City of Benson
City Council Communication

Regular Meeting **January 27, 2014**

To: Mayor and Council Agenda Item # 2

From: Bradley J. Hamilton, P.E., Interim City Manager/Director of Public Works/City Engineer

Subject:

Presentation of the Parks and Recreation 2013 Survey Results

Discussion:

In the fall of 2012, Staff began working with Dr. Ariel Rodrigues, Assistant Professor – School of Community Resources and Development at Arizona State University. Prior to creating the survey, Dr. Rodrigues spent an extensive amount of time, in Benson, taking an inventory of our existing facilities and programs and possibilities for future facilities and programs. Based on his visit to Benson and conversation with Staff, Dr. Rodrigues and Allison Ross put together a survey for the City of Benson Parks and Recreation Departments. Upon approval of the survey questions; Dr. Rodrigues was provided with a list of the City's Utility Customers. From that list 600 names were randomly selected by Dr. Rodrigues. Surveys were sent out to the randomly selected residents to be completed and returned to Dr. Rodrigues.

Dr. Rodrigues is here tonight to present the results of the survey to Council.

Attachment: 2013 Survey Results

Staff Recommendation:

Information only

City of Benson Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment Report

2013

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Acknowledgements

This project would not have been possible without the vision and support of a number of key individuals:

City of Benson Parks and Recreation

Mayor and Council
Laura Parkin, Recreation Coordinator
City Clerks Office

We would also like to thank the citizens of the City of Benson for participating in the needs assessment survey. Their responses helped us in developing this report that is aimed to further enhance park and recreation services in their community.

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Executive Summary

The following highlights key recommendations for future parks and recreation programs and services in the City of Benson based on the survey data collected. Overall, when considering future recreation activities, we advise the following recommendations:

- Increase opportunities that involve the family. 56% of respondents indicated that family was the most influential factor in activity participation.
- Increase opportunities that involve physical activity. Residents desire to participate in activities to get exercise and to increase fitness.
- Increase opportunities for senior citizens. More than half of respondents (69%) were aged 55+ but this age group reported only 38% participation in recreation.

In addition to the activity recommendations above, the results of this assessment indicate that the suggestions below would be useful to pursue:

- Continue to inform residents via the local newspaper and mailed brochures. These methods ranked as two of the highest preferred methods of communication.
- Explore grant opportunities to help fund future projects. Over 80% of residents favored adding upgrades to existing parks and facilities. Over 70% of residents wanted to see more adult and youth programs offered.
- Consider the addition of a dog park. Although this survey did not specifically inquire about dog parks, residents provided overwhelming support of the suggestion in the "additional comments" section.
- Conduct a follow-up study that targets families. In this study, only 35 of the 135 respondents were families with children. This low response rate could mean that an important population was not well represented in the report.

Introduction

Park and recreation services are critical to the quality of life of City of Benson residents. These services help enhance positive development among its residents and provide a context for which residents can engage in social activities with their families and loved ones. Overall, park and recreation services have the potential of having positive economic, social, and health impacts on City of Benson residents and the community as a whole. In order to provide services which are most aligned with resident needs, the City of Benson worked collaboratively with researchers from Arizona State University to implement a needs assessment to garner information from City of Benson residents. The process and findings of this assessment are provided in this report.

City of Benson Parks and Recreation Programs and Services

With an understanding of the economic impact derived from Parks and Recreation, the Recreation Department works closely with local businesses, nonprofit organizations, schools and members of the community to provide a return for our tax payer's investment by providing quality programs, events and facilities. It is our mission to develop lifetime residents and a healthy lifestyle while ensuring a safe environment. Over the past five years the Parks and Recreation Departments have made several improvements to existing facilities while continuing to create and offer quality programs and events to meet the needs of our residents and maintaining affordability. Available to our residents are four public parks, a Community Center, a Pool, 18- hole Championship Golf Course, several Programs and Events all of which provide a variety of leisure opportunities.

Funding

The City of Benson utilizes different resources to fund facility improvement projects for the Parks and Recreation Departments. Sources of funding are Capitol Improvement Project (CIP) monies, Grants and Community Projects. The use of CIP monies ensures the efficient use of public funds through strategic planning during our annual budget process. As grant monies are available from various sources we strive to maintain excellence with strategic planning and throughout the application process. The Recreation Department works with the youth of our community to teach lifelong skills through Community Projects from conception to completion of special projects; essentially creating and maintaining community pride and partnerships. These projects benefit the community as a whole and help increase the quality of life for our residents. Community Project funds are used to purchase equipment for our facilities.

Improvement Projects

In 2011/12 major improvements were made to three of the four ball fields in Lions Park. Those improvements include; new sprinkler systems, grading and leveling, and

reseeding. In 2013, three ramadas were replaced with new ones and new picnic tables and grills are welcomed additions to those ramadas. As a result of a Community Project completed in the spring of 2013, the City was able to install playground equipment at the Union Street Park creating Benson's first pocket park. As a result of a CIP Project, ADA Accessible Restrooms were installed in Lions Park. Currently, we are working to raise funds through a Community Project to purchase new Skate Park equipment.

Parks and Facilities

The Recreation Department is the point of contact for the general public with regards to scheduling the use of our facilities. We work closely with Leagues, nonprofit organizations, the schools and the general public to assist in the scheduling and permitting process.

Lions Park is approximately 15 acres total; 9 acres with improvements. Amenities in Lions Park are a lighted - Little League Field with a Concession Stand, Softball Field and two multi-purpose fields. Other amenities available in Lions Park are basketball courts, horseshoe pits, volleyball courts, Skate Park, Walking Trails, Ramadas, grills, a playground and ADA Accessible Restrooms.

Apache Park was donated to the City in 1949, by what is now known as Apache Nitrogen Products, Inc., and is located in the Apache Park Historical District. In 2009, a master plan was drafted by the Historic Preservation Commission. As funds are available improvements include a gazebo with walking paths around the park connecting to the gazebo.

Union Street Park is less than 1.5 acres and includes the Community Center, Public Pool, Ramadas, grills and newly added Playground Equipment.

Railroad Liner Park includes the Tourism Center, Veterans Memorial Park, and a Fire Wise Exhibit. As part of a 2013 beautification project murals and railroad emblems depicting Benson's train history have been added to this park.

The **Community Center** provides a variety of activities throughout the week and is also available for parties. Activities include; Bingo, Line Dancing, Tax Assistance (February – April), and a Senior Meals program provided by Catholic Community Services.

The **City Pool** is located next to the Community Center and Union Street Park, has a main pool that is 25 yards long with a depth range of 3 - 5 feet and a wading pool. There are a variety of Aquatics Programs available to adults and youth. For the convenience of our residents we coordinate our summer swim season with the Benson Unified School District's summer break schedule.

The **San Pedro Golf Course** is owned and operated by the City of Benson, is an 18-hole championship course. This unique facility has six sets of tee boxes that allows for play from over 7,300 yards all the way down to 3,500 yards. Hence, it offers a quality golfing experience at an affordable price for players of all skill levels. The front nine meanders through mesquite groves along the San Pedro River, while the back nine plays through natural canyons with significant elevation changes. San Pedro is pure golf played in an all-natural setting, free from manmade obstructions. In November 2013, the City purchased 72 new Golf Carts for the Course.

Programs

Our **Aquatics Program** offers Adult Swim, Swimming Lessons, Dive in Movies, and Open Swim. Adult Swim is offered Monday through Saturday with alternating times; mornings and evenings. Due to the high demand for swim lessons we increased the number of lessons offered per session and to date have not had to turn anyone away. Swim lessons are offered for infants up to Level 3. Our ever popular Dive in Movies are typically held every other Saturday in June and provide an affordable evening of family fun for our residents. The pool is open seven days a week for general swim. Admission fees can be paid daily or seasonal passes are available for purchase.

During the summer we offer a wide variety of **Summer Programs** to the youth of our community. Through careful measurement of class registrations, attendance, expenditures and revenues we have developed a nominal fee based program which removes the burden of expenditures from the tax payers. We continuously strive to add new classes while eliminating those of little interest. Our camps include Karate, Dance, Softball, Baseball, Volleyball, Arts and Crafts, and Tennis just to name a few. We also work collaboratively with the School District in order to eliminate activity duplication throughout the summer.

Events

The Recreation Department is responsible for hosting four annual events. We are the point of contact for members of the community who wish to host events within the City Limits. We work closely with applicants during the event application process to ensure quality events for our residents.

Our annual **Movie in the Park** is typically held shortly after school ends in May. We work closely with Cox Communications to provide a free evening of entertainment for our families.

The **4th of July Celebration** is hosted by the City's 4th of July Committee. We work with this committee as the City's Liaison; from planning to execution. Benson's 4th of July Celebration is a hometown event which features a parade, Benson Fire Department's water fight, entertainment, vendors and a spectacular fireworks show. This event is funded through the City and Sponsorships.

Butterfield Overland Stage Days and Rodeo and Celebrates the Pony Express Mail Run which came through Benson in the 1800's. This event is held the second weekend in October and is designed so that our nonprofit organizations can use it as a fundraising opportunity. The parade hosted by the Junior Women's Club allows them to put money back into the community through their scholarship program. The Benson Museum hosts a

variety of activities to include; artisans, reenactments of the 1880's and the Pony Express commemorative mail-run from Benson to Dragoon. The Rodeo is a two day event run by the Benson Butterfield Rodeo Committee; a nonprofit organization who donates their proceeds to All The Kings Horses Children's Ranch. We work very closely with these nonprofit organizations to coordinate scheduling and promotion of the event through advertising.

The **Tree Lighting Ceremony** is held the fourth Tuesday of November. We have partnered with the Benson Museum to host this event. This local favorite began in 2012, and symbolizes the start of the Holiday Season. This event features live music, arts and crafts, refreshments, a guest speaker to light the Living Tree and Mr. and Mrs. Claus. This free event also provides attendees the opportunity to visit the Museum during the evening.

The **Festival of Lights – Light Parade** is held in conjunction with the Benson San Pedro Chamber of Commerce's Christmas on Main as well as the Benson Museum's Festival of Lights Craft Fair the second Saturday in December. Not only do we plan and organize the Light Parade, but we also participate with an entry. This is a very popular event for our residents.

Study Methodology

Data Collection Procedures

This study utilized a cross-sectional survey design. A total of 600 City of Benson residents were randomly selected to participate in the study using a sampling frame of utility subscribers. Of these, a total of 135 (22.5% response rate) City of Benson residents responded to the survey which yielded a confidence interval of 8.32 using a confidence level of 95%, a population of 5,090 (estimated 2012 City of Benson population according to the U.S. Census), and a percentage of 50% (most conservative percentage). The confidence interval was calculated using the online sample size calculator provided by The Survey System (http://www.surveysystem.com/sscalc.htm).

Participants were invited to participate in the study through mail. To maximize survey response and reduce unit nonresponse bias, residents were contacted a maximum number of four times using a modified Dillman approach. The first contact included the questionnaire which included an invitation to participate in the study. The second contact was a postcard reminder if they had not returned the survey. The third contact was another questionnaire, and the final contact was another postcard reminder.

Instrument

The survey questionnaire (i.e., instrument) was designed specifically for this research project (see Appendix). As part of the survey development, the researchers made efforts to replicate, where possible, questions from the 2006 Benson City Parks Community Survey. The questionnaire contained the following four sections: General Activity Participation; Benson Parks and Recreation Programs Services, and Facilities; Demographics; and Child's Recreation and School Travel Behaviors. The last section was applicable only for residents who had children between the ages of 5 – 11 living with them. It was expected that participants could complete the questionnaire in approximately 10 minutes.

Data Analysis

To determine the total responses and percentages for all survey questions, descriptive statistics were used. An Important-Performance matrix was also developed for this study to analyze resident beliefs towards specific outcomes of their recreation participation. Importance-Performance matrices are often used to help agencies determine level of service for any number of programs or services an agency provides. Lastly, where applicable, results were compared to the data available in the 2006 Benson City Parks Community Survey results.

Needs Assessment Findings

Demographic Characteristics of Study Participants

More females (62%) responded to the survey than males (38%). Of the total participants (n=135), 131 people offered their age. As of the 2010 United States Census, the median age of Benson's population was 52.5 years. In this study, 69% of respondents indicated that they were age 55 or older. The remaining 31% of participants were under the age of 55.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2006-2010 American Community Survey (ACS), 86.2% of Benson's population aged 25 years and older had at least a high school diploma or equivalent, which is higher than state and national levels. In our sample, 96.2% of respondents indicated that they attained this educational status. The 2006-2010 ACS reported that 18.3% of Benson residents held a bachelor's degree or higher, which is lower than state and national levels. In our sample, 33.4% of respondents indicated that they received a bachelor's or graduate degree.

The majority of participants (66%) reported being married. Almost half of participants (46.3%) were retired. Of those not retired, 26.5% worked full time, 7.4% worked part-time, and the remaining were split among being self-employed, students, or homemakers. Based on their 2011 household income before taxes, participants reported making under $24,999 (27.8%), between $25,000 - $49,999 (28.7%), between $50,000 - $74,999 (18.3%), between $75,000 - $99,999 (11.3%), and over $100,000 (13.9%). The median household income in 2010 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010) was $32,226. The average length of time that participants reported living in the Benson area was 21 years.

General Activity Participation

As part of the needs assessment, City of Benson residents were asked if they or members of their household had participated in recreation activities over the past 12 months. They were given the option of selecting from 25 recreation activities which represented different physical and passive activities along with different community activities such as volunteering and attending special events. A total of 136 residents responded to this question.

The most common recreation activities City of Benson residents participate in are walking/jogging/running (77%), going on scenic drives (71%), and attending festivals and special events (59%) (Figure 1). On the other hand, less than 1% of residents indicated participating in bowling, going to church, feeding ducks, kayaking, riding motorcycles, rock hunting, and target shooting. Generally, residents of Benson prefer a mix of active versus passive activities.

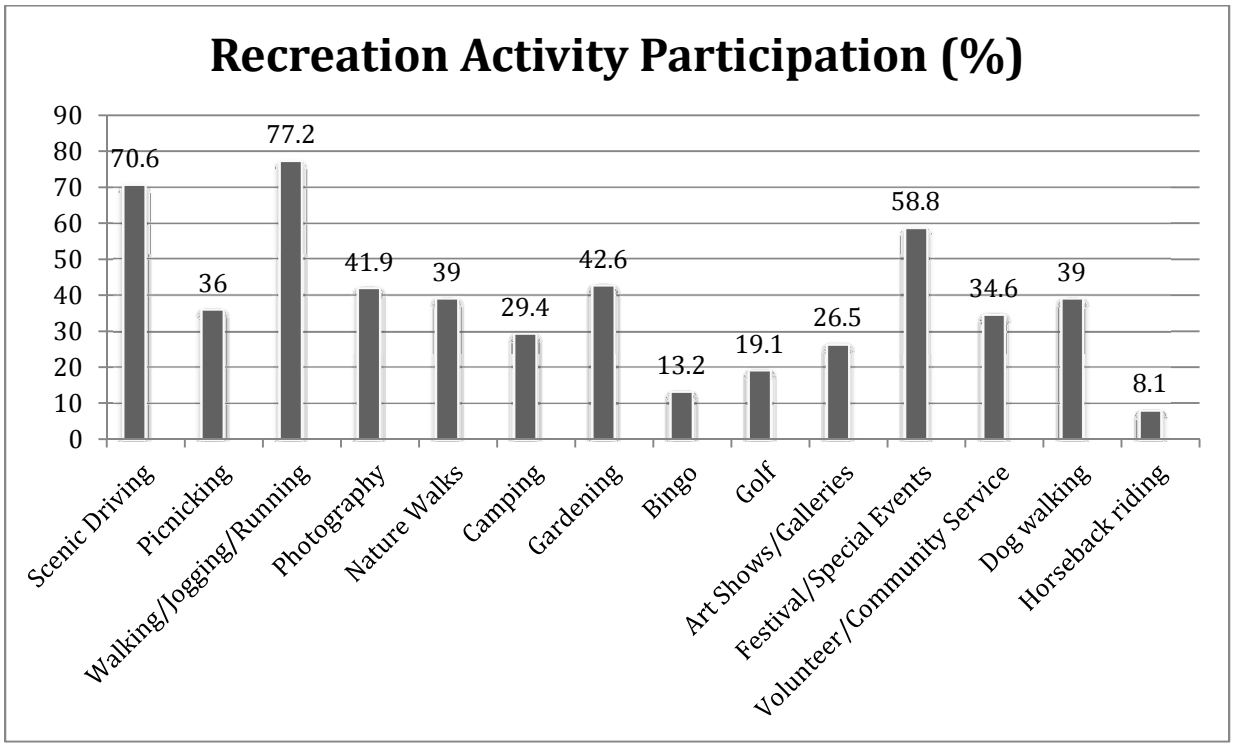

Figure 1: General recreation activity participation

Residents reported the factors that influenced their general activity participation on a scale or 1 (not at all important) to 7 (extremely important). Family interaction ranked highest with an average scale response of 6.23 followed by physical factors (5.73), outdoor recreation (5.56), and social factors (5.44) (Figure 2).

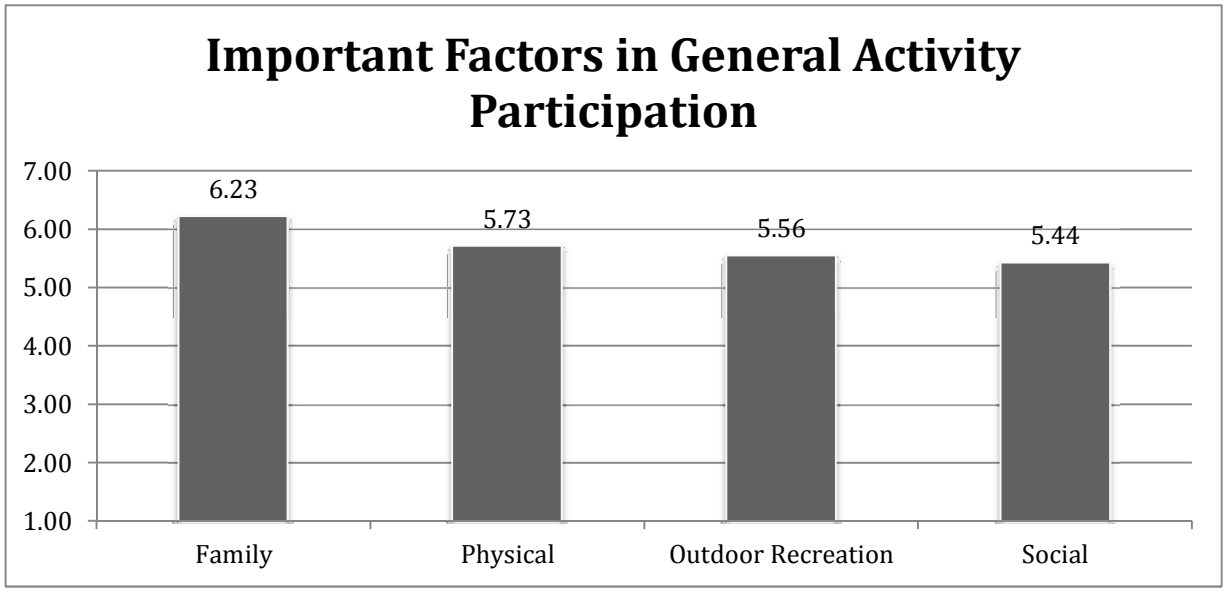

Figure 2: Importance of general activity participation

When analyzed separately, the importance of family becomes particularly evident as 56% of respondents reported family as ranking the highest level of extremely important (Figure 3). The only difference among these trends when compared to 2006 was a slight increase in the percentage of respondents who indicated that outdoor recreation was important to them from 79.5% in 2006 to 83.8% in 2013.

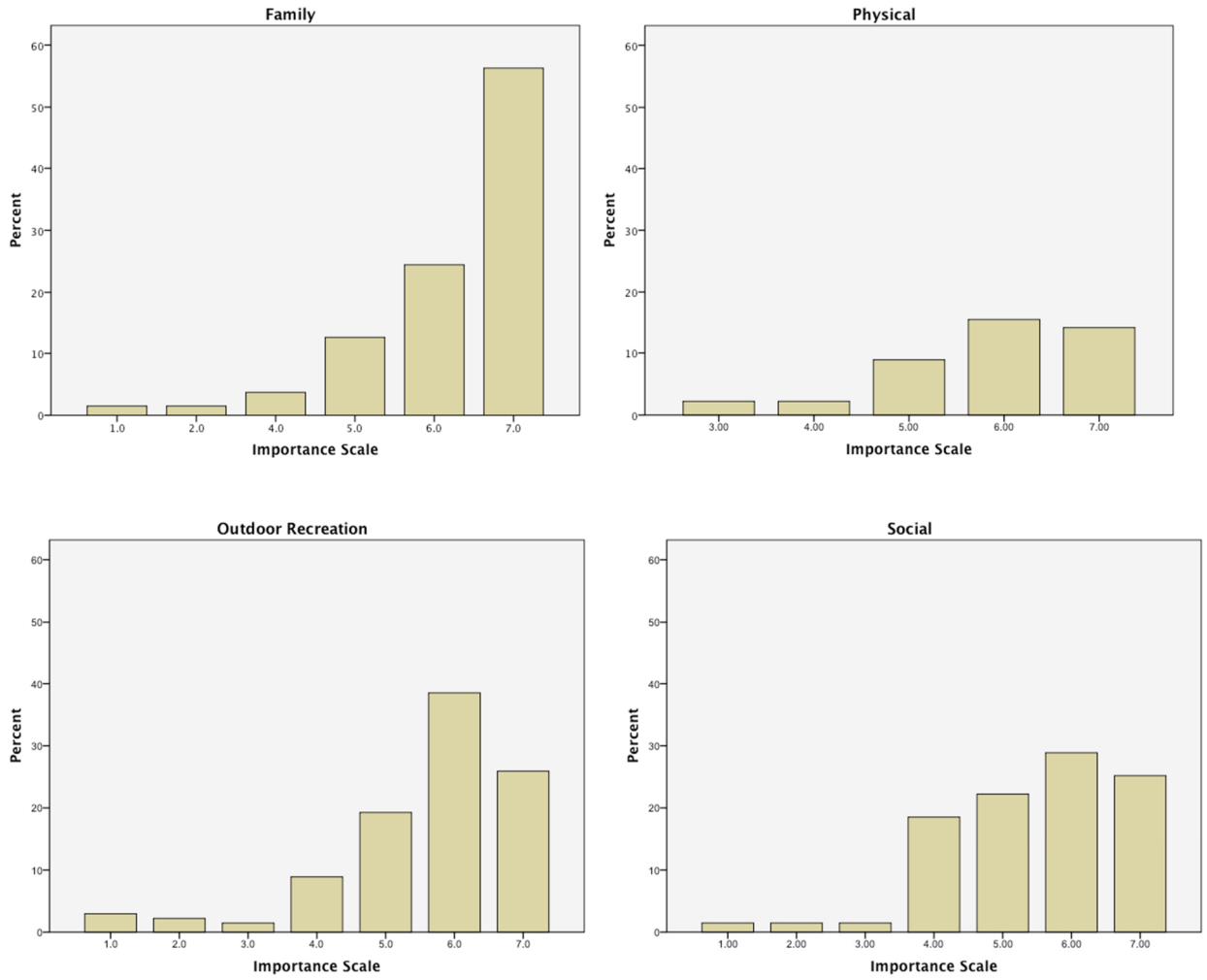

Figure 3: Importance scale for family, physical, social, and outdoor recreation

General Activity Satisfaction and Importance

The following Importance-Performance Analysis (I-P) allows respondents to assess which aspects of activity participation were important and their levels of satisfaction with each of these aspects. Average scores were calculated on a scale of 1=not at all important/completely dissatisfied to 7=completely important/satisfied from the following categories:

1. Get exercise
2. Be with others who enjoy the same things you do
3. Develop your skills and abilities
4. Keep physically fit
5. Do something with your family
6. Feel good after begin physically active
7. To participate in outdoor recreation

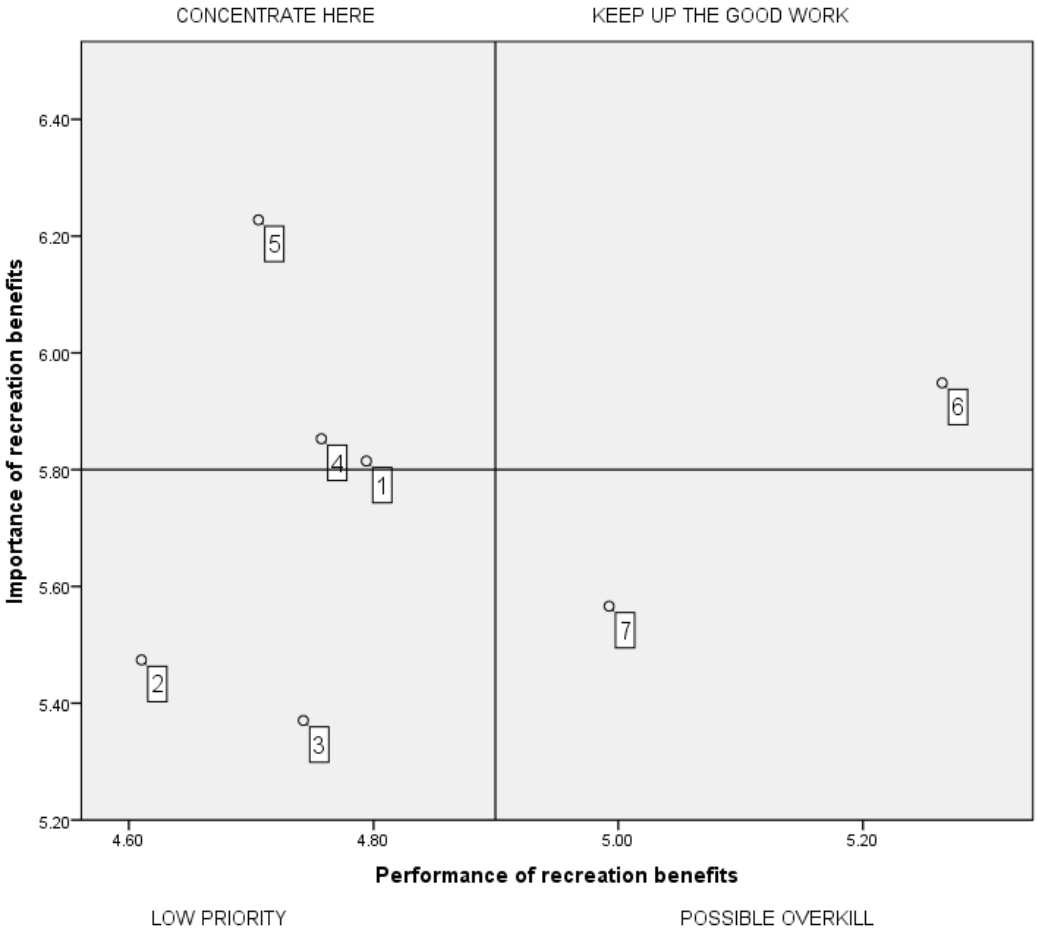

Figure 4: Activity Importance-Performance Scale

Overall, City of Benson residents expressed relatively high levels of importance and performances with their benefits accrued from participating in various activities. However, in order to provide guidance for future recreation focus, we have divided these levels of importance and performance into the four matrices presented in Figure 4. These four quadrants represent possible future management strategies.

Keep up the good work. In this quadrant, outcomes were important to residents and they were satisfied with their ability to experience these outcomes. Only one activity fell within this quadrant, "feel good after being physically active". This suggests residents are satisfied with how they felt after they did various physical activities. This further suggests residents are satisfied with the *quality* of physical activity opportunities they are obtaining.

Low priority. In this quadrant, residents express lower levels of satisfaction with being able to experience activity outcomes, but simultaneously, they are not as important to residents. Two activities were identified in this quadrant, "being with others who enjoy the same things they do" and "developing their skills and abilities".

Possible overkill. In this quadrant, residents are satisfied with their ability to experience the activity outcome, but it is not as important to them. Only one activity was identified in this quadrant, "participating in outdoor recreation".

Concentrate here. In this quadrant, residents express a high level of importance for activity outcomes, but they are not satisfied with the opportunities they have had to experience these outcomes. Three activities fell within this quadrant, "getting exercise", "keeping physically fit," and "doing something with their family". The findings suggest that residents are in need of recreation opportunities which are designed for families and there is a need for additional opportunities to be physically active. In other words, the *quantity* of physical activity opportunities is lacking.

Benson Parks and Recreation Programs, Services, and Facilities

Nearly half of residents (41%) participated in a program, service, or event sponsored by Benson Parks and Recreation within the past year (Figure 5). This was a decline from 2006, when 83% of residents reported attending at least one event.

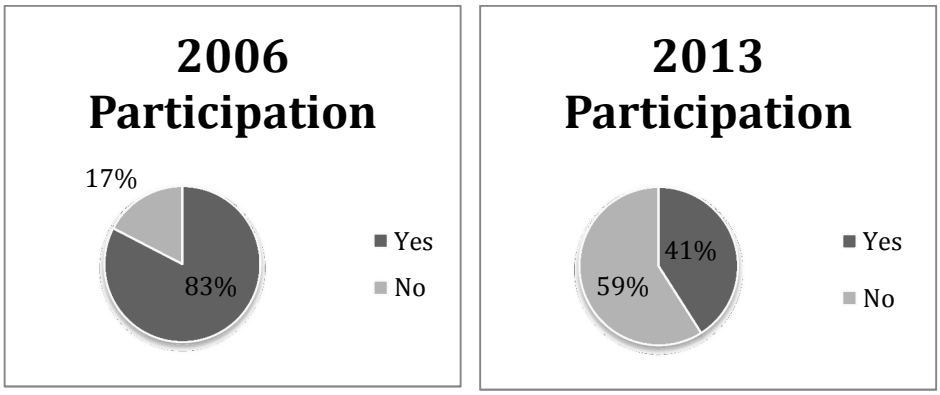

Figure 5: Benson Parks and Recreation programs and services participation comparison

There were no significant differences in participation between male and female residents, those with different marital statuses, and those who owned versus rented their homes. However, when we look at the participation between seniors versus non-seniors, we see that there is a significant difference in participation. As shown in Figure 6, of the 88 (62%) seniors who participated in the study, only 33 (38%) participated in a Benson Parks and Recreation program, service, or event. This could indicate that there is a need to increase and/or enhance the opportunities available to seniors.

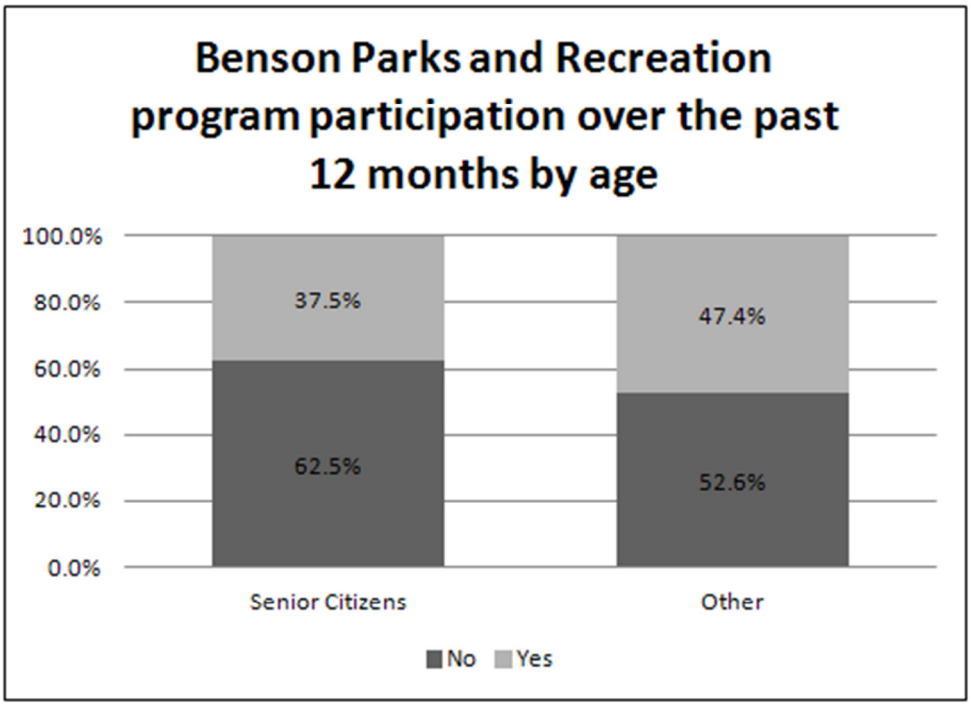

Figure 6: Benson Parks and Recreation programs and services participation of senior citizens

Of the activities offered by Benson Parks and Recreation, camps/clinics (23%), Benson Schools basketball (21%), and SPVLL baseball or softball (17%) were the most popular (Figure 7). The two activities that showed the least amount of participation were youth golf and dog obedience classes, both indicating 2% participation. Respondents also indicated that less than 1% participated in bingo, car shows, church, golf, walking, and swimming.

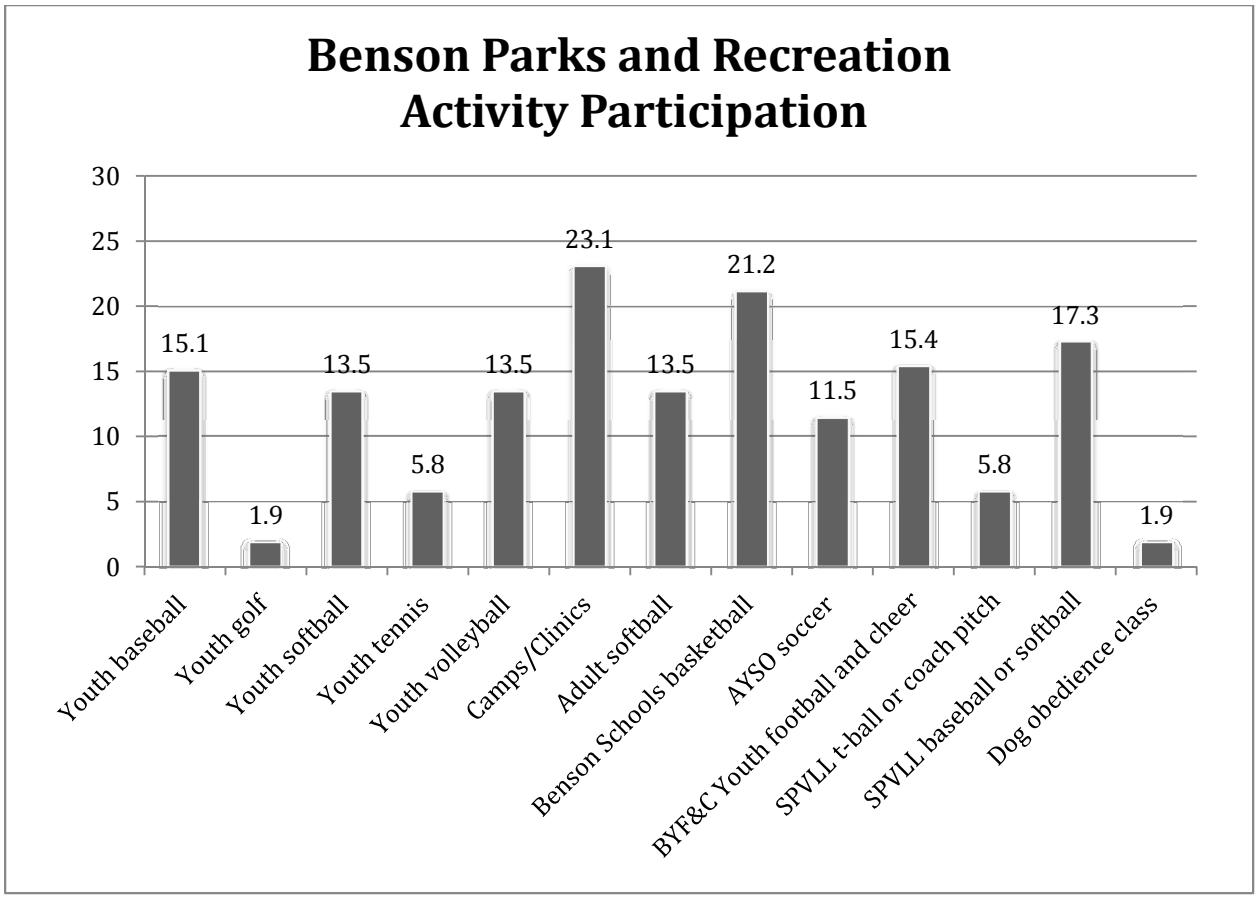

Figure 7: Benson Parks and Recreation activity participation

When recreating, residents indicate being more likely to visit a park than any other community recreation facility. Along these lines, the majority (76%) of survey respondents indicated that they had visited a Benson park at least once during the past 12 months. However, just under half of the survey respondents indicated never having visited Benson Community Center (43%), Benson School gym (47%), or the Benson City pool (49%).

The opportunity to travel to these locations appears to exist as 67% of respondents said there was a park or recreation facility within a 15-minute walk from their home. However, 44% of survey respondents indicated that they did not enjoy walking or biking to parks or recreation facilities. The majority of survey respondents (60%) disagreed with using walking or biking as their major form of transportation to recreation facilities.

Benson Parks and Recreation Satisfaction and Importance

When asked to rate Benson Parks and Recreation quality, cost, and availability of programs as well as quality of services and overall experience, most respondents reported neutral or positive rating. On a seven point scale where 1 = terrible and 7 = excellent, residents rated overall experience with Benson Parks and Recreation a 4.56, quality of programs a 4.49, quality of services a 4.31, cost of programs a 4.29, and availability of programs a 4.24.

Using the same scale, all positive responses marked as "5, 6, or 7" were grouped together. An average of 38% of respondents reported neutral experiences and an average of 42% of respondents reported good to excellent experiences. These percentages were comparable when asked about quality of programs, quality of services, and availability of programs. Although a slight percentage, 6% of respondents did rate cost of programs as being terrible.

Residents were asked to indicate the level of importance regarding certain features of Benson Parks and Recreation on a seven point scale where 1=not at all important and 7=extremely important. On average and in order of importance, respondents rated maintaining clean facilities a 6.33, being free to make their own choices a 6.08, providing excellent quality of service a 5.90, feeling good after being physically active a 5.78, keeping admission costs low a 5.68, providing a variety of programs a 5.58, being with people who have similar values a 5.58, and providing opportunities to meet people a 4.84.

On average, respondents rated the importance of the following features of Benson Parks and Recreation as important to extremely important (see Figure 8).

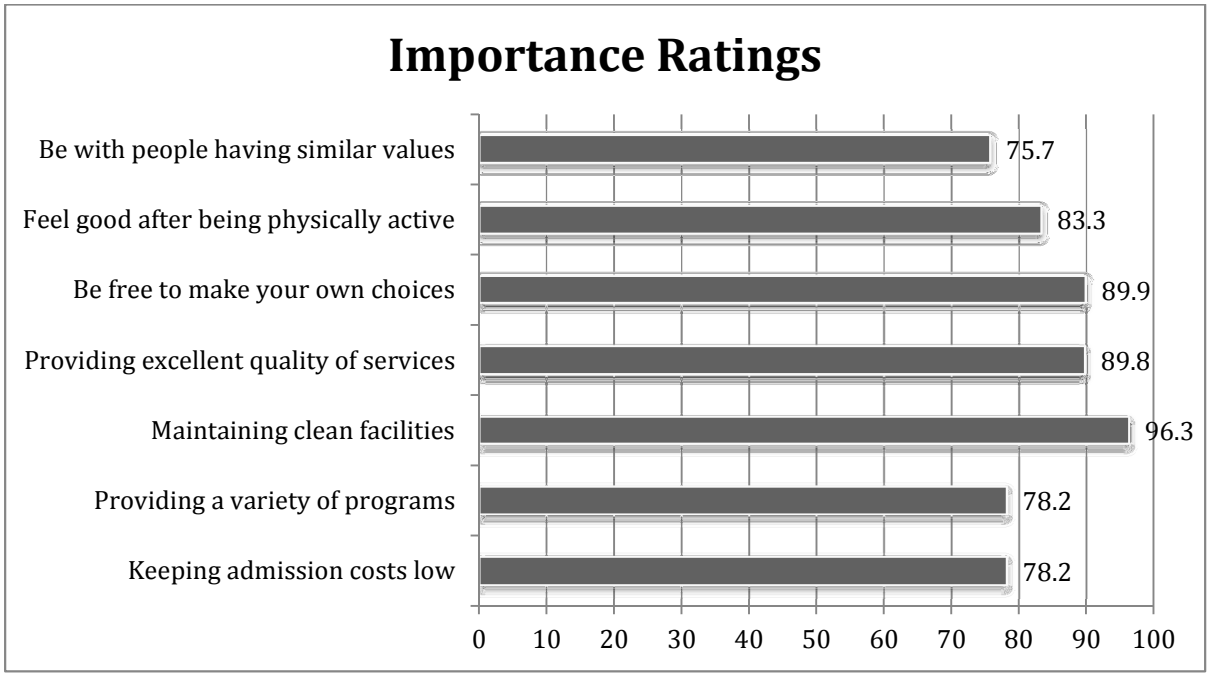

Figure 8: Benson Parks and Recreation importance

Communication with Residents

Residents were asked to indicate the likelihood they would use various forms of communication to learn about recreation programs, services, and facilities. Using a seven-point scale (1 = definitely would not use, 7 = definitely would use), on average, respondents rated advice from family or friends a 5.45, newspaper advertisements a 5.26, Benson Parks and Recreation brochure mailing a 5.13, Benson Parks and Recreation website a 4.27, calling Benson Parks and Recreation a 3.66, and flyers in Benson schools a 3.36.

All positive ratings on a seven-point scale (1 = definitely would not use, 7 = definitely would use) were combined. When residents were asked about which sources of information they would use to find out about recreation programs, services, and facilities, the three most preferable methods were advice from family and friends (78%), newspaper advertisements (74%), and brochure mailings (70%) (Figure 9). Just under half (44%) of respondents indicated that they would be likely to use the Benson Parks and Recreation website to gather information.

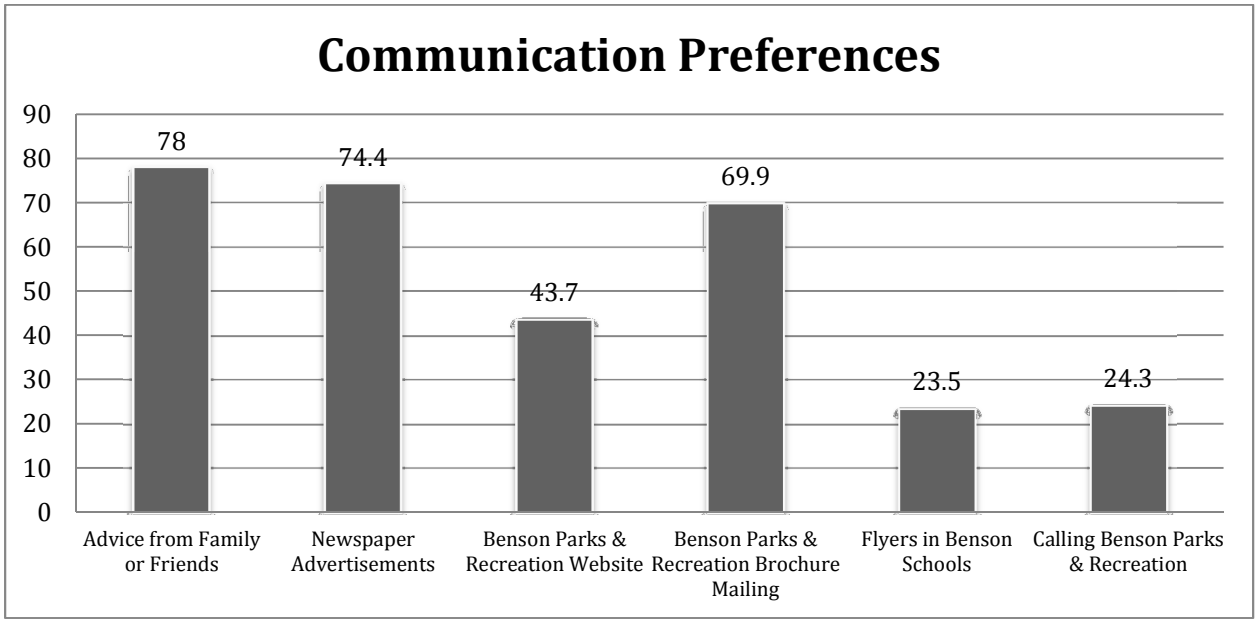

Figure 9: Benson Parks and Recreation communication preferences

Potential Funding Options

In order to fund future land acquisition, development, upgrade, and maintenance, respondents rated their funding preferences on a seven point scale where 1 = strongly oppose and 7 = strongly support. On average and in order of importance, respondents rated grants from local foundations a 5.83, private donations a 5.77, grants from AZDOT a 5.64, forming a friends of Benson Parks and Recreation Foundation that would be responsible for fundraising a 4.63, potential small parks and recreation millage (not to exceed .5 mill) a 4.61, implement a non-residents fee for park and program usage a 4.06, HOAs bearing full costs and responsibilities of new parks within their developments a 3.78, HOAs bearing initial costs and responsibilities of new parks within their developments with the City of Benson taking over long-term costs of maintenance a 3.69, potential sale of bonds a 3.26, and raising fees a 3.01.

Using the same scale, all positive responses marked as "5, 6, or 7" were grouped together (see Figure 10). Grants from local foundations had the most support (83%), followed by private donations (81%), and then grants from the Arizona Department of Transportation (79%). Raising fees and selling bonds were both viewed negatively with 29% and 28% respectively strongly opposing. Asking Homeowner's Associations (HOAs) to bear either the initial or full cost had mixed support, but was viewed more negatively than positively. On average, 36% had some positive support for either HOA option but 42% reported some degree of opposition.

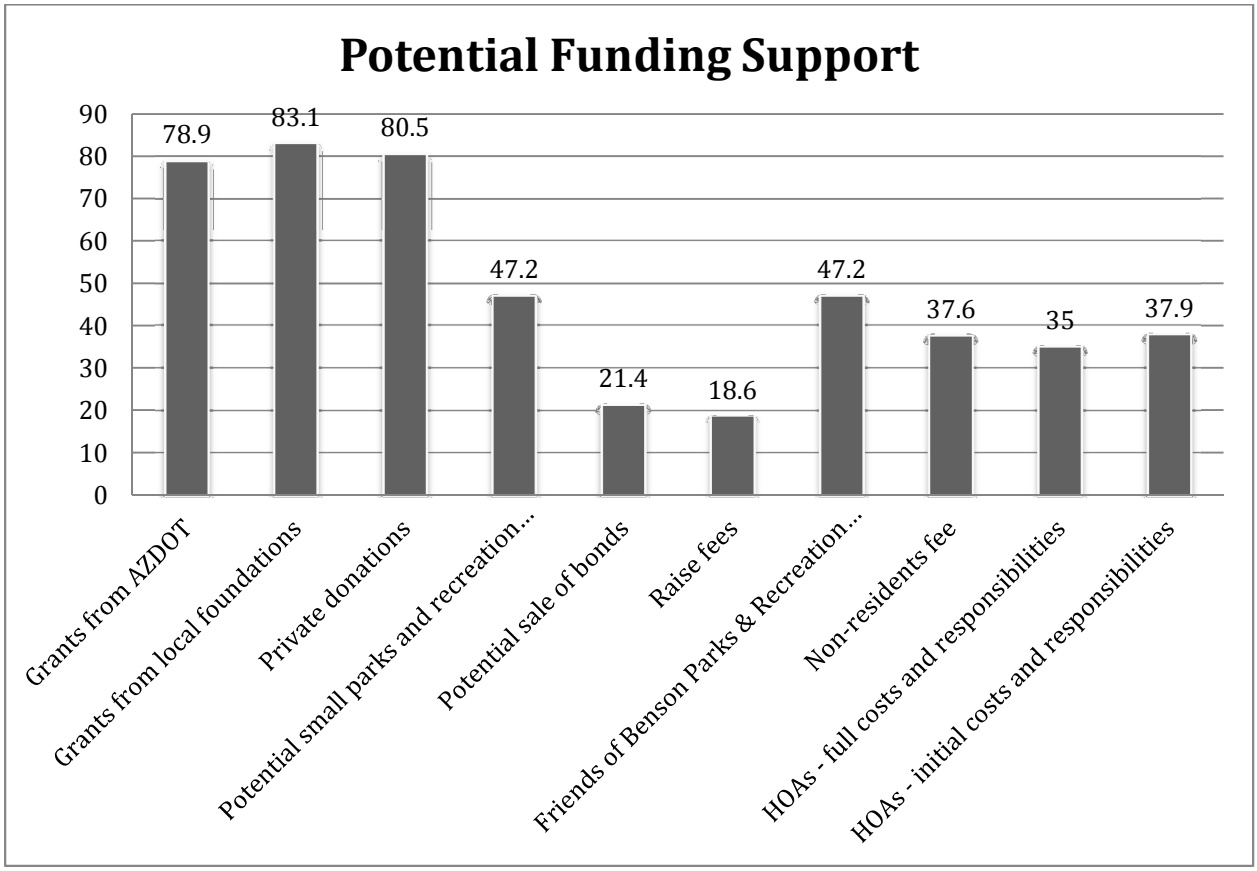

Figure 10: Benson Parks and Recreation support for funding options

Recommendations for Future

City of Benson residents were asked to indicate what they would like to see Benson Parks and Recreation focus their efforts on in the next five years. Using a seven-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree), on average and in order of importance, respondents rated adding upgrades to existing parks a 5.85, adding upgrades to existing facilities a 5.65, providing more youth programs a 5.60, providing more adult programs a 5.50, adding upgrades to existing multipurpose trails a 5.47, building new athletic facilities a 4.88, building a lake a 4.30, and acquiring land a 4.28.

All positive responses on a seven-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree) were combined (see Figure 11). Five of the recommendations for Benson Parks and Recreation to focus their future on received 70% or higher support among respondents. Adding upgrades to existing parks (85%) and adding upgrades to existing facilities (80%) received the most support. Adding upgrades to existing multipurpose trails (74%), providing more adult programs (74%), providing more youth programs (71%), and building new athletic facilities (59%) were the next most popular responses. The two choices that had less than 50% popularity were building a lake (46%) and acquiring land (39%). Overall, respondents seemed to agree with upgrading current facilities and offering more programs as the future focus of the Benson Parks and Recreation Department.

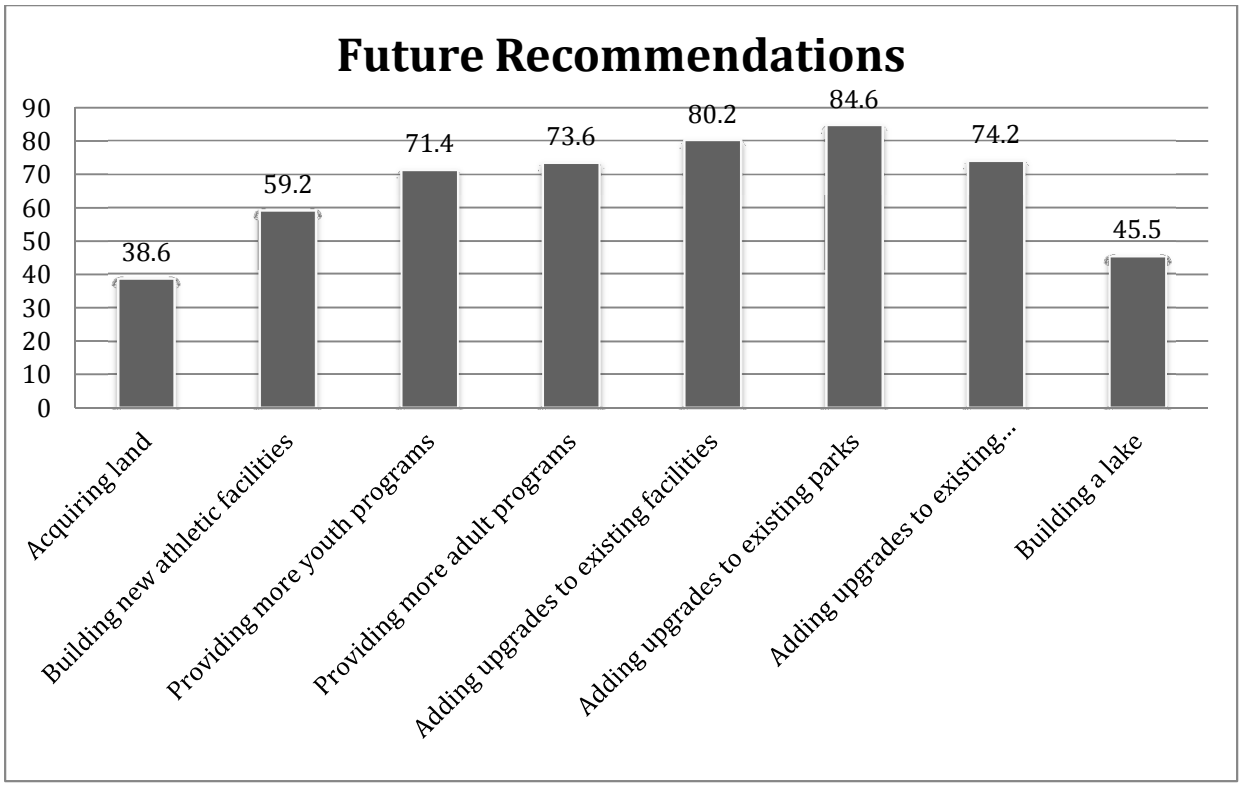

Figure 11: Benson Parks and Recreation recommendations for future

Recommendations

The need assessment findings present a number of opportunities and challenges for parks and recreation services in the City of Benson. Overall, residents have a positive assessment of parks and recreation services in the City of Benson. There is also a sense of optimism over the future of these services. For instance, when asked about future City of Benson Parks and Recreation services, the majority of residents supported a number of future initiatives, but those that were ranked highest built on current services provided. This suggests a desire to see Benson Parks and Recreation grow. This section will discuss future recommendations for the City of Benson in their provision of parks and recreation services.

Overall Recreation Participation

Perhaps the biggest challenge identified through this study was the drop in parks and recreation participation among residents between 2006 (83% participation) and 2013 (41% participation). This drop was more noticeable in older adults with only 38% of older adult respondents indicating they participated in recreation activities. However, it is difficult to determine the reason for the overall drop given the data collected for this study. Reasons for this could be due to differences in survey respondents, shifts in personal economic circumstances of respondents, or even City program/facility availability. Additional information would be needed to more accurately determine the reason for the drop.

When considering future directions for programs and services, it is important to note that over 70% of survey respondents wished to see additional youth and adult programs provided. Additionally, there was a heavy demand for more family oriented opportunities to recreate. Given that most respondents indicated participating in a festival/special event, there may be opportunities to provide similar family oriented events in the City of Benson. Similarly, recreation opportunities that promoted physical activity were also sought. Among survey respondents, walking/jogging/running was among the more popular activities performed by residents. There may be an opportunity to provide programs which promote

physical activity or seek to upgrade current parks and recreation facilities to encourage and facilitate more physical activity among residents.

When considering facilities to upgrade, it is important to note that 76% of residents indicating visiting a local park in the City of Benson. Upgrading parks will more likely have a higher possibility of impacting a larger number of residents. On the other hand, just under half of respondents used both the City of Benson pool and community center. There may be an opportunity to upgrade some of these facilities to promote outcomes that are important to residents, such as opportunities to recreate with family members.

Future Funding

Resident respondents were largely opposed to increases in user fees and bonds to pay for additional park and recreation services. However, they were in support of seeking outside grants and private donations. This suggests there is an opportunity to, for example, work with local businesses to increase sponsorship funding for programs and upgrades to parks and facilities or to seek donations.

Communication

A number of potential communication methods were proposed to survey respondents. Among these, residents indicated more traditional methods of being informed through the local newspaper advertisements and mailing brochures was preferred. Less than half (43%) preferred obtaining information from a Benson Parks and Recreation website.

Additional Recommendations

There are three additional recommendations based on the data collected from the needs assessment. First, the addition of programs and services will require additional personnel either in the form of employees or contracted out service. Second, although the survey did not specifically inquire about dog parks, residents provided overwhelming support of the suggestion in the "additional comments" section. Lastly, it is recommended that a follow-up study be conducted which targets families as only 26% of the respondents

were families with children. Obtaining information from this group of residents may help to more clearly identify recreation opportunities sought by this population.

References

U.S. Census Bureau, (2010). *2006-2010 American Community Survey: American FactFinder fact sheet: Benson city, AZ*. Retrieved May 13, 2013, from http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/searchresults.xhtml?refresh=t#

U.S. Census Bureau, (2010). *Census 2010: State and county quickfacts: Benson city, AZ*. Retrieved May 13, 2013, from http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/04/0405770.html.

Appendix

BENSON PARKS AND RECREATION SURVEY

Valued citizens of Benson,

We invite you to fill out the following survey which will be used to help the City of Benson Parks and Recreation Department provide quality programs, services, and facilities for you and other members of your household. The survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. This information will also be used in the development of a park and recreation master plan for the City of Benson. There are no foreseeable risks to your participation. For participating, you will be eligible to enter into a drawing for one of the six prizes listed on the last page.

Your participation is entirely voluntary. You can skip questions if you wish. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty. You must be 18 or older to participate. Your responses will be kept confidential and at no time will your name be identified with any results. If you have any questions about your rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board, through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance, at (480) 965-6788.

Return of this survey will be considered as your consent to participate in this study. You may enter to win one of six prizes at the end of the survey. Each survey will be assigned a unique code used to enter you into the appropriate raffle. The results of this study may be used in reports, presentations, or publications but your name will not be known.

If you have any questions about the study, please contact
Dr. Ariel Rodriguez at Arizona State University
at ariel.rodriguez@asu.edu or (602) 496-0550.

School of Community Resources & Development
Arizona State University
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Phoenix, AZ 85004

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Introduction: This questionnaire addresses topics of concern to both citizens and policy makers in the City of Benson. There are five sections to this questionnaire. **Section I** asks questions about general activities you and members of your household participate in. **Section II** asks questions about activities specific to Benson Parks & Recreation activities. **Section III** asks about demographics. Please complete **Section IV** only if you have children between the ages of 5 and 11 living with you. This section asks about recreation and travel behaviors of your children. All the data collected will be kept in the strictest confidence.

SECTION I: General Activity Participation

1. Please indicate whether you or members of your household participated in the following activities during the **PAST YEAR (12 months)**. *(Please ☑ all that apply)*

General Activities	*Participated in the past year?*	Water and Sport Activities	*Participated in the past year?*
Scenic Driving	❒	Fishing	❒
Picnicking	❒	Swimming	❒
Walking/Jogging/Running	❒	Skiing	❒
Photography	❒	Soccer	❒
Nature Walks	❒	Lacrosse	❒
Camping	❒	Volleyball	❒
Gardening	❒	Bicycling	❒
Bingo	❒	Baseball/Softball	❒
Golf	❒	Basketball	❒
Art Shows/Galleries	❒	Rollerblading/Skateboarding	❒
Festival/Special Events	❒	Riding quads	❒
Volunteer/Community Service	❒	Other *(Please specify)* _____ _____	❒
Dog walking	❒		
Horseback riding	❒		

General Activity Participation Benefits, Barriers, and Satisfaction

2. Please indicate how important each of the following statements is for you. *(Please **circle** a response for each statement below)*

How important is it for you to…	Not At All Important			Neutral			Extremely Important
Get exercise	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Be with others who enjoy the same things you do	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Develop your skills and abilities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Keep physically fit	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Do something with your family	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Feel good after being physically active	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
To participate in outdoor recreation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

3. During the past month (**4 weeks**), has there been any reason(s) which has prevented you from participating in general recreation activities more often. *(Please ☑ all that apply)*			
There is no opportunity near my home	❒	It is difficult to find others to participate with	❒
I don't know where I can take part in the activity	❒	I am not at ease in social situations	❒
I don't have transportation	❒	The cost of transportation is too high	❒
I'm too busy with my family	❒	I'm too busy with my work (school)	❒
The cost of equipment, material and supplies is too high	❒	Admission fees or other charges for facilities and programs are too high	❒
I don't feel safe or secure	❒	I have too many home chores	❒
I don't know where I can learn the activity	❒	Recreation facilities are poorly maintained	❒
My skills are not good enough	❒	Other (please specify) _____	❒
I don't have physical abilities	❒	_____	

4. Please indicate your level of satisfaction with each of the following statements. *(Please **circle** a response for each statement below)*							
How satisfied are you with how often you are able to…	**Completely Dissatisfied**			**Neutral**			**Completely Satisfied**
Get exercise	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Be with others who enjoy the same things you do	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Develop your skills and abilities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Keep physically fit	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Be with people who have similar interests	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Do something with your family	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Feel good after being physically active	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

SECTION II:
Benson Parks & Recreation Programs, Services, and Facilities

5. In the **past 12 months**, have **you OR other members in your household** participated in a program, service or event organized by Benson Parks and Recreation? *(Please ☑ ONE)*

❒ Yes ❒No ***(skip to question 9)***

6. (If yes) Please indicate whether **you or other members of your household** participated in the following activities during the **PAST YEAR (12 months)**. *(Please ☑ all that apply)*			
Benson Parks and Recreation **Programs**	*Participated in the past year?*	Other **Programs**	*Participated in the past year?*
Youth baseball	❒	Benson Schools basketball	❒
Youth golf	❒	AYSO soccer	❒
Youth softball	❒	BYF&C Youth football and cheer	❒
Youth tennis	❒	SPVLL t-ball or coach pitch	❒
Youth volleyball	❒	SPVLL baseball or softball	❒
Camps/Clinics	❒	Dog obedience class	❒
Adult softball	❒	Other (please specify) _____	❒

7. Please indicate which rating best represents your experience with Benson Parks and Recreation programs, services, or events in the following aspects? *(Please **circle** a response for each statement below)*

	Terrible			Neutral			Excellent
Quality of programs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Cost of programs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Availability of programs (camps, sports leagues, special events…)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Quality of services (registration, customer relations…)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Overall experience with Benson Parks & Recreation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

8. Please indicate how important each of the following statements is for you. *(Please **circle** a response for each statement below)*

How important to you are the following features of Benson Parks & Recreation…	Not At All Important			Neutral			Extremely Important
Keeping admission costs low	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Providing a variety of programs (camps, sports leagues, special events…)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Providing opportunities to meet people	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Maintaining clean facilities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Providing excellent quality of services (registration, customer relations…)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Be free to make your own choices	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Feel good after being physically active	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Be with people having similar values	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

9. Please indicate how often **you or other members of your household** have visited the following recreation sites or facilities in the Benson Area *(Please ☑ all that apply)*

	Visited in past 4 weeks	Visited in past 12 months	Have visited, but not in past 12 months	Have never visited
City parks	❒	❒	❒	❒
Benson Community Center	❒	❒	❒	❒
Benson School gym	❒	❒	❒	❒
City pool	❒	❒	❒	❒

10. Is there a park or recreation facility within a 15-minute walk or bike from your home? *(Please ☑ ONE)*

❒ Yes ❒No ❒ Don't Know

11. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. *(Please **circle** a response for each statement below)*

	Strongly Disagree			Neutral			Strongly Agree
I enjoy actively transporting (e.g. walking or biking) to parks or recreation facilities.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I most often actively transport (e.g. walk or bike) to recreation facilities.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Communication

12. There are many different sources of information that people use to find out about recreation programs, services and facilities. Please indicate how likely you are to use information from the sources listed below. *(Please **circle** a response for each statement below)*

Information Sources	I Definitely Would Not Use			Neutral			I Definitely Would Use
Advice from Family or Friends	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Newspaper Advertisements	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Benson Parks & Recreation Website	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Benson Parks & Recreation Brochure Mailing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Flyers in Benson Schools	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Calling Benson Parks & Recreation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Future Benson Parks & Recreation Programs, Services, or Facilities

13. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. *(Please **circle** a response for each statement below)*

During the next 5 years, I would like to see Benson Parks & Recreation focus their efforts on…	Strongly Disagree			Neutral			Strongly Agree
Acquiring land	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Building new athletic facilities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Providing more youth programs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Providing more adult programs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Adding upgrades to existing facilities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Adding upgrades to existing parks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Adding upgrades to existing multipurpose trails	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Building a lake	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Potential Funding Options

14. Benson Parks & Recreation is considering a number of options to fund **potential future land acquisition, development, upgrade, and maintenance**. Please indicate your level of support for each potential funding option. *(Please **circle** a response for each statement below)*

	Strongly Oppose			Neutral			Strongly Support
Grants from AZDOT (Arizona Department of Transportation)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Grants from local foundations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Private donations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Potential small parks and recreation millage (not to exceed .5 mill)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Potential sale of bonds (borrowing money)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Raise fees	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Form a friends of Benson Parks & Recreation Foundation that would be responsible for fundraising	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Implement a non-residents fee for park and program usage	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Homeowner's Associations (HOAs) bearing *full* costs and responsibilities of new parks within their developments	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Homeowner's Associations (HOAs) bearing *initial* costs and responsibilities of new parks within their developments with the City of Benson taking over long-term costs of maintenance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

SECTION III: General Demographics

These data will be kept in the strictest confidence and used for statistical purposes only

15. Are you? *(Please ☑ ONE)* ❒ Male ❒ Female

16. In what year were you born? 19_____ (year)

17. Which ethnic group are you a member of? *(Please ☑ ONE)*

- ❒ White
- ❒ African American
- ❒ Spanish/Hispanic/Latino
- ❒ American Indian or Alaska Native
- ❒ Asian
- ❒ Other *(please specify_____)*

18. What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed? *(Please ☑ ONE)*

- ❒ Less than 12th Grade
- ❒ High School Graduate or GED
- ❒ Some College (no degree)
- ❒ Associate Degree
- ❒ Bachelor's Degree
- ❒ Graduate or Professional Degree

19. What is your current marital status? *(Please ☑ ONE)*

- ❒ Single, Never Married
- ❒ Widowed
- ❒ Married
- ❒ Divorced or Separated

20. Are you? *(Please ☑ all that apply)*

- ❒ Employed Full-Time
- ❒ Employed Part-Time
- ❒ Self-Employed
- ❒ Homemaker
- ❒ Student
- ❒ Other (please specify) _____
- ❒ Retired
- ❒ Temporarily unemployed

21. What was your approximate 2011 annual household income before taxes? *(Please ☑ ONE)*

- ❒ Under-$24,999
- ❒ $25,000-$49,999
- ❒ $50,000-$74,999
- ❒ $75,000-$99,999
- ❒ $100,000 and over

22. When did you move into your present residence? _____ (year)

23. How many years have you lived in the Benson Area? _____ (years)

24. Do you own or rent your residence? *(Please ☑ ONE)*

- ❒ Own
- ❒ Rent

25. How many adults (18 years and older), *including you*, live in your home? _____ (persons)

26. How many children (under 18 years old) live in your home? _____ children

Child 1 _____ (age) Child 2 _____ (age) Child 3 _____ (age)

Child 4 _____ (age) Child 5 _____ (age) Child 6 _____ (age)

If you **DO NOT** have children between the ages of 5 and 11 living with you, please go directly to the last page where you can ***enter a raffle to win prizes*** and ***add additional comments***.

SECTION IV
Child's Recreation and School Travel Behaviors

If you DO have children between the ages of 5 and 11 living with you, please answer these questions for your child who had the most recent birthday between the ages of 5 and 11 years and who lives in your house most of the time.

Please tell us:

27. What is your child's age? _____ years

28. What is your child's gender? *(Please ☑ ONE)* ❒ Male ❒ Female

29. What is your child's height? _____ feet _____ inches

30. What is your child's weight? _____ pounds

31. Does your child go to school outside your home?
❒ Yes
❒ No (***If no, go directly to last page of survey***)

32. If yes, what is the name of the school? _____

33. Does your district provide a bus for your student?
❒ Yes
❒ No

34. Do you have a car available to drive your child to school?
❒ Yes
❒ No

In an average school week, how many days does your child use the following modes of transportation to get to and from school? (e.g. if your child rides the bus to and from school every day, you would circle a 5 next to "go by car or bus" in both columns)

35. Days per week **TO** school:

a. Walk	0 1 2 3 4 5
b. Bicycle	0 1 2 3 4 5
c. Go by bus	0 1 2 3 4 5
d. Go by car or other vehicle	0 1 2 3 4 5

36. Days per week **FROM** school:

a. Walk	0 1 2 3 4 5
b. Bicycle	0 1 2 3 4 5
c. Go by bus	0 1 2 3 4 5
d. Go by car or other vehicle	0 1 2 3 4 5

37. How far does your child live from school? *(Please ☑ ONE)*

❒ Less than ¼ mile
❒ ¼ - ½ mile
❒ ½ - 1 mile
❒ ❒ 1 – 2 miles
❒ ❒ More than 2 miles
❒ ❒ Don't know

38. What distance is too far for your child to walk to school? *(Please ☑ ALL THAT APPLY)*

- ❒ Less than ¼ mile
- ❒ ¼ - ½ mile
- ❒ ½ - 1 mile
- ❒ ❒ 1 – 2 miles
- ❒ ❒ More than 2 miles
- ❒ ❒ Don't know

39. What distance is too far for your child to bike to school? *(Please ☑ ALL THAT APPLY)*

- ❒ Less than ¼ mile
- ❒ ¼ - ½ mile
- ❒ ½ - 1 mile
- ❒ ❒ 1 – 2 miles
- ❒ ❒ More than 2 miles
- ❒ ❒ Don't know

40. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. *(Please **circle** a response for each statement below)*

	Strongly Disagree			Neutral			Strongly Agree
Other kids my child's age walk or bike to school by themselves	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Other kids my child's age walk or bike to school with a parent or other adult	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My child enjoys walking or biking to school	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My child enjoys walking or biking to school with friends	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My child enjoys walking or biking to school with a parent or other adult	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

41. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. *(Please **circle** a response for each statement below)*

It is difficult for my child to walk or bike to school (alone or with someone) because…	Strongly Disagree			Neutral			Strongly Agree
There are no sidewalks or bike lanes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There is one or more dangerous crossings	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The route does not have good lighting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There is too much traffic along the route	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
It is too far	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My child gets too hot and sweaty	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
No other children walk or bike to this park	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
It is easier for my child to take the bus to school	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
It is easier for me to drive my child to school	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There are unsafe animals along the way	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
It is unsafe because of crime (strangers, gangs, drugs)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My child gets bullied, teased, harassed	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There is nowhere to leave a bike safely	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Is there anything else you would like to share with us? Please write in the space below.

Everyone who returns a completed questionnaire by **February 22, 2013** will be entered into a drawing for one of several passes to local facilities (such as the City Pool). Drawing winners will be notified by **March 1, 2013.**

Of the six drawings, please indicate the one drawing you would like to enter. *(Please ☑ ONE).*

- ❒ 2013 City Pool Pass *Family of 4*
- ❒ 2013 City Pool Pass *Youth ages 12 and under*
- ❒ 2013 City Pool Pass *Teen ages 13-17*
- ❒ 2013 City Pool Pass *Adult ages 18 and up*
- ❒ San Pedro Golf Course Certificate *18 holes with cart for two people and a large bucket of practice balls*
- ❒ Free Swim Lesson

Thank you for your time in completing this questionnaire.
Please place this completed survey in the enclosed, self-addressed envelope, and mail it today.