worth less than the average amount, worth exactly the average amount, or worth more than the average amount.

The youngest and oldest respondents in 1992 and 2015 were the least likely to say that local recreation and park services were worth more than the average investment. In both surveys, the youngest respondents (15-20) were the most likely to believe that local services were worth less than the average amount. The higher a respondent's education level, the more likely they were to perceive local recreation and park services to be worth

more than the average amount. A similar trend was observed in regards to household income level. Not surprisingly, the more affluent a respondent was, the more likely they were to say these services were worth more than the baseline amount.

In both 1992 and 2015, those from rural areas had the lowest percentage of respondents who said local recreation and park services were worth more than the average amount. They also had the highest percentage of respondents who said that these services were worth less than the baseline figure. White respondents in 1992 and 2015 were the most likely to state that local recreation and park services were worth more than the average amount. By contrast, black and Hispanic respondents were much less likely to say that these services were worth more than the average. In both 1992 and 2015, personal disability status did not influence respondents' opinions about the value of local recreation and park services. In both surveys, disabled and non-disabled respondents expressed similar levels of support for paying more than the average amount for local recreation and park services. Finally, in both 1992 and 2015, users of programs and users of local parks were significantly more likely than non-users (of programs and parks) to say that local recreation and park services were worth more than the average amount.

## Differences

There were four primary differences between the two surveys when response to the willingness to pay less, exactly, or more than the average amount for local recreation and park services was compared based on demographic characteristics. These differences related to the influence of gender, marital status, political affiliation, and size of the respondent's household. In 1992, a higher percentage of males perceived local recreation and park services to be worth more than females. Fifty-five percent of males believed that these services were worth more than \$45 compared to only 40% of females who expressed the same opinion. In 2015, there was no difference in regards to the perceived worth of local recreation and park services.

Divorced/separated respondents in 1992 were the most likely to state that local recreation and park services were worth more than the average amount. In 2015, married respondents were the most likely to state that local services were worth more than the

average amount. Also, in 1992, there was no difference in response to whether local services were worth less, exactly, or more than the average amount based on political affiliation. In 2015, Republicans were by far the least likely to say that local services were worth more than the average amount. By contrast, Democrats, Independents, and “other” politically inclined respondents were much more likely to state that local services were worth more than the average amount.

Finally, the influence of a respondent’s household size had contrasting effects on their beliefs that local recreation services were worth less, exactly, or more than the average amount. In 1992, as a respondent’s household size increased, the percentage of respondents who believed that local recreation and park services were worth more than the average amount decreased. The opposite was true in 2015. As household size increased, so did the respondent’s willingness to pay more than the average amount.



**Table 43. Change Over Time: Local Recreation and Park Services Worth Less, More, or Exactly \$45/\$70 Per Household Member Per Year**

Overall Sample Comparison***					
1992			2015		
%Worth less than \$45	%Worth \$45	%Worth more than \$45	%Worth less than \$70	%Worth \$70	%Worth more than \$70
24%	30%	46%	21%	48%	31%
Similarities			Differences		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Age:</b> Youngest and oldest respondents perceive services worth less</li> <li>• <b>Education Level:</b> The higher a respondent's education level, the more they perceive services to be worth</li> <li>• <b>Income:</b> The higher a respondent's income level, the more they perceive services to be worth</li> <li>• <b>Size of Community:</b> Rural respondents were the most likely to perceive services to be worth less than average</li> <li>• <b>Race/Ethnicity:</b> White respondents perceive services worth more</li> <li>• <b>Personal Disability Status:</b> No difference</li> <li>• <b>Program User/Non-User</b> Program users perceive services worth more</li> <li>• <b>Local Park User/Non-User</b> Local parks users perceive services worth more</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Gender:</b> 1992 – Males perceive services worth more 2015 – No difference</li> <li>• <b>Marital Status:</b> 1992 – Divorced/separated respondents perceive services worth more 2015 – Married respondents perceive services worth more</li> <li>• <b>Political Affiliation:</b> 1992 – No difference 2015 – Republicans perceive services worth less</li> <li>• <b>Size of Household:</b> 1992 – As household size increases, perception of worth decreases 2015 – As household size increases, perception of worth increases</li> </ul>		

Crosstab significance levels: \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001, NS = Not significant

In addition to demographic variables, respondents' beliefs about the value of their local recreation and park services were also related to their proximity to parks, their use of local parks, their perception of benefits derived from local parks, and their personal/household participation in local recreation and park programs (Table 44). Many of these findings are unsurprising. For example, those respondents who lived within walking distance of a park, playground or open space were significantly more likely than those who did not live within walking distance to feel that local recreation and park services were worth more than \$70 (34% vs. 26%).

Those who said that they personally use local parks frequently were much more likely to say that these services were worth more than \$70 compared to those who do not use local parks (45% vs. 17%). Similarly, respondents who perceived a great deal personal benefit to be derived from local parks were significantly more likely to say that these services were worth more than \$70 (43% vs. 14%). A similar trend was observed related to perceived level of household and community benefit of local park areas.

As stated above, respondents who had at one time in their life participated in local recreation and park programs were more likely to say that these services were worth more than \$70 than those who had never participated in these types of programs/services. Even among non-users of these services, those who believed that they received some kind of benefit from the fact that their community has park and recreation services were much more likely to believe these services were worth more than \$70 than non-users who did not believe they received a benefit from these services.

These findings are remarkably similar across the two surveys. All of the comparisons from 2015 presented in Table 44 were consistent with what was previously found in 1992 (Godbey, Graefe, & James, p. 76). As use/participation and benefit perception increased, so did a respondent's willingness to pay more for local and recreation and park services.

**Table 44. Leisure Participation Patterns by Perceived Value of Local Recreation and Park Services**

	% Worth less than \$70	% Worth \$70	% Worth more than \$70
<b>Park Within Walking Distance - ***</b>			
No	27	46	26
Yes	18	48	34
<b>Personal Use of Parks - ***</b>			
Not at all	33	50	17
Occasionally	18	50	32
Frequently	13	42	45
<b>Personal Benefit From Parks - ***</b>			
Not at all	43	43	14
Somewhat	28	49	23
A Great Deal	8	49	43
<b>Household Benefits of Parks - ***</b>			
Not at all	37	50	13
Somewhat	22	53	24
A Great Deal	10	45	45
<b>Community Benefits of Parks - ***</b>			
Not at all	45	42	13
Somewhat	32	45	23
A Great Deal	13	50	37
<b>Personal Participation in Recreation Programs (ever) - ***</b>			
No	33	48	19
Yes	17	49	34
<b>Non-Users: Received Benefit From the Fact that Community Has P&amp;R Services - ***</b>			
No	37	47	16
Yes	19	49	31
<b>Household Participation in Recreation Programs - ***</b>			
No	25	50	25
Yes	7	47	46

Note: Row totals. Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding.

Crosstab significance levels: \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001, NS = Not significant

## Total Value of Local Recreation and Park Services

Using responses to the surveys, a total value of local recreation and park services was computed for both the 1992 and the 2015 samples. For 1992, the average amount of money a respondent was willing to pay per household member per year (in local taxes) for local recreation and park services was just over \$52 (Table 45). Responses ranged from \$0 to \$200, with a median value of \$45. In 2015, the average amount was around \$81. 2015 responses ranged from \$0 to \$840 with a median value of \$70.

To adjust the 1992 dollar amounts to reflect 2015 dollars, we used the Bureau of Labor Statistics CPI Inflation Calculator. When this was done, it became clear that respondents in 1992 placed a slightly higher value on local recreation and park services than respondents in 2015 (Adjusted 1992 Mean = \$91.43 vs. 2015 Mean = \$81.20). The adjusted median (\$78.85) was also higher than the 2015 median (\$70.00).

**Table 45. Total Value of Local Recreation and Park Services**

	Dollars		
	1992	1992 – Adjusted to 2015 Dollars*	2015
Mean	52.18	91.43	81.20
Median	45.00	78.85	70.00
Standard Deviation	30.39	53.25	73.60
Minimum	0	0	0
Maximum	200.00	350.42	840.00

\*Used the Bureau of Labor Statistics Calculator to adjust for inflation:  
<http://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/cpicalc.pl>

# Conclusions and Implications

## Summary of Major Findings

This study yielded a large amount of data/findings related to Americans' use and perceptions of local recreation and park services. As a partial replication of the original 1992 study, responses to key variables were compared to understand if there were any changes that occurred across the two time periods. From this analysis, the twelve major overall major findings from this study are:

1. Access to public parks, playground and open space has remained constant from 1992 to 2015. In both surveys, around 70% of respondents reported that they live within walking distance of a local park, playground, or open space.
2. A large majority of Americans still use their local parks. Use of local parks at the individual and household level remains as consistent today as it was in 1992.
3. Though use has remained steady, Americans' perceptions of the benefits received from local parks have increased significantly over the past quarter century. At the individual and household level, there was a nearly double-digit increase in the percentage of respondents who believed local parks provided "a great deal" of public benefit in 2015 compared to 1992.
4. Beyond personal and household benefits, a vast majority of Americans still believe that their community benefits greatly from local parks. In both 1992 and 2015, over 90% of Americans said that local parks provide a community benefit. Moreover, 61% of respondents in 1992 and 63% of respondents in 2015 believed that local parks provide a great deal of community benefits.
5. Even non-users of local parks believed that they and their community benefits from having these parks, playground, or open space in their area. In 2015, 56% of non-park-users believed that local park areas provide a benefit to them. Even more striking is that 80% of non-park-users believed that local park areas provide benefits to their community (with 48% of them saying local park areas provide "a great deal" of benefit). These findings were true in 1992 and remain true today.

6. Participation in organized recreation activities and services has remained consistent over time, with a majority indicating that they have participated in these services at some point in their lives.
7. There was a slight decline in the percentage of non-users of local recreation and park services who believed that they benefitted just by the fact that their community had such services (71% in 1992 vs. 60% in 2015). Though there was a drop, the finding that 60% non-program-users still believe they benefit from these services shows that an individual does not have to directly participate in local recreation services to believe that they benefit from them.
8. Black respondents were significantly less likely than respondents of all other races/ethnicities to report personal or household use of local parks as well as perceive local parks to provide individual, household, and community benefits. They were also significantly less likely to have participated in local recreation services in the past 12 months. This discrepancy between respondents based on race/ethnicity was not as pronounced in the 1992 survey.
9. Like in 1992, respondents identified a wide variety of benefits received at the individual, household, and personal level from local parks and local recreation services. In concert with the 1992 study, a large percentage of these benefits were either personal or social in nature. Additionally, a much smaller percentage of benefits were related to the environment or economics. A major difference between the two surveys was that facility/activity-oriented benefits were much more frequently mentioned in 2015 than they were in 1992.
10. In 1992 and 2015, “exercise, fitness & conditioning” was the most frequently mentioned specific individual, household, and community benefit derived from local parks. It was also identified as the most important individual and household benefit of organized recreation activities. This finding shows that Americans continue to associate local parks and local recreation services with physical fitness and health.
11. Americans viewed the three NRPA pillars of conservation, health and wellness, and social equity as very important priorities for their local recreation and park agencies. Additionally, respondents felt that youth development priorities were also very important.

12. Americans continue to believe that local recreation and park services are worth the average tax amount per household member per year. Seventy-six percent of respondents in 1992 and 79% of respondents in 2015 believed that local recreation and park services were worth the average tax amount per household member per year.

## Conclusions

Much as they had a quarter of a century ago, many Americans use local park and recreation services and believe they are a great benefit to their communities. The fact that support for local parks is as strong today as it was a quarter century ago is extremely noteworthy, particularly during a time of rapid economic, social, and technological transformation. For example, America has become an older, better educated, more racially/ethnically diverse and more urbanized nation. Social interaction and entertainment options have grown exponentially over this time period, with the advent of widespread adoption of the internet, mobile technology, social media, 500 channel cable TV and on-demand media. Such developments have broadened the definition of recreation beyond what could have been imagined a quarter of a century ago.

Despite these shifts, local park and recreation services remain at the core of what defines a healthy, prosperous and connected community, and nothing related to technological advances and demographic shifts has altered that view. If anything, the demographic, societal and technological changes have heightened the need for the many benefits of parks; namely, being an important contributor to health & wellness, being a communal place where people of all ages and social strata can interact with each other, and being a place that protects and preserves high priority conservation areas. Finally, unlike virtually every other form of recreation, access to local parks is ubiquitous and not subject to high entrance fees or other qualifications.

## Study Implications and Recommendations

The implications of study findings are clear. Despite the tight fiscal environment, local, state and national leaders are urged to allocate financial resources to support, sustain and expand local governmental park and recreation agencies and services. Based on the evidence gathered in this national study, Americans do not perceive their local park and recreation services as a luxury, but rather view them as a vital part of what makes their community vibrant, livable, and worth the investment. This widespread support suggests that local investment in parks and recreation should receive priority. Such investment could come from a range of local sources (e.g., property, real estate transfer, sales, bed taxes, and bonds).

Local park and recreation directors, advocates, and interested community members are encouraged to share findings from this study with their local decision makers (both appointed and elected officials). In addition to this full report, there is also a summary report available on NRPA's website, which highlights the major study findings/conclusions to a broader, lay audience. Finally, local governments and/or park and recreation agencies who are in the process of developing a new master plan (or are conducting public surveys for other purposes) are encouraged to use the same questions included in this study. Doing so could facilitate benchmarking and comparisons with national statistics. Such comparisons could be helpful in identifying future needs and priorities for local communities.



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# Appendix A: 2015 Telephone Interview Guide/Questions

## 2015 Survey

### Perceived Benefits Questionnaire

#### Section One: Introduction and Study Purpose

Hello. I'm calling from Left Brain Concepts in Lakewood, Colorado. We are conducting a survey for a major university about the recreation habits of American households. Could I take a few minutes of your time to ask you some questions about your household's recreation patterns over the past year?

(If respondent hesitates or says no): If now is not a convenient time, may I make an appointment to call back to complete the interview some other time?

(If respondent still hesitates or says no): This survey is part of a research project sponsored by the National Recreation and Park Association. Your answers are very important because your household was one of approximately 1,000 randomly selected households throughout the United States who will be asked to participate in the study. Your responses will be strictly confidential and will only be used for statistical purposes.

(If respondent still refuses): Thank you for your time. Goodbye.

#### Section Two: Local Park Use and Benefits

1. Is there a park, playground, or open space within walking distance of your home?

32% No

68% Yes

2. How often do you personally use your local park areas for any purpose? These areas would include any public parks, playgrounds, and other open space in your community.

30% not at all

44% occasionally

26% frequently

3. Now please think about the benefits of public parks. By benefit we mean anything good that happens because public parks are there. To what degree do you feel you personally benefit from your local park areas? (add *even if you don't use them*, if answer to #2 is *not at all*). (If further clarification is needed, say that a benefit is either an improved condition or the prevention of a worse condition).

17% not at all

37% somewhat

46% a great deal

(if somewhat or a great deal): what is the most important benefit you feel you receive from your local parks? \_\_\_\_\_

Any other benefits? \_\_\_\_\_

Any other benefits? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Now I would like you to think about other members of your household; this would include a spouse, children, relatives, friends or anyone else who lives with you. How often do other members of your household use your local park areas?

24% not at all

47% occasionally

29% frequently

\_\_\_\_ no other household members (skip to #6)

5. To what degree do you feel the members of your household benefit from your local park areas?

19% not at all

40% somewhat

41% a great deal

(If somewhat or a great deal): what do you think is the most important benefit other members of your household receive from your local parks? This may be different from your personal benefits or it may be the same. Please don't feel restricted in mentioning any that come to mind. \_\_\_\_\_

Any other benefits? \_\_\_\_\_

Any other benefits? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Now I would like you to think of your community as a whole; that is, the village, town or city where you live. To what degree do you feel your community as a whole benefits from your local park areas?

8% not at all  
29% somewhat  
63% a great deal

(If somewhat or a great deal): what do you think is the most important benefit your community as a whole receives from having local parks? \_\_\_\_\_

Any other benefits? \_\_\_\_\_

Any other benefits? \_\_\_\_\_

### **Section Three: Use/Benefits of Organized Activities provided by Local Recreation and Park Services**

7. Next, we'd like to know about your participation in any recreation activities organized by your local government's recreation and parks department. This would include such things as sports leagues, educational or instructional classes, and special artistic or cultural events in your community. During the past 12 months, have you participated in any recreation or leisure activity that was sponsored by or took place on areas or facilities managed by your local government's recreation and parks department?

32% Yes (go to question #8)  
68% No

(If no): have you ever participated in any recreation activities organized by your local recreation and parks department?

59% No  
41% Yes (If Yes): what were these activities or events? \_\_\_\_\_

Are there any particular reasons why you have not participated during the past 12 months?  
\_\_\_\_\_

7a. Even though you haven't participated directly in any services of your local recreation and parks department during the past year, do you think you receive any benefit from the fact that your community has such services?

40% No  
60% Yes

(If yes) What is the most important benefit you receive from these services?

\_\_\_\_\_

Any others? \_\_\_\_\_

Any others? \_\_\_\_\_

(Skip to question #10)

8. What activities did you participate in? Any others? Any others?

(Repeat the following for each activity mentioned)

You mentioned \_\_\_\_\_. What is the most important benefit you feel you received from participating in \_\_\_\_\_? \_\_\_\_\_

Any other benefits?

You mentioned \_\_\_\_\_. What is the most important benefit you feel you received from participating in \_\_\_\_\_? \_\_\_\_\_

Any other benefits?

You mentioned \_\_\_\_\_. What is the most important benefit you feel you received from participating in \_\_\_\_\_? \_\_\_\_\_

Any other benefits? \_\_\_\_\_

9. All in all, what would you say is the most important benefit you receive from participating in activities which were sponsored by or took place at areas or facilities managed by your local recreation and parks department? \_\_\_\_\_

(Skip 10 and 11 if single member household)

10. Did any other members of your household participate in any recreation or leisure activity during the past 12 months that was sponsored by or took place on areas or facilities managed by your local recreation and parks department?

71% No

29% Yes

(If yes): What activities did they participate in? \_\_\_\_\_

11. What do you feel is the most important benefit other members of your household gain from having local recreation services? \_\_\_\_\_

a. Any other benefits to your household? \_\_\_\_\_

12. What do you feel is the most important benefit your community as a whole gains from having local recreation services? \_\_\_\_\_

a. Any other benefits to your community? \_\_\_\_\_

13. Park and recreation services (such as parks, playgrounds, athletics, sports and fitness, arts and culture, and special events) have the potential to provide a number of individual and community benefits. Please indicate on a five point scale, where 1 = Extremely Unimportant and 5 = Extremely Important, how important the following priorities should be for your local park and recreation agency. (Items Randomized)

Priority	N	Extremely Unimportant	Unimportant	Neutral	Important	Extremely Important	Mean	SD
Promoting positive youth development	1122	1.7	1.8	8.9	23.6	64.1	4.47	0.86
Ensuring that quality programs and facilities are equally accessible to all members of the community	1123	1.3	2.6	8.3	22.9	64.8	4.47	0.86
Conserving the natural environment	1124	2.3	2.6	9.0	24.0	62.1	4.41	0.93
Offering facilities and services to improve physical health	1128	2.3	2.5	10.8	27.4	57.0	4.34	0.93
Protecting open space	1127	2.0	4.1	14.1	22.8	57.1	4.29	0.99
Preventing youth crime	1114	2.6	5.1	12.9	19.9	59.5	4.29	1.04
Offering facilities and services to reduce stress and improve mental health	1121	1.3	3.4	15.2	26.0	54.0	4.28	0.93
Addressing the needs of disadvantaged populations	1096	2.0	4.9	16.2	28.5	48.4	4.16	1.00
Stimulating economic development in the community	1121	5.1	7.5	21.1	31.5	34.8	3.83	1.14
Enhancing real-estate property values	1104	5.8	12.0	25.9	23.0	33.3	3.66	1.22

#### Section Four: Willingness to Pay for Recreation Benefits

14. The next questions deal with funding sources for local recreation and park services. On the average, people in the United States pay about \$70.00 per person per year in local taxes for recreation and park services. The amount you actually pay may be more or less, but \$70.00 is the national average. Do you feel that your local recreation and park services are worth \$70.00 per member of your household each year?

79% Yes

21% No

(If yes): Do you feel these services are worth *more* than this amount annually?

(If no): How much are these services worth to you?  
\_\_\_\_\_

39% Yes      61% No

(If yes): How much are these services worth per household member per year:  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### Section Five: Demographics

Finally, we would like to ask you a few questions about yourself to help us interpret the information for our study. Please remember that your responses will be held confidential and used only for statistical purposes.

15. Which of the following best describes the area where you live?

- 19.9% Rural area
- 10.9% Village or town under 10,000 people
- 14.1% Town of 10,000 to 20,000 people
- 16.1% City of 20,000 to 50,000 people
- 13.4% City of 50,000 to 100,000 people
- 10.8% Urban area (100,000 to 250,000 people)
- 14.7% Metropolitan area (over 250,000 people)



16. Please tell me the age of every person currently living in your household  
(See Appendix C)

Person 1 (yourself/the respondent): \_\_\_\_\_ years of age

Person 2: \_\_\_\_\_ years of age

Person 3: \_\_\_\_\_ years of age

Person 4: \_\_\_\_\_ years of age

Person 5: \_\_\_\_\_ years of age

17. In general, compared to other persons your age would you say your health is...

24.7% excellent

30.0% very good

27.8% good

13.5% fair

4.0% poor

18. What is your current marital status?

29.6% single (never married)

53.5% married or in a long-term partnership

9.5% divorced/separated

7.4% widow or widower

19. What is the highest level of formal education you have completed?

7.4% less than 12 years

22.6% high school graduate

27.0% some college, technical or vocational school

24.7% college graduate/more than 4 years of college, but no graduate degree

18.2% graduate degree

20. Which of the following categories apply to you? Are you (Check all that apply)

45.4% employed full-time

11.2% employed part-time

6.7% unemployed

21.8% retired

9.0% a student

5.9% a homemaker

21. What is your race or ethnic status?

- 1.8% American Indian or Alaska native
- 1.9% Asian or Pacific Islander
- 10.5% Black (not of Hispanic origin)
- 10.3% Hispanic
- 72.3% White (not of Hispanic origin)
- 3.2% Other (specify\_\_\_\_\_)

22. Do you, or anyone in your household have a disability or handicap?

- 12.8% Yes, you have a disability
- 6.1% Yes, someone else in your household has a disability
- 81.1% No, no one in your household has a disability

23. Would you describe yourself as a

- 27.1% Republican
- 27.6% Democrat
- 35.6% Independent
- 9.7% Other (specify\_\_\_\_\_)

24. Which of the following best describes your total household income during 2014?

- 6.7% under \$10,000
- 8.4% \$10,000 to \$20,000
- 19.2% \$20,000 to \$40,000
- 16.3% \$40,000 to \$60,000
- 15.1% \$60,000 to \$80,000
- 11.8% \$80,000 to \$100,000
- 7.0% \$100,000 to \$120,000
- 4.7% \$120,000 to \$140,000
- 10.8% over \$140,000

Unasked, but recorded by interviewer: Respondent's gender

- 47.4% Male
- 52.6% Female

Thank you for your participation in this survey. We appreciate your input. Goodbye.

## 1992 Survey

### Perceived Benefits Questionnaire

#### Section One: Introduction and Purpose of Project

Hello. I'm calling from Database in State College Pennsylvania. We are conducting a survey for a major university about the recreation habits of American households. Could I take a few minutes of your time to ask you some questions about your household's recreation patterns over the past year?

(If respondent hesitates or says no): If now is not a convenient time, may I make an appointment to call back to complete the interview some other time?

(If respondent still hesitates or says no): This survey is part of a research project conducted by Penn State University and sponsored by the National Recreation and Park Association. Your answers are very important because your household was one of approximately 1,000 randomly selected households throughout the United States who will be asked to participate in the study. Your responses will be strictly confidential and will only be used for statistical purposes.

(If respondent still refuses): Thank you for your time. Goodbye.

#### Section Two: Recreation Participation Patterns

First, I'd like to ask you some general questions about your recreation activities.

1. Compared to five years ago, would you say you have:

23% more time for recreation and leisure  
31% about the same amount of time, or  
47% less time for recreation and leisure?

2. Have you begun any new recreation activities during the past twelve months?

78% No  
22% Yes (If yes): what activity have you begun? Any others?  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. In general, how do you feel about your time – would you say you

34% always feel rushed even to do things you have to do  
48% only sometimes feel rushed, or  
18% almost never feel rushed?

4. What is more important to you,

36% your work, or

26% your leisure?

38% both are equally important (volunteered answer)

### **Section Three: Local Park Use and Benefits**

5. Is there a park, playground, or open space within walking distance of your home?

28% No

72% Yes

6. How often do you personally use your local park areas for any purpose? These areas would include any public parks, playgrounds, and other open space in your community.

25% not at all

51% occasionally

24% frequently

7. Now please think about the benefits of public parks. By benefit we mean anything good that happens because public parks are there. To what degree do you feel you personally benefit from your local park areas? (add *even if you don't use them*, if answer to #6 is *not at all*). (If further clarification is needed, say that a benefit is either an improved condition or the prevention of a worse condition).

16% not at all

47% somewhat

37% a great deal

(if somewhat or a great deal): what is the most important benefit you feel you receive from your local parks?

Any other benefits?

Any other benefits?

8. Now I would like you to think about other members of your household; this would include a spouse, children, relatives, friends or anyone else who lives with you. How often do other members of your household use your local park areas?

26% not at all  
49% occasionally  
25% frequently  
\_\_\_ no other household members (skip to #10)

9. To what degree do you feel the members of your household benefit from your local park areas?

21% not at all  
48% somewhat  
31% a great deal

(If somewhat or a great deal): what do you think is the most important benefit other members of your household receive from your local parks? This may be different from your personal benefits or it may n be the same. Please don't feel restricted in mentioning any that come to mind.

Any other benefits?

Any other benefits?

10. Now I would like you to think of your community as a whole; that is, the village, town or city where you live. To what degree do you feel your community as a whole benefits from your local park areas?

6% not at all  
33% somewhat  
61% a great deal

(If somewhat or a great deal): what do you think is the most important benefit your community as a whole receives from having local parks?

Any other benefits?

Any other benefits?

#### Section Four: Use/Benefits of Local Recreation and Park Services

11. Next, we'd like to know about your participation in any recreation activities organized by your local government's recreation and parks department. This would include such things as sports leagues, educational or instructional classes, and special artistic or cultural events in your community. During the past 12 months, have you participated in any recreation or leisure activity that was sponsored by or took place on areas or facilities managed by your local government's recreation and parks department?

30% Yes

70% No

If yes, go to question #12

(If no): have you ever participated in any recreation activities organized by your local recreation and parks department?

65% No

35% Yes

(If Yes): what were these activities or events? \_\_\_\_\_

Are there any particular reasons why you have not participated during the past 12 months?

Please tell me if you agree or disagree with the following statements:

a. I'm not interested in local recreation and park services.

14% Agree

86% Disagree

(If agree): tell me more about that.

b. I don't participate in local recreation and park services because I don't have enough information about them.

33% Agree

67% Disagree

(If agree): tell me more about that.

c. Park and recreation services aren't planned for people like me

23% Agree

77% Disagree

(If agree): tell me more about that.

d. I don't have enough time to participate

52% Agree

48% Disagree

(If agree): tell me more about that.

e. Local recreation and park services are too expensive.

6% Agree

94% Disagree

(If agree): tell me more about that.

f. There aren't other people for me to participate with.

15% Agree

85% Disagree

(If agree): tell me more about that.

i. Even though you haven't participated directly in any services of your local recreation and parks department during the past year, do you think you receive any benefit from the fact that your community has such services?

29% No

71% Yes

(If yes) What is the most important benefit you receive from these services? Any others? Any others?

(Skip to question #14)

12. What activities did you participate in? Any others? Any others?

(Repeat the following for each activity mentioned)

You mentioned \_\_\_\_\_. What is the most important benefit you feel you received from participating in \_\_\_\_\_?

Any other benefits?

You mentioned \_\_\_\_\_. What is the most important benefit you feel you received from participating in \_\_\_\_\_?

Any other benefits?

13. All in all, what would you say is the most important benefit you receive from participating in activities which are sponsored by or took place on areas or facilities managed by your local recreation and parks department?

(Skip 14 and 15 if single member household)

14. Did any other members of your household participate in any recreation or leisure activity during the past 12 months that was sponsored by or took place on areas or facilities managed by your local recreation and parks department?

63% No

37% Yes

(If yes): What activities did they participate in?

15. What do you feel is the most important benefit other members of your household gain from having local recreation services?

a. Any other benefits to your household?

16. What do you feel is the most important benefit your community as a whole gains from having local recreation services?

a. Any other benefits to your community?

### Section Five: Evaluation of Local Services

The next questions ask about your perceptions of your local government services, such as fire and police protection, street maintenance, and so forth.

17. How would you rate the quality of your local:

Public Service	Percent				
	Very poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very good
Police protection	3	5	24	43	25
Fire Protection	1	1	11	48	40
Street maintenance	6	14	30	35	16
Parks and open space	2	3	16	47	32
Indoor recreation facilities	6	11	24	39	20
Recreation programs	2	6	21	50	21



## Section Six: Willingness to Pay for Recreation Benefits

18. The next questions deal with funding sources for local recreation and park services. On average, people in the United States pay about \$45.00 per person per year in local taxes for recreation and park services. The amount you actually pay may be more or less, but \$45.00 is the national average. Do you feel that your local recreation and park services are worth \$45.00 per member of your household each year?

☐ Yes

☐ No

(If yes): Do you feel these services are worth \$55.00 per household member ever year?

(If no): why do you feel these services are not worth \$45.00 annually? \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Yes

Do you feel these services are worth \$35.00 per household member?

☐ No

(If yes) Are they worth \$65.00 per year?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Yes

(If no): Are they worth \$25.00 per year?

☐ No

(If yes): How much are these services worth per household member per year?: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Yes

☐ No

(If no): how much are these services worth to you? \_\_\_\_\_

In your opinion, should public parks and recreation services be supported

21% mainly through taxes,

10% mainly through fees for users, or

69% through an equal combination of taxes and user fees

## Section Seven: Demographics

Finally, we would like to ask you a few questions about yourself to help us interpret the information for our study. Please remember that your responses will be held confidential and used only for statistical purposes.

19. What kind of residence do you live in?

- 73% Single family home
- 7% Town house or condominium
- 13% Apartment building
- 4% Mobile home
- 4% Other \_\_\_\_\_

20. Which of the following best describes the area where you live?

- 21% Rural area
- 16% Village or town under 10,000 people
- 16% Town of 10,000 to 20,000 people
- 15% City of 20,000 to 50,000 people
- 11% City of 50,000 to 100,000 people
- 9% Urban area (100,000 to 250,000 people)
- 14% Metropolitan area (over 250,000 people)

21. How many years have you lived in your present location \_\_\_\_

22. How many people live in your household? \_\_\_\_

- a. How many of these are:
  - 12 years old or younger \_\_\_\_
  - 13 to 19 years old \_\_\_\_
  - 65 years old or older \_\_\_\_

23. In general, compared to other persons your age would you say your health is

- 26% excellent
- 34% very good
- 28% good
- 11% fair
- 2% poor

24. In general, would you say you're

- 39% very happy
- 57% pretty happy
- 4% not too happy

25. What is your current marital status?

27% single (never married)  
57% married  
9% divorced/separated  
7% widow or widower

26. What is the highest level of formal education you have completed?

1% sixth grade or less  
12% less than 12 years  
29% high school graduate  
25% some college  
4% technical or vocational school  
19% college graduate  
3% more than 4 years of college, but no graduate degree  
8% graduate degree

27. In what year were you born? \_\_\_\_\_

28. Which of the following categories apply to you? Are you (Check all that apply)

52% employed fulltime  
13% employed part-time  
6% unemployed  
14% retired  
8% a student  
8% a homemaker

29. What is your race or ethnic status?

1% American Indian or Alaska native  
1% Asian or Pacific Islander  
8% Black (not of Hispanic origin)  
3% Hispanic  
85% White (not of Hispanic origin  
2% Other (specify\_\_\_\_\_)

30. Do you have a disability or handicap?

92% No  
8% Yes

(If Yes) Are you:

7% hearing impaired  
5% visually impaired  
34% mobility impaired  
3% mentally or learning impaired  
51% other (specify\_\_\_\_\_)

31. Would you describe yourself as a

33% Republican  
29% Democrat  
25% Independent  
13% Other (specify\_\_\_\_\_)

32. Which of the following best describes your total household income during 1991?

9% under \$10,000  
17% \$10,00 to \$20,000  
35% \$20,000 to \$40,000  
21% \$40,000 to \$60,000  
10% \$60,000 to \$80,000  
9% over \$80,000

### **Section Eight: Name and Address for Follow-up Survey**

Thank you very much for your help...We won't take any more of your time no but we will be sending a brief follow-up survey with some further questions to selected individuals. This questionnaire will take only a few minutes to complete and will include a self-addressed, stamped envelope for easy return. Can I include you in this special sample?

(If respondent says yes): Thank you very much. May I have your name and address so hat we may send you a questionnaire in the next week or two?

(If the respondent refuses or hesitates): Are you sure? The results will be very valuable and your answers will be completely confidential and will represent thousands of Americans who will not participate in the study.

(If respondent still refuses): Thank you anyway.

(Otherwise record address and say:) Thank you. You will receive a survey in the mail within a week or two and we appreciate your taking the time to return it to us. Thank you again and goodbye.

Mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B: 2015 Call Disposition Summary

TOTL	L.L.	CELL
----	----	----
Total Numbers Resolved		
-----	9774	8013 1761
Good Numbers Resolved		
-----	1330	1003 327
Completes	1250	938 312
Gender:		
Male	536	371 165
Female	711	564 147

TOTL	L.L.	CELL
----	----	----
Initial Refusals (3)	1837	1366 471
Limit Reached (94)	39	30 9

NET Screener Terms		
-----	-	- -

TOTL	L.L.	CELL
----	----	----
Bad Numbers Resolved		
-----	4235	3633 602
Disconnect	1692	1352 340
Changed Number	1655	1524 131
Fax/Modem	549	468 81
Unregistered tone/Circuit problem	-	- -
Language Barrier	87	79 8
Business Number	176	143 33
No Such Person	-	- -
Cell phone scrub	7	7 -
Do Not Call Requested	-	- -
Physically/mentally Unable	-	- -
2-tme Privacy Manager	-	- -
Unwilling Suspends - Qualified	52	48 4
Unwilling Suspends - Not Qualified	5	5 -
All Other Resolved Numbers	12	7 5
Duplicates (91)	-	- -

Total Numbers Still Active (Last Status)			
-----	15379	12298	3081
Answering Machine (141)	6377	5061	1316
No Answer (101)	6601	5287	1314
Busy (102,103)	296	256	40
Callback/Not Specific (105)	1615	1307	308
Callback/Specific (104)	88	41	47
1-time Privacy Manager	-	-	-
Suspends - Qualified	125	101	24
Suspends - Not Qualified	5	5	-
All Other Active Numbers	272	240	32
Numbers Sent	25801	20801	5000
Fresh Numbers	549	410	139
Active Numbers (not fresh)	15421	12325	3096
Resolved Numbers	9831	8066	1765
-----			
0	549	410	139
1	2610	1902	708
2	3566	2788	778
3	3923	3413	510
4	2665	2313	352
5	1264	888	376
6 Attempts or more	1393	1021	372
Overall Numbers By Attempt			
-----			
TOTL	L.L.	CELL	
----	----	----	
0	558	419	139
1	6760	5365	1395
2	6428	5216	1212
3	5495	4708	787
4	3316	2777	539
5	1579	1121	458
6 Attempts or more	1665	1195	470
Total Contacts			
-----	1432	1092	340
List Badness (Bad Resolved/Total Numbers			
Sent-Fresh):	0.16150	.17130	.1208
Incidence	1.00001	.00001	.0000
Screeners Length of Interview	0.00	0.00	0.00
Main Length of Interview	12.47	12.42	12.63
Total Length of Interview	13.24	13.14	13.52

## Appendix C: Characteristics of Respondents

This appendix presents the demographic characteristics of the 2015 sample as well as a comparison of the 2015 and 1992 samples.

### 2015 Sample

Initial analyses of the sample revealed that respondents in the 2015 sample were much older than the current average age of adults in the United States. Therefore, the sample was weighted based on US Census information about estimated average age of the United States adult population (15 years of age and older) in 2014 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). The demographic characteristics of the 2015 sample presented below were computed after the weight was created and applied to the dataset. Also note that the percentages presented in the write-up might not add to 100% because of rounding procedures. Data presented in the tables was rounded to the tenths decimal place.

**Place of Residence:** Respondents were quite evenly distributed across the different places of residence. Nearly 20% of respondents were from rural areas. Twenty-five percent were from either villages or towns with populations of under 20,000 people. Just under 30% of respondents were from cities between 20,000 and 100,000 people. Eleven percent were from urban areas with populations between 100,000 and 250,000 people. Finally, nearly 15% were from metropolitan areas over 250,000 people.

Type of Area	Percentage
Rural area	19.9
Village or town under 10,000 people	10.9
Town of 10,000 to 20,000 people	14.1
City of 20,000 to 50,000 people	16.1
City of 50,000 to 100,000 people	13.4
Urban area (100,000 to 250,000 people)	10.8
Metropolitan area (over 250,000 people)	14.7

**Household Size:** Nearly a quarter of the sample said that they lived in single person households. Just under 45% said that they lived in a two-person household. Nearly another quarter of respondents said that they had three to four people in their household. The remaining seven percent said that they lived with five or more people.

<b>Household Size</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Single Person	24.3
Two People	44.7
Three to Four People	24.3
Five or More People	6.7

**Age of Respondent:** With the weighting procedure applied, the average age of respondents was 45, with a median of 45 as well. These compared favorably to the overall US adult population wherein the average age of adults (15 years and older) was also 45. The youngest respondent was 15 years of age and the oldest was 97. The age distribution of respondents was as follows:

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Percent</b>
15-19	8.2
20-24	8.9
25-29	8.5
30-34	8.3
35-39	7.7
40-44	8.0
45-49	8.1
50-54	8.7
55-59	8.3
60-64	7.2
65-69	6.0
70-74	4.3
75-79	3.1
80-84	2.3
85 and older	2.4

**Gender:** Females composed over half of the sample (53%). Consequently, 47% were males.



**Personal Health:** Nearly a quarter of respondents said their personal health was excellent, 30% said it was very good, 28% said it was good, 14% said it was fair, and 4.0% said it was poor.

<b>Health Comparison</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Excellent	24.7
Very good	30.0
Good	27.8
Fair	13.5
Poor	4.0

**Marital Status:** Over one-in-two respondents (54%) said that they were married or in a long-term partnership. Nearly 30% of respondents were single (never married). Almost 10% said that they were divorced or separated, while around 7% said they were widows or widowers.

**Level of Formal Education:** The vast majority of the 2015 sample were at least high school graduates. Only 7% said that they had less than 12 years of education. Twenty-three percent said that their highest level of educational achievement was a high school diploma. Twenty-seven percent said that had attended technical or vocation school, or had gone to college but not graduated. Another quarter of respondents said they had graduated from college, but had not completed a graduate degree. Finally, 18% said that they had completed a graduate degree.

<b>Educational Achievement</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Less than 12 years	7.4
High school graduate	22.6
Some college, technical or vocational school	27.0
College graduate/Graduate degree, but no graduate degree	24.7
Graduate degree	18.2

**Employment Status:** The largest percentage of respondents were either employed full-time (45%) or part-time (11%). Only 7% of respondents said that they were unemployed. An additional 22% of respondents classified themselves as retired. Nine percent of the sample were students and 6% of the sample were homemakers.

<b>Employment</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Employed full-time	45.4
Employed part-time	11.2
Unemployed	6.7
Retired	21.8
A student	9.0
A homemaker	5.9

**Disabilities:** Over one in nine respondents (13%) said that they had a personal disability or handicap. Seven percent of respondents said that some else in their household has a disability. The vast majority of respondents (80%) said that neither themselves nor anyone else in their household has a disability or handicap.

<b>Disability Statement</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes you have a disability	12.7
Yes someone else in your household has a disability	6.9
No, no one in your household has a disability	80.4

**Political Affiliation:** Twenty-seven percent of respondents identified as Republicans. Similarly, 28% of respondents stated that they identified themselves as Democrats. The majority (36%) of respondents were politically Independent. The remaining 10% stated that they had an “other” political affiliation (such as “neutral/no party,” “libertarian,” or “bipartisan”).

<b>Political Identity</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Republican	27.1
Democrat	27.6
Independent	35.6
Other (specify _____)	9.7

**Household Income Level:** Total household income during 2014 was well distributed across the income categories. The majority of respondents (51%) fell between the \$20,000 to \$80,000 categories. A smaller percentage of respondents (15%) had a household income below \$20,000 compared to the percentage of respondents (34%) who made \$80,000 or more.

<b>Household Income</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Under \$10,000	6.7
\$10,000 to \$20,000	8.4
\$20,000 to \$40,000	19.2
\$40,000 to \$60,000	16.3
\$60,000 to \$80,000	15.1
\$80,000 to \$100,000	11.8
\$100,000 to \$120,000	7.0
\$120,000 to \$140,000	4.7
Over \$140,000	10.8

**Race/Ethnicity:** Respondents' race/ethnicity status generally reflected the US population at large. The majority of respondents (72%) were white (not of Hispanic origin). Nearly 11% of respondents were black and 10% were Hispanic. Two percent of the respondents were American Indian or Alaska Native, as well as Asian or Pacific Islander. The final 3% classified themselves to be from an "other" race or ethnic background (such as a combination of various races/ethnicities).

<b>Race or Ethnic Status</b>	<b>Sample Percentage</b>
American Indian or Alaska native	1.8
Asian or Pacific Islander	1.9
Black (not of Hispanic origin)	10.5
Hispanic	10.3
White (not of Hispanic origin)	72.3
Other (specify_____)	3.2

## Comparison of the 2015 Sample to the 1992 Sample

This section compares the demographic composition of the 2015 sample and the 1992 sample. There were a number of significant differences between the two samples. Often times, these differences are explained by demographic changes that have occurred in society over the past 25 years.

**Place of Residence:** Respondents in 2015 were less likely than respondents in 1992 to live in areas with smaller populations. These include rural areas, villages, and towns. Respondents in 2015 were therefore more likely to live in cities, urban areas, and metropolitan areas. This trend is understandable due to the shift in the American population to become more urbanized over the past 25 years.

	Rural Area	Village Under 10,000	Town 10,000 to 20,000	City 20,000 to 50,000	City 50,000 to 100,000	Urban area (100,000 to 250,000)	Metropolitan area (over 250,000)
<b>1992 Survey</b>	21	16	16	15	10	9	14
<b>2015 Survey</b>	20	11	14	16	13	11	15

Pearson's Chi-Square: 20.531, p=.002

**Age of Respondent:** Even after weighting the 2015 sample based on age, respondents in 2015 were still older than respondents in 1992. This is evidenced in the percentage of respondents in the 21-35 age bracket (35% in 1992 vs. 27% in 2015) and the 75-95 age bracket (4% in 1992 to 7% in 2015). The average age of respondents in 1992 was 42 years of age compared to 45 in the 2015 sample.

	15-20 Years	21-35 Years	36-55 Years	56-65 Years	66-75 Years	75-95 Years
<b>1992 Survey</b>	7	35	34	11	9	4
<b>2015 Survey</b>	9	27	32	15	9	7

Pearson's Chi-Square: 34.274, p<.001

**Personal Health:** There was a statistically significant difference in self-reported health between the 1992 and 2015 samples. Respondents in 1992 considered themselves slightly healthier than respondents in 2015. This difference can be partially explained by the slightly older population in 2015 compared to 1992.

	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent
<b>1992 Survey</b>	2	11	28	34	26
<b>2015 Survey</b>	4	13	28	30	25

Pearson's Chi-Square: 14.061, p=.007

**Marital Status:** There was no difference in marital status between the two samples. The majority of respondents in both samples said they were married or in a long-term partnership. A nearly identical percentage of respondents in both samples said they were divorced/separated or were a widow/widower. A slightly higher percentage of respondents in 2015 were single compared to respondents in 1992.

	Single (never married)	Married or in a long-term partnership	Divorced/separated	Widow or widower
<b>1992 Survey</b>	27	57	9	7
<b>2015 Survey</b>	30	54	10	7

Pearson's Chi-Square: 3.426, p=.331

**Education Level:** Respondents in 2015 were more highly educated than respondents in 1992. This is most recognizable in the percentage of respondents who had completed a graduate degree. In 1992, 8% of the sample had completed a graduate degree. This percentage jumped to 18% in the 2015 sample. On the other end of the educational achievement scale, 41% of respondents in 1992 said that they had achieved a high school diploma or lower. In 2015, only 30% of the sample said a high school diploma or lower was their highest level of formal education they had completed. The difference between these two surveys is also reflected within society. Over the past 25 years, Americans have become more highly educated, with more and more students achieving undergraduate and graduate degrees.

	Less than 12 years	High School Graduate	Some College, Technical or Vocational School	College Graduate or more than 4 years of College, but no graduate degree	Graduate Degree
<b>1992 Survey</b>	12	29	29	22	8
<b>2015 Survey</b>	7	23	27	25	18

Pearson's Chi-Square: 82.946,  $p < .001$

**Employment Status:** The main difference between the two surveys in regards to employment status is the percentage of respondents who are employed full time and those that are retired. As has already been established, the 2015 sample was significantly older than the 1992 sample. Therefore, it is not surprising that the 2015 sample had a much higher percentage of respondents who said they were retired (22% in 2015 vs. 14% in 1992). Consequently, a higher percentage of respondents in 1992 said that they were employed either full time (52% in 1992 vs. 45% in 2015) or part-time (13% in 1992 vs. 11% in 2015). All other response categories (unemployed, student, and homemaker) had nearly identical percentages in both 1992 and 2015.

	Full Time	Part-Time	Unemployed	Retired	Student	Homemaker
<b>1992 Survey</b>	52	13	6	14	8	8
<b>2015 Survey</b>	45	11	7	22	9	6

Pearson's Chi-Square: 32.464  $p < .001$

**Race/Ethnicity:** The 2015 sample was much more racially/ethnically diverse than the 1992 sample. Most noticeable is the decrease in the percentage of white (non-Hispanic) respondents from 1992 to 2015. In 1992, 85% of the sample was white. In 2015, 72% of the sample was white. Between the 1992 and 2015 samples, there was an increase in the percentage of Hispanic (+7%), black (+2%), and American Indian/Alaska Native (+1%) respondents. Having a more diverse sample in 2015 compared to 1992 is also indicative of the demographic shifts within the United States over the past 25 years.

	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian or Pacific Islander	Black	Hispanic	White	Other
<b>1992 Survey</b>	1	1	8	3	85	1
<b>2015 Survey</b>	2	2	10	10	72	3

Pearson's Chi-Square: 78.837,  $p < .001$

**Personal Disability Status:** A higher percentage of respondents in 2015 reported a personal disability compared to respondents in 1992. Again, this could be partially explained by the older population in 2015.

	Yes	No
<b>1992 Survey</b>	8	92
<b>2015 Survey</b>	13	87

Pearson's Chi Square: 17.146,  $p < .001$

**Political Affiliation:** Respondents in 2015 were much more likely to be politically "Independent" than respondents in 1992. Likewise, the 2015 sample had a smaller percentage of Republicans and Democrats than the 1992 sample. Current national data on political identity substantiates the 2015 sample distribution. The data indicates that around 40% of adult Americans consider themselves politically Independent, with just under 30% of respondents identifying as either Republican and another 30% identifying as Democrat ("Party Affiliation," n.d.)

	Republican	Democrat	Independent	Other
<b>1992 Survey</b>	33	29	25	13
<b>2015 Survey</b>	27	28	36	10

Pearson's Chi-Square: 29.948,  $p < .001$

**Household Income:** Comparing raw data about annual household income between the 1992 and 2015 surveys should be interpreted with caution. As can be expected, respondents in 2015 reported a much higher household income than respondents in 1992. Although part of this is undoubtedly due to inflation over the past 25 years, it can also be inferred that Americans today proportionally make more money than Americans in 1992.

	<b>\$0 to \$40,000</b>	<b>\$40,000 to \$80,000</b>	<b>Over \$80,000</b>
<b>1992 Survey</b>	61	30	9
<b>2015 Survey</b>	34	31	34
Pearson's Chi-Square: 242.065, $p < .001$			



## Appendix D: Crosstab Comparison Tables for Key Variables

Note: For each cross-tabulation, a Pearson's chi-square statistic was calculated. Statistically significant comparisons are signified by asterisks. The significance values are as follows: \*p<.05, \*\*p<.01, \*\*\*p<.001. Comparisons that were not significant were labeled "NS."

There were two types of cross-tabulations:

1. Cross-tabulations using the variable of interest and the survey iteration (1992 or 2015). These comparisons show differences between the two surveys. This comparison can be seen below labeled "Total Sample." A horizontal border is also included to show the comparison is occurring across the two time periods.
2. Cross-tabulations were also conducted within each survey iteration. These cross-tabulations utilized the variable of interest (i.e. Q1) and a demographic variable (i.e. Gender). Significant comparisons are denoted for both the 1992 and 2015 samples. For example, as seen below, the response to having a park, playground, or open space within walking distance of the home differed significantly by gender in 1992, but not 2015. Therefore, next to "Gender" was written "\*\*\* / NS."

### 1. Is there a park, playground, or open space within walking distance of your home?

Live Within Walking Distance of Park/Playground				
	1992		2015	
	% No	% Yes	% No	% Yes
<b>Total Sample*</b>	29	71	32	68
<b>Gender** / NS</b>				
Male	25	75	30	70
Female	31	69	35	65
<b>Age*** / *</b>				
15-20	16	84	25	75
21-35	26	74	28	72
36-55	27	73	32	68
56-65	35	65	33	67
66-75	36	64	38	62
76-95	44	56	45	55
<b>Level of Education*** / ***</b>				
High school or less	35	65	37	63
Some college to college graduate	25	75	34	66
Graduate degree	21	79	20	80
<b>Income* / *</b>				
\$0 to \$40,000	31	69	33	67
\$40,000 to \$80,000	24	76	34	66
Over \$80,000	22	78	25	75
<b>Marital Status*** / ***</b>				
Single (never married)	23	77	23	77
Married or in a long-term partnership	30	70	33	67
Divorced/separated	24	76	38	63
Widow or widower	45	55	53	47

	1992		2015	
	% No	% Yes	% No	% Yes
<b>Political Affiliation*/NS</b>				
Republican	26	74	31	69
Democrat	34	66	33	67
Independent	24	76	29	71
Other	27	73	34	66
<b>Size of Household NS/**</b>				
Single Person	30	70	42	58
Two people	30	70	33	69
Three to four people	28	72	23	77
Five or more people	23	77	24	76
<b>Size of Community***/**</b>				
Rural area/Village under 10,000	36	64	48	52
Town of 10,000 to 50,000	22	78	26	74
City of 50,000 to 100,000	31	69	22	78
Metropolitan area (over 100,000)	25	75	24	76
<b>Race/Ethnicity 1 NS/*</b>				
White	29	71	34	66
Non-White	25	75	28	72
<b>Race/Ethnicity 2 NS/**</b>				
White	29	71	34	66
Black	26	74	37	63
Hispanic	21	79	24	76
Other	26	74	19	81
<b>Personal Disability Status – Both*/NS</b>				
Yes	37	63	37	63
No	28	72	32	68
<b>Personal Disability Status – 2015 NS</b>				
Yes, you have a disability	N/A	N/A	37	63
Yes, someone else in your household has a disability	N/A	N/A	29	71
No, no one in your household has a disability	N/A	N/A	32	68
<b>Employment Status**/**</b>				
Employed Fulltime	26	74	30	70
Employed Part-time	25	75	27	73
Unemployed	30	70	44	56
Retired	37	63	40	60
Student	23	77	24	76
Homemaker	39	61	29	71
<b>Program User - **/**</b>				
Has ever participated in programs	21	79	26	74
Have never participated in programs	37	63	41	59

Crosstab significance levels: \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001, NS = Not significant

**2. How often do you personally use your local park areas for any purpose? These areas would include any public parks, playgrounds, and other open space in your community.**

Extent of Personal Park Use						
	1992			2015		
	% Not at All	% Occasionally	% Frequently	% Not at All	% Occasionally	% Frequently
<b>Total Sample**</b>	25	51	24	30	44	26
<b>Gender NS/NS</b>						
Male	24	52	25	29	46	25
Female	27	49	24	31	43	26
<b>Age***/**</b>						
15-20	20	57	23	25	48	26
21-35	18	56	25	21	45	34
36-55	22	53	25	29	47	25
56-65	38	42	21	32	46	22
66-75	39	35	26	43	37	20
76-95	56	29	15	53	35	12
<b>Level of Education***/**</b>						
High school or less	31	49	20	35	45	19
Some college to college graduate	22	52	26	31	42	27
Graduate School	20	51	29	16	51	33
<b>Income NS/**</b>						
\$0 to \$40,000	27	51	23	34	41	25
\$40,000 to \$80,000	20	53	27	24	47	29
Over \$80,000	27	50	24	20	50	30
<b>Marital Status***/**</b>						
Single (never married)	22	56	22	27	48	25
Married or in a long-term partnership	25	50	26	26	47	27
Divorced/separated	24	50	26	36	33	31
Widow or widower	47	38	15	56	29	15
<b>Political Affiliation NS/NS</b>						
Republican	25	51	23	29	46	25
Democrat	28	50	24	31	43	26
Independent	20	53	27	27	43	30
Other	27	49	24	22	43	35
<b>Size of Household***/**</b>						
Single Person	39	41	21	40	37	23
Two people	31	47	22	26	45	28
Three to four people	19	54	26	31	45	24
Five or more people	16	60	24	13	63	24

	1992			2015		
	% Not at All	% Occasionally	% Frequently	% Not at All	% Occasionally	% Frequently
<b>Size of Community NS/**</b>						
Rural area/Village under 10,000	28	47	26	38	40	22
Town of 10,000 to 50,000	25	52	23	25	50	25
City of 50,000 to 100,000	27	54	20	27	45	27
Metropolitan area (over 100,000)	21	53	26	28	43	29
<b>Race/Ethnicity 1 NS/NS</b>						
White	26	49	25	29	44	27
Non-White	22	58	20	31	46	23
<b>Race/Ethnicity 2 NS/*</b>						
White	26	49	25	29	44	27
Black	29	52	19	42	44	14
Hispanic	10	69	21	24	47	29
Other	18	60	22	26	45	29
<b>Personal Disability Status – Both***/**</b>						
Yes	42	41	17	49	33	19
No	24	51	25	27	46	27
<b>Personal Disability Status – 2015***</b>						
Yes, you have a disability	N/A	N/A	N/A	49	33	19
Yes, someone else in your household has a disability	N/A	N/A	N/A	27	53	20
No, no one in your household has a disability	N/A	N/A	N/A	27	46	27
<b>Employment Status***/**</b>						
Employed Fulltime	21	56	23	23	51	26
Employed Part-time	22	49	29	28	42	30
Unemployed	26	43	31	32	44	24
Retired	41	38	21	49	34	17
Student	21	56	22	20	46	34
Homemaker	30	47	23	24	38	38
<b>Program User***/**</b>						
Has ever participated in programs	19	53	28	21	47	32
Have never participated in programs	33	47	20	44	41	16

Crosstab significance levels: \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001, NS = Not significant

**3. Now please think about the benefits of public parks. By benefit we mean anything good that happens because public parks are there. To what degree do you feel you personally benefit from your local park areas?**

Extent of Personal Benefits						
	1992			2015		
	% Not at All	% Somewhat	% A Great Deal	% Not at All	% Somewhat	% A Great Deal
<b>Total Sample***</b>	16	47	37	17	37	46
<b>Gender NA/NA</b>						
Male	17	48	35	16	40	44
Female	16	46	38	18	34	48
<b>Age***/**</b>						
15-20	12	66	21	12	48	40
21-35	10	50	40	10	39	52
36-55	14	44	41	20	30	51
56-65	30	40	30	15	39	45
66-75	26	40	34	24	39	37
76-95	31	44	24	35	36	29
<b>Level of Education***/**</b>						
High school or less	20	50	30	24	42	34
Some college to college graduate	14	44	42	16	39	46
Graduate degree	11	48	40	9	23	68
<b>Income NA/**</b>						
\$0 to \$40,000	17	47	36	19	39	41
\$40,000 to \$80,000	14	48	38	14	36	50
Over \$80,000	16	46	39	13	31	56
<b>Marital Status**/**</b>						
Single (never married)	14	52	34	11	45	44
Married or in a long-term partnership	17	45	38	16	33	50
Divorced/separated	13	52	35	21	34	46
Widow or widower	30	33	37	39	31	30
<b>Political Affiliation NS/**</b>						
Republican	15	52	33	23	37	40
Democrat	17	42	41	18	31	51
Independent	16	48	36	12	39	49
Other	17	44	39	13	24	63
<b>Size of Household***/**</b>						
Single Person	24	41	35	26	36	37
Two people	19	48	33	13	37	51
Three to four people	13	47	40	17	33	50
Five or more people	10	51	38	11	50	39

	1992			2015		
	% Not at All	% Somewhat	% A Great Deal	% Not at All	% Somewhat	% A Great Deal
<b>Size of Community**/**</b>						
Rural area/Village under 10,000	22	44	35	23	41	36
Town of 10,000 to 50,000	13	49	37	12	36	53
City of 50,000 to 100,000	15	50	35	14	35	51
Metropolitan area (over 100,000)	12	48	41	17	36	48
<b>Race/Ethnicity 1 NS/*</b>						
White	17	46	37	17	35	49
Non-White	14	52	34	17	43	40
<b>Race/Ethnicity 2 NS/*</b>						
White	17	46	37	17	35	49
Black	14	51	35	22	44	33
Hispanic	15	51	33	15	41	44
Other	14	54	32	13	43	43
<b>Personal Disability Status – Both NS/*</b>						
Yes	21	43	36	26	34	40
No	16	47	37	16	37	47
<b>Personal Disability Status – 2015**</b>						
Yes, you have a disability	N/A	N/A	N/A	26	34	40
Yes, someone else in your household has a disability	N/A	N/A	N/A	28	29	43
No, no one in your household has a disability	N/A	N/A	N/A	15	38	48
<b>Employment Status**/**</b>						
Employed Fulltime	15	47	38	13	36	51
Employed Part-time	12	51	35	15	40	44
Unemployed	14	51	35	27	35	39
Retired	27	41	32	28	37	35
Student	12	54	34	11	45	44
Homemaker	14	45	41	11	26	64
<b>Park User Status ***/**</b>						
User	6	49	44	5	37	58
Non-user	46	40	14	44	36	20
<b>Program User***/**</b>						
Has ever participated in programs	9	47	44	9	34	57
Have never participated in programs	25	47	28	29	40	31

Crosstab significance levels: \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001, NS = Not significant

**4. Now I would like you to think about other members of your household; this would include a spouse, children, relatives, friends or anyone else who lives with you. How often do other members of your household use your local park areas?**

Extent of Park Use by Household Members						
	1992			2015		
	% Not at All	% Occasionally	% Frequently	% Not at All	% Occasionally	% Frequently
<b>Total Sample NS</b>	26	49	25	24	47	29
<b>Gender*/NS</b>						
Male	28	51	20	22	50	28
Female	24	48	28	26	45	29
<b>Age***/**</b>						
15-20	39	42	19	23	44	33
21-35	19	55	25	19	51	30
36-55	20	50	31	19	51	30
56-65	44	44	12	28	42	29
66-75	39	39	22	43	35	23
76-95	53	30	17	47	42	12
<b>Level of Education*/**</b>						
High school or less	31	45	23	33	49	19
Some college to college graduate	22	52	25	22	48	30
Graduate degree	21	50	29	15	45	41
<b>Income NS/**</b>						
\$0 to \$40,000	27	47	26	30	43	26
\$40,000 to \$80,000	20	56	25	22	46	32
Over \$80,000	25	48	27	15	50	35
<b>Marital Status***/**</b>						
Single (never married)	33	52	16	26	50	25
Married or in a long-term partnership	23	50	27	20	50	29
Divorced/separated	26	43	31	32	27	40
Widow or widower	39	42	18	44	31	25
<b>Political Affiliation*/almost*</b>						
Republican	23	57	20	28	47	25
Democrat	29	45	26	19	53	28
Independent	23	48	29	23	46	31
Other	29	44	27	14	48	38
<b>Size of Household***/**</b>						
Single Person	50	32	18	32	38	30
Two people	37	49	14	24	48	28
Three to four people	20	53	27	27	44	29
Five or more people	16	45	39	4	68	28

	1992			2015		
	% Not at All	% Occasionally	% Frequently	% Not at All	% Occasionally	% Frequently
<b>Size of Community NS/*</b>						
Rural area/Village under 10,000	28	47	25	29	47	24
Town of 10,000 to 50,000	25	51	24	26	48	27
City of 50,000 to 100,000	23	53	25	15	53	32
Metropolitan area (over 100,000)	27	49	24	20	46	34
<b>Race/Ethnicity 1 NS/NS</b>						
White	26	49	25	24	48	28
Non-White	25	49	26	22	47	31
<b>Race/Ethnicity 2 NS/**</b>						
White	26	49	25	24	48	28
Black	29	47	24	23	61	16
Hispanic	20	54	26	21	39	40
Other	21	49	30	23	38	39
<b>Personal Disability Status – Both NS/*</b>						
Yes	28	44	28	36	43	21
No	26	50	24	22	48	30
<b>Personal Disability Status – 2015 *</b>						
Yes, you have a disability	N/A	N/A	N/A	36	43	21
Yes, someone else in your household has a disability	N/A	N/A	N/A	27	50	23
No, no one in your household has a disability	N/A	N/A	N/A	22	48	30
<b>Employment Status**/**</b>						
Employed Fulltime	22	51	27	16	51	34
Employed Part-time	31	48	21	23	49	28
Unemployed	28	52	20	40	45	15
Retired	40	43	18	42	37	21
Student	34	46	20	18	59	23
Homemaker	18	54	29	23	37	40
<b>Program User ***/**</b>						
Has ever participated in programs	21	53	27	20	45	36
Have never participated in programs	32	45	22	32	51	17

Crosstab significance levels: \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001, NS = Not significant



## 5. To what degree do you feel the members of your household benefit from your local park areas?

Extent of Benefits to Household Members						
1992			2015			
	% Not at All	% Somewhat	% A Great Deal	% Not at All	% Somewhat	% A Great Deal
<b>Total Sample***</b>	21	48	31	19	40	41
<b>Gender***/*</b>						
Male	23	52	25	17	44	39
Female	19	45	36	20	36	44
<b>Age***/**</b>						
15-20	31	59	10	11	65	24
21-35	16	51	33	17	38	45
36-55	16	45	39	16	35	49
56-65	33	45	23	20	38	42
66-75	31	40	29	32	36	31
76-95	45	38	17	37	47	16
<b>Level of Education***/**</b>						
High school or less	28	46	27	26	47	28
Some college to college graduate	16	49	35	17	40	44
Graduate degree	15	53	32	11	31	58
<b>Income NS/**</b>						
\$0 to \$40,000	22	46	32	26	42	32
\$40,000 to \$80,000	18	50	32	16	35	49
Over \$80,000	13	54	33	10	41	50
<b>Marital Status***/**</b>						
Single (never married)	27	56	17	19	46	35
Married or in a long-term partnership	18	47	35	15	39	45
Divorced/separated	17	43	40	25	32	43
Widow or widower	42	24	33	41	34	25
<b>Political Affiliation NS/**</b>						
Republican	19	52	29	21	45	34
Democrat	22	45	33	17	37	46
Independent	19	49	32	16	39	45
Other	22	45	33	16	26	58
<b>Size of Household***/**</b>						
Single Person	48	34	17	30	39	32
Two people	28	49	23	18	38	44
Three to four people	16	49	35	18	43	39
Five or more people	14	46	41	8	48	44

	1992			2015		
	% Not at All	% Somewhat	% A Great Deal	% Not at All	% Somewhat	% A Great Deal
<b>Size of Community NS/*</b>						
Rural area/Village under 10,000	25	44	32	23	44	33
Town of 10,000 to 50,000	18	50	32	19	38	43
City of 50,000 to 100,000	15	53	32	14	37	49
Metropolitan area (over 100,000)	21	50	29	15	41	44
<b>Race/Ethnicity 1 NS/NS</b>						
White	20	48	31	18	39	43
Non-White	24	45	31	18	44	38
<b>Race/Ethnicity 2 NS/NS</b>						
White	20	48	31	18	39	43
Black	27	42	31	18	51	31
Hispanic	18	56	26	14	40	46
Other	23	40	36	23	41	36
<b>Personal Disability Status – Both NS/**</b>						
Yes	23	35	42	29	41	30
No	21	49	31	17	40	43
<b>Personal Disability Status – 2015 *</b>						
Yes, you have a disability	N/A	N/A	N/A	29	41	30
Yes, someone else in your household has a disability	N/A	N/A	N/A	23	36	41
No, no one in your household has a disability	N/A	N/A	N/A	17	40	43
<b>Employment Status*** /***</b>						
Employed Fulltime	19	46	35	11	41	48
Employed Part-time	21	55	24	23	36	41
Unemployed	23	46	31	39	39	21
Retired	31	43	25	33	37	30
Student	26	56	18	12	52	37
Homemaker	12	46	41	17	30	53
<b>Park User Status *** /***</b>						
User	13	51	36	9	41	51
Non-user	46	39	15	47	38	15
<b>Program User*** /***</b>						
Has ever participated in programs	16	49	35	13	37	50
Have never participated in programs	27	47	27	27	45	28

Crosstab significance levels: \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001, NS = Not significant

**6. Now I would like you to think of your community as a whole; that is, the village, town or city where you live. To what degree do you feel your community as a whole benefits from your local park areas?**

Extent of Benefits to Community						
1992			2015			
	% Not at All	% Somewhat	% A Great Deal	% Not at All	% Somewhat	% A Great Deal
<b>Total Sample**</b>	6	33	61	8	29	63
<b>Gender*/NS</b>						
Male	5	37	58	9	32	60
Female	6	30	64	8	26	66
<b>Age*/*</b>						
15-20	8	43	49	6	37	58
21-35	5	35	60	5	33	62
36-55	4	33	63	10	24	66
56-65	10	29	61	7	26	66
66-75	7	23	70	13	25	62
76-95	6	36	58	13	30	57
<b>Level of Education**/***</b>						
High school or less	8	34	58	11	36	54
Some college to college graduate	4	32	64	8	30	63
Graduate degree	1	32	67	5	16	79
<b>Income NS/*</b>						
\$0 to \$40,000	7	32	61	10	29	61
\$40,000 to \$80,000	3	35	62	6	30	63
Over \$80,000	4	37	59	5	25	70
<b>Marital Status NS/***</b>						
Single (never married)	6	36	59	5	33	62
Married or in a long-term partnership	6	31	63	7	26	67
Divorced/separated	6	37	57	12	26	62
Widow or widower	5	31	64	16	37	47
<b>Political Affiliation NS/NS</b>						
Republican	5	32	62	9	33	58
Democrat	6	33	61	6	25	69
Independent	6	34	60	7	27	66
Other	5	34	61	8	28	64
<b>Size of Household NS/***</b>						
Single Person	7	29	65	13	33	53
Two people	7	31	62	7	30	63
Three to four people	5	34	62	7	18	75
Five or more people	4	41	55	1	39	59

	1992			2015		
	% Not at All	% Somewhat	% A Great Deal	% Not at All	% Somewhat	% A Great Deal
<b>Size of Community***/**</b>						
Rural area/Village under 10,000	11	31	59	12	34	54
Town of 10,000 to 50,000	3	35	61	7	26	67
City of 50,000 to 100,000	2	36	62	5	28	67
Metropolitan area (over 100,000)	2	34	65	6	26	67
<b>Race/Ethnicity 1 NS/**</b>						
White	5	33	62	8	26	65
Non-White	9	34	57	7	37	56
<b>Race/Ethnicity 2 NS/**</b>						
White	5	33	62	8	26	65
Black	9	39	52	11	38	50
Hispanic	5	29	66	4	37	58
Other	10	29	61	4	34	62
<b>Personal Disability Status – Both NS/NS</b>						
Yes	8	28	65	10	29	62
No	5	33	61	8	29	64
<b>Personal Disability Status – 2015 NS</b>						
Yes, you have a disability	N/A	N/A	N/A	10	29	62
Yes, someone else in your household has a disability	N/A	N/A	N/A	14	27	59
No, no one in your household has a disability	N/A	N/A	N/A	7	29	64
<b>Employment Status NS/**</b>						
Employed Fulltime	6	33	61	5	29	66
Employed Part-time	6	34	60	9	32	59
Unemployed	4	34	62	20	29	51
Retired	7	27	66	13	28	59
Student	4	37	59	4	34	62
Homemaker	4	37	59	5	15	80
<b>Park User Status ***/**</b>						
User	4	32	64	3	27	70
Non-user	11	36	53	20	32	48
<b>Program User***/**</b>						
Has ever participated in programs	4	30	67	3	24	73
Have never participated in programs	8	37	55	15	36	49

Crosstab significance levels: \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001, NS = Not significant

**7. Next, we'd like to know about your participation in any recreation activities organized by your local government's recreation and parks department. This would include such things as sports leagues, educational or instructional classes, and special artistic or cultural events in your community. During the past 12 months, have you participated in any recreation or leisure activity that was sponsored by or took place on areas or facilities managed by your local government's recreation and parks department?**

Individual Participation in Locally Sponsored Programs in the Last 12 Months				
1992			2015	
	% No	% Yes	% No	% Yes
<b>Total Sample NS</b>	70	30	68	32
<b>Gender NS/NS</b>				
Male	69	31	70	30
Female	70	30	66	34
<b>Age***/**</b>				
15-20	61	39	81	19
21-35	67	33	69	31
36-55	66	34	59	41
56-65	80	20	69	31
66-75	82	18	70	30
76-95	89	11	82	18
<b>Level of Education***/**</b>				
High school or less	75	24	75	25
Some college to college graduate	67	33	70	30
Graduate degree	62	38	48	52
<b>Income***/**</b>				
\$0 to \$40,000	73	27	72	28
\$40,000 to \$80,000	62	38	62	38
Over \$80,000	72	28	61	39
<b>Marital Status***/**</b>				
Single (never married)	70	30	74	26
Married or in a long-term partnership	69	31	62	38
Divorced/separated	61	39	74	26
Widow or widower	90	10	80	20
<b>Political Affiliation NS/NS</b>				
Republican	66	34	67	33
Democrat	74	26	68	32
Independent	69	31	67	33
Other	71	29	64	36
<b>Size of Household***/**</b>				
Single Person	80	20	76	24
Two people	73	27	64	36
Three to four people	64	36	69	31
Five or more people	69	31	66	34

	1992		2015	
	% No	% Yes	% No	% Yes
<b>Size of Community NS/NS</b>				
Rural area/Village under 10,000	70	30	71	29
Town of 10,000 to 50,000	70	30	64	36
City of 50,000 to 100,000	70	30	65	35
Metropolitan area (over 100,000)	69	31	70	30
<b>Race/Ethnicity 1 NS/NS</b>				
White	69	31	67	33
Non-White	75	25	71	29
<b>Race/Ethnicity 2 NS/NS</b>				
White	69	31	67	33
Black	76	24	75	25
Hispanic	64	26	67	33
Other	80	20	70	30
<b>Personal Disability Status – Both NS/**</b>				
Yes	77	23	78	22
No	69	31	66	34
<b>Personal Disability Status – 2015 *</b>				
Yes, you have a disability	N/A	N/A	78	22
Yes, someone else in your household has a disability	N/A	N/A	68	32
No, no one in your household has a disability	N/A	N/A	66	34
<b>Employment Status**/**</b>				
Employed Fulltime	68	32	62	38
Employed Part-time	70	30	77	23
Unemployed	64	36	76	24
Retired	81	19	74	26
Student	62	38	72	29
Homemaker	75	25	57	43

Crosstab significance levels: \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001, NS = Not significant

**(If respondent answers “no” to Question #7): have you ever participated in any recreation activities organized by your local recreation and parks department?**

Individual Participation in Locally Sponsored Programs - Ever				
	1992		2015	
	% No	% Yes	% No	% Yes
<b>Total Sample*</b>	65	35	59	41
<b>Gender NA/NA</b>				
Male	62	38	58	42
Female	67	33	60	40
<b>Age*/NA</b>				
15-20	52	48	70	30
21-35	60	40	60	40
36-55	68	32	58	42
56-65	68	32	55	45
66-75	67	33	59	41
76-95	76	24	54	46
<b>Level of Education**/**</b>				
High school or less	70	30	69	31
Some college to college graduate	61	39	56	44
Graduate degree	54	46	48	52
<b>Income NA/NA</b>				
\$0 to \$40,000	66	34	62	38
\$40,000 to \$80,000	61	39	56	44
Over \$80,000	66	34	51	49
<b>Marital Status NA/NA</b>				
Single (never married)	58	42	64	36
Married or in a long-term partnership	68	32	55	45
Divorced/separated	64	36	59	41
Widow or widower	68	32	64	36
<b>Political Affiliation*/NA</b>				
Republican	63	37	58	42
Democrat	71	29	61	39
Independent	59	41	54	46
Other	65	35	52	48
<b>Size of Household NA/*</b>				
Single Person	64	36	64	36
Two people	69	31	60	40
Three to four people	65	35	51	49
Five or more people	56	44	65	35

	1992		2015	
	% No	% Yes	% No	% Yes
<b>Size of Community*/***</b>				
Rural area/Village under 10,000	69	31	67	33
Town of 10,000 to 50,000	67	33	50	50
City of 50,000 to 100,000	63	37	49	51
Metropolitan area (over 100,000)	56	44	63	37
<b>Race/Ethnicity 1 NA/*</b>				
White	64	36	57	43
Non-White	69	31	65	35
<b>Race/Ethnicity 2 NA/*</b>				
White	64	36	57	43
Black	64	36	66	34
Hispanic	80	20	71	29
Other	70	30	54	46
<b>Personal Disability Status – Both NA/NA</b>				
Yes	70	30	64	36
No	64	36	59	41
<b>Personal Disability Status – 2015 NA</b>				
Yes, you have a disability	N/A	N/A	64	36
Yes, someone else in your household has a disability	N/A	N/A	55	45
No, no one in your household has a disability	N/A	N/A	59	41
<b>Employment Status NA/***</b>				
Employed Fulltime	63	37	55	45
Employed Part-time	64	36	63	37
Unemployed	55	45	86	14
Retired	67	33	59	41
Student	67	33	64	36
Homemaker	79	21	35	65

Crosstab significance levels: \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001, NS = Not significant



**7a. (If no to Question 7) Even though you haven't participated directly in any services of your local recreation and parks department during the past year, do you think you receive any benefit from the fact that your community has such services?**

Non-Users: Benefits from the Fact That Community Has P & R Services				
	1992		2015	
	% No	% Yes	% No	% Yes
<b>Total Sample***</b>	29	71	40	60
<b>Gender NS/NS</b>				
Male	27	73	36	64
Female	31	69	43	57
<b>Age NS/NS</b>				
15-20	34	66	49	51
21-35	32	68	38	62
36-55	24	76	36	64
56-65	32	68	35	65
66-75	31	69	45	55
76-95	38	62	44	56
<b>Level of Education*** /***</b>				
High school or less	37	63	47	53
Some college to college graduate	24	76	37	63
Graduate degree	18	82	26	74
<b>Income*/NS</b>				
\$0 to \$40,000	32	68	39	61
\$40,000 to \$80,000	22	78	42	58
Over \$80,000	22	78	33	67
<b>Marital Status*/*</b>				
Single (never married)	36	64	39	61
Married or in a long-term partnership	26	74	38	62
Divorced/separated	26	74	34	66
Widow or widower	35	65	58	42
<b>Political Affiliation NS/NS</b>				
Republican	26	74	39	61
Democrat	27	73	44	56
Independent	32	68	36	64
Other	34	66	30	70
<b>Size of Household NS/**</b>				
Single Person	34	66	50	50
Two people	27	73	36	64
Three to four people	29	71	35	65
Five or more people	28	72	35	65

	1992		2015	
	% No	% Yes	% No	% Yes
<b>Size of Community*/*</b>				
Rural area/Village under 10,000	36	64	44	56
Town of 10,000 to 50,000	28	72	39	61
City of 50,000 to 100,000	26	74	28	72
Metropolitan area (over 100,000)	24	76	39	61
<b>Race/Ethnicity 1 NS/NS</b>				
White	29	71	39	61
Non-White	33	67	40	60
<b>Race/Ethnicity 2 NS/NS</b>				
White	29	71	39	61
Black	32	68	48	52
Hispanic	44	56	35	65
Other	28	72	35	65
<b>Personal Disability Status – Both NS/NS</b>				
Yes	34	66	43	57
No	29	71	38	62
<b>Personal Disability Status – 2015 NS</b>				
Yes, you have a disability	N/A	N/A	43	57
Yes, someone else in your household has a disability	N/A	N/A	49	51
No, no one in your household has a disability	N/A	N/A	37	63
<b>Employment Status NS/*</b>				
Employed Fulltime	27	73	32	68
Employed Part-time	32	68	40	60
Unemployed	33	68	42	58
Retired	34	66	45	55
Student	34	66	51	49
Homemaker	25	75	39	61

Crosstab significance levels: \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001, NS = Not significant

**10. Did any other members of your household participate in any recreation or leisure activity during the past 12 months that was sponsored by or took place on areas or facilities managed by your local recreation and parks department?**

Household Member Participation in Locally Sponsored Programs				
	1992		2015	
	% No	% Yes	% No	% Yes
<b>Total Sample***</b>	63	37	71	29
<b>Gender NS/NS</b>				
Male	65	35	73	27
Female	62	38	70	30
<b>Age***/**</b>				
15-20	67	33	92	8
21-35	66	34	74	26
36-55	52	48	64	36
56-65	78	22	65	35
66-75	78	22	74	26
76-95	77	23	81	19
<b>Level of Education**/**</b>				
High school or less	69	31	80	20
Some college to college graduate	60	40	69	31
Graduate degree	52	48	64	36
<b>Income***/NS</b>				
\$0 to \$40,000	67	33	73	27
\$40,000 to \$80,000	56	44	71	29
Over \$80,000	57	43	64	36
<b>Marital Status***/**</b>				
Single (never married)	73	27	84	16
Married or in a long-term partnership	61	39	66	34
Divorced/separated	53	47	63	37
Widow or widower	67	33	72	28
<b>Political Affiliation***/NS</b>				
Republican	56	44	72	28
Democrat	70	30	71	29
Independent	62	38	69	31
Other	70	30	73	27
<b>Size of Household***/NS</b>				
Single Person	75	25	79	21
Two people	76	24	69	31
Three to four people	57	43	74	26
Five or more people	53	47	65	35

	1992		2015	
	% No	% Yes	% No	% Yes
<b>Size of Community NS/NS</b>				
Rural area/Village under 10,000	64	36	74	26
Town of 10,000 to 50,000	63	37	67	33
City of 50,000 to 100,000	65	35	68	32
Metropolitan area (over 100,000)	61	39	75	25
<b>Race/Ethnicity 1 NS/*</b>				
White	62	38	69	31
Non-White	69	31	76	24
<b>Race/Ethnicity 2 NS/*</b>				
White	62	38	69	31
Black	68	32	70	30
Hispanic	66	34	83	17
Other	72	28	75	25
<b>Personal Disability Status – Both NS/NS</b>				
Yes	57	43	66	34
No	64	36	72	28
<b>Personal Disability Status – 2015 NS</b>				
Yes, you have a disability	N/A	N/A	66	34
Yes, someone else in your household has a disability	N/A	N/A	68	32
No, no one in your household has a disability	N/A	N/A	72	28
<b>Employment Status*/**</b>				
Employed Fulltime	60	40	67	33
Employed Part-time	69	31	68	32
Unemployed	63	37	80	20
Retired	74	26	76	24
Student	64	36	86	14
Homemaker	59	41	67	33
<b>Program User***/**</b>				
Has ever participated in programs	47	53	60	40
Have never participated in programs	84	16	91	9

Crosstab significance levels: \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001, NS = Not significant

**14. The next questions deal with funding sources for local recreation and park services. On the average, people in the United States pay about (\$70.00 per person per year: 2015; \$45.00 per person per year: 1992) in local taxes for recreation and park services. The amount you actually pay may be more or less, but \$70.00/\$45.00 is the national average. Do you feel that your local recreation and park services are worth \$70.00/\$45.00 per member of your household each year?**

Recreation and Park Services are Worth \$45/\$70 per Member of Household				
	1992 (\$45)		2015 (\$70)	
	No	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Total Sample NS</b>	24	76	21	79
<b>Gender*/NS</b>				
Male	20	80	22	78
Female	26	74	21	79
<b>Age NS/**</b>				
15-20	33	67	38	62
21-35	24	76	23	77
36-55	20	80	18	82
56-65	29	71	16	84
66-75	23	77	19	81
76-95	24	76	22	78
<b>Level of Education**/**</b>				
High school or less	28	72	29	71
Some college to college graduate	21	79	21	79
Graduate degree	15	85	9	91
<b>Income NS/**</b>				
\$0 to \$40,000	25	75	24	76
\$40,000 to \$80,000	23	77	18	82
Over \$80,000	15	85	14	86
<b>Marital Status NS/**</b>				
Single (never married)	24	76	29	71
Married or in a long-term partnership	25	75	16	84
Divorced/separated	18	82	23	77
Widow or widower	24	76	25	75
<b>Political Affiliation NS/NS</b>				
Republican	21	79	22	78
Democrat	25	75	20	80
Independent	22	78	20	80
Other	25	75	17	83
<b>Size of Household**/**</b>				
Single Person	16	84	31	69
Two people	22	78	17	83
Three to four people	26	74	20	80
Five or more people	30	70	18	82

	1992 (\$45)		2015 (\$70)	
	No	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Size of Community NS/**</b>				
Rural area/Village under 10,000	26	74	28	72
Town of 10,000 to 50,000	21	79	15	85
City of 50,000 to 100,000	21	79	14	86
Metropolitan area (over 100,000)	23	77	26	74
<b>Race/Ethnicity 1**/**</b>				
White	22	78	18	82
Non-White	33	67	28	72
<b>Race/Ethnicity 2**/**</b>				
White	22	78	18	82
Black	39	61	26	74
Hispanic	32	68	31	69
Other	21	79	26	74
<b>Personal Disability Status – Both NS/NS</b>				
Yes	17	83	24	76
No	24	76	21	79
<b>Personal Disability Status – 2015 NS</b>				
Yes, you have a disability	N/A	N/A	24	76
Yes, someone else in your household has a disability	N/A	N/A	26	74
No, no one in your household has a disability	N/A	N/A	20	80
<b>Employment Status*/**</b>				
Employed Fulltime	22	78	17	83
Employed Part-time	29	71	22	78
Unemployed	14	86	32	68
Retired	22	78	22	78
Student	23	77	32	68
Homemaker	34	66	18	82
<b>Program User***/**</b>				
Has ever participated in programs	19	81	13	87
Have never participated in programs	29	71	33	67
<b>Park User Status***/**</b>				
User	20	80	16	84
Non-user	36	64	33	67

Crosstab significance levels: \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001, NS = Not significant

## Park and Recreation Services Worth Less, Worth the Value, or Worth More

Park and Recreation Services Worth Less, Worth the Value, or Worth More						
	1992			2015		
	Worth less than \$45	Worth \$45	Worth more than \$45	Worth less than \$70	Worth \$70	Worth more than \$70
<b>Total Sample***</b>	24	30	46	21	48	31
<b>Gender***/NS</b>						
Male	21	25	55	22	44	34
Female	26	34	40	21	51	29
<b>Age***/**</b>						
15-20	33	36	31	38	38	25
21-35	24	28	49	23	52	26
36-55	20	27	52	18	45	37
56-65	29	30	41	16	48	36
66-75	23	42	35	19	47	35
76-95	24	41	35	22	60	18
<b>Level of Education***/**</b>						
High school or less	28	36	35	29	52	19
Some college to college graduate	21	27	52	21	46	33
Graduate degree	15	20	65	9	43	48
<b>Income***/**</b>						
\$0 to \$40,000	25	33	42	24	54	22
\$40,000 to \$80,000	23	24	54	18	45	37
Over \$80,000	15	18	67	14	42	44
<b>Marital Status*/**</b>						
Single (never married)	24	30	47	29	40	31
Married or in a long-term partnership	25	29	47	16	50	34
Divorced/separated	18	30	52	23	49	28
Widow or widower	24	44	32	25	54	20
<b>Political Affiliation NS/**</b>						
Republican	21	30	49	22	54	24
Democrat	25	31	44	20	41	38
Independent	22	28	50	20	45	34
Other	25	32	43	17	43	41
<b>Size of Household */**</b>						
Single Person	16	33	51	31	47	23
Two people	22	32	46	17	49	34
Three to four people	26	27	48	20	47	33
Five or more people	30	32	38	18	44	38

	1992			2015		
	Worth less than \$45	Worth \$45	Worth more than \$45	Worth less than \$70	Worth \$70	Worth more than \$70
<b>Size of Community*/***</b>						
Rural area/Village under 10,000	26	30	44	28	48	24
Town of 10,000 to 50,000	21	34	44	15	51	34
City of 50,000 to 100,000	21	33	46	14	51	35
Metropolitan area (over 100,000)	23	24	53	26	41	33
<b>Race/Ethnicity 1 ***/**</b>						
White	22	30	48	18	48	33
Non-White	33	34	33	28	44	28
<b>Race/Ethnicity 2 ***/*</b>						
White	22	30	48	18	48	33
Black	39	29	33	26	46	27
Hispanic	32	37	32	31	42	27
Other	21	44	35	26	44	30
<b>Personal Disability Status – Both NS/NS</b>						
Yes	17	32	51	24	51	25
No	24	30	46	21	47	33
<b>Personal Disability Status – 2015 NS</b>						
Yes, you have a disability	N/A	N/A	N/A	24	51	25
Yes, someone else in your household has a disability	N/A	N/A	N/A	26	51	23
No, no one in your household has a disability	N/A	N/A	N/A	20	47	33
<b>Employment Status ***/**</b>						
Employed Fulltime	22	26	52	17	45	37
Employed Part-time	29	34	36	22	47	31
Unemployed	14	36	50	32	51	17
Retired	22	35	42	22	52	26
Student	23	35	42	32	36	61
Homemaker	34	37	30	18	58	24
<b>Program User ***/**</b>						
Has ever participated in programs	19	25	56	13	48	39
Have never participated in programs	29	37	34	33	48	19
<b>Park User Status***/**</b>						
User	20	30	50	16	47	37
Non-user	36	29	35	33	50	17

Crosstab significance levels: \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001, NS = Not significant



## Appendix E: Benefit Codes and Frequency of Responses

### Benefit Codes

<b>Personal Benefits = 1</b>	<b>Social Benefits (Continued)</b>
1. Enjoy being outdoors/natural resources	72. Group participation
2. Escape	73. Helping
3. Exercise – Fitness & Conditioning	74. Keeping in touch with friends
4. Feel Good Because they (parks) are there	75. Kids – get pleasure from it
5. Freedom	76. Kids – good for them
6. Fun/Entertainment	77. Kids – keep busy – occupied
7. Getting out of the house	78. Kids – keep off street
8. Health	79. Kids – keep out of house
9. Involvement – getting more involved	80. Kids – place to go
10. Keeping mind occupied	81. Interaction – kids and adults
11. Learning – education	82. Learning discipline/following instructions
12. Mental benefits	83. Place for elderly to socialize
13. Passing the time – providing something to do	84. Place to meet people
14. Peace and quiet	85. Place to take children
15. Pursuit of happiness	86. Place to take grandchildren
16. Relaxation – place to relax	87. Respect for others
17. Rest	88. See Others enjoy themselves
18. Safety – felt safe – secure environment	89. Team spirit – being on a team
19. Stress Release	<b>Economic Benefits = 4</b>
20. Time alone/place to be alone	105. Availability
<b>Environmental Benefits = 2</b>	106. Affordable – inexpensive – low cost
35. Aesthetics	107. Bring dollars into the community
36. Fresh Air	108. Convenience
37. Green area	109. Influence property values
38. Land preservation	<b>Facility-Activity Oriented Benefits = 5</b>
39. Nature	110. Activities
40. No buildings	111. Arts
41. Open Space	112. Exposure to different crafts
42. Out of City	113. Facilities – play area for children
43. Place for Kids that isn't asphalt	114. Instructional classes
44. Place to be outdoors	115. Joy of playing
45. Scenery	116. New forms of activities
46. Wildlife – habitat – place for wildlife	117. New sports
47. Wildlife – place for seeing	118. Place for picnics
<b>Social Benefits = 3</b>	119. Place for recreation
63. Competition	120. Place to exercise pets
64. Cooperation	121. Place to go
65. Community awareness/sense of community	122. Planned activities
66. Cultural awareness – heritage	123. Play – Place to play
67. Exposure to role-models	124. Play organized sports
68. Family time-togetherness	125. Provide activities not otherwise available
69. Fellowship	126. Special events
70. Gathering Place – hang out with friends	127. Watch organized sports
71. Getting to know people	149. Same as previous answer
	150. I do not know

## Benefits of Local Parks: Frequency of Responses

Benefits of Local Parks	Individual	Household	Community
<b>Personal Benefits</b>			
Enjoy being outdoors/natural resources	100	35	25
Escape	9	9	11
Exercise – Fitness & Conditioning	226	210	133
Feel good because they (parks) are there	10	5	11
Freedom	5	3	1
Fun/Entertainment	29	33	16
Getting out of the house	22	29	23
Health	32	24	18
Involvement – getting more involved	1	1	6
Keeping mind occupied	0	0	0
Learning – education	6	7	5
Mental benefits	9	5	9
Passing the time – providing something to do	9	9	9
Peace and quiet	44	7	13
Pursuit of happiness	1	0	2
Relaxation – place to relax	45	25	26
Rest	0	0	0
Safety – fell safe – secure environment	33	20	51
Stress Release	2	1	5
Time alone/place to be alone	10	0	0
<b>Environmental Benefits</b>			
Aesthetics	47	12	19
Fresh Air	53	38	30
Green area	28	12	24
Land preservation	8	2	7
Nature	36	11	36
No buildings	1	0	0
Open Space	71	34	48
Out of City	10	3	5
Place for Kids that isn't asphalt	0	0	1
Place to be outdoors	33	19	20
Scenery	19	16	15
Wildlife – habitat – place for wildlife	8	4	4
Wildlife – place for seeing	8	8	7
<b>Social Benefits</b>			
Competition	0	0	0
Cooperation	0	0	0
Community awareness/sense of community	31	13	84
Cultural awareness – heritage	0	0	0
Exposure to role-models	0	0	0
Family time-togetherness	71	72	99
Fellowship	28	40	52
Gathering Place – hang out with friends	45	36	97
Getting to know people	6	2	7

Benefits of Local Parks	Individual	Household	Community
<b>Social Benefits Continued</b>			
Group participation	1	0	0
Helping	0	3	0
Keeping in touch with friends	1	2	0
Kids – get pleasure from it	22	4	20
Kids – good for them	32	8	17
Kids – keep busy – occupied	14	10	9
Kids – keep off street	5	9	30
Kids – keep out of house	6	7	12
Kids – place to go	41	27	59
Interaction – kids and adults	11	6	5
Learning discipline/following instructions	2	0	0
Place for elderly to socialize	1	1	5
Place to meet people	30	32	34
Place to take children	37	28	30
Place to take grandchildren	26	14	3
Respect for others	0	0	3
See Others enjoy themselves	7	5	2
Team spirit – being on a team	0	2	5
<b>Economic Benefits</b>			
Availability	12	5	20
Affordable – inexpensive – low cost	18	14	24
Bring dollars into the community	9	6	31
Convenience	23	6	11
Influence property values	12	5	6
<b>Facility-Activity Oriented Benefits</b>			
Activities	56	63	67
Arts	5	3	8
Exposure to different crafts	2	3	1
Facilities – play area for children	42	63	43
Instructional classes	7	5	8
Joy of playing	0	0	0
New forms of activities	0	0	0
New sports	0	0	0
Place for picnics	47	35	48
Place for recreation	120	91	122
Place to exercise pets	78	48	25
Place to go	13	7	71
Planned activities	11	14	7
Play – Place to play	76	81	101
Play organized sports	79	73	133
Provide activities not otherwise available	3	2	3
Special events	51	29	92
Watch organized sports	9	8	8
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>1464</b>	<b>1982</b>

## Benefits of Local Recreation and Park Services: Frequency of Responses

Benefits of Recreation and Park Services	Individual	Household	Community	Non-User
<b>Personal Benefits</b>				
Enjoy being outdoors/natural resources	19	2	4	7
Escape	2	0	0	0
Exercise – Fitness & Conditioning	65	47	30	18
Feel good because they (parks) are there	0	0	8	23
Freedom	0	0	0	0
Fun/Entertainment	24	21	22	10
Getting out of the house	16	15	6	9
Health	37	17	17	19
Involvement – getting more involved	4	3	1	1
Keeping mind occupied	0	0	0	0
Learning – education	10	9	9	5
Mental benefits	6	3	3	1
Passing the time – providing something to do	11	4	6	17
Peace and quiet	2	2	0	3
Pursuit of happiness	2	1	2	1
Relaxation – place to relax	12	4	4	6
Rest	0	0	0	0
Safety – fell safe – secure environment	4	8	20	14
Stress Release	3	1	1	2
Time alone/place to be alone	0	0	0	0
<b>Environmental Benefits</b>				
Aesthetics	4	0	3	14
Fresh Air	7	4	5	3
Green area	1	0	10	2
Land preservation	0	0	1	2
Nature	7	6	6	4
No buildings	0	0	0	0
Open Space	4	0	8	3
Out of City	1	0	5	1
Place for Kids that isn't asphalt	0	0	0	0
Place to be outdoors	2	2	6	2
Scenery	3	0	6	2
Wildlife – habitat – place for wildlife	0	0	1	0
Wildlife – place for seeing	1	3	0	1
<b>Social Benefits</b>				
Competition	0	0	0	0
Cooperation	0	0	0	0
Community awareness/sense of community	53	13	57	41
Cultural awareness – heritage	1	2	1	0
Exposure to role-models	0	0	0	0
Family time-togetherness	35	21	26	16
Fellowship	46	19	27	16
Gathering Place – hang out with friends	11	6	31	12
Getting to know people	3	1	2	5

<b>Benefits of Recreation and Park Services</b>	<b>Individual</b>	<b>Household</b>	<b>Community</b>	<b>Non-User</b>
<b>Social Benefits Continued</b>				
Group participation	0	0	0	0
Helping	11	8	2	2
Keeping in touch with friends	1	0	0	0
Kids – get pleasure from it	3	1	1	2
Kids – good for them	3	4	19	12
Kids – keep busy – occupied	3	4	16	10
Kids – keep off street	0	6	18	17
Kids – keep out of house	0	1	8	1
Kids – place to go	5	5	25	22
Interaction – kids and adults	1	1	5	4
Learning discipline/following instructions	2	0	0	0
Place for elderly to socialize	1	1	2	2
Place to meet people	28	3	18	12
Place to take children	0	3	3	7
Place to take grandchildren	1	4	0	5
Respect for others	3	1	3	3
See Others enjoy themselves	3	0	1	12
Team spirit – being on a team	12	13	4	4
<b>Economic Benefits</b>				
Availability	3	3	8	17
Affordable – inexpensive – low cost	20	15	20	8
Bring dollars into the community	4	0	12	7
Convenience	4	2	5	0
Influence property values	2	1	4	8
<b>Facility-Activity Oriented Benefits</b>				
Activities	8	9	18	33
Arts	1	1	2	2
Exposure to different crafts	0	2	0	0
Facilities – play area for children	1	0	1	1
Instructional classes	3	1	5	6
Joy of playing	0	0	0	0
New forms of activities	0	0	0	0
New sports	0	0	0	0
Place for picnics	2	0	8	0
Place for recreation	14	6	9	18
Place to exercise pets	1	1	5	0
Place to go	1	15	24	25
Planned activities	0	1	4	3
Play – Place to play	1	4	17	14
Play organized sports	5	20	34	21
Provide activities not otherwise available	1	0	9	3
Special events	4	2	12	9
Watch organized sports	0	0	2	6
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>548</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>652</b>	<b>556</b>

## Appendix F: Activity Codes and Frequency of Responses

Code	Classes = 1	Code	Culture =2
5	Hobby – arts and crafts	62	Concert – choral
27	Classes – Dancing – tap or ballet	63	Concert – outdoor
28	Classes – Adult education	64	Cultural – exhibits
29	Classes – Baton	65	Cultural – plays
30	Classes – Calligraphy	66	Dancing
31	Classes – Communication	67	Dancing – square dancing
32	Classes – CPR	68	Dancing – two step
33	Classes – Diving	89	Festival – 4 <sup>th</sup> July
34	Classes – Drama	90	Festival – arts
35	Classes – Exercise	91	Festival – ethnic
36	Classes – Fishing education	92	Festival – hot air ballooning
37	Classes – Geological	93	Festival – Indian roots
38	Classes – Hunting safety	94	Festival – music
39	Classes – Instructional	95	Festival – labor day
40	Classes – Interior design	96	Festival – picnic
41	Classes – Jazzercise	97	Festival – seafood and wine
42	Classes – Karate	98	Festival – shrimp
43	Classes – Kayak	99	Festival – steam engine
44	Classes – Language	100	Festival – fairs
45	Classes – Prenatal	101	Festival – fireworks
46	Classes – Quitting smoking, etc.	102	Festival – holiday (Lincoln)
47	Classes – Strip and refinish furniture	103	Festival – religious holidays
48	Classes – Tennis	104	Festival – winter carnivals
49	Classes – Tutor	105	Festival – maple syrup
50	Classes – Women	107	Fireworks
51	Classes – Ceramic	158	Music appreciation
52	Classes – Crafts	159	Music in park
53	Classes – Marital arts	160	Music – play in band
54	Classes – Exercise	190	Singing
71	Dog obedience	231	Theatre
143	Classes – Kendo classes	225	Symphony
161	Classes – Nature	188	Culture – shows
175	Classes – Red cross lifesavers	156	Movies
201	Classes – Spanish lessons	157	Museum
260	Classes - Arts	163	Outdoor trails
267	Classes – Swimming Lessons	164	Hobby - painting
269	Classes - Dance	266	Gathering
273	Classes - Self defense		

Code	Exercise = 3	Code	Sponsored Activities = 6
1	Acrobats	58	Community clean up parks
2	Aerobics	59	Community days
16	Body building	74	Easter egg hunt
75	Exercise – Rowing	88	Family day
76	Exercise	165	Parades
77	Exercise – At home	150	Memorial services
78	Exercise – Heart condition	147	Marathon
79	Exercise – Join health club	209	Sponsor - frog race
80	Exercise – Jump rope	211	Sponsor –Easter egg hunt
81	Exercise – Nautilus	212	Sponsor – Muppet show
82	Exercise – Nordic track	213	Sponsor – Community event/Fundraiser
83	Exercise – Stationary bike	214	Sponsor – bikeathon
84	Exercise – Treadmill	215	Sponsor – chili cook off
85	Exercise – Work out at club	216	Sponsor – games day
86	Exercise – Workouts	217	Sponsor – trips
119	Sports - Gymnastics	218	Sponsor - walkathon
141	Sports – jogging	268	Sponsored – Footraces
208	Splitting wood	274	Sponsored - Car shows
247	Weight training	Code	<b>Seniors = 7</b>
251	Exercise – work out	183	Senior citizens center
255	Yoga	184	Senior citizens – quilting
		185	Senior group – exercise
		186	Senior trips
Code	<b>Hobbies = 4</b>	187	Seniors – monthly dinner
122	Hobby – Brewing beer	Code	<b>Skiing = 8</b>
123	Hobby – Airplane building	191	Skiing
124	Hobby – Bare back riding in rodeo	192	Skiing – cross country
125	Hobby – Basket making	193	Skiing – snow
126	Hobby – Bottle collecting	194	Skiing – water
127	Hobby – Collecting baseball cards	Code	<b>Special Population Programs = 9</b>
128	Hobby – Genealogy	202	Special Olympics
129	Hobby – Needlework	203	Special population activities
130	Hobby – Saltwater fish	204	Special programs – disabled skip rope
264	Hobby – Mechanical work	Code	<b>Spectator = 10</b>
265	Hobby – Art Auctioning	205	Spectator at sport events
162	Hobby – Oil painting	206	Spectator – Children
271	Hobby – Remote Control Cars		
Code	<b>Clubs = 5</b>	207	Spectator - Hockey
55	Club		
56	Club – ecology		
57	Club – sports		
121	Historical society		
259	Club 4H or Farm related skills		
263	Club – Drama		
189	Sierra Club		
180	Sports – running club		

Code	Team Sports = 11	Code	Outdoor Non-Consumptive (Nature) = 15
219	Sports	6	Back packing trip
220	Sports league	11	Bicycling
221	Sports – high school	12	Biking
171	Police league	14	Boat tours
144	Sports – lacrosse	15	Boating
199	Sports – soccer	20	Camping
200	Sports – Softball	120	Sports – hiking
179	Sports – Rugby	134	Horseback riding
131	Sports – Hockey	145	Play – Lake
132	Sports – Hockey – youth	154	Hobby – Mountain biking
112	Sports – Football	155	Sports – mountain climbing
239	Sports – Volleyball	177	River system
240	Sports – Volleyball – sand	197	Sledding
238	Sports – T-ball	198	Snowmobiling
8	Sports – Baseball	233	Hobby – trail riding
10	Sports – Basketball	245	Walking
106	Sports – Field Hockey	246	Walking tours
Code	<b>Hunting and Fishing = 12</b>	248	Wildlife sanctuary
137	Sports – Hunting	249	Wildlife walks
138	Sports – Hunting – bow	Code	<b>Swimming = 16</b>
139	Sports – Hunting – duck	223	Swimming
108	Fishing	224	Swimming – arthritic group
109	Fishing for kids	Code	<b>Tennis = 17</b>
111	Fly fishing	229	Sports – tennis
Code	<b>Volunteers = 13</b>	230	Classes – tennis - lessons
241	Volunteer at events	Code	<b>Table Games = 18</b>
242	Volunteer – make toys for hospital	226	Game – table billiards
243	Volunteer – campground	227	Game – table pool
244	Volunteer – coaching or teach team class	228	Game – table tennis
Code	<b>Individual Sports = 14</b>	22	Cards
261	Flying	24	Game – chess
262	Sports – Boxing	60	Computer
252	Sports – Wrestling	61	Computer – Nintendo/consul
237	Tumbling	Code	<b>House Related Activities = 19</b>
234	Sports – Trap shooting	253	Yard work
232	Sports – Track	250	Hobby – Woodworking
140	Sports – Ice skating	136	House work
4	Sports – Archery	114	Hobby - Gardening
17	Game – Bowling	Code	<b>Golf = 20</b>
18	Game – Bowling on Green	115	Game – Golf
70	Diving	116	Classes – Golf
151	Motorcycle events	117	Game – Golf driving range
152	Hobby – Motorcycling		
142	Sports – Judo		
173	Game – Racquetball		
176	Hobby – Rifle shooting		



Code	Water Sports & Events = 21	Code	Facility Related Use = 24
181	Hobby – Sailing	148	Meeting for Groups – YMCA
182	Hobby – Scuba Diving	149	Meetings for Groups – Scouts
21	Canoeing	87	Facilities – Sportsplex used by individual
Code	Children’s Programs = 22	73	Driving school
19	Camp for kids	110	Flea/Farmers market
25	Child care	133	Homeless extension group
26	Children’s programs	167	Photo lab
69	Day care	168	Play at beach
236	Trips – Science center	169	Play in facilities
256	Zoo education	170	Playing with grandchildren
257	Zoo visiting	Code	Miscellaneous = 25
Code	Animal Related = 23	254	YMCA corps challenge
72	Dog show	235	Travelling
166	Pet show	153	Hobby – Motorhome
172	Hobby – Raising animals	146	Library
272	Dog park	135	Horseshoes
		118	Music – Guitar playing
		113	Frisbee
		23	Cheerleading
		13	Game – Bingo
		9	Baseball sponsor
		7	Band
		3	Hobby – Antiquing
		174	Reading
		178	Game – Roller blading
		270	Voting place/information

Code	Activity	Individual Past	Individual Current	Household Current
1	Acrobats	2	1	1
2	Aerobics	0	3	0
3	Hobby – Antiquing	0	0	0
4	Sports – Archery	1	1	1
5	Hobby – arts and crafts	4	3	5
6	Back packing trip	0	0	0
7	Band	0	1	2
8	Sports – Baseball	32	9	27
9	Baseball sponsor	0	0	0
10	Sports – Basketball	25	15	24
11	Bicycling	2	1	1
12	Biking	5	0	2
13	Game – Bingo	0	0	0
14	Boat tours	0	0	0
15	Boating	3	6	2
16	Body building	0	0	0
17	Game – Bowling	0	0	0
18	Game – Bowling on Green	1	1	0
19	Camp for kids	5	1	5
20	Camping	9	5	2
21	Canoeing	0	0	0
22	Cards	0	1	0
23	Cheerleading	3	0	5
24	Game – chess	0	0	0
25	Child care	2	0	0
26	Children’s programs	6	8	5
27	Classes – Dancing – tap or ballet	0	0	0
28	Classes – Adult education	0	5	0
29	Classes – Baton	0	0	0
30	Classes – Calligraphy	0	0	0
31	Classes – Communication	0	0	0
32	Classes – CPR	0	0	0
33	Classes – Diving	0	0	0
34	Classes – Drama	0	0	0
35	Classes – Exercise	4	6	0
36	Classes – Fishing education	0	0	1
37	Classes – Geological	0	0	0
38	Classes – Hunting safety	0	0	0
39	Classes – Instructional	3	8	5
40	Classes – Interior design	0	0	0
41	Classes – Jazzercise	1	0	0
42	Classes – Karate	1	1	4
43	Classes – Kayak	0	2	1
44	Classes – Language	0	1	0
45	Classes – Prenatal	0	0	0
46	Classes – Quitting smoking, etc.	0	0	0
47	Classes – Strip and refinish furniture	0	0	0
48	Classes – Tennis	0	0	0
49	Classes – Tutor	0	0	0

Code	Activity	Individual Past	Individual Current	Household Current
50	Classes – Women	0	0	0
51	Classes – Ceramic	0	0	0
52	Classes – Crafts	0	0	0
53	Classes – Marital arts	0	0	0
54	Classes – Exercise	0	0	0
55	Club	3	4	1
56	Club – ecology	0	0	0
57	Club – sports	0	0	0
58	Community clean up parks	6	5	0
59	Community days	1	1	0
60	Computer	0	3	0
61	Computer – Nintendo/consul	0	0	0
62	Concert – choral	0	1	2
63	Concert – outdoor	15	20	11
64	Cultural – exhibits	0	3	2
65	Cultural – plays	0	0	0
66	Dancing	6	3	3
67	Dancing – square dancing	0	1	1
68	Dancing – two step	0	0	0
69	Day care	0	0	0
70	Diving	0	0	0
71	Dog obedience	0	3	1
72	Dog show	0	0	0
73	Driving school	0	0	0
74	Easter egg hunt	4	5	2
75	Exercise – Rowing	0	0	0
76	Exercise	5	3	2
77	Exercise – At home	0	0	0
78	Exercise – Heart condition	0	0	0
79	Exercise – Join health club	0	0	0
80	Exercise – Jump rope	0	0	0
81	Exercise – Nautilus	0	0	0
82	Exercise – Nordic track	0	0	0
83	Exercise – Stationary bike	0	0	0
84	Exercise – Treadmill	0	0	0
85	Exercise – Work out at club	1	4	3
86	Exercise – Workouts	0	0	1
87	Facilities – Sportsplex used by individual	0	0	0
88	Family day	2	4	3
89	Festival – 4 <sup>th</sup> July	2	7	7
90	Festival – arts	7	13	3
91	Festival – ethnic	0	8	3
92	Festival – hot air ballooning	0	0	0
93	Festival – Indian roots	0	0	0
94	Festival – music	3	6	1
95	Festival – labor day	2	0	1
96	Festival – picnic	12	9	7
97	Festival – seafood and wine	0	0	0
98	Festival – shrimp	0	0	1

Code	Activity	Individual Past	Individual Current	Household Current
99	Festival – steam engine	0	0	2
100	Festival – fairs	17	21	14
101	Festival – fireworks	2	7	3
102	Festival – holiday (Lincoln)	4	1	6
103	Festival – religious holidays	3	9	6
104	Festival – winter carnivals	0	1	2
105	Festival – maple syrup	0	0	0
106	Sports – Field Hockey	0	0	0
107	Fireworks	6	1	2
108	Fishing	5	7	11
109	Fishing for kids	0	0	0
110	Flea/Farmers market	1	10	3
111	Fly fishing	0	0	0
112	Sports – Football	12	0	11
113	Frisbee	2	0	0
114	Hobby - Gardening	0	0	2
115	Game – Golf	5	2	1
116	Classes – Golf	2	0	0
117	Game – Golf driving range	0	0	0
118	Music – Guitar playing	0	0	0
119	Sports - Gymnastics	0	0	2
120	Sports – hiking	2	4	3
121	Historical society	0	0	0
122	Hobby – Brewing beer	0	0	0
123	Hobby – Airplane building	0	0	0
124	Hobby – Bare back riding in rodeo	0	0	0
125	Hobby – Basket making	0	0	0
126	Hobby – Bottle collecting	0	0	0
127	Hobby – Collecting baseball cards	0	1	0
128	Hobby – Genealogy	0	0	0
129	Hobby – Needlework	1	0	0
130	Hobby – Saltwater fish	0	0	0
131	Sports – Hockey	0	1	0
132	Sports – Hockey – youth	0	0	0
133	Homeless extension group	0	0	0
134	Horseback riding	1	0	3
135	Horseshoes	0	0	0
136	House work	0	0	0
137	Sports – Hunting	0	2	2
138	Sports – Hunting – bow	0	0	0
139	Sports – Hunting – duck	0	0	0
140	Sports – Ice skating	2	2	0
141	Sports – jogging	0	3	9
142	Sports – Judo	0	0	0
143	Classes – Kendo classes	0	0	0
144	Sports – lacrosse	0	0	1
145	Play – Lake	0	0	3
146	Library	0	2	2
147	Marathon	0	0	1

Code	Activity	Individual Past	Individual Current	Household Current
148	Meeting for Groups – YMCA	3	2	1
149	Meetings for Groups – Scouts	4	0	0
150	Memorial services	0	0	0
151	Motorcycle events	0	0	0
152	Hobby – Motorcycling	0	0	0
153	Hobby – Motorhome	0	0	0
154	Hobby – Mountain biking	0	0	0
155	Sports – mountain climbing	0	0	0
156	Movies	4	3	5
157	Museum	1	0	0
158	Music appreciation	0	0	0
159	Music in park	5	5	8
160	Music – play in band	0	0	0
161	Classes – Nature	3	3	0
162	Hobby – Oil painting	0	0	0
163	Outdoor trails	0	2	3
164	Hobby - painting	0	0	0
165	Parades	2	9	5
166	Pet show	1	0	0
167	Photo lab	0	0	0
168	Play at beach	0	2	0
169	Play in facilities	1	6	7
170	Playing with grandchildren	0	0	2
171	Police league	0	0	0
172	Hobby – Raising animals	0	0	0
173	Game – Racquetball	0	0	1
174	Reading	0	0	0
175	Classes – Red cross lifesavers	0	0	0
176	Hobby – Rifle shooting	0	0	0
177	River system	0	0	0
178	Game – Roller blading	0	1	1
179	Sports – Rugby	0	0	0
180	Sports – running club	0	0	1
181	Hobby – Sailing	0	4	3
182	Hobby – Scuba Diving	0	0	0
183	Senior citizens center	1	2	1
184	Senior citizens – quilting	0	0	0
185	Senior group – exercise	0	0	0
186	Senior trips	0	1	0
187	Seniors – monthly dinner	0	0	0
188	Culture – shows	2	1	2
189	Sierra Club	0	0	0
190	Singing	0	0	0
191	Skiing	2	1	0
192	Skiing – cross country	0	0	0
193	Skiing – snow	0	0	0
194	Skiing – water	0	0	0
197	Sledding	0	0	1
198	Snowmobiling	0	0	0

Code	Activity	Individual Past	Individual Current	Household Current
199	Sports – soccer	30	17	32
200	Sports – Softball	22	17	12
201	Classes – Spanish lessons	0	0	0
202	Special Olympics	0	0	0
203	Special population activities	0	0	1
204	Special programs – disabled skip rope	0	0	0
205	Spectator at sport events	3	2	1
206	Spectator – Children	1	1	1
207	Spectator - Hockey	0	0	0
208	Splitting wood	0	0	0
209	Sponsor - frog race	1	0	0
211	Sponsor –Easter egg hunt	0	2	0
212	Sponsor – Muppet show	0	0	0
213	Sponsor – Community event/Fundraiser	8	24	13
214	Sponsor – bikeathon	0	0	0
215	Sponsor – chili cook off	0	1	2
216	Sponsor – games day	0	0	0
217	Sponsor – trips	0	0	0
218	Sponsor - walkathon	6	0	1
219	Sports	17	16	26
220	Sports league	17	12	1
221	Sports – high school	0	0	0
223	Swimming	15	14	23
224	Swimming – arthritic group	0	0	0
225	Symphony	0	0	0
226	Game – table billiards	0	0	0
227	Game – table pool	0	0	0
228	Game – table tennis	0	0	0
229	Sports – tennis	9	6	9
230	Classes – tennis - lessons	2	0	1
231	Theatre	1	2	3
232	Sports – Track	3	1	1
233	Hobby - trail riding	1	0	0
234	Sports – Trap shooting	0	0	0
235	Travelling	0	0	0
236	Trips – Science center	1	0	0
237	Tumbling	0	0	0
238	Sports – T-ball	4	0	8
239	Sports – Volleyball	2	3	5
240	Sports – Volleyball – sand	0	0	1
241	Volunteer at events	7	4	5
242	Volunteer – make toys for hospital	0	0	0
243	Volunteer – campground	0	0	0
244	Volunteer – coaching or teach team class	7	16	6
245	Walking	10	9	8
246	Walking tours	1	1	1
247	Weight training	0	0	2
248	Wildlife sanctuary	0	1	1
249	Wildlife walks	5	1	1

Code	Activity	Individual Past	Individual Current	Household Current
250	Hobby – Woodworking	0	0	0
251	Exercise – work out	0	0	0
252	Sports – Wrestling	0	0	0
253	Yard work	0	0	0
254	YMCA corps challenge	0	0	0
255	Yoga	4	3	0
256	Zoo education	0	0	0
257	Zoo visiting	1	1	2
259	Club 4H or Farm related skills	0	0	0
260	Classes - Arts	1	3	1
261	Flying	0	0	0
262	Sports – Boxing	0	0	0
263	Club – Drama	0	0	0
264	Hobby – Mechanical work	0	0	0
265	Hobby – Art Auctioning	1	0	0
266	Gathering	3	3	2
267	Classes – Swimming Lessons	10	2	3
268	Sponsored – Footraces	7	23	12
269	Classes - Dance	2	1	0
270	Voting place/information	1	2	1
271	Hobby – Remote Control Cars	1	0	0
272	Dog park	2	3	3
273	Classes - Self defense	1	0	0
274	Sponsored - Car shows	2	0	0
<b>Total Count</b>		<b>481</b>	<b>489</b>	<b>467</b>



**NRPA**

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