



# Understanding Usership in Hermann Park

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# Presentation Overview

Hermann Park in the Houston Context

The Process

Research Design

Research Questions

The Survey and the Observational Form

Findings

Who uses Hermann Park?

What do they think about Hermann Park?





# Hermann Park in the Houston Context

Motivation for study

Master plan

Houston as a unique city

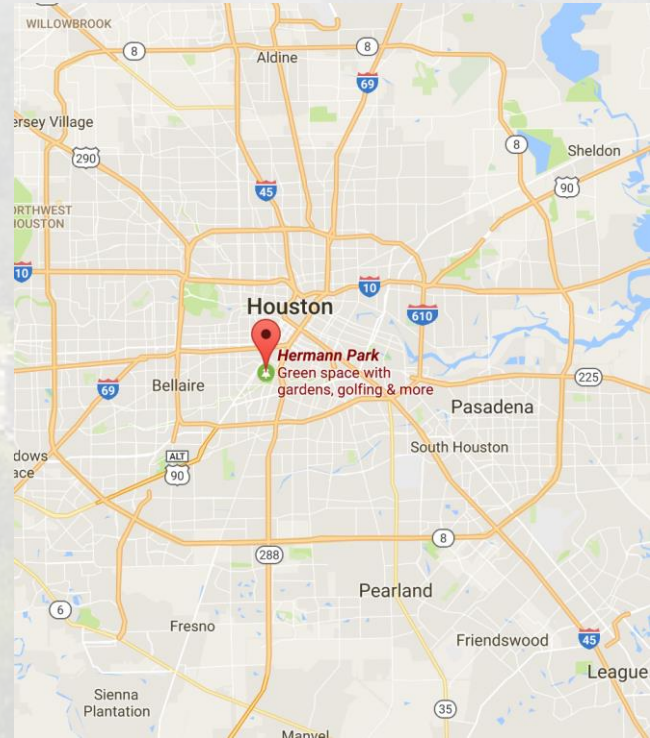
Sprawl

Diverse

Hermann as a unique park

Size

Uses



# Process and Methodology

**Background  
Research**

**Research  
Questions**

**Research Design**

**Research  
Implementation**

**Data**

**Findings**

# Background Research

Regional park studies and literature

Community meetings

Survey methods research

Meeting with Doreen Stoller,  
President

Field and pilot testing



**Background  
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# Research Questions

What kinds of **demographic groups** use Hermann Park? How does use of Hermann Park vary between them?

Where are Hermann Park users coming from, and how are they arriving? Do **patterns of park use** vary by their previous location and arrival method?

Which **features** of Hermann Park are most well-used by park users? What types of features drive park attendance? (features = activities and amenities)

What user characteristics are related to spontaneous **social interaction**?

What recommendations for **improvement** do park users suggest?



# User Survey: Usership on an Individual Level

Captures moments

Provides individual opinions

Offers specific insights



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# Observational Form: Taking a Snapshot of the Park

Broader patterns

Demographic data

Age

Gender

Race

Activity



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# How was park usage divided geographically?

Focus on busier, Western section of the park

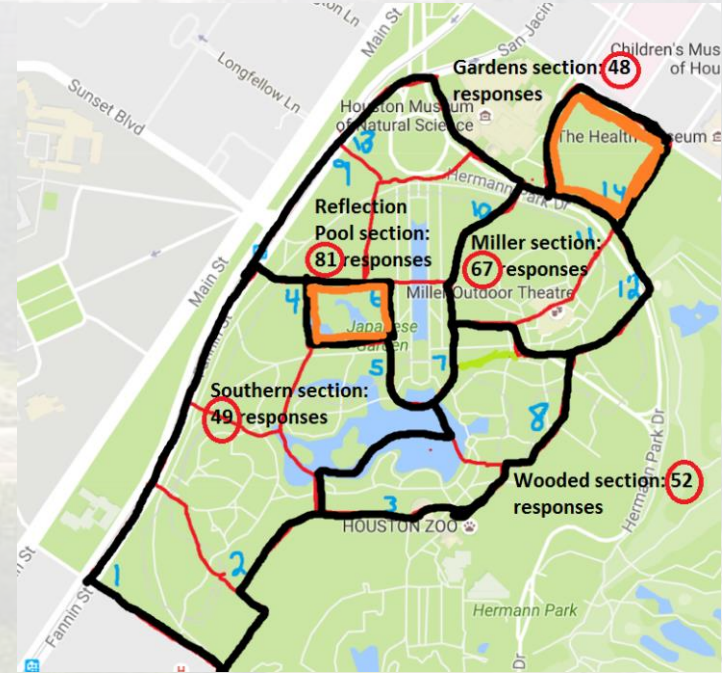
No golf course, no zoo parking lot

Bayou Parklands - observational

Divided by park amenities

"Playground," "Miller Hill," "Centennial Gardens"

Busier zones surveyed more



Background Research

Comparison with observational forms

Research Questions

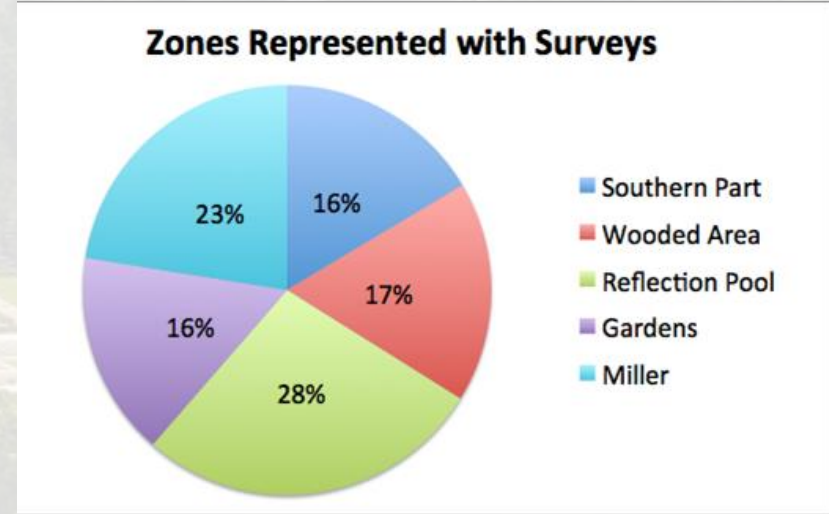
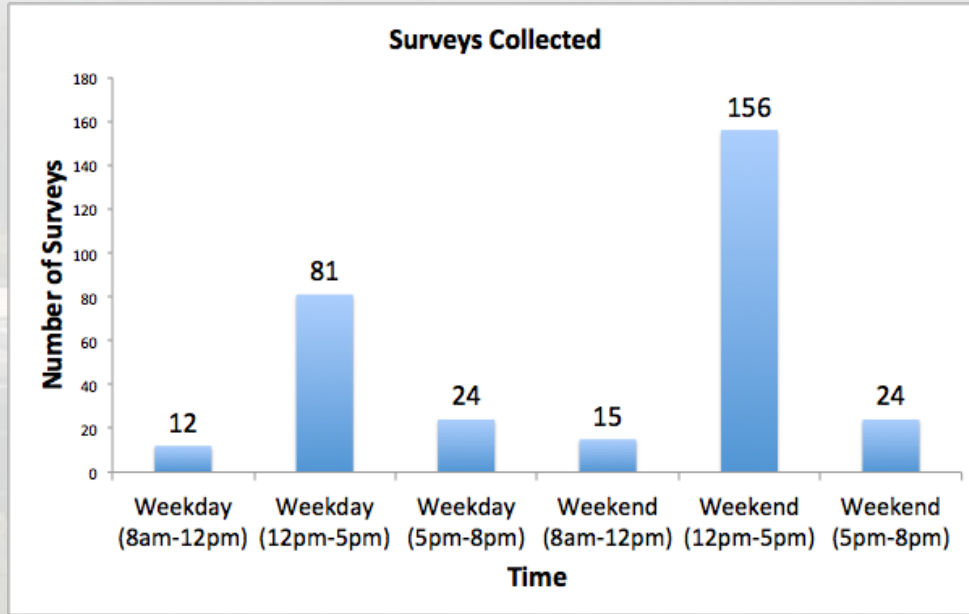
Research Design

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# When and where did we collect surveys?



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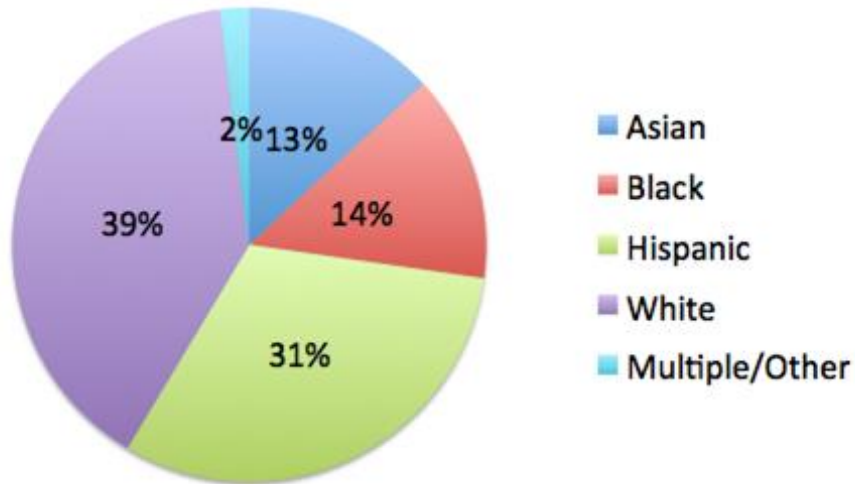
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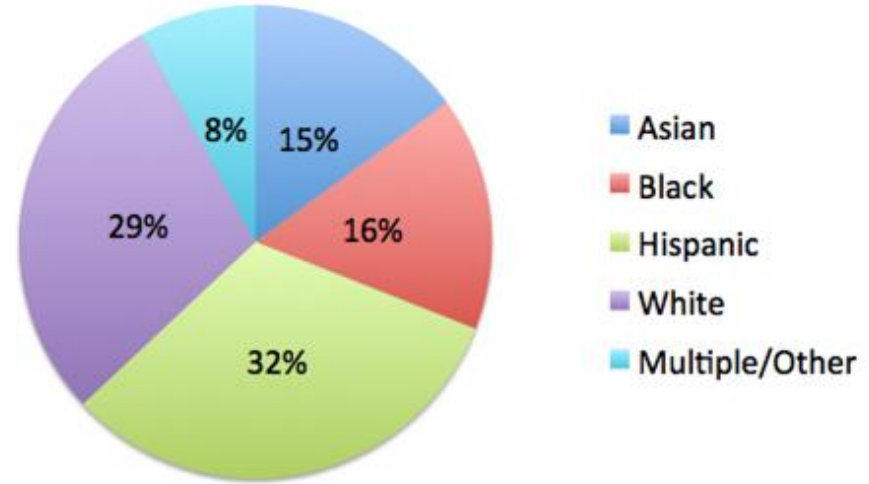
Findings

# Who uses the park: Race/Ethnicity?

**Survey**



**Observational Forms**



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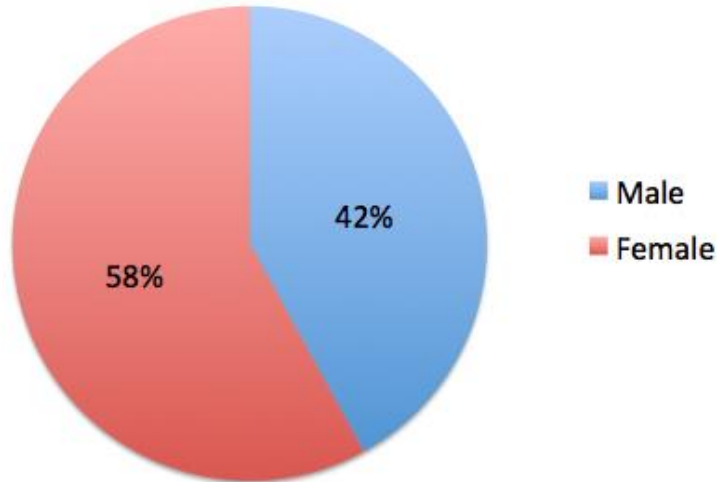
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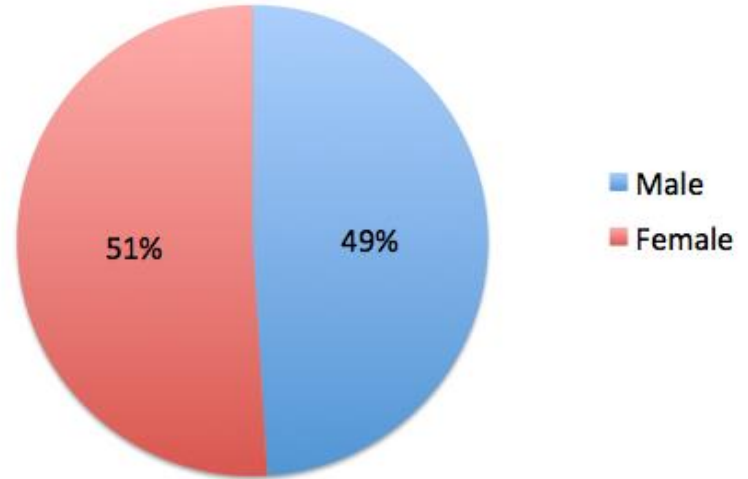


# Who uses the park: Gender?

**Survey**



**Observational Form**



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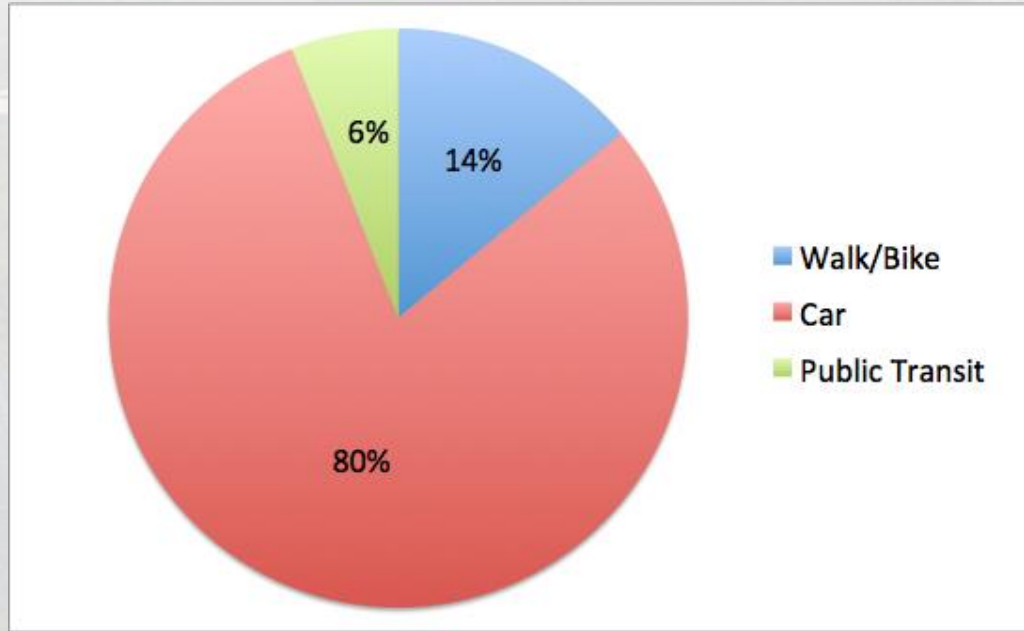
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# How do users get to the park?



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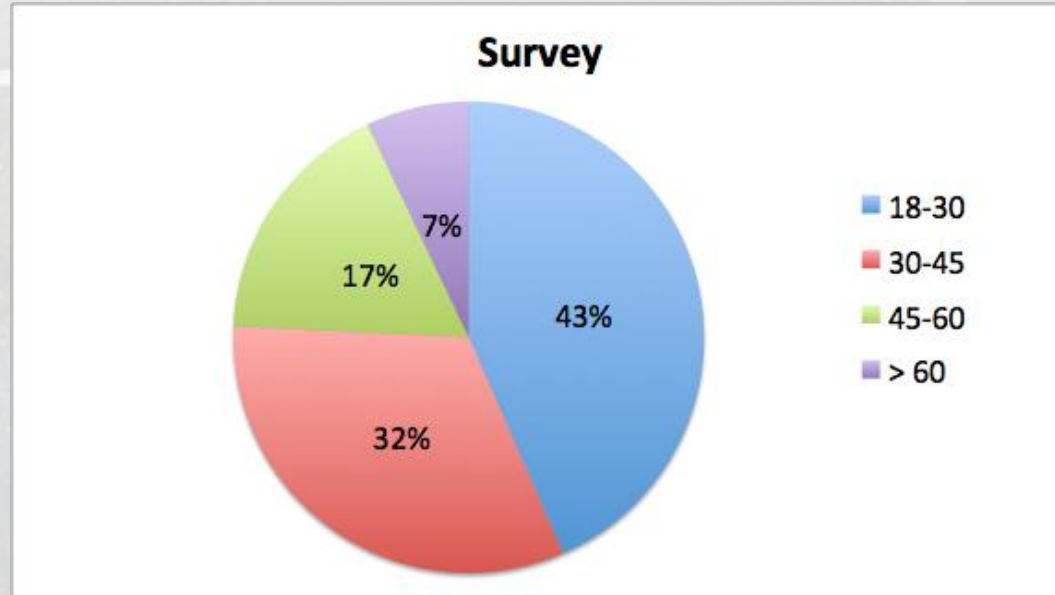
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# Who uses the park: Age?



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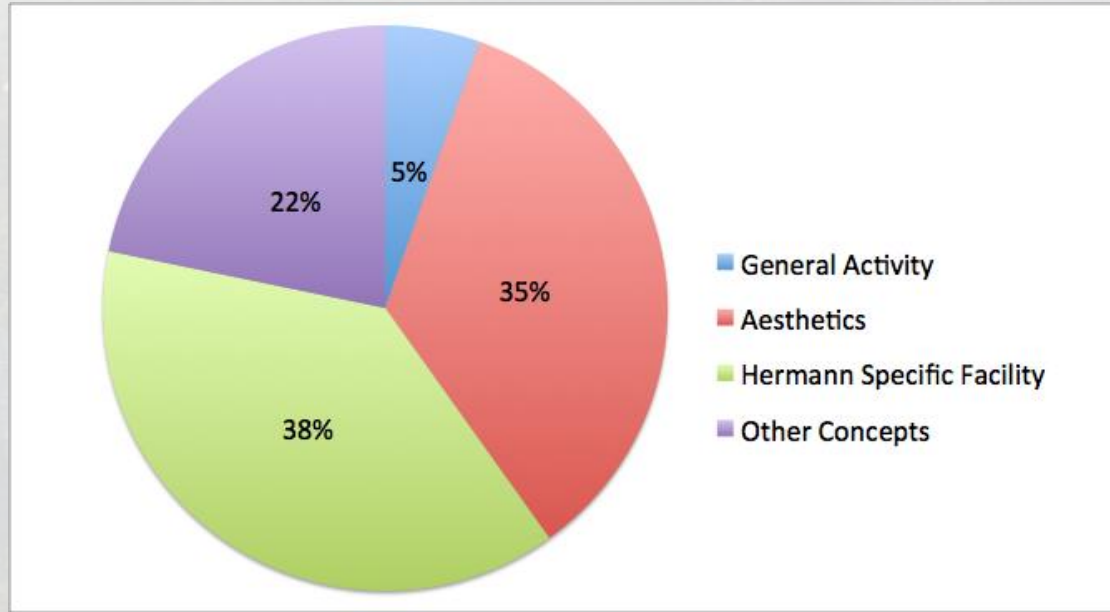
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# What do users love most about Hermann Park?



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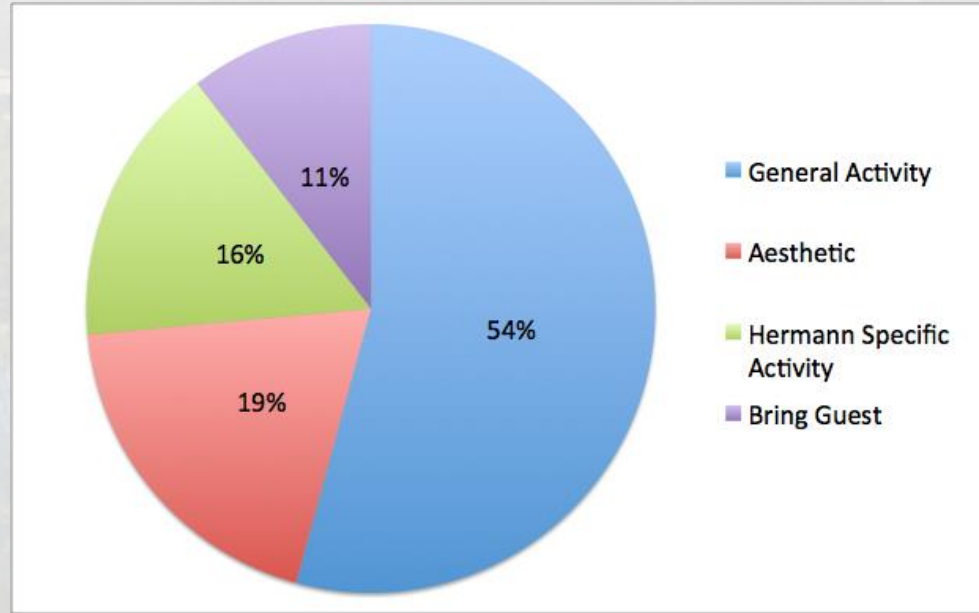
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# Why do users come to the park today?



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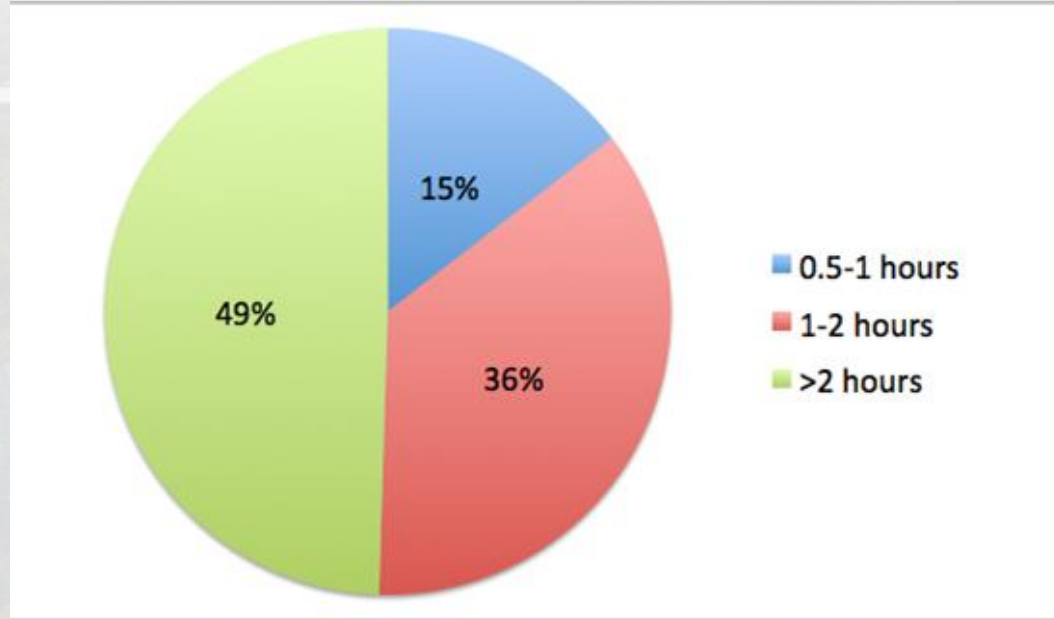
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# How long do users spend in the park?



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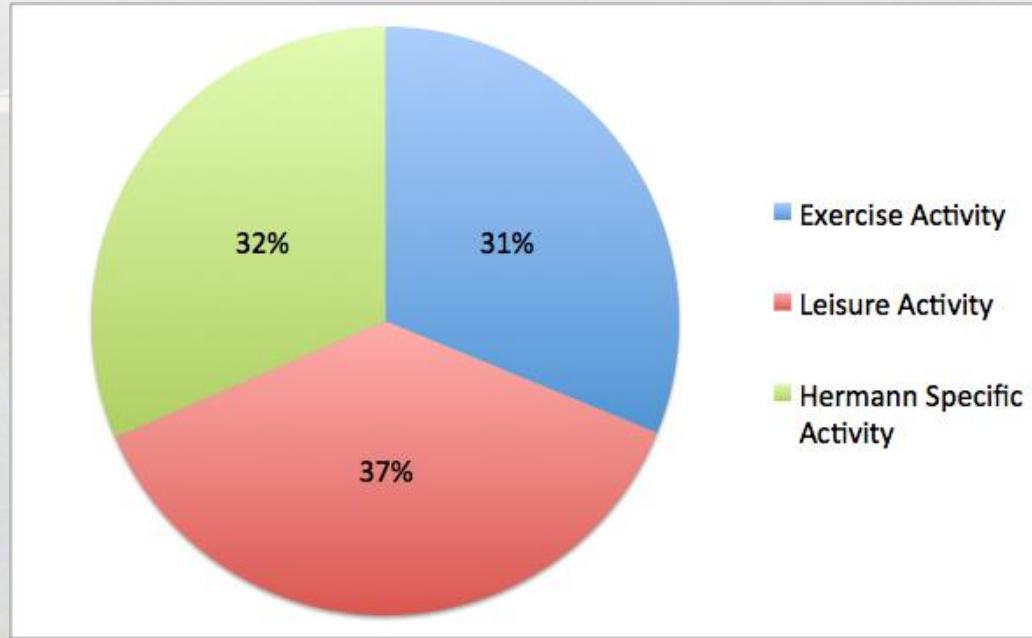
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# What do users typically do in Hermann?



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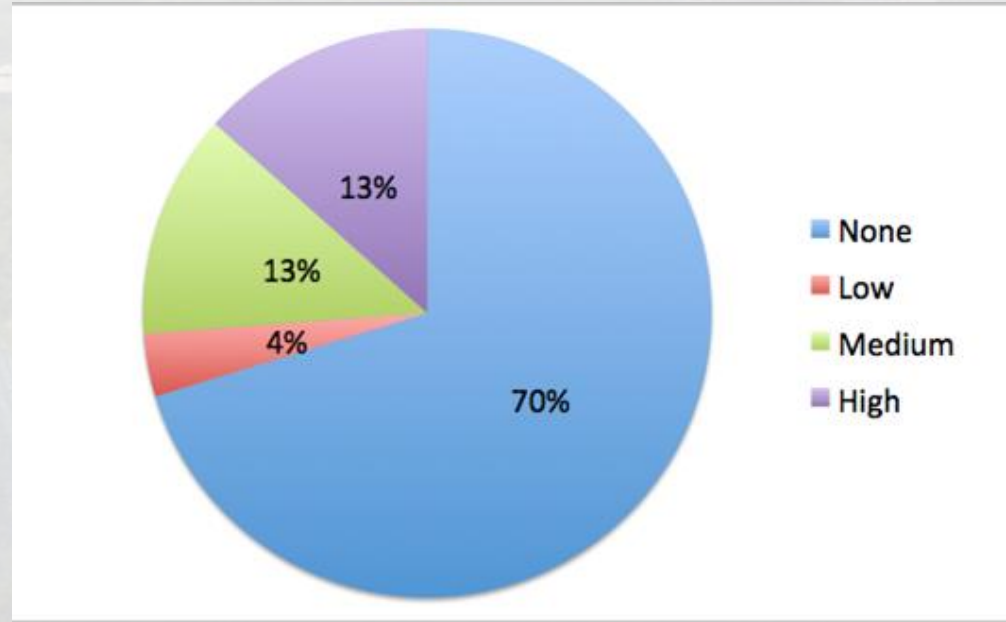
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# How is Hermann used as a social space?



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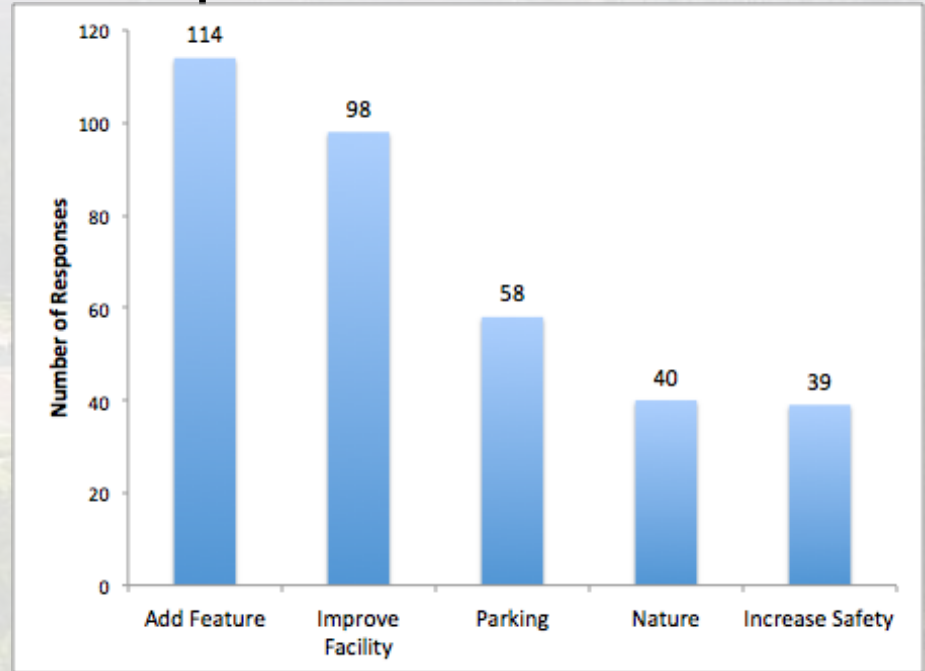
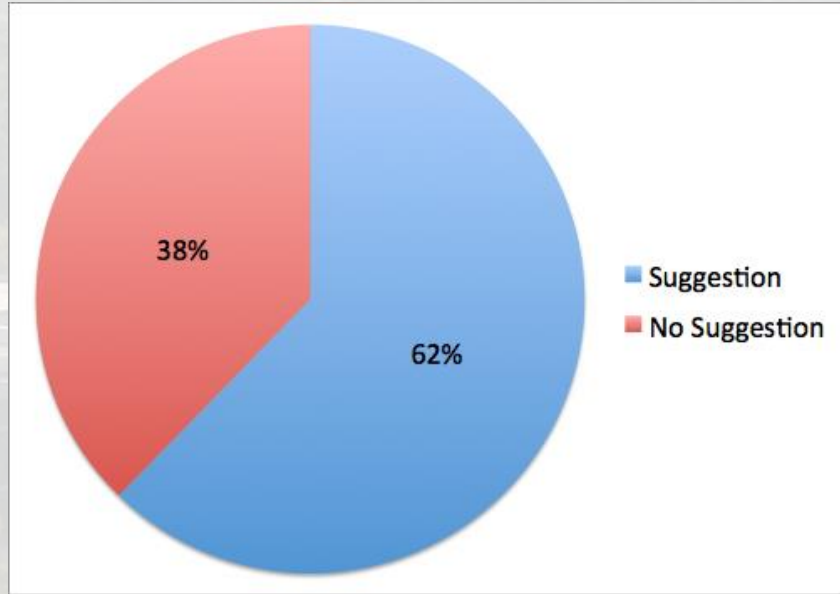
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# What do users suggest for improvement?



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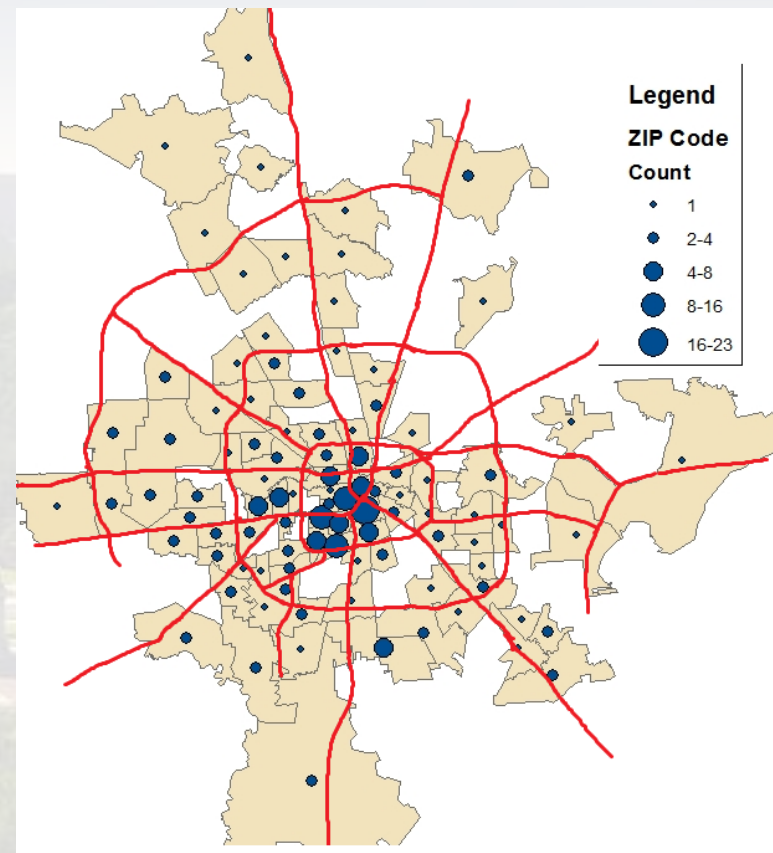
# How far away from Hermann do users live?

28% traveling from within 3 miles

28% traveling from 3-10 miles

33% traveling 10+ miles, within Houston metro area

11% from outside Houston metro area



Background  
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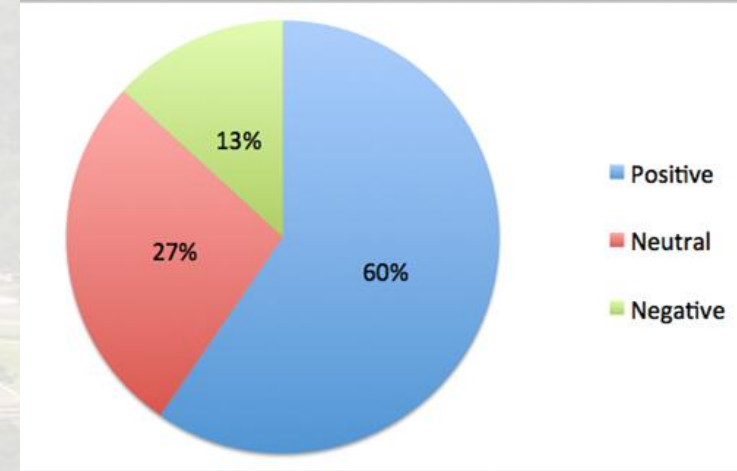
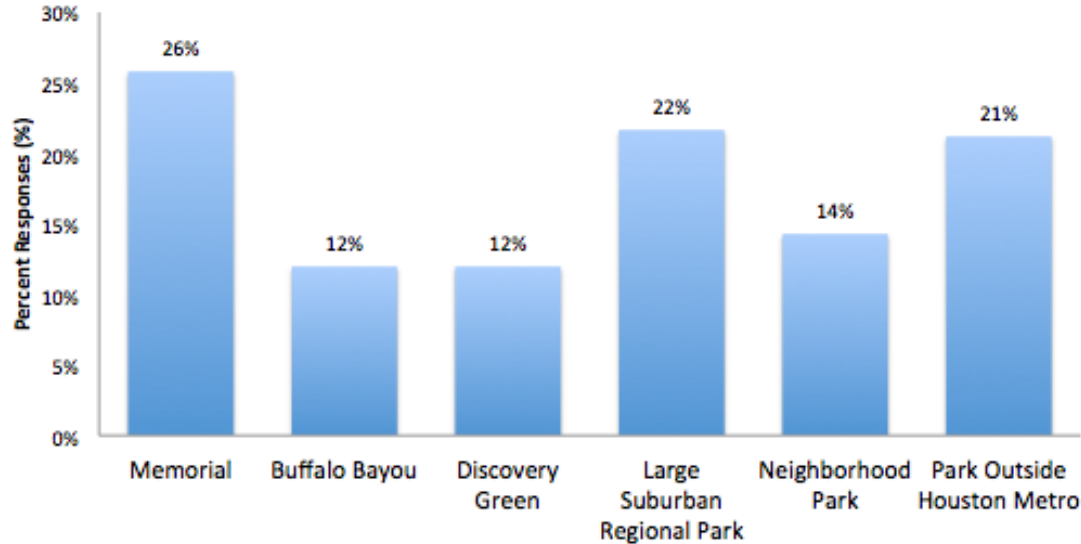
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# How does Hermann compare to other parks?



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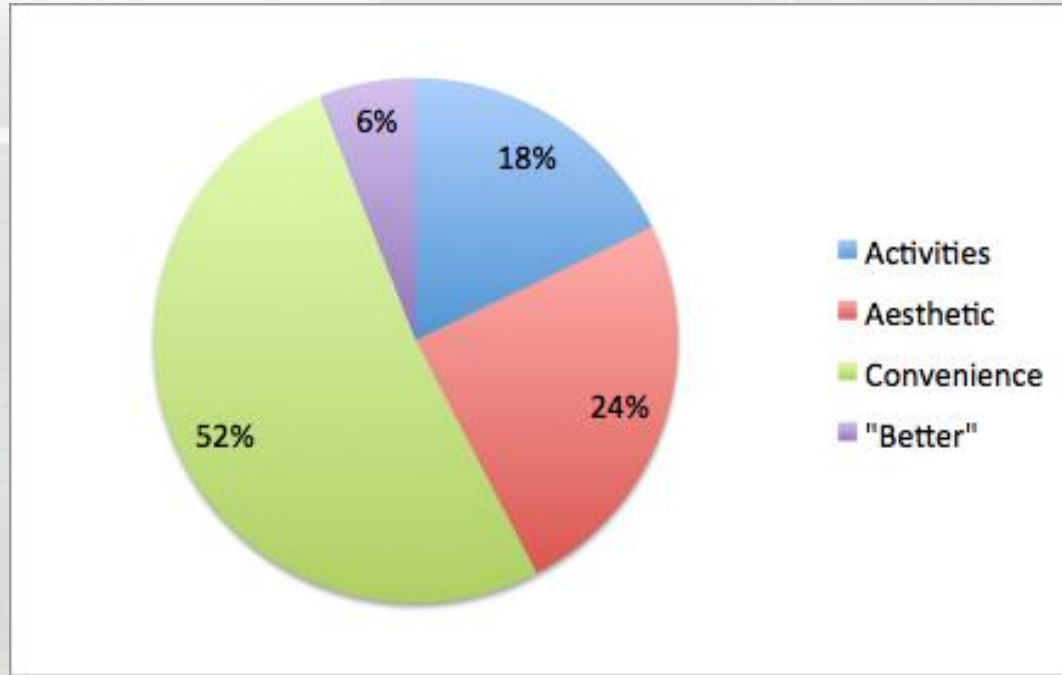
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# Why do users choose Hermann over alternative parks?



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# How do user characteristics vary based on park activities?

Frequent park  
users (43%)

Occasional park  
users (40%)

First-time  
visitors (17%)

Runners  
Outdoor Gym  
Playground, Splash Pad  
Reflection Pool area  
Walk to park

Photography  
"Family time"  
Hanging out  
Miller Hill area  
Drive to park

Northern sections of  
park (Gardens area in  
particular)

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# How do user characteristics vary based on park activities?

Local residents  
(28%)

Houston-area  
community (61%)

Visitors to  
Houston (11%)

Runners  
Visited for <2 hours  
Gardens zone

Visited for >2 hours  
Picnic Table users  
Splash Pad users

Came to "sightsee"  
Gardens, Wooded  
zones  
Leisure over activity

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# What use patterns and user characteristics are related to spontaneous social interaction?

Spontaneous interaction happens uniformly in all park areas

- **No relation** to location within park or commonly used features

**Males** and **elderly** more likely to report encountering someone

Common recurring interactions: **Petting dogs** and **kids playing**

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# How do comparisons to other parks vary based on activity usership?

Memorial

Hermann Park compared more neutrally; runners; males  
“Memorial more for fitness, Hermann more for activities/leisure”

Buffalo Bayou

Runners; reflection pool users  
“Hermann has more green space, more to do”

Discovery Green

“Hermann much bigger, Discovery Green has concerts”

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# How do comparisons to other parks vary based on activity usership?

Suburban  
Regional

Often mentioned in Southern and Wooded sections of park  
“Hermann has more to do, not just a field”

Neighborhood  
Parks

Often mentioned in Miller area of park  
“Hermann is much bigger; no comparison”

Non-Houston

Wide variation of responses - no majority opinion

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# How do suggested changes for Hermann Park vary between user characteristics?

People who **suggested changes** in general:

- Have visited the park previously
- Local area residents

People who **suggested parking improvements**:

- Surveyed in Reflection Pool / Circle area
- Greater Houston metro residents

**Restroom/water fountain** suggestions, and others, were uniform across the board



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# Major Takeaways

## **Demographic Groups**

- Hermann Park's users are representative of Houston residents

## **Patterns of Use**

- No particular group uses Hermann Park differently
- Gardens attract new users

## **Features**

- People are satisfied with existing features

## **Social Interactions**

- Hermann park facilitating social activity

## **Improvement**

- Parking not a high priority
- New features