

Belle Isle Study

November 2015



Market Research & Consulting

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Background and Objectives

Background

PURPOSE

To gain an understanding, among different cohorts, of their perceptions of Belle Isle, its importance and value. To focus on the level of awareness surrounding the park's features and potential improvements.

METHODOLOGY

A multiple-pronged methodology that included participants from Wayne, Oakland and Macomb counties.

A goal of 700 completed interviews and two focus groups. A total of 200 interviews with stakeholders associated with Belle Isle Conservancy, 400 surveys from the general population of the three counties and 100 in-person intercept interviews conducted on the island itself.

- 10 minute survey (the actual time was closer to 20 minutes)
- Because of the extended length of the survey instrument, several long questions were rotated and not asked of all the respondents
- 75 minute focus groups

RESPONDENT COMPOSITION

- The target respondent composition is shown in the table below:

Target Sample			
	Conservancy list Phone Interviews	Phone Interviews	Intercept Interviews
	(N = 200)	(N = 400)	(N = 100)
Wayne	N/A	N = 250 (70% from Detroit)	N/A
Oakland	N/A	N = 75	N/A
Macomb	N/A	N = 75	N/A
Focus Groups	2 Groups	N/A	N/A

- Respondents had to be at least familiar with the park to participant (not all of the people had been to the park in the last year).
- Project fieldwork took place in August, September and November of 2015.

Objectives

Only for respondents who have been to the park in the past year

Reasons for visiting Belle Isle

- Activities/things that they do
- How often they visit
- What sights and activities they visited /participated in over the past year
- Traveling to Belle Isle
- Food on the island

Satisfaction and importance with park features

- Satisfaction level from cleanliness to the bicycle trails and many other items
- Importance for each of the same features as were rated for satisfaction
- How welcome they feel at Belle Isle
- Their overall experience on the island

All respondents

Perception of Belle Isle

- Description of the island
- Review of various activities
- Island upkeep

Belle Isle improvements

- DNR presence
- Additional/ varying activities
- Means of obtaining island information

Only for respondents who are aware of the park but have not been to it in the past year

Level of awareness and interest in Belle Isle

- When was the last time they visited
- Why they hadn't visited for at least a year
- Appropriateness, of the park, for various activities
- Level of interest in various park activities
- Awareness of various sites and activities
- Likelihood of future visits

Satisfaction and importance with park features

- Satisfaction level from cleanliness to the bicycle trails and many other items
- Importance for each of the same features as were rated for satisfaction



Executive Summary



Executive Summary

- There was a higher level of awareness of Belle Isle, and a tendency to go to the park more often, among Detroiters versus people who live outside the city.
- Overwhelmingly, respondents thought of Belle Isle as a place to bring food/picnic rather than a location to purchase food.
- The park has more of a perception of being dirty and noisy among people who have not visited it within the past year.
- People who visited the park in the last year, and individuals who had not, had very similar views on the appropriate uses for Belle Isle. Especially popular items included family outings/celebrations, viewing scenery, walking and biking.
- Detroiters who have visited the park within the past year were significantly more inclined to feel that the \$11 state park passport was a good value compared to residents who have not visited in the past 12 months.



Executive Summary...Continued

- Fresh air/open spaces and scenic drive/cruise were favorite reasons to actually come to Belle Isle among people who had been there in the past year, but visiting a museum and gardens were very high on the list among non-recent visitors.
- Visiting Belle Isle seems to be considered a social activity, with an overwhelming percentage of the respondents indicating that they go or will go with at least one other person.
- Scott Fountain/Statue and the Belle Isle Aquarium were easily the most visited sites and they were the favorites as well. In general, visitors were aware of the park's less viewed attractions like the casino area and the Dossin Great Lakes Museum.
- Whether a visitor within the past year or not, the vast majority of individuals spent at least one hour in the park with more than 50%, of each group, being on the island for three or more hours.



Executive Summary...Continued

- People who have been to the park within the past year clearly felt welcome (Top 2 Box score of 81%) and were satisfied with their experience/visit (Top 2 Box result of 89%).
- Among all respondents, helpfulness of the park's staff, improving its cleanliness and the restrooms were unmet needs and would be the clearest paths to improving overall satisfaction and expanding the visitor base.
- Among Detroiters who have visited Belle Isle in the past year, two unmet needs stood out: The quality of the park's signage and the quality of the restrooms.



Executive Summary...Continued

- Within the group of respondents who have not been to the park in the past year, improved restrooms, cleanliness, safety and security and the helpfulness of the park's staff were their chief unmet needs. Improvements in these areas could motivate some of them to visit and then, when they do, increase their potential satisfaction with the park.
- Among Conservancy list respondents, the unmet needs that, if improved, could lead to higher satisfaction at Belle Isle were the helpfulness of the park's staff and better restrooms.
- Among respondents who were metro residents, one area stood out as an unmet need: The restrooms.
- Among participants who had not visited the park in the last year, there was no extravagant reason why this was the case. They simply noted that they did not have the opportunity/were too busy, that it was too far to drive, etc.



Executive Summary...Continued

- When asked about park improvement ideas via an open-end question, no single concept obtained more than 17% of the responses. Being cleaner/trash pickup, bathroom improvements, more security (all issues that showed up on the unmet needs charts) and more activities/concerts were mentioned the most.
- Individual Detroit residents who have not visited Belle Isle in the past year were more enthusiastic about music events, organized activities and boating activities than were Detroiters who have been to the park within the past year.
- People would like to obtain information about Belle Isle through many different means with none being dominant. The most common were the Internet, newspapers/magazines, social media, the Belle Isle Conservancy website and emails/on a listserv.



Executive Summary Conclusions

- If a goal of the Conservancy and DNR is to increase visits to the park by people who have been there before, but not in the past year, focusing some attention on specific things to visit (museums, monuments, gardens, etc.) would probably be worthwhile. Some of the findings tend to indicate that more current visitors come to the island for what might be termed “traditional park-like features” – open spaces, fresh air, natural beauty and scenery, etc. while individuals who have not been there in a while are more focused on specific things/places to visit. It is strongly possible that once people who have not been to the park recently or not been there at all, will then come back for its many “traditional park-like features.”
- It is noteworthy that Detroiters, who have not been to the park within the past year, were significantly less inclined to believe that the state passport was a good value versus residents that have been to the park in the past year. This might be something that needs to be overcome to help increase attendance among Detroit residents.



Executive Summary Conclusions

- Another way to increase park usage among Detroit resident could be to increase the level of awareness and frequency of various events (such as concerts, boating, etc.) as Detroiters, who have not been to the park in the past year, were enthusiastic about these concepts.
- Over the course of several questions the respondents strongly voiced their opinion that the idea of purchasing food on Belle Isle was not that appealing/important. Food on the island was an important topic during the focus groups and many varying concepts were put forward. In line with ideas that were expressed by some individuals during the groups, survey respondents did not articulate that the ability to purchase food at the park was particularly important. Simple, limited, food items and beverages would probably suffice for the significant majority of visitors.



Executive Summary Conclusions...Continued

- Visiting Belle Isle is a social event (a very high percentage of respondents came to the park with other people), and when they visit, individuals spend a lot of time – usually over three hours – on the island. These findings underscore the park’s potential for an increased level of visitors. Belle Isle is already recognized as a place to go with a group of people and this ‘friends and family’ atmosphere and reputation can be built upon to broaden its circle of visitors. These results also highlight the need to potentially expand and improve park facilities that cater to groups of people - from picnic shelters to restrooms.
- With both questions featuring Top 2 Box results of over 80%, once they come to the park, people feel welcome and are very satisfied with their experience. These results strongly indicate that once “new” visitors come to Belle Isle, their positive experience will lead them to come to the park again and again.



Executive Summary Conclusions...Continued

- The unmet needs charts, which is an analysis based on people's level of satisfaction about individual items and the importance of these same items, provided some clear-cut park improvement ideas. Many of participants' unmet needs rested in what could be generally termed "Sanitation / Maintenance". The restrooms and cleanliness were unmet needs of multiple groups of respondents. These responses were largely consistent among people who have been to the park recently and those who have not been (which provides us insights relating to the park's reputation). While obviously costing money (and therefore not being easy to undertake), improvements in the "Sanitation / Maintenance" area would very likely help it to expand its base of visitors and advance the perception and reputation of the island. In addition, the helpfulness of the park's staff was also regularly noted as an unmet need. This is an area that could probably be improved if the staff had an improved awareness of visitors' preferences, expectations and needs while they are on Belle Isle.

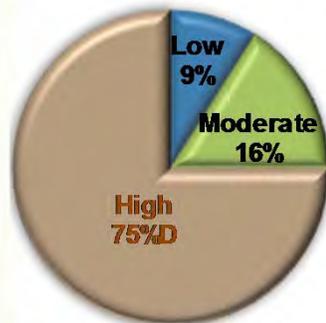


Description of Belle Isle, Uses and Management

Awareness / Visitation Overview

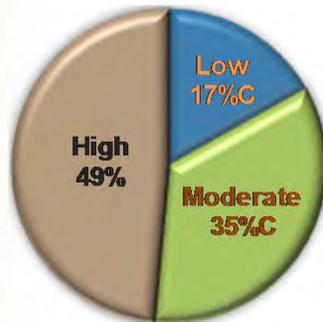
- There was higher level of awareness of Belle Isle, and a tendency to go to the park more often, among Detroiters versus people who live outside the city.

(C) Awareness: Living in Detroit



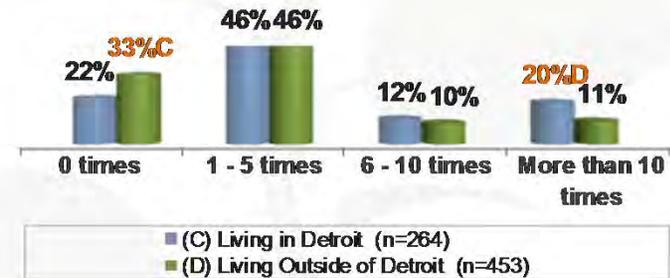
Sample Size: (264)

(D) Awareness: Outside of Detroit

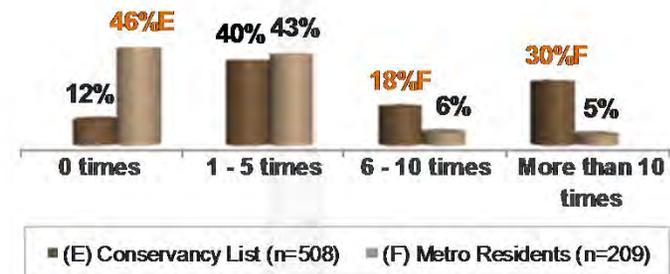


Sample Size: (453)

Visitation: Living In/Out of Detroit

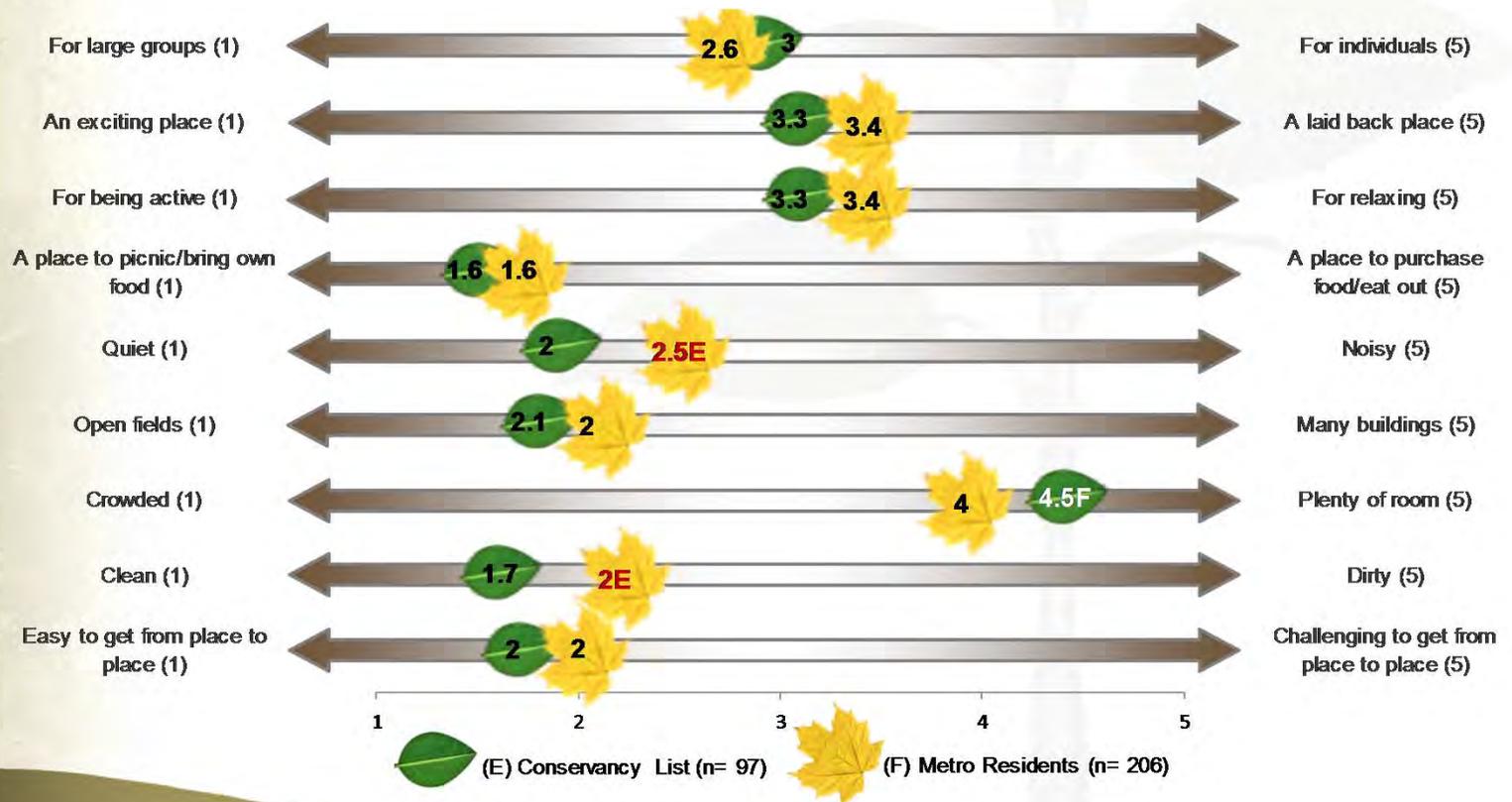


Visitation: Conservancy List/ Metro Residents



Describing Belle Isle: Conservancy List vs Metro Residents

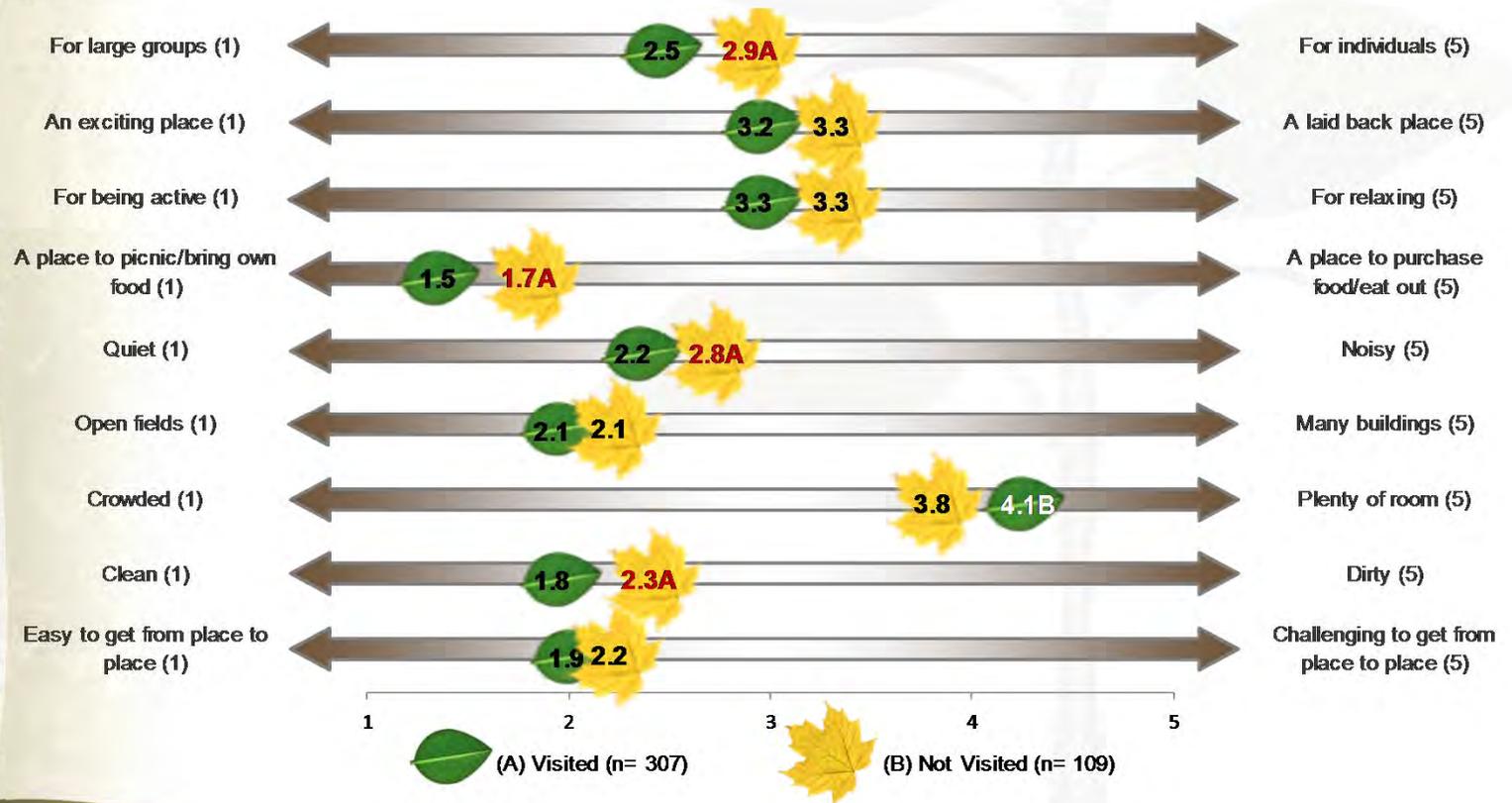
- For the most part, Conservancy list respondents and metro residents described Belle Isle in a similar manner. The exceptions were that metro residents felt the park was noisier, dirtier, and more crowded than did Conservancy list respondents.



Q1A. On a scale of one to five where one means the first term describes Belle Isle more, three is neutral and five means the second term describes Belle Isle more please indicate which rating is the most accurate:

Describing Belle Isle: Visited vs Not Visited

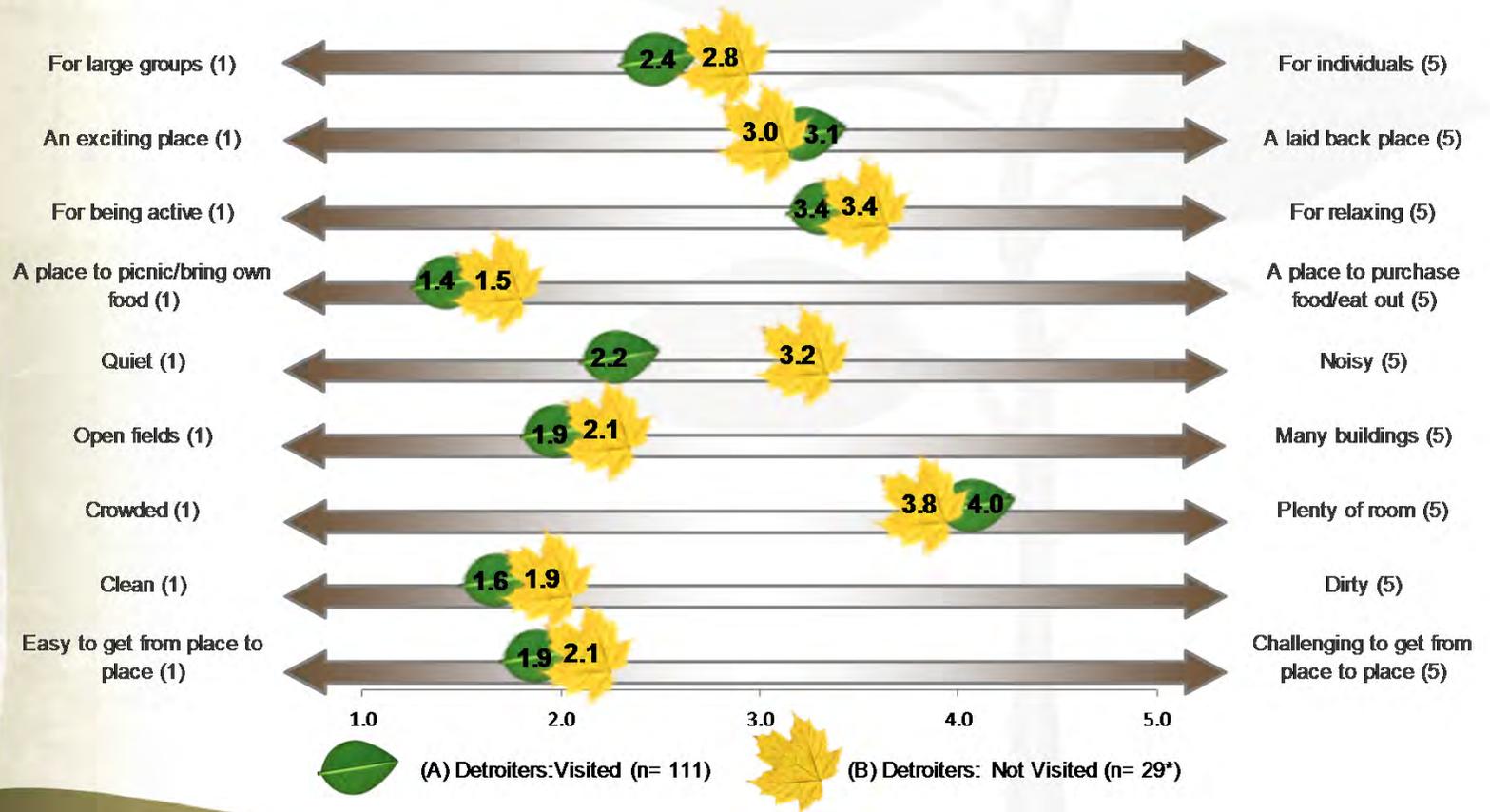
- Overwhelmingly, respondents thought of Belle Isle as a place to bring food/picnic rather than a location to purchase food.
- The park has more of a perception of being dirty, noisy and for individuals among people who have not visited within the past year.



Q1A. On a scale of one to five where one means the first term describes Belle Isle more, three is neutral and five means the second term describes Belle Isle more please indicate which rating is the most accurate:

Describing Belle Isle: Detroiters who have Visited vs Detroiters who have not Visited

- Detroiters who were Belle Isle visitors were much more inclined to describe it as “quiet” compared to ones who have not been to the park in at least a year.
- Detroiters who have visited the park were somewhat more likely to feel that it was for large groups than Detroiters who had not been to the park.



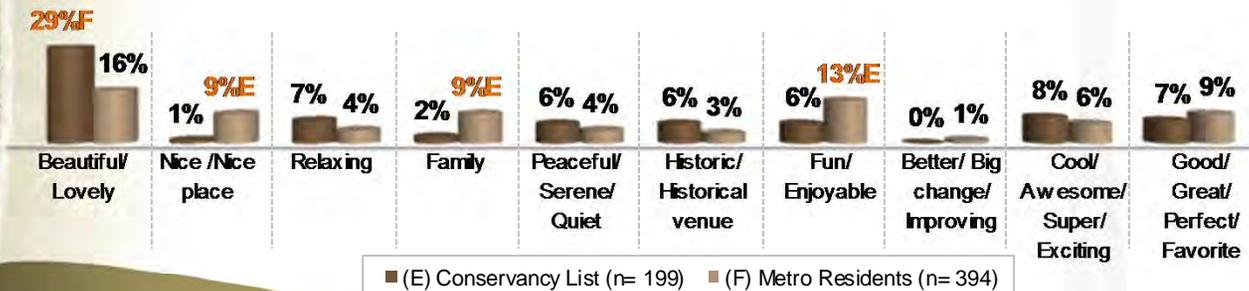
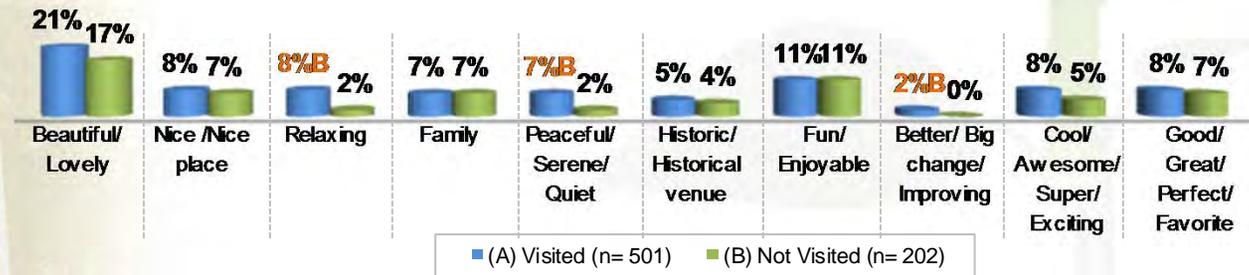
Q1A-Q1H. On a scale of one to five where one means the first term describes Belle Isle more, three is neutral and five means the second term describes Belle Isle more please indicate which rating is the most accurate:

Describing Belle Isle

The terms “beautiful/lovely” and “fun/enjoyable” were the most common used to describe Belle Isle. Conservancy list respondents were much more likely to use the “beautiful/lovely” terminology than metro residents who focused on “fun/enjoyable” and “family”.



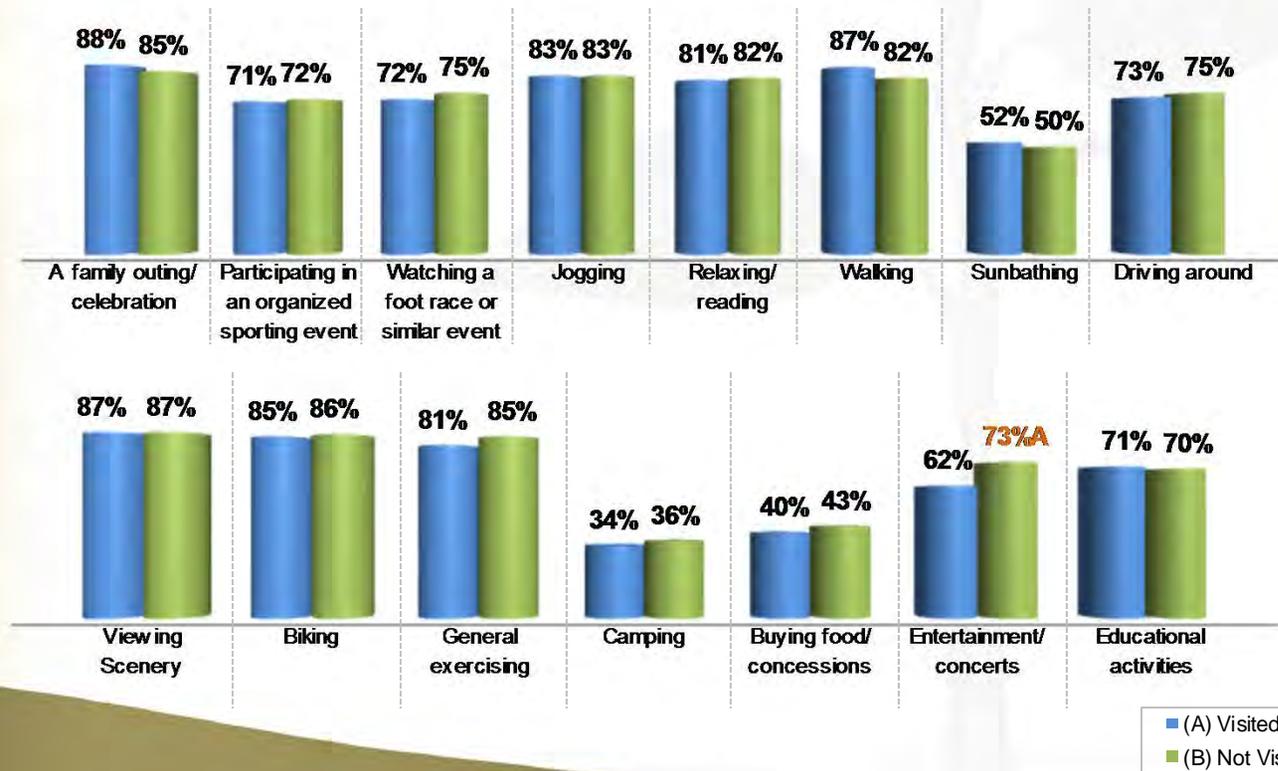
Words Used to Describe Belle Isle



Appropriate Uses for Belle Isle

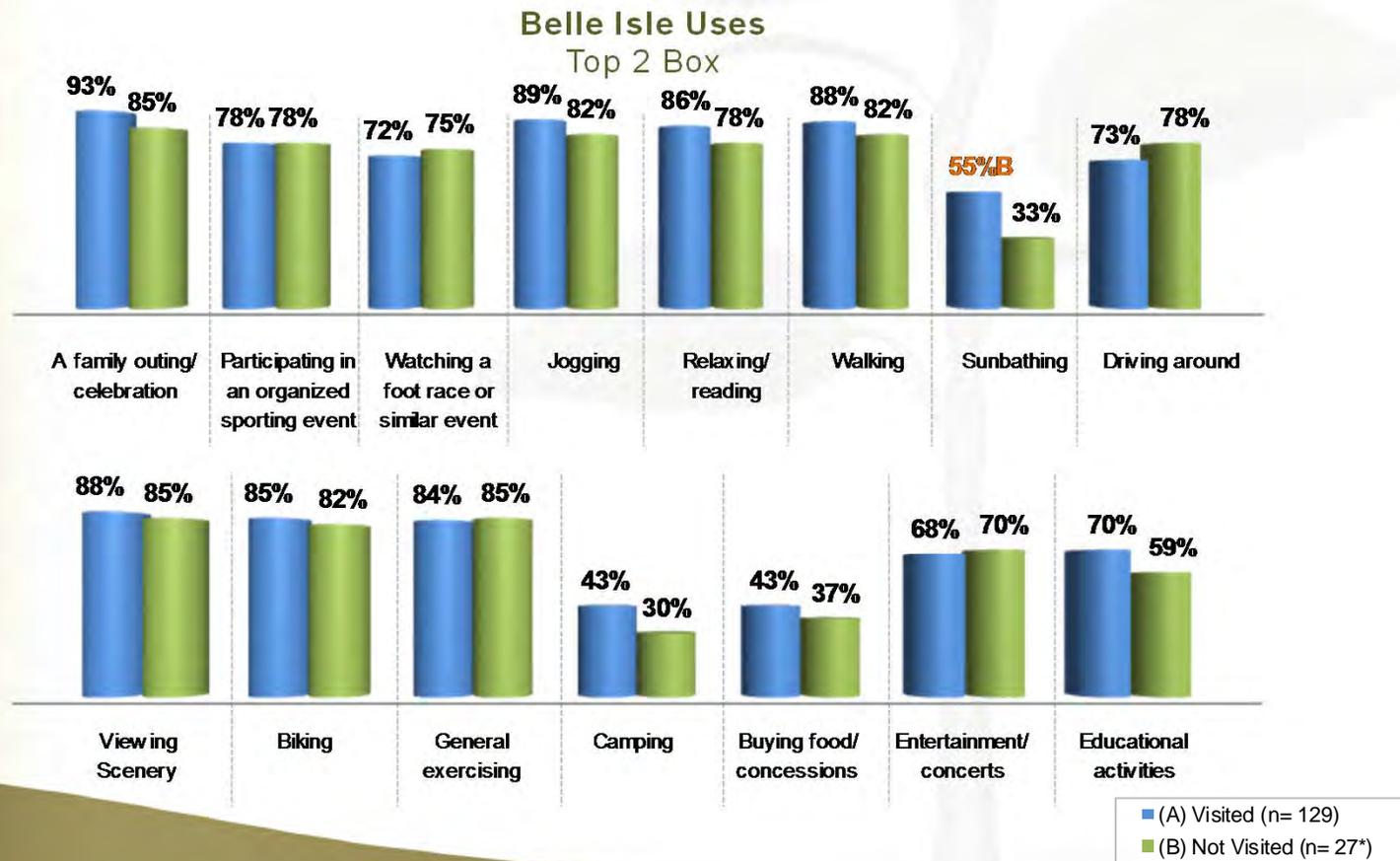
- Regardless if they had visited the park in the last year or not, participants had very similar views on the appropriate uses for Belle Isle. Especially popular items included family outings/celebrations, viewing scenery, walking and biking.
- Entertainment/concerts were found to be significantly more appropriate among non-visitors indicating a possible traffic driver.

Belle Isle Uses
Top 2 Box



Appropriate Uses for Belle Isle – Detroiters who have Visited vs Detroiters who have not Visited

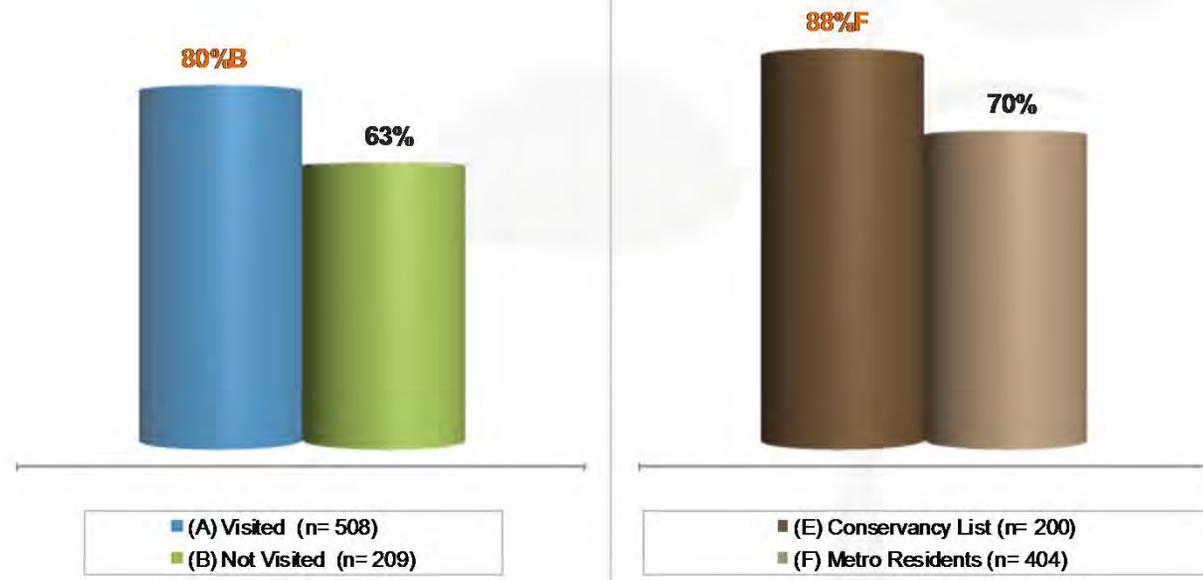
- Detroit residents who have visited Belle Isle in the past year were much more inclined to consider it a location for sunbathing and camping versus people who have not been to the park in this timeframe.



State Park Passport

- Recent visitors and Conservancy list respondents were more likely than other respondents to indicate that the requirement to purchase a state park passport for entry to Belle Isle was a good value.

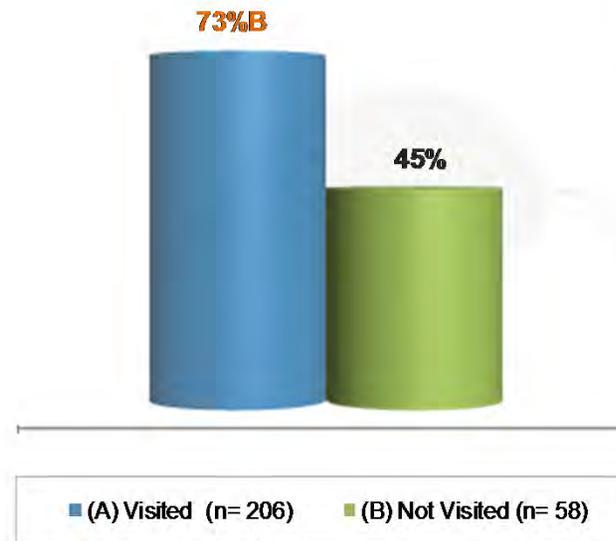
Top 2 Box
(Definitely/Somewhat a Value)



State Park Passport – Detroiters who have Visited vs Detroiters who have not Visited

- Detroiters who have visited the park within the past year were significantly more inclined to feel that the \$11 state park passport was a good value compared to residents who have not visited in the past 12 months.

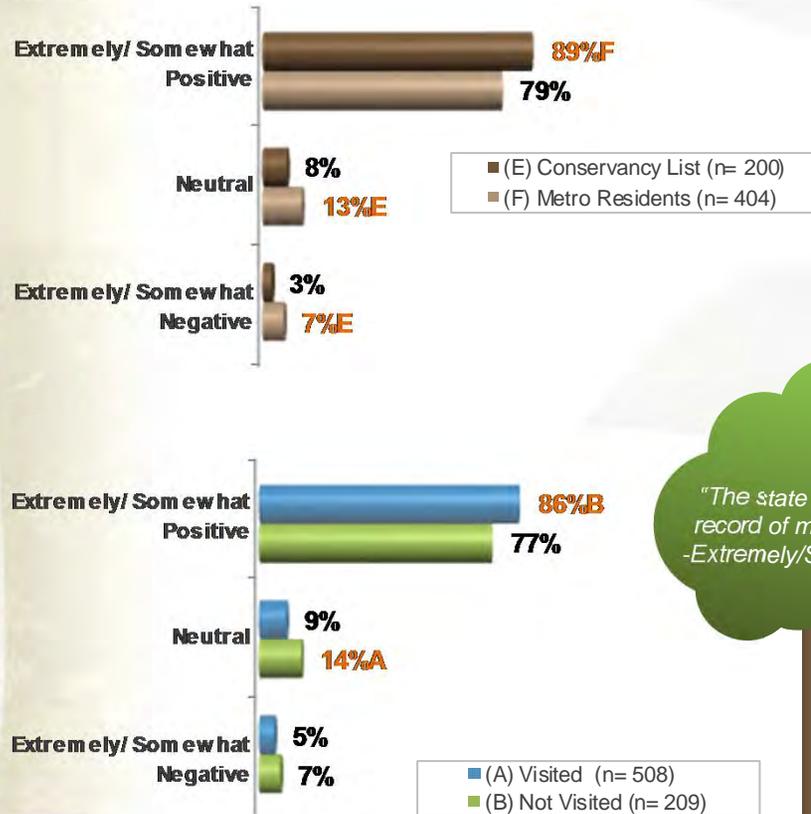
Top 2 Box
(Definitely/Somewhat a Value)



State Park Management

- The fact that Belle Isle is now managed by the Michigan DNR was clearly seen as a positive development.

State Park Management: Positive/Negative



"The state has picked up the tab and made it more friendly, cleaner and provides more security."
-Extremely/Somewhat Positive

"The fee may limit the accessibility of people who can not afford the pass."
-Extremely/Somewhat Negative

"It's nice to have somewhere to go in the city. There is a lot of police presence there now."
-Extremely/Somewhat Positive

"The state has a good track record of maintaining parks."
-Extremely/Somewhat Positive

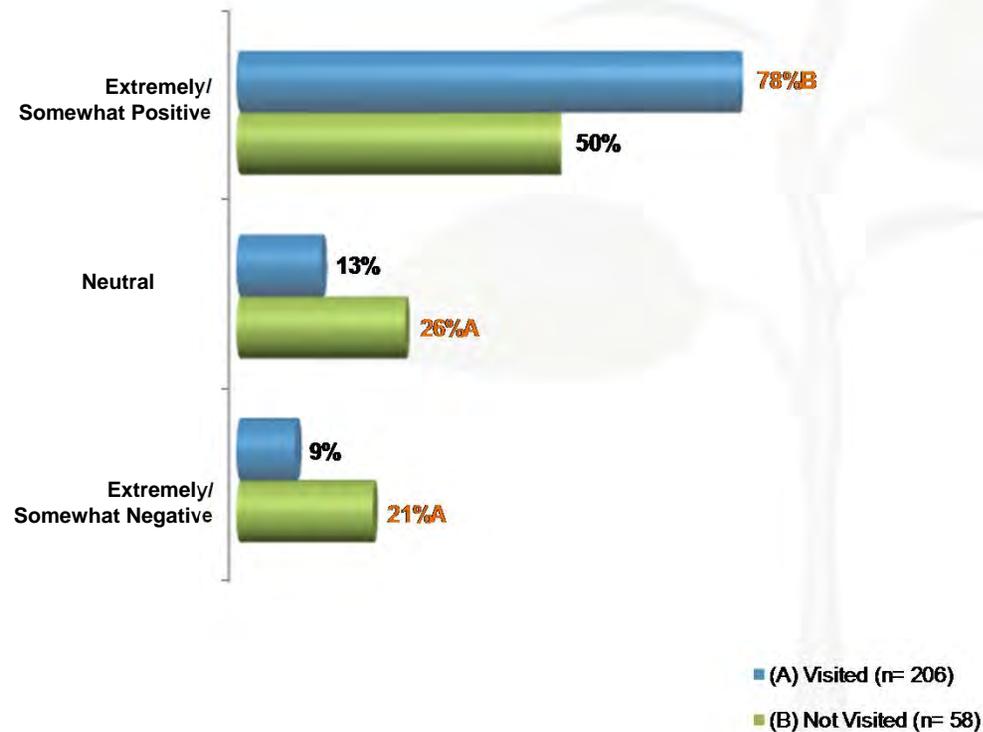
Q31. As you may or may not know Belle Isle is now managed as a state park. On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is extremely negative and 5 is extremely positive How positive or negative do you think this development is?

Q32. In a few words, please tell me why you feel this way?

State Park Management – Detroiters who have Visited vs Detroiters who have not Visited

- Detroit residents who have not visited the park in the past year were significantly more likely to state that they were neutral to negative toward the state managing Belle Isle.

State Park Management: Positive/Negative



Q31. As you may or may not know Belle Isle is now managed as a state park.
On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is extremely negative and 5 is extremely positive
How positive or negative do you think this development is?

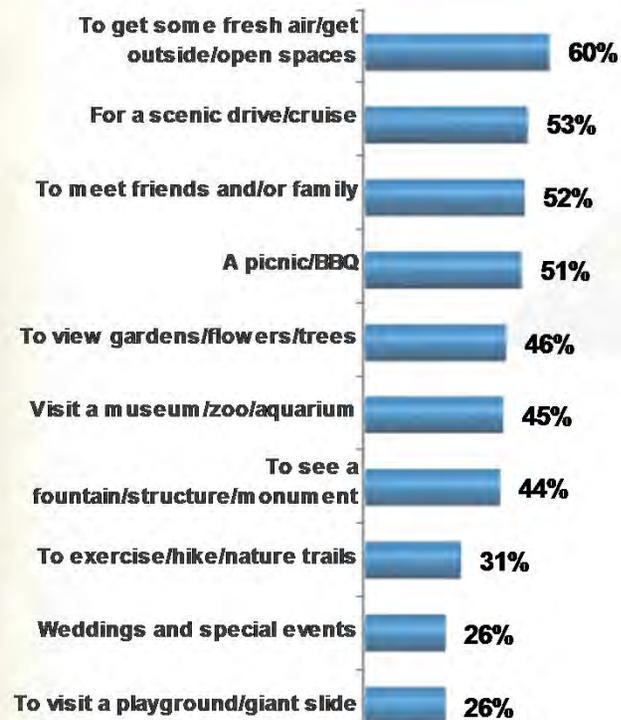


Visiting the Park

Reasons For Visiting Belle Isle

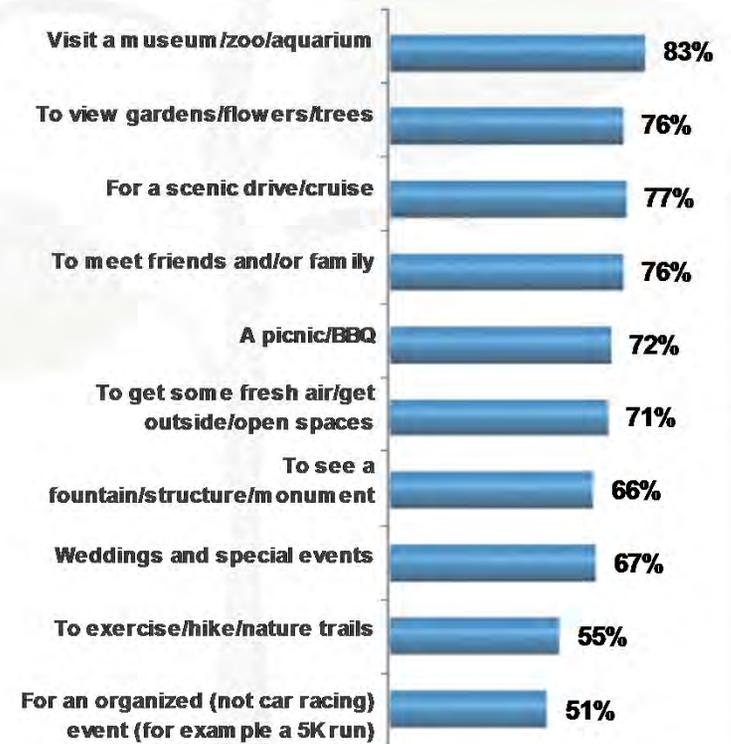
- Fresh air/open spaces, scenic drive/cruise, to meet a friend/family and a picnic/BBQ were favorite reasons to actually come to Belle Isle among people who had been there in the past year, but visiting a museum and gardens were very high on the list among non-recent visitors as reasons they would visit.

Reasons for Visiting
Visited in Past Year



Sample Size: (307)

Reasons to Visit
Not Visited in Past Year



Sample Size: (109)

Reasons For Visiting Belle Isle

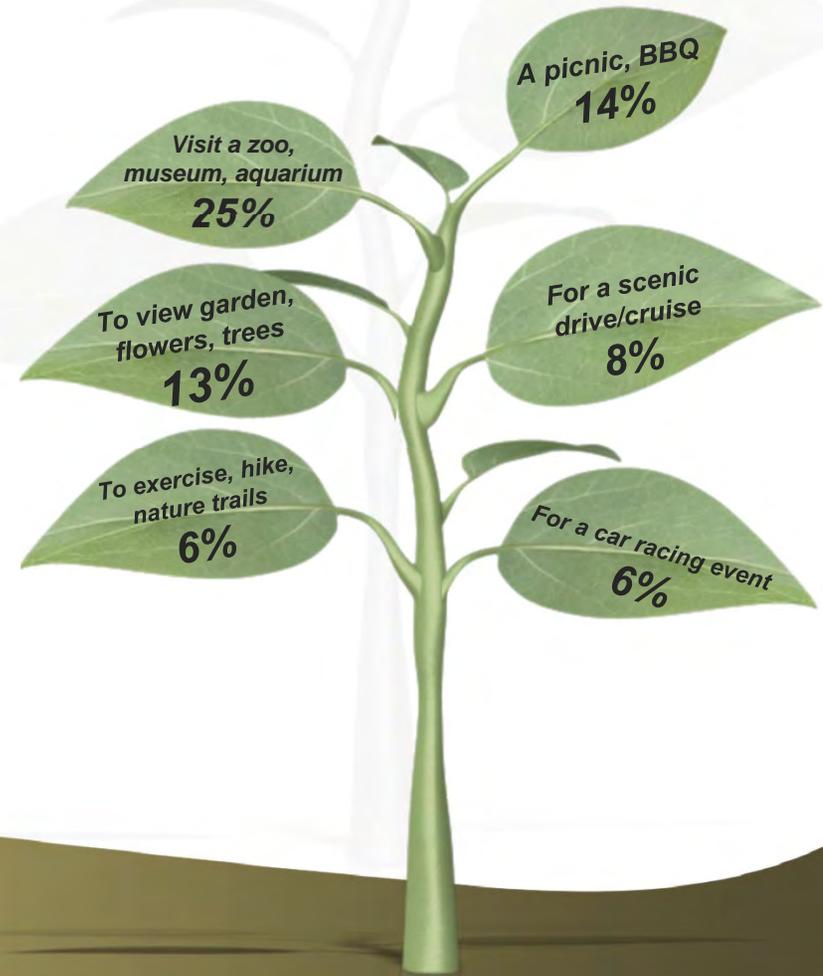
- For people who have not visited the park in the past year, the number one reason to consider going was for a feature - like a museum or the aquarium. Actual visitors came to Belle Isle for many different reasons; picnic, fresh air, scenic drive, meet people, etc.

Top Reasons for Visiting
(Visited in the past year)



Sample Size: (281)

Top Reasons to Visit
(Not visited in the past year)



Visiting the Park

- Visiting Belle Isle seems to be considered a social activity with an overwhelming percentage of the respondents indicating that they go or will go with at least one other person.

Visited Park

Usually visit with at least one other person (45% say typically 2-3 others) *N=508*

87%

Has Not Visited Park

Would visit with at least one other person *n=147*

99%

Usually bring children *n=444*

46%

Would be extremely or somewhat likely to bring children under 18 *N=137*

53%

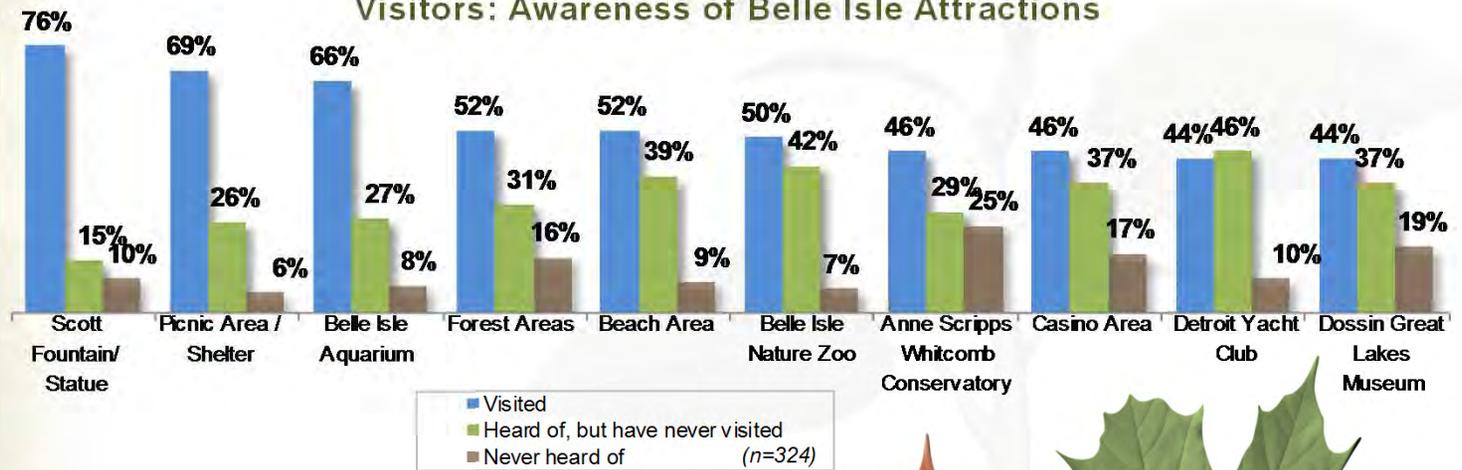


- Q8. When you visit Belle Isle do you usually come alone or with at least one other person?
 Q9. Typically, how many additional people are with you when you visit Belle Isle?
 Q10. Are any of these additional people typically children under the age of 18?
 Q21. If you were to visit Belle Isle, do you think you would come alone or with at least one other person?
 Q22. On a scale of 1-5 where 1 is extremely unlikely and 5 extremely likely, would it be likely that this additional person/people will include at least 1 child under the age of 18?

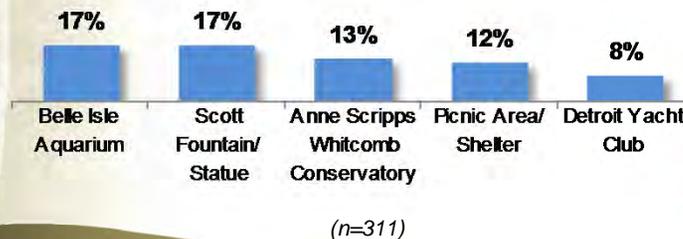
Belle Isle Attractions: Visitors

- Scott Fountain/statue and the Belle Isle Aquarium were easily the most visited sites and they were the favorites as well. While they were visited less often than other attractions, respondents still had at least an awareness of the casino area and the Dossin Great Lakes Museum.

Visitors: Awareness of Belle Isle Attractions



Visitors: Top 5 Favorite Sites



"Because it's [Anne Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory] beautiful and nice to visit in the winter."

"I visit it [Belle Isle Aquarium]. I love the structure, historical and it's being redone."

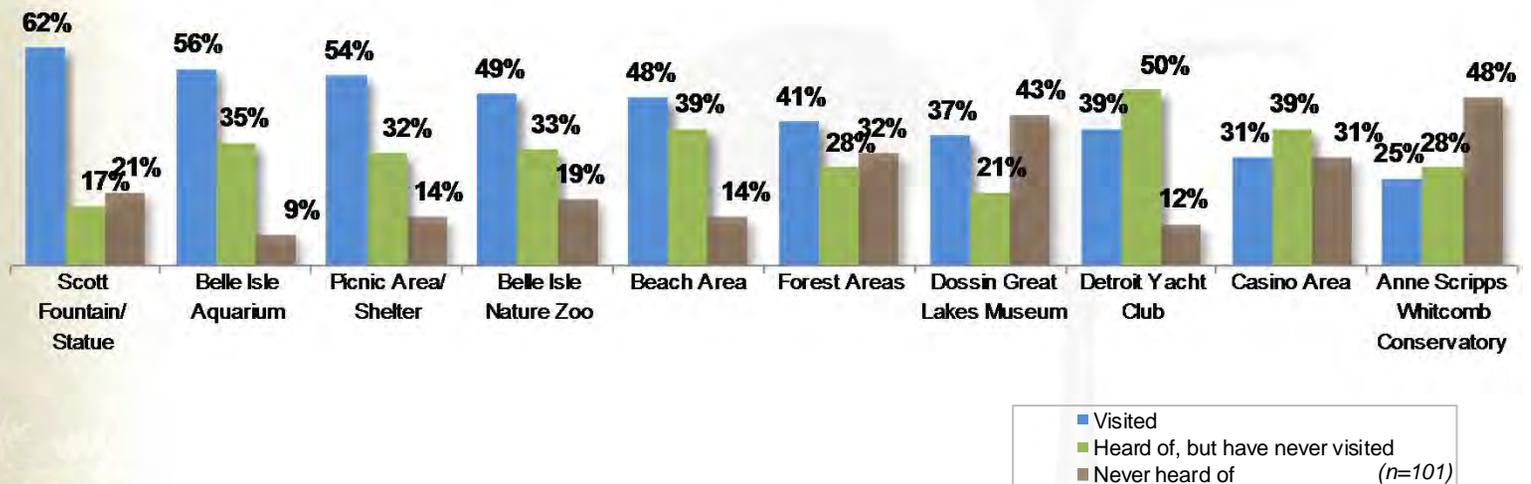
"I like it [Scott Fountain/Statue] when it lights up it gives you a relaxed feeling"

- Q11A. Over the past year, have you visited and/or are you aware of/have you ever heard of any of the following specific sites/locations on Belle Isle?
- Q12. Of all the sites/locations that you visited, which one was your favorite?
- Q12A. Why did you select (INSERT RESPONSE FROM Q12) as your favorite?

Belle Isle Attractions: Non-Visitors

- Despite having not visited Belle Isle in the past year, many of the people who fell into this category had, at some point, visited the Scott Fountain, the aquarium and a picnic area. In fact, only 9% of these respondents had never heard of the aquarium.

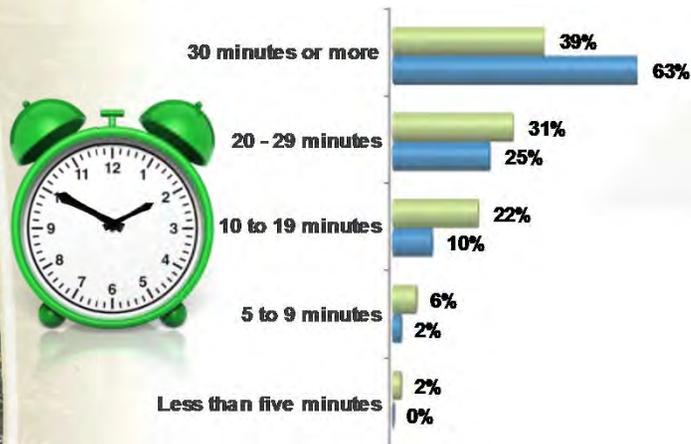
Non-Visitors: Awareness of Belle Isle Attractions



Transportation

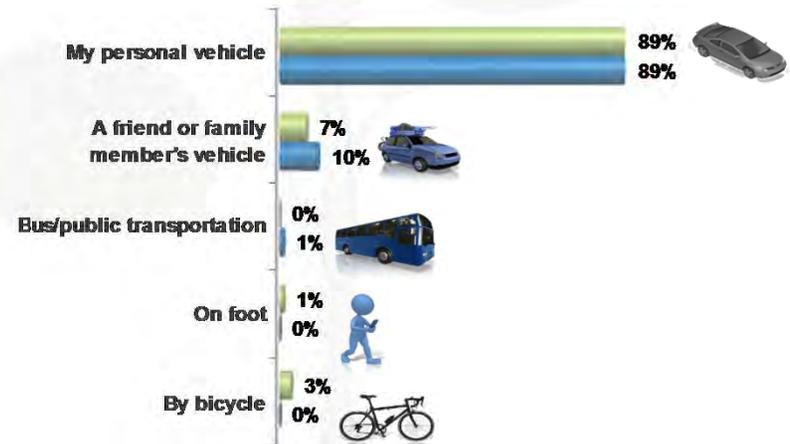
- People who have not visited Belle Isle in the past year indicated that it would take them much longer (63% at 30 minutes or more) to get there than participants who had visited it. The overwhelming majority of respondents took their personal vehicle to the park.

Average Time



■ (A) Visited (n= 508)
■ (B) Not Visited (n= 147)

Transportation to the Park



■ (A) Visited (n= 508)
■ (B) Not Visited (n= 147)

Q13. Typically, how do you get to Belle Isle?

Q13A. Normally, when you visit, how long does it take you to travel to Belle Isle?

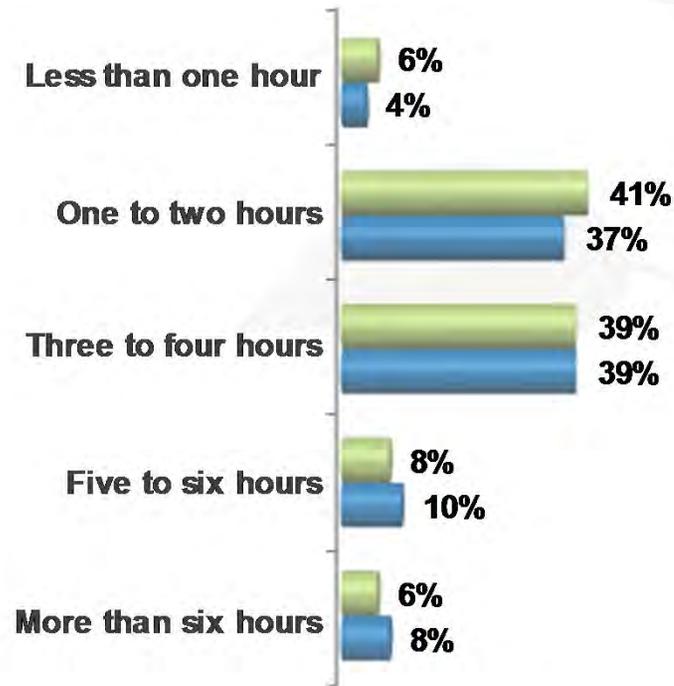
Q23. If you were to visit Belle Isle, what is the most likely mode of transportation that you would utilize?

Q23A. If you were to visit, how long do you think it would take you to travel to Belle Isle?

Time Spent on the Island

- Whether a visitor within the past year or not, the vast majority of individuals spent at least one hour in the park with more than 50% of each group being on the island for three or more hours.

Time Spent on the Island

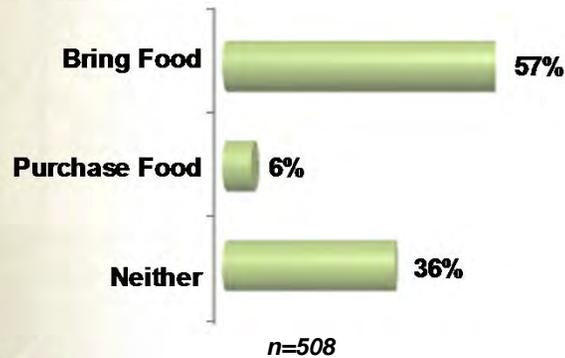


■ (A) Visited (n= 508)
■ (B) Not Visited (n= 147)

Food on Belle Isle

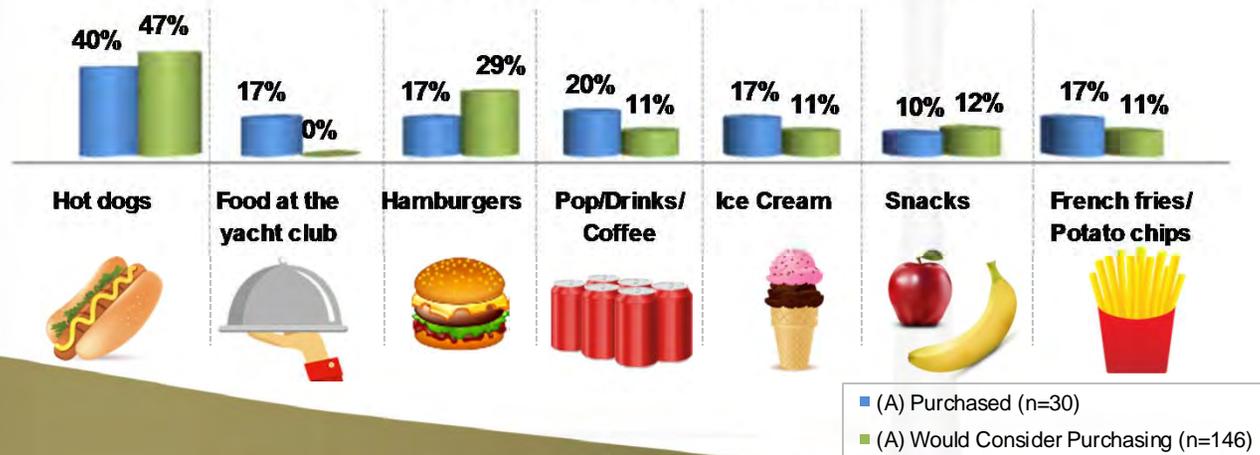
- In the survey portion of the project the idea of having food available for purchase on the island was not overly important. Most people brought food or didn't have any desire to have food at the park.

Purchase/Bring Food



Belle Isle Food Wish List		
1.	Hot dogs	13%
2.	Pops/Drinks/Coffee	11%
3.	Hamburgers	9%
n=462		

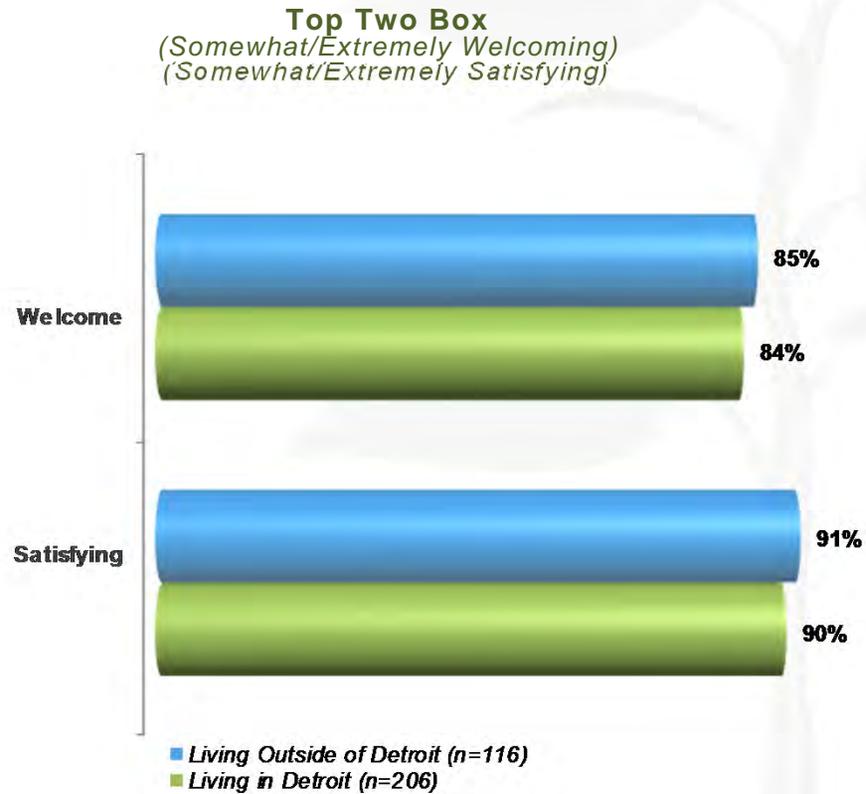
Purchase/Would Consider Purchasing



Q15. Do you typically purchase or bring any food when you visit Belle Isle?
 Q15A. What food did you purchase?
 Q15B. Is there any type of food that you wish was available for purchase?
 Q25A. What type/style of food would you consider purchasing?

Welcome/Satisfied

- People who have been to the park within the past year clearly felt welcome and were satisfied with their experience/visit.



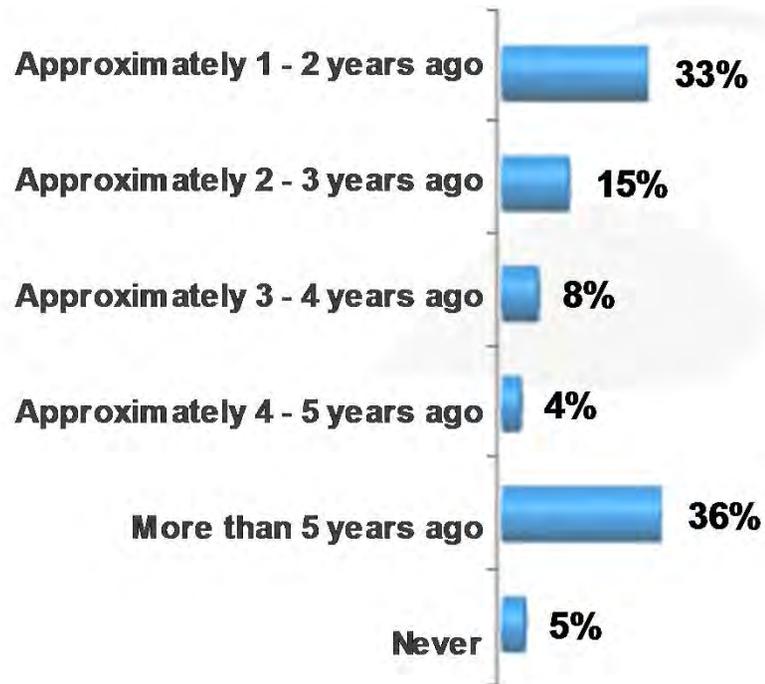


Additional Non-Visitor Insights

Visiting Belle Isle Among “Non-Visitors”

- Among respondents who had not visited Belle Isle in the past year, one-third had done so within the last two years, and another 36% had not been to the island in more than five years.

Last Time Visited Belle Isle

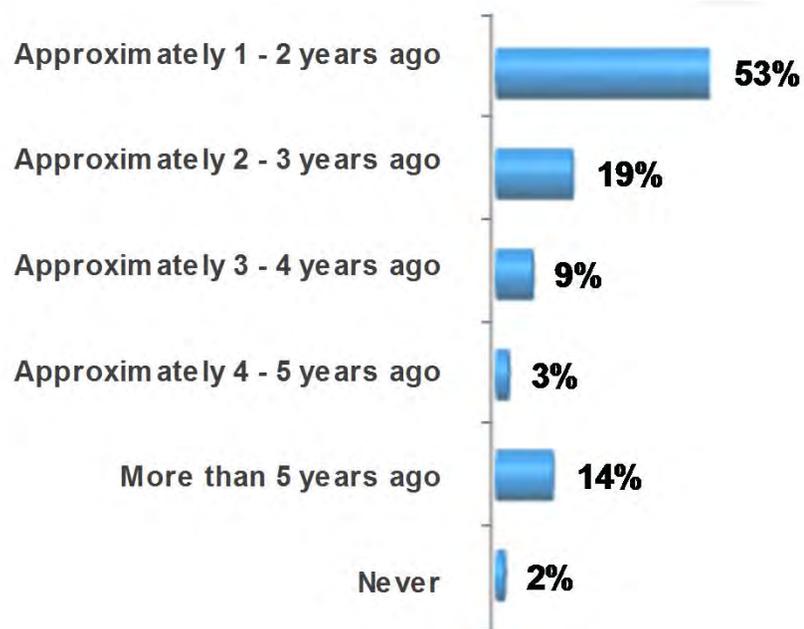


Sample Size: 209

Visiting Belle Isle Among “Detroit who have not Visited”

- Among Detroiters who had not visited the park in the past year, over half have been to Belle Isle within the past two years.

Last Time Visited Belle Isle

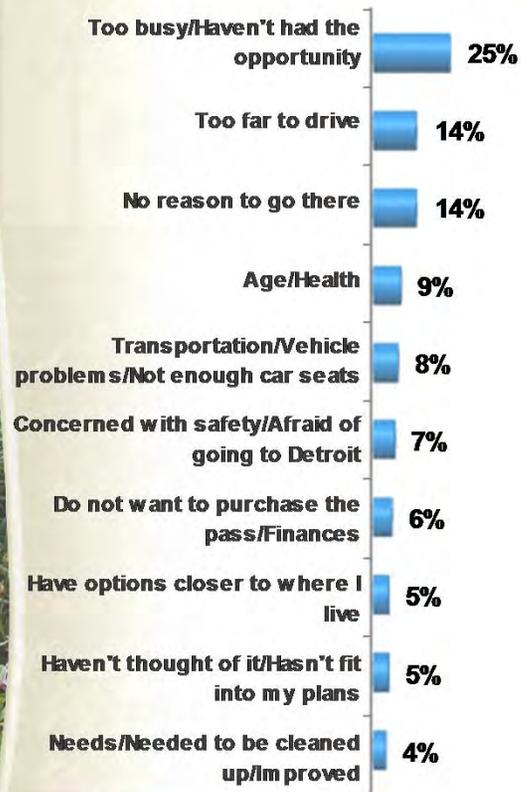


Sample Size: 58

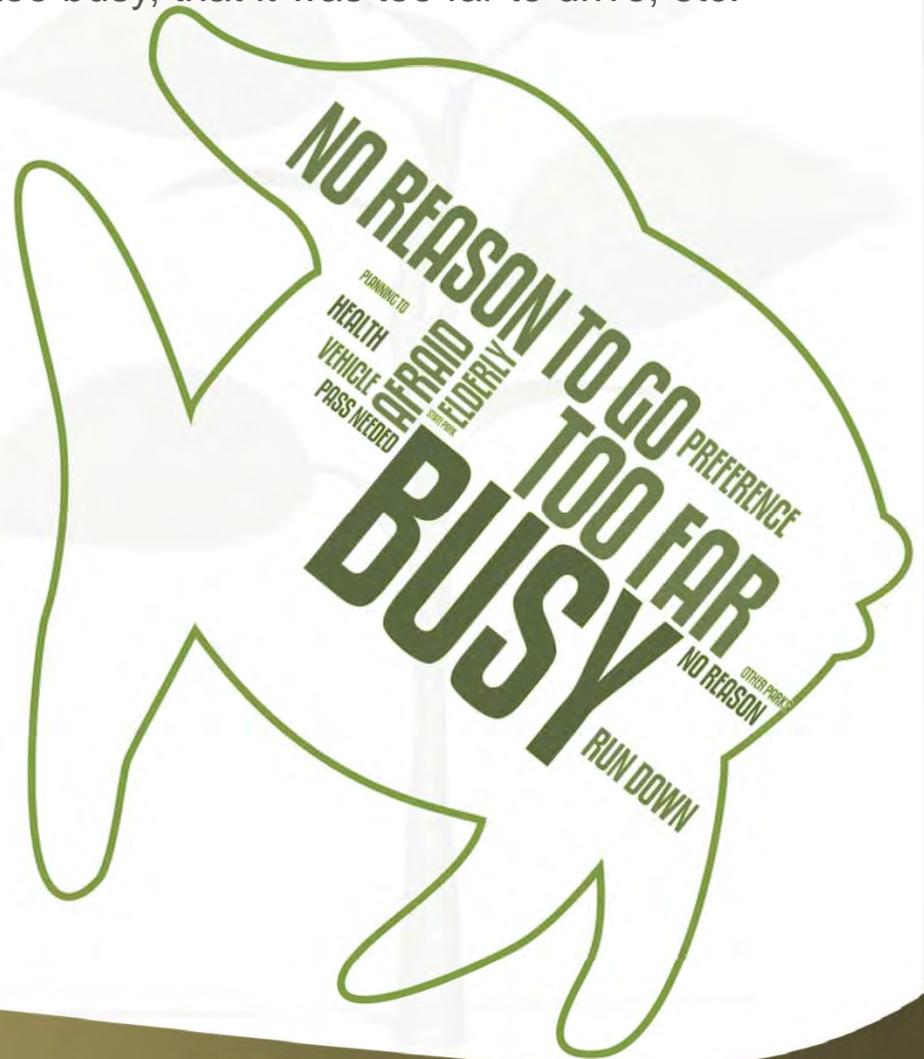
Reasons for not Visiting Belle Isle

- Among participants who have not visited the park in the last year, there was no specific reason why this was the case. They simply noted that they did not have the opportunity/were too busy, that it was too far to drive, etc.

Reasons for Not Visiting Belle Isle



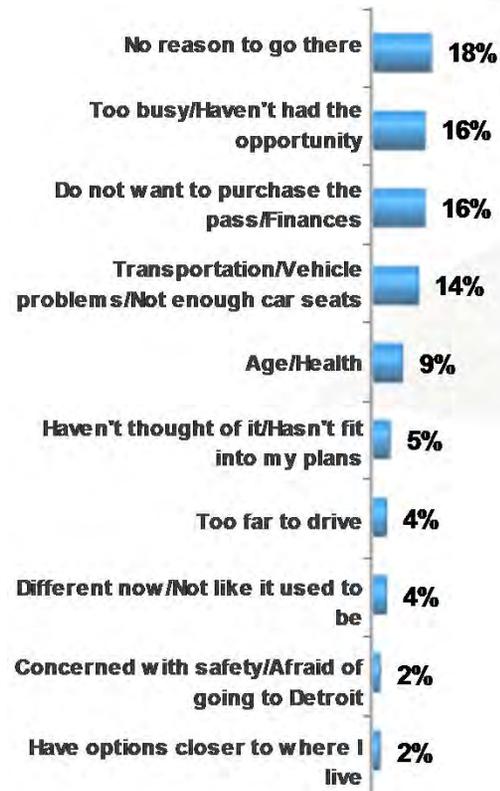
Sample Size: 207



Reasons for Not Visiting Belle Isle - Detroiters

- Just like the overall sample, there was not one main reason why Detroit residents have not visited Belle Isle in the past year. The leading reasons were “no reason to go there”, “too busy/haven’t had the opportunity” and “do not want to purchase the pass/finances”.

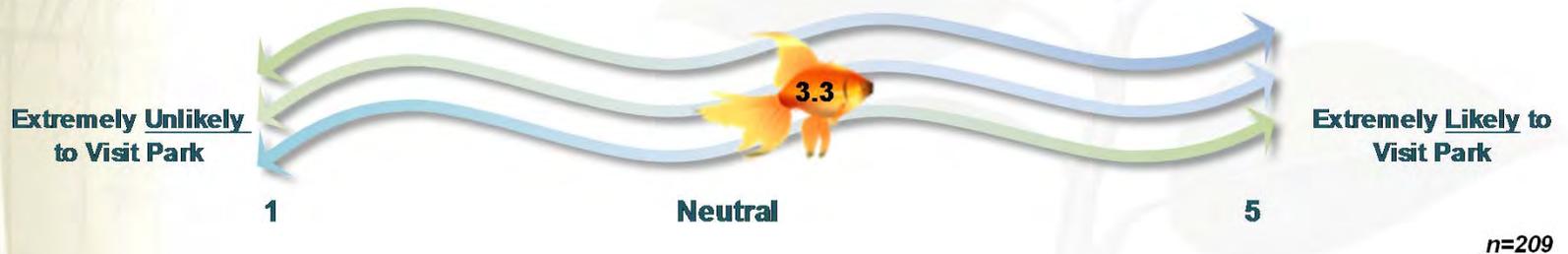
Reasons for Not Visiting Belle Isle



Sample Size: 206

Likelihood to Visit Belle Isle

- Overall, respondents who have not been to the park within the past year slightly leaned toward visiting versus not visiting.



Those who are very or somewhat unlikely to visit said...

“Not the same. It has changed too much for me. It used to be a park were you can come go as you pleased but that is not the case anymore. They have restrictions for the park. I had out of town visitors and they would not let us go on the park and go as we pleased. It had too many restrictions for us”

“I don't have small children. We have a lot of other things going on.”

“I have no need to be down there. I would rather go north as opposed to into the city.”

“Just because of the 1 hour travel time to belle isle. I have lakes and parks closer to my home. No trails and woods available at belle isle park.”

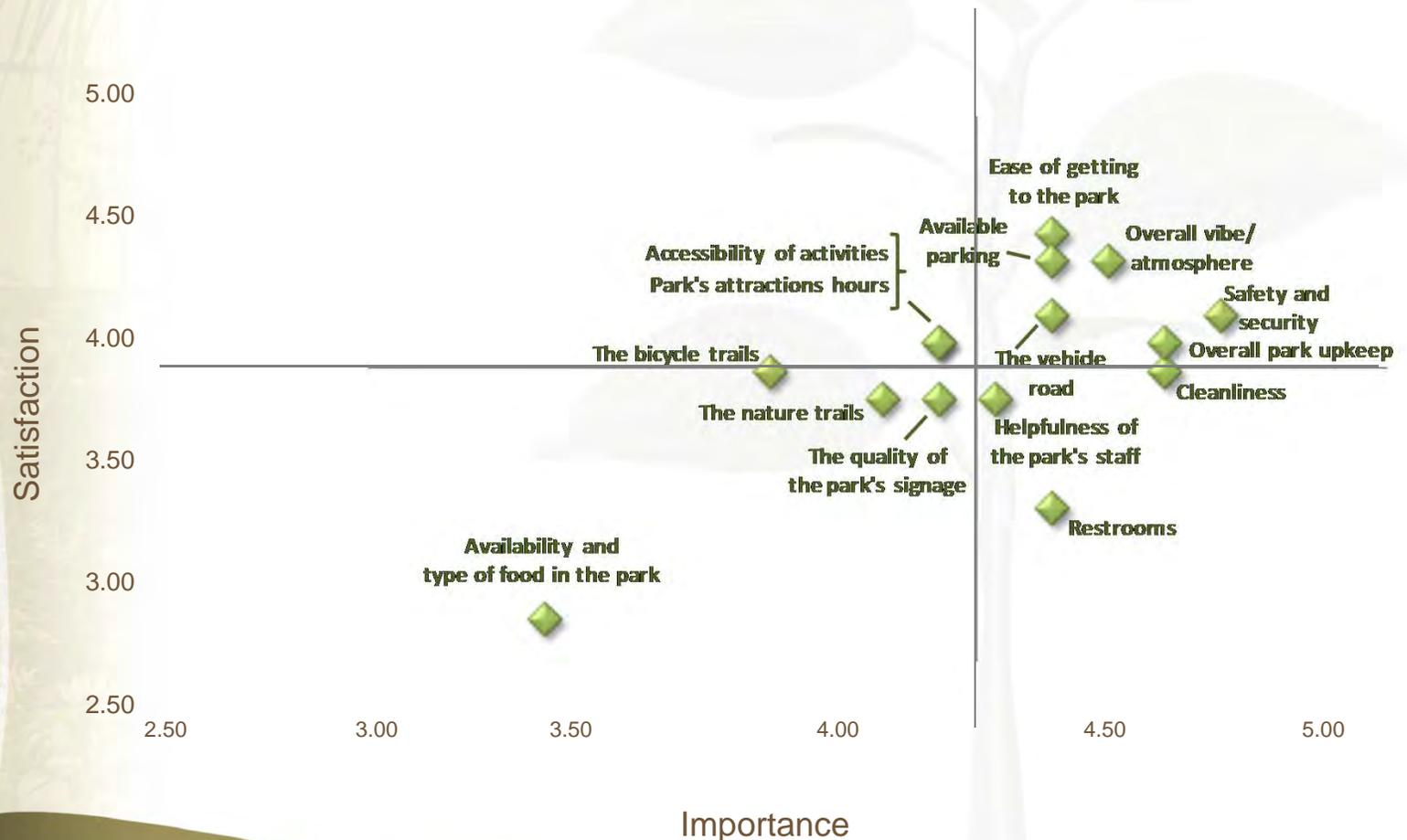
“I live in the suburbs and Detroit has nothing to offer me. They won't let me carry a gun and that's the only way I would go down there.”



Unmet Needs and Improvements

Satisfied/Important – Total

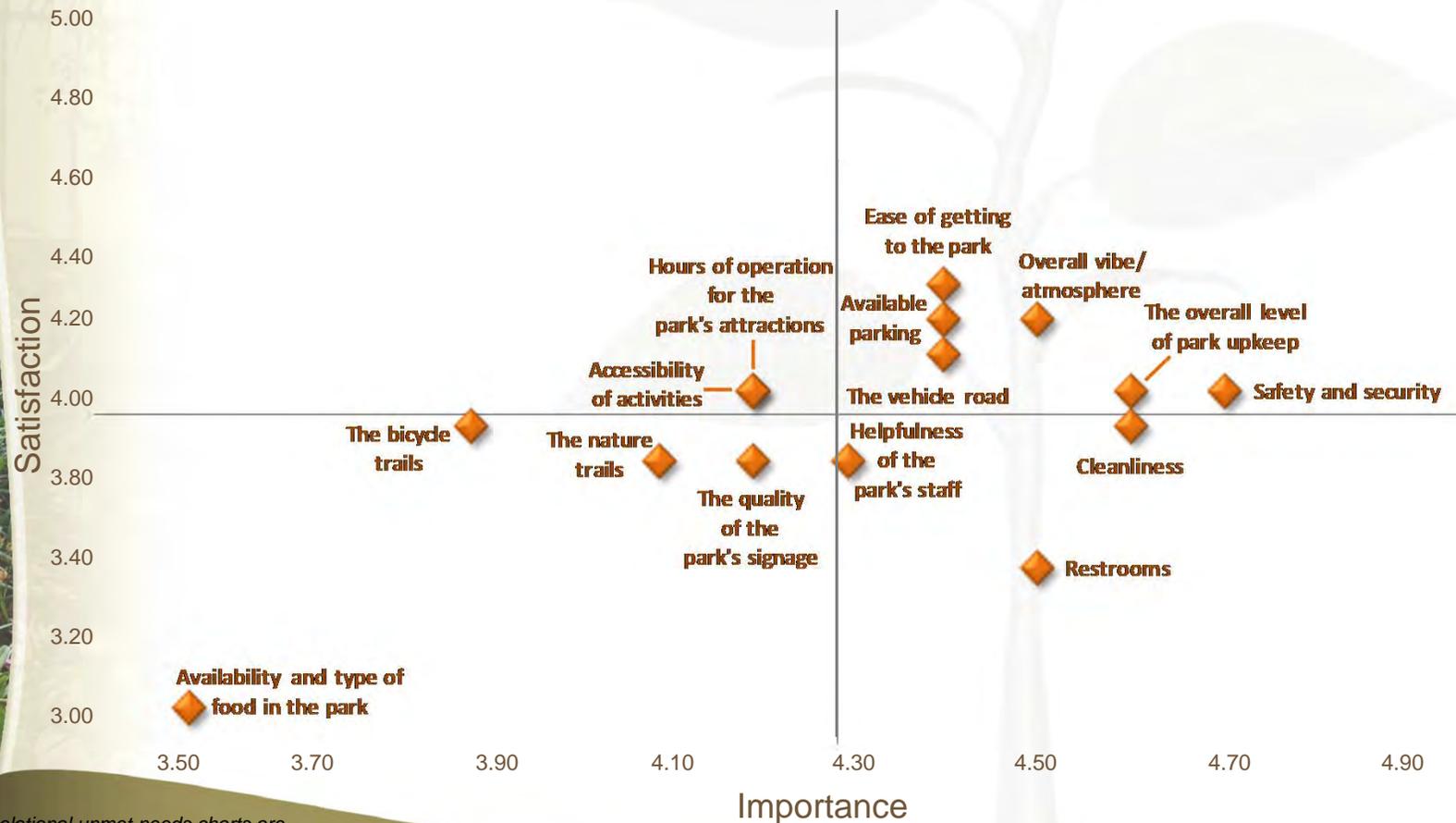
- Among all the respondents, helpfulness of the park's staff, its cleanliness and the restrooms were unmet needs and would be the clearest paths to improved overall satisfaction and expanding the number of visitors.



Relational unmet needs charts are highly effective in showing what items are especially important to people and also which ones have lower levels of satisfaction. Any item in the bottom right side quadrant is of high importance but obtained a lower satisfaction score. These items are then classified as "unmet needs."

Satisfied/Important – Visited

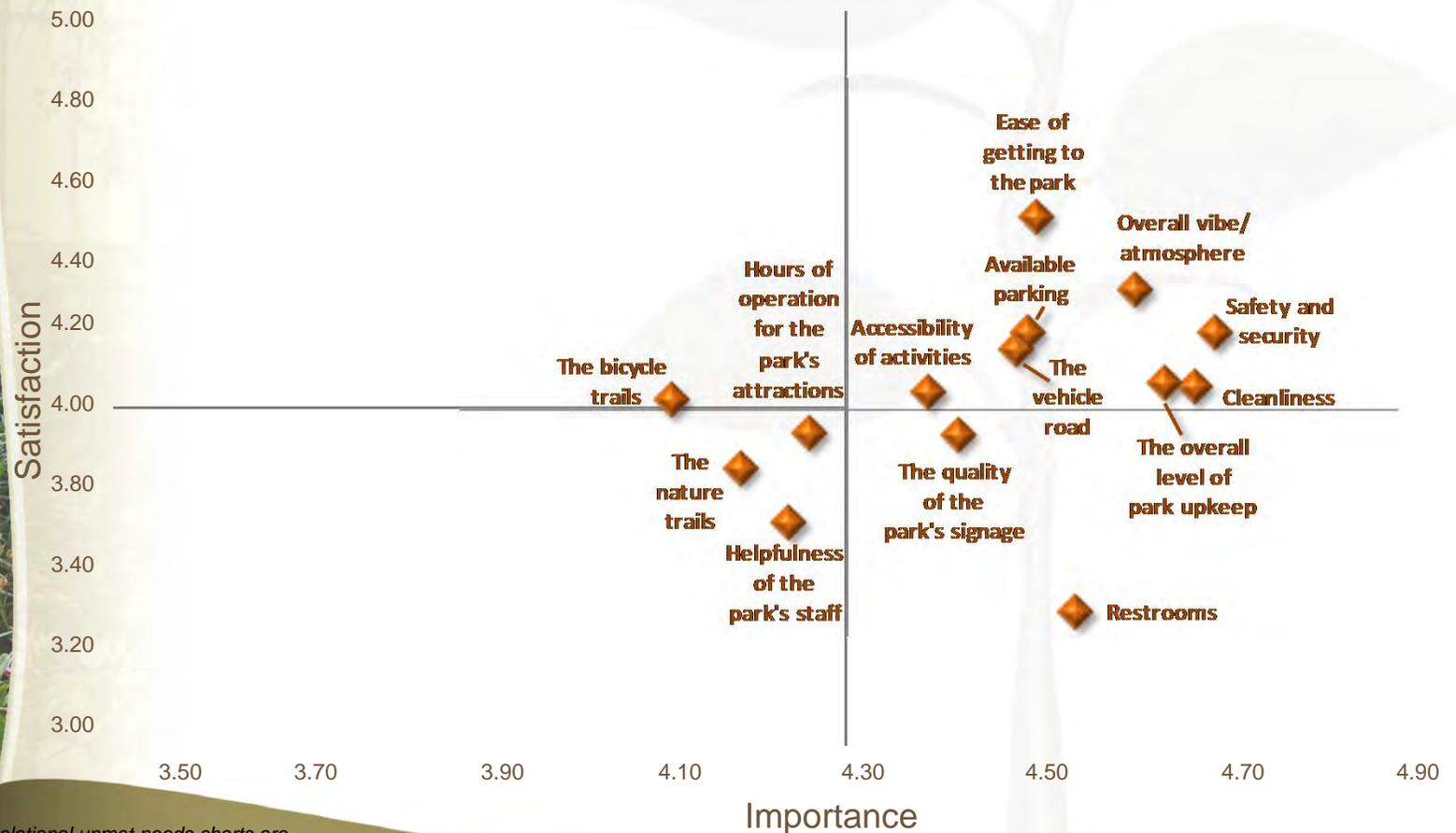
- Within the group of respondents who have been to the park in the past year, improved restrooms, cleanliness and helpfulness of the park's staff were their chief unmet needs.



Relational unmet needs charts are highly effective in showing what items are especially important to people and also which ones have lower levels of satisfaction. Any item in the bottom right side quadrant is of high importance but obtained a lower satisfaction score. These items are then classified as "unmet needs."

Satisfied/Important – Detroiters who have Visited

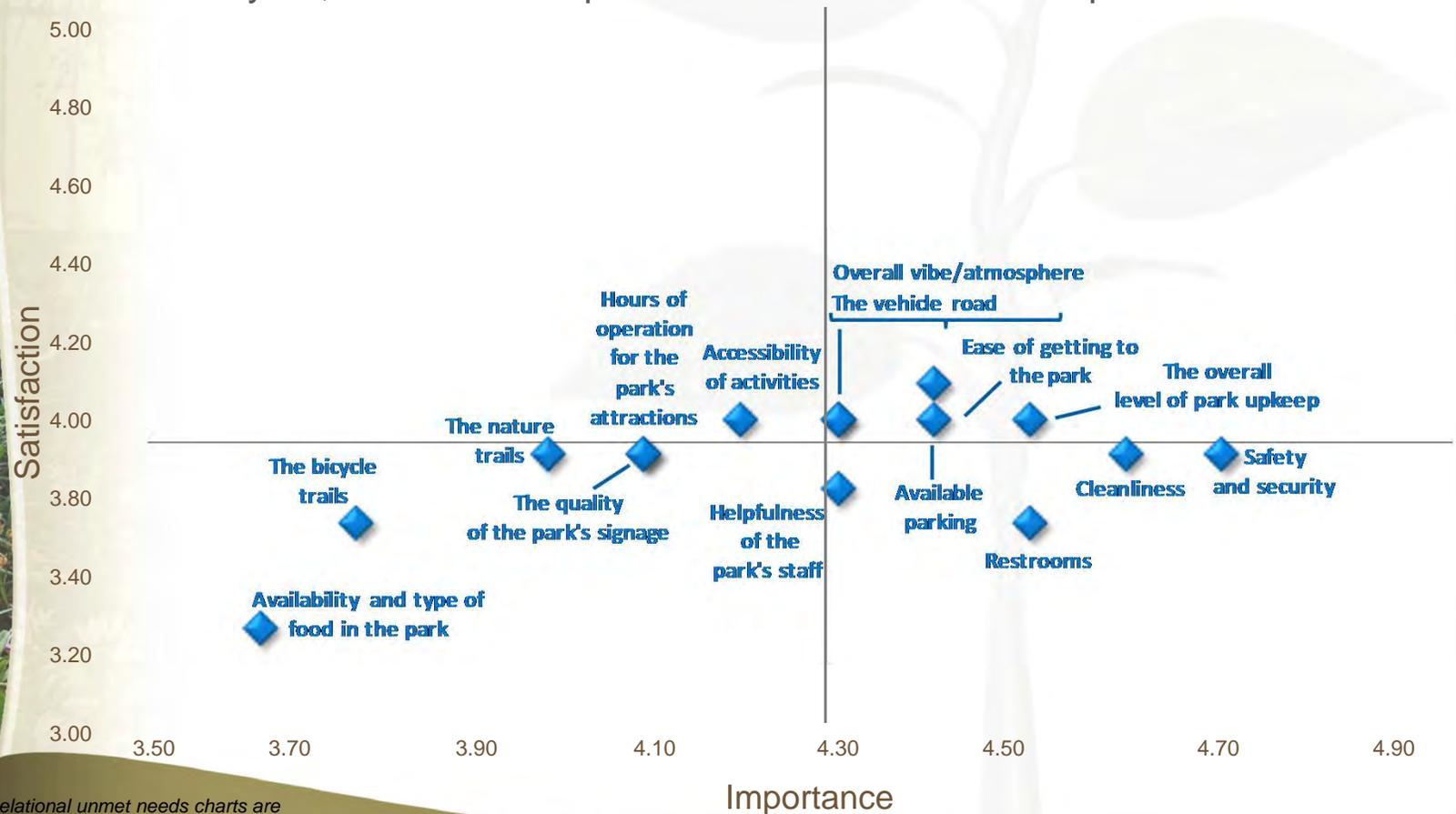
- Among Detroiters who have visited Belle Isle in the past year, two unmet needs stood out: The quality of the park's signage and the quality of the restrooms.



Relational unmet needs charts are highly effective in showing what items are especially important to people and also which ones have lower levels of satisfaction. Any item in the bottom right side quadrant is of high importance but obtained a lower satisfaction score. These items are then classified as "unmet needs."

Satisfied/Important – Not Visited

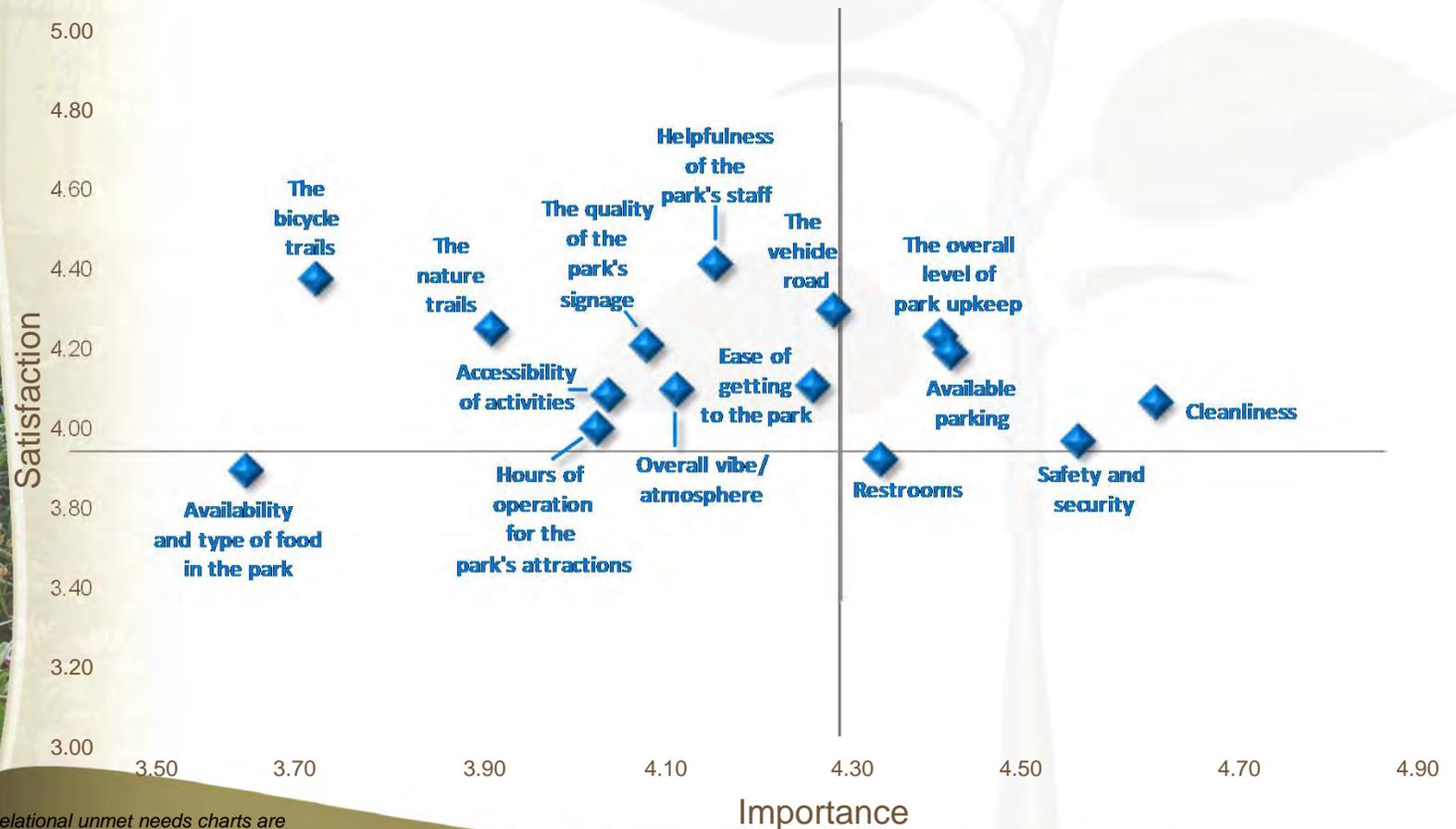
- Within the group of respondents who have not been to the park in the past year, improved restrooms, cleanliness, safety and security and the helpfulness of the park's staff were their critical unmet needs. Improvements in these areas could motivate some of them to visit and then, when they do, increase their potential satisfaction with the park.



Relational unmet needs charts are highly effective in showing what items are especially important to people and also which ones have lower levels of satisfaction. Any item in the bottom right side quadrant is of high importance but obtained a lower satisfaction score. These items are then classified as "unmet needs."

Satisfied/Important – Detroit who have not Visited

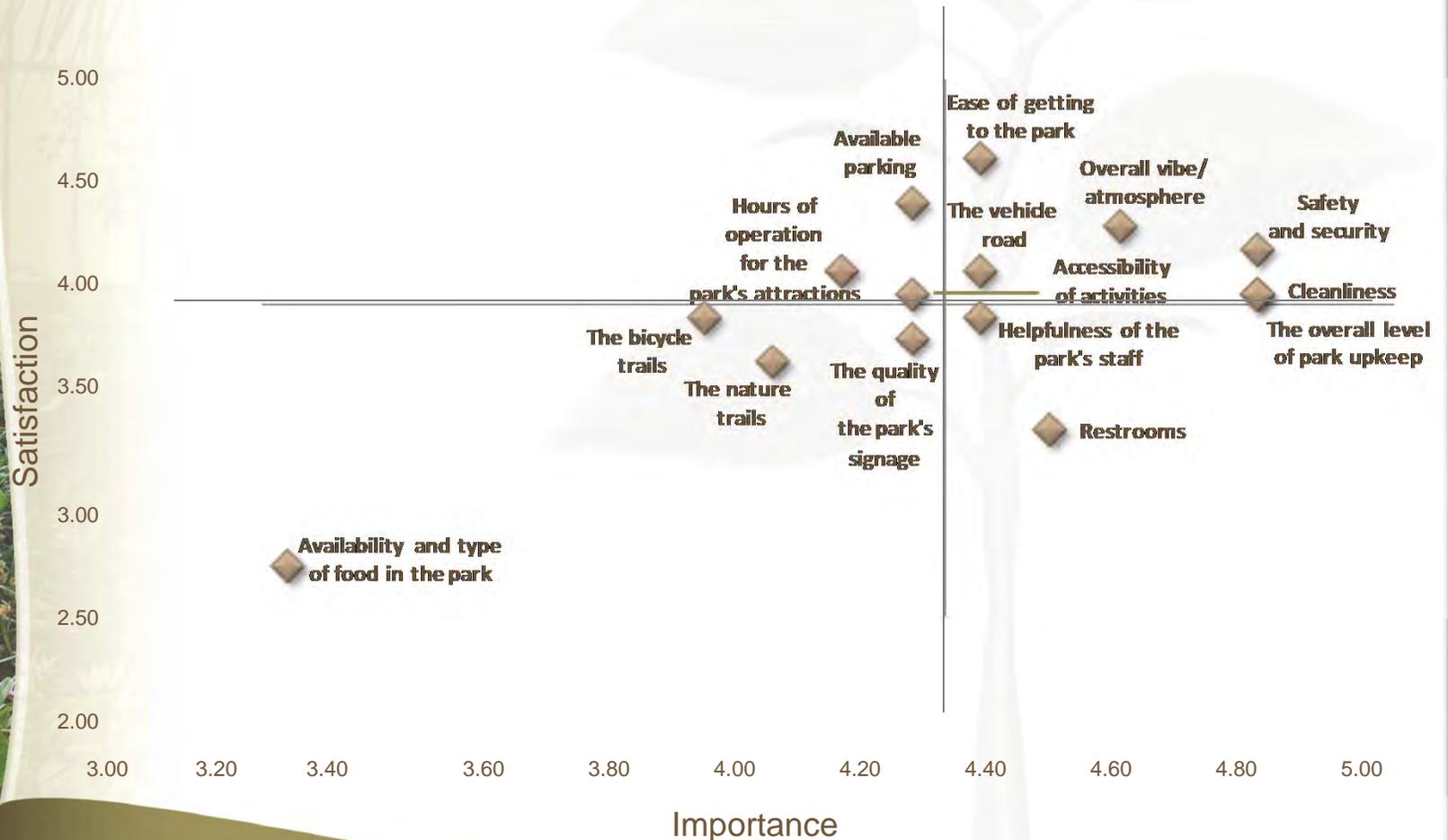
- Among the Detroit residents who have not visited the park in the past year, no attribute fell into the unmet needs category. The restrooms and safety and security were the two closest items to unmet needs for this group of people.



Relational unmet needs charts are highly effective in showing what items are especially important to people and also which ones have lower levels of satisfaction. Any item in the bottom right side quadrant is of high importance but obtained a lower satisfaction score. These items are then classified as "unmet needs."

Satisfied/Important – Conservancy List - Visited

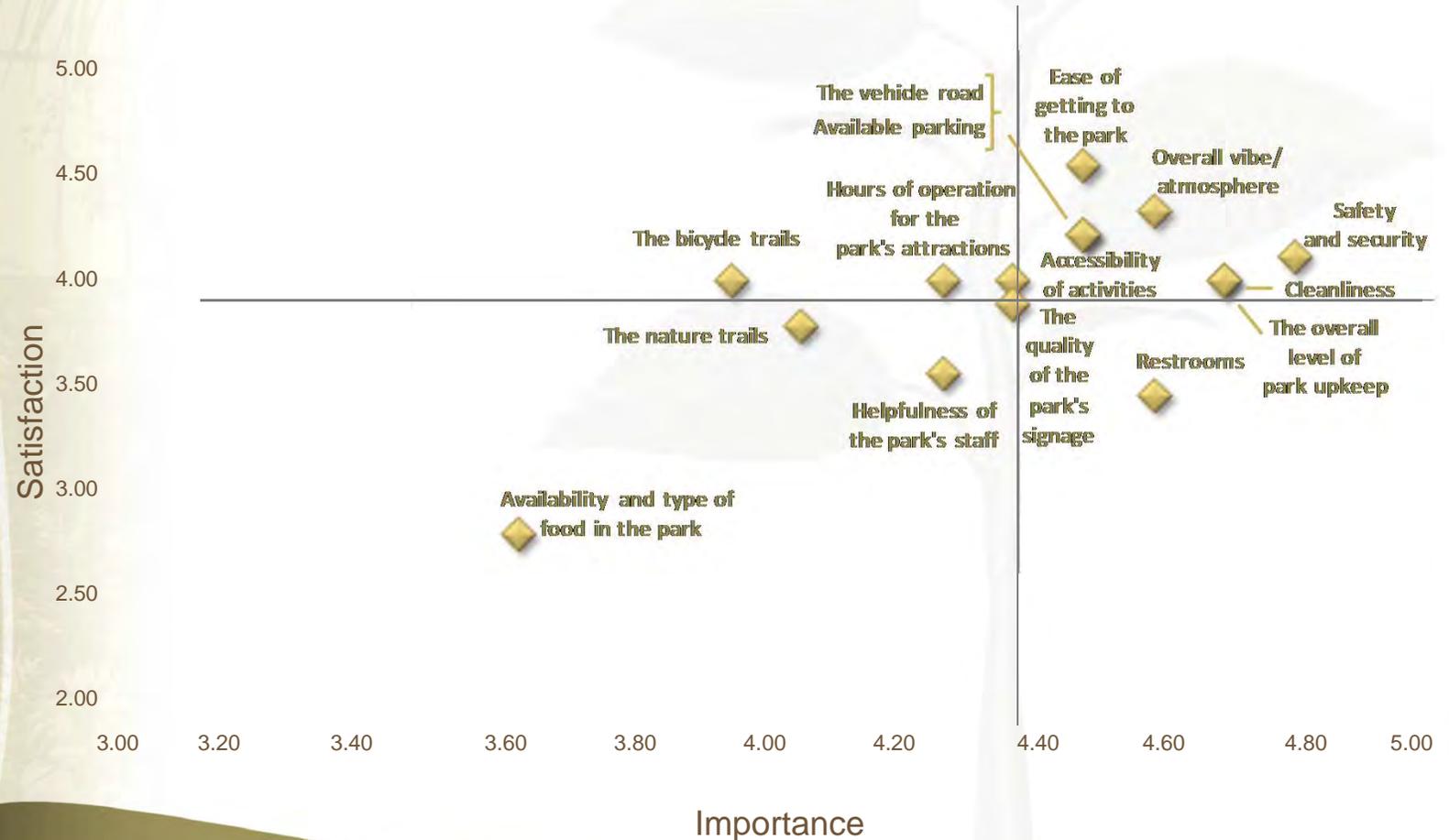
- Among those respondents on the conservancy list the unmet needs that, if improved, could lead to higher satisfaction at Belle Isle were improved helpfulness of the park's staff and better restrooms.



Relational unmet needs charts are highly effective in showing what items are especially important to people and also which ones have lower levels of satisfaction. Any item in the bottom right side quadrant is of high importance but obtained a lower satisfaction score. These items are then classified as "unmet needs."

Satisfied/Important – Metro Population - Visited

- Among metro residents, one area stood out as an unmet need: The restrooms. The quality of the park's signage is on the border of falling into the unmet needs quadrant.



Relational unmet needs charts are highly effective in showing what items are especially important to people and also which ones have lower levels of satisfaction. Any item in the bottom right side quadrant is of high importance but obtained a lower satisfaction score. These items are then classified as "unmet needs."

Improvements for Belle Isle

- For this open-ended question, no one improvement idea obtained more than 17% of the responses. Being cleaner/trash pickup, bathroom improvements, more security (all issues that showed up on the unmet needs charts) and more activities/concerts were mentioned the most.

Belle Isle Improvements





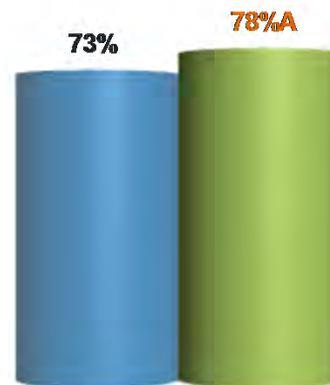
Appendix

Large Scale Events

- While metro residents were far more encouraging about the Grand Prix, those on the Conservancy list were definitely not completely averse to this event.

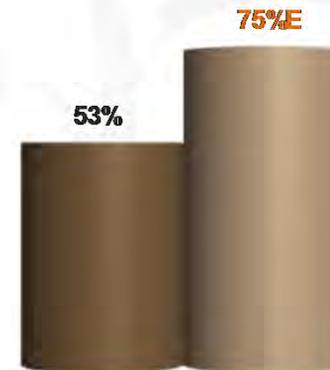
Top Two Box
(Definitely/Somewhat appropriate)

Large Scale Events



■ (A) Visited (n= 508)
■ (B) Not Visited (n= 209)

Grand Prix



■ (E) Conservancy List (n= 200)
■ (F) Metro Residents (n= 404)

Q37A. On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is definitely inappropriate and 5 is definitely appropriate, how appropriate do you feel Belle Isle is for large scale events such as car races, concerts, marathons, etc.?

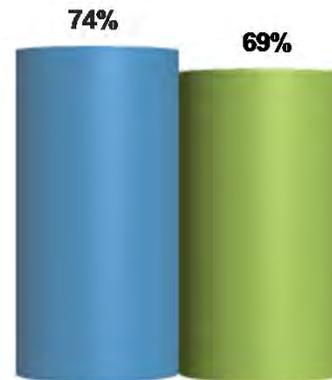
Q37B. On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is definitely inappropriate and 5 is definitely appropriate, how appropriate do you think it is to hold the annual Detroit Belle Isle Grand Prix on the island?

Large Scale Events – Detroiters who have Visited vs Detroit who have not Visited

- Among both Detroit residents who visited the park in the past year, and those who had not, approximately two-thirds felt that Belle Isle was an appropriate location for large scale events as well as the Grand Prix.

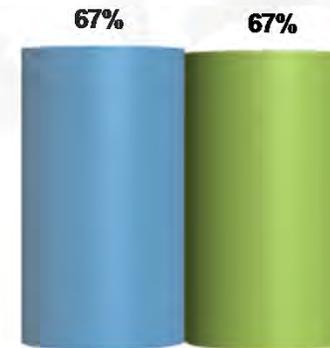
Top Two Box
(Definitely/Somewhat appropriate)

Large Scale Events



■ (A) Visited (n= 206) ■ (B) Not Visited (n= 58)

Grand Prix



■ (A) Visited (n= 206) ■ (B) Not Visited (n= 58)

Q37A. On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is definitely inappropriate and 5 is definitely appropriate, how appropriate do you feel Belle Isle is for large scale events such as car races, concerts, marathons, etc.?

Q37B. On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is definitely inappropriate and 5 is definitely appropriate, how appropriate do you think it is to hold the annual Detroit Belle Isle Grand Prix on the island?

Activities – Add Value/Likelihood to Visit

- The participants liked the idea of adding more music events and making more organized activities available on Belle Isle. But, the concept that would add the most value to the park was additional boating activities.

Top Two Box
(Somewhat/Extremely Likely)

69%



Music Events

Top Two Box
(Somewhat/Extremely Valuable)

68%



Organized Activities

74%



Boating Activities

Sample Size: 717

Q33. On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is definitely not valuable and 5 is definitely valuable, do you think it would be valuable if additional/expanded organized activities (for example, exercise classes or team/group sports) were available at Belle Isle?

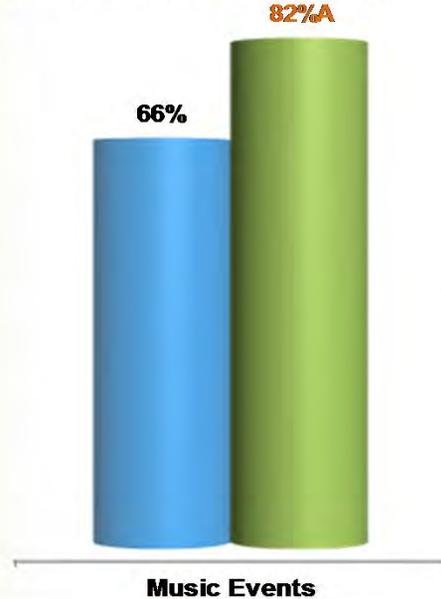
Q35. On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is extremely unlikely and 5 extremely likely, how likely would you be to attend Belle Isle if live music events were available?

Q36. On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is definitely not valuable and 5 is definitely valuable, how valuable would it be to have more boating activities (like canoeing and kayaking in the canals) available on Belle Isle?

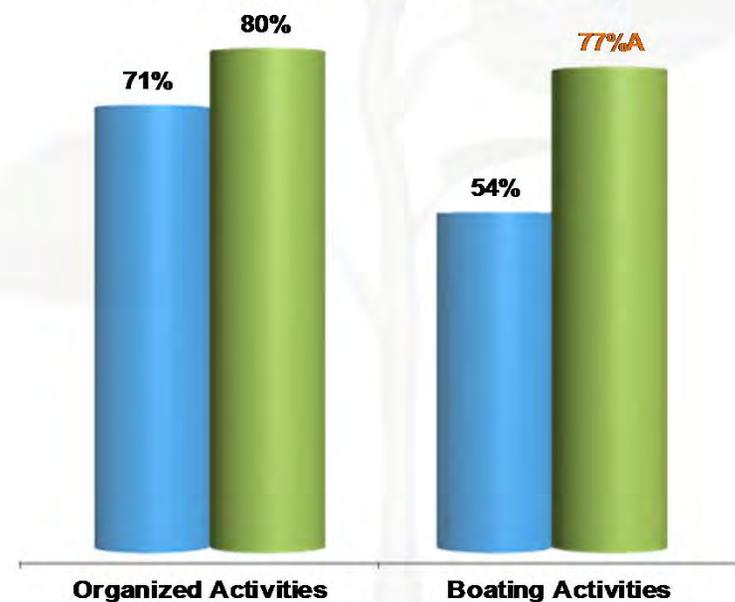
Activities – Add Value/Likelihood to Visit among Detroiters

- Individual Detroit residents who have not visited Belle Isle in the past year were more enthusiastic about music events, organized activities and boating activities than were Detroiters who have been to the park within the past year.

Top Two Box
(Somewhat/Extremely Likely)



Top Two Box
(Somewhat/Extremely Valuable)



■ (A) Visited: n=206
■ (B) Not visited: n=58

Capital letter indicates a statistically significant difference at a 90% Confidence Level.

Q33. On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is definitely not valuable and 5 is definitely valuable, do you think it would be valuable if additional/expanded organized activities (for example, exercise classes or team/group sports) were available at Belle Isle?

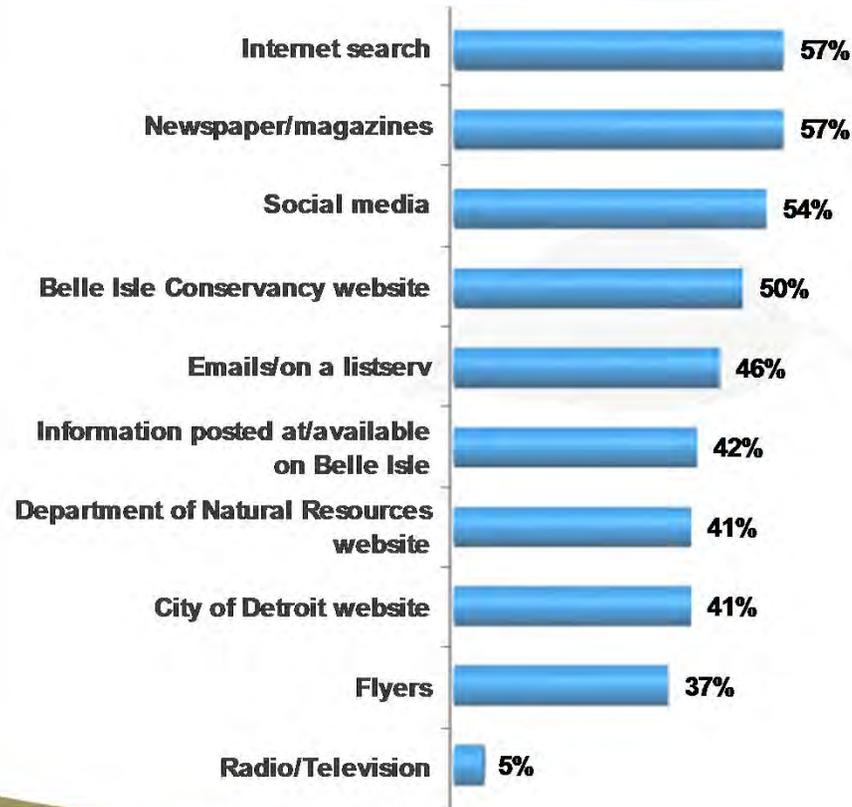
Q35. On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is extremely unlikely and 5 extremely likely, how likely would you be to attend Belle Isle if live music events were available?

Q36. On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is definitely not valuable and 5 is definitely valuable, how valuable would it be to have more boating activities (like canoeing and kayaking in the canals) available on Belle Isle?

Obtaining Information about Belle Isle

- People would like to obtain information about Belle Isle through many different means with none being dominant. The most common were the Internet, newspapers/magazines, social media and the Belle Isle Conservancy website.

Top 10 preferred ways to obtain Belle Isle information

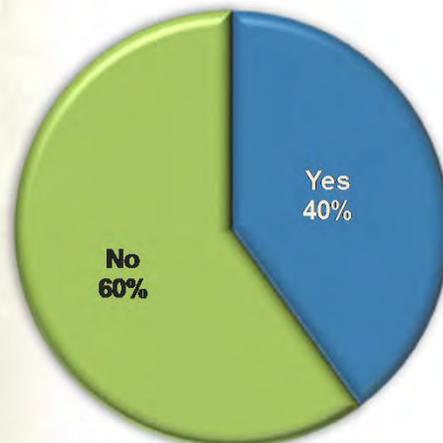


Sample Size: (717)

Other Michigan Parks

- Approximately 70% of the respondents also visit other state parks, but only 40% go to other Detroit parks.

Visit Other Detroit Parks



Sample Size: (717)

Visit Other State Parks



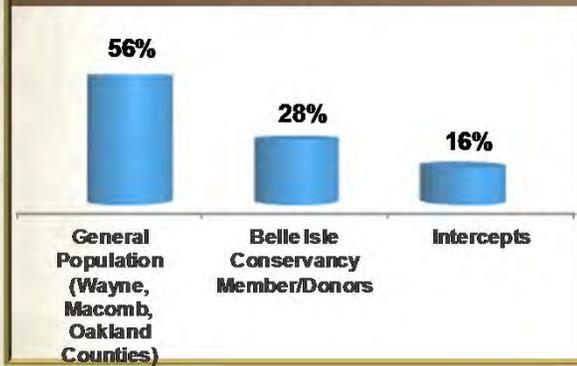
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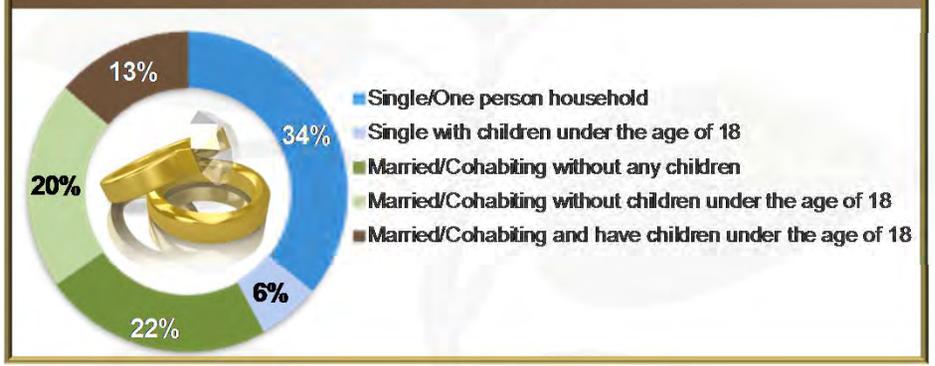
Demographics

Demographics

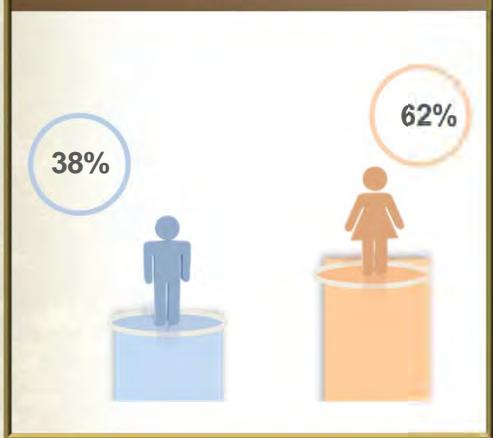
Participants



Marital Status



Gender



Annual Household Income

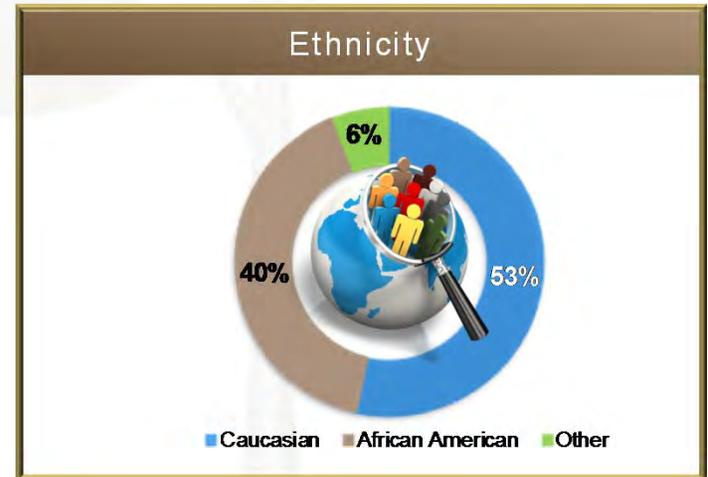
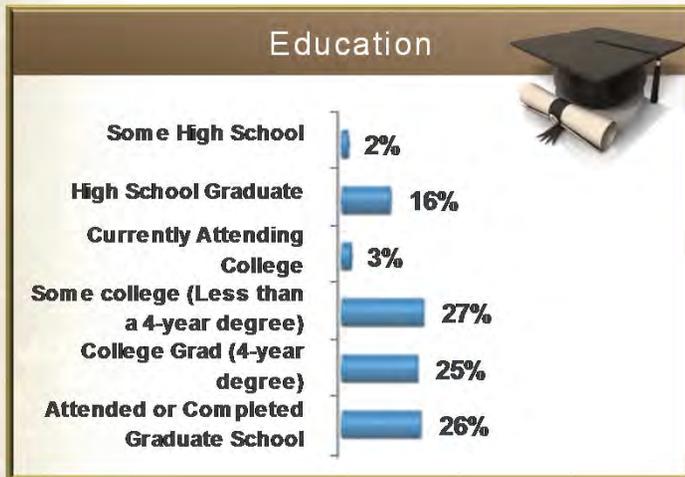
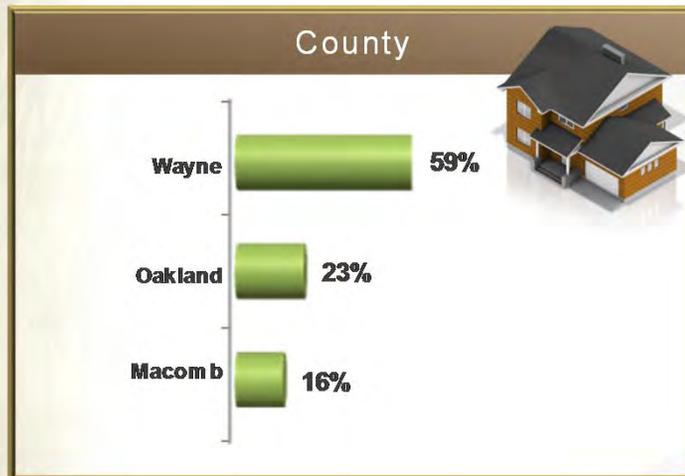


Age



Sample Size: 717

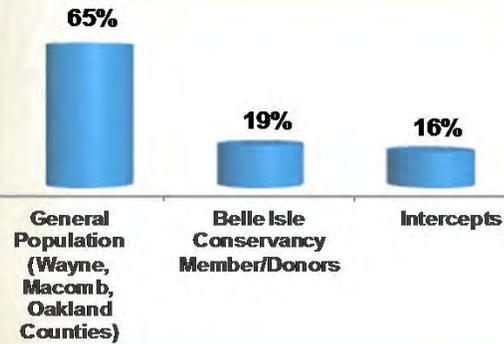
Demographics



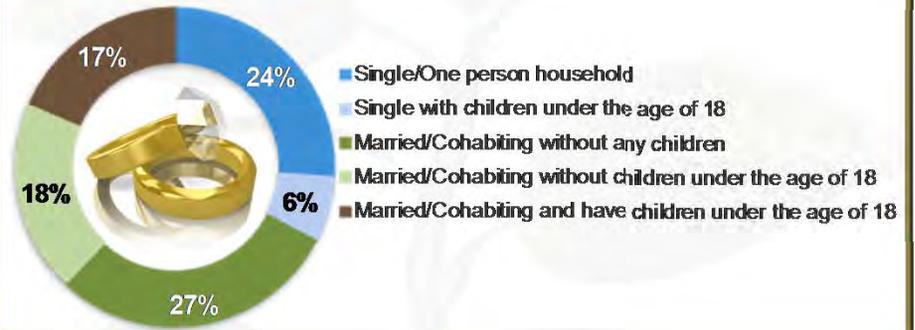
Sample Size: 717

Demographics - Macomb

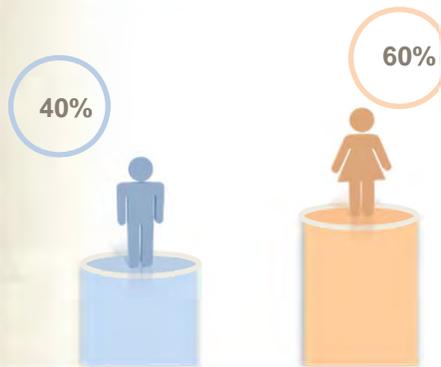
Participants



Marital Status



Gender



Annual Household Income



Age

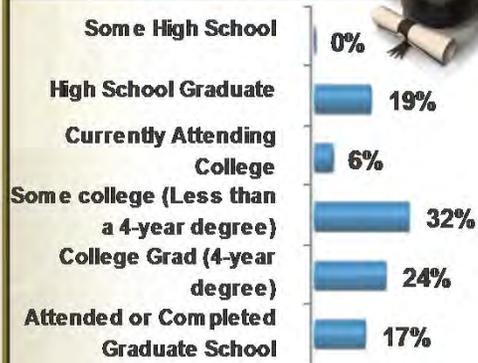


Sample Size: 115

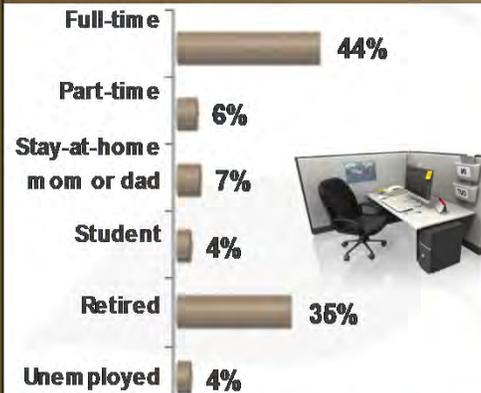
- S4. Which of the following categories includes your age?
- S5. Can you please tell me if you are currently...
- S11. Which category includes your 2014 total annual household income before taxes?
- S12. Are you....

Demographics - Macomb

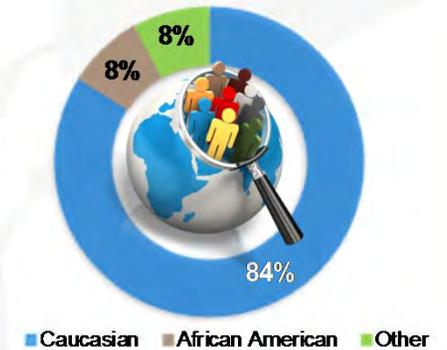
Education



Employment Status



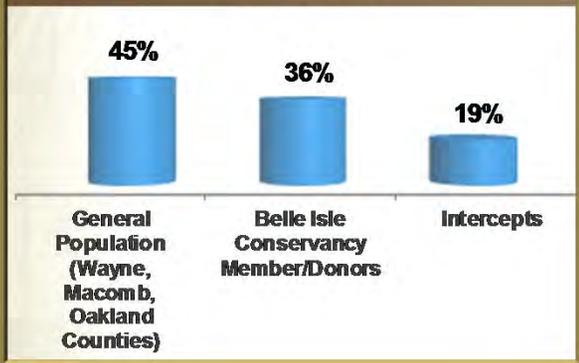
Ethnicity



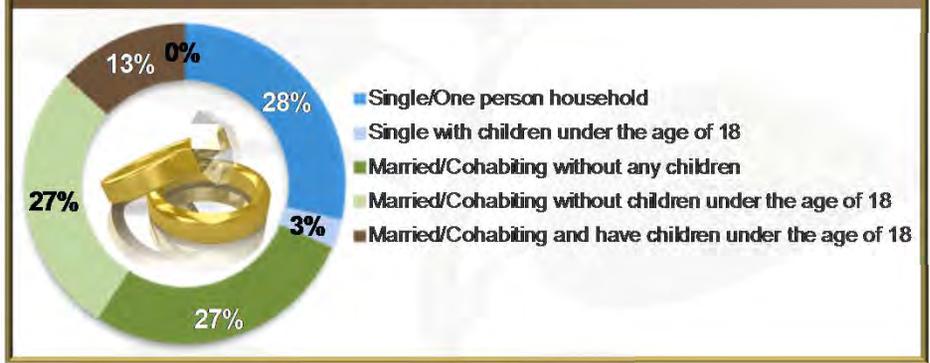
Sample Size: 115

Demographics - Oakland

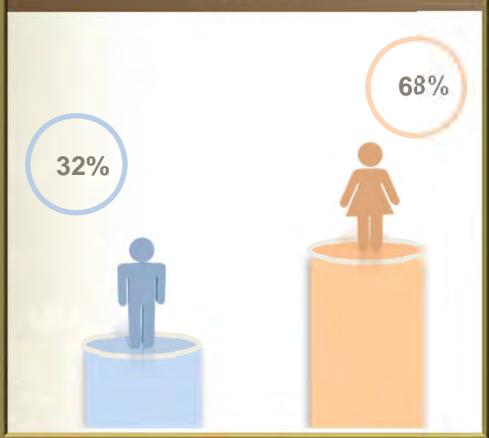
Participants



Marital Status



Gender



Annual Household Income



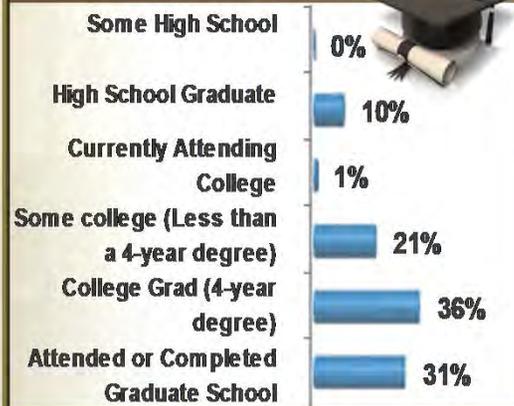
Age



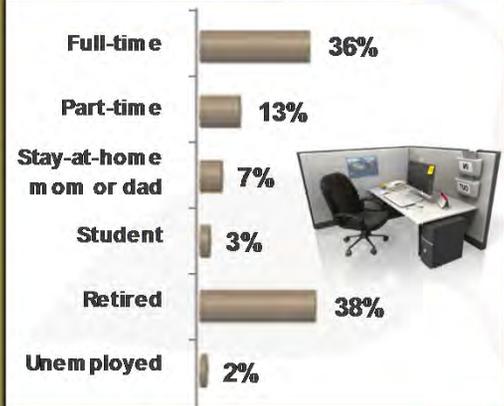
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Demographics - Oakland

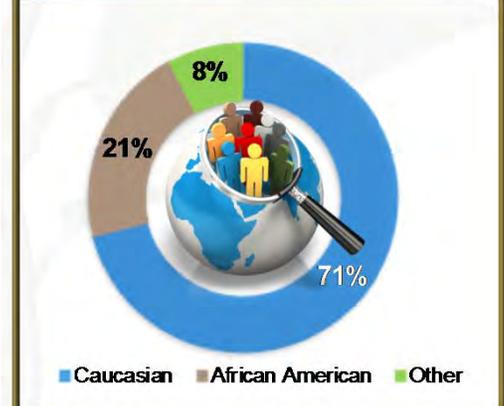
Education



Employment Status



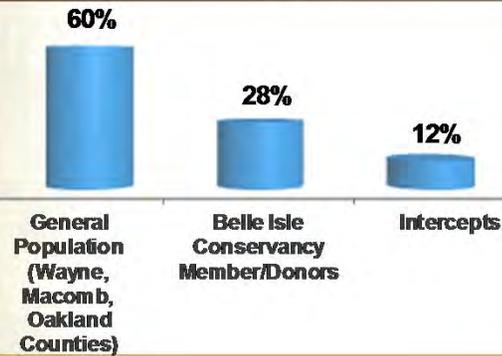
Ethnicity



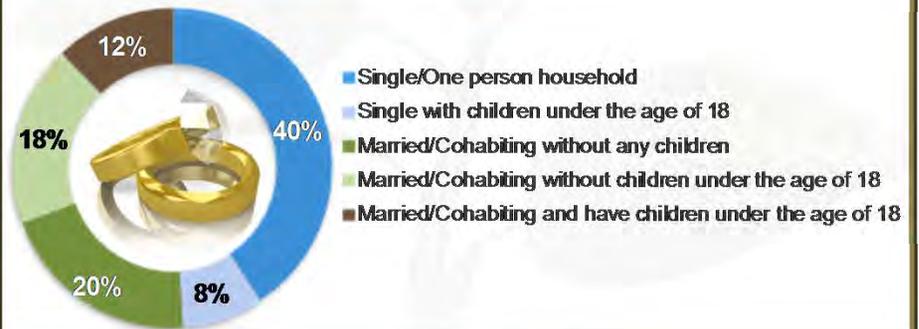
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Demographics - Wayne

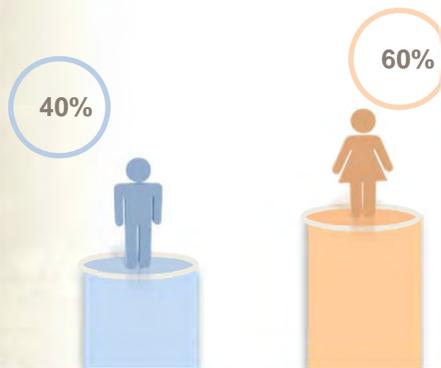
Participants



Marital Status



Gender



Annual Household Income



Age

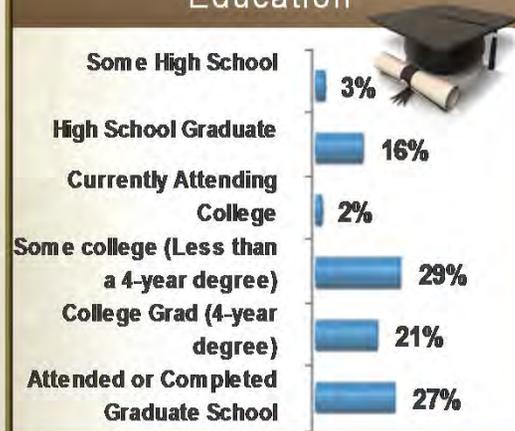


Sample Size: 423

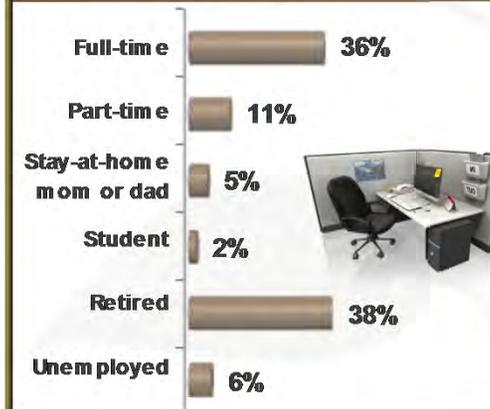
- S4. Which of the following categories includes your age?
- S5. Can you please tell me if you are currently...
- S11. Which category includes your 2014 total annual household income before taxes?
- S12. Are you....

Demographics - Wayne

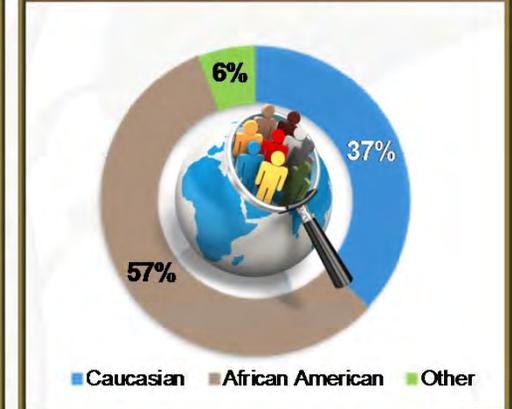
Education



Employment Status



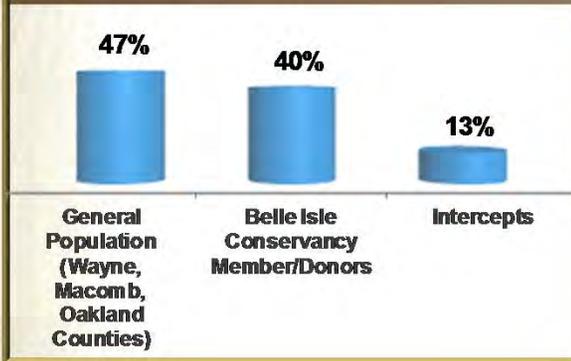
Ethnicity



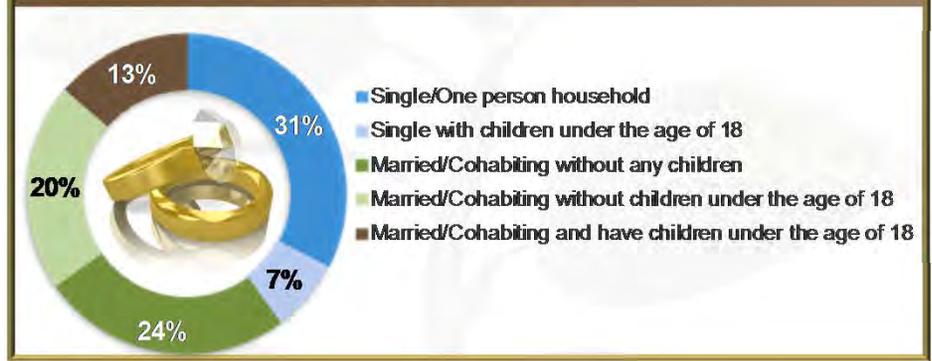
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Demographics – Wayne Without Detroit

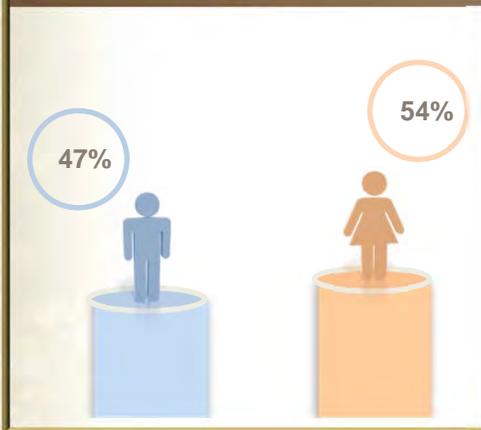
Participants



Marital Status



Gender



Annual Household Income



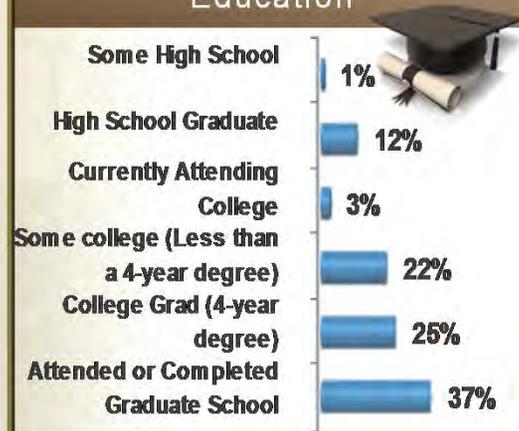
Age



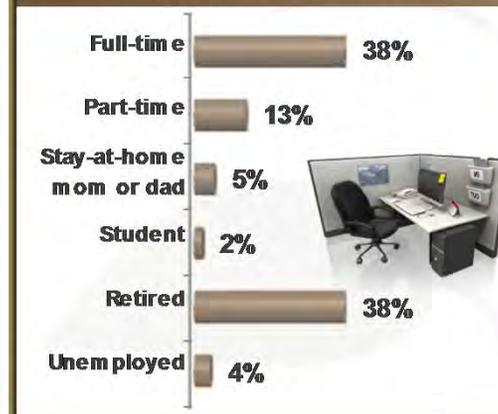
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Demographics – Wayne Without Detroit

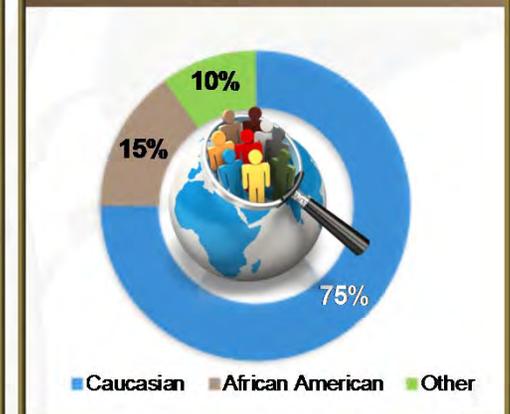
Education



Employment Status

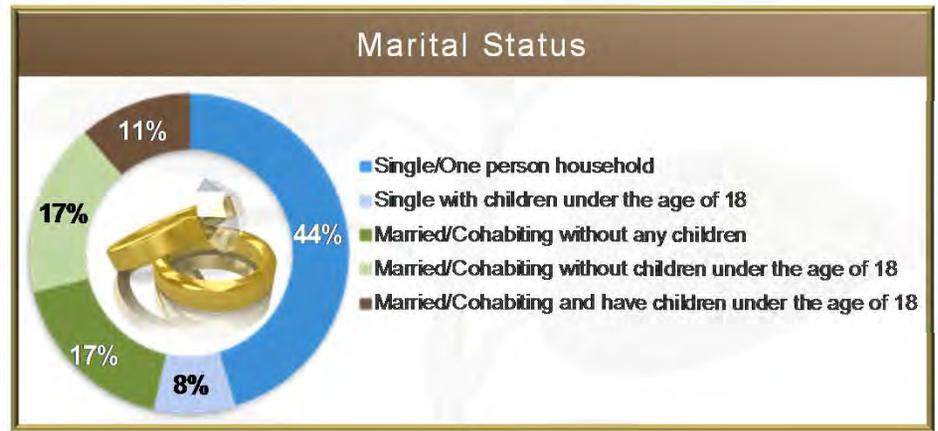
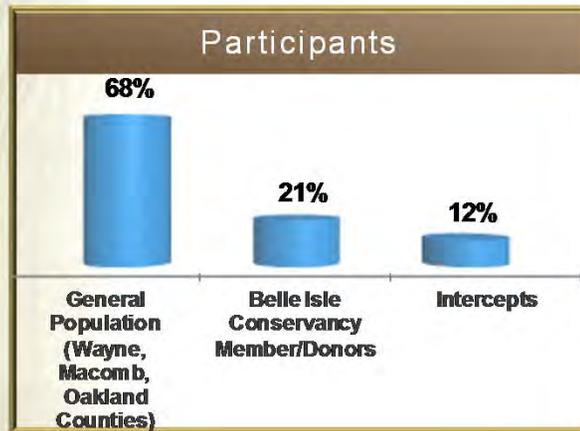


Ethnicity



Sample Size: 159

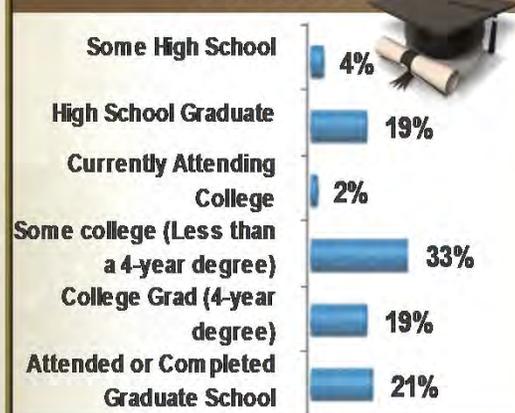
Demographics - Detroit



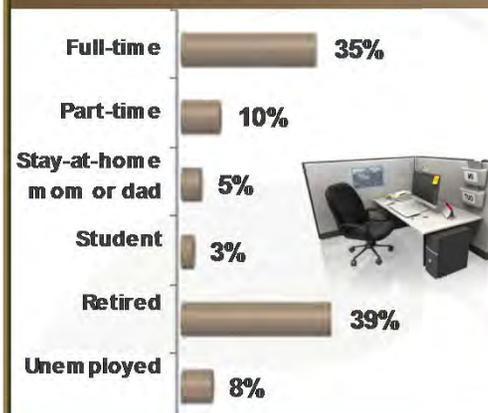
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Demographics - Detroit

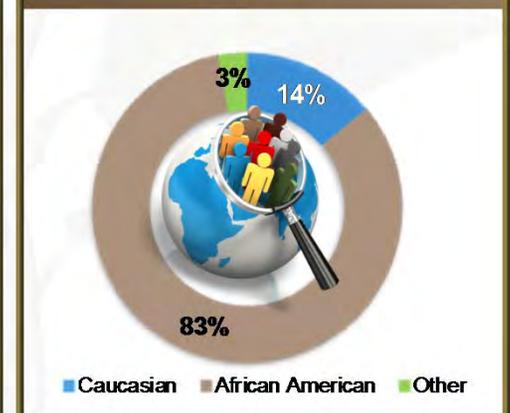
Education



Employment Status



Ethnicity



Sample Size: 264



Focus Groups



Focus Groups

Group Overview

Two groups on September 17, 2015 at the Belle Isle Conservancy's office in Detroit:

- All groups consisted of park supporters/donors/Conservancy members
- The groups were moderated by Michael Schmall of Morpace
- The groups lasted approximately 75 minutes each

Participants

A total of 18 people participated in the two groups:

- 16 women
- 2 men

Major Topics Included:

- Reason why they are park supporters/ donors/members of the Conservancy
- Feelings toward Belle Isle
- Description of Belle Isle
- The DNR's involvement on the island
- Discussion about the park's specific features
- Park amenities
- Events on the island
- The future of the park



Reasons for being a Member of the Conservancy

In both groups, participants mentioned the historical value of the park as one of the main reasons for wanting a close relationship with it. They talked a lot about the value of having such historical buildings and information on the island.

“That was very enticing, just to have that ambiance with the water, the river.”

“The idea that it is an island is so special. Just the natural beauty of it and the history is there. The buildings, and how it [island] relates to Detroit.”

Having an island so close to a big city was another mention as respondents talk about how traveling over the bridge into Belle Isle makes them feel like they are escaping the city and reality.

- Being close to the water contributes to the escape.

“I think this is something Detroit does not do well at all. We do not value or maintain or try to protect our historical landmarks. Our historical pieces to our history.”

“Where else can you cross over a bridge and you would never think you were in the middle of a city?”



What you do when you Visit

They mentioned the Museum, Aquarium, and others as monuments of Belle Isle with unique architecture that makes the park exceptional to visit. They visited these sites because they are considered historical.

Other things they included:

- Exercise
- Commune with nature
- Walk along water
- Access wilderness without having to travel far

“My top five would be the wilderness, the waterfront, the fountain, conservatory, aquarium...It [conservatory] is very unique and historical. It is an absolutely amazing resource. It is a lovely peaceful area. It is small and contained. It is an amazing structure.”

“It’s really just to commune with nature and be closer to water. I live downtown so I see water out of my window but it’s different when you’re walking along the shore.”

“The conservatory. The aquarium. The museum. These are buildings. These are unique, beautiful buildings designed for the people of Detroit. They are incredibly important.”

Improvements for the Park - Food

When asked about food on the island, we heard a range of answers. Some people were opposed to the idea because they look at a park as being a place to picnic and bring your own food.

Some others were interested in having a few food trucks where you can grab something quick.

Others mentioned the idea of repurposing a current building for a restaurant. When asked what kind of restaurant would be appropriate we heard various possibilities:

- Waterfront view
- “Tavern on the Green” (slightly fine dining)
- Cheap
- Detroit related

“That can become an additional destination. If you had a Detroit themed something, whether it was an ice cream shop or a canteen type thing...”

“You can look at the Canadian side and look over at the river near downtown Detroit. It would be nice to have a place where you can come and have a meal and have that gorgeous view.”



Improvements for the Park - Food

Overall, most participants strongly suggest adding some sort of food to the island. The idea of having a contained area of food trucks and concession seemed to be the best compromise.

“Years ago, where the lighthouse is, they had a concession stand. It was really fun. It had candy, ice cream, and all of that kind of stuff. And it was a nice area because you could access it with your car. They [people] are not staying out there for hours, but when they are out there they can grab a cup of coffee or a drink.”

“I have seen at other parts of the country where they allocate a place, maybe a parking lot or boat club, and say, ‘We are going to park some food trucks there.’ That is the place where you go for that, and it doesn’t have to spill out over the rest of the island. You can do something like that where it is contained.”



Improvements for the Park – Hours of operation

Hours of operation was a concern for participants. They would like the activities on the island (museum, aquarium, etc.) to be open for more days and longer hours.

If the activities were open during the week, participants think they would be used more for educational purposes such as field trips.

“I think the aquarium is very important because it brings back that family value, that family time. That parents can bring their children to the park. And also for me as an educator, we can plan field trips to give kids who don’t have the opportunity to visit parks.”

“I think educationally if somehow the island itself could work maybe with, now, the Michigan Science Center, you can actually bring children there. Make the education interactive so that they can go out, and when they are just planting let’s say tulips, understanding all of the components that go into tulips...”

“I think right now it [the island] is at a trial-and-error point to see how effective it will be being open, the days it is open. I think in the future they will extend it and see that there is a need for it, which I definitely feel there is a need for it.”

Improvements for the Park – Activities

Some participants say that more activities are needed on the island. They mentioned the need to improve the current activities such as the aquarium by increasing the number and types of sea life.

Other activity ideas included:

- Petting zoo
- Music (small concerts that won't distract the whole island)
- Movie nights

"Musical events. Every single type of music there is, but on a smaller scale just so you can come to the island and enjoy, and it won't disturb the entire island. I don't want it to go on all of the time."

"And the aquarium. That was a heart breaker when it closed. It is hard to get it back to where it was. They had fish that were there, but extinct in the rest of the world."

"I would like to see more fish there [aquarium] of course."

"Some sort of summer camp for the kids so they have the activities. They have a place to go. They have a place to be kids."



Improvements for the Park – Regularly Scheduled Activities

Some talk about organized sporting activities and camps, especially during the summer when kids are out of school. They mention having a separate area for sports that will not take away from the nature and peacefulness of the park.

“I would encourage more athletic events. Like we said, using those intramural fields and maybe the paddleboats have a once around the island race on Sundays.”

“Especially during the summer when kids are out of school, there needs to be planned activities because that will bring the children there.”

“Maybe for certain parts of the island certain areas, where they’re confined so the nature part is still the majority of the island: the trees, the flowers, the garden.”

“I’d like to see more encouragements for sporting teams to come in and use the playing fields (intramural) soccer, baseball...”

Improvements for the Park – Infrastructure

When asked what can be done to improve getting around the park, the first group mentioned the possibility of a trolley. However, some say that takes away from the “park” feeling.

Also, some say there need to be improvements for ADA. Those in wheelchairs might find it hard to get around and they can’t get as close to the water as they might want.

Other infrastructure improvements included:

- Boat shuttle
- **NO MORE CEMENT**
- Separate trails for walking and biking
- Flooding
- More lighting

“I think that it [parking] really spoiled the island. If they [parking lots] are going to be cemented, they need to be used. If you are going to cement grass then you need to make it open throughout the year. I think we can limit the number of cars on the island.”

“Bringing the trolley on would be good because then you wouldn’t have to have the parking or as many cars.”

“The bike lanes are great, but there needs to be walking lanes as well so that you can have separate areas. It is safer for both bikers and joggers.”

“There are some things I would want to change, in a non-invasive way, if you could, which would be for people who are in wheelchairs to be able to access a little bit more of the areas.”

Improvements for the Park – Other

Additional things that the participants mentioned for improvement included:

- Benches for trails
- Signage (especially for length of walking and bike trails)
- Bathrooms (however, some say they like the bathrooms)
- Boat club (first thing seen after entering Belle Isle)
- Renovate horse stables
- Sprinkler system

“People don’t do things that they are not directed towards. You do need to put up some signage...‘this is the way that it works’...if you want new people, or just getting the information out there so people can easily research it. It is just easy to get to.”

“What is happening with the boat club? I understand that the rowing club has started doing improvements inside. What’s going to be done? Are they going to be maintaining that club? That’s the first thing you see...It used to be one of the most beautiful.”

“The horse stables. They were absolutely beautiful. I think it adds another element. The barns and the stables. It would be nice for them to redo those. I think it adds another activity for families to enjoy the island.”

“I know it is a problem at the conservatory. There are no sprinklers. And all of those flowers as you come into the park and the flowers on that clock, they have to hand water all of them.”



Belle Isle State Park

Participants seem positive with the DNR management. They feel money was needed to care for the park. Since the DNR began managing the park, participants think it is more structured and organized. They feel safer and have a better sense of comfortability.

“I think the structure is better through the DNR. I think there is just a better organization running the park.”

“I think it is just a safer island.”

On the other hand, some say heavy security is not necessary and it is discouraging people from wanting to visit the park. Some also say Detroit could have implemented an entry fee which would have helped build the park instead of handing over management.

“I can’t tell you how frequently I’ve had the police following me. I’m not looking for that level of security because I have a comfort level with the area. I just imagine what that might be for the youth...”

Events on the Island

Bike marathons were mentioned as being a negative and positive for the island. Some think they are too disruptive. Musical events were also mentioned as being a pro and con. Loud music can be disruptive to some visitors who want to enjoy the peacefulness of the island. However, if the music can be contained, they would be open to having it on the island.

Events for the island

- Musical events
- Family activities
- Holiday events
- Athletic events
- Garden shows
- Art shows
- Movies in the park
- Bike marathons

“Family activities. They can be themed. Like revolving around the nature that happens on the island. It would be great to call attention to the different wildlife in the winter versus the summer.”

“Use the holiday season to have something that goes on throughout the year. I can see Halloween. There are so many old structures around there that would make great opportunities for Halloween. The casino. Halloween parties for the kids...”

Events NOT for the island

- Racing
- Events that damage nature/wildlife
- Bike marathons
- Musical events

“Of course, the 5K’s are very disruptive to the island and peace of the island, so that would not be as frequent. They [island] do have a lot of 5K’s.”

“Well they had a rock concert and I live right next door...The water tends to carry the music and no-one was out there managing the decibels of that music. It was so loud.”

Future of the Island

More Activities

For children and families especially related to nature and education utilizing historical aspects.

"...they [parents] will take the kids out and they will do a family picnic. Well if they had other activities along with that picnic for the children to do that would bring more people on to the island."

Original Intent

Peaceful and relaxing

"It [island] should still be peaceful. It should still be enjoyable. Where you can smell what you are supposed to smell, which is nature."

Improved Infrastructure

Food, Flooding, lighting, and buildings

"Infrastructure needs to be worked on. Infrastructure, roads, the flooding, and lighting. I was thinking about the flooding of the roads. It is a problem."

Keep Park Integrity

- No hotels/commercial building
- No profit driven events
- No large scale events

"I hope there are no hotels, no for-profits, no leasing out areas...Food trucks are okay."



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