



PORTLAND PARKS & RECREATION™

Healthy Parks, Healthy Portland

**FALL 2021 COMMUNITY INPUT
ONLINE SURVEY SUMMARY**

METRO LOCAL SHARE

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PORTLANDPARKS.ORG

*Prepared by JLA Public Involvement
December 2021*

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Survey Overview

In the fall of 2021, Portland Parks & Recreation (PP&R) launched an online survey to help determine community needs and priorities for how to invest in the City's Local Share of Metro's 2019 Parks and Nature Bond. The Local Share program gave PP&R access to \$31.8 million for projects that meet Metro's funding criteria. Funding criteria includes protecting habitat, connecting people to nature, and addressing racial equity and climate change.

PP&R's list of potential projects that meet Metro's funding criteria totaled more than \$57 million. The goal of the survey was to help PP&R staff understand what types of eligible projects best meet the community's priorities and needs. The survey focused on understanding community needs and values when experiencing and accessing local and regional parks. A list and map of potential projects was available to the public on the PP&R webpage (portland.gov/parks/local-share).

Input from this survey, along with input received from the focus groups, will help inform PP&R decisions on a final project list to recommend to Metro and City Council in early 2022.

Outreach Overview

A six-question online survey with additional demographic questions was open from **November 4 to November 30, 2021**. The survey was promoted through many channels including:

- Focus group meetings hosted by Verde and Community Engagement Liaisons
- East Portland Parks Committee meeting 11/4/2021
- Parks Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting 11/4/2021
- PACCO newsletter (Philippine Chamber of Commerce)
- PP&R's Facebook, Nextdoor, and LinkedIn accounts postings
- PP&R's webpage posting
- Email to PP&R's main email list

The survey was provided in Spanish and in English and received **1,346 total responses**. The English-language survey received **1,337** responses, and the Spanish-language survey received **nine** responses. For this summary document, the Spanish-language responses are summarized after the English summary to differentiate the responses that were collected using the two survey formats.

Overall Themes and Takeaways

Overall, participants said that **better trails, parking, and habitat restoration** were their top priorities. English survey participants were also concerned about issues related to the houseless, safety and cleanliness whereas Spanish survey participants were concerned about safety, and more accessible and better maintained parks.

English Survey

A total of 1,337 surveys and 1,472 comments were submitted through the online survey in English. Participants indicated that trails, habitat restoration, and better parking are their top priorities.

For the open-ended comments, issues related mountain biking trails, the houseless, safety, access and cleanliness were the most common themes. Additional frequent themes in the open-ended comments include updating restrooms, more trees and shade in parks, maintaining trails, and issues related to dogs.

The most common participants for the English survey were 35- to 44-year-old white women.

Spanish Survey

A total of nine surveys and nine comments were submitted through the online survey in Spanish. Participants indicated that parking, trails, habitat restoration, and improvements that make parks easier to visit are their top priorities.

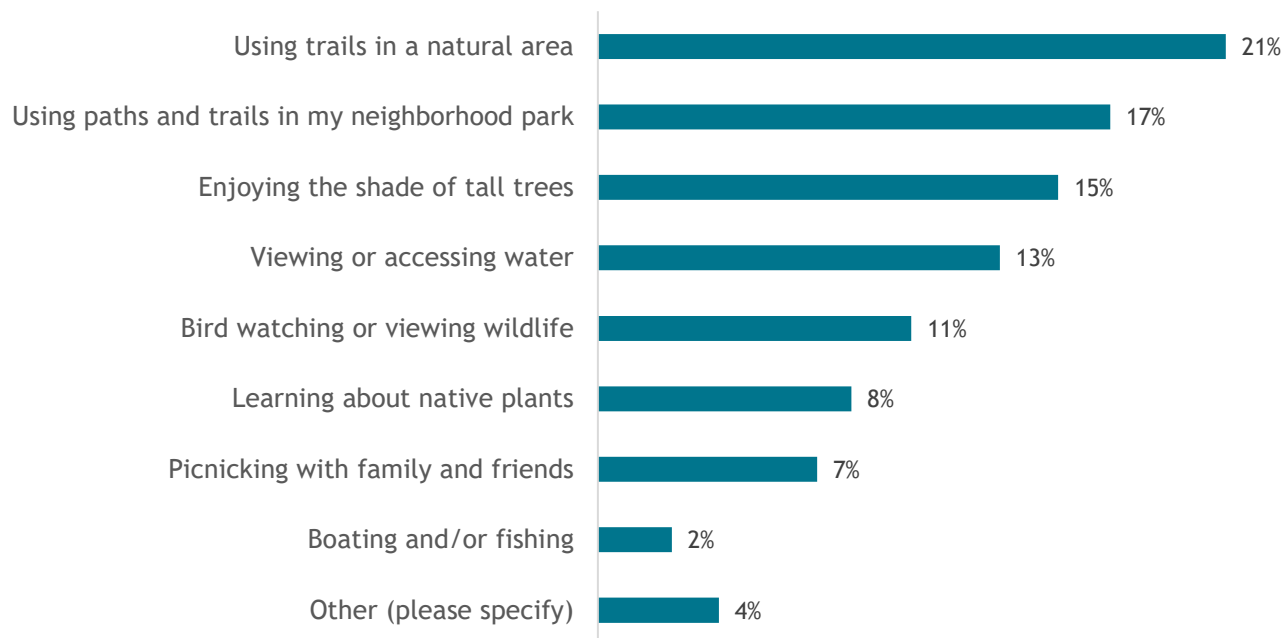
Open-ended comments included concerns about park maintenance, invasive blackberry bushes, working restrooms, lighting, safety, and dogs. One participant commented, “Parks are nice, but the people who enjoy them don't represent the people of Portland.”

The most common participants for the Spanish survey were 25- to 34-year-old Hispanic or Latino/a/x women.

English Survey Questions

A total of 1,337 surveys were submitted through the online survey in English. Not all questions required answers, so the number of responses will not total 1,337 for each question.

Access: When you think about access to nature, which of the following are most important to you? (Select all that apply).



Participants were asked to select all that apply. The most popular choice was “Using trails in a natural area” which was selected by 1,162 (21%) participants, followed by “Using paths and trails in my neighborhood park” which 948 (17%) selected. The least common of the provided responses was “Boating and/or fishing,” which 137 (3%) participants selected, followed by “Picnicking with family and friends” which 406 (7%) selected.

Participants were given an opportunity to select “Other (please specify)” and add their own response. This option was selected by 224 (4%) participants. The most common themes are listed below.

Other Write-In Themes Related to Accessing Nature

- Access to mountain biking trails within the Portland metro area (72)
- Mitigating issues within the parks related to safety and houseless people (33)
- ADA accessibility, access to parks by public transit, and access in underserved areas (27)
- Cleanliness, including trash maintenance and cleanup of homeless camps (17)
- More educational opportunities to learn about the natural areas (14)

- Non-motorized boating activities and access to swimming in rivers and lakes (14)
- Better maintained bike trails that are already within parks, or new access to bike trails for all users (14)
- More dog-friendly areas and enforcement of leash laws (12)
- Better access to trails and better maintained trail systems (11)
- Updated playground equipment or natural playground facilities for children (6)
- Opportunities for peace and quiet (5)
- Better signage and education of the surrounding areas (4)
- Updated restrooms (3)

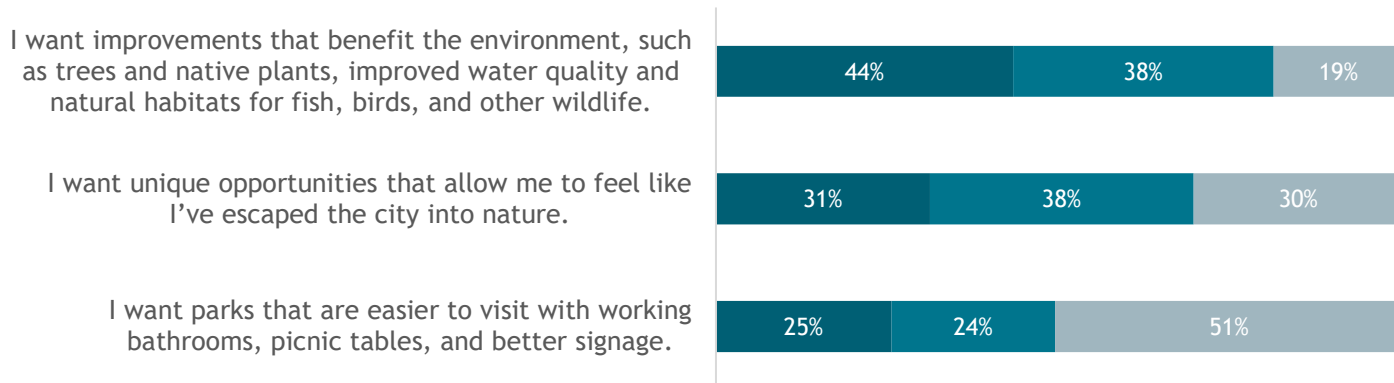
Specific Locations

These comments refer to specific locations:

- “Mountain bike trails in Portland city parks, like **Forest Park**”
- “**Hoyt Arboretum**”
- “Being in a park area, such as the **Zoo, Japanese Garden, Rose Garden**. We have urban parks to relieve the stress of urban life, not wilderness”

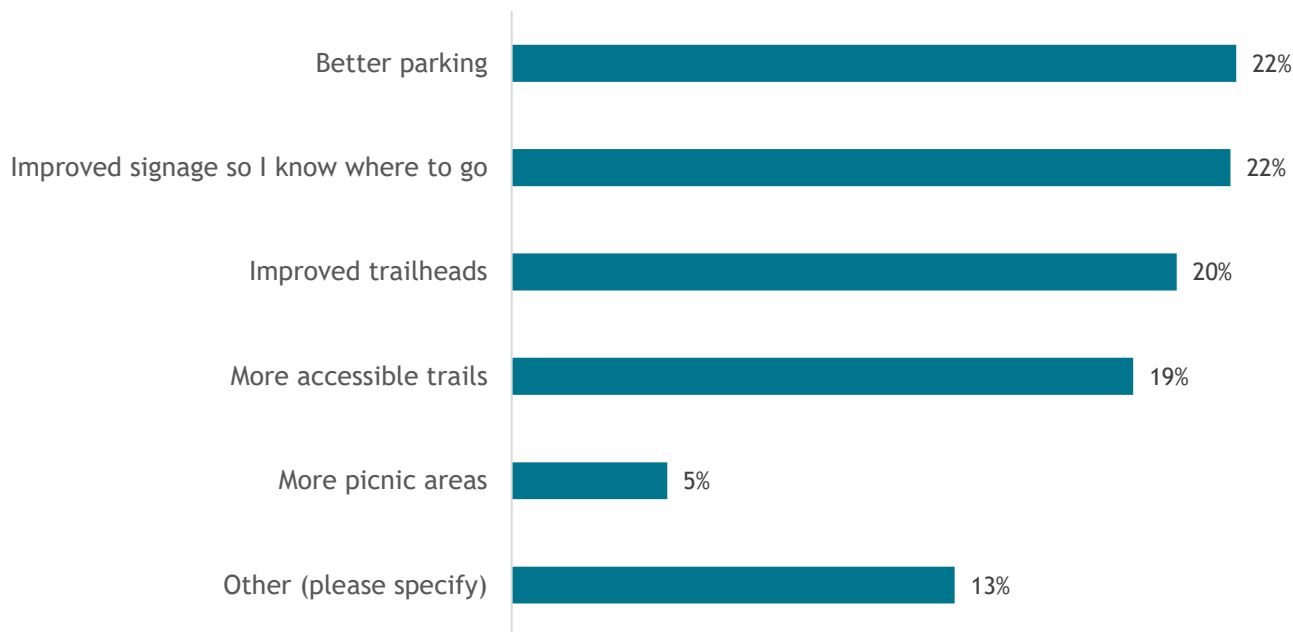
Experience: What type of improvements would enhance your experience in a park?

Rank the following with 1 as the statement that feels more like you:



Participants were asked to rank three improvements that would enhance their experience in a park. The most common answer selected for “Rank 1” was “I want improvements that benefit the environment, such as trees and native plants, improved water quality and natural habitats for fish, birds, and other wildlife,” chosen by 577 (44%) participants. The least common response for Rank 1 was “I want parks that are easier to visit with working bathrooms, picnic tables, and better signage,” chosen by 338 (26%) participants. It was also the most common response for Rank 3, with 644 (51%) participants selecting it.

Regional Parks: What kinds of improvements would allow you to better access parks with unique natural features that serve the entire region like Forest Park, Kelley Point Park, or Wilkes Headwaters? (Select all that apply.)



Participants were asked to select all improvements that would allow for better access to regional parks. The most common answer was “Better parking,” which was selected by 633 (22%) participants, followed by “Improved signage so I know where to go,” which was selected by 628 (22%). The least common answer was “More picnic areas,” which 136 (5%) participants selected.

Participants were also given the option to choose “Other (please specify)” and provide their own response. This option was chosen by 387 (13%) participants. The most common themes are listed below.

Other Write-In Themes Related to Regional Parks

- Access to mountain biking trails and other bike facilities (100)
- Improved safety such as rangers, security patrols, and rule enforcement (62)
- Better access for pedestrians, bikes, and by public transit (47)
- Mitigating issues related to the houseless within the parks (40)
- Trash clean-up and cleanliness of restroom facilities (31)
- Improved trail maintenance and clean up (23)
- Better signage and information of trails, hours of operation, and habitat, including websites and downloadable materials (19)
- Sustainable habitat restoration and native landscaping (19)
- Improved ADA accessibility, multi-use access, and park maintenance in underserved areas (15)

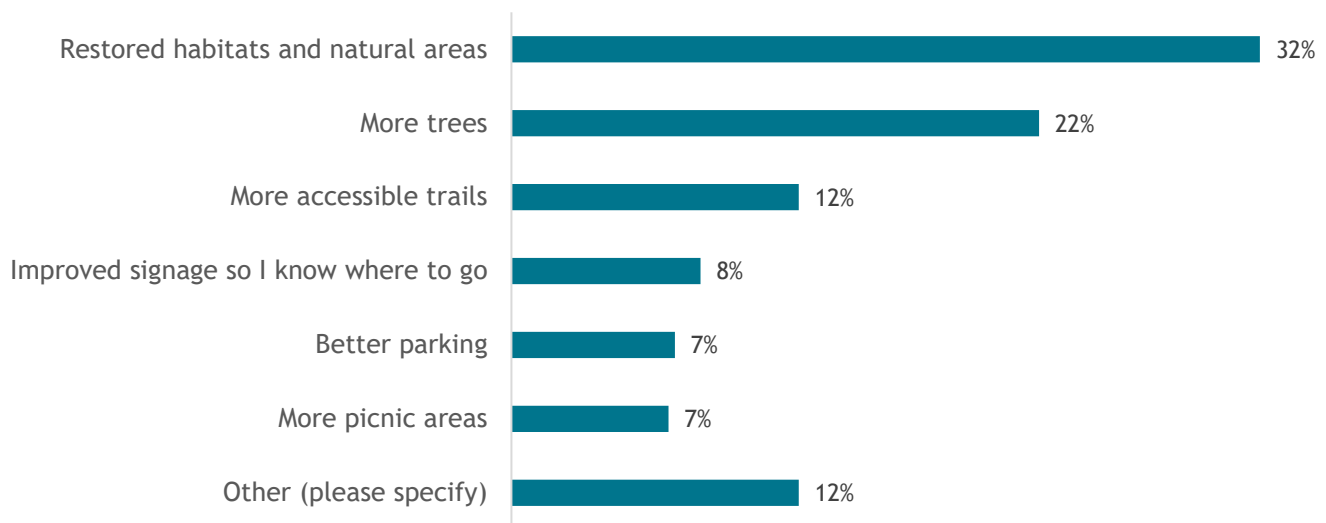
- More dog-friendly areas and enforcement of leash laws (15)
- Improved trails and connections within the parks (8)
- More seating and quiet experiences (7)
- Maintenance of park facilities (5)

Specific Locations

These comments refer to specific locations:

- “Would be nice to have trails along the beach that can be used during high water at **Kelley Point Park** as an option to the asphalt.”
- “I love **Forest Park** and all its trails. Trail improvements and habitat restoration are high on my list.”
- “Better maintenance on outer parks like **Eastridge Park**, it is sorely neglected.”

Neighborhood parks: What kinds of improvements would allow you to better access nature in your neighborhood park? *(Select all that apply.)*



Participants were asked to select all improvements that would allow for better access to nature in neighborhood parks. The most common answer was “Restored habitats and natural areas,” which was selected by 938 (32%) participants, followed by “More trees,” which was selected by 661 (22%). The least common answer was “More picnic areas,” which 197 (7%) participants selected.

Participants were also given the option of selecting “Other (please specify)” and providing their own answer. 360 (12%) participants selected this option. The most common themes are listed below.

Other Write-In Themes Related to Neighborhood Parks

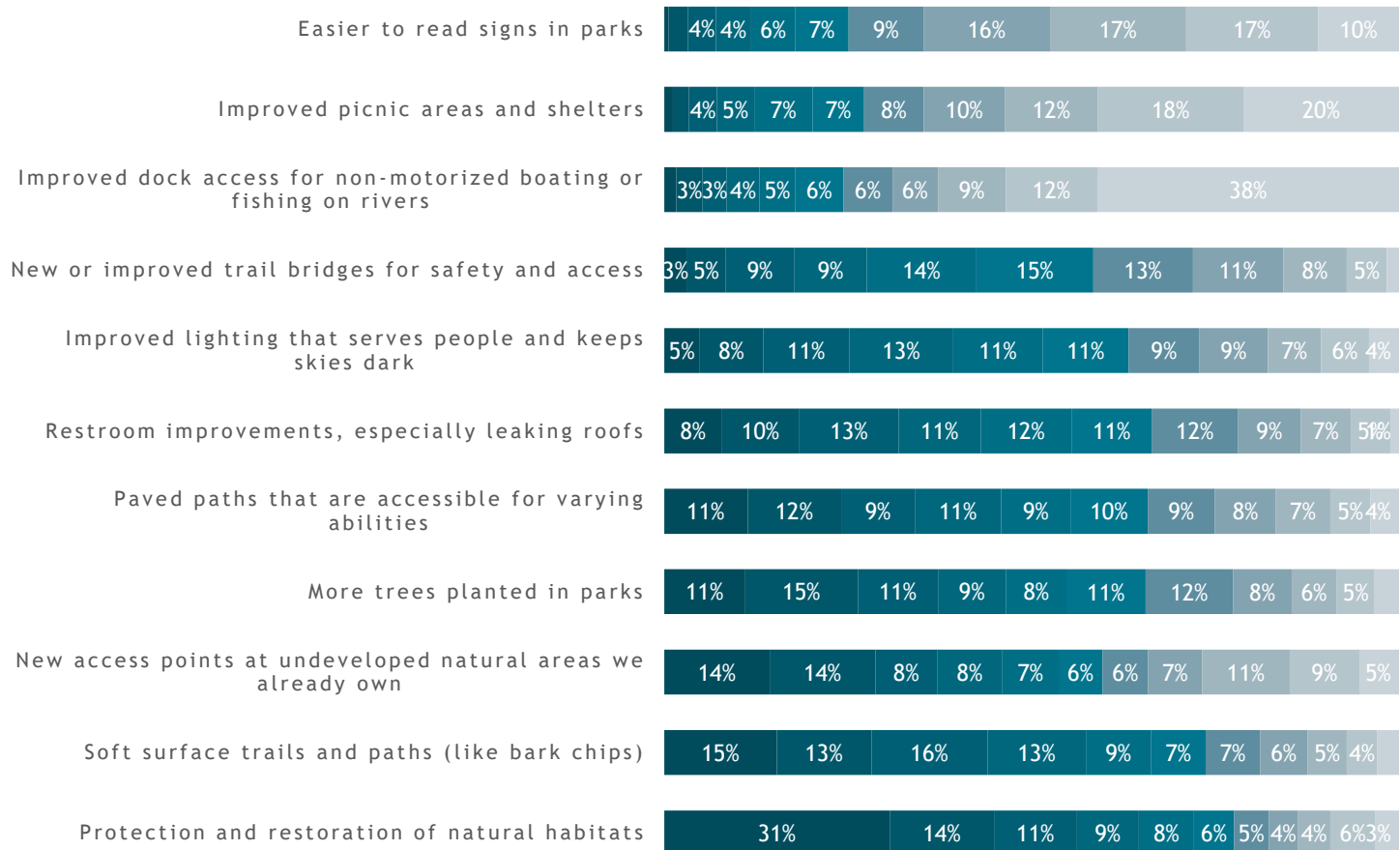
- Mitigation of impacts related to the houseless in parks (73)
- Access to mountain biking opportunities and improved bike trails and facilities (62)
- Improved safety within parks and security patrols of rangers; enforcement of laws (61)
- More frequent trash clean-up, graffiti removal, and garbage cans (55)
- More sustainable landscaping and trees to create shade, cleanup of invasive species, nature patches, and community gardens (37)
- Updated restrooms and restroom access (34)
- Updated play structures and children's areas (19)
- Better access points and connections, as well as bike/pedestrian/transit options (15)
- More dog-friendly areas and enforcement of leash laws (15)
- Improved and maintained walking trails (13)
- Improved park facility and tree maintenance (11)
- More seating, especially around playgrounds and along trails (9)
- More parks, especially in underserved areas (9)
- Access to pool and swimming areas (6)
- Better signage and information (5)

Specific Locations

These comments refer to specific locations:

- "My neighborhood park (**Senn's Dairy**) is small, so it doesn't feel very "natural." A lot of native plants were planted a couple years ago which helped. But the main area doesn't get much shade in the summer. The park would benefit from a large tree in the middle of the park."
- "My broader neighborhood has limits to how to access some of its parks. Some, like **Kelley Point** I have to drive to, so need a trail to that one, but **Columbia Park** is accessible by bike, walk or car and has plenty of trees."
- "**Brentwood Darlington parks** where I live are highly underserved, we do not have working bathrooms or proper equipment for children etc."
- "**More parks in SE and East Portland** as Mt Tabor and Powell Butte get overcrowded."
- "Please keep the two regional trail projects on the list! Include the repaving of the **Columbia Slough Trail** next to Heron Lakes and PIR."
- "Improve **Rosemount Bluff**"
- "Get rid of stairs at **Rose City Park** and install a ramp [for] inclusion!"
- "Restore the bridges in **Westmoreland Park**."
- "**Raymond Park** needs steel posts at the Liebe entrance all along to keep people from driving on the grass [and] the sidewalk."

What is important to you? What types of projects should we prioritize to help more Portlanders protect and connect to nature? Rank the following with 1 as your top priority and 11 your lowest priority.



Participants were asked to rank 11 types of projects that would help Portlanders protect and connect to nature. The most common answer selected for the top priority (Rank 1) was “Protection and restoration of natural habitats,” which was chosen by 409 (31%) participants, followed by “Soft surface trails and paths (like bark chips)” which was chosen by 198 (15%). The least common answer ranked first was “Easier to read signs in parks,” which seven (1%) participants selected. The most common response chosen for the lowest priority (Rank 11) was “Improved dock access for non-motorized boating or fishing on rivers,” which was selected by 497 (41%) participants, followed by “Improved picnic areas and shelters,” which 258 (22%) selected.

Is there anything else you want to tell us?

502 respondents wrote in their own comments. The most common themes from these answers are below.

Write-In Themes

- Access to mountain biking trails, bike facilities, and shared bike trails (81)
- Increased safety, patrols, lighting, and enforcement of laws (74)
- Mitigating issues related to houseless in parks (74)
- Routine trash clean-up, garbage cans, needle mitigation (60)
- Increased ADA accessibility as well as equity and access for underserved populations (66)
- More sustainable landscaping and trees to create shade, cleanup of invasive species, nature patches, and community gardens (37)
- Maintenance of current facilities and landscaping (32)
- Trail maintenance and access (28)
- More dog friendly areas and enforcement of leash laws (24)
- Better bike, pedestrian, and public transit access to parks (23)
- Better signage and information about the parks and habitats (22)
- Updated, accessible restrooms (16)
- Funding and involvement of communities and organizations, and discounted fees (14)
- More parks or land acquisition, particularly in underserved areas (13)
- Improved play areas and nature access for children (12)
- Increased seating (6)

Specific Locations

Participants mentioned 36 specific PP&R parks. The most common themes about specific parks are below.

- **Forest Park** (13)
 - Access to mountain biking trails (6)
 - Valued “wild” space in the city (3)
 - Improved access, signage, and parking (2)
- **Brentwood Darlington** – Improved tree coverage and better facilities in this underserved area (6)
- **Columbia Slough** – Support for project and desire to see the regional trail completed (4)
- **Gateway Green** – Support for this park and a desire to see versions of it all Portland quadrants (4)

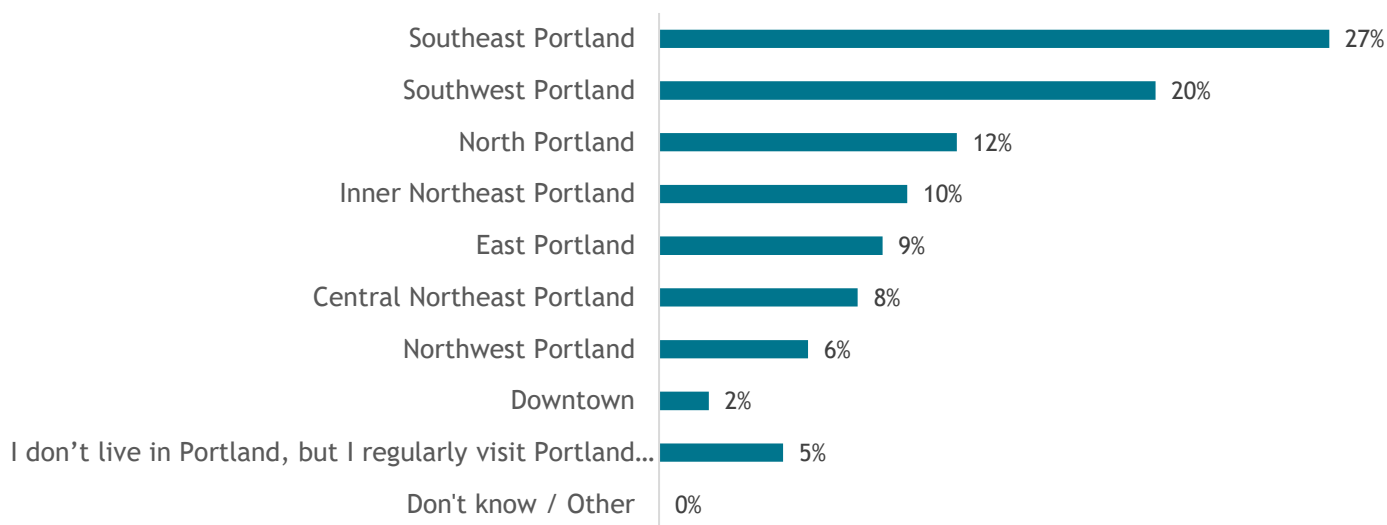
Demographics (English Survey)

The most common participant for this survey is white women aged 35 to 44. Most participants own a home. Most participants indicated they are able bodied. The most common disability of participants or their family is mobility related. Most participants are likely to visit a park or natural area with one or more adults. The most

responses, more than a quarter, came from those who live in SE Portland. Most participants learned about the survey through email.

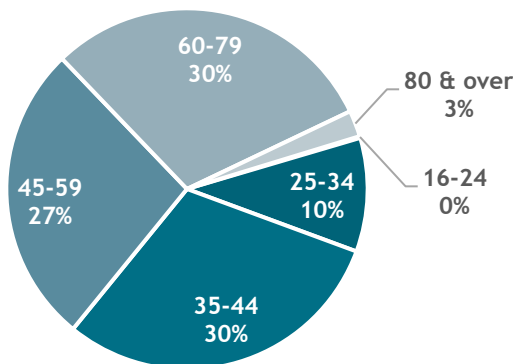
What area best describes where you live?

The most common area that participants said they lived in was “Southeast Portland,” which was selected by 348 (27%) participants, followed by “Southwest Portland, which 252 (20%) selected. The least common answer was “Don’t know / Other,” which was chosen by five (0.4%) participants, followed by “Downtown,” which 27 (2%) participants selected.



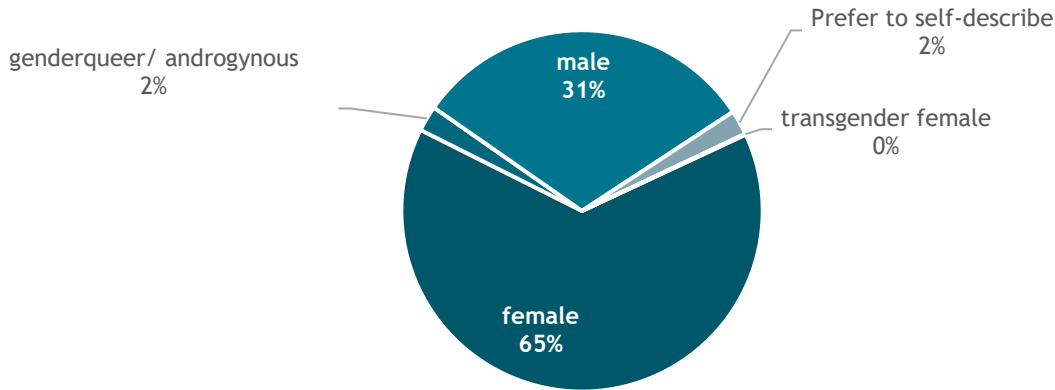
I am age:

The most common response was “35-44,” which was selected by 386 (30%) participants, closely followed by “60-79,” which was selected by 384 (30%). The least common response was “16-24,” which was selected by two (0.2%) participants.



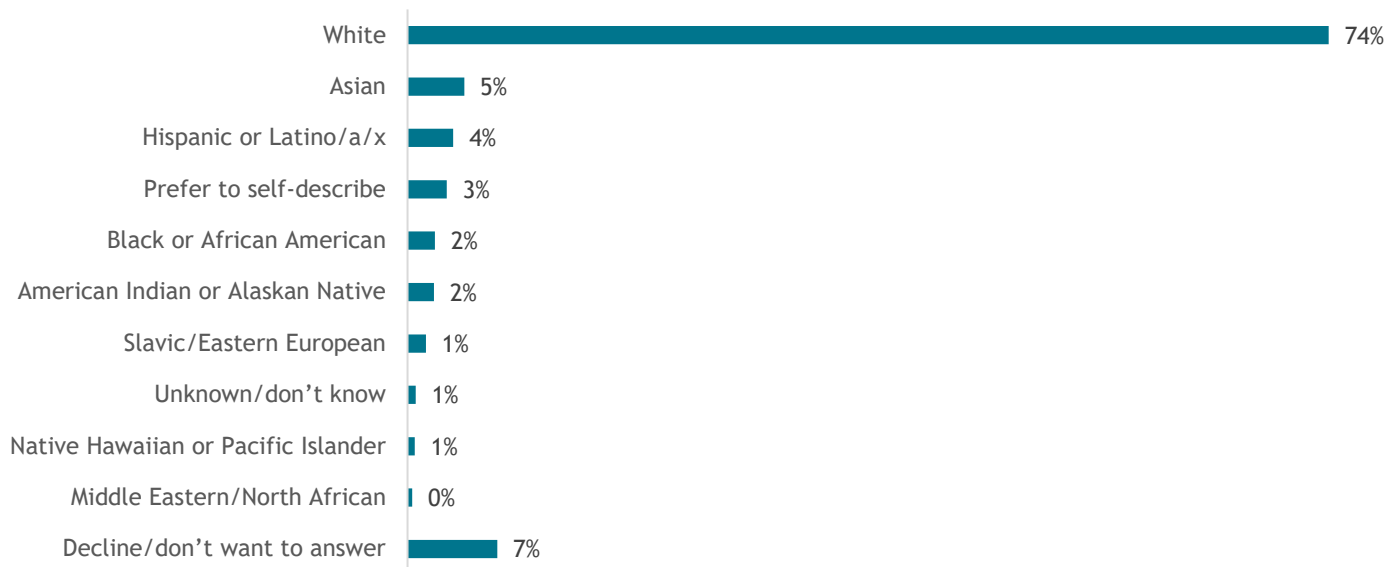
I identify as:

The most common answer was “Female,” which was chosen by 812 (65%) participants, followed by “Male,” which was selected by 392 (31%). Participants were also given the opportunity to select “Prefer to self-describe,” which 43 (3.41%) participants selected. Please see Appendix A for a full list of responses.



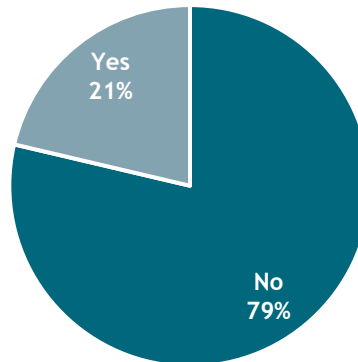
I identify as: (Select all that apply)

The most common response was “White,” which was selected by 1007 (74%) participants, followed by “Decline/don’t want to answer,” chosen by 98 (7%), and “Asian,” chosen by 62 (5%). The least common response was “Middle Eastern/North African,” which five (0.4%) participants selected. Participants were also given the opportunity to select “Prefer to self-describe” and provide their own response, which 98 (7%) did.



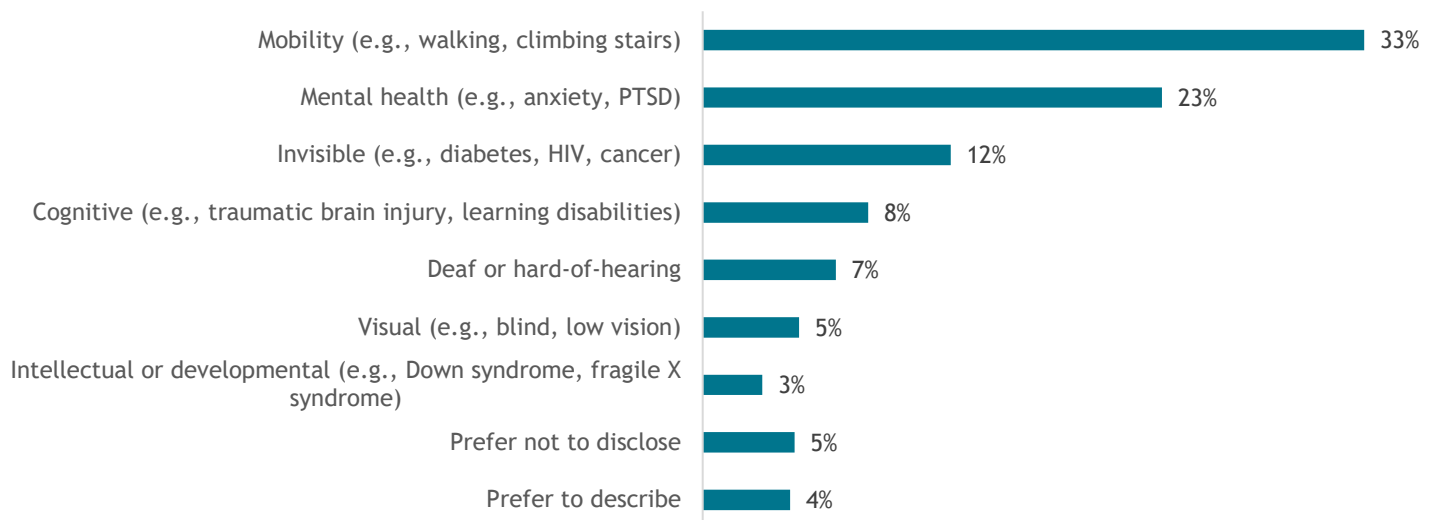
Do you or a family member live with a disability or identify as a disabled person?

Most participants, 1,000 (79%), selected “No,” while 271 (21%) said “Yes.”



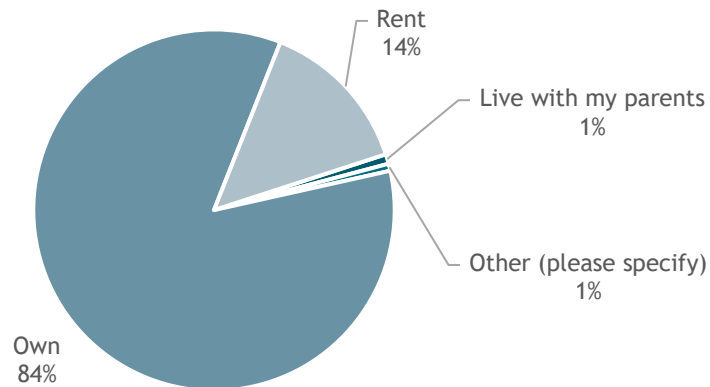
If yes, please describe the nature of you and/or your family member’s disability. (Select all that apply)

Of those who responded “Yes” to the previous question, the most common answer was that the nature of their and/or their family member’s disability was “Mobility (e.g., walking, climbing stairs),” which was chosen by 144 (33%) respondents. The least common response was “Intellectual or developmental (e.g., Down syndrome, fragile X syndrome),” which was selected by 13 (3%) participants. Participants were also given the opportunity to select “Prefer to describe” and provide their own answer, which 19 (4%) chose.



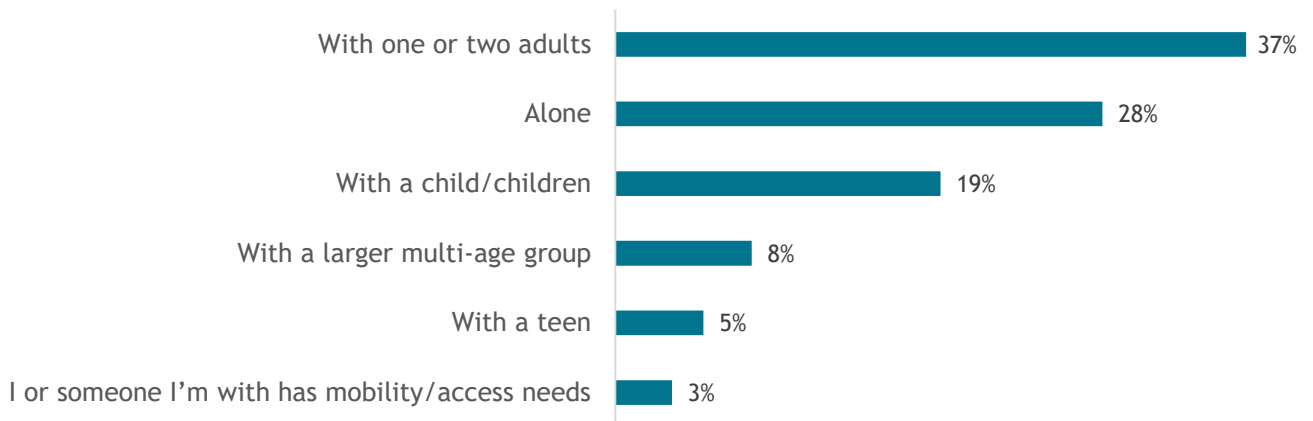
Regarding residence, I...

The most common answer was “Own,” which was selected by 1068 (84%) or participants, followed by “Rent,” which 177 (14%) selected. The least common response was “Other (please specify),” which was selected by eight (1%) participants.



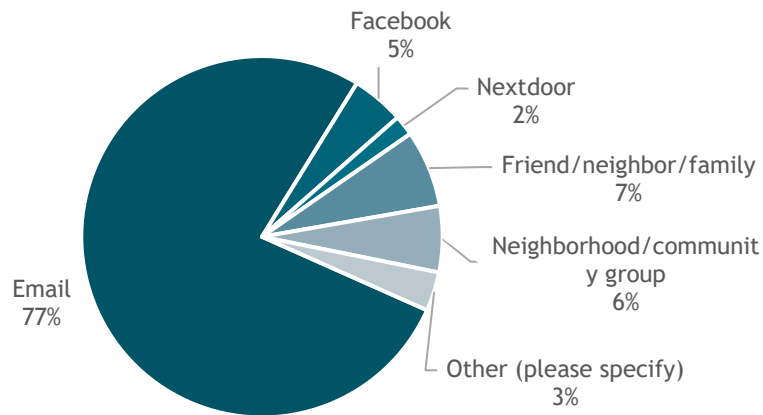
When you visit nature, who do you go with? (Select all that apply)

The most common answer was “With one or two adults,” which was selected by 958 (37%) participants, followed by “Alone,” which was selected by 740 (28%). The least common answer was “I or someone I’m with has mobility/Access needs,” which 86 (3%) participants selected.



How did you hear about this survey? (Select all that apply)

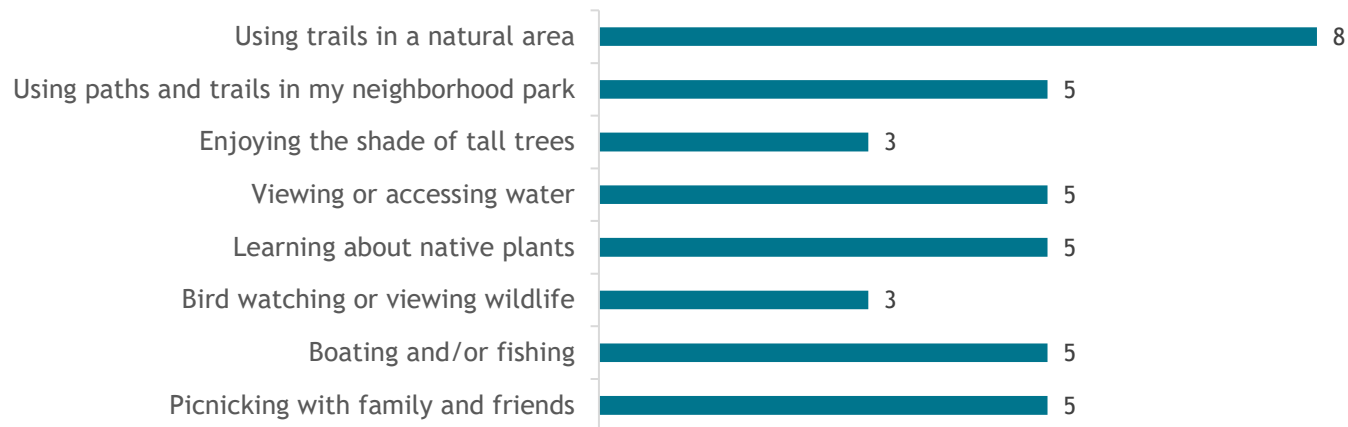
The most common way that participants said they heard about the survey was “Email,” which was selected by 1016 (77%) participants, followed by “Friend/neighbor/family,” which was selected by 91 (7%). The least common answer was “Nextdoor,” which 24 (2%) participants selected. Participants were also given the option of choosing “Other (please specify),” which 46 (4%) elected to do. See Appendix A for a full list of responses.



Spanish Survey Questions

A total of nine surveys were submitted through the online survey in Spanish. Not all questions required answers, so the total number of responses will not total nine for each question.

Access: When you think about access to nature, which of the following are most important to you?
(Select all that apply).

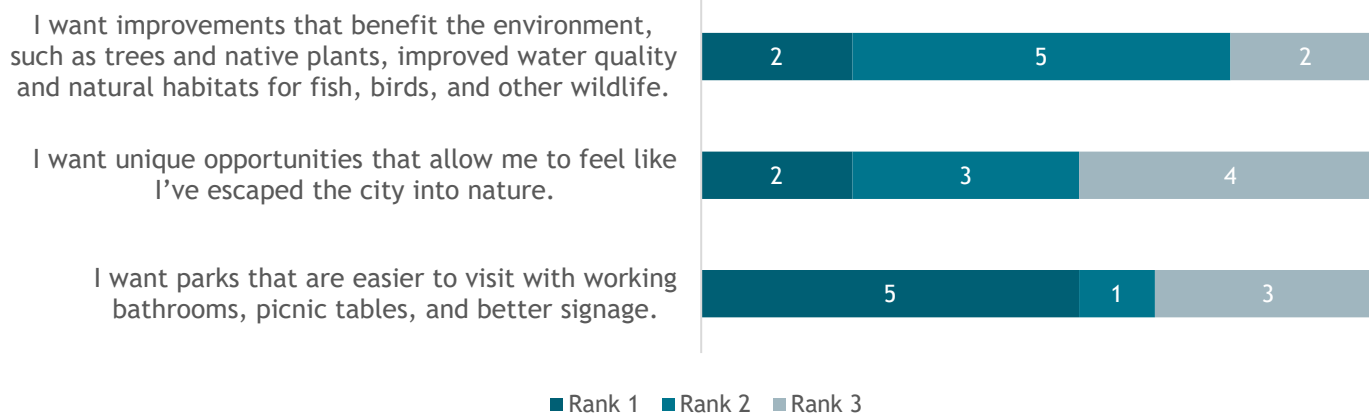


Participants were asked to select all that apply. The most popular choice was “Using trails in a natural area,” which was selected by eight participants. The least common of the provided responses was “Enjoying the shade of tall trees” and “Bird watching or viewing wildlife,” which three participants selected each.

Participants were given an opportunity to select “Other (please specify)” and provide their own response. One selected this answer; their translated response is included verbatim below:

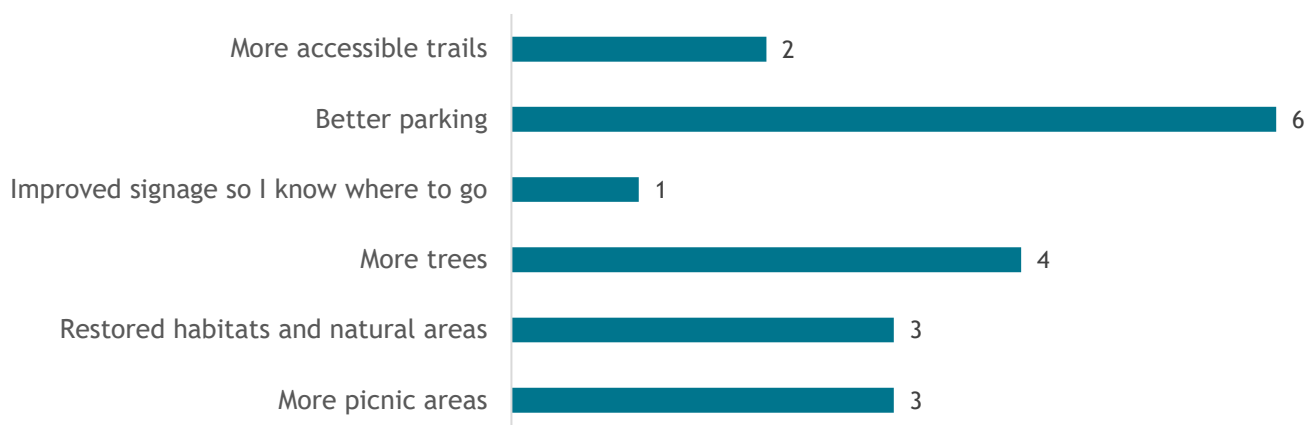
- “That the water and rivers stay clean.”

Experience: What type of improvements would enhance your experience in a park? Rank the following with 1 as the statement that feels more like you:



Participants were asked to rank three improvements that would enhance their experience in a park. The most common answer that was selected for “Rank 1” was “I want parks that are easier to visit with working bathrooms, picnic tables, and better signage,” which was chosen by five participants.

Regional Parks: What kinds of improvements would allow you to better access parks with unique natural features that serve the entire region like Forest Park, Kelley Point Park, or Wilkes Headwaters? (Select all that apply.)

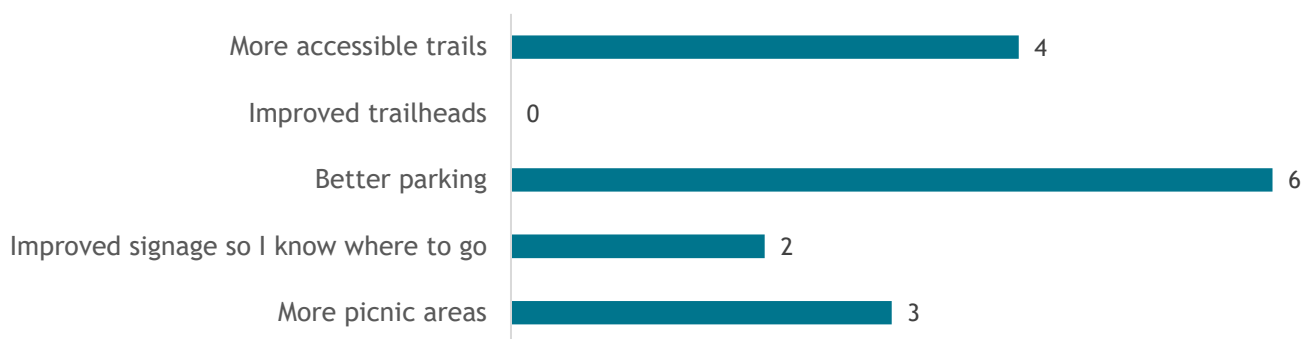


Participants were asked to select all improvements that would allow for better access to regional parks. The most common answer was “Better parking,” which was selected by six participants, followed by “More accessible trails,” which was selected by four participants. No participants selected “Improved trailheads.”

Participants were also given the option to choose “Other (please specify)” and provide their own response. Two selected this option; the translated responses are included verbatim below:

- “Working toilets and water.”
- “That parks can be accessed by transit/bus/train, and programs that take groups to enjoy the park. Parks are nice, but the people who enjoy them don't represent the people of Portland.”

Neighborhood parks: What kinds of improvements would allow you to better access nature in your neighborhood park? *(Select all that apply.)*

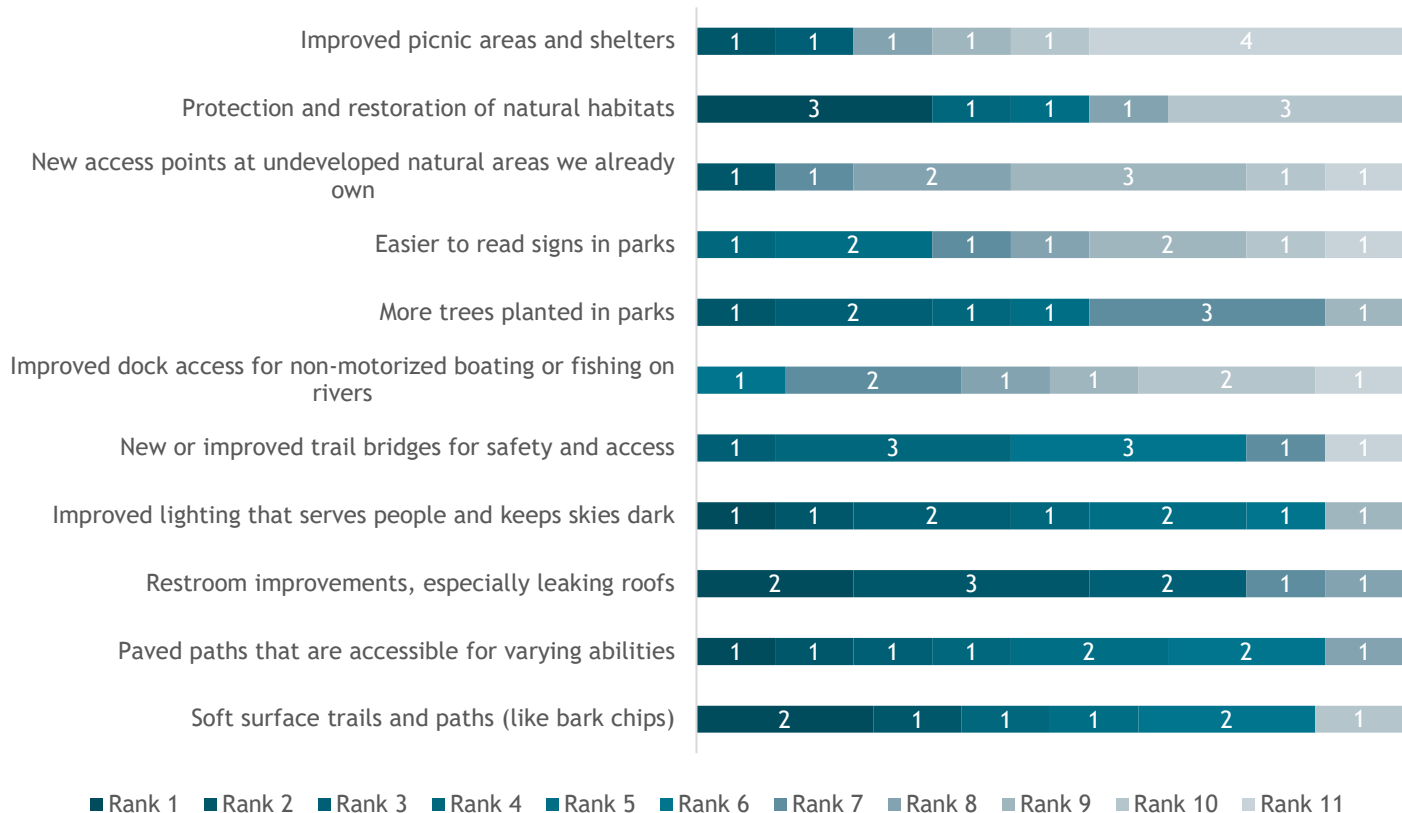


Participants were asked to select all improvements that would allow for better access to nature in neighborhood parks. The most common answer was “Better parking,” which was selected by six participants, followed by “More trees,” which was selected by four (22%). The least common answer was “Improved signage so I know where to go,” which one participant selected.

Participants were also given the option of selecting “Other (please specify)” and providing their own answer. Three participants selected this option; the translated responses are included verbatim below:

- “Lighting”
- “Working toilets and water”
- “Areas for dogs or restricted areas for dogs so that people with dogs are responsible for their waste.”

What is important to you? What types of projects should we prioritize to help more Portlanders protect and connect to nature? Rank the following with 1 as your top priority and 11 your lowest priority.



Participants were asked to rank 11 types of projects that would help Portlanders protect and connect to nature. The most common answer selected for Rank 1 was “Protection and restoration of natural habitats,” which was chosen by three participants, followed by “Soft surface trails and paths (like bark chips)” and “Restroom improvements, especially leaking roofs,” which was chosen by two participants each.

Is there anything else you want to tell us?

Three respondents wrote in their own comments. The translated responses are included verbatim below.

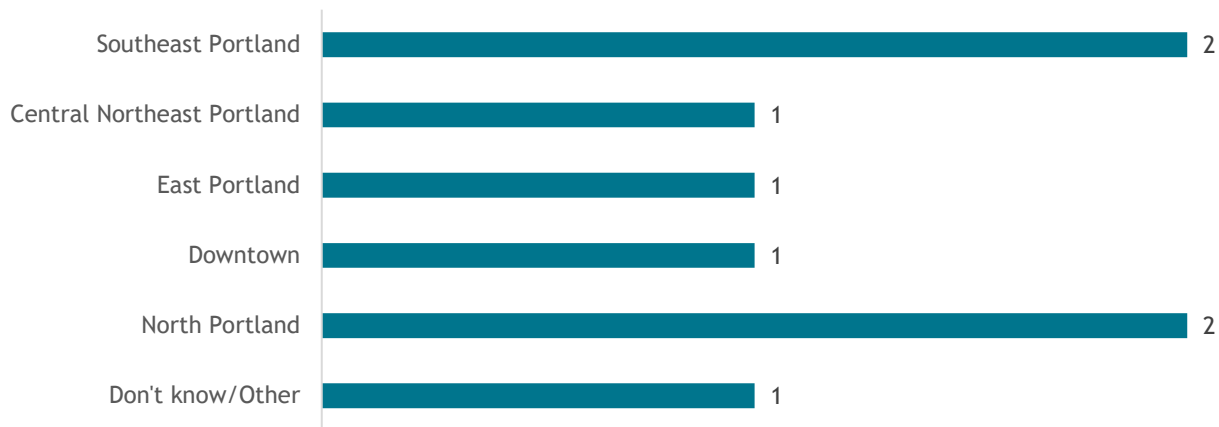
- “We should respect and protect the natural areas. And not invade wildlife. Thanks for the invitation, greetings.”
- “The tennis courts are nice, but they feel forgotten, the nets are not maintained. Blackberries must be maintained because there are people who get hurt when they get on roads/trails where there are blackberries. Children and adults take shortcuts, and the thorns of wild blackberries are dangerous.”
- “I don't like the garbage and the homeless camps”

Demographics (Spanish Survey)

The most common participant for this survey is Hispanic or Latino/a/x women aged 35-44. Most participants own a home. Most participants indicated they are able bodied. The most common disability of participants or their family is mobility related. Most participants are likely to visit a park or natural area with one or more adults. The most responses, more than a quarter, came from those who live in SE Portland. Most participants learned about the survey through email.

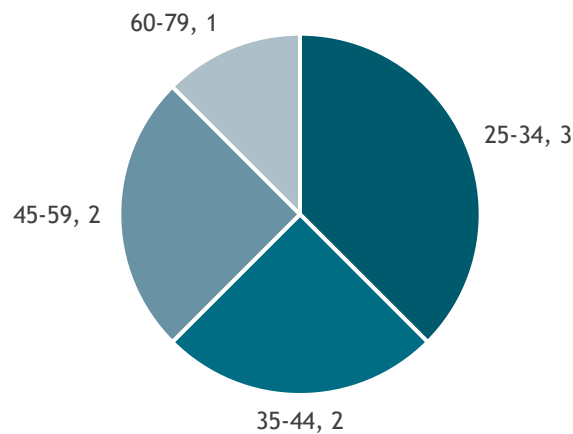
What area best describes where you live?

The most common area that participants said they lived in was “Southeast Portland” and “North Portland” which was selected by two participants each.



I am age:

The most common response was age “25-34,” which was selected by three participants.



I identify as:

The most common answer was “Female,” which was chosen by five participants, followed by “Male,” which was selected by two participants. One participant chose “Non-binary/Androgynous.”

I identify as: (Select all that apply)

Eight participants chose “Hispanic or Latino/a/x,” and one participant chose “Hispanic or Latino/a/x” and “White.”

Do you or a family member live with a disability or identify as a disabled person?

Eight participants selected “No,” while one said “Yes.”

If yes, please describe the nature of you and/or your family member’s disability. (Select all that apply)

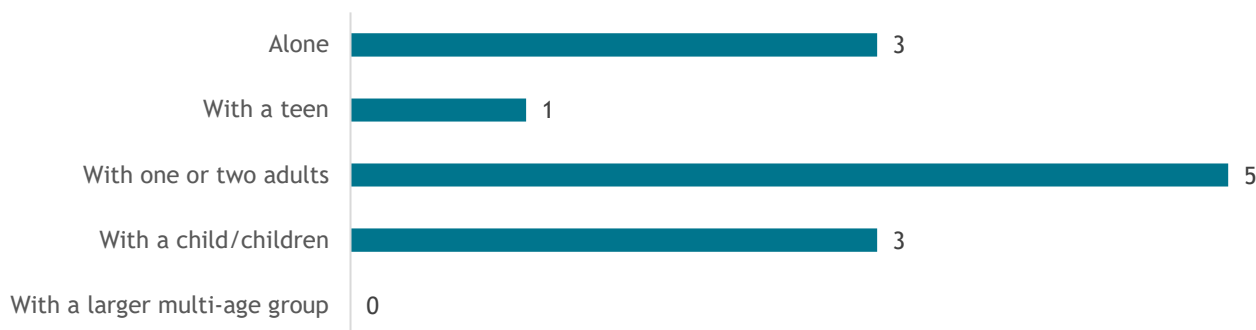
Two disabilities were described as “Invisible (e.g. diabetes, HIV, cancer)” or “Prefer not to answer.”

Regarding residence, I...

Most participants own their home, with six participants selecting this answer. Two participants rent their home.

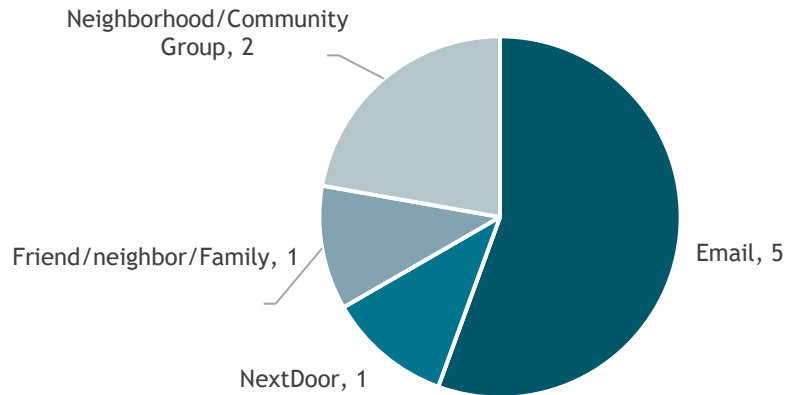
When you visit nature, who do you go with? (Select all that apply)

The most common answer was “With one or two adults,” which was selected by five (37%) participants, followed by “Alone” and “With a child/children” which was selected by three participants each.



How did you hear about this survey? (Select all that apply)

The most common way that participants said they heard about the survey was “Email,” which was selected by five participants. One participant indicated they heard about the survey through “Focus groups.”







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Sustaining a healthy parks and recreation system to make Portland a great place to live, work, and play.

