

Visitor Surveys & Management Actions





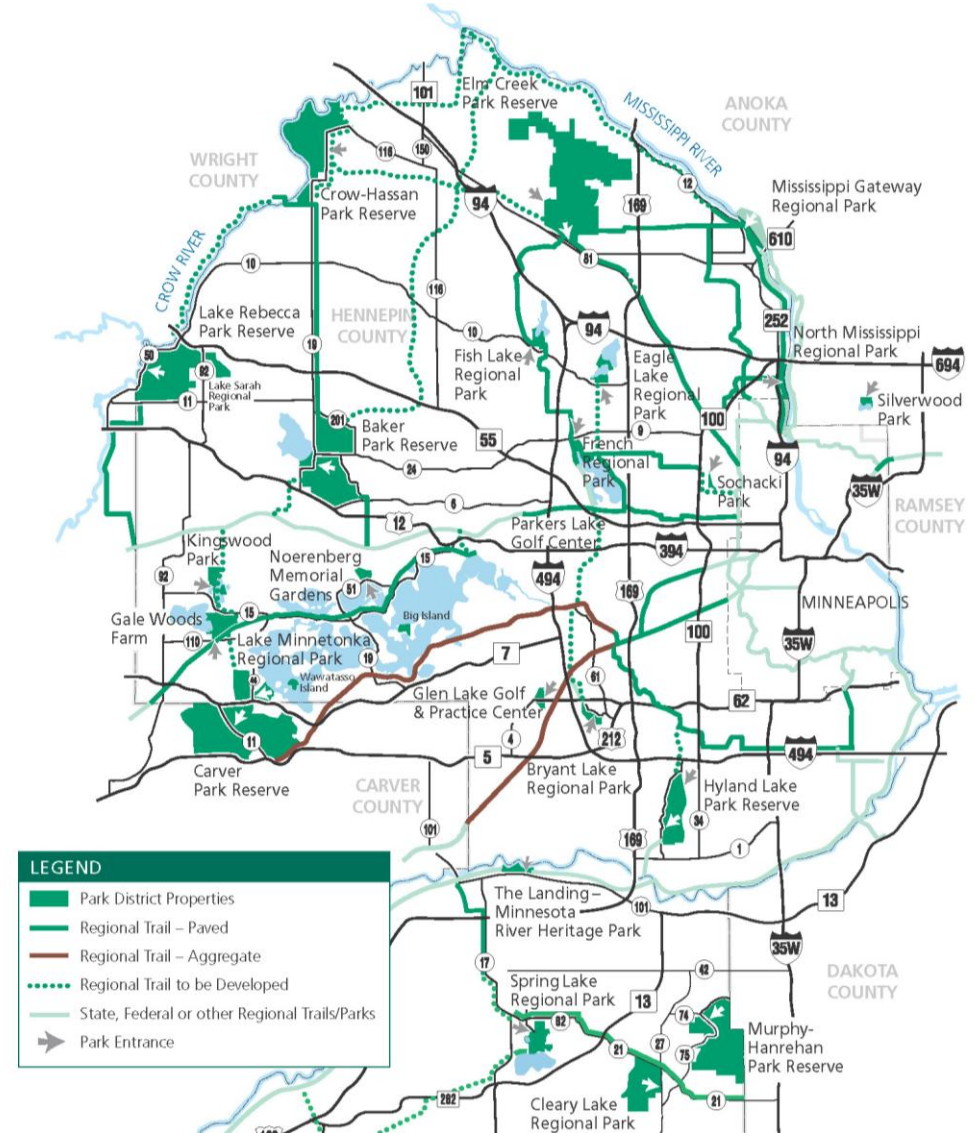
Outline

- 1. Three Rivers Park District**
- 2. Research objectives**
- 3. Visitation estimates**
- 4. Survey design, methods & analysis**
- 5. Survey outcomes, actions & data**
- 6. Questions**



Three Rivers Park District

- Established by MN State Legislature in 1957
- Special Park District located in the Suburban-Hennepin County
- Nature-based regional park and trail system which falls between a county and state park system
- 14.5 million annual visitors
- About 400 regular staff and 2,500 seasonal staff





Three Rivers Park District

Mission: To promote environmental stewardship through recreation & education in a natural resources-based park system

- Park Reserves - 7
- Regional Parks - 8
- Special Recreation Features - 5
- Regional Trails – 175+ miles
- 2 Downhill Ski Areas
- 6 golf courses





Research Objectives

- **Visitation Estimates**

- 2-hour observations 8AM – 8PM
- Vehicle counters, Trail counters
- 1-hour Activity observations

- **Visitor Surveys**

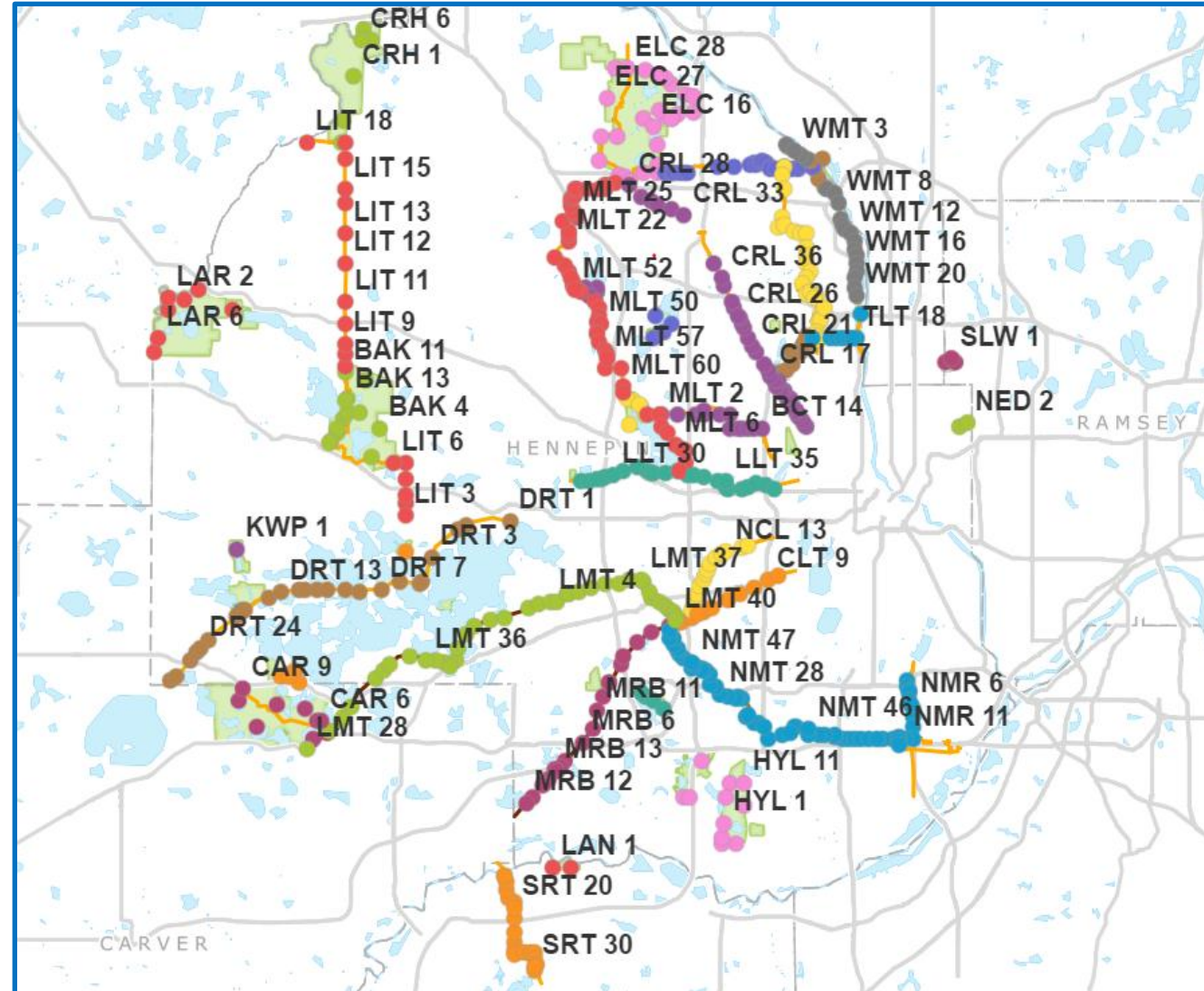
- Summer Parks
- Summer Regional Trails
- Winter Parks
- Summer Golf
- Resident Survey – Consultant administered

- **Miscellaneous Projects**



Visitation Estimates

- Monitor 600+ access points and complete more than 1,000, 2-hour observation counts
- Monitor park facilities & activity areas
- Vehicle & trail counter data
- Reservation & registration data as applicable
- Use counts to develop visitation estimates at the park & trail level
- Use visitation estimates to weight survey data by main activity & park



Visitation Estimates

Visitation data & survey data are interconnected. Without it, our data story would be much different



Visitor Survey

Methodology

Short Survey:

- 5,000 intercept surveys
- 90% response rate
- 200 – 400 surveys per park/trail
(400 = goal for 95% confidence)
- Well distributed sampling plan
(Weekday vs weekend, 8 AM – 8 PM)

Data Collected:

- Demographics
- First-time visitors
- Park/trail activities
- Seasonal use patterns
- Mode of arrival
- Visit length
- Visitor origin (address, city, zip code)



Visitor Survey Methodology

Long Survey:

- 2,000 – 3,000 mail or online surveys
- Offered to all short survey participants
- 40-50% response rate

Data Collected:

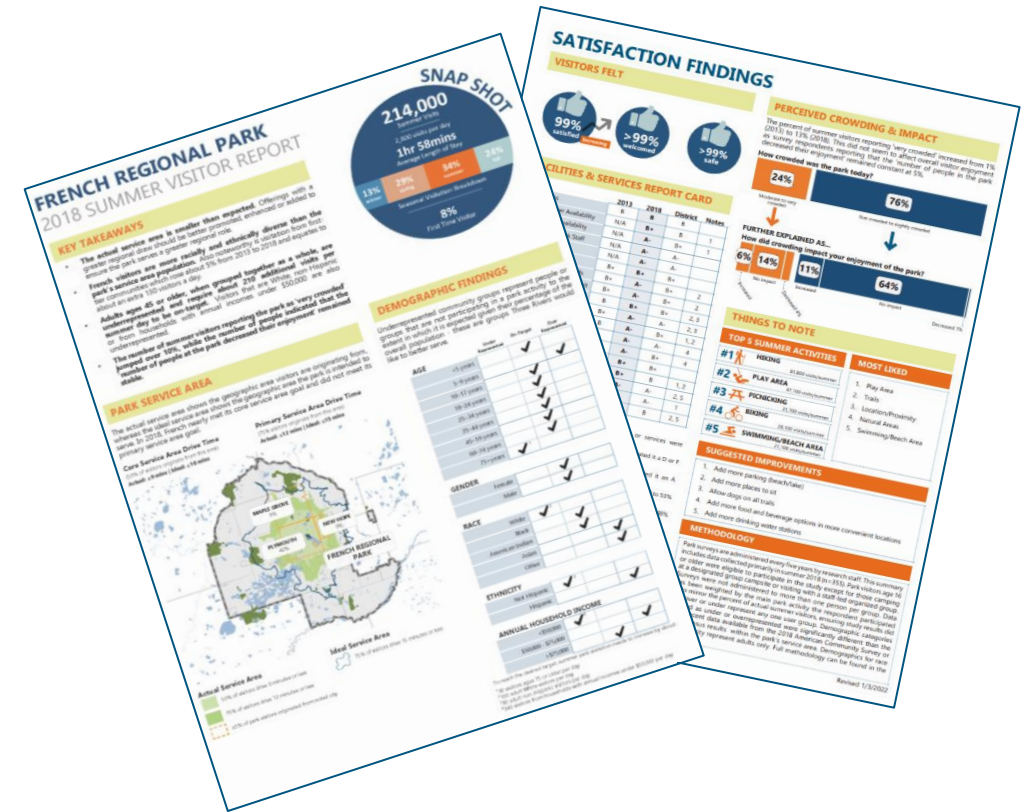
- Visitor preferences & priorities
- Quality of amenities & services
- Visitor motivations
- Key performance indicators
- Suggested improvements
- Other “open ended” questions

11. Rate the **importance** of each of the following factors on your decision to visit the park where you received this survey.

	Very Important	Moderately Important	Slightly Important	Not At All Important
Closeness of park to my home	1	2	3	4
Low cost of park activities	1	2	3	4
A new area I haven't visited before	1	2	3	4
Feeling of solitude and privacy	1	2	3	4
Opportunity to experience nature	1	2	3	4
Improve physical health and fitness	1	2	3	4
Improve mental health and wellness	1	2	3	4
Opportunity to learn about the past/history	1	2	3	4
Opportunity to learn or improve an outdoor skill	1	2	3	4
Variety of recreation activities in one area	1	2	3	4
Familiar and comfortable with park	1	2	3	4
Chance to do something with friends and family	1	2	3	4
Chance to be around other people	1	2	3	4
Park contains native habitats	1	2	3	4
Park is a unique place	1	2	3	4

Analyzing Results

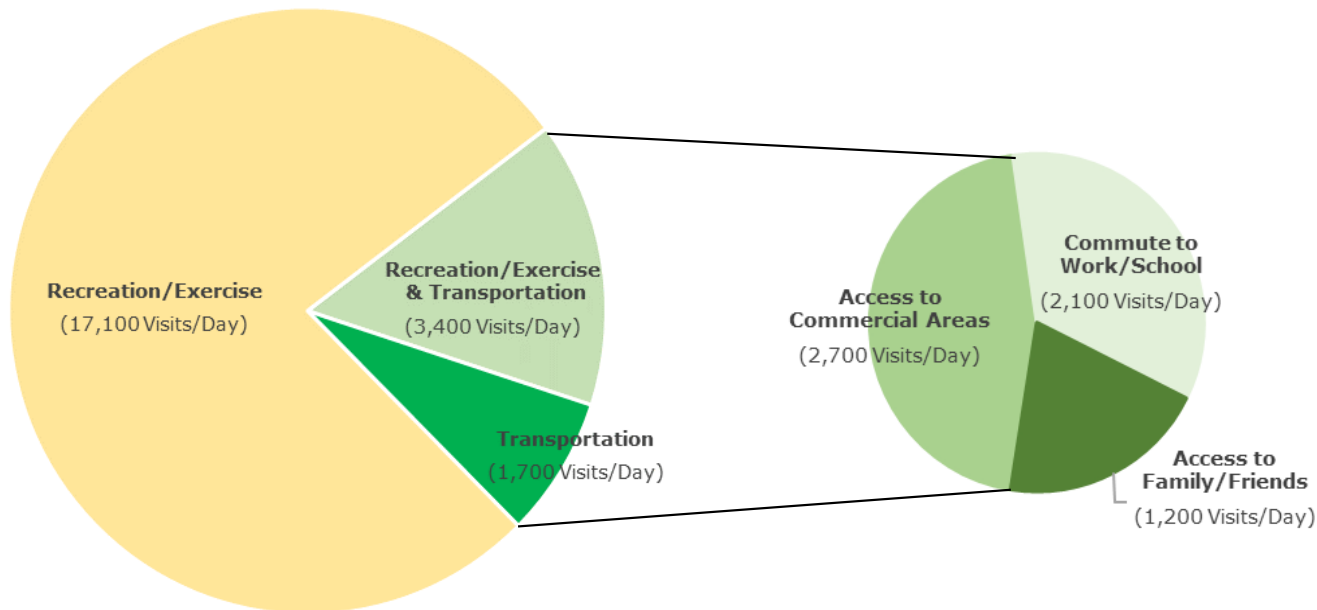
- Analyze data at park & activity level
- Compare ratings to previous years
- Compare ratings to agency average
- Calculate service areas
- Compare visitor demographics to census
- Conduct statistical analyses (t-tests, chi square, etc.)



Use Cases & Actions

External Funding & Grant Applications

- **Demographics, Origin, Access**
- **Primary Purpose**



Results from 2019 Summer Regional Trail Visitor Survey



Use Cases & Actions

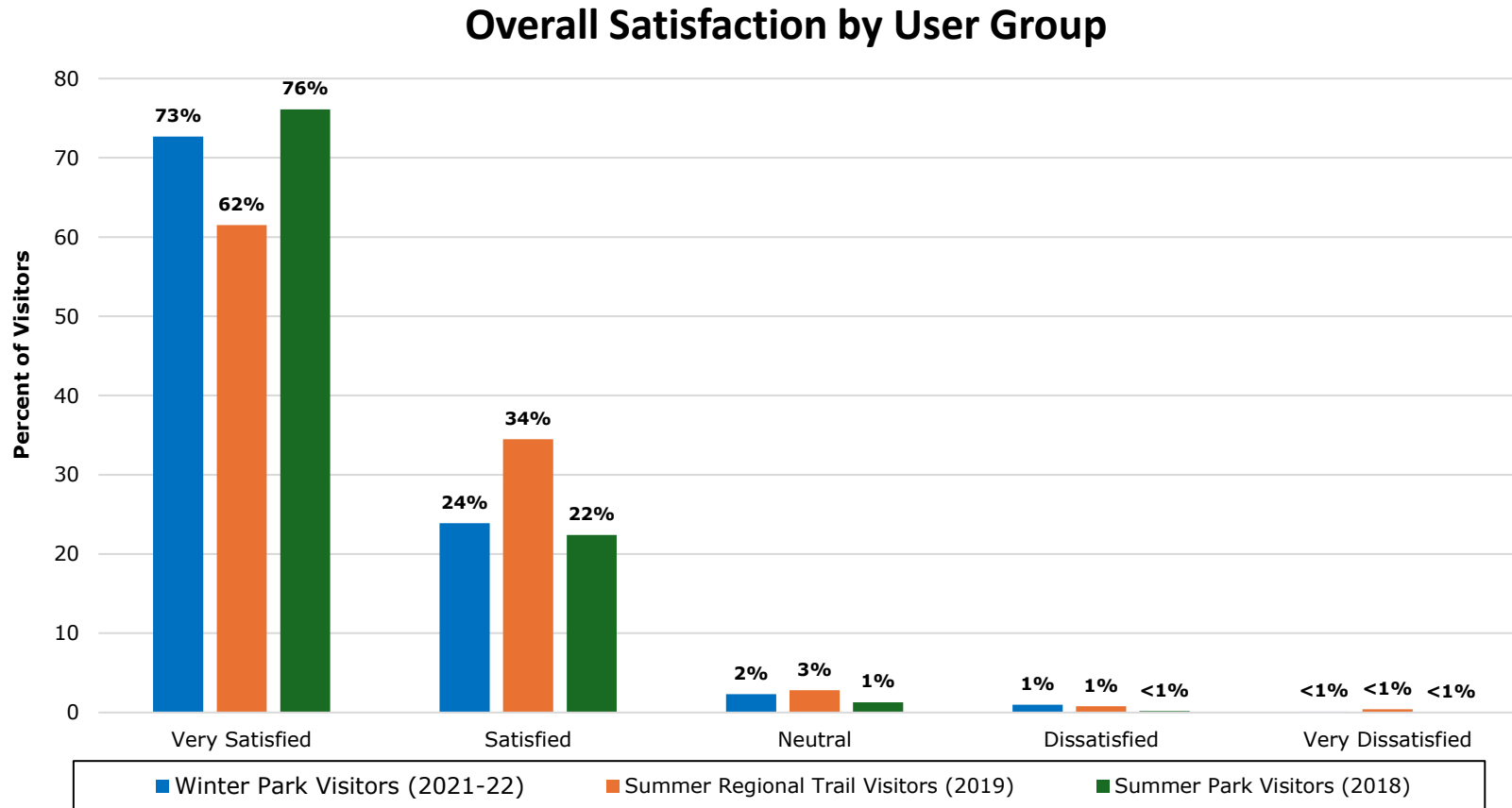
Key Performance Indicators & Trends

- **Overall Satisfaction**
- **Welcome**
- **Safety**
- **Crowding**
- **Actions:**
 - Identify differences across parks, activities & demographic groups
 - Monitor trends and changes
 - Make informed decisions
 - Track system plan goals
 - Identify operational issues (safety, crowding)



Key Performance Indicators & Trends

Overall Satisfaction

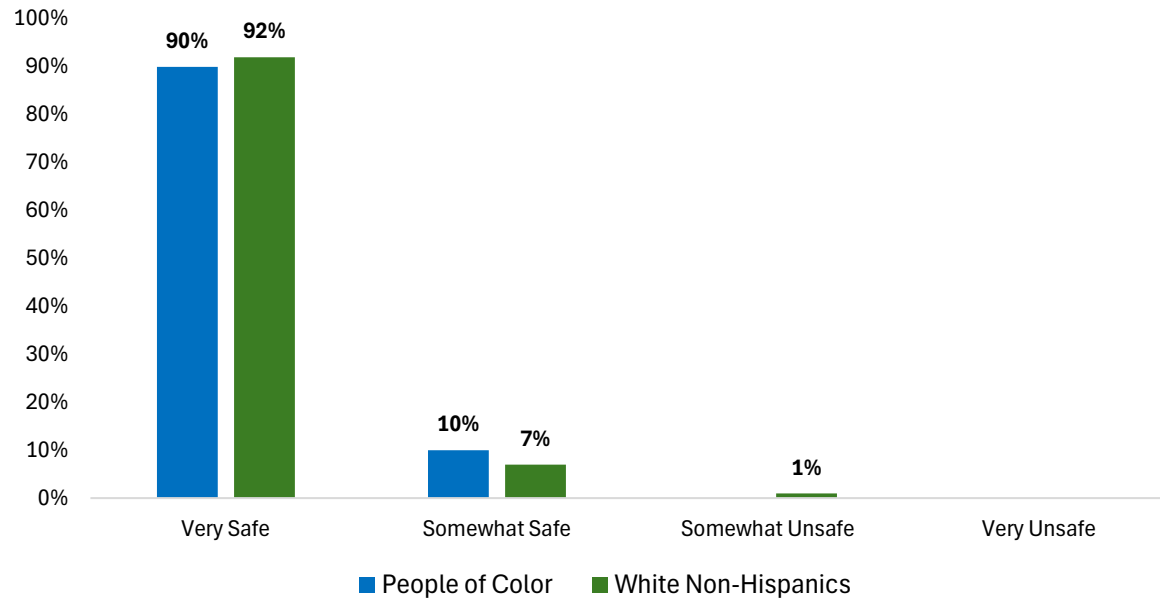


Overall winter park satisfaction was significantly higher than summer regional trail visitors, but significantly lower than summer park visitors.

Key Performance Indicators & Trends

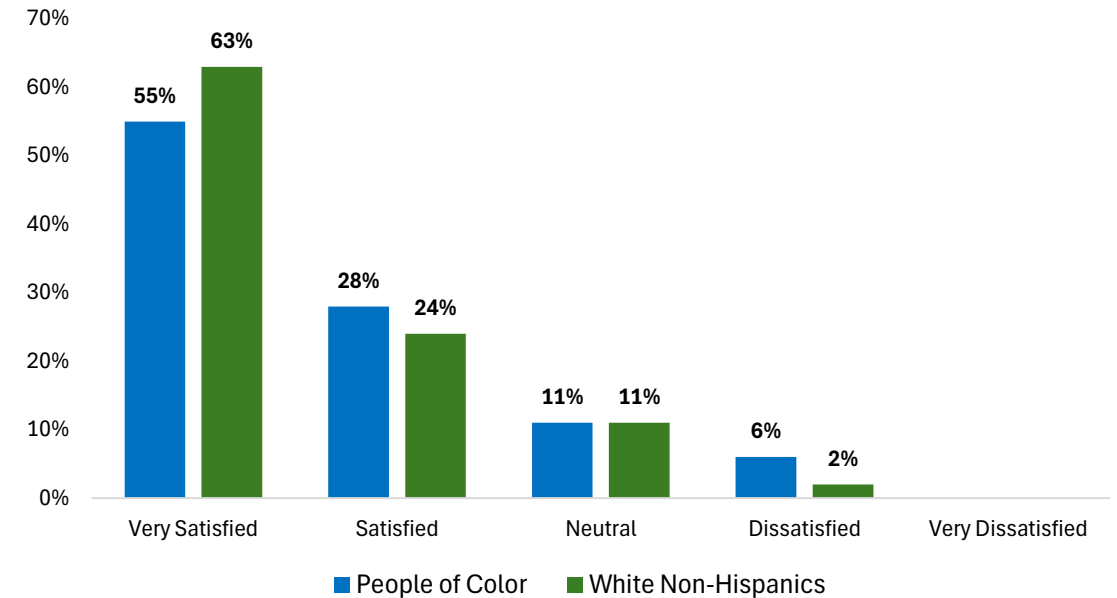
Overall Satisfaction & Safety

Feeling of Safety



Park visitors feeling of safety did not differ significantly between people of color and white non-Hispanic park users.

Overall Satisfaction

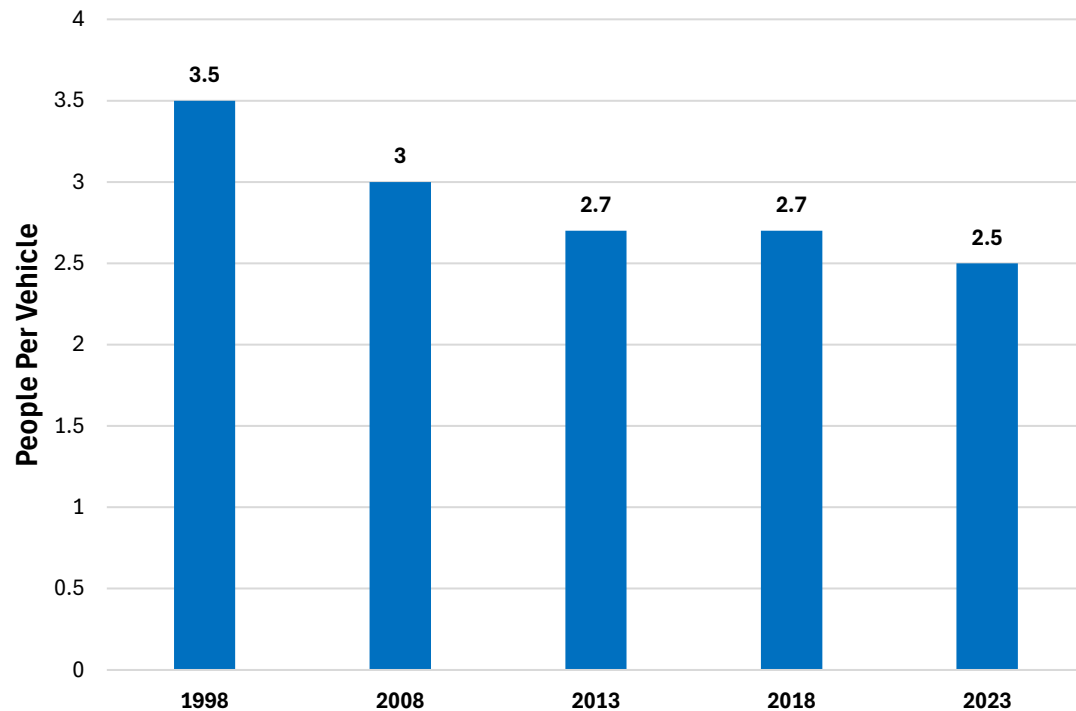


Overall satisfaction was significantly lower among people of color than for white non-Hispanic park visitors. Statistical significance determined by conducting a t-test.

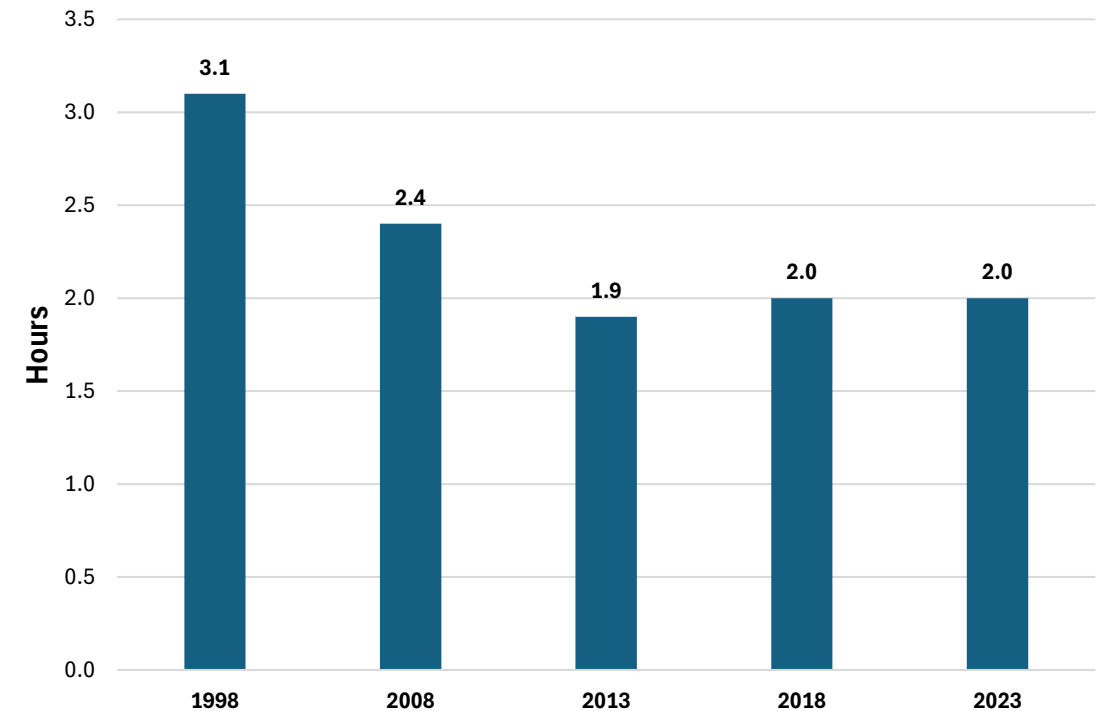
Key Performance Indicators & Trends

Length of Visit & Group Size

People Per Vehicle



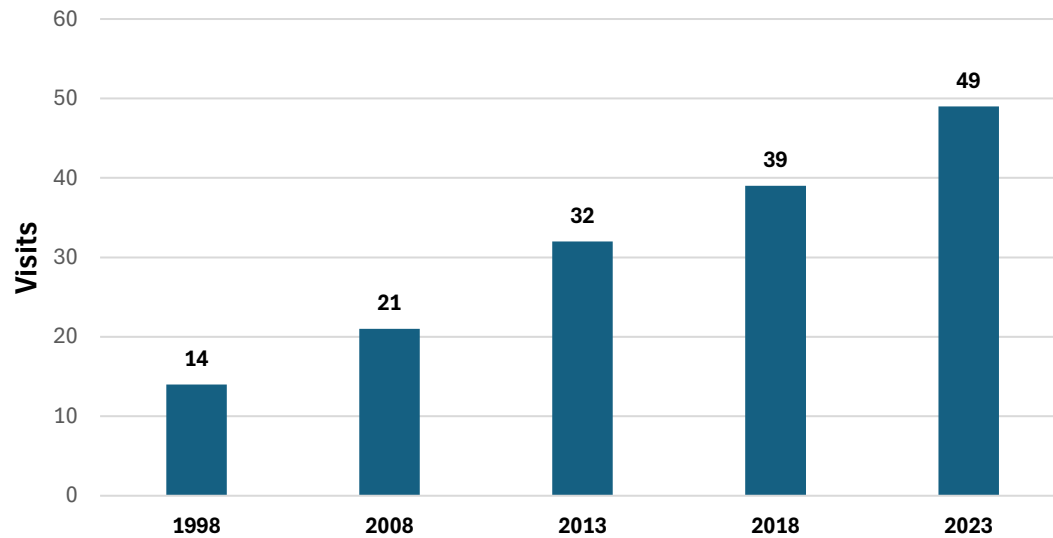
Average Length of Summer Park Visit



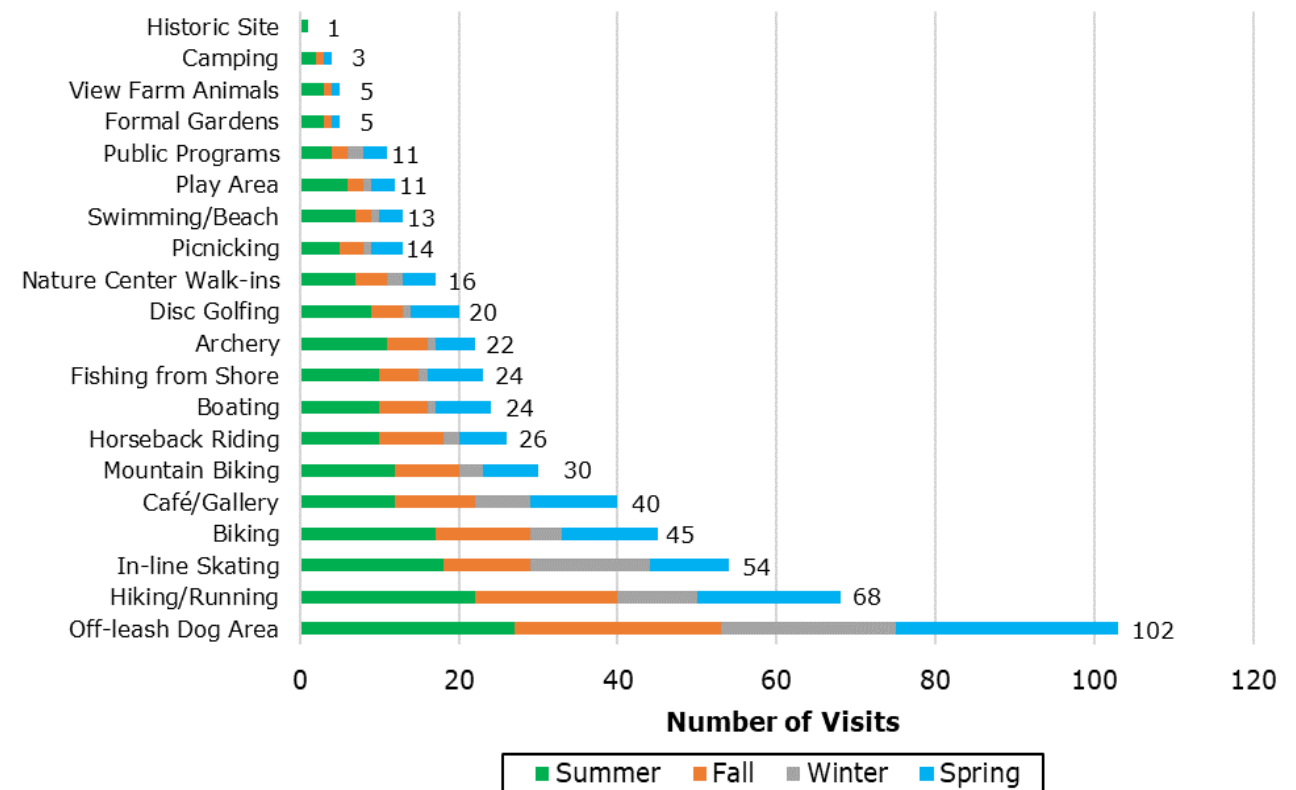
Key Performance Indicators & Trends

Visits per season

Average Annual Visits



Annual Visits by Activity



Use Cases & Actions

Demographics and Origin

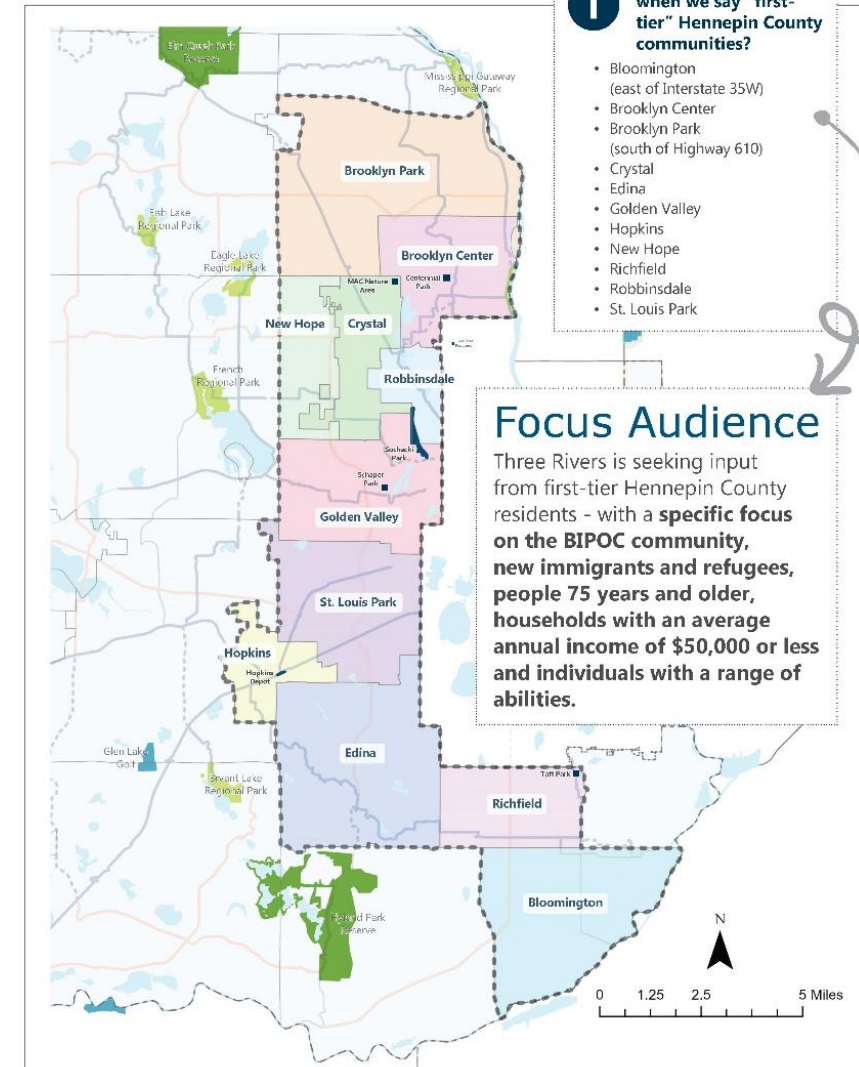
- **Visitor Demographics & Origin**

- Identify gaps by race, ethnicity, income, age, city
- Compare visitor demographics to census data
- Determine underrepresented audiences

- **Actions:**

- Community Engagement Department
- Explorer Camps
- Parks 2 People

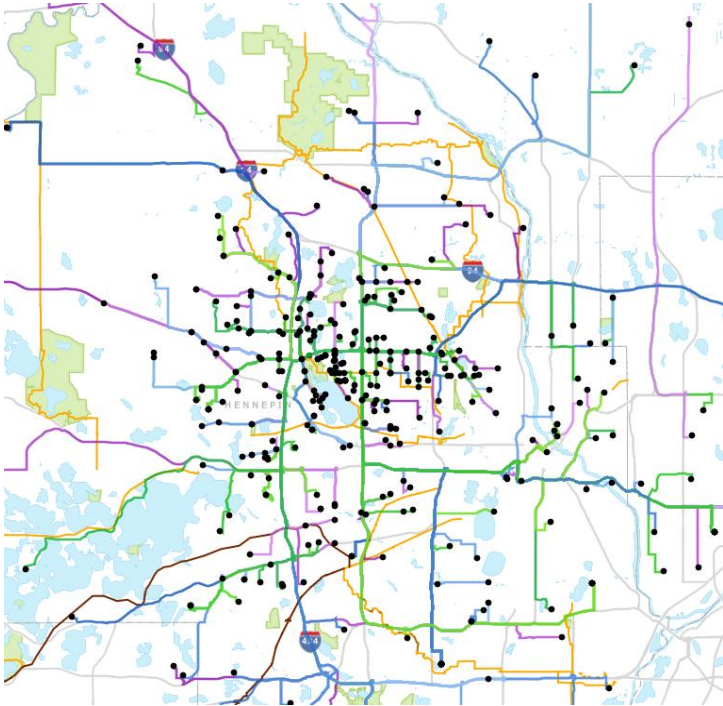
Focus Geography



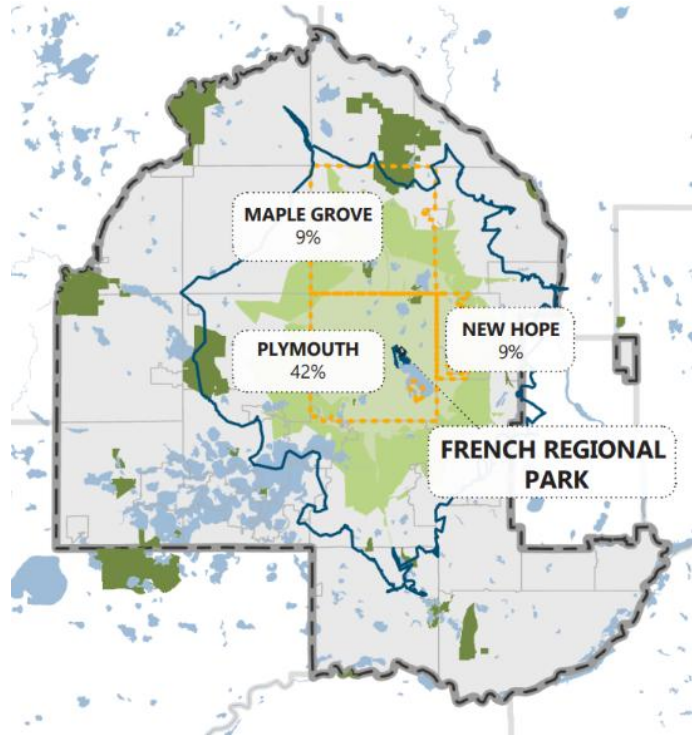
Use Cases & Actions

Service Area & Demographics

1. Calculate Drive Time



2. Determine median & 75th percentile



3. Compare visitor and service area demographics

Race	Under Represented	On Target	Over Represented
White			✓
Black	5 ✓		
American Indian		✓	
Asian		✓	
Multiple Races	6 ✓		
Other	7 ✓		

Ethnicity

Not Hispanic			✓
Hispanic	8 ✓		

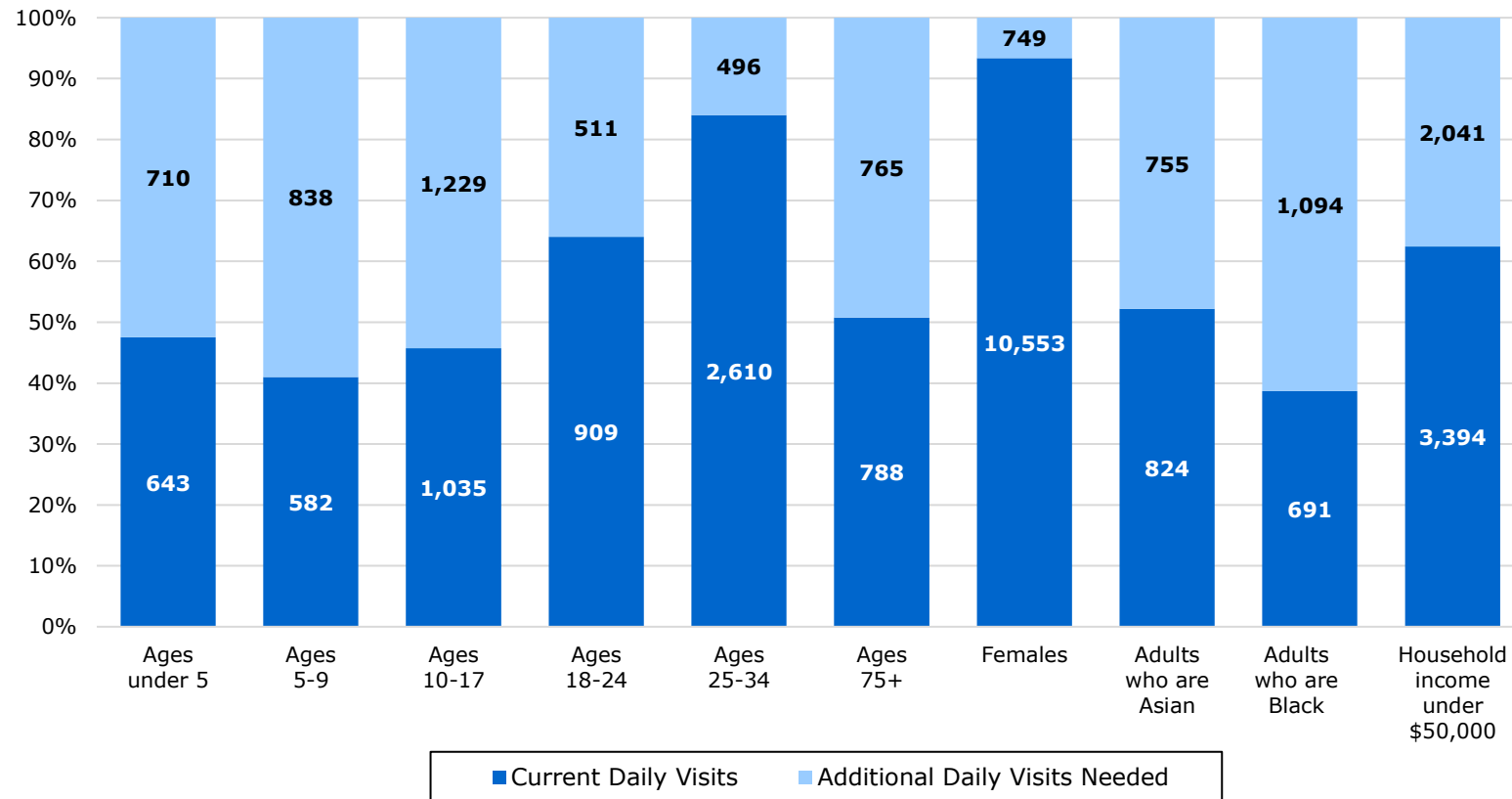
Annual household income

<\$50,000	9 ✓		
\$50,000 - \$75,000		✓	
>\$75,000			✓

Visitor Demographics

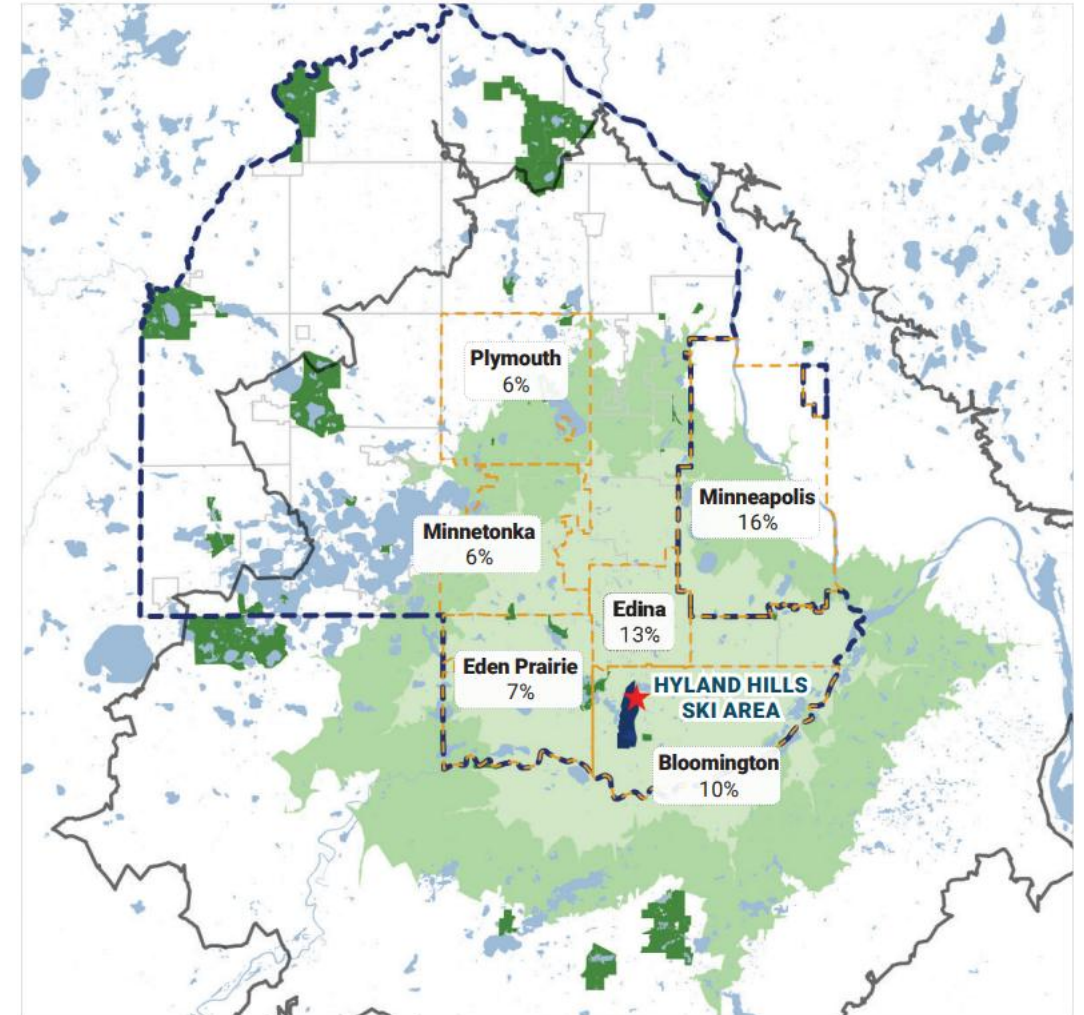
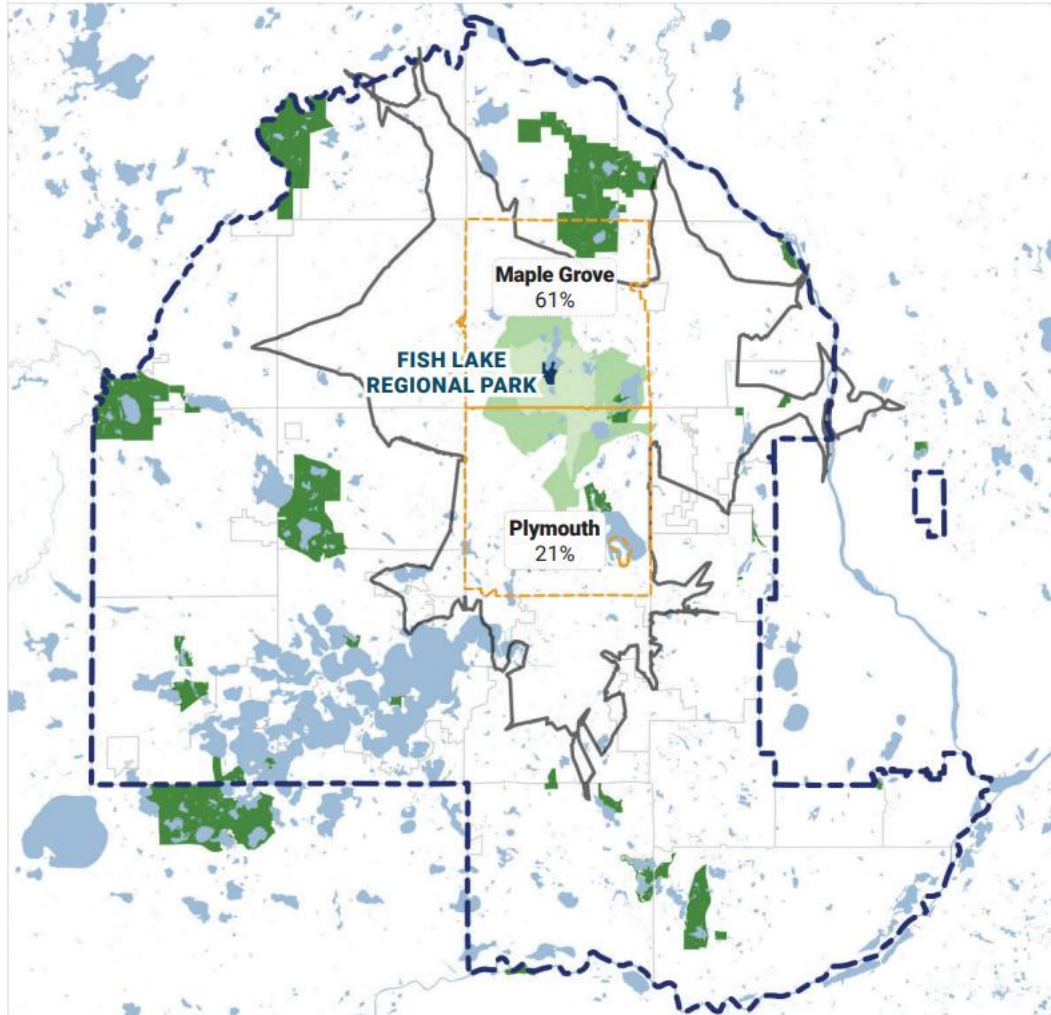
Underrepresented Visitors

Underrepresented Visitors on Regional Trails (2019)



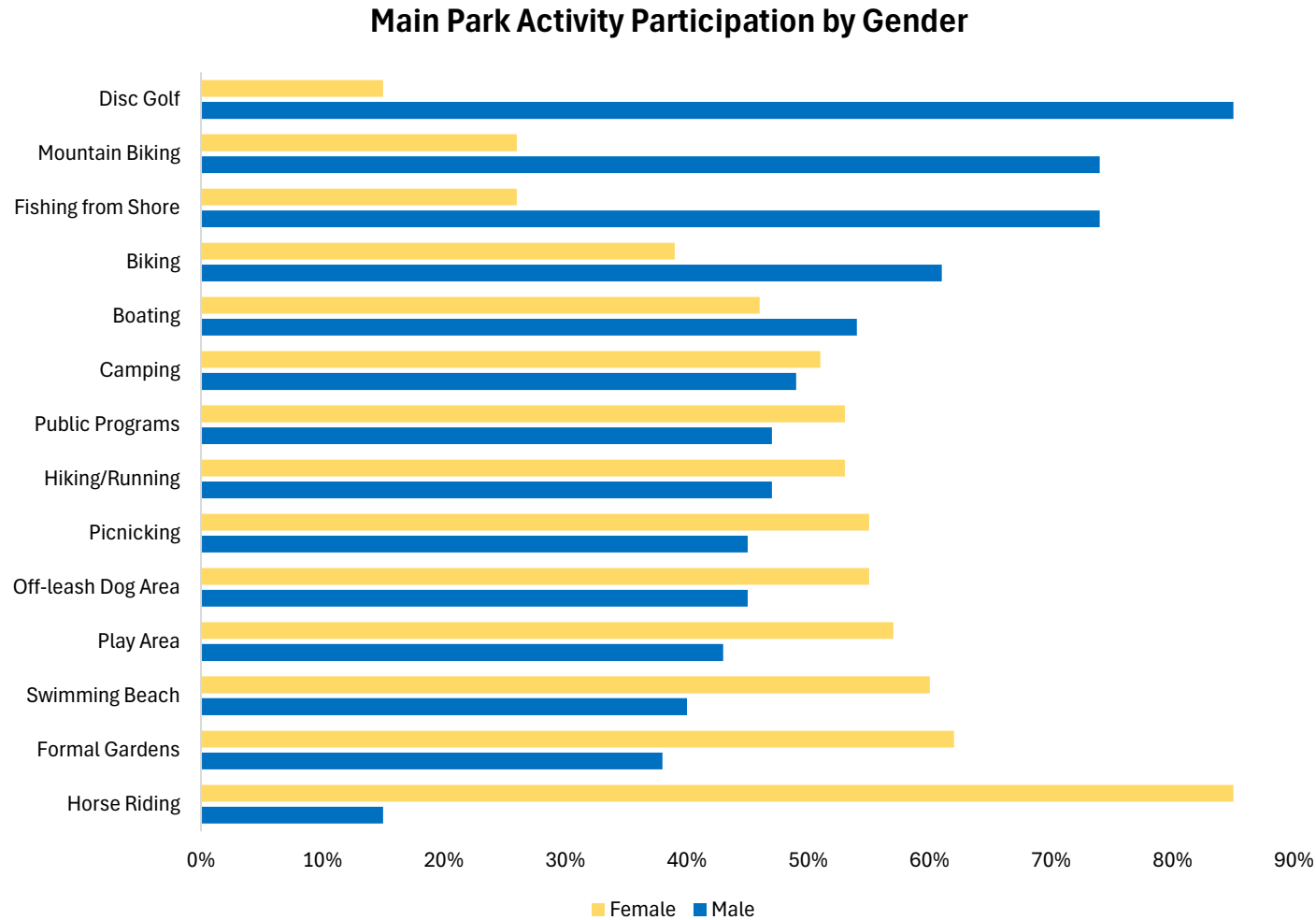
Service Area

Drive Time & Origin



Demographic Differences

Visitor Gender & Main Activity



Use Cases & Actions

Visitor Feedback

- **Suggested Improvements & Comments:**

- Direct visitor feedback & suggestions
- Rarely amounts to a large percent of suggestions (5-10%)
- Compounds over time
- Often validates a known issue

- **Actions:**

- New point-of-sale & web purchasing interface
- In park wayfinding & trail directional signage



Wrap Up

- **We're still learning and adapting**
- **Only collect data that is used**
- **Representative sample & sample size**
- **Make data more accessible and understandable**
- **Consistent metrics to measure longitudinal change**



Questions

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