

1.1 SURVEY COMPARISON

The Survey Comparison Report presents a comprehensive analysis and comparison of findings from two significant surveys conducted for the Gurnee Park District: the ETC Statistically Valid Survey and the Online Community Survey via SurveyMonkey.

The objective of these surveys was to gather insightful feedback from the district's residents and park users, aiming to understand their satisfaction levels, preferences, and expectations regarding park facilities, programs, and services offered by the Gurnee Park District.

The ETC Statistically Valid Survey, recognized for its rigorous methodology and representative sampling, offers a detailed snapshot of community sentiment and perceptions, providing results with a high degree of accuracy and reliability. On the other hand, the Online Community Survey, facilitated through SurveyMonkey, allowed for broader participation, enabling a wide range of stakeholders to express their opinions and preferences.

By comparing the insights gathered from both surveys, this report aims to highlight common trends, divergences, and unique perspectives that emerged from the different methodologies employed. Such a comparative analysis is crucial for the Gurnee Park District's strategic planning and decision-making processes, ensuring that both the statistically significant viewpoints and the broader community feedback are considered in shaping the future of the District's offerings.



Statistically Valid Survey

- 402 households (Goal of 400)
- Precision rate of at least +/- 4.8% at the 95% level of confidence
- Residents were able to return the survey by mail, by phone or completing it online
- Only scientific & defensible method to understand community needs
- Translation services available in multiple languages including Spanish.

Online Community Survey

- 536 responses
- No precision rate or level of confidence due to there being no selection criteria for respondents
- Asked same questions as the Statistically Valid Survey
- Provides further insight on community expectations
- Available in English and Spanish

The following shows a side-by-side comparison of key results from each survey by question.

Full results from the Statistically Valid Survey can be found in **APPENDIX ? (add link in report)**.

Full results from the Online Community Survey can be found in **APPENDIX ?. (add link in report)**




1.1.1 DEMOGRAPHICS

In the demographic section of this report, we analyze the community demographics served by the Gurnee Park District based on responses from the ETC Statistically Valid Survey and the Online Community Survey via SurveyMonkey.

We examine respondent demographics such as age, gender, tenure in Gurnee, and race to gain insights into the community's composition. Our findings are compared with the 2023 demographic estimates from ESRI to understand how the survey data aligns with broader demographic trends.




Full demographic data can be found in **Section (Insert link in report)**.

AGE

			
Ages 0-17	20%	35%	23%
Ages 18-34	16%	15%	22%
Ages 35-54	25%	25%	26%
Ages 55-74	33%	19%	23%
Ages 75+	6%	6%	5%



Both surveys underrepresent the youngest age group (0-17) and the 18-34 category compared to ESRI's data, indicating a potential oversight of younger residents' perspectives. The ETC Survey has a higher number of respondents aged 55-74, while the Online Survey overestimates responses from the 0-17 category.

GENDER

			
Female	50%	75%	52%
Male	49%	25%	48%
Other/Self-Describe	1%	0%	0%




There's a stark contrast in gender representation, with the Online Survey significantly overrepresenting females (75% vs. ESRI's 52%) and underrepresenting males (25% vs. 48%), whereas the ETC Survey presents a more balanced gender ratio that closely mirrors ESRI's demographics.

YEARS LIVED IN GURNEE

		
0-5	15%	20%
6-10	15%	16%
11-15	8%	9%
16-20	12%	15%
21-30	29%	23%
31+	21%	17%

The tenure of residents in Gurnee as captured by the surveys is similar, with minor variations. However, both surveys indicate a slightly higher representation of longer-term residents (21+ years) compared to shorter-term residents, suggesting a skew towards more established community members.

RACE



			
White Alone	67%	87%	55%
Black Alone	8%	3%	11%
American Indian	1%	0%	1%
Asian	13%	6%	12%
Pacific Islander	0%	0%	0%
Some Other Race	1%	4%	10%
Two or More Races	N/A	N/A	11%

Racial composition discrepancies are notable, with the Online Survey particularly overrepresenting White respondents (87% vs. 55% per ESRI) and underrepresenting Black and Asian populations. The ETC Survey, is much closer to ESRI's racial demographics, but still marginally over represents White Alone and under represents Some Other Race and Black Alone categories.



DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

These observations highlight the ETC Statistically Valid Survey's effectiveness in achieving a demographic representation that more closely aligns with the community's actual makeup, as provided by ESRI. This underscores the value of statistically valid approaches in capturing a comprehensive and accurate demographic profile, ensuring that the insights drawn from such data are truly reflective of the entire community. The following results showcase the contrast and similarities between the two survey findings.



1.1.2 VISITATION/PARTICIPATION

		
Visited parks in the past 12 months	82%	91%
Visited facilities in the past 12 months	59%	79%
Participated in programs in the past 12 months	48%	66%



HOW OFTEN HAVE YOU VISITED GURNEE PARK DISTRICT PARKS DURING THE PAST 12 MONTHS?

		
5+ times a week	11%	9%
2-4 times a week	27%	26%
Once a week	14%	14%
1-3 times a month	26%	27%
Less than once a month	22%	25%

HOW OFTEN HAVE YOU VISITED GURNEE PARK DISTRICT RECREATION FACILITIES DURING THE PAST 12 MONTHS?

		
5+ times a week	11%	15%
2-4 times a week	30%	34%
Once a week	12%	15%
1-3 times a month	16%	16%
Less than once a month	31%	21%

HOW MANY PROGRAMS OR EVENTS OFFERED BY THE GURNEE PARK DISTRICT HAVE YOU OR MEMBERS OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD PARTICIPATED IN DURING THE PAST 12 MONTHS?

		
1 program / event	28%	29%
2-3 programs / events	40%	42%
4-6 programs / events	21%	21%
7+ programs / events	11%	8%





Higher engagement and participation among Online Survey respondents. The comparative analysis of visitation and participation data from the ETC Statistically Valid Survey and the Online Community Survey via SurveyMonkey shows a greater proportion of online respondents reported visiting parks (91% vs. 82%), using facilities (79% vs. 59%), and participating in programs (66% vs. 48%) within the past 12 months, compared to those surveyed by the ETC Institute.

Frequency of park visits shows relatively consistent patterns across both surveys, the Online Survey participants reported more frequent visits to recreation facilities and slightly higher participation in park district programs or events.



This suggests that the online community survey might attract a segment of the community that is more actively involved in utilizing park district offerings, thereby indicating a potential area of focus for targeted engagement and program development efforts.

1.1.3 PHYSICAL CONDITION/QUALITY



HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE PHYSICAL CONDITION OF ALL THE GURNEE PARK DISTRICT PARKS YOU HAVE VISITED?

		
Excellent	44%	41%
Good	53%	52%
Fair	5%	6%
Poor	0%	0%

OVERALL, HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE PHYSICAL CONDITION OF ALL THE GURNEE PARK DISTRICT RECREATION FACILITIES YOU HAVE VISITED?

		
Excellent	51%	41%
Good	45%	53%
Fair	5%	6%
Poor	0%	0%

HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE OVERALL QUALITY OF THE GURNEE PARK DISTRICT PROGRAMS OR EVENTS IN WHICH YOUR HOUSEHOLD HAS PARTICIPATED IN?

		
Excellent	44%	46%
Good	52%	48%
Fair	3%	4%
Poor	1%	1%

Positive Rating for Physical Conditions of Parks and Recreation Facilities: Respondents from both surveys generally rated the physical condition of parks and recreation facilities positively, with a majority indicating 'Excellent' or 'Good' conditions. Specifically, the ETC survey showed a higher percentage of respondents rating parks as 'Excellent' (51% vs. 41%) compared to the Online Survey, which conversely had a higher proportion deeming them 'Good' (53% vs. 45%).



Similar trends were observed in the evaluation of recreation facilities, with the ETC survey reporting a marginally higher 'Excellent' rating (44% vs. 41%), while both surveys showed a comparable distribution in the 'Good' category.

Quality of programs or events: The Online Survey participants rated them slightly more favorably, with a higher percentage finding them 'Excellent' (46% vs. 44%) and a slight shift towards 'Good' ratings as well (48% vs. 52%).



These findings suggest a consensus on the satisfactory physical condition and quality of the Gurnee Park District's parks, facilities, and programs, with minor variations between the survey instruments hinting at differing levels of expectation or experience among respondents.

1.1.4 BARRIERS

REASONS THAT PREVENT YOU OR MEMBERS OF YOUR HOUSEHOLDS FROM VISITING GURNEE PARK DISTRICT PARKS, COMMUNITY CENTERS, OR FITNESS/AQUATICS FACILITIES MORE OFTEN. (TOP FIVE RESPONSES)

	
Cost (25%)	Cost (35%)
Lack of amenities we want to use (15%)	Use parks/facilities in other districts/jurisdictions (21%)
Use parks/facilities in other districts/jurisdictions (13%)	Lack of amenities we want to use (19%)
Not aware of parks' or facilities' locations (9%)	Hours of operation are not convenient (12%)
Lack of shade (8%)	Lack of shade (10%)

REASONS THAT PREVENT YOU OR MEMBERS OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD FROM PARTICIPATING IN GURNEE PARK DISTRICT PROGRAMS MORE OFTEN. (TOP FIVE RESPONSES)

	
Too busy (25%)	Program times are not convenient (34%)
Cost (23%)	Cost (27%)
Program times are not convenient (23%)	Too busy (27%)
Not interested (16%)	Classes are full (21%)
I don't know what is offered (16%)	Program not offered (21%)

Cost: Financial considerations stand out as the most significant barrier across both surveys for visiting facilities and participating in programs, with a notable increase in concern among Online Survey respondents (35% for visitation, 27% for program participation) compared to the ETC Survey participants (25% for visitation, 23% for program participation).



Additionally, the preference for amenities and the attraction to parks or facilities in other districts highlight divergent priorities, with the Online Community emphasizing the lack of desired amenities (19%) and more convenient operating hours (12%) as substantial barriers, contrasting with the ETC respondents who prioritized these less.

Program participation: Conflicting schedules and availability issues such as full classes or unoffered programs present significant obstacles, particularly emphasized by Online Survey respondents with concerns about program times (34%) and full classes (21%).



These findings suggest that to enhance community participation, addressing affordability, expanding and continuing to publicize its amenities and programs, and explore more flexible scheduling to accommodate community needs and preferences would be viable options.

1.1.5 NEEDS

NEED FOR RECREATION FACILITIES/AMENITIES BY PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WHO INDICATED NEED (TOP FIVE RESPONSES)

	
Walking paths in parks (78%)	Trees (73%)
Trees (76%)	Walking paths in parks (67%)
Small neighborhood parks (75%)	Small neighborhood parks (65%)
Multi-use hiking, biking, walking trails (72%)	Fitness & exercise facilities (indoor) (62%)
Shaded picnic areas & shelters (63%)	Large community parks (more than 10 acres) (62%)

NEED FOR RECREATION PROGRAMS/ACTIVITIES BY PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WHO INDICATED NEED (TOP FIVE RESPONSES)

	
Adult fitness & wellness programs (57%)	Adult fitness & wellness programs (48%)
Exercise classes (49%)	Community & cultural special events (38%)
Community & cultural special events (48%)	Exercise classes (38%)
Cultural enrichment programs (36%)	Youth seasonal programs & camps (29%)
Senior programs (35%)	Youth sports programs & camps (28%)

Recreation facilities and amenities: Walking paths in parks are highly valued by both ETC (78%) and Online Survey respondents (67%), indicating a widespread desire for accessible walking spaces.

Trees and small neighborhood parks also rank high in necessity across both surveys, emphasizing the community's preference for natural elements and localized recreational spaces.

Notably, the ETC respondents placed a greater emphasis on multi-use trails and shaded picnic areas, while Online Survey participants expressed a stronger need for indoor fitness facilities and large community parks, suggesting a variance in recreational preferences and priorities between the two groups.



Recreation programs and activities: Adult fitness and wellness programs emerged as the top need among both ETC (57%) and Online Survey respondents (48%), highlighting a strong demand for health-oriented offerings. Exercise classes and community & cultural special events also ranked highly, reflecting a shared interest in physical activity and community engagement.

However, differences emerge in the prioritization of cultural enrichment and senior programs by the ETC respondents, versus a stronger focus on youth seasonal programs and sports camps in the Online Survey, indicating generational and lifestyle-based distinctions in program needs. The online survey respondents were also much younger and significantly less racially diverse which also may have a bearing on their responses for priorities.



These findings underline the importance of providing a diverse range of facilities and programs that cater to the varied interests and needs within the Gurnee Park District community, with an emphasis on accessibility, natural amenities, fitness opportunities, and inclusive programming to serve all age groups and preferences.

1.1.6 IMPORTANCE

FACILITIES/AMENITIES MOST IMPORTANT TO HOUSEHOLDS BY PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WHO SELECTED THE ITEMS AS ONE OF THEIR TOP FIVE CHOICES (TOP FIVE RESPONSES)

	
Walking paths in parks (44%)	Fitness and exercise facilities (42%)
Multi-use hiking, biking, walking trails (41%)	Walking paths in parks (37%)
Small neighborhood parks (31%)	Multi-use hiking, biking, walking trails (37%)
Fitness & exercise facilities (27%)	Community center (30%)
Community center (22%)	Small neighborhood parks (26%)

PROGRAMS/ACTIVITIES MOST IMPORTANT TO HOUSEHOLDS BY PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WHO SELECTED THE ITEMS AS ONE OF THEIR TOP FIVE CHOICES (TOP FIVE RESPONSES)

	
Adult fitness & wellness programs (33%)	Adult fitness & wellness programs (52%)
Community & cultural special events (24%)	Exercise classes (35%)
Exercise classes (22%)	Community & cultural special events (31%)
Senior programs (19%)	Youth sports programs & camps (22%)
Pickleball lessons & leagues (13%)	Swim lessons (21%)

Top Priority: Walking paths in parks emerge as a top priority in both surveys, with a slightly higher emphasis in the ETC Survey (44%) compared to the Online Survey (37%), underscoring the universal appeal of accessible and safe walking areas. The importance of multi-use trails is equally acknowledged, though the ETC respondents placed a somewhat higher value on them (41%) than the Online respondents (37%).

Fitness and exercise facilities and community centers are also prioritized but with a notable preference shift; the Online Community places a higher importance on fitness facilities (42% vs. 27%) and community centers (30% vs. 22%), suggesting a demand for indoor recreational spaces.

Programs and activities Priorities: Adult fitness and wellness programs top the list in both surveys, with a significantly higher importance rating in the Online Survey (52% vs. 33%), indicating a strong community focus on health and wellness.

While both surveys agree on the value of community and cultural events and exercise classes, the Online Survey respondents show a greater inclination towards these activities.

Notably, the ETC Survey highlights the importance of senior programs, whereas the Online Survey shifts attention towards youth sports programs and swim lessons, reflecting divergent demographic priorities.

1.1.7 PRIORITY INVESTMENT RATING



The Priority Investment Rating (PIR), crafted by ETC Institute, serves as an analytical framework designed to assist agencies in objectively assessing where to focus their parks and recreation investment efforts. This tool helps in pinpointing which facilities and programs the community views as most deserving of funding and development priority.

It evaluates both the significance residents assign to various facilities/programs and their expressed unmet needs – aspects that are either partially addressed or completely overlooked, compared against the highest-rated facility/program. Recognizing the critical balance between addressing unmet needs and valuing the community's prioritization, the PIR assigns equal weight to these factors.



Each facility or program is then scored on a 0-200 scale, facilitating a comprehensive approach to guiding future investment decisions in parks and recreation projects.

*More information regarding PIR can be found in **SECTION (Add Link in Report)***

FACILITIES/AMENITIES (TOP FIVE)

	
Multi-use hiking, biking, walking trails (188)	Multi-use hiking, biking, walking trails (167)
Walking paths in parks (173)	Fitness & exercise facilities (158)
Fitness & exercise facilities (141)	Walking paths in parks (152)
Dog park (131)	Community center (137)
Environmental/nature education center (122)	Splash pads/Spray park (137)

PROGRAMS/ACTIVITIES (TOP FIVE)

	
Adult fitness & wellness programs (195)	Adult fitness & wellness programs (200)
Community & cultural special events (162)	Exercise classes (145)
Exercise classes (154)	Community & cultural special events (127)
Senior programs (132)	Swim lessons (89)
Adult visual arts/crafts programs (127)	Water fitness programs/lap swimming (89)

Facilities and amenities, both surveys identified multi-use hiking, biking, and walking trails as the top priority, with scores of 188 (ETC) and 167 (Online), indicating a strong community desire for versatile outdoor spaces. Walking paths in parks and fitness & exercise facilities also ranked highly but with a notable preference for walking paths in the ETC Survey (173) over the Online Survey (152), and a reverse preference for fitness facilities (ETC 141 vs. Online 158). Additionally, the ETC Survey highlighted the importance of dog parks and environmental/nature education centers, while the Online Community expressed a higher preference for community centers and splash pads/spray parks.



Programs and activities: Adult fitness and wellness programs emerged as the highest priority across both surveys, with a slightly higher rating in the Online Survey (200 vs. 195). Community & cultural special events and exercise classes were also prioritized, though the Online Survey respondents placed more emphasis on exercise classes over community events compared to the

ETC Survey. Senior programs and adult visual arts/crafts were noted in the ETC Survey, whereas the Online respondents highlighted the need for swim lessons and water fitness programs.

This comparison underscores a shared value placed on health and wellness facilities and programs across both respondent groups, with slight variations in the ranking of priorities. The data suggests a support for investment in multi-purpose trails, fitness amenities, and adult exercise classes and wellness programs and community wide cultural and special events, while also considering the unique preferences indicated by each survey for a well-rounded development strategy.

1.1.8 OVERALL PERCEPTIONS

WHICH FIVE SERVICES DO YOU THINK SHOULD RECEIVE THE MOST ATTENTION FROM THE GURNEE PARK DISTRICT OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS (TOP FIVE RESPONSES)



	
Safety in parks (32%)	Innovation in developing new offerings (38%)
Innovation in developing new offerings (26%)	Safety in parks (38%)
Cleanliness of Gurnee Park District parks (25%)	Cost of recreation programs (35%)
Cost of recreation programs (24%)	Quality of programs for adults over 55 years of age (32%)
Quality of other programs (24%)	Cost of other offerings (membership, rentals, etc.) (32%)

Both ETC and Online Survey respondents identify safety in parks as an area that should receive the most attention, with ETC highlighting safety (32%) and Online Survey emphasizing both safety and innovation in offerings (38% each). It is important to note that while Safety is an area of attention, it was not cited as a barrier to participation. Thus, it is likely that respondents want to ensure a proactive approach towards continuing to prioritize safety in the parks.

The demand for innovative park experiences is evident, alongside ETC's focus on cleanliness (25%) and Online Survey's concerns over the affordability of programs (35%) and inclusivity for adults over 55 (32%).

Cost considerations are crucial across both surveys, pointing to a community preference for affordable and accessible park services. These findings suggest a strategic focus for the Gurnee Park District on ensuring safety, fostering innovation, maintaining cleanliness, and providing cost-effective, inclusive programming.

IF YOU HAD \$100, HOW WOULD YOU ALLOCATE THE FUNDS AMONG THESE PARKS AND RECREATION CATEGORIES? (TOP FIVE RESPONSES)

	
Improve/maintain existing parks and recreation facilities (\$27.68)	Improve/maintain existing parks and recreation facilities (\$25.36)
Develop new walking and biking trails (\$19.41)	Expand existing indoor facilities (\$18.29)
Develop new indoor facilities (\$14.18)	Develop new indoor facilities (\$16.83)
Construct new sports fields and sports courts (\$10.71)	Develop new walking and biking trails (\$15.22)
Expand existing indoor facilities (\$10.64)	Construct new sports fields and sports courts (\$12.39)

Improve and Maintain Existing Parks and Facilities are top: Both ETC and Online Survey respondents prioritize the improvement and maintenance of existing parks and recreation facilities, with ETC allocating slightly more (\$27.68) than Online (\$25.36). While both groups value developing new walking and biking trails, ETC favors this more (\$19.41) compared to Online's preference for expanding indoor facilities (\$18.29).

Online participants also allocate more towards new indoor facilities (\$16.83) than ETC (\$14.18), and both view constructing new sports fields and courts as less of a priority, with Online Survey still allocating slightly more funds (\$12.39) than ETC (\$10.71).

This reflects a common interest in enhancing current facilities and expanding recreational options, but differences in funding allocations indicate varied views on the balance between new development and expansion, underscoring the community's diverse investment priorities in parks and recreation.

RATE YOUR SATISFACTION WITH THE OVERALL VALUE YOU RECEIVE FROM THE GURNEE PARK DISTRICT?

Most respondents from both surveys express a level of satisfaction, with 80% of ETC respondents (30% very satisfied and 50% satisfied) and 87% of Online respondents (38% very satisfied and 49% satisfied) indicating positive feedback. A notable difference is observed in the proportion of respondents who are unsure, with the ETC survey reporting a higher uncertainty rate (16%) compared to the Online survey (8%). The percentages of dissatisfied respondents are relatively low and similar across both surveys (ETC: 4% dissatisfied, 1% very dissatisfied; Online: 5% dissatisfied).

This data suggests a strong overall satisfaction with the Gurnee Park District's value among residents.

1.1.9 SUMMARY

Demographic Representation: The ETC Survey more accurately reflects community demographics in terms of age, gender, tenure in Gurnee, and race when compared to the Online Survey. The Online Survey particularly overrepresented females and the White demographic, while underrepresenting males and Black and Asian populations.

Visitation/Participation: The Online Survey respondents reported higher engagement, with a greater proportion indicating they visited parks, used facilities, and participated in programs within the past 12 months than the ETC Survey respondents. This suggests that the online platform may attract a segment of the community more actively involved with park district offerings.

Physical Condition/Quality: Respondents from both surveys rated the physical condition and quality of parks, facilities, and programs positively. Minor differences in perceptions were noted, suggesting overall satisfaction with the condition and quality of the Gurnee Park District's assets.



Barriers to Participation: Cost emerged as a significant barrier for both visiting facilities and participating in programs across both surveys. Other noted barriers include the lack of amenities, inconvenient operating hours, and the use of facilities in other districts.

Needs and Priorities: Walking paths, trees, and small neighborhood parks were among the top needs for facilities and amenities. Adult fitness and wellness programs were highly demanded across both surveys. The Online Survey respondents showed a stronger need for indoor fitness facilities and large community parks.

Importance and Investment Priority: Walking paths, fitness and exercise facilities, and multi-use trails were prioritized by both surveys. The Priority Investment Rating (PIR) highlighted multi-use trails and adult fitness programs as top investment priorities, with slight variations in priorities between the two surveys.

Overall Perceptions and Investment Preferences: Safety, innovation, and cost-effectiveness were identified as areas of continued focus. Both groups of respondents favored improving and maintaining existing facilities and developing new trails and indoor spaces, with variations in funding allocation preferences.

Satisfaction with Value: High levels of satisfaction with the Gurnee Park District were reported, with the Online Survey respondents slightly more satisfied. A small percentage of respondents remained unsure or dissatisfied.

		
Very satisfied	30%	38%
Satisfied	50%	49%
Unsure	16%	8%
Dissatisfied	4%	5%
Very Dissatisfied	1%	0%

The analysis emphasizes the crucial role of the ETC Statistically Valid Survey as the only survey that provides a statistically valid representation of the community, making it a more accurate and reliable source for understanding community needs and preferences.

While the Online Community Survey via SurveyMonkey plays a valuable role in capturing a wide range of opinions and fostering broad community engagement, the ETC survey's rigorous methodology and representative sampling ensure that its findings are more reflective of the Gurnee Park District's entire demographic.

This comparative analysis is helpful in ensuring that input is accurately weighted and validated or differentiated, as appropriate, in making decisions by the Gurnee Park District leadership and staff.