



2017 FEE STUDY SURVEY RESULTS



Maricopa County
Parks and Recreation Department



2013 FEE STUDY

In 2013, Parks and ASU, conducted a Park Visitor Study. The study generated feedback on park visitor satisfaction and attitudes towards management issues including fees.

When asked about user fees, most Maricopa County Park visitors did not agree that park user fees should pay for all park operations and maintenance costs, but instead felt that the entrance fees should be

kept at a minimum to encourage the use of the regional parks.

However, more than 64% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they would support an occasional entrance fee increase to keep up with inflation.

Additionally, more than 92% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the current fee is a good value for the benefits received.

2017 FEE STUDY

**OPENED:
Sept. 25, 2017**

**CLOSED:
October 12, 2017**

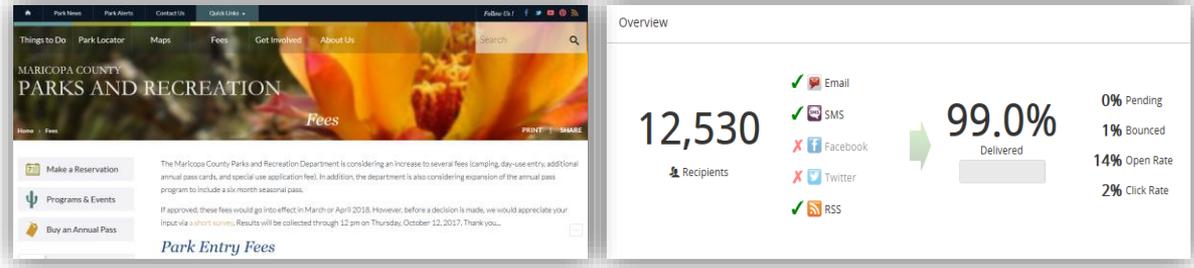
On September 19, 2017 Parks Department staff recommended fee increases for discussion at the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting and the Commission requested additional public comment.

Staff generated a survey using the cloud-based Survey Monkey application using questions consistent with questions asked in the 2013 survey and included questions soliciting general input on new fees for new services being recommended.

“At this time, the department is considering an increase to several fees (camping, day-use entry, additional annual pass cards, and special use application fee). In addition, the department is also considering expansion of the annual pass program to include a six month seasonal pass. If approved, these fees would go into effect in March or April 2018. However, before a decision is made, we would appreciate your input.”

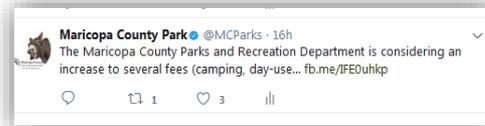
DISTRIBUTION

Website: Alert banner, main banner, fees page
Gov.Docs - Maricopa County's subscription service:
Emailed to 12,530 Parks subscribers

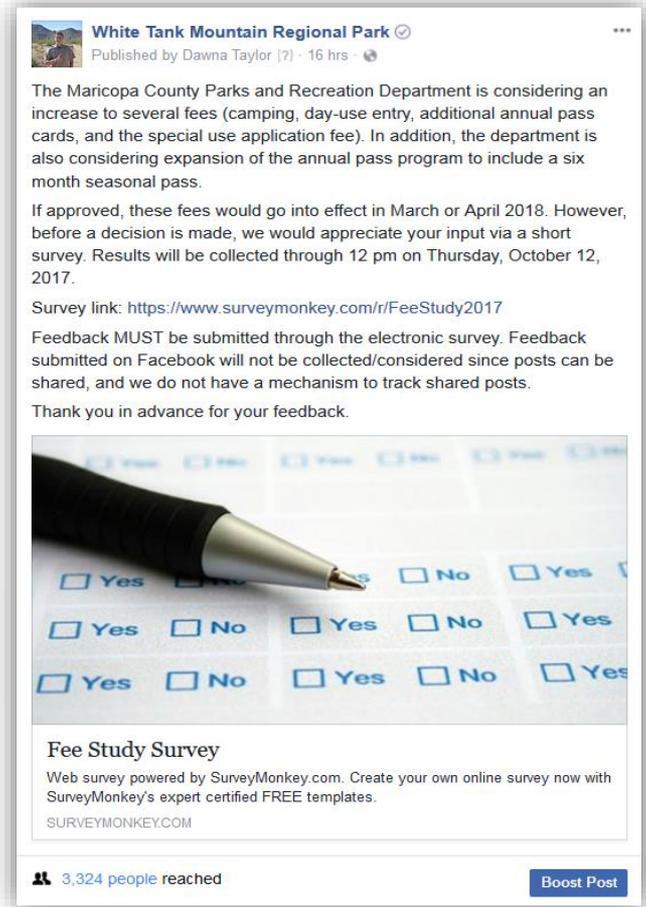


DISTRIBUTION

Social Media: Park Facebook pages (10 accounts), and main Twitter account (which roll up from Facebook pages).



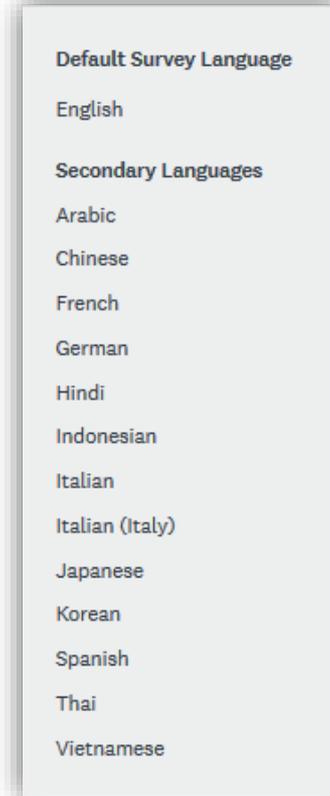
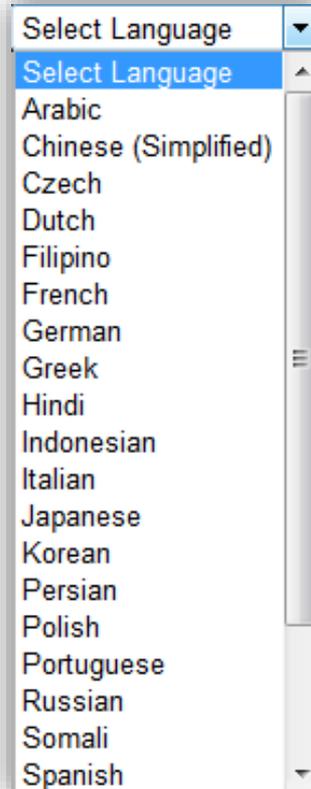
3,000 followers including media



30,000 followers

LANGUAGES

Information was available in the following languages on the website and via Survey Monkey.





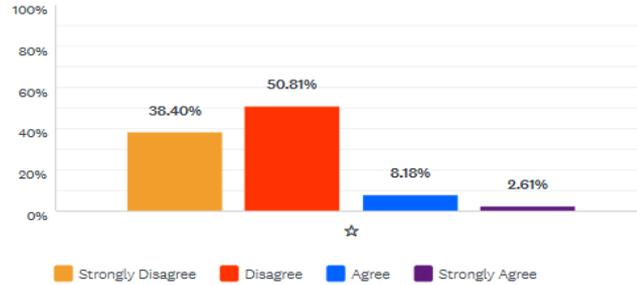
1,123 RESPONDENTS

QUESTION ONE:

Q1

Park user fees should pay for all of the parks operations and maintenance costs with no funding coming from Maricopa County.

Answered: 1,112 Skipped: 11

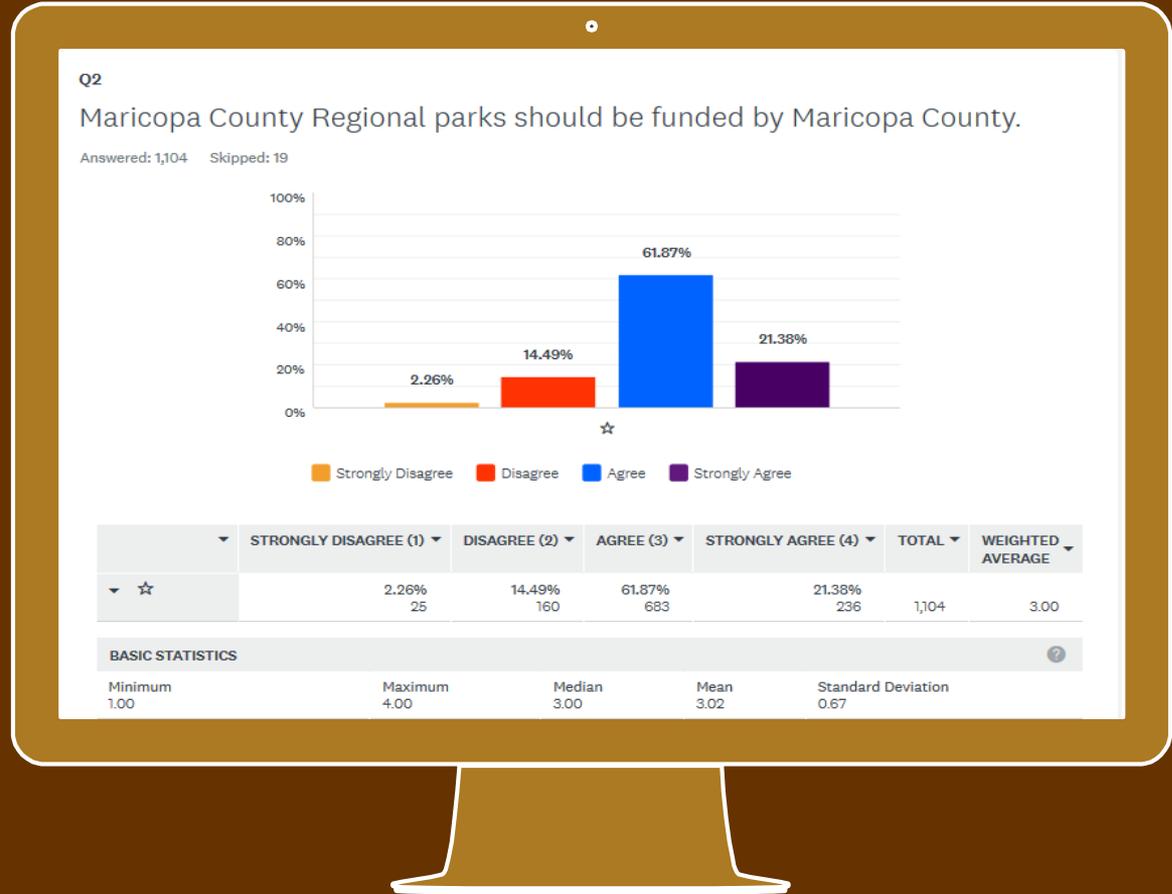


	STRONGLY DISAGREE (1)	DISAGREE (2)	AGREE (3)	STRONGLY AGREE (4)	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
☆	38.40% 427	50.81% 565	8.18% 91	2.61% 29	1,112	1.75

BASIC STATISTICS

Minimum	Maximum	Median	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.00	4.00	2.00	1.75	0.71

QUESTION TWO:

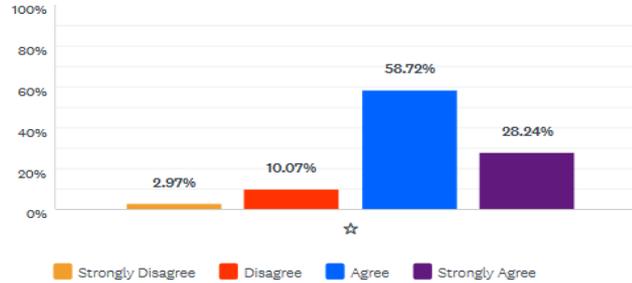


QUESTION THREE:

Q3

The current entrance fee is a good value for the benefits I receive from using the park(s).

Answered: 1,112 Skipped: 11



	STRONGLY DISAGREE (1)	DISAGREE (2)	AGREE (3)	STRONGLY AGREE (4)	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
☆	2.97% 33	10.07% 112	58.72% 653	28.24% 314	1,112	3.12

BASIC STATISTICS

Minimum	Maximum	Median	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.00	4.00	3.00	3.12	0.70

QUESTION FOUR:



QUESTION FIVE:

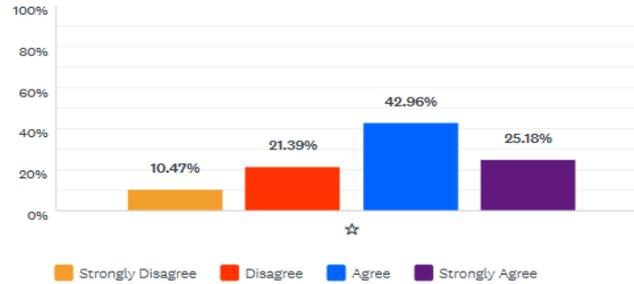


QUESTION SIX:

Q6

I would be interested in purchasing a seasonal (six month period) annual pass.

Answered: 1,108 Skipped: 15

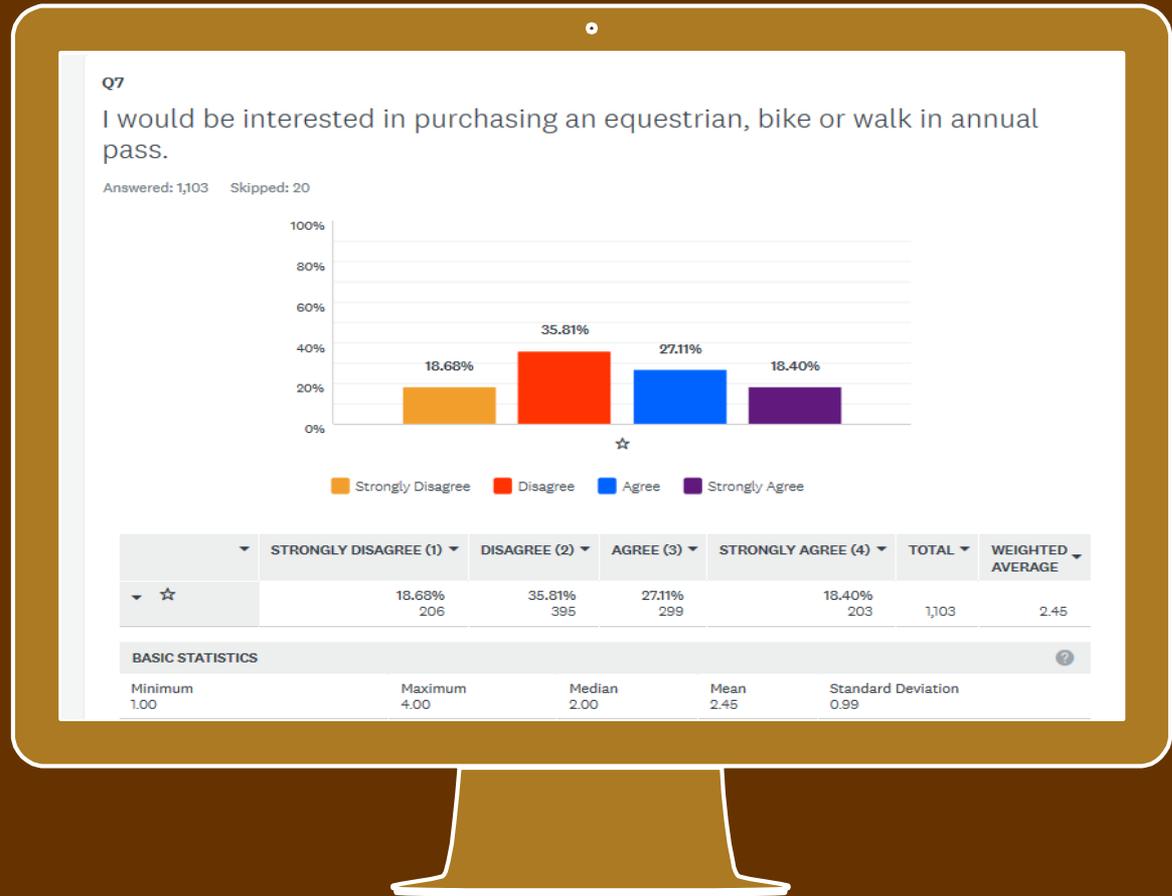


	STRONGLY DISAGREE (1)	DISAGREE (2)	AGREE (3)	STRONGLY AGREE (4)	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
☆	10.47% 116	21.39% 237	42.96% 476	25.18% 279	1,108	2.83

BASIC STATISTICS

Minimum	Maximum	Median	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.00	4.00	3.00	2.83	0.92

QUESTION SEVEN:



AND, EVEN MORE NUMBERS!

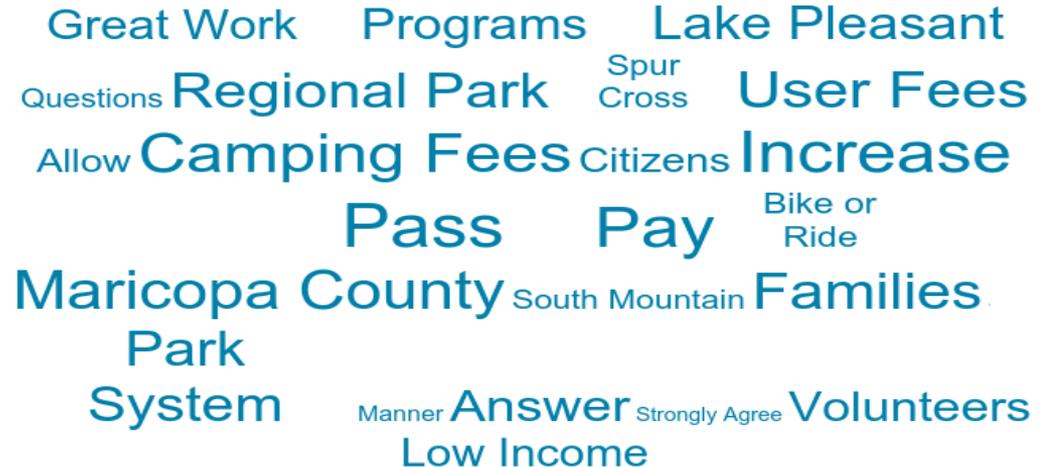
WORD CLOUD: Word analysis algorithm.

The most important (frequent) words and phrases respondents used. The larger the font size, the more important or significant the word.

457 respondents



Provided additional comments



COMMON THEME ANNUAL PASS

TOTAL
RESPONSES: 55

THE PULSE...

- *I am a current annual pass holder and would hate to see the price go up.*
- *I'm an annual pass holder. I greatly appreciate the parks and understand a periodic fee increase is necessary. I hope the increases can be kept to a minimum.*
- *Currently we purchase 2 passes for my husband & myself. I don't use the parks as much as he does so the value of the pass for me is that we choose to support our park. That being said, any significant increase in the second pass will make us choose not to purchase said pass. Thanks.*
- *For quite a few years I had purchased an annual Parks pass and did not renew it this year (2017) due to the increase from the prior year. I would seek additional monies from Maricopa County OR require local developers to kick in monies to support the park OR have special events that you charge for. I hike and ride my mule at the White Tanks but with the opening of Skyline Regional Park in Buckeye I've been going there (they don't charge).*

COMMON THEME

SIX MONTH PASS

TOTAL
RESPONSES: 37

THE PULSE...

- *I would love to see a six month pass become available. The only reason I haven't bought an annual pass is because I can't justify the hot months I would not be using the pass.*
- *My family and I love visiting the parks and will continue to do so provided the increase isn't too high. I think a 6 month pass is a great idea also as long as its cheaper than the current pass.*

**COMMON THEME
EQUESTRIAN /
WALK / BIKE
IN ANNUAL
PASS**

**TOTAL
RESPONSES: 6**

THE PULSE...

- *I hate that I have to pay \$2 to ride my bike up the road and back out. It's not worth it for me to purchase the (annual) pass. If there was a pass for ride/walk in, I'd be interested in that.*

COMMON THEME CAMPING

TOTAL
RESPONSES: 54

THE PULSE...

- *We strongly disagree that camping fees increase! 30.00 for water and electric is up there in price.*
- *Many of us who use the camping feature of the park are retirees living on a fixed income. If the fees increase too much, we will be priced out.*
- *Please do not increase camping fees, we live locally and enjoy camping in our rv in local parks. Also, if group camping fees go up, the camping club we are in (retirees) might have an issue. An idea: Leave camping fees as is or give a discount if we possess an annual pass. Its only fair to local residents since we already pay for that, it should apply to camping as well. Thank you for asking our opinions.*

COMMON THEME
FUNDING

TOTAL
RESPONSES: 27

THE PULSE...

- *I think there should be a shared responsibility of fees from both the county/taxpayers for doing the right thing in preserving special areas for flora and fauna. Seems only fair and appropriate for all of us to share.*
- *Funding from the County General Fund should be increased. If the rationale for increasing user fees can be justified (i.e., they can show what the increased revenue will be used on, and demonstrate the actual need for increased revenue, then increasing user fees is a non issue). It goes without saying that user fees should be adjusted for inflation, but so must the 10% contribution from the General Fund.*

COMMON THEME
**OUT-OF-
STATE
VISITORS**

TOTAL
RESPONSES: 17

THE PULSE...

- *For me, the issue is: Non-resident snowbirds who take up all the camping areas all winter should pay double or more what a resident pays. As a resident, I can't even get a campsite for the entire winter..... Get the snowbirds to foot the increase.*

**COMMON THEME
FEE
ENFORCEMENT**

**TOTAL
RESPONSES: 12**

THE PULSE...

- *I think too many folks use the parks for free when there is no one at the entry station and they don't put the fee in the envelopes provided.*

COMMON THEME
**GENERAL
FEEDBACK
ON FEES**

TOTAL
RESPONSES: 125

THE PULSE...

- *Fees should be kept reasonable but also strive to cover park costs.*
- *I understand that with inflation, operation costs go up. But too much of a jump will make people go to free areas such as South Mountain and Browns Ranch.*
- *I can barely afford the fees now. Lower income people and people with disabilities need the parks too!*
- *I view the fee as a way for people to see they have a part in keeping up the parks. When they are free the parks get trashed, but when people have “skin involved” they will take better care of them.*



Thank you very much for your time

If you have any questions about this document
please don't hesitate to contact me at:

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- RJCardin@mail.maricopa.gov



**TABLE 2.19
MANAGEMENT
AND
USER FEE
ISSUES
IN MARICOPA
COUNTY PARK**

	Strongly Disagree Agree 2017	Strongly Disagree Agree 2013	Disagree 2017	Disagree 2013	Agree 2017	Agree 2013	Strongly Agree 2017	Strongly Agree 2013
Park user fees should pay for all of the park operations and maintenance costs with no funding coming from Maricopa County	38.16%	28.7%	50.97%	59.7%	8.29%	9.7%	2.58%	1.9%
Maricopa County Regional parks should be funded by Maricopa County	2.23%	4.0%	14.67%	22.2%	62.21%	59.0%	20.89%	14.8%
The current entrance fee is a good value for the benefits I receive from using this park	2.86%	1.4%	9.95%	6.4%	58.71%	46.9%	28.48%	45.3%
Entrance fees should be increased occasionally to keep up with inflation and increases in operating costs	8.93%	8.0%	23.20%	27.9%	54.79%	47.5%	13.08%	16.6%
Entrance fees should be kept at a minimum to encourage use of regional parks	1.57%	0.8%	9.90%	10.2%	44.22%	52.8%	44.31%	36.2%