

COMMUNITY RESEARCH RESULTS

PARK USE AND VALUE IN LANE COUNTY

September 2024

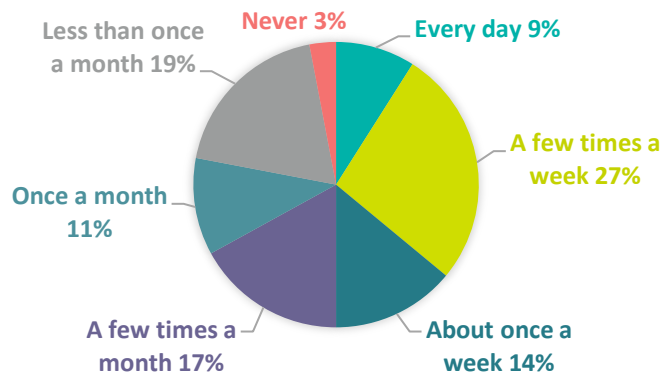
USE AND VALUE OF PARKS

We asked our community about how frequently they go to parks in their area, what are the most important aspects of parks, and to what extent they value parks and are willing to fund them. Primarily, respondents live in or close to Eugene (80%). Other respondents live in or near Springfield (11%), Oakridge (2%), Coburg, Creswell, Veneta (1% each), Cottage Grove, Florence, Junction City, Loraine (0.5% each).

FREQUENCING PARKS

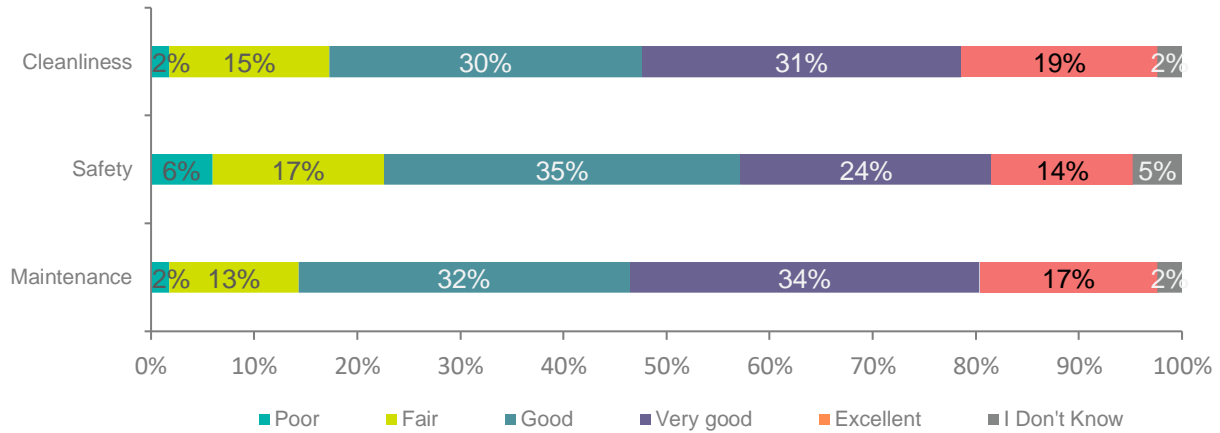
Respondents are mixed between how frequently they go to a park in their area, with the most common response being they go to a park a few times a week (27%) and the second being they go to a park less than once a month (19%).

About how often do you visit a park in your area?



We asked respondents how they would rate parks in their area for cleanliness, safety and maintenance. Maintenance received the highest marks, followed by cleanliness, with safety falling behind. Interestingly, safety also had the most respondents who indicated they didn't know how safe their area's parks are (8 responses, 5% of respondents).

How would you rate parks in your area for the following?



WHAT'S IMPORTANT AT PARKS

Nearly three-fourths (74%) of respondents indicated that natural elements, such as trees and greenery, are important features in deciding which park to go to. This was followed by safety (69%) and cleanliness (67%).

When asked to rank the items that they selected as most important, safety was selected as the most important aspect the respondents, followed by “natural elements” and “proximity to my home.” Cleanliness also plays a clear role, being the second or third choice for many respondents.

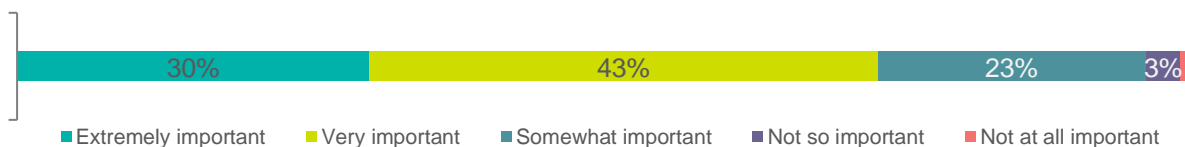
Takeaway

While safety and cleanliness are very important for a park to be visited, the natural elements also have a tremendous importance. Perhaps the natural elements are what draws people, while unsafe or unclean conditions deter people. The proximity to the home underlies the importance of people being able to access parks within a short walk or drive of their home.

IMPORTANCE OF PARKS

In thinking about the importance of parks for their quality of life, 73% indicated parks are extremely (30%) or very (43%) important.

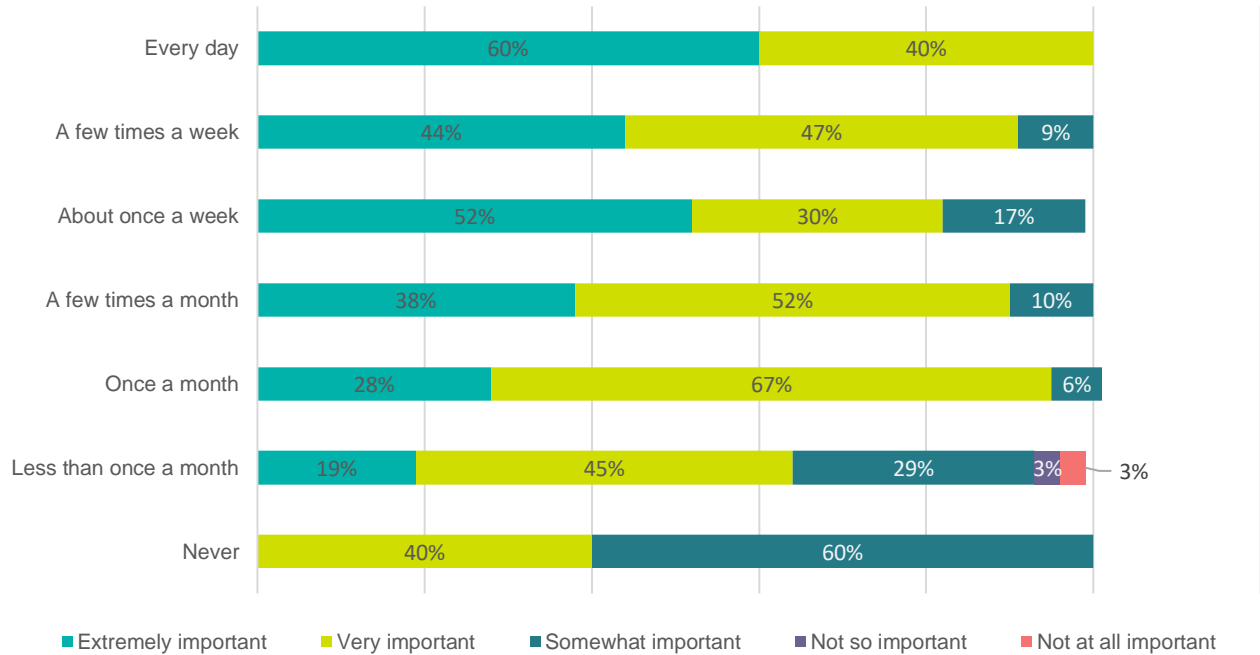
For you, how important are parks for your quality of life?



Perhaps not surprisingly, the importance of parks is strongly correlated with how frequently people visit parks: people who are at parks more frequently are more likely to indicate that parks are extremely or very important. For those who are at a park a few times a week, 91% indicated parks are extremely or very important, while 51% of those who are at a park less than once a month indicated that to them parks are just somewhat important.

Similarly, the frequency at which people are at parks is reflected in their beliefs that parks should be funded to be safe, clean and well-maintained.

For you, how important is funding parks to be safe, clean and well-maintained?



Takeaway

The strong correlation between frequency of visiting a park and the importance of a park, as well as sentiment for the importance of funding parks makes sense – people value what they use, and conversely, they use what they value. This may be applicable to other service areas managed by municipalities.

METHODOLOGY

This survey was conducted in August and September 2024 and received 168 completed surveys. Responses were solicited from people who indicated an interest in participating in Turell Group’s community research and from people who were encouraged to take the survey by local nonprofit Bags of Love with an incentive of a \$1 donation per survey completed given to Bags of Love.

TURELL GROUP

Turell Group is a full-service marketing and communications agency in Eugene, Oregon, that offers independent research as a service. The agency staff have been providing unbiased services for more than two decades. The agency is non-partisan, independent, and specializes in supporting organizations located within Oregon.