

Executive Summary

Community Attitude and Interest Survey

Executive Summary of Citizen Survey Results

Overview of the Methodology

The Lake Bluff Park District conducted a Community Attitude and Interest Survey during the summer of 2009 to help establish priorities for the future improvement of parks and recreation facilities, programs and services within the community. The survey was designed to obtain statistically valid results from households throughout the Lake Bluff Park District. The survey was administered by a combination of mail and phone.

Leisure Vision worked extensively with Lake Bluff Park District officials in the development of the survey questionnaire. This work allowed the survey to be tailored to issues of strategic importance to effectively plan the future system.

Leisure Vision mailed surveys to a random sample of 3,600 households throughout the Lake Bluff Park District. Approximately three days after the surveys were mailed each household that received a survey also received an electronic voice message encouraging them to complete the survey. In addition, about two weeks after the surveys were mailed Leisure Vision began contacting households by phone. Those who indicated they had not returned the survey were given the option of completing it by phone.

The goal was to obtain a total of at least 500 completed surveys from Lake Bluff Park District households. This goal was far exceeded, with a total of 640 surveys having been completed. The results of the random sample of 640 households have a 95% level of confidence with a precision of at least +/-3.9%.

The following pages summarize major survey findings.

Major Survey Findings

- **Visiting The Lake Bluff Park District Parks.** Eighty-seven percent (87%) of households have visited Lake Bluff Park District parks during the past year. This is significantly higher than the national benchmarking average of 72%. The most frequently mentioned parks that households have visited during the past year include: Sunrise Beach (75%), Artesian Park (60%), and Blair Park (51%).

Of the 87% of households that have visited Lake Bluff Park District parks during the past year, 91% rated the physical condition of the parks they've visited as either excellent (35%) or good (56%). This is higher than the national benchmarking average of 85% of households who rated the physical condition of parks as either excellent or good. In addition, 9% of households rated the physical condition of parks as "fair" and less than 1% rated them as "poor".

- **Participating in Lake Bluff Park District Programs.** Fifty percent (50%) of households have participated in Lake Bluff Park District recreation programs during the past year. This is significantly higher than the national benchmarking average of 30%.

Of the 50% of households that have participated in Park District recreation programs during the past year, 93% rated the overall quality of the programs they've participated in as either excellent (33%) or good (60%). This is higher than the national benchmarking average of 87% of households who rated the quality of the programs as either excellent or good. In addition, 6% of households rated the quality of programs as "fair" and only 1% rated them as "poor".

- **Lake Bluff Park District Facilities Used.** Fifty-two percent (52%) of households have used the Park District's Health and Fitness Center. Other frequently mentioned Park District facilities that households have used include: the golf clubhouse (51%), recreation center (49%), and swimming pool (48%).

- **Organizations Used for Indoor and Outdoor Activities.** Sixty percent (60%) of households have used the Lake Bluff Park District for indoor and outdoor recreation and sports activities during the past 12 months. Other frequently mentioned organizations that households have used include: School District #65 (25%), Lake Forest beach area (25%), Lake Forest health and fitness (21%), and private youth sports teams (20%).

- **Need for Parks and Recreation Facilities.** The parks and recreation facilities that the highest percentage of households have a need for include: beach (79%), walking and biking trails (74%), nature center, nature trails and green space (63%), indoor fitness and exercise facilities (59%), outdoor swimming pools (53%), and small neighborhood parks (52%).
- **Most Important Parks and Recreation Facilities.** Based on the sum of their top four choices, the parks and recreation facilities that households rated as the most important are: beaches (46%), walking and biking trails (32%), indoor fitness and exercise facilities (32%), golf course (27%), and outdoor swimming pools (23%).
- **Need for Recreation Programs.** The recreation programs that the highest percentage of households have a need for include: adult fitness and wellness programs (57%), special events (39%), nature programs/environmental education (34%), golf lessons and leagues (30%), youth sports programs (28%) and adult continuing education programs (28%).
- **Most Important Recreation Programs.** Based on the sum of their top four choices, the recreation programs that households rated as the most important include: adult fitness and wellness programs (38%), youth sports programs (18%), special events (17%), and golf lessons and leagues (16%).
- **Recreation Programs Participated in Most Often at Lake Bluff Park District Facilities.** Based on the sum of their top four choices, the recreation programs that households participate in most often at Lake Bluff Park District facilities include: adult fitness and wellness programs (28%), youth sports programs (15%), golf lessons and leagues (13%), and special events (12%).
- **Ways Respondents Learn about Programs and Activities.** Eighty-six percent (86%) of respondents have learned about Lake Bluff Park District programs and activities through the Park District program brochure. Other frequently mentioned ways that respondents have learned about Park District programs and activities include: from friends and neighbors (40%), flyers at Park District facilities (30%), and Lake Bluff Park District website (29%).
- **Parks and Recreation Services that Should Receive the Most Attention.** Based on the sum of their top three choices, the parks and recreation services that respondents feel should receive the most attention from the Park District over the next two years include: quality of experience at the beach (36%), maintenance of parks (21%), quality of walking/biking trails (19%), and quality of youth programs (16%).

- **Level of Satisfaction with the Overall Value Received from the Lake Bluff Park District.** Sixty-nine percent (69%) of respondents are either very satisfied (31%) or somewhat satisfied (38%) with the overall value their household receives from the Lake Bluff Park District. Only 8% of respondents are either somewhat dissatisfied (5%) or very dissatisfied (3%). In addition, 13% of respondents rated the Lake Bluff Park District as “neutral”, and 10% indicated “don’t know”.

- **Actions Respondents Are Most Willing to Fund with Park District Tax Dollars.** Based on the sum of their top four choices, the actions respondents are most willing to fund with the Park District’s tax dollars include: improve the existing beach (61%), improve existing parks (35%), improve the existing swimming pool (32%), and purchase land or open space for recreational use (26%).

- **Willingness to Pay Additional Taxes to Fund the Most Important Park and Recreation Facilities.** Forty-seven percent (47%) of respondents are either very willing (15%) or somewhat willing (32%) to pay additional taxes to fund the types of parks and recreation facilities that are most important to their household. Thirty-five percent (35%) of respondents are not willing to pay additional taxes, and the remaining 18% of respondents indicated “not sure”.