

Popular Activities in Parks and Trails

Visitors identified all activities and primary activity they did on their visit. Here are the ranked answers of all activities. Forty-six percent of trail and 59% of park users combined two or more activities on their visit. Many people named “relaxing” (#2, parks) and “observing nature” (#5, trails), even if not the main activity. Some “less popular” amenities are more often done by underserved populations, making these important for building an equitable system.

Visitors enjoyed diverse activities during visits to the Regional Park and Trail System.

Rank	Parks	Trails	
1	Hiking/walking	Biking	
2	Relaxing/Doing nothing [^]	Hiking/walking	
3	Observing nature [^]	Dog walking/dog park*	
4	Biking	Jogging/running*	
5	Family/friends meetup*	Observing nature*	
6	Dog walking/dog park*	Relaxing/doing nothing*	
7	Taking photographs	Commuting [^]	
8	Using the playground	Family/friends meetup [^]	
9	Picnicking	Using the playground	
10	Jogging/running	Taking photographs	
11	Swimming	Picnicking	
12	Commuting	Sports (soccer, volley/basketball, tennis)	
13	Visiting the farm or gardens	Swimming*	
14	Canoeing/kayaking/SUP	Mountain biking*	
15	Fishing	Festival, concert, or community event*	
16	Family event	Rollerblading/skating/scootering*	
17	Festival, concert, or community event [^]	Fishing*	
18	Camping [^]	Canoeing/kayaking/SUP*	
19	Hammocking*	Visiting the farm or gardens [^]	
20	Mountain biking*	Hammocking [^]	
21	Boating or sailing [^]	Stargazing/astronomy*	
22	Sports (soccer, volley/basketball, tennis) [^]	Attended a program or class*	
23	Rollerblading/skating/scootering*	Family/friends meetup [^]	
24	Disc golf*	Camping [^]	
25	Attended a program or class*	Boating or sailing [^]	>40% of visitors did this
26	Stargazing/astronomy [^]	Disc golf*	20-30% of visitors did this
27	Geocaching [^]	Geocaching*	10-19% of visitors did this
28	Archery [^]	Horseback riding*	3-9% of visitors did this
29	Horseback riding [^]		<3% of visitors did this

Table 1: List of activities that visitors did on parks and trails on day of visit. Visitors could choose more than one activity. Sequential items with [^] or * indicate that activities statistically tied in popularity.

Implementing Agency Top Activities

Hikes, walks, and biking are main activity for visitors across implementing agencies. Other activities were visitor favorites in just a few agencies.



Implementing agency	Most popular	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th , other answers >5%
Anoka County	Hike/walk & Biking (TIE)		Dog walk/dog park & Camping (TIE)		Running, Swim, Fishing
Bloomington	Hike/walk	Dog walk/dog park	Biking	Running	Swim
Carver County	Biking	Dog walk/dog park	Hike/walk & Swim (TIE)		Family/friend meetup, Relax, Camping
Dakota County	Hike/walk	Biking	Mountain biking	Dog walk/dog park	Running
MPRB	Hike/walk	Biking	Dog walk/dog park & Running (TIE)		Family/friend meetup, observe nature
Ramsey County	Hike/walk & Biking (TIE)		Dog walk/dog park	Playground	Running
Saint Paul	Hike/walk	Biking	Running	Dog walk/dog park	Family/friend meetup, Swim
Scott County	Hike/walk	Dog walk/dog park	Biking	Running	Paddling
TRPD	Hike/walk	Biking	Dog walk/dog park	Playground	Running, Family/friend meetup
Washington County	Hike/walk	Biking	Swim	Running	Camping, Playground, Family/friend meetup, Dog walk/dog park

Table 2: Top primary activities by implementing agency.

Guiding Discussion Questions:

- What findings stand out to me?
- How does my system have influence to respond to these trends? What factors lie outside of our control? How would I like the Council to respond?
- What else would I like to know?
- What are the implications for my work?

Exploring Differences in Visitor Activity Patterns (1/3)

All visitors, regardless social characteristics, enjoyed a diverse range of activities. However, analysis of differences in activity patterns can help identify how underserved users enjoy parks and trails compared to others.

Figure 1: Likelihood of greater participation by Asian American visitors

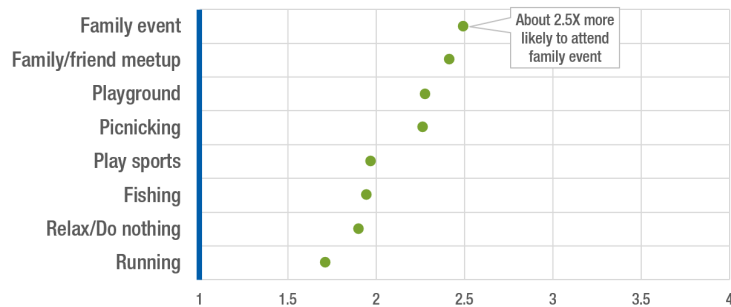


Figure 2: Likelihood of greater participation by Latino/a visitors

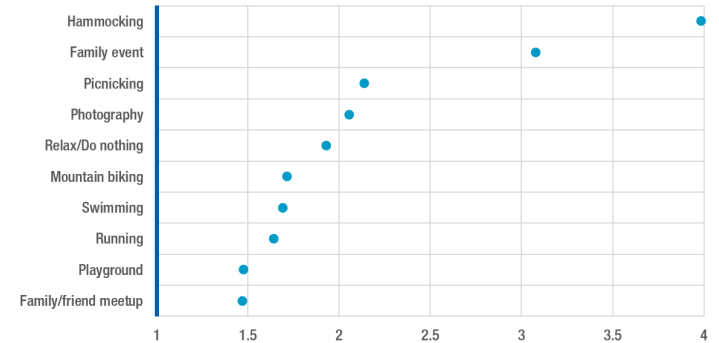


Figure 3: Likelihood of greater participation by African American visitors

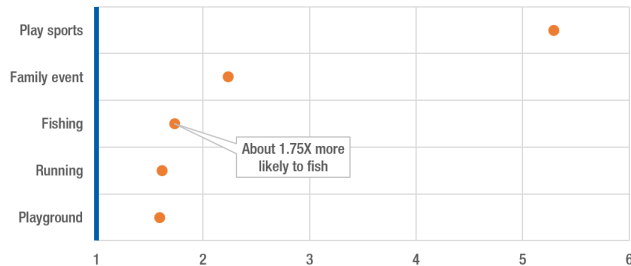
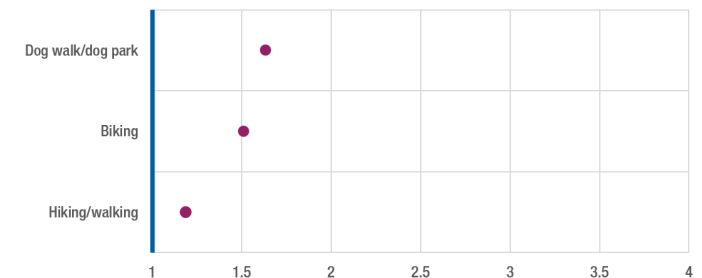


Figure 4: Likelihood of greater participation by white visitors



How to interpret the figures: The thick bold vertical line in each figure is the rate of activity by baseline comparison group. A dot on the right side of the thick comparison line means that the group featured is more likely than the comparison group to do the activity. If no significant difference was seen between groups, the activity is not listed in the figure.

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Exploring Differences in Visitor Activity Patterns (2/3)

Figure 5: Likelihood of greater participation by visitors age 12-24

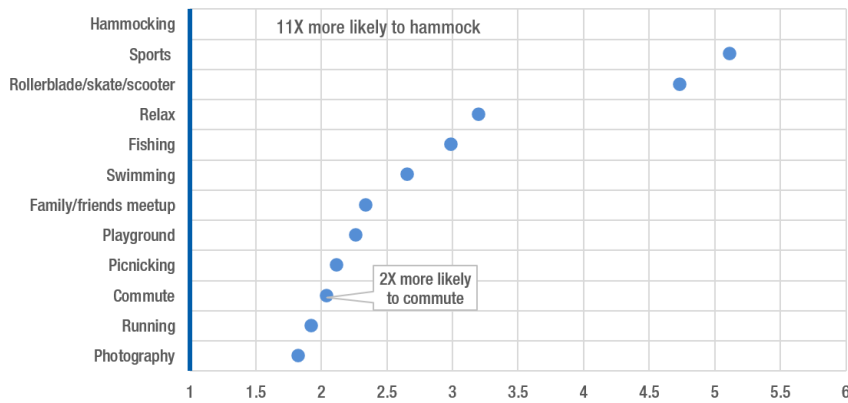


Figure 6: Likelihood of greater part. by groups incl. someone w/ disability

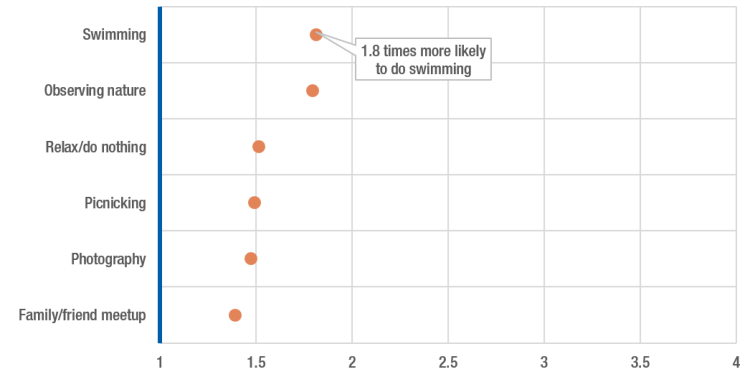
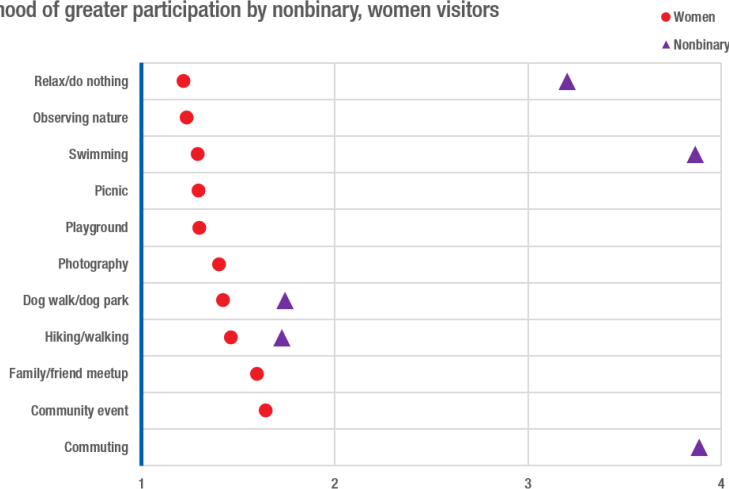


Figure 7: Likelihood of greater participation by nonbinary, women visitors



Why does it matter?

- Activities currently popular with an underserved group can inform investments and programming to expand equitable use.
- Activities currently unpopular with an underserved group can help identify systemic, historical, economic, and cultural barriers to access.
- Activities popular with dominant/adequately served users can be understood, and we can consider implications.

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Exploring Differences in Visitor Activity Patterns (3/3)

Different groups have different activity patterns. At the same time, many activities are very popular with all groups or across many groups.

Most popular activity	Hiking/walking is the most popular activity for all groups				
2nd most popular activity	Relax/do nothing: Age 12-44; Black, Latino, Asian American, multiple race visitors; gender nonbinary	Biking: Age 45+, American Indian, white visitors; men		Dog walking/dog park: women	Observing nature: Group incl member with a disability
3rd most popular activity	Biking: Women, gender nonbinary; ages 12-44; Black, Latino, multiple races visitors	Dog walk/dog park: Age 44-64; white visitors	Family/friend meetup: American Indian, Asian American	Observing nature: Age 65+, men	Relaxing/do nothing: Group incl. member with a disability

Table 3: Top three most popular activities, disaggregated by social characteristics.

Note: Respondents can be members of more than one group. A 19-year-old African American man would be counted with men, African Americans, and age 12-24.

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