



2012

# City of Mount Pleasant Recreation Needs and Interests Survey



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## Executive Summary

This report presents information, including resident characteristics, current leisure participation, attitudes and opinions about recreation services and preferences for future recreation services by City of Mount Pleasant residents during the winter of 2011-12.

### Residents:

- The typical respondent was a 43 year old female representing a household of 2.52 persons with a household income between \$50,000 and \$74,999.

### Benefits sought from recreation:

- For the typical household, the top three benefits sought from recreation include improving mental and physical health, accessing the outdoors and nature, and improving the quality of life.

### Participation in City-sponsored recreation programs:

- By far, the most popular City-sponsored recreation program or service is the Farmers Market, with over 60% of residents indicating participation, followed by the Peak program (14%), youth soccer, and youth tee ball (12% each).

### Concerns about recreation services

- The greatest concern about recreation services expressed by respondents regarded advertising of recreation programs. Almost 40% did not agree that recreation programs are well advertised.

### Future focus for City recreation

- Over half of respondents indicated a preference for more emphasis on recreation programming that promotes the enjoyment of nature and the outdoors (67%), community-wide festivals, fairs, concerts, etc. (57%), programs that contribute to health and wellness (55%), and recreation programs for teens (53%).

### Funding recreation programs

- Respondents agree that City residents should pay less than non – residents, that some recreation services should be available at no cost and that some groups of residents should be able to participate free or at reduced costs.

### Sources of information about recreation

- The most often used sources for information about recreation services are the city newsletter, newspapers, word of mouth and school handouts.

## Methodology

The survey methodology was based on a modified Dillman<sup>1</sup> method coupled with an online survey option for user convenience. The Dillman method utilizes multiple subject contacts in order to optimize survey response.

The mailing strategy included:

1. an initial postcard introducing the survey and inviting the resident to participate,
2. an initial mailing including the questionnaire, and,
3. a second mailing of the questionnaire to non-responders.

Each mailing also included an Internet link to an online version of the questionnaire for those with Internet access. All mailings included a password security code to prevent multiple responses by any subject.

To further increase awareness of the survey, a press release was sent to the *Morning Sun* newspaper and local radio stations, and an announcement was posted on the city web site.

## Household Sampling

The survey was conducted utilizing a commercial mailing list that included both homes and apartment units within the city. Random sampling was conducted to assure equal representation by all demographic and geographic areas of the City. For economy, a 25% random sample of Mount Pleasant households was selected to receive the survey.

An incentive was offered to participants to increase participation. The incentive was a \$250 gift card to the Great Wolf Lodge in Traverse City. The incentive was awarded to a randomly selected respondent household in early January 2012.

The initial postcard was mailed on Friday, November 4, 2011 to 2,135 Mount Pleasant households. From the initial mailing, 204 postcards were returned marked *undeliverable*, *unable to forward*, or *vacant*. These addresses were removed from the mailing list for further mailings.

The second mailing, consisting of the first hard-copy of the questionnaire, was mailed ten days later on Monday, November 14, 2011.

The final mailing, consisting of the second hard-copy of the questionnaire, was mailed two weeks later on Monday, November 28, 2011.

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<sup>1</sup> Dillman, Donald A. (2000). *Mail and Internet Surveys: The Tailored Design Method*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. New York, John Wiley & Sons.

## Survey Response

As of December 26, 2011 256 valid, completed questionnaires had been returned either by mail or via the online survey option, resulting in a 13% return rate of the valid addressees.

Initial mailing list	2135
<i>Undeliverable</i>	-204
Valid addresses	1931
Total responses	256
Overall response rate	13.26%

## Questionnaire Development

The contractor worked closely with Mr. Anthony to develop the questionnaire. Input from recreation staff was also solicited to help define the scope of the questionnaire as well as the question content. Several versions of the questions and the questionnaire were reviewed and edited by recreation staff and Mr. Anthony before the questionnaire was finalized.

The overall goals of the project were to answer the following questions:

- What are the benefits sought by recreation participants?
- To what extent do respondents participate in City recreation programs?
- What are respondent's opinions of City recreation programs?
- What other local recreation programs and services are used by respondents?
- What out-of-town recreation programs and services are used by respondents?
- Where do respondents feel the recreation department should focus its programming efforts in the coming years?
- What are respondent's opinions about fees for City-sponsored recreation programs?
- Do respondents feel that there are any groups of citizens who are underserved by City-sponsored recreation programs?
- Where do respondents receive their information about recreation programs?



# Findings

## Respondent Profile

The survey was intended for City of Mount Pleasant residents only. To assure that only residents responses were included, the questionnaires were mailed to a sample of Mt. Pleasant households randomly selected from a commercially available mailing list. In addition, the online version of the questionnaire was accessed using a personal password assigned to each household. Finally, the first question on the survey asked “Are you a resident of the City of Mount Pleasant?” Respondents who indicated they were not a city resident were excluded from the database. Two hundred fifty-six valid questionnaires were completed.

### Gender

Two-thirds of questionnaires were completed by females (66%) and one-third by males. The City of Mt. Pleasant population is 52% female. Ideally the gender of the respondent should be closer to the population value, but since this is a survey of households and not a personal survey, the variance is not considered to be significant.

### Students

Thirteen percent of respondents indicated they were full-time college students. This was expected. Although CMU students were not targeted in this survey, many students do live off campus and are City residents as well.

### Household Makeup

Several demographic characteristics were collected in order to be able to make comparisons to the total population.

**Figure 1: Household Makeup for Sample and Population**

	Sample	Population*
<b>Household Size</b>	2.52	2.35
<b>Householder living alone</b>	26.9%	31.6%
<b>Households with children present</b>	34.3%	37%

\* U.S. Census Bureau: Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010. Mt. Pleasant, MI

## Income

Respondents were asked to indicate the range into which their household annual income fell.

**Figure 2: Respondent Household Income**

Value	Sample Count	Sample Percent %	Population Percent*
Less than \$10,000	29	11.90%	23.4%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	10	4.10%	11.2%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	28	11.50%	15.4%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	24	9.90%	9.5%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	35	14.40%	11.4%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	56	23.00%	12.8%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	29	11.90%	6.4%
\$100,000 and above	32	13.20%	9.9%

\*U.S. Census Bureau 2005-2009 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; Mt. Pleasant, MI.

## Geographic Distribution of Respondents

Respondents were asked to indicate the area of town in which they reside by indicating the appropriate zone (voting precinct) on a map.

**Figure 3: Geographic Distribution**

Precinct	Sample Count	Sample Percent %	Registered Voters
1	45	18.80%	1952
2	51	21.30%	1640
3	28	11.70%	877
4	42	17.50%	2616
5	31	12.90%	1250
6	23	9.60%	2279
7	20	8.30%	1496

## Benefits Sought in Recreation

Respondents were asked to indicate the three benefits of recreation that are the most important to their household.

To improve physical and mental health was the leading benefit sought by participating in recreation programs, services, and activities (62%) followed by opportunities to access the outdoors and nature (57%), and improving the quality of life (47%).

**Figure 4: Benefits Sought in Recreation**

Value	Count	Total Percent %	HH with children* %	HH with Older Adults** %	HH with Young Adults*** %
Provide opportunities to improve physical and mental health	157	<b>62%</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>62%</b>
Provide structure and supervision for children and youth	72	29%	<b>39%</b>	28%	29%
Provide positive alternatives to unfavorable behavior	32	13%	16%	6%	17%
Provide opportunities to learn new leisure skills	54	21%	22%	15%	23%
Provide fun for participants and observers	70	28%	36%	29%	28%
Improve the quality of life for residents	120	<b>47%</b>	35%	<b>57%</b>	<b>40%</b>
Increase community pride	30	12%	15%	9%	13%
Provide opportunities to access the outdoors and nature	145	<b>57%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>55%</b>
Provide opportunities for social interaction	60	24%	28%	16%	28%

\*Households with children include those with children ages 0-18.

\*\*Older adults include households with adults age 55 and above.

\*\*\*Young adult households include those between the ages of 19 and 54 with no children.

For all three household types examined, having opportunities to improve physical and mental health, opportunities to access the outdoors and nature, and improving the quality of life were in the top three benefits sought.

## Participation in City Recreation Programs

Respondents were asked, “For those programs, services, activities or events that *you or members of your household* have participated in, please indicate your level of satisfaction”.

The most widely used recreation program or service offered by the city is the Farmers Market. Almost two - thirds of respondents (62%) indicated that they attended the Farmers Market during the previous 12 months with over ninety-five percent indicating they were very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the service.

Of the two hundred fifty six households represented among the respondents, other popular and well - liked programs and services included:

**Figure 5: Popular and Well Liked Recreation Programs**

	<b>Percent of households participating</b>	<b>Percent very satisfied or satisfied</b>
<b>Farmers Market</b>	62%	95%
<b>Smart Start Tee Ball</b>	10%	100%
<b>Smart Start Soccer</b>	9%	100%
<b>Youth Soccer</b>	12.5%	100%
<b>Youth Tee Ball</b>	11.7%	80%
<b>PEAK After School Program</b>	14.1%	94%
<b>Daddy-Daughter Dance</b>	8.6%	95%
<b>Great Egg Scramble</b>	8.6%	82%

**Figure 6: Participation and Satisfaction with All Recreation Programs**

	<b>Very satisfied</b>	<b>Somewhat satisfied</b>	<b>Somewhat dissatisfied</b>	<b>Very dissatisfied</b>
<b>Start Smart Basketball</b>	58.30%	41.70%	0.00%	0.00%
	7	5	0	0
<b>Start Smart Flag Football</b>	80.00%	0.00%	20.00%	0.00%
	4	0	1	0
<b>Start Smart Tee Ball</b>	64.00%	36.00%	0.00%	0.00%
	16	9	0	0
<b>Start Smart Tennis</b>	75.00%	25.00%	0.00%	0.00%
	3	1	0	0
<b>Start Smart Soccer</b>	77.30%	22.70%	0.00%	0.00%
	17	5	0	0
<b>Start Smart Golf</b>	50.00%	25.00%	25.00%	0.00%
	2	1	1	0
<b>Learn to Bowl</b>	60.00%	20.00%	20.00%	0.00%
	3	1	1	0
<b>Bowling League</b>	66.70%	33.30%	0.00%	0.00%
	4	2	0	0
<b>Youth Soccer</b>	71.90%	28.10%	0.00%	0.00%
	23	9	0	0
<b>Tee Ball</b>	73.30%	6.70%	13.30%	6.70%
	22	2	4	2
	<b>Very satisfied</b>	<b>Somewhat satisfied</b>	<b>Somewhat dissatisfied</b>	<b>Very dissatisfied</b>
<b>Youth Volleyball</b>	40.00%	50.00%	0.00%	10.00%
	4	5	0	1
<b>Youth Basketball</b>	64.30%	35.70%	0.00%	0.00%
	9	5	0	0
<b>Youth Dodge Ball</b>	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
	4	0	0	0
<b>Hockey</b>	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
	7	0	0	0
<b>Youth Tennis</b>	60.00%	30.00%	10.00%	0.00%
	6	3	1	0
<b>PEAK After School Program</b>	80.60%	13.90%	0.00%	5.60%
	29	5	0	2
<b>Winter / Spring / Summer Camps</b>	60.00%	20.00%	6.70%	13.30%
	9	3	1	2
<b>Youth / Adult Bowling Tournament</b>	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%
	0	1	0	0
<b>Daddy - Daughter Dance</b>	72.70%	22.70%	0.00%	4.50%
	16	5	0	1

	<b>Very satisfied</b>	<b>Somewhat satisfied</b>	<b>Somewhat dissatisfied</b>	<b>Very dissatisfied</b>
<b>Mom and Son Event</b>	44.40%	33.30%	11.10%	11.10%
	4	3	1	1
<b>Men's Softball</b>	63.60%	36.40%	0.00%	0.00%
	7	4	0	0
<b>Co-ed Softball</b>	75.00%	25.00%	0.00%	0.00%
	12	4	0	0
<b>Co-ed Sand Volleyball</b>	42.90%	57.10%	0.00%	0.00%
	3	4	0	0
<b>Tennis Lessons</b>	50.00%	37.50%	12.50%	0.00%
	4	3	1	0
<b>Princess and Superhero Party</b>	50.00%	50.00%	0.00%	0.00%
	2	2	0	0
<b>Great Egg Scramble</b>	45.50%	36.40%	13.60%	4.50%
	10	8	3	1
<b>Candy Cane Lane</b>	83.30%	16.70%	0.00%	0.00%
	5	1	0	0
<b>Softball Tournaments</b>	76.90%	15.40%	0.00%	7.70%
	10	2	0	1
<b>Farmers Market</b>	67.30%	28.30%	3.80%	0.60%
	107	45	6	1

## Opinions about City Recreation Programs

Respondents were asked to evaluate City recreation programs and services on a number of dimensions based on their experience during the previous year.

Overall, respondents indicated agreement or strong agreement with each statement concerning quality of City recreation programs and services.

Respondents demonstrated the highest level of disagreement with the statement, “recreation programs and services are well advertised,” with 38% either disagreeing or strongly disagreeing.

**Figure 7: Opinions Concerning City Recreation Services**

	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<b>Recreation programs are well organized</b>	23.66%	72.04%	4.30%	0.00%
	22	67	4	0
<b>Recreation programs are well supervised</b>	28.57%	64.84%	5.49%	1.10%
	26	59	5	1
<b>Recreation programs are conveniently scheduled</b>	22.11%	72.63%	4.21%	1.05%
	21	69	4	1
<b>Fees for recreation programs are reasonable</b>	29.21%	61.80%	8.99%	0.00%
	26	55	8	0
<b>Recreation programs and services are well advertised</b>	9.00%	53.00%	31.00%	7.00%
	9	53	31	7
<b>Recreation staff are courteous</b>	38.04%	59.78%	2.17%	0.00%
	35	55	2	0
<b>Places where recreation programs take place are safe</b>	48.54%	51.46%	0.00%	0.00%
	50	53	0	0
<b>Places where recreation programs take place are well maintained</b>	34.58%	61.68%	3.74%	0.00%
	37	66	4	0

## Other Local Recreation Programs

### Recreation Services and Providers in Mt. Pleasant

Respondents were asked, “Do you or members of your household participate in recreation programs, services, activities, or events that are provided by other organizations in the Mt. Pleasant community?”

Over half of respondents indicated that they participated in recreation programs and services provided by other organizations in the Mt. Pleasant community.

**Figure 8: Other Recreation Programs in Mt. Pleasant**

Value	Count	Percent %
Yes	131	52.40%
No	119	47.60%

Of those who participated in other recreation programs in the community, the most common activities included:

**Figure 9: Other Recreation Activities in Mt. Pleasant**

Activity	Number of mentions
Sports Participation	51
Music Concerts & Events	28
Health, Fitness & Exercise	26
Swimming	23
Road Races (running)	18
Cheerleading, Dance, Gymnastics	14
Volunteer Activities	13
Art, Crafts, Music Classes	12
Use local recreation facilities	11

For a full listing of local recreation activities respondents participated in, see Volume 2.



Of those who participated in other recreation programs in the Mt. Pleasant community, the most common places and providers included:

**Figure 10: Other Recreation Providers in Mt. Pleasant**

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Number of Mentions</b>
<b>Central Michigan University</b>	51
<b>Morey Courts</b>	27
<b>Local Sports Clubs</b>	22
<b>Private Businesses</b>	20
<b>Civic and Nonprofit Organizations</b>	19
<b>Area Churches</b>	13
<b>Commission on Aging</b>	11
<b>Wellness Central</b>	7
<b>Broadway Theatre</b>	6

For a complete listing of all other local recreation providers identified by respondents, see Volume 2.

**Recreation Programs and Services Outside of Mt. Pleasant**

Respondents were asked, “Do you or members of your household go outside of the Mt. Pleasant community in order to participate in recreation programs, services, or activities that are not available in Mt. Pleasant?”

Just over one - fourth of respondents indicated they traveled outside the Mt. Pleasant community to participate in recreation programs, services, or activities.

**Figure 11: Other Recreation Programs Outside Mt. Pleasant**

Value	Count	Percent %
No	182	72.50%
Yes	69	27.50%

Of those who participated in other recreation programs outside the Mt. Pleasant community, the most common activities included:

**Figure 12: Other Recreation Activities Outside Mt. Pleasant**

Activity	Number of Mentions
Sports Participation	23
Rails to Trails (Biking)	14
Art Fairs, Festivals & Events	9
Road Races (running)	8
Swimming	8
Agriculture, Farm Markets	7
Snow Sports	6
Animal & Pet Related	5
Cheerleading, Dance, Gymnastics	5
Hiking & Backpacking	5
Music Concerts & Events	5

For a full list of recreation activities respondents participated in outside of Mt. Pleasant, see Volume 2.

Of those who participated in other recreation programs outside the Mt. Pleasant community, the most common destination was Midland. Most respondents identified cities around Michigan as their destination for recreation outside the Mt. Pleasant area, notably Grand Rapids, Lansing, and Detroit areas. Few respondents were specific on recreation providers.

For a complete list of recreation providers listed by respondents, see Volume 2.

## Future Priorities

Respondents were asked, “In the coming years, do you feel the City Recreation Department should do more, about the same, or less of the following types of recreation programming?”

Over half of respondents indicated a preference for more emphasis on recreation programming that promotes the enjoyment of nature and the outdoors (67%), community-wide festivals, fairs, concerts, etc. (57%), programs that contribute to health and wellness (55%), and recreation programs for teens (53%).

The majority of respondents indicated that the focus on recreation programming should remain about the same for activities including competitive sports (71%), skill instruction in recreation and sport activities (70%), recreation programs and services for families (61%), and after-school and summer programs for children (57%).

**Figure 13: Priorities for Future Recreation Programming**

	<b>More</b>	<b>About the same</b>	<b>Less</b>
<b>Skill instruction in recreation activities and sports.</b>	28.40%	70.10%	1.50%
	57	141	3
<b>Recreation programs and services for families.</b>	38.60%	60.90%	0.50%
	78	123	1
<b>Community-wide special events. (festivals, fairs, concerts, etc.)</b>	57.40%	39.80%	2.80%
	124	86	6
<b>Competitive athletics and sports.</b>	20.00%	70.70%	9.30%
	41	145	19
<b>Recreation programs and services for teens in the community.</b>	53.20%	44.40%	2.40%
	109	91	5
<b>Recreation programs involving visual arts (art, crafts, ceramics, etc).</b>	43.90%	50.00%	6.10%
	93	106	13
<b>Recreation programs that promote enjoyment of nature and the outdoors.</b>	66.50%	32.60%	0.90%
	145	71	2
<b>Recreation programs for youth in the community.</b>	49.50%	49.00%	1.50%
	102	101	3
<b>After school and summer programs for children.</b>	41.10%	57.00%	1.90%
	85	118	4
<b>Recreation programs that contribute to health and wellness of City residents.</b>	55.30%	43.70%	0.90%
	119	94	2
<b>Recreation programs and services for senior adults in the community.</b>	46.90%	51.60%	1.40%
	100	110	3
<b>Recreation programs involving performing arts (theatre, dance, music, etc.).</b>	41.00%	52.40%	6.70%
	86	110	14

## Recreation Fees

Respondents were asked, “Please indicate your agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements related to fees for recreation programs and services.”

Respondents were evenly split (51% agreeing and 49% disagreeing) on the statement that recreation fees should be paid entirely by those who participate.

Respondents agreed that some recreation programs should be available at no cost (88%), and that certain groups of residents should be allowed to participate free or on a reduced cost basis (87%). Further, respondents disagreed (59%) with the statement that recreation programs should only be offered if the fees cover all cost of the program.

Respondents clearly agreed (83%) with the statement that City residents should pay less than non-residents.

**Figure 14: Opinions about Recreation Fees**

	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<b>The cost of recreation programs should be paid entirely by those who participate.</b>	8.40%	42.60%	43.90%	5.10%
	20	101	104	12
<b>Some recreation programs should be available to everyone at no cost.</b>	36.80%	50.80%	10.30%	2.10%
	89	123	25	5
<b>Certain groups of residents should be allowed to participate free or at reduced cost based on need.</b>	35.80%	51.00%	9.90%	3.30%
	87	124	24	8
<b>City residents should pay less than non - residents</b>	37.10%	45.80%	15.00%	2.10%
	89	110	36	5
<b>Recreation programs should only be offered if the revenue from fees covers all costs of offering the program.</b>	8.70%	32.50%	47.20%	11.70%
	20	75	109	27

Based on the responses to these questions, respondents appear to recognize that some recreation programming should be made available as a service at no cost to participants, and that some groups of citizens should have access to recreation programs regardless of ability to pay, and that

program revenue should not be the determining factor in offering programs. Respondents also clearly feel that non-residents should pay higher fees than residents

### Underserved Groups

Respondents were asked, “Do you feel that there are any groups of citizens in the City of Mt. Pleasant who do not have adequate access to recreation programs, services and activities?”

The majority of respondents (70%) indicated that they felt no groups of citizens were being underserved by City recreation services and activities.

**Figure 15: Underserved Groups**

Value	Count	Percent %
No	157	71.40%
Yes	63	28.60%

Of those respondents who felt there were underserved groups of citizens, the most commonly mentioned underserved groups, based on the number of times they were mentioned, include:

- Low income 24 comments
- Seniors 11 comments
- People with limited transportation 7 comments
- People with disabilities 5 comments
- Teens 5 comments
- Adults 5 comments

### Sources of Information

Respondents were asked if they consider themselves to be fairly well-informed about recreation opportunities offered by the City of Mt. Pleasant.

Almost sixty percent of respondents indicated that they felt they were well informed about city recreation programs and services.

**Figure 16: Are You Well Informed?**

Value	Count	Percent %
Yes	146	58.20%
No	105	41.80%

Respondents were also asked to “*Think about how you learn of the recreation programs, services, and activities offered by the City of Mt. Pleasant and then indicate the extent to which you use the following sources for your information.*”

Overall, the most heavily used sources of information about City recreation programs, services, and activities were the City Newsletter (39%) followed by word of mouth and newspapers (27% each). Least used sources of information included e-mail from the city (78%), social media (71%), and school handouts (65%).

**Figure 17: Sources of Information**

	<b>Seldom</b>	<b>Occasionally</b>	<b>Regularly</b>
<b>City newsletter</b>	<b>24.40%</b>	<b>37.20%</b>	<b>38.50%</b>
	57	87	90
<b>School handouts</b>	<b>65.00%</b>	<b>12.30%</b>	<b>22.70%</b>
	132	25	46
<b>Cable/Satellite TV</b>	<b>59.20%</b>	<b>31.00%</b>	<b>9.90%</b>
	126	66	21
<b>Posters &amp; flyers</b>	<b>33.00%</b>	<b>55.30%</b>	<b>11.60%</b>
	71	119	25
<b>Email from the City</b>	<b>78.00%</b>	<b>12.00%</b>	<b>10.00%</b>
	156	24	20
<b>City web site</b>	<b>49.80%</b>	<b>40.50%</b>	<b>9.80%</b>
	102	83	20
<b>Word of mouth</b>	<b>18.10%</b>	<b>54.60%</b>	<b>27.30%</b>
	41	124	62
<b>Radio</b>	<b>43.80%</b>	<b>37.90%</b>	<b>18.30%</b>
	96	83	40
<b>Newspapers</b>	<b>32.00%</b>	<b>41.30%</b>	<b>26.70%</b>
	72	93	60
<b>Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)</b>	<b>71.10%</b>	<b>19.10%</b>	<b>9.80%</b>
	145	39	20
<b>Other</b>	<b>82.40%</b>	<b>13.20%</b>	<b>4.40%</b>
	56	9	3

Sources of information used varies by type of household with older households relying more on newspapers and the City Newsletter while households with children rely more heavily on school handouts and word of mouth.



**Figure 18: Source of Information by Household Type**

	Young Adults with no Children	Households with Children	Adults 55 and over	All Households
City newsletter	1.99	2.05	<b>2.49</b>	2.14
School handouts	1.66	<b>2.06</b>	1.39	1.58
Cable/Satellite TV	1.46	1.32	1.71	1.51
Posters & flyers	1.78	1.76	1.77	1.79
Email from the City	1.37	1.55	1.17	1.32
City web site	1.70	1.81	1.39	1.60
Word of mouth	<b>2.10</b>	<b>2.14</b>	<b>2.06</b>	<b>2.09</b>
Radio	1.74	1.48	1.77	1.74
Newspapers	1.78	1.62	<b>2.36</b>	1.95
Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, etc )	1.47	1.38	1.20	1.39
<b>Scale: 1 (rarely) to 3 (regularly)</b>				

Although less than one in five respondents reported using other sources of information than those listed, other sources used included:

- Billboard
- CM Life
- CMU
- CMU sources
- Coworkers with children
- Discussions with individuals involved in such programs.
- Facebook - City of Mt. Pleasant page
- Facebook, colleagues at CMU
- I get most of my information from my patients (word of mouth)
- I rarely hear of the recreation department activities I think this needs to be advertised better
- ISABELLA COLLABORATIVE, ISABELLA HEALTH
- IMPROVEMENT PLANNING WORKGROUP THROUGH THE TOGETHER WE CAN I

Mailed flyers  
Mt Pleasant WOW online or Central Michigan University events  
calendar  
Postings at place of business  
Public bulletin boards  
Special mailings  
teachers  
Veterans Memorial Library  
Web site and posters I guess  
Word of mouth  
work

### **For Further Investigation**

One common concern when conducting surveys is whether those who choose to respond truly represent the population as a whole. One of the methods of checking for a response bias is to make comparisons between the characteristics of those who choose to respond and the overall population on common variables. The assumption then is, if the respondents do not differ from the overall population on those items, they will not differ on the questions of interest.

For this survey, a response bias check was conducted on the variables of geographic distribution (voting precinct), and household income since that data was collected on the questionnaire and is also available from other sources. In both cases, there were differences between the survey respondents and the overall population that are significant enough to recommend further examination.

Figure 18 shows that households in the \$10,000 to \$34,999 income range were slightly under represented while households in the \$100,00 and above income range was significantly underrepresented in the returned surveys. Similarly, households in the \$25,000 to \$74,999 income range are significantly over represented in the returned surveys.

**Figure 19: What Category Best Represents Your Household Income?**

Income Group	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Less than \$10,000	29	24.1	4.9
\$10,000 to \$14,999	10	15.6	-5.6
\$15,000 to \$24,999	28	31.1	-3.1
\$25,000 to \$34,999	24	27.7	-3.7
\$35,000 to \$49,999	35	23.1	11.9
\$50,000 to \$74,999	56	37.4	18.6
\$75,000 to \$99,999	29	27.2	1.8
\$100,000 and above	32	56.9	-24.9
Total	243		

Figure 19 below demonstrates that households from precincts 4, 6 and 7 were under represented, while households from precincts 2 and 3 were over represented in the returned surveys.

**Figure 20: Precinct of Respondents**

Precinct	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
1	45	38.7	6.3
2	51	32.5	18.5
3	28	17.6	10.4
4	42	51.8	-9.8
5	31	24.8	6.2
6	23	45.1	-22.1
7	20	29.6	-9.6
Total	240		

Figures 20 and 21 provide a more detailed breakdown of the preferences of respondents for future recreation program planning by household and by precinct. Table cells represent the percent of respondents in each category who desires to see more of each type of recreation programming in the coming years.

**Figure 21: Percent of Respondents by Income who Desire more Specified Programming**

<b>Household Income</b>	<b>Skill instruction</b>	<b>Families</b>	<b>Special Events</b>	<b>Sports Athletics</b>	<b>Teens</b>	<b>Visual Arts</b>	<b>Nature Outdoors</b>	<b>Youth</b>	<b>After School/Summer</b>	<b>Health And Wellness</b>	<b>Seniors</b>	<b>Performing Arts</b>
<b>Less than \$10,000</b>	32%	39%	84%	28%	60%	60%	79%	60%	48%	50%	44%	48%
<b>\$10,000 to \$14,999</b>	33%	33%	71%	17%	50%	67%	67%	50%	33%	33%	17%	17%
<b>\$15,000 to \$24,999</b>	24%	44%	41%	17%	47%	35%	65%	22%	26%	55%	50%	42%
<b>\$25,000 to \$34,999</b>	32%	53%	60%	20%	76%	53%	81%	58%	40%	65%	52%	26%
<b>\$35,000 to \$49,999</b>	21%	45%	47%	22%	39%	19%	59%	40%	45%	50%	55%	42%
<b>\$50,000 to \$74,999</b>	29%	39%	60%	20%	55%	43%	67%	58%	60%	64%	41%	44%
<b>\$75,000 to \$99,999</b>	28%	36%	58%	20%	48%	57%	74%	54%	54%	54%	44%	39%
<b>\$100,000 and over</b>	33%	23%	50%	19%	57%	46%	52%	44%	35%	46%	46%	44%

**Figure 22: Percent of Respondents By Precinct Who Want More of the Specified Programs**

Precinct	Skill instruction	Families	Special Events	Sports Athletics	Teens	Visual Arts	Nature Outdoors	Youth	After school/Summer	Health and wellness	Seniors	Performing arts
1	27%	43%	63%	24%	58%	41%	76%	45%	40%	66%	56%	32%
2	71%	34%	59%	20%	50%	44%	57%	43%	33%	54%	33%	37%
3	29%	44%	41%	17%	54%	39%	76%	35%	27%	46%	46%	30%
4	28%	42%	60%	15%	58%	46%	59%	56%	47%	46%	47%	43%
5	21%	36%	63%	23%	48%	46%	58%	54%	48%	42%	42%	64%
6	41%	50%	59%	19%	56%	44%	78%	56%	50%	78%	61%	50%
7	15%	23%	57%	15%	36%	43%	71%	43%	43%	67%	53%	36%

## Recommendations

### Programming focus:

Based on resident input, there is a strong interest being connected to the outdoors and to nature and to improving mental and physical health. Residents see these as beneficial to themselves and their families and desire more programs and services that allow them to achieve these desired benefits

1. Provide recreation programs, services and activities that allow residents of all ages to connect with the outdoors and with nature.
2. Provide recreation programs, services and activities that help residents of all ages to improve their mental and physical health.

In addition, half or more of respondents desire to see more recreation programs, services and activities for youth and teens in the community as well as more community-wide special events such as festivals, fairs, and concerts. Currently there are no City-sponsored programs or services targeting the teen age population.

1. Provide programming for teens
2. Increase programming for youth
3. Provide more community wide special events

### Administrative and Policy focus:

Although by no means overwhelming, respondents demonstrated the least satisfaction with efforts to advertise recreation programs and services. The most heavily used source of information mentioned included the newspaper and the *City Newsletter* which has had a sporadic publication schedule lately. Word of mouth is a leading source of information for all respondents.

1. Create a marketing plan that meets the needs of target groups for accurate information.

Respondents demonstrated sensitivity to the needs of some members of the community who may have difficulty accessing recreation programs and services. Over eighty-five percent of respondents acknowledge that there are groups of citizens should be allowed to participate in recreation programs and services free or at reduced rates. Likewise, respondents believe some recreation programs and services should be available to all citizens at no cost.

1. Explore Identifying core recreation programs and services that will be offered annually at no cost.
2. Explore revenue sources to subsidize recreation programs and services for residents with financial need.
3. Explore developing policy related to fee subsidy for residents with financial need.

## Appendix A: The Survey



Dear Mt. Pleasant Resident:

Thank you for taking time to participate in this Recreation Needs and Interests Survey being conducted by the City of Mt. Pleasant Parks and Recreation Department.

PLEASE NOTE that this survey is NOT about Parks or Recreation **facilities** – rather it is about recreation programs, services, activities and events.

Your voluntary participation in this survey is greatly appreciated and your input is highly valued. We want to assure you that your responses to these questions are confidential. The information you provide will be used to assist in recreation planning and to improve recreation programs and services for residents of the City of Mt. Pleasant.

You can help save us the cost of postage by completing this survey online at:

<http://sgiz.mobi/s3/Recreation-Survey>

**Complete the questionnaire by December 9 to be entered into a drawing for a \$250.00 gift certificate to the Great Wolf Lodge and Water Park in Traverse City.**

### RECREATION NEEDS AND INTERESTS SURVEY

Record the password just as it appears on the address label. \_\_\_\_\_

1. Are you a resident of the City of Mt. Pleasant? Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_
2. Prior to receiving information about this survey, were you aware that the City of Mt. Pleasant has a Recreation Department? Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_
3. Recreation programs and services provide many benefits. From the list of benefits below check up to **THREE (3)** benefits that you feel are most important to members of your household.
  - Provide opportunities to improve physical and mental health
  - Provide structure and supervision for children and youth
  - Provide positive alternatives to unfavorable behavior
  - Provide opportunities to learn new leisure skills
  - Provide fun for participants and observers
  - Improve the quality of life for residents
  - Increase community pride
  - Provide opportunities to access the outdoors and nature
  - Provide opportunities for social interaction

Below is a list of recreation programs, services, activities and events that the City of Mt. Pleasant Parks and Recreation Department has sponsored or co-sponsored during the past year.

**4. For those programs, services, activities or events that you or a member of your household participated in, please indicate your overall satisfaction.**

If your household has not participated in city recreation programs, go to the next question.

<b>Program, Service, Activity, Event</b>	<b>Very satisfied</b>	<b>Somewhat satisfied</b>	<b>Somewhat dissatisfied</b>	<b>Very dissatisfied</b>
<b>Pre-School Sports</b>				
Start Smart basketball	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Start Smart flag football	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Start Smart tee ball	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Start Smart tennis	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Start Smart soccer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Start Smart golf	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Youth Sports</b>				
Learn to bowl	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bowling league	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Youth soccer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tee ball	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Youth volleyball	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Youth basketball	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Youth dodge ball	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hockey	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Youth tennis	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Youth Programs</b>				
PEAK after school program	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Winter / Spring / Summer camps	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Family Activities</b>				
Youth / Adult bowling tournament	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Daddy - Daughter dance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mom and Son event	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Adult Sports</b>				
Men's softball	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Co-ed softball	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Co-ed sand volleyball	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tennis lessons	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Special Events</b>				
Princess and Superhero party	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Great Egg Scramble	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Candy Cane Lane	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Softball tournaments

**5. Think about the City of Mt. Pleasant-sponsored recreation programs, services, activities and events that members of your household have attended or participated in the past year.**

**Strongly Agree    Agree    Disagree    Strongly Disagree    No basis for an opinion**

If your household has not participated in city recreation programs skip to the next question.

Recreation programs are well organized	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recreation programs are well supervised	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recreation programs are conveniently scheduled	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fees for recreation programs are reasonable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recreation programs and services are well advertised	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recreation staff are courteous	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Places where recreation programs take place are safe	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Places where recreation programs take place are well maintained	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Farmers market	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	

**6. Do you or members of your household participate in recreation programs, services, activities, or events that are provided by other organizations in the Mt. Pleasant community?**

No \_\_\_\_\_  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_

**7. If you answered **Yes**, would you please share what these recreation programs are and what organization offers them?**

<b>Program, service, activity, or event</b>	<b>Sponsoring Organization</b>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

**8. Do you or members of your household go outside of the Mt. Pleasant community in order to participate in recreation programs, services, or activities that are not available in Mt. Pleasant?**

No \_\_\_\_\_  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_

**9. If you answered **Yes**, what recreation programs, services, or activities do you participate in outside of the Mt. Pleasant community?**

<b>Program, service, activity, or event</b>	<b>Location</b>
_____	_____

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<b>10. In the coming years do you feel the City Recreation Department should do more, about the same, or less of the following types of recreation programming?</b>	<b>MORE</b>	<b>ABOUT THE SAME</b>	<b>LESS</b>
Skill instruction in recreation activities and sports.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recreation programs and services for families.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community-wide special events. (festivals, fairs, concerts, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Competitive athletics and sports.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recreation programs and services for teens in the community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recreation programs involving visual arts (art, crafts, ceramics, etc).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recreation programs that promote enjoyment of nature and the outdoors.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recreation programs for youth in the community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
After school and summer programs for children.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recreation programs that contribute to health and wellness of city residents.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recreation programs and services for senior adults in the community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recreation programs involving performing arts (theatre, dance, music, etc.).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11. Are there any Recreation programs, services, activities or events that are not offered by the City Recreation Department that you would like them to offer? Please list or describe.

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<b>12. Please indicate your agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements related to fees for recreation programs and services.</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
The cost of recreation programs should be paid entirely by those who participate.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Some recreation programs should be available to everyone at no cost.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Certain groups of residents should be allowed to participate free or at reduced cost based on need.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
City residents should pay less than non residents	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recreation programs should only be offered if the revenue from fees covers all costs of offering the program.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

13. Do you feel that there are any groups of citizens in the City of Mt. Pleasant who do not have adequate access to recreation programs, services and activities?

No \_\_\_\_\_

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ What groups \_\_\_\_\_

14. Would you consider yourself fairly well-informed about recreation opportunities offered by the City of Mt. Pleasant? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

15. Think about how you learn of the recreation programs, services, and activities offered by the City of Mt. Pleasant and then indicate the extent to which you use the following sources for your information:

Sources of Information	Seldom	Occasionally	Regularly
City newsletter	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
School handouts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cable/Satellite TV	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Posters & flyers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Email from the city	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
City web site	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Word of mouth	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Radio	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Newspapers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

16. Including yourself, how many persons in your household fall into each age group below?

_____ Children 5 & younger	_____ Adults 19-24	_____ Adults 55-64
_____ Children 6-12	_____ Adults 25-34	_____ Adults 65-74
_____ Youth 13-15	_____ Adults 35-44	_____ Adults 75 or older
_____ Teens 16-18	_____ Adults 45-54	

17. What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_

18. Are you a full-time college student at Central Michigan University or Mid-Michigan Community College?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

19. On the map to the right, **circle the number** that best represents the area of Mt. Pleasant in which you live?



20. What annual household income category best represents your situation?

\_\_\_\_\_ Less than \$10,  
 \_\_\_\_\_ \$10,000 to \$14,999  
 \_\_\_\_\_ \$15,000 to \$24,999  
 \_\_\_\_\_ \$25,000 to \$34,999  
 \_\_\_\_\_ \$35,000 to \$49,999  
 \_\_\_\_\_ \$50,000 to \$74,999  
 \_\_\_\_\_ \$75,000 to \$99,999  
 \_\_\_\_\_ \$100,000 and above

21. What is your gender:

\_\_\_Female \_\_\_Male

Additional comments you would like to share regarding City of Mt. Pleasant recreation.

Thank you for completing this survey. Your response is very important to us.  
Please fold the questionnaire so the return address is visible, staple or tape, and mail. No postage needed.

