



The County of El Dorado

Chief Administrative Office

Parks Division

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Memo

Date: February 11, 2016
To: Vickie Sanders, Parks Manager
From: Donna Mullens, Department Analyst
RE: District II Parks Survey Analysis

At the request of Supervisor Frentzen, the Parks Division staff published a survey directed to residents of District II on the parks, trails and recreational opportunities in that district. The survey was launched in November 2015 and was open for responses until December 18, 2015. Staff collected 395 responses and the analysis results are as follows:

Question 1: Which area in District II do you live?

The largest group of District II resident responses was from the Placerville/El Dorado/Diamond Springs area (26.74% followed by Shingle Springs (11.05%) and El Dorado Hills (10.80%). Interesting to note was that the survey received 61 responses from individuals living outside of District II, which was the survey's second highest response percentage (15.68%).

Question 2: What is your age?

The largest age bracket for responses was the 55-64 age groups, followed by the 45-54 age groups. This might indicate that these two age groups have more "free" time for recreational activities possibly due to retirement, "empty nesters" (children grown and out of the home), more discretionary income.

Question 3: What is your gender?

There was basically an equal amount of responses from the female and male gender.

Question 4: How important are parks, recreation, trails and special events to your quality of life?

Responses showed that over 95% of the responses indicated that parks, recreation, trails and special events are important to their quality of life. Of that percentage, 51.79% indicated that it is extremely important.

Question 5: Which of the following benefits of parks, recreation and trails are most important to you?

Respondents were allowed to choose three of the choices provided and the two that received the largest percentage of responses were "Provide opportunities to enjoy nature/outdoors" (79.74%) and "Improve health, wellness and fitness" (74.36%). The third choice was "protect our natural environment" (50.00%). It was noted in the "Other" option to the question that many utilize the bicycling, walking and equestrian trails as well as the sports fields.

Question 6: Which of the following types of recreation is most needed in District II?

This question allowed for three choices (not prioritized). The largest response was for more trails and pathways, following by picnic shelters/pavilions and playgrounds. The "Other" responses identified many additional recreational amenities, but more aquatic centers, disc golf courses, dog parks and mountain bike trails were noted as priorities for the District.

Question 7: Do you utilize the facilities at Pioneer Park? If so, which ones?

Pioneer Park, located in the south County area – Somerset, has multiple facilities for the public to utilize. This question brought a large response (58.65%) of participants not using any of the facilities at this park. Of those using the park, the four most noted facilities utilized were the Community Center, the playground, sports fields and the disc golf course. The “Other” responses to not using the facilities included that the park was too far from their residence, they were not familiar with the park and they participated in other activities not offered at the park. Since there is a lack of familiarity with the park, an effort to increase utilization and awareness could be accomplished through social media, updates on the county website and “free” publications in the local community. There has been an increase of interest in utilizing the sports fields by various leagues.

Question 8: Do you utilize the facilities at Bradford Park? If so, which ones?

Of those that utilize the park, the facilities most identified were the picnic area, followed by the playground and sports fields. Under “Other” the comments recorded indicated a substantial number were not utilizing any of the facilities at the park, followed by those that were not familiar with the park. Again, to increase the awareness and utilization could be accomplished through social media, updates on the county website and “free” publications in the local community. Also, as with Pioneer Park, there has been an increase of interest in utilizing the sports field by various leagues. A large number of participants skipped this question.

Question 9: Have you signed up for any programs at the following locations? If so, what programs do you participate in?

The majority of the respondents skipped this question, but of those that did respond, they indicated that they participated in programs through the City of Placerville, followed with fairly equal number utilizing Cameron Park CSD and El Dorado Hills CSD. The recreation programs most participated in was aquatic recreation and youth sports. The Parks Division has been reviewing the Aquatic Centers and the needs of the West Slope residents through meetings with the City of Placerville, Cameron Park CSD and El Dorado Hill CSD to determine what maintenance, programmatic and use issues are outstanding.

Question 10: Do you utilize the El Dorado County trail/rail system? If you do, which sections?

The overwhelming respond to this question was “Yes” and of the 203 comments, the section most utilized was the El Dorado Trail – Class I bike path, which runs from Missouri Flat Road to Camino (a portion of this trail runs through the City of Placerville). Many responded that they utilize all sections of the trail/rail system, with a second group noting the sections from Missouri Flat Rd to the County line (SPTC Corridor). There were a few safety issues noted that kept users from using the trails, with one in particular being the “homeless” encampments that arise along the trails.

Question 11: Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

A large number of responses were for an increase of the number of trails for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians, extension of the El Dorado Trail (Class I bike path) to the County line, and add more recreational activities at the parks within the County. Other responses included the continuation of the current rail excursions, connectivity of County trails with Folsom, American River Parkway and other trail systems, address safety issues on the trail (homeless encampments), parking issues and remove the rails on the SPTC Corridor. Several responses thanked the County for their efforts on the trails and in the parks and to keep up the “good” work.

The development of future Class I trails within the County would be under the prevue of the Community Development Agency, Transportation Division. Parks Division staff would coordinate with Facilities, the Sherriff’s Office and various other departments to address maintenance and safety issues on the current trails and within the Park facilities.

So what does this survey tell the county? It tells us that we need to do improvements to the walking path around the park. We also need to discuss with Transportation the options of connecting the school to the park in the future.

If someone was interested in coordinating classes at this location I think it would have potential. With the commercial kitchen cooking classes, arts and crafts, exercise and daycare could be provided out of this facility. It would take coordination and a number of classes to make it profitable. It was also noted in the meeting that an obstacle for renting the facilities was the County's Liability Insurance requirements, especially pertaining to the use of the equestrian arena. Staff has contacted Risk Management Division to discuss the inclusion of a rider to the County's current liability insurance that would include coverage for equestrian events held at the park.