

Manistee County seeks community input on park planning survey

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MANISTEE COUNTY — Officials are looking to update the county-wide Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and a new survey by Networks Northwest could impact the direction it takes.

The survey is aimed to gather public input to find out what the community wants from their parks and other public areas. Gathering that input is necessary for two key reasons, according to Zach Vega, a community planner with Networks Northwest.

“First, it ensures that the plan and the implementation strategy therein reflect the needs and wants of the people who live, work and recreate in the county,” Vega stated in an email.

That means local officials tasked with developing parks and recreation projects can more easily garner public support, according to Vega.

“Second, as with any public initiative, there will be many voices with ranges of agreeing and conflicting views,” he said. “Gathering public input early in a process helps the planning team to develop goals, objectives and projects that serve as many interests as possible.”

SEE PARKS, 8A

PARKS

CONTINUED FROM 1A

The responses will assist the planning team in developing actionable goals and objectives that reflect the public's expressed preferences. These will supplement the goals and objectives created for each individual jurisdiction, including the City of Manistee, villages and townships.

"The DNR, when awarding parks and recreation grants, wants to see that the projects seeking funding are supported by members of the public. The survey

results are one component of that," said Vega.

Input also helps to frame conversations in the individual municipalities.

"For example, if a majority of residents state a desire for more trail connections, we would likely use part of a public meeting to ask where these trail connections should be or which stakeholders need to be in a discussion to get trails built," Vega said.

"Our intent is to have a draft plan to each of the jurisdictions in September and part of the plan will be an analysis of the survey results so it will have to be closed before then," he continued.

Networks Northwest is leading this planning process in conjunction with the Manistee County Recreation Commission and planning department. They will work directly with local officials and the public to update the plan during the spring and summer months, according to the Networks Northwest website.

Tom Oele, vice-chair of the Manistee Parks Commission stressed the importance of this survey in an email to the News Advocate.

"This is the county plan that is incredibly vital in seeking grant money for all future county, and city, park improvements and projects," he stated. "The plan is highly based on an anonymous quick online survey that is put out to the public."

The survey, which opened in January, is available at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/K9G7HLT>. It will be open until the end of July.

For the survey to reach statistical significance, Vega said it would require around a 20% response rate or roughly 5,000 responses across the county.

"We can also accept a lower response rate and understand those results as an anecdotal look at what people want to see in Manistee," he said.

The survey had received 282 responses as of July 8.

There are a few notable patterns in the responses, though Vega cautioned that these early results should not be interpreted as statistically significant measures of public opinion.

Most respondents are in agreement that the county should preserve its natural areas and water access, and there is also support for additional trail connections, he said.

The most popular recreation activities cited were beach and water activities, hiking, walking and running.

"There is high support for parks and recreation funding in Manistee through a variety of funding mechanisms," Vega said. "For example, 54% of

respondents would support re-appropriation of existing taxpayer funds and 48% would support a millage to fund site improvements for parks and recreation in Manistee."

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources requires municipalities to have a five-year recreation plan on file with the state to be eligible for various funding opportunities, according to the Networks Northwest website. These can include funding from the Land and Water Conservation Fund, Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund and Waterways grants. The Manistee County Minger Family Endowment Fund also guides its funding through adopted plans.

The previous county-wide plan expired Dec. 31, 2020.

"One of the implied benefits of this county-wide plan and the creation of the County Recreation Commission is that they will streamline the grant application and acquisition process. Rather than each jurisdiction expending staff time, hiring a grant writer and applying for various funding sources, the Manistee County Recreation Commission will act as a centralized entity for this purpose," states part of the Networks Northwest website.

The plan will cover everything required by the Michigan DNR in its guidelines, which can be viewed at https://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-350-79134_81684_79209_81658---,00.html.

This county-wide plan will also incorporate past planning projects including the Manistee Lake Non-Motorized Plan and the Railroad Relocation for the Manistee Lake Area Communities Plan.

Visit <https://www.networksnorthwest.org/community/current-projects/manistee-county-wide-park-recreation-plan-update.html> for more information.

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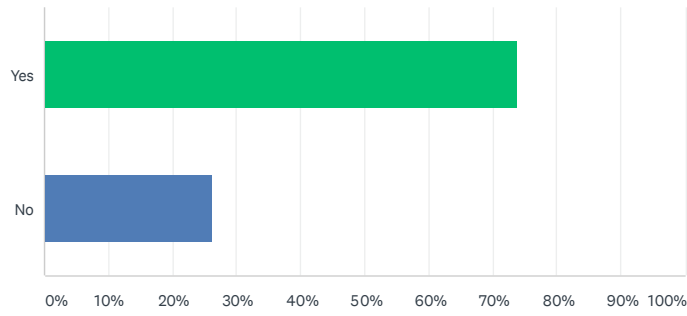
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Appendix H - Survey Results

Q1 Are you a permanent resident of Manistee County?

Answered: 395 Skipped: 0

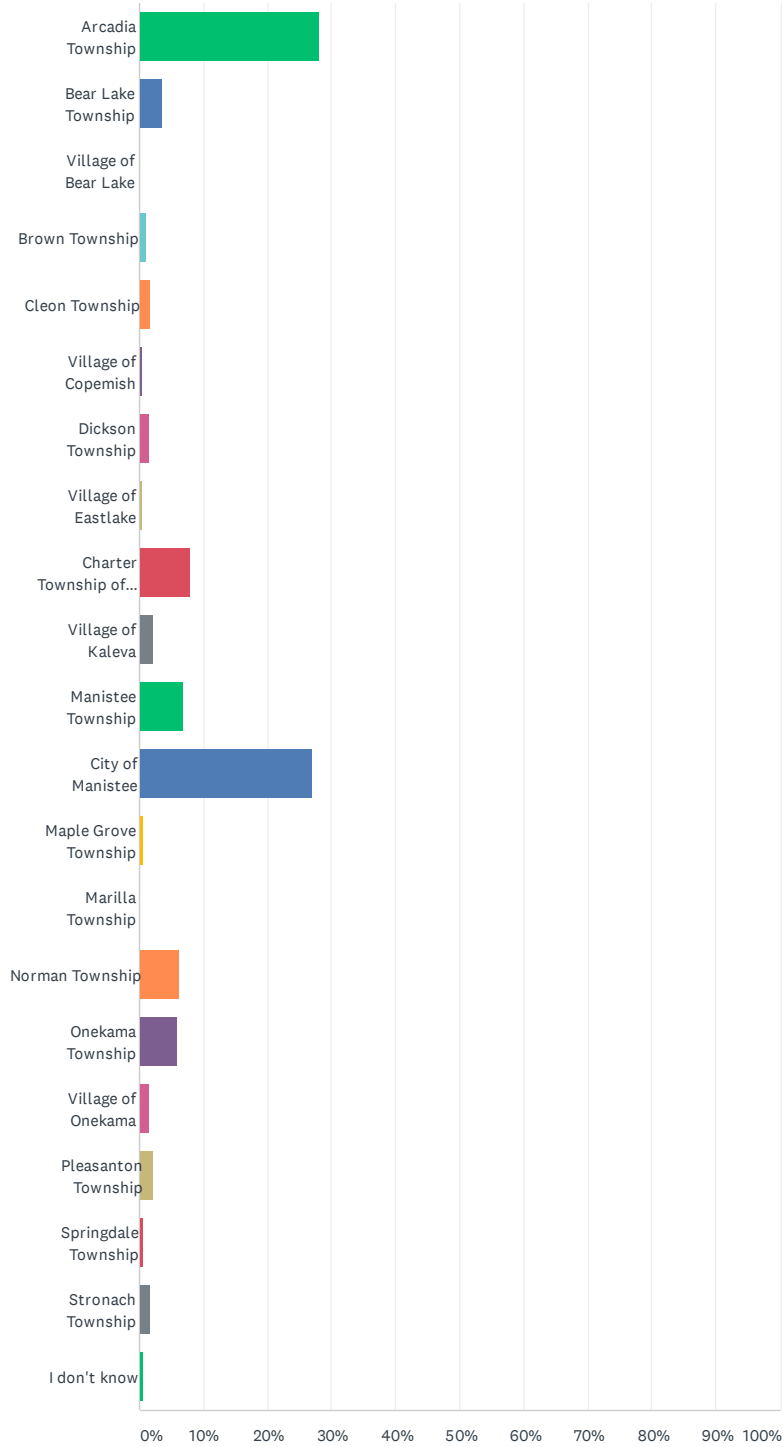


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	73.92%	292
No	26.08%	103
TOTAL		395

Q2 Where in Manistee County do you live?

Answered: 288 Skipped: 107

Manistee County-Wide Park & Recreation Plan

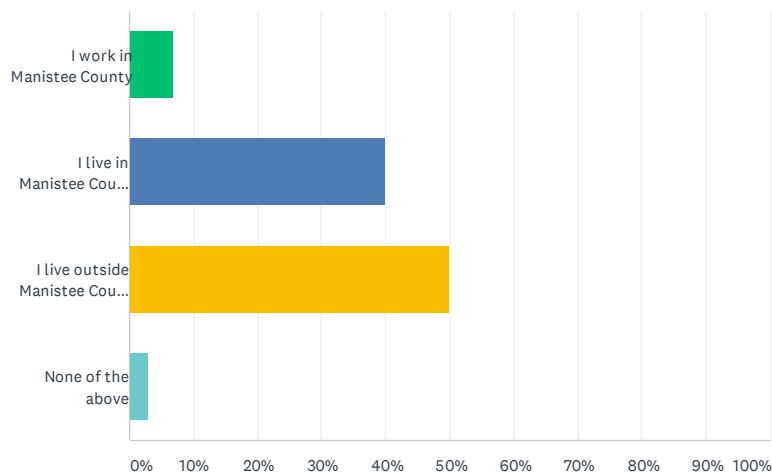


Manistee County-Wide Park & Recreation Plan

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Arcadia Township	28.13%	81
Bear Lake Township	3.47%	10
Village of Bear Lake	0.00%	0
Brown Township	1.04%	3
Cleon Township	1.74%	5
Village of Copemish	0.35%	1
Dickson Township	1.39%	4
Village of Eastlake	0.35%	1
Charter Township of Filer	7.99%	23
Village of Kaleva	2.08%	6
Manistee Township	6.94%	20
City of Manistee	27.08%	78
Maple Grove Township	0.69%	2
Marilla Township	0.00%	0
Norman Township	6.25%	18
Onekama Township	5.90%	17
Village of Onekama	1.39%	4
Pleasanton Township	2.08%	6
Springdale Township	0.69%	2
Stronach Township	1.74%	5
I don't know	0.69%	2
TOTAL		288

Q3 Which of the following best describes your affiliation with Manistee County?

Answered: 100 Skipped: 295



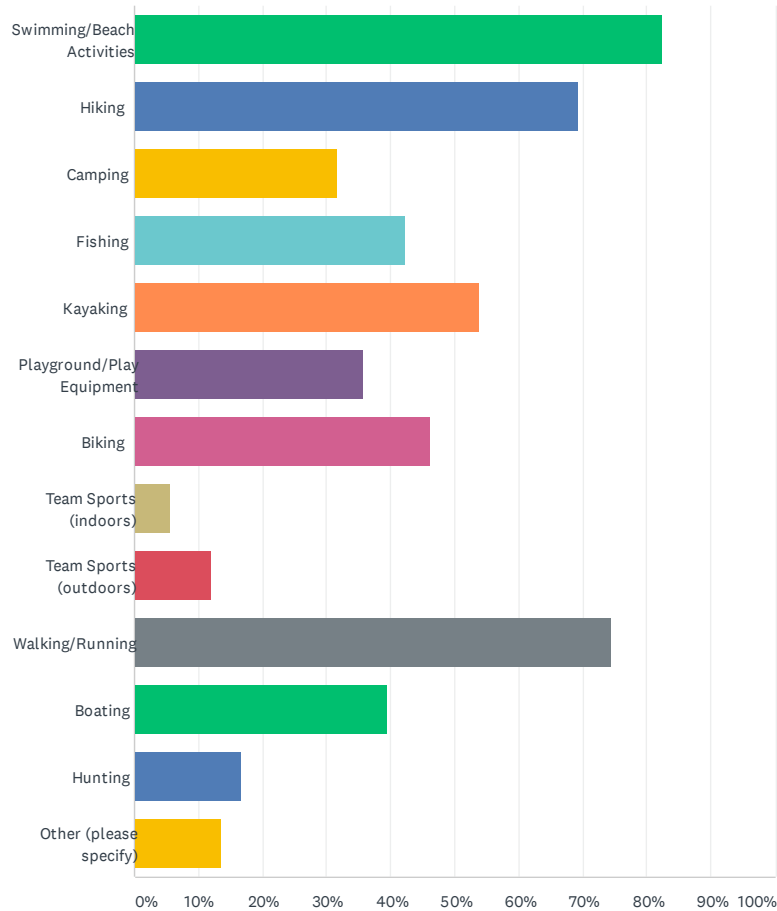
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I work in Manistee County	7.00%	7
I live in Manistee County for part of the year (seasonal resident)	40.00%	40
I live outside Manistee County but visit Manistee County's recreation sites	50.00%	50
None of the above	3.00%	3
TOTAL		100

Q4 If you are not a permanent resident of Manistee County, where do you live?

Answered: 91 Skipped: 304

Q5 Which of the following recreation activities do you participate in within Manistee County during the warm-weather months? (choose all that apply)

Answered: 377 Skipped: 18

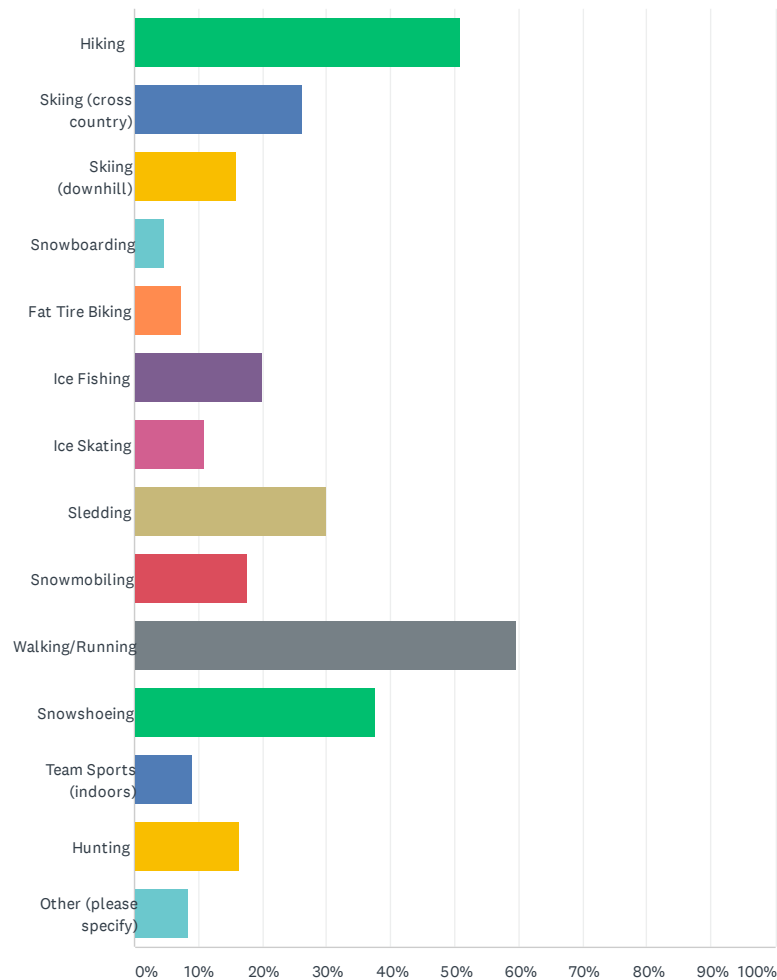


Manistee County-Wide Park & Recreation Plan

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Swimming/Beach Activities	82.49%	311
Hiking	69.23%	261
Camping	31.56%	119
Fishing	42.18%	159
Kayaking	53.85%	203
Playground/Play Equipment	35.81%	135
Biking	46.15%	174
Team Sports (indoors)	5.57%	21
Team Sports (outdoors)	11.94%	45
Walking/Running	74.54%	281
Boating	39.52%	149
Hunting	16.71%	63
Other (please specify)	13.53%	51
Total Respondents: 377		

Q6 Which of the following recreation activities do you participate in within Manistee County during the winter months? (choose all that apply)

Answered: 332 Skipped: 63

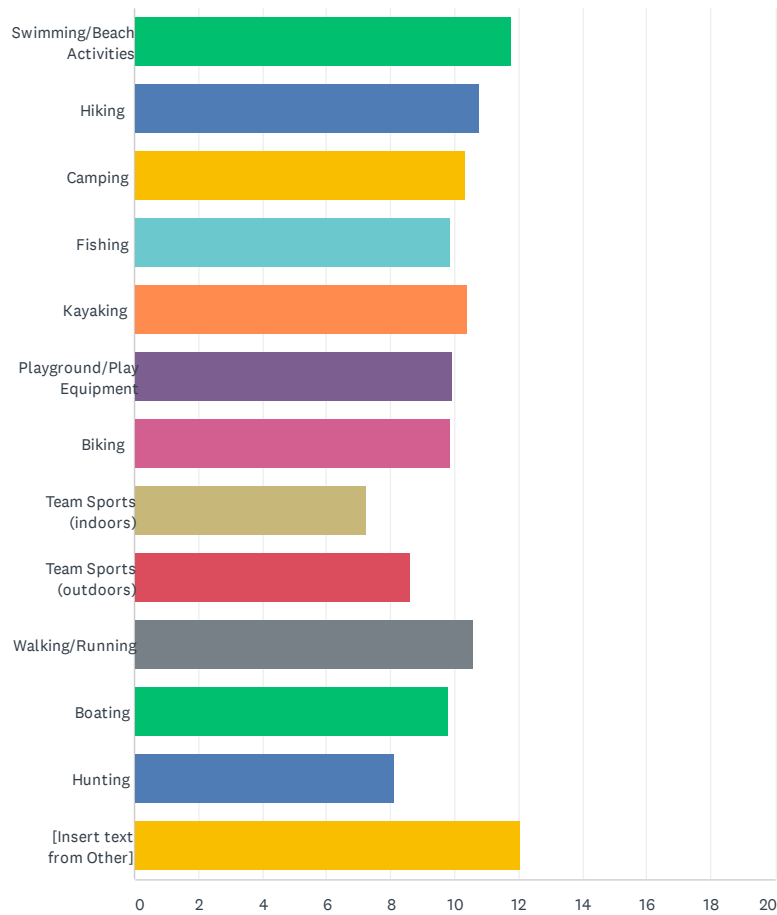


Manistee County-Wide Park & Recreation Plan

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Hiking	50.90%	169
Skiing (cross country)	26.20%	87
Skiing (downhill)	15.96%	53
Snowboarding	4.52%	15
Fat Tire Biking	7.23%	24
Ice Fishing	19.88%	66
Ice Skating	10.84%	36
Sledding	29.82%	99
Snowmobiling	17.47%	58
Walking/Running	59.64%	198
Snowshoeing	37.65%	125
Team Sports (indoors)	9.04%	30
Hunting	16.27%	54
Other (please specify)	8.43%	28
Total Respondents: 332		

Q7 Pleas rank your favorite warm-weather activities - with 1 being your favorite.

Answered: 325 Skipped: 70



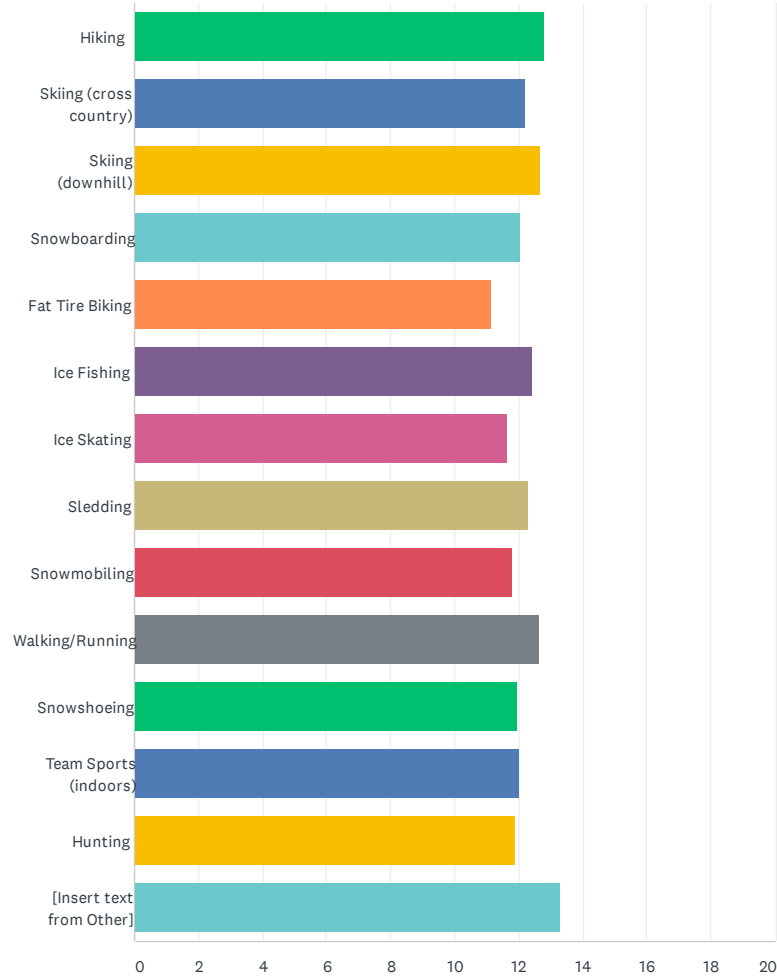
Manistee County-Wide Park & Recreation Plan

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	TC
Swimming/Beach Activities	43.77% 116	21.89% 58	14.34% 38	10.94% 29	4.53% 12	3.02% 8	0.75% 2	0.75% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	
Hiking	15.04% 34	23.89% 54	20.80% 47	20.80% 47	9.73% 22	5.75% 13	2.21% 5	0.88% 2	0.00% 0	0.44% 1	0.44% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	
Camping	13.73% 14	21.57% 22	16.67% 17	13.73% 14	15.69% 16	9.80% 10	4.90% 5	2.94% 3	0.98% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	
Fishing	15.04% 20	10.53% 14	15.79% 21	13.53% 18	17.29% 23	15.04% 20	9.02% 12	1.50% 2	1.50% 2	0.75% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	
Kayaking	12.15% 22	20.99% 38	13.81% 25	19.89% 36	18.23% 33	10.50% 19	2.21% 4	2.21% 4	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	
Playground/Play Equipment	9.73% 11	21.24% 24	13.27% 15	14.16% 16	15.93% 18	10.62% 12	8.85% 10	2.65% 3	0.88% 1	2.65% 3	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	
Biking	13.55% 21	9.68% 15	20.00% 31	16.77% 26	14.19% 22	11.61% 18	8.39% 13	2.58% 4	1.94% 3	0.00% 0	0.65% 1	0.65% 1	0.00% 0	
Team Sports (indoors)	0.00% 0	5.88% 1	5.88% 1	11.76% 2	11.76% 2	0.00% 0	23.53% 4	11.76% 2	17.65% 3	5.88% 1	5.88% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	
Team Sports (outdoors)	5.56% 2	8.33% 3	13.89% 5	5.56% 2	8.33% 3	25.00% 9	13.89% 5	13.89% 5	5.56% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	
Walking/Running	17.00% 42	21.86% 54	23.48% 58	13.36% 33	8.91% 22	5.67% 14	3.64% 9	3.24% 8	2.02% 5	0.81% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	
Boating	9.16% 12	14.50% 19	19.08% 25	13.74% 18	12.98% 17	12.98% 17	12.21% 16	3.82% 5	1.53% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	
Hunting	11.54% 6	7.69% 4	9.62% 5	5.77% 3	7.69% 4	5.77% 3	11.54% 6	21.15% 11	9.62% 5	7.69% 4	1.92% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	
[Insert text from Other]	59.52% 25	16.67% 7	9.52% 4	4.76% 2	7.14% 3	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	2.38% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	

Q8 Please rank your favorite winter recreation activities - with 1 being your favorite.

Answered: 287 Skipped: 108

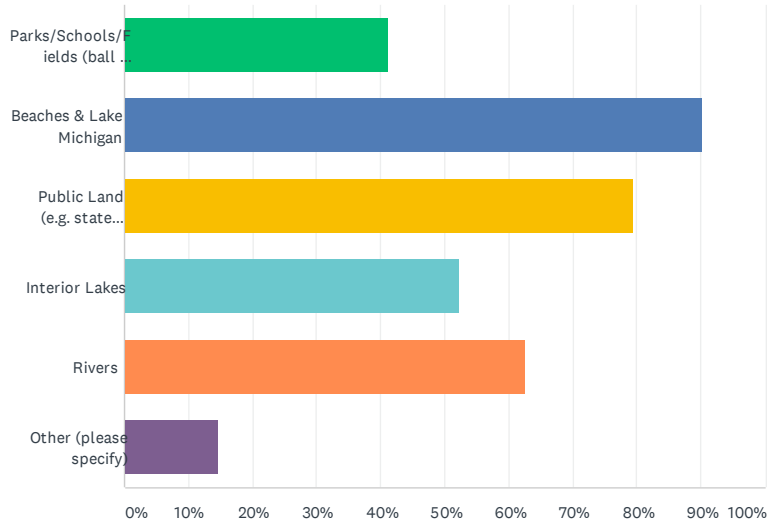
Manistee County-Wide Park & Recreation Plan



	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Hiking	33.79% 49	34.48% 50	17.24% 25	8.97% 13	2.76% 4	2.76% 4	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Skiing (cross country)	23.68% 18	23.68% 18	23.68% 18	18.42% 14	6.58% 5	1.32% 1	0.00% 0	1.32% 1	1.32% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Skiing (downhill)	45.65% 21	17.39% 8	13.04% 6	15.22% 7	4.35% 2	2.17% 1	0.00% 0	2.17% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Snowboarding	35.71% 5	21.43% 3	21.43% 3	7.14% 1	0.00% 0	7.14% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	7.14% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Fat Tire Biking	15.00% 3	5.00% 1	35.00% 7	20.00% 4	0.00% 0	5.00% 1	15.00% 3	5.00% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Ice Fishing	28.07% 16	36.84% 21	10.53% 6	10.53% 6	8.77% 5	1.75% 1	1.75% 1	0.00% 0	1.75% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Ice Skating	16.67% 5	30.00% 9	20.00% 6	3.33% 1	13.33% 4	0.00% 0	13.33% 4	3.33% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Sledding	27.06% 23	23.53% 20	22.35% 19	11.76% 10	10.59% 9	3.53% 3	1.18% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Snowmobiling	26.53% 13	8.16% 4	28.57% 14	14.29% 7	10.20% 5	6.12% 3	4.08% 2	0.00% 0	2.04% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Walking/Running	39.18% 67	28.07% 48	14.62% 25	7.60% 13	5.26% 9	1.17% 2	0.58% 1	2.34% 4	0.58% 1	0.58% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Snowshoeing	22.81% 26	20.18% 23	24.56% 28	16.67% 19	7.89% 9	2.63% 3	1.75% 2	0.88% 1	0.88% 1	0.88% 1	0.88% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Team Sports (indoors)	37.50% 9	16.67% 4	12.50% 3	12.50% 3	4.17% 1	4.17% 1	8.33% 2	0.00% 0	4.17% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Hunting	28.89% 13	31.11% 14	11.11% 5	0.00% 0	6.67% 3	13.33% 6	0.00% 0	6.67% 3	0.00% 0	2.22% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
[Insert text from Other]	76.19% 16	4.76% 1	4.76% 1	4.76% 1	4.76% 1	4.76% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0

Q9 Where do you go in Manistee County to recreate? (choose all that apply)

Answered: 337 Skipped: 58



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Parks/Schools/Fields (ball & soccer)	41.25% 139
Beaches & Lake Michigan	90.21% 304
Public Land (e.g. state forests)	79.53% 268
Interior Lakes	52.23% 176
Rivers	62.61% 211
Other (please specify)	14.54% 49
Total Respondents: 337	

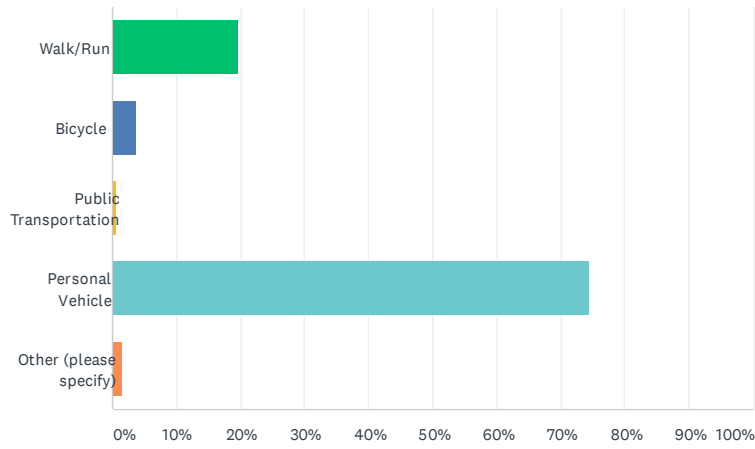
Q10 Please specify which recreation sites you visit most often in Manistee County.

Answered: 303 Skipped: 92

Q11 How do you access recreation sites in Manistee County, for the most part?

Answered: 337 Skipped: 58

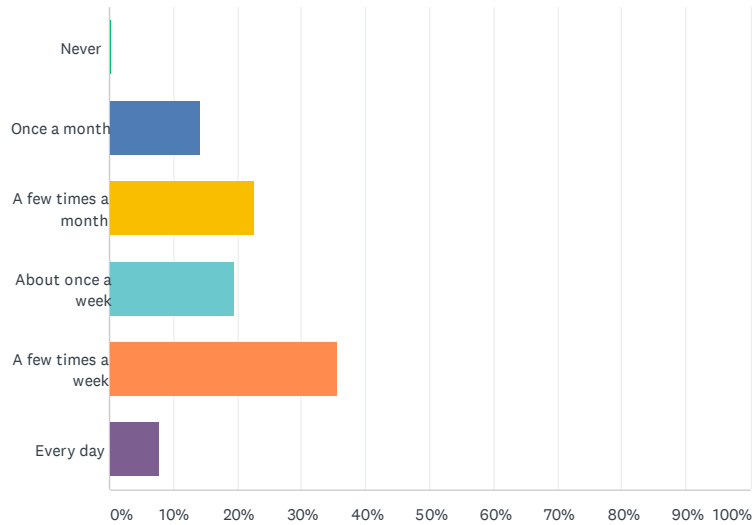
Manistee County-Wide Park & Recreation Plan



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Walk/Run	19.58%	66
Bicycle	3.86%	13
Public Transportation	0.59%	2
Personal Vehicle	74.48%	251
Other (please specify)	1.48%	5
TOTAL		337

Q12 How often do you visit a public park, beach, trail or other recreation site in Manistee County?

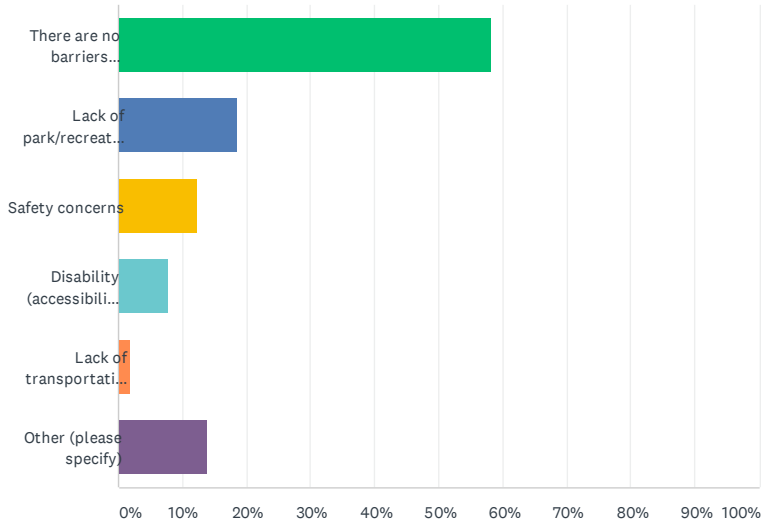
Answered: 335 Skipped: 60



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Never	0.30%	1
Once a month	14.33%	48
A few times a month	22.69%	76
About once a week	19.40%	65
A few times a week	35.52%	119
Every day	7.76%	26
TOTAL		335

Q13 What types of barriers prevent you from participating in recreation within Manistee County.

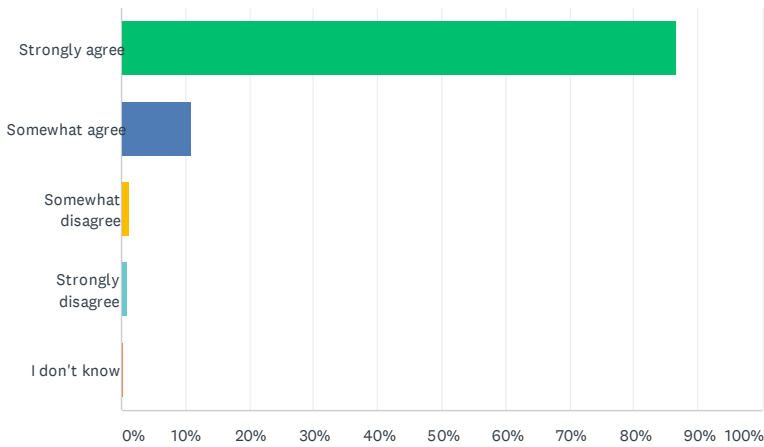
Answered: 332 Skipped: 63



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
There are no barriers preventing me from participating in recreation within Manistee County.	58.13%	193
Lack of park/recreation features I'm interested in	18.67%	62
Safety concerns	12.35%	41
Disability (accessibility barriers)	7.83%	26
Lack of transportation to recreation site(s)	1.81%	6
Other (please specify)	13.86%	46
Total Respondents: 332		

Q14 Manistee County should make it a priority to preserve natural areas and water access.

Answered: 337 Skipped: 58

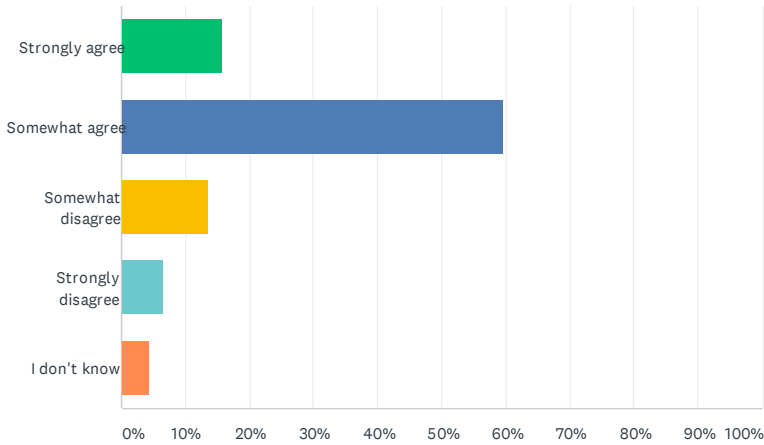


Manistee County-Wide Park & Recreation Plan

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	86.65%	292
Somewhat agree	10.98%	37
Somewhat disagree	1.19%	4
Strongly disagree	0.89%	3
I don't know	0.30%	1
TOTAL		337

Q15 Parks in Manistee County are well-maintained.

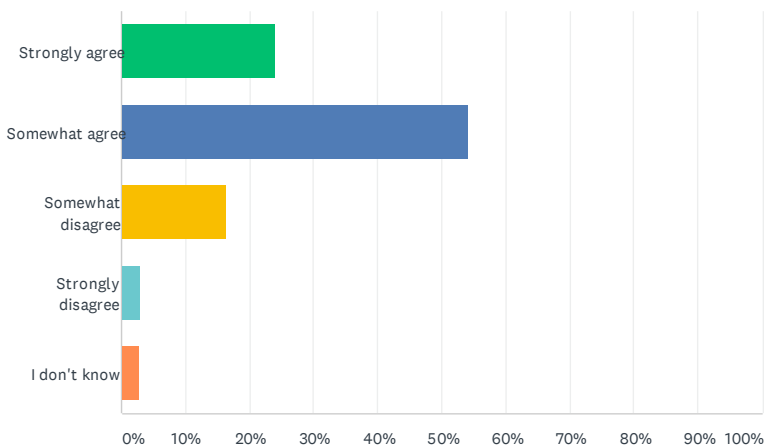
Answered: 337 Skipped: 58



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	15.73%	53
Somewhat agree	59.64%	201
Somewhat disagree	13.65%	46
Strongly disagree	6.53%	22
I don't know	4.45%	15
TOTAL		337

Q16 Parks in Manistee County offer amenities that appeal to my recreation interests.

Answered: 338 Skipped: 57

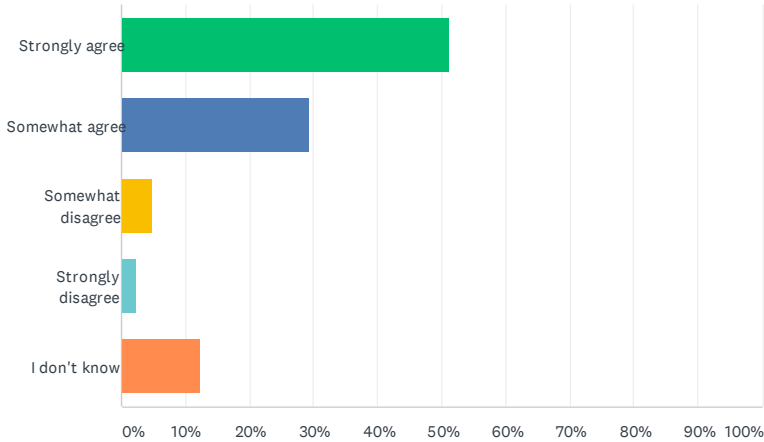


Manistee County-Wide Park & Recreation Plan

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	23.96%	81
Somewhat agree	54.14%	183
Somewhat disagree	16.27%	55
Strongly disagree	2.96%	10
I don't know	2.66%	9
TOTAL		338

Q17 Manistee County should implement more non-motorized trail connections.

Answered: 335 Skipped: 60



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	51.34%	172
Somewhat agree	29.25%	98
Somewhat disagree	4.78%	16
Strongly disagree	2.39%	8
I don't know	12.24%	41
TOTAL		335

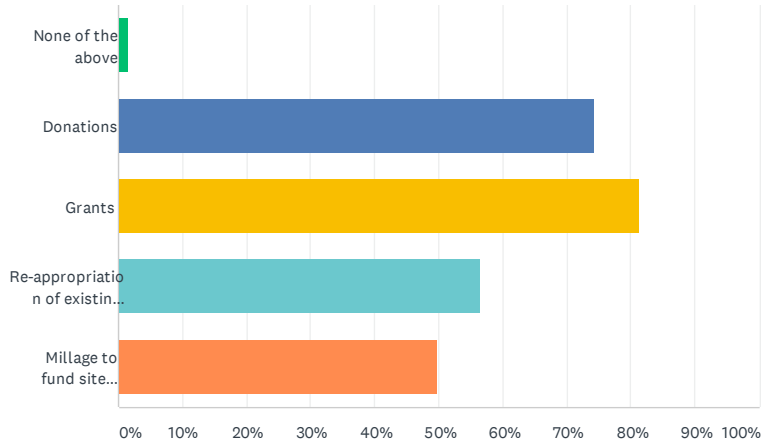
Q18 What programs or recreation amenities do not currently exist in Manistee County that you would like to see implemented?

Answered: 217 Skipped: 178

Q19 Which recreation funding methods do you support for parks and recreation in Manistee County?

Answered: 326 Skipped: 69

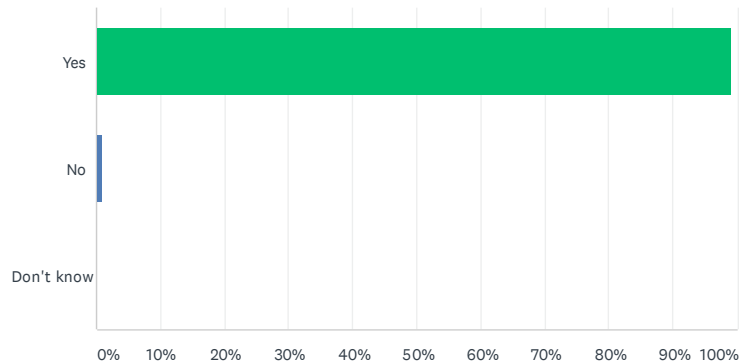
Manistee County-Wide Park & Recreation Plan



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
None of the above	1.53% 5
Donations	74.23% 242
Grants	81.29% 265
Re-appropriation of existing taxpayers funds	56.44% 184
Millage to fund site improvements	49.69% 162
Total Respondents: 326	

Q20 Do you have access to a personal vehicle?

Answered: 329 Skipped: 66

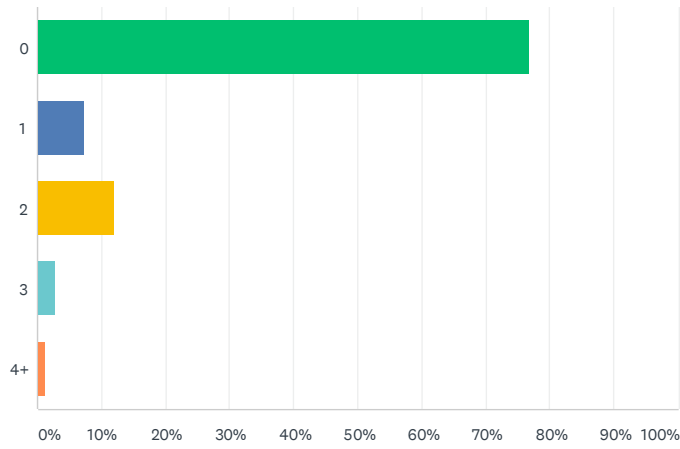


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	99.09% 326
No	0.91% 3
Don't know	0.00% 0
TOTAL	329

Q21 How many children under the age of 18 live in your household?

Answered: 328 Skipped: 67

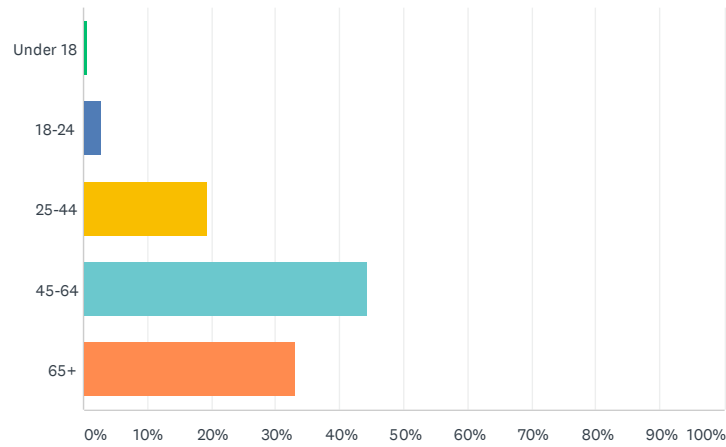
Manistee County-Wide Park & Recreation Plan



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
0	76.83% 252
1	7.32% 24
2	11.89% 39
3	2.74% 9
4+	1.22% 4
TOTAL	328

Q22 What is your age?

Answered: 327 Skipped: 68

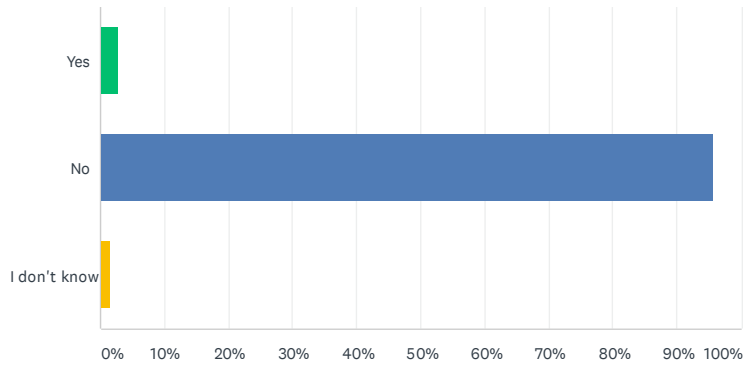


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Under 18	0.61% 2
18-24	2.75% 9
25-44	19.27% 63
45-64	44.34% 145
65+	33.03% 108
TOTAL	327

Q23 Are you or is any member of your household of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish descent?

Answered: 324 Skipped: 71

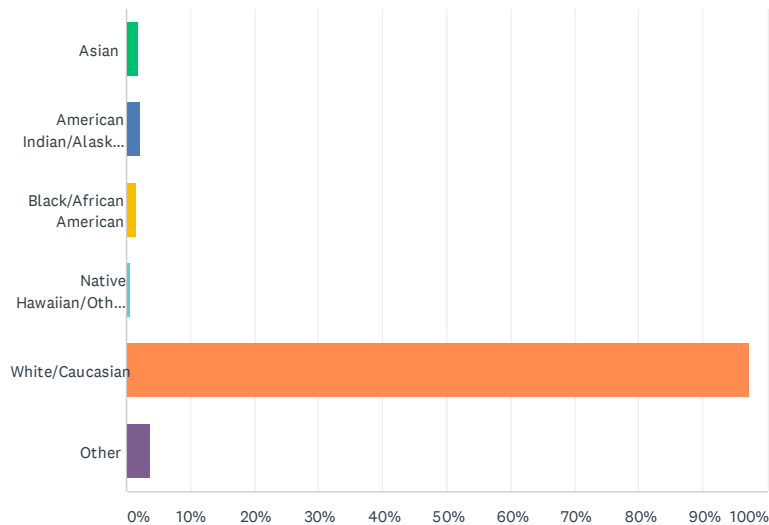
Manistee County-Wide Park & Recreation Plan



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	2.78% 9
No	95.68% 310
I don't know	1.54% 5
TOTAL	324

Q24 What race(s) are represented by the people who live in your household (check all that apply)

Answered: 322 Skipped: 73

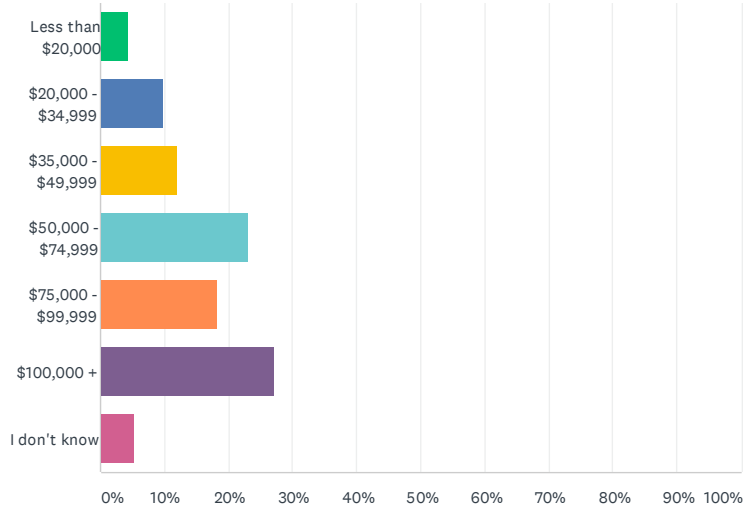


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Asian	1.86% 6
American Indian/Alaska Native	2.17% 7
Black/African American	1.55% 5
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	0.62% 2
White/Caucasian	97.20% 313
Other	3.73% 12
Total Respondents: 322	

Q25 What is your yearly household income?

Answered: 312 Skipped: 83

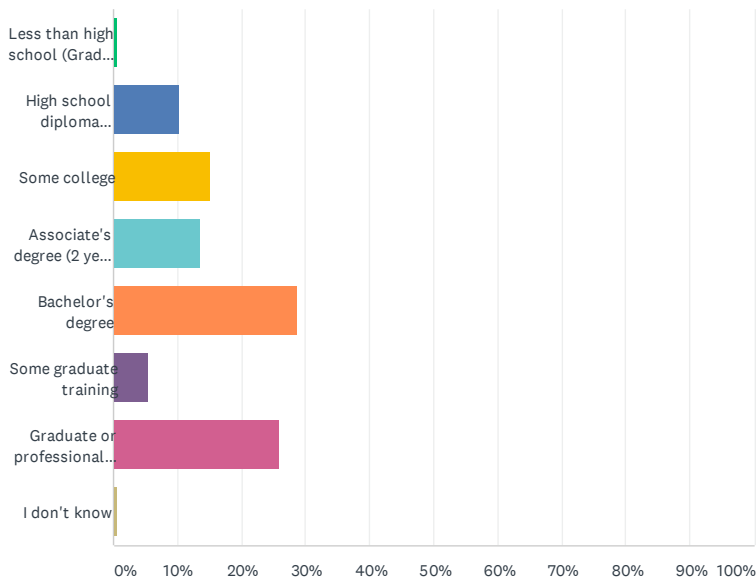
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than \$20,000	4.49%	14
\$20,000 - \$34,999	9.94%	31
\$35,000 - \$49,999	11.86%	37
\$50,000 - \$74,999	23.08%	72
\$75,000 - \$99,999	18.27%	57
\$100,000 +	27.24%	85
I don't know	5.13%	16
TOTAL		312

Q26 What is the highest grade of school or year of college you have completed?

Answered: 325 Skipped: 70



Manistee County-Wide Park & Recreation Plan

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than high school (Grade 11 or less)	0.62%	2
High school diploma (including GED)	10.15%	33
Some college	15.08%	49
Associate's degree (2 year) or specialized technical training	13.54%	44
Bachelor's degree	28.62%	93
Some graduate training	5.54%	18
Graduate or professional degree	25.85%	84
I don't know	0.62%	2
TOTAL		325

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