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READING THE REPORT

This report is the final outcome of the Needs Assessment that was commissioned by Jefferson County in 2005. In reading this report, it is important to note that the results are presented in several ways. First, there is a narrative description of the findings, which are then supported by tables of data. **Key findings and summaries are underlined in the body of the report.** Recommendations are made across the entire body of the report and are always supported by data. *All recommendations are presented in italics in the body of the report.*

Additionally, this summary report needs to be considered as a snap shot of the results of the Needs Assessment. The tables and numbers in the report should be considered carefully. Since there were sometimes several questions that addressed similar issues, these items were distributed in different parts of the questionnaire. Together these pieces of information make up the entire report and results. *In many cases, the importance attached to a particular piece of numeric data has to be interpreted in relation to other similar questions in the instrument.* Moreover, before drawing specific conclusions, it is important to recognize that a universal yardstick cannot be used to interpret the results. For instance, in some cases, a particular facility which 40% of the respondents indicated was a need could be considered to be the biggest necessity in that category. This is so because other facilities in the category might have received far less endorsement. On the other hand, a different facility with 40% of the respondents supporting it could be considered very insignificant in that category because there were several other facilities in the category that received far more support. It is the ranking, as presented in the tables that is most important. Consequently, it is impossible to try to find one percentage as the cut-off point for all the questions. Each question needs to be considered separately and as a part of the category to which it belongs.

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

The study was designed to elicit interest, behavior, demographic, and attitude information from the citizens served by Jefferson County concerning parks, recreation and leisure. It is important to note that this component of the study was intended to obtain information from the entire community and not any specific user group. It is also important to note that the study was geared towards exploring the interest and needs of the community. Since this was a community-wide study, the statistically random sample was selected to represent the opinion of the entire population of Jefferson County. The objective of the study was to obtain the relevant information that will help the Department do its job more effectively by enabling it to be more responsive to the recreation needs of the residents of County (sometimes also referred to as the “community”). Additionally, the information can also be used to better organize the everyday operation of the Department to stay in tune with the current and future needs of the community. In summary, this study was not a user’s survey, but a more comprehensive assessment of the recreation needs, attitudes and opinions of the residents of the entire County. Thus, it should be noted that the primary goal of the study was to obtain information about parks and recreation in the County.

METHODS AND PROCEDURES OF THE STUDY

Determination of the Sample

While it is desirable to question all of the residents of Jefferson County, it is not possible to do so due to a variety of constraints including cost, available time and access. However, using the principles of random sampling, it was possible to collect data from a part of the population and then make projections about the entire population. For this reason, a statistically viable and reliable random sampling procedure was used for this survey. Given the fact that it was a random sample of the population, it is possible to claim that, within a small margin of error (3.00%), the sample is representative of the community as a whole.

In this case, a sample of 4,500 addresses was selected from a complete list of addresses in Jefferson County. Addresses were chosen randomly from this frame so that every address had an equal chance of being selected. The addresses were then used for mailing the questionnaires.

Development of the Survey Questionnaire

Before the development of the first draft of the instrument, information was collected about the Department and recreation in and around Jefferson County. This information included several examples of program brochures and flyers from the past several years, literature about recreational facilities and other materials distributed by the Department.

Several “focus group” meetings with participants from the area were conducted so that those in attendance could identify issues relating to parks and recreation in Jefferson County. The meetings were moderated by MLL staff. Overall, the meetings were well attended.

The people attending the group discussions included:

- County staff members
- Representatives of special needs
- People interested in recreation and open space
- Senior citizens
- People interested in cultural arts
- Members of County businesses
- Members of service clubs
- Youth representatives
- Representatives from athletic organizations and sports groups

- General community members
- Elected officials and city administrators

The use of focus groups for questionnaire design is now an accepted and preferred tool for developing an instrument that will be appropriate for determining the needs of a specific community. This approach facilitates the production of a unique questionnaire for a specific community and eliminates the need to fall back upon a “standard” questionnaire containing generic questions that may be irrelevant for residents of a particular locale. Each meeting lasted for about sixty minutes and various issues surrounding recreation in the area were discussed and compiled.

All of the background information gathered in these meetings was used to produce the first draft of the instrument, which contained questions and items specific to Jefferson County. These early drafts were then reviewed by the consulting team, as well as by the members of County. After a thorough review, a final draft of the questionnaire was approved by the County.

The first section of the questionnaire was designed to elicit respondents’ interest in various recreation categories such as “arts and crafts,” “performing arts,” “sports and athletics,” etc. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of interest in the categories and whether they had participated in the activity within the past twelve months. Examples within each category were provided so respondents knew what each category meant.

The next section of the questionnaire was designed to elicit the level of need for various new programs and facilities. The respondents were offered a list of various additions such as “baseball,” “bike trails” and “nature center” and were asked to indicate if they felt there was a need for the item and how the item should be paid for – by user fees or taxes.

The next section of the questionnaire dealt with the respondents’ attendance at various recreation facilities and recreation programs. Several sites and programs were listed and the respondents were asked to indicate whether they had ever patronized it. Respondents were also asked to indicate if they had attended a facility operated by Jefferson County, and if they had traveled to any of the neighboring states to attend a program. These items were followed by a list of possible barriers to recreation participation and use, and respondents were asked to indicate if those were reasons for their non-attendance. The choices included items such as, “lack of information,” “condition of facilities,” etc.

The next set of questions asked the respondents to indicate when they might be available to participate in recreation activities. A grid with days of the week and specific time slots were provided.

The next section of the questionnaire was intended to elicit the personal opinions of the respondents. There was a series of statements for which they could indicate their level of

agreement on a four-point scale that ranged from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree,” with a fifth “do not know” option. These items dealt with issues such as:

- Respondents’ personal knowledge and feelings about Jefferson County Parks and Recreation Department (JCPRD) and its offerings,
- Specific improvements that JCPRD could make in its services,
- General recreation issues related to JCPRD,
- Opinions about the effectiveness of marketing and publicity efforts of JCPRD, and
- General questions about the quality of life in Jefferson County.

Responses to these questions can offer JCPRD a better understanding of the factors that make JCPRD attractive to the people they serve.

Respondents then were asked about the best ways of keeping them informed about public recreation opportunities. They were provided with a list that included items such as television, seasonal brochures and newspaper advertising, and respondents were asked to evaluate them on a scale ranging from “very effective” to “very ineffective.”

The next section of the questionnaire was designed to elicit the respondents’ availability for recreation. The respondents were asked to indicate when, during an average week, they are available for participating in recreational activities. The information was collected about different seasons of the year. Information was also collected about the amount of time that people could devote towards recreation and leisure activities.

This was followed by a section where the respondents were asked to indicate their impressions about funding JCPRD. Many different options were offered such as “user fees,” “grants” and “endowments” and respondents were asked to indicate how favorable they felt for each of the options.

The last section of the questionnaire included the general demographic questions concerning gender, age, marital status, household composition, length of residence in Jefferson County, and where specifically the respondent lives in the community.

Procedures for Administering and Analyzing the Surveys

Once the 4,500 names were compiled, each individual was mailed the survey with a postage-paid envelope included to facilitate return. One reminder postcards were mailed to the respondents within a week of mailing of the questionnaire. The returns included 455 non-deliverables. At the end of the mailing, a total of 528 usable surveys were obtained, resulting in an overall response rate of 1315 %. This response rate is similar to other county-level studies and close to the average of 15%; it was also high enough to produce a satisfactory error factor of

less than 4%. Data entry procedures maintained confidentiality of all sample members, as well as anonymity of individual survey respondents.

The survey data were analyzed using the *CompuRec* data analysis and query program. *CompuRec* is a data analysis package specifically designed to analyze recreation-related data. Data analysis consisted primarily of frequency distributions for each response category on each survey item, in order to determine the percentage of respondents who selected each answer option.

It is important to note that the analysis reported here, as well as the recommendations presented, is primarily based on the aggregate information and data. Furthermore, it should be noted that the data presented in this report are based only on the responses obtained in the community-wide survey and the descriptive and narrative information collected in the focus group meetings. There are no presumptions about the actual performance of the Park System; only the perceptions of the community are reported. It is quite possible that many of the perceptions do not match the actual activities of the JCPRD. However, the purpose of this report is to present the perception, accurate or inaccurate, to demonstrate what the community feels about the JCPRD.

RESULTS OF THE SURVEY: DEMOGRAPHICS

Description of the Population

There was a set of questions that were designed to elicit demographic information such as age, marital status, gender, etc. These are questions that can provide information about a community's makeup and therefore its possible recreation needs. It is useful to note that the percentages reported and tabulated may in some cases add up to 101% or 99% due to the effects of rounding off decimals.

Gender

The sample was made up of 41% male and 59% female respondents.

Age

The questionnaire provided different age categories and the percentages are reported below.

Age Category	
18-24	1%
25-34	16%
35-44	27%
45-54	23%
55-64	21%
65-69	5%
70-74	4%
Over 75	3%

Income

The questionnaire provided different age categories and the percentages are reported below. The median income was in the \$51,000 and \$75,000.

Income Category (in thousand Dollars)	
Under 25	6%
25-50	16%
51-75	24%
76-100	25%
101-125	16%
Over 125	14%

Length of residence in Jefferson County

About 12% of the respondents claimed that they have lived in Jefferson County for only one year, while another 38% claimed that they have lived there between two and ten years. Another 7% indicated that they have lived in Jefferson County for eleven to fourteen years. The remaining 43% indicated that they have been in Jefferson County for more than fifteen years.

Household composition

The respondents indicated that 75% of the households had two adults in the home, while 11% reported one adult in the household. About 10% claimed that there were three or more adults in the household. The remainder claimed more than three adults in the household. Furthermore, nearly 20% had one or more children under five years of age, 27% had at least one child in the five to ten years range, 19% of the respondents indicated that they had at least one child in the eleven to fourteen years age range, and finally 13% claimed they had at least one child in the fifteen to eighteen age range. Thus, in total, about 80% of the respondents indicated that their household had at least one child under the age of eighteen. The respondents also indicated that nearly 81% were married, and 8% were divorced, with the remainder being either single or widowed. Nearly half the respondents (53%) indicated that there were two working adults in the household and 30% of the respondents indicated that there was a single working adult. Nearly 12% of the respondents had no working adults in the household. The respondents also indicated that nearly 11% had at least one disabled person at home. The results also indicate

that a fair portion of the respondents work outside Jefferson County with nearly 60% of the respondents indicating that there was at least one adult that works outside the County. Nearly 93% of the respondents claimed to be Caucasian, and 4% claimed to be African-American and the rest were of other ethnicities. Finally only 6% claimed no access to the Internet with the remainder having access either at home or at work or both.

RESULTS OF THE SURVEY: GENERAL FINDINGS

The following sections of this report describe the findings about the various recreational needs of Jefferson County residents. The questionnaire was used to explore recreation and leisure interests as well as what residents believe should be areas of emphasis for additional facilities and programs in Jefferson County. Moreover, information was gathered concerning opinions about various recreation-related issues, including factors that limit the use of facilities and how recreation programs should be funded. Personal opinions about recreation- and health-related issues were also collected. Unless otherwise specified, numbers in parentheses refer to the percentage responding positively to a question. Furthermore, it should be noted that the percentages are estimates and can vary between plus or minus three percentage points.

Recreation Interests

The first section of the questionnaire asked respondents to indicate the level of interest they have for each of twenty-one different categories of recreational activities and whether they have participated in any of these activities in the past 12 months. Examples of specific activities pertaining to each general category were provided. The scale included the options, “yes participated,” “interested,” and “no interest.” The results are described primarily in terms of the percentage of respondents who selected the “interested” option. The results presented in Table 1 are arranged in descending order to highlight the most widely shared leisure interests at the top of the table.

Special events appear at the top of the ranking, with four-fifths (80%) of the respondents indicating interest in festivals, shows, fairs, and one or two day events. This is consistent with the fairly widespread belief that more organized concerts, fireworks displays, and other special events, such as a culture day, should be organized (see Table 2). While recreation providers must compete against other activities for residents’ time, there are some recreation activities that can be combined and enjoyed communally; for example, performing arts and outdoor fitness, which are of interest to almost all of the respondents (Table 1). *The Jefferson County Parks and Recreation Department (JCPRD) should offer special events in conjunction with performing arts and/or outdoor fitness. For instance, the implementation of summer jazz concerts or providing the opportunity for residents to participate in community walks.*

Outdoor fitness and self-improvement are also significantly popular, with more than three-fifths (77%) of the respondents indicating they have an interest in these types of leisure activities. The outdoor fitness interests are consistent with the widespread need for bicycle trails, walking trails, and other outdoor facilities such as tennis courts (Table 2). The self-improvement results indicate that a significant number of respondents are interested in learning self-defense, home improvement, and increasing computer-related knowledge. In addition, the low participation rates (only 23% of respondents report participating in self-improvement activities) combined with a high level of interest in such activities indicates that *more self-improvement opportunities are needed in Jefferson County; many of these activities could take place at Community Centers, a significant area of need (Table 2). Also, the JCPRD should ensure that it provides opportunities and spaces for their residents to participate in activities related to the environment and outdoors.*

Passive recreation is enjoyed by nearly three-fourths of the respondents. 72% of the respondents are interested in sitting in the parks, enjoying scenery, etc. These results are consistent with the expressed need for playgrounds and a Nature Center (Table 2). Considering only a little over a third (37%) of the respondents participate in passive recreation, *the JCPRD should consider offering more passive forms of recreation such as creating playgrounds with picnic tables and benches, planting trees and flowers in parks, and creating a Nature Center for residents to enjoy the scenery.*

Performances and indoor fitness appear next in the ranking, with more than two-thirds (71%) of the respondents reporting that they have an interest in attending plays, concerts, and ballets, or taking aerobic classes and using exercise equipment. Given the desire for an indoor exercise facility, as well as the expressed need for a year-round swimming facility (Table 2), *the JCPRD should consider offering more indoor fitness opportunities for their residents. In addition, offering more opportunities to attend plays and ballet performances would coincide with an expressed need for more concerts (Table 2).*

Two-thirds (65-66%) of the respondents showed interest in single day excursions, sports and athletics, adventure activities, aquatics, and gardening. In addition, reported participation in all of these activities was relatively low. Therefore, *Jefferson County should consider combining some of these recreation interests by providing residents with one-day trips to sporting events such as baseball or basketball games. The interest in adventure activities could be met by offering single-day hiking and skiing excursions. It is important to note that there is less of an interest in extended multi-day trips (Table 1); therefore it is important to keep the majority of excursions as single-day events. In addition, the JCPRD should consider offering swimming, gardening and landscaping lessons through a Community Center and/or year-round swimming facility (Table 2).*

Arts and crafts activities are enjoyed by more than three-fifths (62%) of the respondents. Given that participation in arts and crafts activities is relatively low with only 23% of respondents indicating participation, *the JCPRD should provide classes in ceramics, photography, calligraphy, painting, etc., once the more popular interests have been addressed.*

There is fairly widespread interest in hobbies, environment activities, and the performing arts, which are enjoyed by more than three-fifths (61%) of the respondents. Given the significant expressed need for both a Community Center and Nature Center (Table 2), *Jefferson County should consider offering cooking, sewing, flower arranging, dance, and music classes through a newly developed Community Center, and provide environmental opportunities such as bird watching, nature studies and walks by creating a state-of-the-art Nature Center.*

More than half (56%) of the respondents showed interest in extended multi-day trips. These trips include excursions to points of interest that are further than a 3 hour drive. There is a significantly greater interest in single-day excursions (Table 1), therefore *the JCPRD should offer some multi-day trips, perhaps in the form of 2-3 day camping trips, but ultimately offer more single-day excursion opportunities to their residents.*

The remaining recreation interests, volunteer opportunities, family programs, outdoor sports, golf, and activities specifically for people with disabilities, are of interest to less than half of the respondents and should remain lowest in priority. This does not mean that these kinds of activities, such as the opportunity to lead tours, family nights, fishing excursions, and rounds of golf, should be ignored entirely, but they should only be supported once the more popular interests have been accommodated and/or if there is sufficient interest among a small, dedicated group of residents to support such activities. *The JCPRD should first focus on those activities in which most residents are interested. Subsequently, those interests that are supported by a smaller subgroup of residents should be accommodated.*

The results from these items are presented in the following table. Percentages reflect the proportion of respondents who selected each response option for each activity type.

Table 1: Recreation Interests

	Participated	Interested
Special Events	41%	80%
Outdoor Fitness	42%	77%
Self-Improvement	23%	77%
Passive recreation	37%	72%
Performances	40%	71%
Indoor Fitness	36%	71%
Single day excursions	30%	66%
Sports and Athletics	41%	66%
Gardening	31%	66%
Aquatics	26%	66%
Adventure activities	30%	65%
Arts & Crafts	23%	62%
Hobbies	25%	61%
Environmental	24%	61%
Performing Arts	18%	61%
Extended multi-day trips	26%	56%
Volunteer opportunities	10%	48%
Family Programs	16%	48%
Outdoor sports	26%	48%
Golf	21%	42%
Activities specifically for people with disabilities	8%	38%

Areas of Need

One section of the questionnaire was designed to determine the relative importance of the various recreational needs there may be in the community. Forty-two possible recreational programs and facilities were listed for the respondents, and they were asked whether there is a need for the additional programs and facilities for the children, teens, adults and seniors in their family ("yes" or "no"), and how each of the facilities or programs would be paid for ("tax" or "user fee"). These results can help Jefferson County prioritize its future additions in terms of what the community perceives as a need; they can also help the JCPRD recognize areas that may be perceived as a need simply because residents are not aware of existing provisions. The items

were listed in alphabetical order in the questionnaire but they have been divided into facilities and programs for ease of analysis and presentation.

Areas of need – Facilities

Twenty-one possible facilities were listed for the respondents, based on issues that surfaced in the focus group discussions.

First, community centers ranked at the top of the facility items, with almost all (80%) of the respondents indicating there is a need for this type of facility. Nearly four-fifths (79%) of the residents feel that community centers should be paid by taxes. *JCPRD should consider providing residents with multi-purpose community centers by charging an extra tax, as ranking indicates these facilities are among the highest priorities in meeting the needs of the residents of Jefferson County. In addition, it is worth noting that many of the recreation interests (Table 1) are activities that can be offered through such community centers.*

Various types of indoor facilities appeared next in ranking. Nearly four-fifths (78%) of the respondents expressed a need for a year-round swimming facility and three-fourths (75%) of the respondents indicated a desire for an indoor exercise facility; however the preferred method of funding such facilities varied. More than three-fifths (62%) of the respondents indicated that a year-round swimming facility should be paid for through taxes, whereas two-thirds (66%) of the respondents felt an indoor exercise facility should be paid for through user fees. *Since a year-round swimming facility is a general interest that all residents can use, JCPRD should provide residents with this facility and use taxes to pay for it. On the other hand, since an indoor exercise facility is more of a special interest facility that not everyone can/will use, JCPRD should offer an indoor exercise facility to residents and implement fees for those who use it.*

The creation of a senior center and nature center followed in ranking, with 66% of respondents indicating a need for both. More than three-fourths (80%) of respondents preferred tax dollars to pay for a senior center and more than two-thirds (70%) of respondents indicated funding a nature center through taxes. It is important to note, however, that tax dollars may not be the most logical course of action. A senior center will only be used by those 65 and over and a nature center will only be used by those who are genuinely nature-lovers and have an interest in the outdoors. Nonetheless, these types of facilities are needed since they could accommodate various activities that are of interest to many Jefferson County residents (Table 1) and could help meet a need for programming that is tailored to residents of all ages. Therefore, *JCPRD should consider enhancing existing community centers by including a sector for seniors and nature-lovers. In addition, JPCRD should keep respondents' funding preferences in mind but explore user fees as a more logical way to fund such facilities.*

Playgrounds, bike trails, and walking trails are of interest to a significant number of respondents. More than three-fourths (78%) of respondents feel there is a need for playground areas. Additionally, 72% of respondents indicate a need for more biking and walking trails, with 54% indicating a specific need for more mountain biking trails. Almost all (85%) of the respondents reveal that playgrounds should be funded through added taxes. Similarly, 69% and 76% of respondents, respectively, would like bicycle and walking trails to be paid for by added taxes. This does not include the 61% of respondents who also felt that mountain biking trails should be paid for by taxes. These kinds of facilities are consistent with respondents' general interest, and high level of participation, in outdoor fitness activities, so *JCPRD should focus on providing playgrounds and trails so residents are able to enjoy the outdoors.*

An indoor walking track appears next in ranking. Specifically, more than two-thirds (69%) of respondents feel there is a need for such a facility. These results are consistent with findings revealed earlier in the study (Table 1) which convey a very high interest in indoor fitness. Interestingly enough, more than half (60%) of the respondents believe an indoor walking track should be paid for by user fees, which indicates that interest and participation in outdoor fitness (Table 1), such as through outdoor walking trails (Table 2), surpasses the interest and need for indoor fitness. Nonetheless, given that there are a significant number of residents who are interested in indoor walking facilities, *JCPRD should accommodate by making an indoor walking track available, and ask that those who use it pay a fee.*

Tennis courts are an expressed need by two-thirds (66%) of the respondents. It is important to note, however, that only a little more than half (57%) of the respondents prefer that taxes are implemented in order to use this facility, whereas 43% of the respondents feel that user fees should be implemented. *Therefore, if JCPRD has available resources, tennis courts should be created and taxes should be used to pay for the facilities. After some time, if it is realized that tennis is more of a special interest instead of a general interest, JCPRD should consider switching to user fees.*

Exercise machines appeared next in ranking, with by more than half (59%) of the respondents expressing a need for this facility. It is important to note that this need is more of a special interest since the majority (81%) of respondents feel user fees should be paid in order to use this specific facility. *Once Jefferson County has met the more pressing facility needs, JCPRD should focus on providing exercise machines for its residents and pay for this facility through user fees.*

A skate park is an expressed need by half of the respondents. The majority (71%) of respondents preferred user fees in order to pay for such a facility, indicating that a skate park is more of a special interest. *JCPRD should consider providing a skate park for the residents of*

Jefferson County, through user fees, only after the more popular types of facilities have been provided.

The remaining facilities were of need to less than half of the respondents. This does not mean that these less significant needs should be ignored, but rather they should remain lower in priority than the more pressing needs. Furthermore, additional inquiries may be made using *CompuRec* to get a better picture of the relative urgency of these lower-ranked needs. *JCPRD should address the most pressing facility-related needs first, and further investigate the less urgent needs using CompuRec.*

The results from the facility-related needs are summarized in the following table. The numbers represent the percentage of respondents who feel the following facilities are needed for the children, teens, adults or seniors in their family, and how each of the facilities should be paid for (“tax” or “user fee”). Table 2 has been arranged according to the “need” column (“yes”), listed in descending order, in order to highlight those facilities that will be the most widely used at the top of the table.

Table 2: Areas of Need – Facilities

	Yes	Tax	User Fee
Community Centers	80%	79%	21%
Year round swimming facility	78%	62%	38%
Playgrounds	78%	85%	15%
Indoor exercise facility	75%	34%	66%
Bike trails	72%	69%	31%
Walking trails	72%	76%	24%
Indoor walking track	69%	40%	60%
Senior Center	66%	80%	20%
Tennis courts	66%	57%	43%
Nature Center	66%	70%	30%
Exercise machine	59%	19%	81%
Mountain Biking trails	54%	61%	39%
Skate park	50%	29%	71%
Rental Room	47%	20%	80%
Dance rooms	46%	24%	76%
Dog park	45%	47%	53%
Game rooms	44%	30%	70%
Equestrian facilities	33%	20%	80%
Wrestling facilities	24%	23%	77%
Boxing facilities	15%	8%	92%

Areas of need – Programming

In addition to facilities, twenty-one items related to programming were also included in this section of the questionnaire. Results from these items can help Jefferson County recognize program needs of the residents, as well as identify which programs are of greater interest.

Concerts appear at the top of the programming items, with almost four-fifths (79%) of the respondents indicating a need for such programs. These results are consistent with previous results demonstrating that residents have an interest in special events and performances (Table 1). More than three-fourths (78%) of respondents indicate that user fees should be implemented in order to pay for concerts. *JCPRD should make a conscience effort to provide residents with*

outdoor concerts by implementing user fees for those residents who are interested in attending the concerts. Concerts are an activity that the whole family can participate in.

Nearly three-fourths (73%) of the respondents indicate a need for a fireworks program. More than two-thirds (72%) of the respondents would like taxes to pay for fireworks. The need for fireworks programs coincides with a previously expressed interest in special events (Table 1) and could be beneficial for Jefferson County since it would provide residents with a passive recreation activity. Therefore, *JCPRD should strongly consider providing fireworks programs at the beginning or end of certain special events such as concerts or fairs.*

Special events appear next in ranking for programming items, with 65% of the respondents indicating a need for such programs for children, teens, adults, and seniors. These results are consistent with the strong interest in special events indicated earlier (Table 1). It is important to note that this type of programming can be enjoyed by the whole family. 62% of respondents feel that special events should be funded through user fees, so those interested in participating are the ones who pay for the program. *JCPRD should make a conscience effort to provide its residents with various festivals, community gathering, and special events. Not only would such an effort provide residents with a much expressed need, but such events would spark tourism within, and around, Jefferson County.*

Also at the top of the list was an expressed need for athletic programs. Almost two-thirds (63%) of respondents convey a need for soccer programs, 58% expressed a need for ice skating and volleyball programs, 57% indicated a desire for gymnastic programs, 56% of respondents cited a need for dance programs, 55% state a need for baseball programs, and 54% feel there is a need for football programs. User fees were preferred for all of these athletic programs and activities. In fact, an overwhelming majority (59% to 91%) of the respondents claim they would prefer user fees to pay for such programs. This programming need coincides with a previously expressed interest in outdoor fitness which 77% of respondents expressed, as well as a significant interest in sports and athletics as expressed by 66% of respondents (Table 1). *JCPRD should provide residents with ample fitness options since a strong need has been voiced for such programs.*

Holiday programming and after-school programs appear next in ranking, with three-fifths (61%) of respondents expressing a need for such programs. While respondents were fairly evenly split on funding preferences for holiday and after-school programs, there was a slight preference for user fees over taxes. 52% of respondents would like holiday programming to be paid for by user fees. Similarly, 55% of residents feel after-school programs should be funded through user fees. This is logical since not all residents will have children or relatives participating in such programs. *JCPRD should try to meet the needs of residents by providing after-school and holiday programming needs.*

Teen dances and concerts are also highly sought after. More than half (54% and 53%, respectively) of respondents indicate a need for such programs. Therefore, these two findings can be consolidated to meet one very important need. *JCPRD should provide teen programs, more specifically dances and concerts for teens, since an ample need has been expressed. These teen programs should be funded through user fees since 77% and 75% of respondents, respectively, have indicated they prefer the implementation of user fees.*

Land acquisition programs appear next in ranking. 54% of respondents indicate a necessity for such programs. These results are consistent with the overall interest in self-improvement opportunities (Table 1). It is important to note that there is a high general public interest in land acquisition programs, since nearly four-fifths (79%) of respondents revealed that these programs should be paid for through taxes. *JCPRD should offer land acquisition classes to residents since it will allow individuals to expand their knowledge on a particular subject, ultimately resulting in self-improvement.*

Bus trips are expressed as a need by half (50%) of the respondents. Nearly all (91%) the respondents feel this program should be paid for through individual user fees. The indicated need for bus trips is consistent with an aforementioned interest in single day excursions (Table 1). Therefore, once other programming needs have been met, *Jefferson County should try to provide bus trips to points of interest within a 3 hour drive to its residents. These trips should be paid for by individual user fees.*

Respondents indicated that the remaining programs, such as culture day, bingo, frisbee, archery, and paintball, are needed by less than half of the residents. This does not mean that these less significant programming needs should be ignored, but rather they should remain lower in priority than the more pressing needs. Furthermore, additional inquiries may be made using *CompuRec* to get a better picture of the relative urgency of these lower-ranked needs. *JCPRD should address the most pressing program-related needs first, and further investigate the less urgent needs using CompuRec.*

The results from the program-related needs are presented in the next table. The numbers represent the percentage of respondents who feel the following programs are needed for the children, teens, adults or seniors in their family, and how each of the facilities should be paid for (“tax” or “user fee”). Table 3 has been arranged according to the “need” column (“yes”), listed in descending order, in order to highlight those facilities that will be the most widely used at the top of the table.

Table 3: Areas of Need – Programs

	Yes	Tax	User Fee
Concerts	79%	22%	78%
Fireworks	73%	72%	28%
Special Events	65%	38%	62%
Soccer	63%	38%	62%
Holiday programming	61%	48%	52%
After-school programs	61%	45%	55%
Ice skating	58%	19%	81%
Volleyball	58%	41%	59%
Gymnastics	57%	22%	78%
Dance programs	56%	9%	91%
Baseball	55%	25%	75%
Football	54%	29%	71%
Land acquisition	54%	79%	21%
Teen dances	54%	23%	77%
Teen concerts	53%	25%	75%
Bus trips	50%	9%	91%
Culture day	46%	34%	66%
Bingo	35%	9%	91%
Frisbee	34%	26%	74%
Archery	28%	11%	89%
Paintball	26%	8%	92%

Attendance

The next section of the questionnaire asked respondents to indicate how often they, or their family, have visited different kinds of recreational facilities in the past 12 months. The scale included the options, “never” or “at least once.” Respondents were also asked to indicate who operated the facility by choosing one of the following options: “Jefferson County,” “other park organization,” or “not sure who operates facility.” In addition, respondents were asked to indicate if they traveled out of state by indicating all the states that apply out of “MD,” “VA,” “PA,” and/or “DC.” The results are described in terms of the percentages of respondents who

indicated use of facilities “at least once.” The results presented in Table 4 are arranged in descending order to highlight the most widely used facilities at the top of the table.

Historic sites are the most widely visited facility, with almost all (80%) of the respondents indicating they have attended a historic site at least once in the last 12 months. An equal number of respondents indicated visiting historic sites inside and outside of Jefferson County. Specifically, 44% of respondents stated visiting historic sites within Jefferson County and 46% of respondents claimed visiting historic sites in another county. In addition, nearly one-third (28%) of respondents indicated visiting historic sites in Maryland. While recreation providers must compete against facilities in other counties for residents’ time, historic sites are highly visited. These results are congruent with results that indicate excursions are of interest to many of the respondents (Table 1). *JCPRD should ensure that maintenance of historic sites remains a high priority given the use of and appreciation for such sites.*

Fairgrounds are next in ranking. Three-fourths (75%) of the respondents indicate visiting fairgrounds at least once in the past 12 months. Almost all (81%) of the respondents stated visiting fairgrounds in Jefferson County. These results are consistent with previous findings that indicate an interest and need for more special events (Table 1 and 3) such as fairs. Therefore, *JCPRD should maintain the quality of their fairgrounds so that residents continue attending these facilities.*

Trails are used by nearly two-thirds (63%) of the respondents. An equal number of respondents indicated using trails inside and outside of Jefferson County. Specifically, 43% of respondents stated using trails within Jefferson County and 47% of respondents said they used trails in another county. In addition, nearly one-fifth (19%) of respondents indicated using trails in Maryland and Virginia. These results are consistent with the interest in more outdoor fitness activities (Table 1) and an expressed need for more walking and biking trails (Table 2), therefore *JCPRD should ensure that the maintenance of existing trails remains a high priority. Additionally, Jefferson County should consider creating more trails given the use of and appreciation for them.*

Picnic areas are also a popular facility, with 62% of respondents indicating the use of picnic facilities at least once a year. More than half (59%) of the respondents stated using Jefferson County picnic facilities. In addition, nearly one-fifth (18%) of respondents indicated using picnic facilities in Maryland and Virginia. Considering the significant interest in passive recreation (Table 1) and the high level of attendance of picnic facilities in Jefferson County, the *JCPRD should make it a priority to continue maintaining Jefferson County picnic facilities so that residents continue using them.*

Three-fifths (60%) of respondents indicated attending a waterfront park at least once in the last 12 months, however more than half (61%) of respondents stated attending waterfront

parks at a park organization other than Jefferson County. In fact, only 18% of respondents indicated attending a waterfront park in Jefferson County. About one-quarter (24%) of respondents claimed attending waterfront parks in Maryland and 23% of respondents stated attendance at waterfront parks in Virginia. Considering the high level of attendance and interest in waterfront parks, the *JCPRD should strongly consider developing more waterfront park facilities within Jefferson County so that residents do not attend waterfront parks outside of Jefferson County.*

Playgrounds are next in ranking. Nearly three-fifths (58%) of the respondents indicate visiting playgrounds at least once in the past 12 months. Almost three-fourths (68%) of the respondents stated visiting playgrounds in Jefferson County. These results are consistent with previous findings that indicate a significant need for more playgrounds (Table 2). Therefore, *JCPRD should make it a priority to maintain the quality of their current playgrounds so that residents may continue enjoying them and consider creating new playgrounds.*

A little more than half (57%) of respondents indicated attending swimming pools and athletic fields/courts. 41% of respondents indicated attending swimming pools within Jefferson County whereas 45% of respondents claimed using swimming pools in other counties. Almost a quarter (21%) of respondents said they attended pools in Virginia. Alternatively, the majority (68%) of respondents indicated using Jefferson County athletic fields/courts. Considering the highly expressed need for a year-round swimming facility combined with the relatively low attendance rate of pools within Jefferson County, *the JCPRD should consider establishing more swimming facilities. In particular, Jefferson County should seriously consider creating a year-round swimming facility. Additionally, the JCPRD should maintain its athletic fields/courts so that residents may continue using them.*

Environmental/nature centers, arts and crafts facilities, fishing areas, campgrounds, boating sites, golf courses, and hunting areas appear at the bottom of the ranking. In fact, less than half of respondents claim attending any of these facilities in the past 12 months. *JCPRD should improve the overall condition of these facilities and make a concerted effort to distribute more information to residents about these facilities.*

It should also be noted that 95% of the respondents indicated that they get to facilities by car and are willing to travel 10 miles or 30 minutes to get to a program or facility. The results from the attendance items are presented in the following table. Percentages reflect the proportion of respondents who indicated each response as a visited facility.

Table 4: Attendance

	At least once	Jefferson	Other	Not sure	MD	VA	PA	DC
Historic sites	80%	44%	46%	10%	28%	26%	15%	16%
Fairgrounds	75%	81%	15%	4%	14%	11%	2%	0%
Trails	63%	43%	47%	10%	19%	19%	7%	2%
Picnic facilities	62%	59%	35%	6%	18%	18%	5%	1%
Waterfront parks	60%	18%	61%	21%	24%	23%	6%	4%
Playgrounds	58%	68%	22%	10%	10%	16%	2%	1%
Swimming pools	57%	41%	45%	14%	11%	21%	4%	1%
Athletic fields/courts	57%	68%	20%	12%	10%	13%	4%	3%
Environmental/nature centers	46%	16%	65%	19%	15%	15%	4%	4%
Arts and crafts facilities	44%	64%	22%	14%	11%	12%	4%	2%
Fishing areas	43%	37%	46%	17%	9%	9%	4%	1%
Campgrounds	39%	12%	71%	17%	13%	15%	8%	0%
Boating sites	36%	28%	52%	20%	13%	8%	3%	0%
Golf courses	34%	35%	40%	25%	9%	10%	4%	1%
Hunting areas	19%	40%	40%	20%	4%	5%	2%	1%

Reasons for Non-Attendance

This section of the questionnaire was aimed at investigating the reasons why people cannot, or do not, participate in programs or visit sites offered by the Jefferson County Parks and Recreation Department. This is important so that the staff can be aware of the strengths as well as address issues that may serve as barriers to participation. Twenty-two characteristics were listed as possible reasons residents or their family members have not participated in recreation activities and visited leisure sites. The results are described in terms of the percentages of respondents who selected each option as a reason for non-attendance. The results presented in Table 5 are arranged in descending order to highlight the most widely held limitations at the top of the table.

The most important factor affecting participation in recreation and leisure activities is that there is a lack of information. Almost half (42%) of the respondents claimed they do not partake in recreation and leisure activities because they are unaware of the activities being offered.

These results should be considered alongside those presented in Table 11 which suggests that direct mailings of the Parks and Recreation brochure and providing information in newspaper articles would be the most effective ways of keeping residents informed about recreation.

JCPRD should focus on keeping their residents well informed about recreation opportunities and leisure activities.

More than one-third (38%) of respondents indicated not participating in programs or visiting sites because the JCPRD is unclear about the opportunities offered. This particular reason for non-attendance coincides with the most popular reason, which is lack of information. Therefore, these findings should be considered alongside those presented in Table 11, which suggests that direct mailings of the Parks and Recreation brochure and distributing information through newspaper articles are effective ways of keeping residents informed about the various opportunities offered. *JCPRD should make a concerted effort to be clear about various opportunities and activities that are being offered by distributing relevant information to its residents.*

Lack of interest in the activities and programs being provided is the next most popular reason for non-attendance. More than one-third (37%) of respondents indicated that they were not interested in what was being provided by the JCPRD, therefore *Jefferson County should consider using the results from Tables 1 to determine the activities that residents are most interested in. Additionally, the findings from Tables 2 and 3 reveal the facilities and program that residents feel they need the most. By providing activities, facilities and programs that residents are interested in, attendance is bound to increase. Consequently, "lack of interest" will no longer be a reason for non-attendance.*

The fourth most popular reasons for non-attendance are inconvenient timings of programs and lack of time. Almost one-fourth (28% and 23%, respectively) of the respondents claim these two reasons significantly effect their attendance in recreation programs and leisure activities. It is important to note that these two reasons go hand in hand with one another. If residents feel that program times are inconvenient, they will feel as though there is not enough time in their day to engage in leisure activities. *JCPRD should consider offering extended hours for certain facilities that are high in demand, or attempt to work around residents' schedules, in order to enable residents to participate in recreation offerings.*

The remaining factors were not considered significant limitations since less than one-fourth of respondents agreed that they were reasons for non-attendance. These reasons included: prefer other facilities (21%), hours of operation of facilities (21%), inconvenient location (20%), lack of restrooms (15%), lack of maintenance (13%), the programs get filled up (13%), lack of cleanliness (10%), the facilities are too crowded (9%), cost (8%), the facilities are not easily accessible (7%), unsatisfactory customer service (7%), safety concerns (7%), problems with

registration (5%), lack for disabled (5%), not interested in public recreation (4%), lack of transportation (3%), and language barriers (2%). While they are the lowest-ranked issues relative to the others, they should not be ignored. *JCPRD should first address the most important factors in recreation decisions and then focus on the lower-ranked factors whenever possible.*

The results from the reasons for non-attendance items are presented in the following table. Percentages reflect the proportion of respondents who indicated each response as a reason for not participating in recreation and leisure activities.

Table 5: Reasons for Non-Attendance

	Yes
Lack of information	42%
Unclear about the opportunities offered	39%
Not interested in what is provided	37%
Inconvenient timing	28%
I do not have the time	23%
Prefer other facilities	21%
Hours of operation	21%
Inconvenient location	20%
Lack of restrooms	15%
Lack of maintenance	13%
The programs get filled up	13%
Lack of cleanliness	10%
The facilities are too crowded	9%
Cost	8%
The facilities are not easily accessible	7%
Unsatisfactory customer service	7%
Safety concerns	7%
Problems with registration	5%
Lack for disabled	5%
Not interested in public recreation	4%
Lack of transportation	3%
Language barriers	2%

Time and Availability

The next section of the questionnaire asked respondents to indicate all of the times that are most convenient for them or their family to attend recreation activities, programs and facilities in Jefferson County. The scale included the options, “6 a.m. - 8 a.m.,” “8 a.m. - noon,” “noon - 3 p.m.,” “3 p.m. - 7 p.m.,” “7 p.m. - 10 p.m.,” and “10 p.m. - 6 a.m.” for each day of the week. The results are described in terms of the percentages of respondents who indicated use of facilities at particular times during the weekdays and the weekend.

On the weekdays, 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. is the most popular time block. Almost half (43% to 49%) of respondents indicated that their family would attend recreational activities, programs and facilities during these hours, Monday thru Friday. This is understandable since the majority of residents are at work or school during the daytime hours. The popularity of the 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. block indicates that most families attend activities, programs and facilities after they have had a chance to go home, relax for a little while, and perhaps even eaten dinner. Therefore, *if Jefferson County is going to have programs and activities available for residents during the weekdays, the JCPRD should schedule the majority of these programs and activities between the times of 7 p.m. and 10 p.m. In terms of facilities, the JCPRD should provide extended hours until 10 p.m. from Monday to Friday, especially since only 4% to 8% of respondents indicated using facilities, or attending programs and activities, after 10 p.m. on the weekdays.*

The second most popular time block on the weekdays is from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. About two-fifths (38% to 40%) of the respondents indicated participating in activities, programs and facilities during these hours, Monday thru Friday. These findings indicate that a sizable portion of residents prefer attending programs, facilities and activities in the late afternoon hours of weekdays. This suggests that many residents enjoy recreational activities immediately following school or work, which would free up their evening for other commitments. Therefore, *the JCPRD should make a conscience effort to have activities, programs and facilities available during the hours of 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. on the weekdays.*

On Saturdays and Sundays, the most popular blocks of time are noon to 3 p.m. and 3p.m. to 7 p.m. More than half (61% and 53%, respectively) of respondents indicated that their family would attend recreational activities, programs and facilities during the hours of noon to 3 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. Similarly, about three-fifths (61% and 56%, respectively) of the respondents claimed to enjoy activities, programs and facilities from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. The popularity of these time slots suggests that most families attend activities, programs and facilities from noon to 7 p.m. on the weekend. This is understandable

since most families wake up later on the weekends than on the weekdays. Additionally, most people have evening commitments with friends or family that do not involve recreational activities. Nonetheless, a significant number of respondents indicated that they would attend activities and facilities from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. (45%) on Saturdays. 8 a.m. to noon was also a popular time slot for Saturdays with 57% of respondents indicating that they would attend activities during this time. Therefore, *the JCPRD should schedule the majority of programs and activities between the times of 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. on Saturdays and between the times of noon and 7 p.m. on Sundays.*

The results from attendance at activities, programs and facilities on particular days are presented in the following table. Percentages reflect the proportion of respondents who indicated they would use facilities and attend activities at specific times on particular days. The results presented in Table 6 are arranged by day of the week and specific time block.

Table 6: Time and Availability

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
6 a.m. to 8 a.m.	7%	8%	7%	8%	8%	19%	16%
8 a.m. to Noon	15%	15%	15%	15%	15%	57%	38%
Noon to 3 p.m.	16%	15%	15%	15%	16%	61%	53%
3 p.m. to 7 p.m.	38%	38%	38%	39%	40%	61%	56%
7 p.m. to 10 p.m.	43%	44%	44%	45%	49%	45%	36%
10 p.m. to 6 a.m.	5%	5%	4%	5%	8%	15%	12%

Personal Opinions about the Jefferson County Parks and Recreation Department

This section of the questionnaire contained twenty-four opinion statements with which respondents could agree or disagree. A four-point scale ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree” was provided, along with a fifth “don’t know” option in case the respondents did not have enough experience with a particular issue to form an opinion about it. For the sake of simplicity of presentation, the results have been collapsed into the categories “agree,” “disagree” and “don’t know,” but JCPRD can use *CompuRec* if more detail is needed to discriminate between levels of agreement or disagreement. These opinion items were generated in part on the basis of the focus group meetings with staff and residents, and they reflect some of

the larger issues surrounding the operation of Jefferson County recreation facilities and programs. Although the items were arranged somewhat randomly in the questionnaire, the results are presented here around four major topic areas.

Opinions about General Recreation

Five of the items in the opinions section of the questionnaire addressed general recreation opinions and opinions about the JCPRD. The responses from these items considered alongside previous findings from throughout the report will help the JCPRD staff further understand residents' preferences and needs.

Almost all (98%) of the respondents indicated that well-maintained parks add to the quality of life in the community. Considering the opinions expressed about parks in Table 9, combined with the overwhelming preference for well-maintained parks, *JCPRD should provide residents with more neighborhood parks and make a conscience effort to maintain the cleanliness of open areas.*

Almost half (48%) of the respondents indicated that they are *not* aware of the recreation programs and activities offered by the JCPRD. This finding should be considered alongside findings presented in Table 11, which suggests that direct mailings of the Parks and Recreation brochure and distributing information through newspaper articles are effective ways of keeping residents informed about the various opportunities offered. *JCPRD should make a concerted effort to be clear about various programs and activities that are being offered by distributing information to its residents.*

More than half (56%) of respondents *did not know* if the JCPRD staff is courteous and helpful. This finding suggests that either not enough residents are interacting with the JCPRD staff when they participate in programs and activities, or that not enough residents are participating in JCPRD programs and activities to begin with. Only 39% of respondents indicated that they thought the JCPRD staff was courteous and helpful. These findings suggest that *the JCPRD staff needs to make a concerted effort to inform residents of activities and programs, as well as interact with residents of Jefferson County during programs to build a good rapport.*

Residents also *did not know* about the quality of JCPRD leadership/supervision. More than half (55%) of the respondents indicated not knowing if the quality of leadership/supervision provided by the JCPRD is good, and only 30% indicated that they felt the leadership/supervision was, indeed, good. These findings suggest the same problem stated previously: either not enough residents are interacting with the JCPRD staff when they participate in programs and activities, or not enough residents are participating in JCPRD programs and activities to begin

with. Therefore, *the JCPRD staff needs to make a concerted effort to interact with residents of Jefferson County to establish a good leadership and supervision style.*

More than half (54%) of the respondents indicated that they were *not* satisfied with the recreation opportunities they receive for their tax dollars. About one-fourth (23%) of respondents stated they were satisfied with the recreation opportunities they receive for their tax dollars, therefore the *JCPRD should consider the facilities and programming needs stated earlier (Tables 2 and 3) and offer programs, facilities and activities that residents have a genuine interest in, and have expressed a need for. Simultaneously, JCPRD should consider the findings from the funding section (Table 12) of this report.*

Table 7: Opinions about General Recreation

	Agree	Disagree	Don't Know
Well-maintained parks add to the quality of life in the community	98%	1%	1%
I am aware of the recreation programs and activities the JCPRD offers	42%	48%	10%
The JCPRD staff is courteous and helpful	39%	5%	56%
The quality of leadership/supervision provided by the JCPRD is good	30%	15%	55%
I am satisfied with the recreation opportunities I receive for my tax dollars	23%	54%	23%

Opinions about Programs

Nine of the items in the opinions section were specific to issues of programming. These items are designed to accompany the interest categories discussed earlier (Table 1), as well as the items regarding areas of need related to programming (Table 3).

Almost all (84%) of the respondents claimed the JCPRD should provide activities where the whole family can participate. These results are consistent with a previously expressed need for more special events (Table 1) that the whole family can attend, such as concerts (Table 3). Therefore, *the JCPRD should consider offering more family-oriented activities and programs so that the entire family can attend them and spend quality-time together.*

Almost three-fourths (72%) of the respondents felt there needs to be greater emphasis on active recreation. These results are consistent with previous findings that support interest in active recreation programs (Tables 1 and 3), therefore *JCPRD should concentrate on providing residents with more active recreation opportunities. Jefferson County should combine this finding with other program-related opinions. For instance, providing active recreation opportunities for the entire family, such as family basketball tournaments.*

The next set of opinions is related to programs. Two-thirds (67%) of respondents feel there is a need for more teen programs; 59% of respondents expressed a need for more environmental programs; 56% of respondents feel the JCPRD needs to have more cooperative programs with the schools; and 55% of respondents claimed there should more programs for people over the age of 55. So while the majority of respondents indicated earlier that they would like the JCPRD to provide more activities that the whole family can participate in together, there is still a desire for specialized programs and programs targeted at specific age groups. Therefore, *the JCPRD should consider providing more programs aimed at specific age groups, such as programs for those over 55 or teen programs, as well as specialized programs such as environmental programs and cooperative programs with schools.*

The remaining programming opinions were agreed on by less than half of the respondents, and therefore should remain lowest in priority. This does not mean that these opinions should be ignored entirely but that these opinions and concerns should be considered once the more popular concerns have been addressed. *JCPRD should first focus on those opinions which the majority of residents agree are major concerns and then address the remaining opinions and concerns.*

The program-related results are presented in Table 8.

Table 8: Opinions about Programs

	Agree	Disagree	Don't Know
The JCPRD should provide activities where the whole family can participate	84%	5%	11%
There needs to be greater emphasis on active recreation	72%	5%	23%
There is a need for more teen programs	67%	5%	28%
There is a need for more environmental programs	59%	11%	30%
The JCPRD needs to have more cooperative programs with the schools	56%	6%	38%
There is a need for special programs for persons over age 55	55%	6%	39%
There needs to be greater emphasis on passive recreation	34%	28%	38%
The JCPRD recreation activities are primarily tailored for the youth	26%	24%	50%
The JCPRD recreation activities are primarily tailored for adults	6%	42%	52%

Opinions about Facilities

Eight of the items in the opinions section of the questionnaire specifically addressed the facilities maintained by JCPRD. These tap into opinions about the development of new facilities and use of existing ones, and considered alongside the possible facility-related needs (Table 2) they will help the staff further understand what preferences and needs there may be.

Almost four-fifths (78%) of the respondents claim they would support lighted facilities to extend hours of facility use. These results are consistent with previous findings which indicate that residents frequently use facilities from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. on the weekdays (Table 6). Considering residents use facilities at night and many respondents support extended hours of facility use, the *JCPRD should provide lighted facilities, especially to increase safety.*

The next set of opinions is related to park facilities. Almost three-fourths (70%) of the respondents feel safe in the parks; two-thirds (66%) of the respondents feel the park facilities they visit are clean and well maintained; two-thirds (66%) of the respondents prefer smaller parks closer to their home instead of a large centralized park; and more than half (60%) of residents feel the parks they visit are conveniently located. Since there is generally a very positive perception about safety and cleanliness in Jefferson County parks, therefore *the JCPRD should continue implementing their existing safety and maintenance programs to ensure that*

residents continue feeling safe in parks and continue enjoying the cleanliness of Jefferson County parks. The residents of Jefferson County also seem to enjoy the accessibility and convenience of small neighborhood parks; therefore JCPRD should consider providing residents with more neighborhood parks instead of large centralized parks. JCPRD should also try to create more open areas for residents since the community has a high appreciation and use for parks and outdoor spaces.

The next set of opinions is related to athletic field facilities. More than half (60%) of the respondents indicate a need for more athletic fields. Less than half (40%) of the respondents are satisfied with the condition of the existing athletic fields. *JCPRD should try to improve the condition of existing athletic fields and provide residents with more athletic fields if there are sufficient funds.*

Lastly, a few (24%) respondents said that transportation to recreation facilities is a problem. *Considering that 32% of the respondents indicated that transportation is not a problem for them and 44% of the respondents weren't sure if it was a problem, JCPRD should focus on the more pressing facilities-related issues first.*

The results from the facility-related opinion items are presented in the next table.

Table 9: Opinions about Facilities

	Agree	Disagree	DK
I would support lighted facilities to extend hours of facility use	78%	15%	7%
I feel safe in the parks	70%	10%	20%
The park facilities I visit are clean and well maintained	66%	17%	17%
I prefer smaller parks closer to my home over a large centralized park	66%	24%	10%
The parks I visit are conveniently located	60%	26%	14%
There is a need for more athletic fields	60%	13%	27%
In general, athletic field conditions are satisfactory	40%	18%	42%
Transportation to recreation facilities is a problem	24%	32%	44%

Opinions about Finance

Two of the items in the opinions section of the questionnaire were related to finance. These items provide insight about perceived cost and value of new recreation opportunities, as well as willingness to volunteer in the community.

Almost all of the respondents are in favor of reasonable user fees. 91% of respondents indicated that they are willing to pay reasonable user fees for new recreation opportunities. Therefore, *JCPRD should consider implementing user fees for new recreational activities and programs.*

Almost half of the respondents are willing to volunteer. 43% of respondents stated that they would volunteer for JCPRD activities and programs and 27% of respondents indicated that they didn't know if they would volunteer. 30% of respondents indicated that they would not volunteer for activities and programs, therefore *JCPRD should think about offering some paid positions and some volunteer positions to residents who are interested in running activities and programs.*

The results from the finance-related items are presented in Table 10.

Table 10: Opinions about Finance

	Agree	Disagree	Don't Know
I am willing to pay reasonable user fees for new recreation opportunities	91%	7%	2%
I would volunteer for JCPRD activities and programs	43%	30%	27%

Information about Park and Recreation Opportunities

The next section of the questionnaire asked respondents to indicate which methods of communication would be the most effective in keeping them informed about recreation. The scale included the options, "very effective," "effective," "not sure," "ineffective," and "very ineffective." The results are described primarily in terms of the percentages of respondents who selected the "very effective" or "effective" option. The results presented in Table 11 are

arranged in descending order in order to highlight which methods of communication are most valuable.

Direct mail of Parks and Recreation brochures appears at the top of the ranking, with almost all (93%) of the respondents indicating this type of communication as being the most effective. Residents recognize the importance of having all the city's events listed in print for them and the convenience of having this listing sent to their home, therefore *JCPRD should directly mail brochures to residents to keep them informed of upcoming recreation activities.*

Newspapers articles, advertisements and inserts are also significantly popular. About three-fourths (72%) of the respondents recognize newspaper articles as an effective way of being informed about ongoing recreational and leisure activities. In addition, more than three-fifths (65% and 64%, respectively) of respondents revealed that newspaper advertisements and inserts are helpful in staying up to date on activities and programs. Since many people in the community read the newspaper on a daily basis, *JCPRD should publish articles, advertisement and inserts in the newspaper to keep people updated.*

The use of a recreation website and e-mail are next in the ranking. Almost three-fourths (71%) of the respondents indicated that a recreation website would be an effective way to stay informed and more than half (59%) of the respondents claimed that e-mail was an effective form of communication. Therefore, the *JCPRD should consider distributing information about parks and recreation opportunities through an internet website and e-mail, especially since these outlets require a minimal budget or no budget at all. This method of communication is an economical way of keeping residents informed as long as community e-mails are not mistaken for junk or bulk mail.*

More than half of the respondents indicated brochures, flyers or posters at public facilities as an effective method of communication. In fact, 55% of respondents said they would like to be kept informed of events and activities through signage at public facilities. *Jefferson County should consider broadcasting activities through brochures, flyers or posters at certain large scale public facilities.*

The remaining methods of communication, flyers coming home from schools (48%), radio (47%), cable TV/public access (42%), and word of mouth (38%), should remain lowest in priority. This does not mean that these forms of communication should be ignored entirely; in fact, some of these methods could be combined with more popular methods. For instance, along with mailing brochures directly to residents and having them available at the public library, Jefferson County can send flyers home from school for added reinforcement. Nonetheless, these methods should only be enforced once the more popular methods of communication have been implemented and/or if there are sufficient funds to do so. *JCPRD should first focus on those*

methods of communication that the majority of residents deem effective before implementing the less effective methods.

The results from these items are presented in the following table. Percentages reflect the proportion of respondents who selected each response option for each method of communication.

Table 11: Information about Recreation and Health Opportunities

	Effective	Not sure	Ineffective
Direct mail of brochure	93%	4%	3%
Newspaper articles	72%	14%	14%
Recreation Website	71%	16%	13%
Newspaper advertisements	65%	18%	17%
Newspaper inserts	64%	18%	18%
E-mail	59%	24%	17%
Brochures, flyers or posters at public facilities	55%	25%	20%
Flyers coming home from schools	48%	19%	33%
Radio	47%	26%	27%
Cable TV Public access	42%	25%	33%
Word of mouth	38%	27%	35%

Funding Public Recreation

The last section of the questionnaire was designed to elicit respondents' opinions about various options for funding public recreation in Jefferson County. Seven sources of funding were listed, and respondents were asked to rate each on a four-point scale in terms of favorability for funding public recreation facilities and programs. The scale ranged from one ("least favorable") to four ("most favorable"), and the results presented below reflect the average rating of each source of funding across all respondents. This information will help Jefferson County gauge the level of public support for various sources of funding and therefore know what is likely to be acceptable to residents when financial decisions need to be made. The results presented in Table 12 are arranged in descending order to highlight the most favorable funding sources at the top of the table.

The most widely supported source of funding are bonds to be paid by voter approved property taxes (mean = 3.67). Respondents previously specified that certain facilities (Table 2) being used by residents of all ages should be paid for by taxes, but these results indicate that bonds, in particular, are preferred. Therefore, *Jefferson County should consider using bonds paid by voter approved property taxes as the primary source of funding recreational facilities and programs.*

Sales taxes ranked next (mean = 3.43). Respondents favored using a portion of sales taxes to fund new facilities and programs that the majority of residents have an interest in. *Jefferson County should consider using sales taxes to fund certain facilities and/or programs that the majority of residents are highly interested in.*

The next most acceptable means of funding are corporate sponsorship and donations (mean = 3.19), followed by private individual donations (mean = 2.80). These types of donations and sponsorships can lift part of the burden off the taxpayers' and users' shoulders, so *Jefferson County should seek out corporate sponsorship and corporate and private donations whenever possible.*

Grants from state, federal and private sources appeared next in ranking (mean = 3.13). This is logical considering the nature of this particular type of funding. *Jefferson County should try to find and take advantage of grants since they will alleviate some of the load that residents feel when paying taxes to fund new facilities and programs.*

Program user fees for recreation programs ranked next (mean = 2.24). This is important to consider alongside the results reported previously (Table 3), which reveal an understanding on the part of the respondents that people who have an interest in a specialized program should be responsible for paying for that program. Given that most respondents are agreeable to personally paying user fees for programming and facilities that are of interest to them, *Jefferson County should take advantage of reasonable user fees in moderation and where appropriate.*

Taxes in general are the least favored source of funding (mean = 2.17). It seems that respondents are not keen on having to pay additional taxes to fund recreational activities, programs and facilities, therefore *JCPRD should proceed with caution when considering taxes in general; this source of funding should be avoided unless Jefferson County can increase public support for them as being necessary in order to provide much-needed facilities and/or programming.*

The results from the funding items are presented in the following table. The mean reflects the average rating of each source of funding.

Table 12: Funding Public Recreation

	Mean	Rank
Bonds to be paid by voter approved property taxes	3.67	1
Sales Taxes	3.43	2
Corporate sponsorship and donations	3.19	3
Grants from state, federal, & private sources	3.13	4
Private individual donations	2.80	5
Program user fees for recreation programs	2.24	6
Taxes in general	2.17	7