

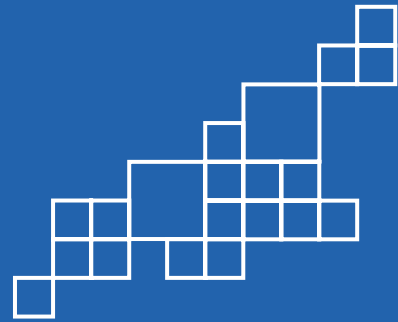


Prepared for:
City of Cleveland

Prepared by: **OLIN**

with PROS Consulting, DesignExplorr, OHM Advisors, Rhonda Crowder and Associates, ThirdSpace Action Lab, Neighborhood Connections, ETC Institute, IG Global Solutions, and Larry Weaner Landscape Associates





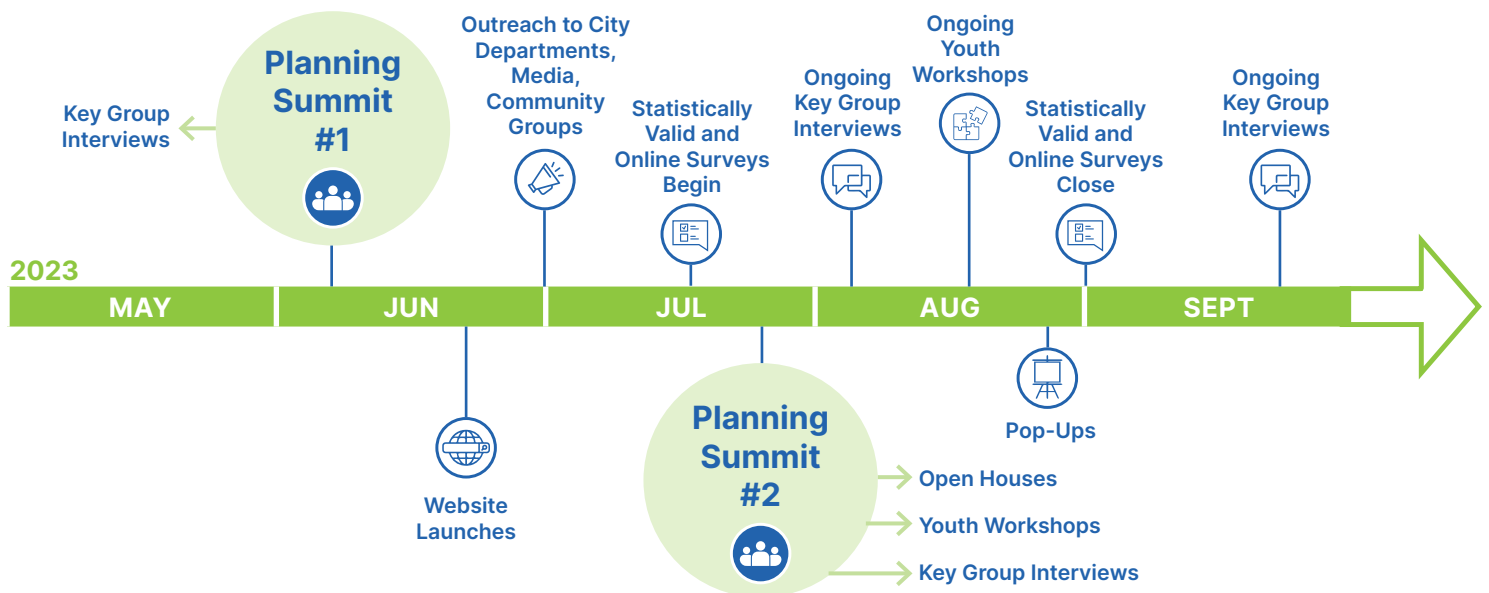
Community Needs Assessment

INTRODUCTION

The process of developing this Parks and Recreation Plan included a number of opportunities for residents, advocates, and elected leaders to provide input. The goal of these touch points was to foster dialogue among the widest possible audience to cultivate a shared vision for the future of Cleveland’s parks and recreation facilities.

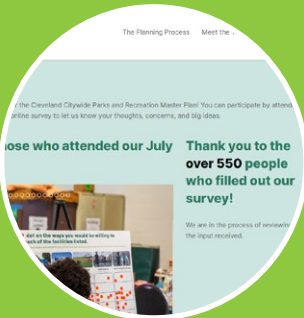
This knowledge was critical to creating a plan that will guide city decisions for the next 15 years.

Community Engagement Timeline.
Source: OLIN, 2023.

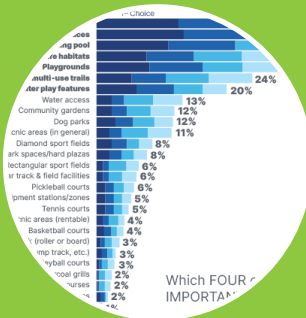


1,500+

POINTS OF ENGAGEMENT



555
Online Survey Responses



528
Statistically Valid Survey Responses



150+
Open House Attendees



95+
Youth Workshop Participants



80+
Pop-Up Attendees



68
Neighborhood Meeting Participants



35+
City & Community Group Interviews

ENGAGEMENT BY THE NUMBERS

COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

To inform the future of parks and recreation in Cleveland, this Community Needs Assessment summarizes the biggest park and recreation needs identified by residents, community groups, partner organizations, and city leadership and how well they think the current system is meeting those needs.

In addition to talking with City leadership and staff, Clevelanders were invited to share their opinions during the summer of 2023 in a variety of ways:

- a statistically valid survey of residents
- open houses
- youth workshops
- pop-ups at existing community events
- a website and online survey
- meetings with local neighborhood groups and organizations

The variety of engagement formats spanned geographic, language, and other accessibility barriers to capture as great a diversity of voices as possible, particularly from those traditionally disengaged from the planning process.

The multiple methods of engagement highlighted areas of agreement—those recurring needs and themes that are most important to residents—and areas of disagreement that may indicate disparities that could inform different priorities for different planning regions.

STATISTICALLY VALID SURVEY

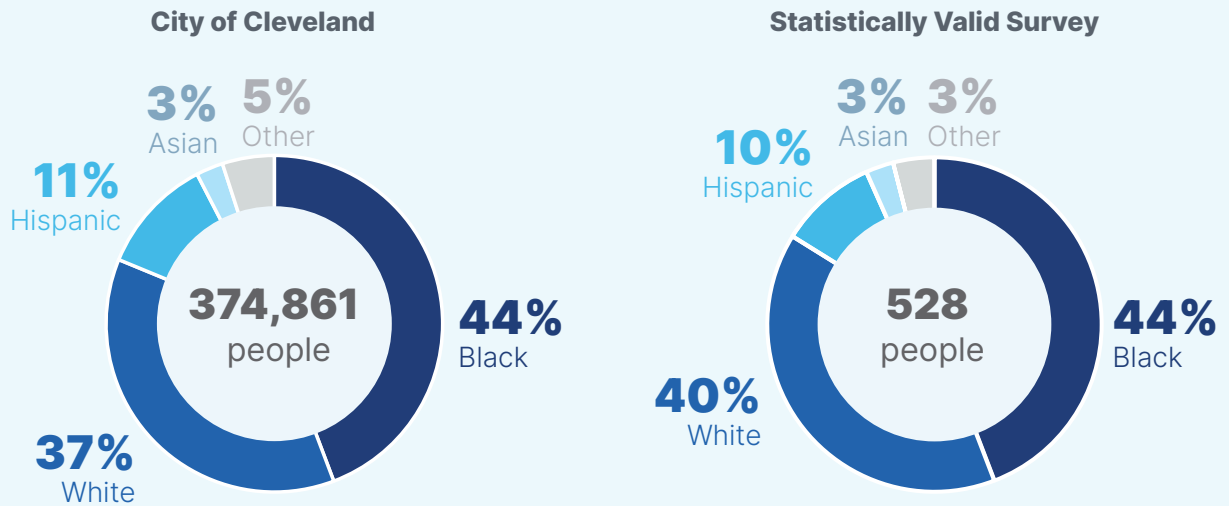
A statistically valid survey was conducted of a random sample of city residents by mail, phone, and internet to understand and measure Clevelanders' needs across the city. The 528 responses received exceeded the goal of 500 responses and ensured that the opinions of a representative cross-section of residents—geographically and across demographic groups—were heard. With this sample size, there is 95% confidence that citywide opinions are within 4.3 percentage points of the values shown.

Residents were asked to identify the facilities and programs most important to them.
Source: Sylven Lamar Edwards, 2023; Zelma Watson George Open House.

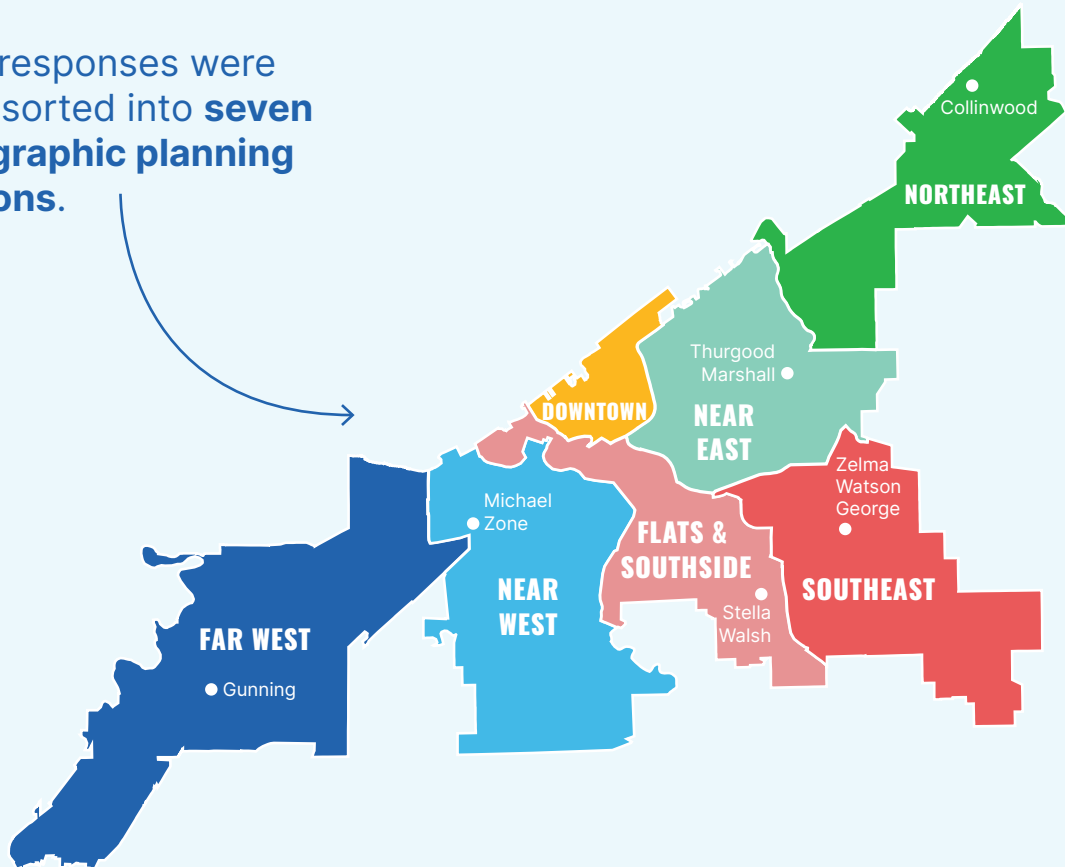


WHO TOOK THE STATISTICALLY VALID SURVEY?

The **demographic and geographic makeup** of the statistically valid survey's respondents **closely match that of the city.**

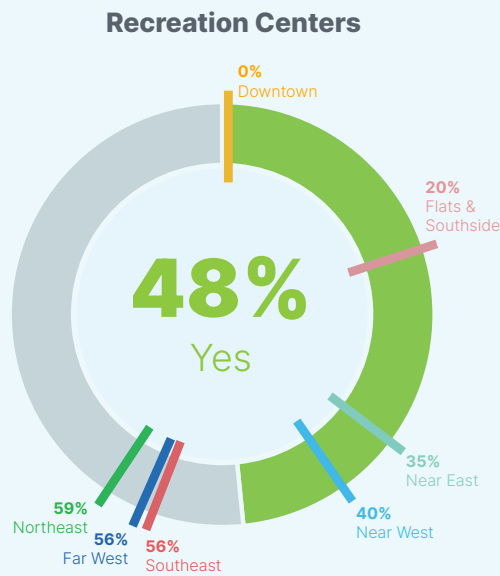
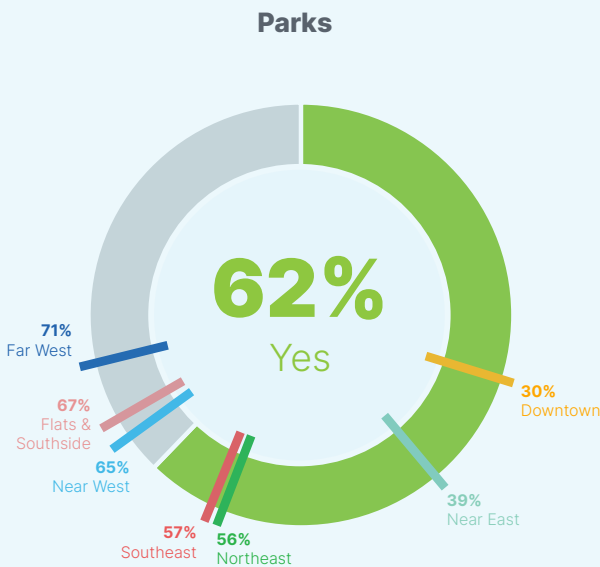


The responses were also sorted into **seven geographic planning regions.**



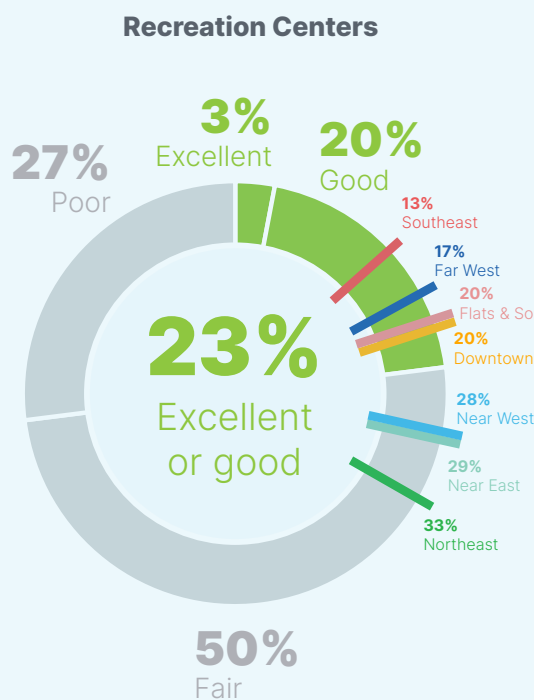
KEY SURVEY FINDINGS

Close to 2/3 of respondents feel that there are enough parks within walking distance of their home, while less than 1/2 feel there are enough recreation centers.



Households with older children (10-18) are more likely to say there are sufficient parks (73%) and recreation centers (57%) within walking distance than other households.

A little over 40% of respondents think parks are in excellent or good condition, less than 25% for recreation centers.



Seniors are more likely to rate the condition of parks and recreation centers higher (54% and 33% excellent or good, respectively), than households with children.

Top three most important . . .

Outdoor Facilities

| | | |
|---------------------------|--|-----|
| Paved, multi-use trails | | 41% |
| Unprogrammed green spaces | | 36% |
| Swimming pool | | 35% |

| Downtown | Northeast | Near East | Southeast | Flats & Southside | Near West | Far West |
|--|---|---|---|--|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Unprogrammed green spaces Paved, multi-use trails Non-paved, multi-use trails <p>Natural areas & wildlife habitats</p> <p>Downtown park spaces/hard plazas</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Swimming pool Playgrounds Paved, multi-use trails | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Swimming pool Water play features Unprogrammed green spaces | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Paved, multi-use trails Playgrounds Unprogrammed green spaces | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Swimming pool Water play features Playgrounds <p>Paved, multi-use trails</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Paved, multi-use trails Unprogrammed green spaces Natural areas & wildlife habitats | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Swimming pool Paved, multi-use trails Unprogrammed green spaces |

Indoor Facilities

| | | |
|------------------------------|--|-----|
| Swimming pool | | 39% |
| Walking/jogging track | | 32% |
| Exercise & fitness equipment | | 31% |

| Downtown | Northeast | Near East | Southeast | Flats & Southside | Near West | Far West |
|---|---|--|--|---|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Swimming pool Walking/jogging track Weight rooms/gyms | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Swimming pool Walking/jogging track Exercise & fitness equipment <p>Makerspaces</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Exercise & fitness equipment Swimming pool Walking/jogging track | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Swimming pool Lap pool Walking/jogging track <p>Exercise & fitness equipment</p> <p>Weight rooms/gyms</p> <p>Space for meetings, parties, etc.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Indoor sports fields Rooms for arts, crafts & games Classroom space | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Swimming pool Walking/jogging track Exercise & fitness equipment | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Swimming pool Exercise & fitness equipment Walking/jogging track |

Aquatics were identified as important across **outdoor facilities, indoor facilities, and programs.**

Programs and Activities

| | | |
|-----------------------|--|-----|
| Seniors (age 50+) | | 26% |
| Aquatics | | 26% |
| Arts & crafts classes | | 22% |

| Downtown | Northeast | Near East | Southeast | Flats & Southside | Near West | Far West |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Recreation (organized & drop-in) Arts & crafts classes Special events/festivals | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Seniors Aquatics Fitness/wellness programs <p>Arts & crafts classes</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Seniors Public health services Mental health services | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Mental health services Aquatics Seniors Youth & family | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Youth & family Teens Recreation (drop-in) Special events/festivals Mental health services | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Aquatics Arts & crafts classes Seniors Recreation (drop-in) Nature experiences or education | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Seniors Aquatics Arts & crafts classes Fitness/wellness programs |

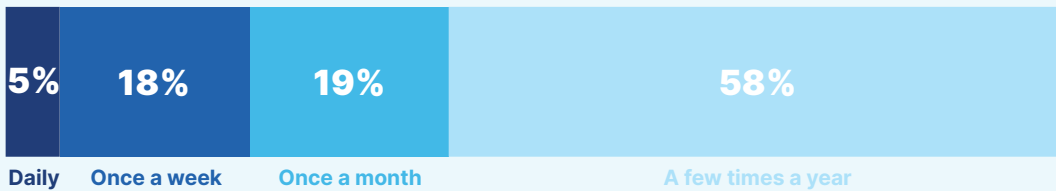
A little over half of respondents visit a park at least once a week, however **less than 25%** visit a recreation center that often.

Parks



Over 56% of households with children visit parks at least once a week, **more frequently** than households without children.

Recreation Centers



Over 40% of households with children (10-18) visit recreation centers at least once a week, **more frequently** than other than other households.

Top three barriers to visiting parks and recreation centers more often:

50%

Facilities are not well maintained

40%

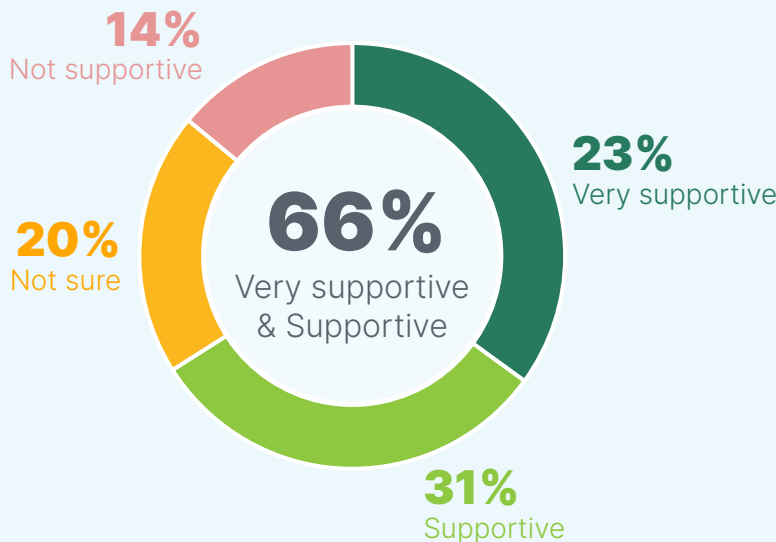
Do not know where to go/ what is offered

38%

Poor/uncomfortable atmosphere

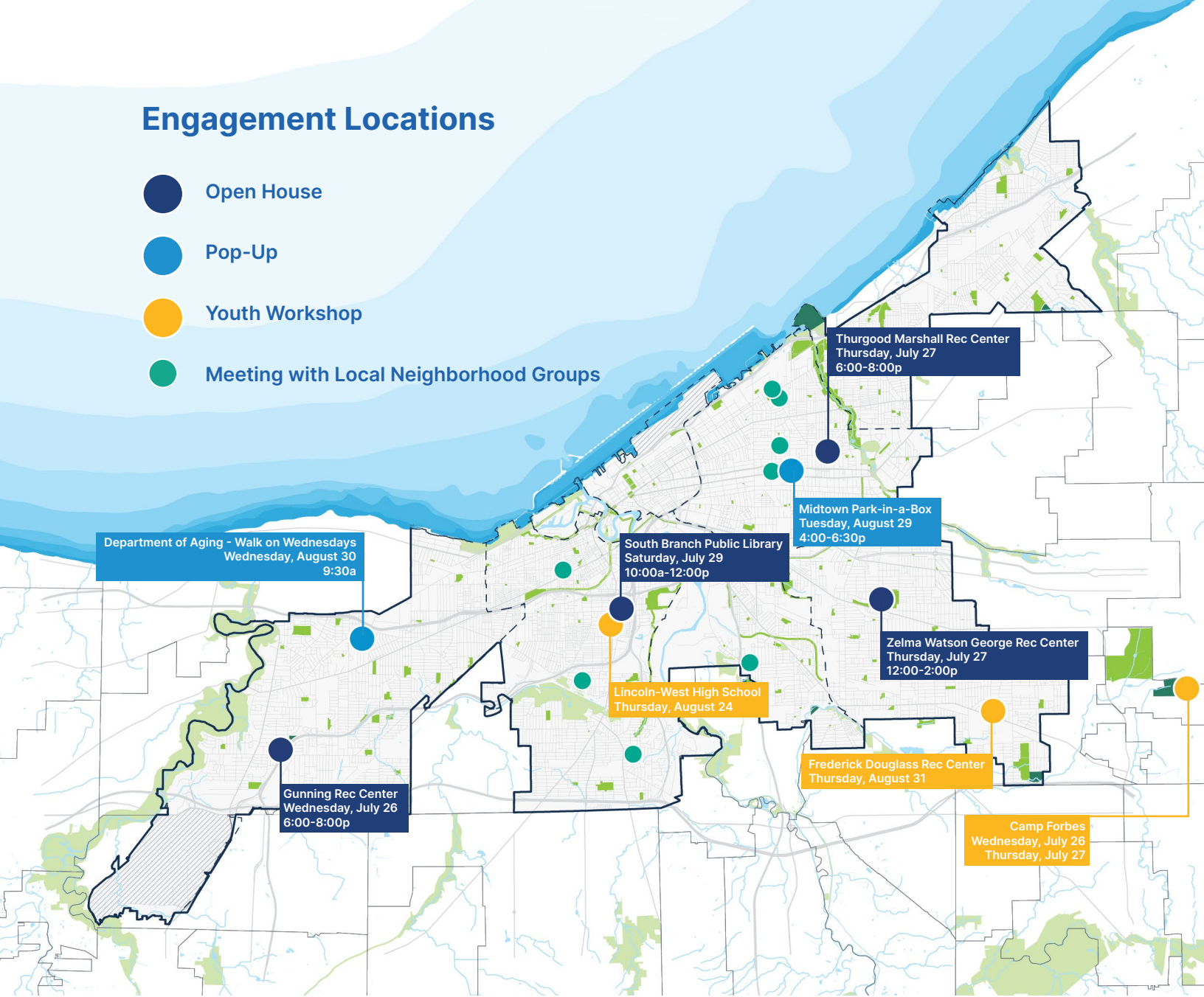
Households with young children (under 10) do not rate the quality of recreation programs as highly as other households. **Only 1/3** rate them excellent or good.

Two thirds of respondents are supportive of an increase in taxes or levies to fund parks & rec facilities.



Engagement Locations

- Open House
- Pop-Up
- Youth Workshop
- Meeting with Local Neighborhood Groups



Community Engagement Activity Locations.
Source: OLIN, 2023.

See the following page for images from the open houses and pop-up events.



OPEN HOUSES

In July of 2023, over 150 participants attended four public open houses—at Gunning Park, Zelma Watson George, and Thurgood Marshall Neighborhood Resource and Recreation Centers and at the South Branch of the Cleveland Public Library. The open houses took place in different neighborhoods throughout the city and were scheduled at varying times throughout the day allowing residents to attend the open house that fit best within their schedule.

At the open houses, a series of boards in English and Spanish were set up for participants to explore at their own pace. Informational boards provided maps and statistics about the parks and recreation system and the planning process. At input boards, participants voted for their preferred choices and wrote in their own ideas. City staff and members of the planning team provided clarifications, answered questions, and listened to participants’ concerns and ideas—also in both English and Spanish. Youth-tailored activities engaged the city’s

To help get the word out about the engagement events, we contacted:

22 Community Development Corporations

21 Neighborhood Resource & Recreation Centers

41 Community Leaders & Concerned Residents

6 Community Centers

22 Businesses

7 Libraries

300+ Residential Flyer Drops

- 3 Apartment Buildings/ Complexes
- 10 Residential Streets

18 News & Media Outlets

- Cleveland Observer
- Real Deal Press
- Eastside Daily News
- The Land
- Signal Cleveland
- Call & Post
- Axios Cleveland
- NPR Daily Frequency
- WOJU
- Headlines & Headaches
- Cleveland.com
- WEWS
- WKYC
- WOIO
- FOX 8
- Tremonster
- West Park Times
- Metro Urban News

youngest parks and recreation users. Light meals from local establishments were provided. Outreach in advance of meetings included a press release, posters distributed to neighborhood resource and recreation centers, flyers distributed in neighborhoods around the open houses, emails, and social media announcements.

POP-UPS AT EXISTING COMMUNITY EVENTS

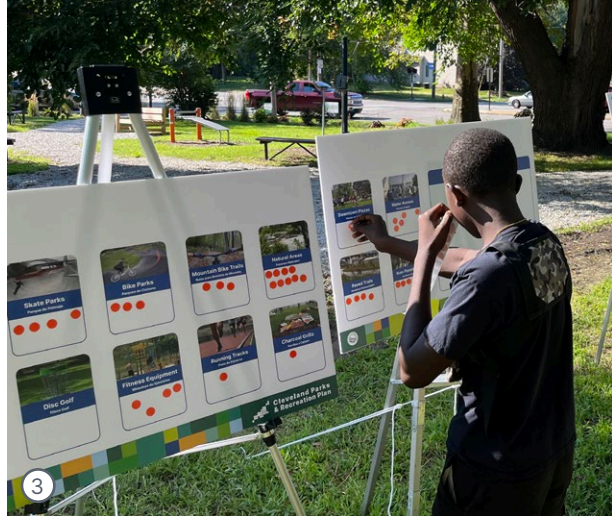
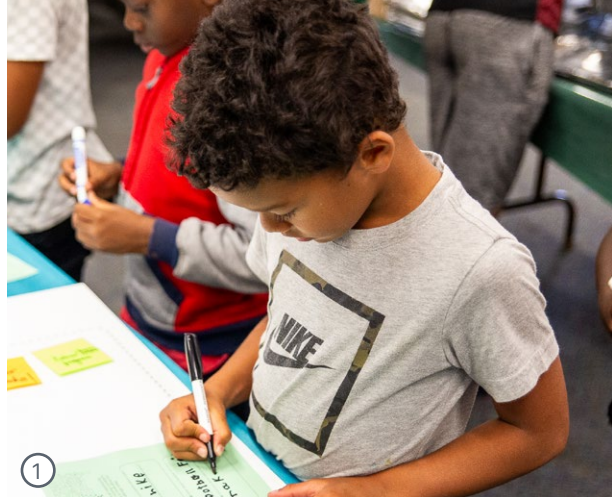
Tables were set up at Mohican Park during a senior walk hosted by the Department of Aging and at a Trust for Public Land event in midtown. These events provided spontaneous opportunities for gathering feedback and to inform the community about the plan.

Top: Division of Recreation Commissioner Sam Gissentaner being interviewed at the Gunning Open House. Source: Sylvén Lamar Edwards, 2023.

Bottom: Media outlets like Cleveland 19 News WOIO provided coverage on the engagement events. Source: Cleveland 19 News, 2023.



- ① Youth activities were available at all the open houses.
Source: Sylvén Lamar Edwards, 2023.
- ② Youth activities at the Trust for Public Land's Pop-Up in Midtown.
Source: City of Cleveland, 2023.
- ③ Pop-Up at the Trust for Public Land's event in Midtown.
Source: City of Cleveland, 2023.
- ④ Open house at Zelma Watson George Recreation Center.
Source: Sylvén Lamar Edwards, 2023.
- ⑤ Open house at Gunning Recreation Center.
Source: Sylvén Lamar Edwards, 2023.
- ⑥ Pop-Up at the Department of Aging's Wednesday Walks.
Source: City of Cleveland, 2023.



**Describe
Cleveland parks
& recreation in
three words.**

What does Cleveland do well in parks & recreation?

**MANY COMMUNITIES
HAVE WALKABLE PARKS,
WHICH IS GREAT TO
HAVE CLOSE TO HOME!**

– Open house participant at Gunning

CLEVELAND BELIEVES IN
THE IMPORTANCE OF GREEN
SPACE AND ACCESS TO IT.

– Online survey participant from Near West Cleveland

**THE NUMBER OF BOTH
[PARKS & REC CENTERS]
IS INCREDIBLE BRAVO!!**

– Online survey participant from Northeast Cleveland

I LIKE THAT OLDER
FACILITIES ARE KEPT
UP AND RUNNING, LIKE
HALLORAN PARK, PLACES
THAT GIVE A FLAVOR TO
THE NEIGHBORHOOD THEY
SERVE. I ALSO LIKE THAT A
LOT OF THE BIGGER PARKS
ARE ON BUS LINES.

– Online survey participant from Far West Cleveland

WHEN THE CITY RENOVATES
RECREATION CENTERS, THEY
DO A REALLY GOOD JOB.

– Neighborhood meeting participant from Hough

**STRIVING TO IMPROVE
AND MAINTAIN EQUITY
THROUGHOUT THE CITY.**

– Online survey participant from Near East Cleveland

LOCALLY “PROGRAMMED”
ACTIVITIES - ATHLETIC
LEAGUES.

– Open house participant at South Branch Library

**LOTS OF BASKETBALL
AND GRILLS.
BASKETBALL COURTS
IMPROVES MENTAL
HEALTH & STRESS RELIEF.**

– Neighborhood meeting participant from St. Clair Superior

THERE PLAYGROUNDS AND
POOLS EVERYWHERE. WE
ARE ACCESSIBLE BECAUSE
WE ARE FREE.

– Online survey participant from Southeast


YOUTH WORKSHOPS

There are approximately 67,000 school-aged children in Cleveland. To encourage participation from the next generation of park and recreation stewards, teens at Camp Forbes participated in workshops during their summer camp sessions, and students at Lincoln-West High School and at Frederick Douglass Neighborhood Resource and Recreation Center participated in workshops to prototype their ideal park and recreation facilities and identify what could be improved.



- ① Prototyping an ideal park at Lincoln-West High School.
Source: DesignExplorr, 2023.
- ② Identifying most and least important park and recreation facilities at Camp Forbes.
Source: OLIN, 2023.
- ③ Prototyping an ideal park at Camp Forbes.
Source: DesignExplorr, 2023.
- ④ Prototyping an ideal park at Lincoln-West High School.
Source: DesignExplorr, 2023.

Adjacent Page: Youth workshop attendees were asked to identify what they liked about their park and recreation facilities and what they would do to improve them.
Source: DesignExplorr, 2023.




A design challenge is an opportunity to think deeply about solving a problem. Below are questions to think about for our design challenge today.

1 THINK: What do you like about your park/recreation center?
 It has a Pool

What do you dislike about your park/recreation center?
 It is not open

2 UNDERSTAND: What needs to be better? For who?
 the Pool

3 CREATE: What's your design idea to make it better?
 We can ask to fix the Pool




A design challenge is an opportunity to think deeply about solving a problem. Below are questions to think about for our design challenge today.

1 THINK: What do you like about your park/recreation center?
 What I like about parks/recreation centers is that you could spend time with family and friends

What do you dislike about your park/recreation center?
 What I don't really like is sometimes how unsafe the environment can be.

2 UNDERSTAND: What needs to be better? For who?
 The secure ness needs to be better for adults, children, seniors, and teenagers.

3 CREATE: What's your design idea to make it better?
 Try adding Park Patrol Rec
 Use Metal Detectors




A design challenge is an opportunity to think deeply about solving a problem. Below are questions to think about for our design challenge today.

1 THINK: What do you like about your park/recreation center?
 spaces for people to be active

What do you dislike about your park/recreation center?
 only appeals to some groups of people

2 UNDERSTAND: What needs to be better? For who?
 easier access to rec centers for kids, teens, elders

3 CREATE: What's your design idea to make it better?
 plenty of parking/racks near fields & courts



A design challenge is an opportunity to think deeply about solving a problem. Below are questions to think about for our design challenge today.

1 THINK: What do you like about your park/recreation center?
 The location and easiness to start going

What do you dislike about your park/recreation center?
 barely any space

2 UNDERSTAND: What needs to be better? For who?
 more space for clubs for teenagers

3 CREATE: What's your design idea to make it better?
 a indoor Rec center with a bunch of rooms for different activities

DEAR CLEVELAND PARKS & RECREATION,



I would like for you to come into the 21st century and provide the service's we need for a world-class city.

Sincerely,

Hough Resident



I really love you and would like for our relationship to expand. Creating a space for indoor swimming, paved trails, roller skating rinks and a facility to exercise would help to enhance and contribute to the growth of our relationship. I'm in it to win it . . . and hope you are too. Let's make it happen . . . soon!

With love, City Resident



You've been there for me ever since I was young, giving me a space to play, make friends, and create new memories with my own children & family. I must say, overtime you haven't changed much but the world around you has and I'm afraid if you're not willing to grow and adapt with the rest of us you'll be a memory of the past

Sincerely,

St. Clair Superior Resident



I love you so much, you have kept me from so much trouble and I want you to know how much you mean to me. With love, St. Claire Superior Resident



I think you have a ton of potential but you don't always give me what I need or want...I'm looking forward to more organization, more engagement, and more oversight. I hope you get the help you need.

Sincerely,

Buckeye-Woodhill-Shaker Square Resident



How fondly I remember so many activities, days, crafts, skills that were fostered through my rec center growing up. I learned to swim which got me my first job. I tried sports and built endurance and overcame challenges. I was able to sail on a tall ship and learned how critically we need to care for our natural resources. I haven't experienced this in the last few decades. I've tried and I'll keep trying and hoping. These memories shaped me and I hope there are more of these for others.

With love,

Old Brooklyn Resident

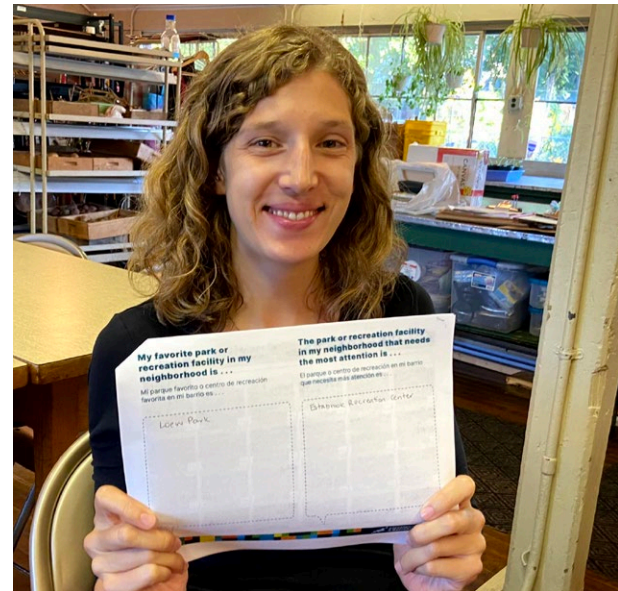
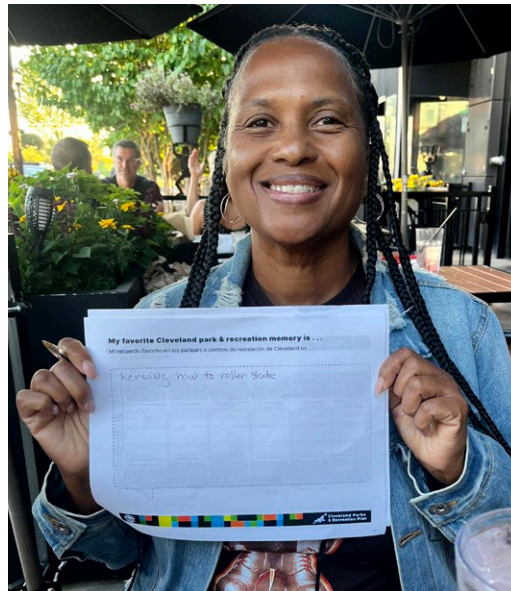


Please keep improving each of your parks to serve the community. As a child I have fond memories walking, playing, and watching rec league baseball games. I learned tennis at Luke Easter. These parks can continue to be spaces where memories are made and skills are learned.

With love,

Buckeye-Woodhill-Shaker Square Resident

Residents were asked to complete worksheets as part of the neighborhood conversation kits. Source: Cleveland Neighbors, Ben Franklin Garden & SE Cleveland Resource Center, 2023.



MEETINGS WITH LOCAL NEIGHBORHOOD GROUPS & ORGANIZATIONS

Over the month of August 2023, neighborhood conversation kits were distributed to 11 neighborhood groups to host their own discussions about parks and recreation. Each group used the kit to host its own meeting and submitted photo, video, and written documentation of the meeting. Small grants were provided to cover refreshments or other resources for participants. The kits were also made available to all City Council members.

RESIDENTS' LETTERS TO PARKS AND RECREATION REVEALED **A LOVE OF THE CITY'S FACILITIES AND A DESIRE TO HAVE THEM KEEP UP WITH THE TIMES.**

My favorite Cleveland park & recreation memory is:

Residents were asked to share their favorite memory of parks and recreation in Cleveland.



MY KIDS PLAYING IN SAM MILLER PARK. WE LIVE NEAR THE PARK SO I CAN WATCH THEM FROM MY PORCH. ALSO, THE PARK WOULD OFTEN **HOST THE GLENVILLE FESTIVAL.**

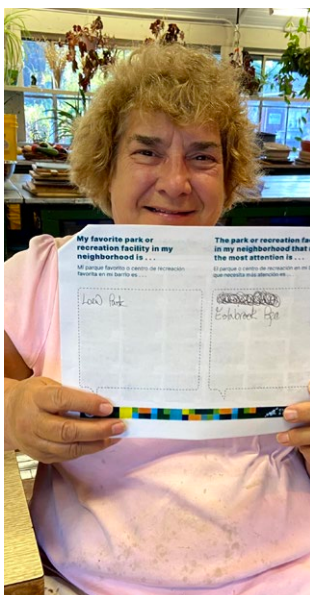


AS A KID, I WENT THROUGH LUKE EASTER EVERYDAY TO GO SOMEWHERE. **I PLAYED BASEBALL** DURING THE SUMMER AND **TONS OF FOOTBALL.** IT WAS A BEAUTIFUL PERIOD OF MY LIFE. **THE PARK IS A TRUE JEWEL.**

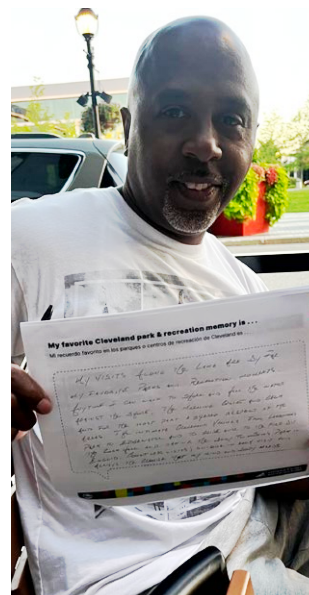
AS A CHILD, MY GRANDFATHER AND I WOULD USE **LUKE EASTER AS A MAKESHIFT DRIVING RANGE.** IT MADE ME LOOK AT THE LARGE GREEN SPACE THROUGH A DIFFERENT LENS. IT MADE ME REALIZE THERE WAS SOME **UNTAPPED OPPORTUNITY.**



WALKING TO **KERRUSH PARK** ALONE AS A KID WAS **MY FIRST TASTE OF INDEPENDENCE.** WHEN I HAD KIDS, WE SPENT ALL OF OUR TIME THERE BECAUSE THERE WERE **TONS OF FROGS AND BUTTERFLYS** TO CATCH.



SPENDING ALL SUMMER GOING FROM **BENJI GARDEN,** THEN **BENJAMIN FRANKLIN SCHOOL PLAYGROUND** TO SET UP **SWINGS AND PLAY** ON EQUIPMENT, THEN TO **LOEW POOL SWIMMING ON HOT DAYS!**



MY VISITS ALONG **THE LAKE** ARE BY FAR MY FAVORITE MOMENTS...THE **MORNING QUIET AND CALM** AND FOR THE MOST PART **A SHARED RESPECT OF THE AREA.** COUNTLESS VISITS; **UNIQUE EACH TIME.**

PROJECT WEBSITE

The Cleveland Parks and Recreation Plan website launched in June of 2023. The website changed throughout the planning process, providing information on the plan's background, ways to participate, and related informational resources.

ONLINE SURVEY

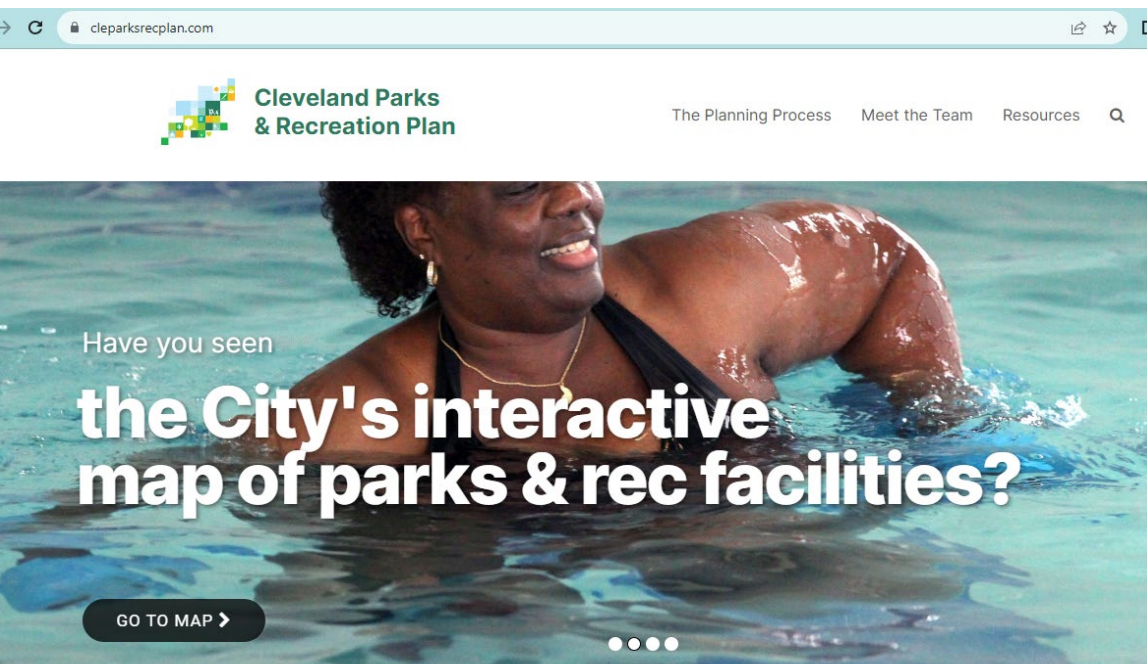
An online survey available on the project website was designed to be a digital complement to the open houses, for those who were not able to participate in person and received 555 responses. A short version of the survey gave people a quick opportunity to provide input in 5-10 minutes, and a long version of the survey gave people an opportunity to answer all questions that were asked at the open houses.

CITY AND PARTNER ORGANIZATION INTERVIEWS

Small group interviews provided an opportunity to hear from advocacy organizations, user groups, and city departments about the way they use or interact with parks and recreation in Cleveland and the needs they have for parks and recreation moving forward. These interviews highlighted departmental perspectives, challenges working within existing government structures, and opportunities to leverage Clevelanders' passion for parks. See opposite page for all of the organizations and departments that participated in these interviews.

Opposite: Councilman Slife at the Gunning Open House.
Source: Sylvén Lamar Edwards, 2023.

The project website has over **920** visits



The project website serves as a resource for residents throughout the planning process.
Source: OLIN, 2023.

The City of Cleveland is excited to begin work on the city's first ever parks and recreation plan. The plan will create a 15-year roadmap that ensures just and



Who We Talked To:

Partner Organizations

- Cleveland Metropolitan School District
- Cleveland Metroparks
- Trust for Public Land
- Western Reserve Land Conservancy
- Cleveland Neighborhood Progress
- Greater Cleveland Partnership
- Downtown Cleveland Alliance
- Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District
- Canalway Partners
- America SCORES
- Cleveland Plays
- Munny Football
- Refugee Response
- St. Ignatius Soccer
- Old Brooklyn Baseball
- B-Buzz Baseball
- LAND Studio
- Case Western Reserve University Pickleball Club
- Holden Parks Trust

City of Cleveland

- MOCAP
 - Division of Architecture and Site Development
- Public Works
 - Division of Recreation
 - Division of Park Maintenance & Properties
 - Urban Forestry
 - Cemeteries
 - Rockefeller Park Greenhouse
- Chief Operating Officer
- Youth & Family Success
 - Office of Prevention, Intervention, and Opportunity for Youth & Young Adults
 - Department of Aging
- Community Relations Board
- Land Bank
- Department of Public Health
- City Planning Commission
- Mayor's Office of Sustainability
- Council President Griffin and Council Members Bishop, Gray, Howse-Jones, Kazy, Maurer, McCormack, Polensek, Santana, Slife, Spencer, Starr

KEY THEMES AND PRIORITIES

Collectively, all of the events, surveys, and workshops generated thousands of comments and data points. Throughout these community touchpoints, several key themes and priorities emerged which will help form the basis of the plan's recommendations.

MAINTENANCE AND UPDATES

People are concerned that parks and recreation facilities are not being adequately maintained and updated. Half of survey respondents identified this as the top reason for not visiting parks and recreation centers more often, and 38% noted 'poor or uncomfortable atmosphere' as a major barrier. People noted issues around trash collection and mowing, upkeep of existing equipment and facilities, and investments to older and dated facilities. Just over 40% of survey respondents think parks are in excellent or good condition. That number drops to less than 25% for Neighborhood Resource and Recreation Centers.

PROGRAMMING

Clevelanders love and appreciate the City's free programming. The 57% who participated in recreation programs in the previous year rated program quality as excellent or good. There is a desire for more diverse, multigenerational, community-focused programming in parks and recreation facilities. Close to a third of survey respondents said they do not participate because their desired facility/program is not offered.

NATURE AND GREEN SPACE

People expressed a desire for parks that feel more natural and incorporate sustainable elements that move beyond grass. This includes increased tree canopy, wildlife habitats, ecological diversity through native plantings, opportunities to interact with nature, and unprogrammed green space. In the survey, unprogrammed green spaces (36%) and natural areas and wildlife habitats (29%) were both in the top four most important outdoor facilities to respondents.

CONNECTIVITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

Many people emphasized the importance of having a well-connected park and recreation system through a network of biking and walking trails that make traveling to facilities safe for everyone in the neighborhood. This includes access to other city facilities, as well as the waterfront and other regional recreation areas. Paved, multi-use trails were most frequently cited as the most important outdoor facility to them, selected by 41% of respondents.

DESIGN

People voiced the importance of basic amenities like restrooms, seating, shade/shelter, lighting, water fountains, and directional/informational signage in parks. In addition, people expressed interest in moving beyond the traditional playground and traditional field, with universally accessible playgrounds, natural playgrounds, elements that reflect the unique identity of the community, and multi-use facilities frequently mentioned.

SYSTEM AWARENESS AND COMMUNICATION

Many people said that they are unaware of the full range of services, programs, and amenities offered by the City. Respondents frequently indicated that they do not know where to go for programs or what is offered and noted that an online system for searching and registering for programs was missing. In the survey, 40% of respondents identified this as a major barrier to visiting parks and recreation centers more often.

Open house boards included opportunities for residents to write in their own ideas.

Source: Miracle Walker for LaunchArts Media, 2023.



STAFFING AND HOURS

People noted inadequate staffing numbers and a lack of convenient hours at park and recreation facilities. Specifically, people noted uncertainty at Neighborhood Resource and Recreation Centers around when indoor and outdoor pools are open and a desire for senior-specific hours. Nearly half of survey respondents said they do not participate in programs because of the times the programs are offered, and close to a third of respondents said they do not visit parks and recreation centers more often because facility operating hours are not convenient.

SAFETY

People expressed concern around safety, both in park and recreation facilities and getting to those facilities. They cited a general lack of visible patrolling, lighting, and other preventative security as barriers to usage. Over a third (37%) of survey respondents said they did not visit parks and recreation centers more often due to a lack of visible patrolling presence.

COMMUNITY AND PARTNERSHIPS

Community and other organizations expressed interest in developing collaborative partnerships with the City. There is energy to establish “Friends of” groups and to leverage community volunteerism, but navigating the city’s organizational structure and processes is currently difficult.

WHAT CLEVELANDERS SAID . . .

Maintenance and updates

Programming

Nature and green space

Connectivity and accessibility

System awareness and communication

Staffing and hours

Community and partnerships

Design

Safety

Need to do a better job advertising what is offered at parks.

– Neighborhood meeting participant from Hough

Transit and trails connecting public assets.

– Open house participant Zelma Watson George

Think beyond old fashioned parks with only concrete and metal. Places for play and rest for everyone.

– Online survey participant from Downtown

Connectivity among different spaces across the city.

– Online survey participant from Near West Cleveland

More trees, native plants and pollinator gardens.

– Online survey participant from Near West Cleveland

Have consistent and thorough programming for ALL ages at times working families can make it.

– Online survey participant from Near West Cleveland

Community upkeep of small parks.

– Open house participant at South Branch Library

Too many parks are un-programmed and severely underutilized as a result.

– Online survey participant from Downtown

It's pretty hard to figure out what's available when, and what's open. Posting updated schedules online . . . would be awesome.

– Online survey participant from Far West Cleveland

There are so many parks they can't all be maintained well and some are deeply neglected.

– Neighborhood meeting participant from citywide organization

Extended hours of all rec centers.

– Online survey participant from Far West Cleveland

Enhancing safety measures, such as increased lighting, security patrols, and surveillance.

– Neighborhood meeting participant from Buckeye-Woodhill-Shaker Square

**Better
bathrooms and
more seating.**

– Neighborhood meeting
participant from Ohio City

**Renovations
to parks have
been really well
received.**

– Neighborhood meeting participant from
Slavic Village

**Lean into Cleveland's identity
as the forest city - planting
more trees is a simple way to
add more beauty, privacy, and
better for the environment.**

– Online survey participant from Near West Cleveland

**Encourage & create clear
process for "friends
of" and volunteer park
maintenance.**

– Online survey participant from Near East
Cleveland

**Safer routes from
my home to a park.**

– Online survey participant
from Southeast Cleveland

**Regular maintenance of facilities,
landscaping, and infrastructure
is crucial to ensure that the
amenities remain attractive, safe,
and accessible to the public.**

– Neighborhood meeting participant from Buckeye-Woodhill-
Shaker Square

**Playspace for people of
all ages and abilities -
moving beyond the old
fashioned playground.**

– Online survey participant from Downtown

**Volunteer
programs!**

– Online survey
participant from Near
East Cleveland

**Innovative
playgrounds
including those that
use natural elements.**

– Online survey participant from
Near East Cleveland

**More staff, my kids
couldn't even do tee ball
and baseball this summer
because the rec had no
staff.**

– Online survey participant from Southeast
Cleveland



OLIN

PROS Consulting, DesignExplorr, OHM Advisors, Rhonda Crowder and Associates, ThirdSpace Action Lab, Neighborhood Connections, ETC Institute, IG Global Solutions, and Larry Weaner Landscape Associates