




**EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT
BOARD LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE
AGENDA STAFF REPORT**

DATE	April 2, 2025
TITLE	Informational Update on the Community Survey
DIVISION	General Manager's Office
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APPROVED	Sabrina Landreth, General Manager 

RECOMMENDATION

This is an informational item.

BACKGROUND

The East Bay Regional Park District (Park District) is dedicated to understanding the diverse needs and interests of communities in Alameda and Contra Costa counties. To support this goal, the Park District conducts annual, community-focused surveys. The 2024 Community Survey specifically aimed to gather feedback on various aspects of park programming, including school programs, environmental education, volunteer opportunities, recreational activities (such as kayaking and biking), and visitor center events. The insights gained from this survey are intended to guide strategic decisions related to resource allocation, investments, and advocacy efforts.

After a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) process, Lake Research Partners was selected to administer the survey.

Between December 4-10, 2024, a survey of 880 adults from Alameda and Contra Costa counties was conducted in English, Spanish, Mandarin, and Cantonese. Participants were surveyed through live telephone interviews and text-to-online interviews. The phone numbers for the survey were randomly selected from a database of residents in both counties. The sample was stratified by gender, age, race/ethnicity, and region to ensure it accurately reflected the demographic makeup of the adult populations in Alameda and Contra Costa counties. This report presents the results of the survey.

ANALYSIS

The 2024 Community Survey revealed strong awareness and support for the Park District across Alameda and Contra Costa counties. Over 90% of residents recognize the value of the Park District, with nearly 80% strongly agreeing it is a valuable public resource. Access to nature and outdoor spaces is cited most frequently as the primary reason the Park District is considered valuable, mentioned by nearly half of all residents. Park visitation is widespread, with nearly 90% of residents reporting visits, and over half identifying as frequent visitors. Frequent visitors tend to be younger, more educated, more affluent, and predominantly white. Geographically, West Contra Costa shows the highest share of frequent visitors, while East Contra Costa sees a higher proportion of infrequent visitors. Mandarin-speaking households, however, report notably lower rates of visitation compared to other groups.

Visitors to East Bay parks engage in a variety of activities, with biking and unguided walks or hikes being the most common. Other popular activities include guided hikes, special events, fishing, overnight camping, and family programs. Demographic variation plays a role in the types of activities residents participate in, with some groups showing distinct preferences based on factors such as age, income, and ethnicity. Infrequent and non-visitors also express interest in a range of activities, such as programs for seniors, aquatic paddle sports, and campfires or movie nights, which are less common among frequent park visitors.

Awareness of the Park District's programs varies across residents, with over two-thirds aware of activities like biking and fishing, while programs for seniors are less well-known. The frequency of park visitation is a strong predictor of program awareness, although demographic factors also play a role, with lower-income residents, Black and AAPI residents, and residents in Northwest Alameda showing lower awareness of available programs. Transportation to parks is primarily by car, with more than 80% of residents using this mode of travel, though only about two-thirds prefer it. A significant portion of residents across all demographics would opt for biking, walking, or using public transit if these options were more available.

Fees are generally not seen as a barrier to participation, but 16% of residents, particularly women, lower-income residents, residents of color, and those in Mandarin-speaking households, report that fees prevent their participation. The most common fees perceived as barriers are those for aquatic activities. In terms of accessibility, over 90% of residents believe that East Bay parks are accessible, although common barriers include awareness, time, distance, and transportation. For residents of color, lower-income households, and families with children, cost is a more significant barrier. About 10% of residents, including those with disabilities or mobility limitations, report challenges in accessing parks, as do 10% of residents in households where a language other than English is spoken. Spanish-speaking and Mandarin-speaking households report similar rates of encountering language barriers in parks, but it is not a significant percentage of these households overall.

Safety perceptions of East Bay parks are generally positive, with 90% of residents feeling that parks are safe. However, there is a divide, with some residents feeling only "somewhat safe." Groups rating parks as less safe include older adults, lower-income individuals, those without a college degree, Latino/a residents, and Mandarin-speaking households. Across all demographic groups, car break-ins are identified as the primary safety concern. Lastly, most residents learn about Park District parks through friends and family, with significant numbers also using the Park District website, social media, search engines, and newsletters as key sources of information.

FISCAL IMPACT

None.

ATTACHMENTS

A. Survey Results Presentation.