

Fox Valley Park District

Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment Survey Executive Summary Report

Overview of the Methodology

Leisure Vision conducted a Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment Survey Fall of 2013 to help establish usage and satisfaction for current parks and facilities and to determine priorities for the future development of parks and recreation facilities, programs and services within the Fox Valley Park District. The survey was administered by mail and by phone.

Leisure Vision worked extensively with Fox Valley 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.

A seven-page survey was mailed to a random sample of 6000 households within Fox Valley Parks District. Approximately three days after the surveys were mailed each household that received a survey also received an automated 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 had 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 1500 completed surveys. A total of 1641 surveys were completed. The results of the random sample of 1641 households have a 95% level of confidence with a precision of at least +/-2.4%.

The following pages summarize major survey findings.

- ❖ **Have Respondents Visited Fox Valley Parks or Facilities Over the Past Year?** Eighty-three percent (83%) of respondents indicated that they have visited Fox Valley District parks or facilities during the past year.
- ❖ **Parks and Facilities Respondent Households Have Used Over the Past Year:** Sixty-six percent (66%) of respondents have used walking, hiking and biking trails in Fox Valley Park District during the past year. Other parks and facilities that households have used include: Indoor community centers (48%), Blackberry Farm (40%), indoor fitness centers (34%), Red Oak Nature Center (27%), indoor aquatic facilities (26%), park shelters (26%), river shoreline (26%) and outdoor aquatic facilities (25%).
- ❖ **Respondents Overall Rating of the Physical Condition of the Parks they Have Visited Over the Past 12 Months:** Of the (83%) of respondents who visited Fox Valley parks and facilities during the last year, fifty-two percent (52%) of respondents rate the overall condition as “good.” Other respondent ratings include: “excellent” (42%) and “fair” (6%).
- ❖ **How Often Respondents Use Fox Valley Parks and Recreation Facilities Over the Past 12 Months:** Of respondents who visited major parks, recreation and sports facilities over the past 12 months, (38%) visited Blackberry Farm 1-9 times over the past 12 months and (3%) visited 10-24 times over the past 12 months. Twenty-six percent (26%) of respondents visited Prisco Community Center 1-9 times over the past 12 months and (4%) visited 10-24 times. Twenty-five percent (25%) of respondents visited Red Oak Nature Center 1-9 times over the past 12 months and (2%) of respondents visited the Center 10-24 times over the past 12 months.
- ❖ **Fox Valley Park District Facilities that are Most Important to Households:** Based on the sum of the respondent’s top three choices, (35%) of respondents indicated Vaughan athletic center as the most important. Other top choices include: Eola Community Center (33%), Blackberry Farm (31%), Prisco Community Center (23%), Philips Park Family Aquatic Center (21%) and Red Oak Nature Center (20%).
- ❖ **Have Respondents Participated in Fox Valley Recreation Programs Over the Past 12 Months, if so How Many?** Thirty percent (30%) of respondents indicated they have participated in recreation programs offered by Fox Valley park district over the past 12 months. Based on the (30%) of respondents who participated in recreational programs; (47%) participated in 2-3 programs, (29%) participated in 1 program, (17%) participated in 4-6 programs, (5%) participated in 7-10 programs and (3%) participated in 11 or more programs.
- ❖ **Primary Reasons Why Respondents Have Participated in Programs Over the Past 12 Months:** Based on the sum of respondent’s top three choices, the primary reasons for participating in Fox Valley recreation programs include: Location of facility (72%), economical fees (57%) and convenient times offered (35%).

- ❖ **How Respondents Rate the Overall Quality of Programs that they Have Participated in Offered by the Fox Valley Park District Over the Past 12 Months:** Based on the (30%) of respondents who participated in recreational programs; (50%) rated the overall quality of recreational programs as “good”. Other respondent’s rating include: “excellent” (44%) and “fair” (6%).

- ❖ **Organizations that Respondents Have Used for Both Indoor and Outdoor Recreation Activities Over the Past 12 Months:** Fifty-four percent (54%) of respondents have used *Fox Valley Park District* for indoor and outdoor recreation activities over the past 12 months. Other organizations respondents use for indoor and outdoor recreation activities include: School district (29%), Churches (27%) and forest preserves (27%).
 - **Organizations that Household Members Ages 11 or Under Use the Most for Indoor and Outdoor Recreation Activities During the Past 12 Months:** Based on the percentage of respondents who selected the item as one of their top two choices, (12%) use the *Fox Valley Park District* the most. Other responses include: School district (9%) and youth sports associations (5%).

 - **Organizations that Household Members Ages 12-17 Years Use the Most for Indoor and Outdoor Recreation Activities During the Past 12 Months:** Based on the percentage of respondents who selected the item as one of their top two choices, (9%) use the *school district* the most. Other responses include: Fox Valley Park District (7%), youth sports associations (5%), private school (3%) and travel sports teams (3%).

 - **Organizations that Household Members Ages 18-54 Years Use the Most for Indoor and Outdoor Recreation Activities During the Past 12 Months:** Based on the percentage of respondents who selected the item as one of their top two choices, (23%) use Fox Valley park district the most. Other responses include: Forest Preserves (9%), private clubs (7%) and Churches (7%).

 - **Organizations that Household Members Ages 55 Years and Older Use the Most for Indoor and Outdoor Recreation Activities During the Past 12 Months:** Based on the percentage of respondents who selected the item as one of their top two choices, (14%) use Fox Valley Park District the most. Other responses include: Churches (6%) and Forest Preserves (6%).

- ❖ **Fox Valley Respondents Have a Need for the Following Parks and Recreation Facilities:** Seventy percent (70%, 52,392 households) of respondents indicated they have a need for *walking, hiking and biking trails*. Other parks and recreation facilities that have a need for include: Small neighborhood parks (64%, 47,853 households), and large community parks and natural areas (57%, 42,643 households) and wildlife habitats (57%, 42,420 households).

- ❖ **Fox Valley Park District Facilities that are Most Important to Households:** Forty-five percent (45%) of respondents indicated *walking, hiking and biking trails* as the most important parks and recreation facility to their households. Other parks and recreation facilities that are most important include: Small neighborhood parks (32%), indoor fitness and exercise facilities (26%), indoor running/walking track (21%) and natural areas and wildlife habitats (20%).
- ❖ **Respondents Have a Need for the Following Park District Programs:** Forty-seven percent (47%, 35,052 households) of respondents indicated their household has a need for *adult fitness and wellness programs*. Other various recreational programs needs include: Water fitness programs (28%, 20,540 households), nature programs (25%, 18,903 households), youth sports programs (25%, 18,456 households), youth learn to swim programs (24%, 17,787 households) and senior adult programs (23%, 17,415 households).
- ❖ **Recreation Programs that are Most Important to Respondent Households:** Thirty-six percent (36%) of respondents indicated *adult fitness and wellness programs* the most important to households. Other recreation programs that are most important to households include: Senior adult programs (16%), youth sports programs (16%), youth learn to swim programs (15%), water fitness programs (15%) and nature programs (14%).
- ❖ **Recreation Programs Offered by the Fox Valley Park District that Respondent Households Participate in Most Often:** Nineteen percent (19%) of respondents indicated households currently participate in *adult fitness and wellness programs* the most often. Other recreation programs household participate in most often include: Youth sports programs (11%), youth learn to swim programs (8%), and nature and senior adult programs (7%).
- ❖ **Fox Valley Park District Facilities that Respondent Households Hold Memberships too:** Eighteen percent (18%) of respondents indicated they hold memberships at *Vaughan Athletic Center*. Other facilities where respondents hold memberships include: Eola Fitness Center (11%), outdoor water parks (7%), Blackberry Farm (4%) and Prisco fitness center (4%).
- ❖ **Fox Valley is Studying Opportunities to Improve the Aquatic Center Features: Which ones Would Respondents Use if Developed?** Forty-one percent (41%) of respondents indicated *additional shade areas* as an aquatic feature households would use if they were developed at the existing outdoor aquatic centers. Other aquatic features households would use include: Family cabanas in shade areas (38%), speed and tornado slides (35%), improved concession areas (33%), water zip lines (33%) and water spray playgrounds (31%).

- ❖ **Which Aquatic Features Would Households Use the Most if Developed?** Based on respondents top three choices, (24%) of respondents indicated *speed and tornado slides* as the aquatic feature households would use the most if they were developed at the existing outdoor aquatic centers. Other aquatic features households would use the most include: Family cabanas in shade areas (20%), additional shade areas (20%) and water zip lines (19%).
- ❖ **Reasons Respondents Would Use Outdoor Aquatic Centers:** Fifty-eight percent (58%) of respondents indicated “*recreation*” as the top reason households would use outdoor aquatic centers. Other reasons include: Fun (56%), sunbathing (22%), lap lanes for exercise (21%), water fitness classes (21%), swim lessons (20%) and therapeutic (18%).
- ❖ **Ways Respondents Learn About Fox Valley Park District Programs and Activities:** Seventy-six percent (76%) of respondents use the *Fox Valley Park District activity guide* to learn about Fox Valley park district programs and activities. Other ways respondents learn about programs and activities include: Fox Valley Park District website (35%), from friends and neighbors (34%), and Park District newsletters (25%) and Park District facilities (25%).
- ❖ **Reasons that Deter Respondents from Using Parks, Recreation Facilities or Programs Offered by the Fox Valley Park District More Often?** Forty-two percent (42%) of respondents indicated *we are too busy* as the primary reason they are prevented from using Fox Valley Park District parks, recreation facilities or programs more often. Other reasons that deter respondents from using parks, recreational facilities or programs offered include: Fees are too high (27%), program times are not convenient (21%), too far from our residence (16%) and program or facility not offered (13%).
- ❖ **Respondent Level of Satisfaction with the Overall Quality of Various Recreation Services Provided by the Fox Valley Park District:** Based on the percentage of respondents that indicated “very satisfied” with the overall quality of recreational services provided by Fox Valley park district. Quality of Blackberry farm (45%), quality of walking/hiking/biking trails (41%), quality of Orchard Valley Golf Course (38%), quality of indoor recreation centers (36%) and overall quality of Orchard Valley Restaurant (34%).
- ❖ **Fox Valley Park District Parks, Facilities, and Services that Respondents Feel Should Receive the Most Emphasis Over the Next 2 Years:** Based on the sum of respondents top three choices, (36%) of respondents indicated *overall quality of walking/hiking/biking trails* should receive the most emphasis over the next two years. Other parks, facilities, and services that should receive the most emphasis include: Overall quality of small neighborhood parks (36%), overall quality of large community parks (24%) and overall quality of outdoor pools/water parks (19%).

- ❖ **Respondent Level of Satisfaction Received from the Fox Valley Parks District:** Thirty-six percent (36%) of respondents indicated that they were *somewhat satisfied* with the overall value households receive from the Fox Valley Park District. Other levels of respondent satisfaction include: Very satisfied (32%), neutral (16%) and (8%) of respondents indicated “don’t know.”

- ❖ **Respondent Allocation of Funds if \$100 Were Provided to Improve and Maintain Park District Facilities:** If \$100 in funds were available to fund improvements and maintenance to Park District facilities, respondents would allocate the most amount of funds to maintain and improve *existing neighborhood parks*. Other allocation of funds to maintain and improve Fox Valley Park District facilities would include: Walking and biking trails (\$19), indoor facilities (\$12), existing outdoor pools and aquatic fitness (\$12), Blackberry Farm (\$9), outdoor sports fields (\$8), Red Oak Nature Center (\$7), other types of facilities (\$7) and Orchard Valley Golf Course (\$4).