

HAYS COUNTY PARKS, RECREATION

AND

OPEN SPACE

SURVEY

JULY 2000

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>PAGE</u>
SUMMARY	3-7
QUESTIONS	8-16
DEMOGRAPHICS	17-18
RESIDENT COMMENTS	18-19
METHODOLOGY	20
ABOUT THE TEXAS POLL/ SCRIPPS DATA CENTER	20

SUMMARY

Hays County residents rank river/creek access as the No. 1 public recreational facility need in Hays County, according to a survey conducted by The Scripps Howard Texas Poll.

Twenty-eight percent of Hays County residents ranked river/creek access as the No. 1 need.

Other needs and the percentage who ranked them No. 1 were:

	1 0		
?	Playgrounds (8 percent)	?	Picnic tables (3 percent)
?	Fishing lakes (8 percent)	?	Baseball fields (3 percent)
?	Trails (8 percent)	?	Softball fields (2 percent)
?	Camping sites (7 percent)	?	Soccer fields (2 percent)
?	Picnic pavilions (5 percent)	?	Basketball courts (1 percent)
?	Nature study areas (5 percent)	?	Volleyball courts (1 percent)
?	Bird watching/wildlife sites (4	?	Tennis courts (less than 1
	percent)		percent)

The survey asked residents a variety of questions regarding parks, recreation and open space. The Scripps Howard Texas Poll conducted the survey from April 24 to June 20, mailing 2,000 questionnaires to a random sample of Hays County residents. A total of 943 residents completed and returned the survey - a 47 percent response rate.

County Involvement

A majority of Hays County residents support the county acquiring, managing and funding parks, and 71 percent are concerned about growth stripping the county of its rural character.

Sixty-five percent of residents agree that Hays County should acquire and manage parks, and 61 percent believe parks are a public service that should be funded by the county.

Visits to Parks

The survey also found that Hays County residents enjoy visiting public parks and most residents believe there aren't enough parks and recreation opportunities in the county.

Fifty-three percent of Hays County residents have visited Dudley Johnson Park. But 70 percent believe the county does not have enough parks and recreation opportunities.

And 67 percent of residents visited public park or recreation areas in Texas in the past 12 months. Among those who visited state parks, Pedenales State Park and Zilker Park were the most popular with Hays County residents.

Continued on next page

Other popular park destinations for Hays County residents were: Page 3



- ? Enchanted Rock (7 percent)
- ? Canyon Lake (6 percent)
- ? Bastrop State Park (5 percent)
- ? Blanco State Park (4 percent)
- ? McKinney Park in Austin (4 percent)
- ? Garner State Park (4 percent)
- ? Five Mile Dam (3 percent)
- ? Guadalupe State Park in Blanco (3 percent)

- ? Big Bend (3 percent)
- ? City Park in San Marcos (3 percent)
- ? Lost Maples State Park (3 percent)
- ? Rio Vista Park in San Marcos (3 percent)
- ? Children's Playscape in San Marcos (2 percent)

Options for a County Program

The survey also asked residents the importance of several options if Hays County begins a program to acquire more park and open space land.

A majority of residents – 55 percent -- say it is extremely important for the county to acquire land to protect aquifer recharge areas. Twenty-three percent see that as very important, 11 percent moderately important, 4 percent slightly important, 5 percent not important and 2 percent have no opinion.

Forty-four percent of residents say it is extremely important for the county to acquire buffer land along streams to provide flood protection, protect habitat, natural environment and water quality. Twenty-seven percent say that is very important, 14 percent moderately important, 5 percent slightly important, 7 percent not important and 3 percent have no opinion.

Thirty-eight percent say it is extremely important for the county to acquire park land along rivers and creeks, compared with 30 percent who say it is very important, 19 percent moderately important, 5 percent slightly important, 6 percent not important and 2 percent have no opinion.

Twenty-six percent of Hays County residents say it is extremely important and 29 percent say it is very important for the county to acquire land along scenic roadways to preserve the view. Acquiring land along roadways is moderately important to 23 percent, slightly important to 10 percent, not important to 8 percent and 4 percent have no opinion.

Meanwhile, 25 percent of residents say it is extremely important for the county to acquire very large parks to be left mostly natural and 22 percent say it is very important. Twenty-one percent say acquiring very large parks is moderately important, 10 percent slightly important, 16 percent not important and 6 percent have no opinion.

Nineteen percent of residents say it is extremely important for the county to acquire large parks to be developed with various recreation facilities. Thirty-one percent say it is very important to develop large parks, 27 percent say moderately important, 9 percent slightly important, 10 percent not important and 4 percent have no opinion.

Less important to residents is having the county acquire parks in existing cities. Thirteen percent see that as extremely important, compared with 21 percent very important, 25 percent moderately important, 15 percent slightly important, 19 percent not important and 7 percent have no opinion.

Residents also are lukewarm to the idea of the county acquiring land for parks near the newly developing neighborhoods. Eleven percent see that as extremely important, 19 percent very important, 26 percent moderately important, 18 percent slightly important, 20 percent not important and 6 percent have no opinion.

Also less important for residents is the county acquiring parkland to be developed with athletic field complexes for softball, soccer and other team sports. Twelve percent say that is extremely important, 19 percent very important, 23 percent moderately important, 19 percent slightly important, 23 percent not important and 4 percent have no opinion.

Meanwhile, the survey asked residents why they don't go to parks as often as they may like. The top response – 40 percent – was that they spend their leisure time doing other things. Thirty-three percent say the parks are too crowded, 27 percent say the parks are too far away and 21 percent don't know where parks are located.

Eleven percent of Hays County residents don't go to parks as often as they like because they don't feel safe at them. Eight percent say their age limits their visits, 7 percent don't have anyone to go with and 5 percent have disabilities that prohibit them from visiting parks. Two percent of residents don't visit parks because they don't enjoy outdoor recreation and 1 percent don't have transportation to get there.

Funding

Another series of questions asked residents to rank the top three ways of funding a county program to acquire, develop and maintain new parks. More residents -33 percent - ranked "grants from the state and foundations" as the No. 1 way to fund such a program.

Other funding suggestions and the percentage of residents who ranked them No. 1 were:

- ? Donations of land or money (23 percent)
- ? Entrance/user fees (18 percent)
- ? Voter-approved bonds (8 percent)
- ? Creating a special park district (2 percent)
- ? An increase in annual budget from the property tax (2 percent)

Parks and Open Space

The survey also asked residents to agree or disagree with a series of questions about parks and open space.

Eighty-nine percent of residents agree that it's important to preserve open space for future generations. Only 4 percent disagree, 6 percent are neutral and 1 percent had no opinion.

And residents overwhelmingly disagree – 70 percent – that Hays County has enough parks and recreation opportunities. Nine percent agree, 15 percent are neutral and 6 percent had no opinion.

Hays County residents clearly support the county's involvement in acquiring, managing and funding parks.

Sixty-five percent agree that Hays County should acquire and manage parks, compared with 8 percent who disagree. Twenty percent are neutral and 7 percent have no opinion.

Sixty-one percent of residents agree and 10 percent disagree that parks are a public service that should be funded by county government. Twenty-two percent are neutral and 7 percent have no opinion.

Residents are split, however, over Hays County acquiring parks but contracting with others to manage them. Twenty-three percent agree, 28 percent disagree, 36 percent are neutral and 13 percent have no opinion.

Meanwhile, 79 percent of resident like knowing that park sites exist even if they don't visit them often. Six percent disagree, 11 percent are neutral and 5 percent have no opinion.

And 71 percent of Hays County residents are concerned that the current level of growth will strip the county of its rural character. Eleven percent disagree, 14 percent are neutral and 4 percent have no opinion.

Park Fees

Regarding fees to parks, 50 percent of residents agree that county park fees should be high enough to make them self-sufficient. Twenty-four percent disagree, 23 percent are neutral and 3 percent have no opinion.

But 56 percent of residents also support keeping fees at a minimum to encourage the use of the facilities. Twenty-two percent disagree that fees should be kept at a minimum, 19 percent are neutral and 3 percent have no opinion.

About one-third of county residents -32 percent - are willing to pay higher taxes if additional funding is needed to provide and improve a park system in the county. Forty-one percent would not be willing to pay higher taxes, 25 percent are neutral and 2 percent have no opinion.

Role of Commissioners' Court

The survey also included a series of questions about the importance of various activities for the Hays County Commissioners' Court.

Protecting air and water quality received the most ``extremely important'' responses – 49 percent. Thirty-five percent say it is very important for the commissioners' court to focus on protecting air and water quality, 12 percent say moderately important, 2 percent slightly important, 1 percent not important and 1 percent have no opinion.

But nearly half of residents – 47 percent -- believe protecting property rights is extremely important. Thirty percent say it is very important, 14 percent moderately important, 5 percent slightly important, 2 percent not important and 2 percent have no opinion.

Other issues that received a high percentage of extremely important responses were: reducing taxes (40 percent); improving quality of life (39 percent); guiding residential and commercial development (39 percent); preserving open space and park land (37 percent); and improving law enforcement (34 percent).

Only 15 percent of residents say it is extremely important for the commissioners' court to promote economic growth. Twenty-six percent say it is very important, 20 percent moderately important, 14 percent slightly important, 12 percent not important and 3 percent have no opinion.

- Ty Meighan Texas Poll Director

THE QUESTIONS:

(1) Hays County currently owns and manages only one park, Dudley Johnson Park on the Blanco River (also known as 5-Mile Dam). Have you ever visited this park?

Yes 53
No 46
Don't know/no answer 1

(2) In the last 12 months, did you visit any public park or recreation area anywhere in Texas?

Yes 67
No 31
Don't know/no answer 2

(If yes to question 2)

(3) List the park sites you visited in the last 12 months: (Top 15 sites visited)

Pedenales State Park 10 Zilker Park 10 **Enchanted Rock** 7 6 Canyon Lake **Bastrop State Park** 5 **Blanco State Park** 4 McKinney Park in Austin 4 **Garner State Park** 4 3 Five Mile Dam 3 Guadalupe State Park in Blanco 3 Big Bend City Park in San Marcos 3 3 Lost Maples State Park Rio Vista Park 3 Children's Playscape San Marcos

(4) Below is a list of reasons why people don't go to parks as often as they may like. Which, if any, are reasons that limit your visits?

	% (N= 903)
Sites are too far from my home	27
I don't know where parks sites are located	21
I don't enjoy outdoor recreation	2
I don't have other people to go with	7
My leisure time is spent doing other things	40
My age limits my visits	8

Continued on next page

	<u>%</u>
I have physical disabilities that limit my visits	5
Park sites are too crowded	33
I don't have transportation to get to park sites	1
I don't feel safe at parks	11
None of the above	7

Other reasons for not visiting parks (listed by residents):

?	Not enough free	?	Need more information on parks
	time	?	Not enough hiking trails
?	Dirty or poor	?	Gangs
	facilities	?	Can't drink beer at parks
?	Too expensive	?	Too much booze at the park
?	Can't bring my	?	Aren't enough parks
	dogs	?	Too much trash
?	Lack of money	?	Too hot
?	Not enough	?	No shooting ranges
	recreation for older	?	We like to get rowdy and loud
	people	?	No parks for Northern Hays County residents
?	Need more sites for	?	No river access in Wimberley
	RVs	?	No parks in Hays County
?	Most parks are	?	Homeless people live and hang out in parks
_	trashed out	?	Park curfews are not enforced
?	Lack of restrooms	?	Not enough trails for off road
?	Bathrooms need to		vehicles/motorcycles
	be repaired	?	Too many honey do's

(5) If Hays County begins a program to acquire more park and open space land, how important is it for the County to acquire each of the following?

? Very large parks to be left mostly natural

	% (N=900
Extremely important	25
Very important	22
Moderately important	21
Slightly important	10
Not important	16
No opinion	6

? Large parks to be developed with various recreation facilities

	% (N=898)
Extremely important	19
Very important	31
Moderately important	27
Slightly important	9
Not important	10
No opinion	4

? Park land along rivers and creeks

	<u>% (N=910)</u>
Extremely important	38
Very important	30
Moderately important	19
Slightly important	5
Not important	6
No opinion	2

? Parkland to be developed with athletic field complexes for softball, soccer and other team sports

	<u>% (N=900)</u>
Extremely important	12
Very important	19
Moderately important	23
Slightly important	19
Not important	23
No opinion	4

? Parks near the newly developing neighborhoods

	% (N=898)
Extremely important	11
Very important	19
Moderately important	26
Slightly important	18
Not important	20
No opinion	6

? Parks in existing cities

	% (N=884)
Extremely important	13
Very important	21
Moderately important	25
Slightly important	15
Not important	19
No opinion	7

? Buffer land along streams to provide flood protection, protect habitat, natural environment and water quality

	<u>% (N=904)</u>
Extremely important	44
Very important	27
Moderately important	14
Slightly important	5
Not important	7
No opinion	3

? Land along scenic roadways to preserve the view

	% (N=907)
Extremely important	26
Very important	29
Moderately important	23
Slightly important	10
Not important	8
No opinion	4

? Land to protect aquifer recharge areas

	<u>% (N=908)</u>
Extremely important	55
Very important	23
Moderately important	11
Slightly important	4
Not important	5
No opinion	2
-	•

Others areas the county should acquire (listed by residents):

?	Lar	ıd for l	iking
	and	l biking	g paths
•	т.	1.0	11

- ? Land for small parks with pools and child playscapes
- ? Access points along San Marcos and Blanco rivers
- ? Land for dog parks
- ? Land for a park that emphasizes recycling
- ? Land for overnight camping

(6) From the list provided below, please choose five (5) public recreational facility needs that you feel Hays County should provide, and rank those five top facilities from 1 to 5.

	1	2	3	4	5
Baseball fields	3%	3%	2%	3%	4%
Softball fields	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%
Soccer fields	2%	1%	3%	2%	2%
Basketball	1%	2%	1%	2%	2%
courts					
Tennis courts	<1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Volleyball	1%	<1%	<1%	1%	1%
courts					
Playgrounds	8%	6%	8%	7%	8%
River/creek	28%	14%	8%	8%	5%
access					
Fishing lakes	8%	13%	8%	8%	7%
Camping sites	7%	10%	15%	9%	8%
Picnic tables	3%	7%	8%	9%	10%
Picnic	5%	6%	6%	8%	6%
Pavilions					
Trails	8%	8%	10%	8%	7%
Off-road	2%	1%	1%	2%	2%
vehicle areas					
Nature study	5%	7%	6%	7%	7%
areas					
Bird watching/	4%	5%	5%	4%	6%
Wildlife sites					

Other (listed by residents):

- ? Visitor information
- ? Nice bathrooms
- ? Frisbee golf
- ? Bike trails
- ? Leash-free area
- ? Swimming pools
- ? Golf facilities

- ? Barbecue pits
- ? Hiking trails
- ? Horse riding trails
- ? Multi-use sports facility

(7) How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following:

? It's important that we preserve open space for future generations % (N=891)

	70 (11	1-001 <i>)</i>
Strongly Agree	63	
Agree	26	89 agree
Neutral	6	
Disagree	2	
Strongly Disagree	2	4 disagree
No opinion	1	_

? We have enough parks and recreation opportunities in Hays County

	<u>% (N=890)</u>		
Strongly Agree	4		
Agree	5	9 agree	
Neutral	15		
Disagree	36		
Strongly Disagree	34	70 disagree	
No opinion	6		

? Hays County should acquire and manage parks

	<u>% (N</u>	<u>V= 884)</u>
Strongly Agree	24	
Agree	41	65 agree
Neutral	20	
Disagree	4	
Strongly Disagree	4	8 disagree
No opinion	7	

? Hays County should acquire parks but contract with others to manage

	% (N= 872)		
Strongly Agree	6		
Agree	<u>17</u>	23 agree	
Neutral	36		
Disagree	17		
Strongly Disagree	11	28 disagree	
No opinion	13		

? I like knowing that park sites exist even if I don't visit them that often

	<u>% (N= 883)</u>		
Strongly Agree	30		
Agree	49	79 agree	
Neutral	11		
Disagree	3		
Strongly Disagree	3	6 disagree	
No opinion	5	· ·	

? Parks are a public service that should be funded by county government

<u>% (N</u>	<u>N=859)</u>
20	
41	61 agree
22	
6	
4	10 disagree
7	
	20 41 22 6 4

? I am concerned that Hays County will lose its rural character because of the county's current level of growth

	<u>% (N= 886)</u>		
Strongly Agree	43		
Agree	28	71 agree	
Neutral	14		
Disagree	8		
Strongly Disagree	3	11 disagree	
No opinion	4		

? Fees at county parks should be high enough to make them self-sufficient % (N=875)

	<u> 70 (1</u>	<u>1-073)</u>
Strongly Agree	16	
Agree	34	50 agree
Neutral	23	
Disagree	17	
Strongly Disagree	7	24 disagree
No opinion	3	<u> </u>

? If additional funding is needed to provide and improve a park system in the county, I would be willing to pay higher taxes

	<u>% (1</u>	<u>V=888)</u>
Strongly Agree	7	
Agree	25	32 agree
Neutral	25	
Disagree	19	
Strongly Disagree	22	41 disagree
No opinion	2	C

? Entrance fees at county parks should be kept at a minimum to encourage the use of these facilities

	% (N	N= 889)
Strongly Agree	22	
Agree	34	56 agree
Neutral	19	
Disagree	17	
Strongly Disagree	5	22 disagree
No opinion	3	

(8) If Hays County begins a program to acquire, develop and maintain new parks, which, if any, of the following ways of funding such a program do you support? From the list below, please choose three (3) ways you support most, and rank those three from 1 to 3.

	1	2	3
Voter approved	8%	12%	15%
bonds			
Grants from state	33%	22%	16%
and foundations			
Increase in annual	2%	4%	7%
budget from			
property tax			
Entrance/user fees	18%	20%	23%
Donations of land	23%	25%	17%
or money			
Creating special	2%	2%	4%
park district			

Do not support any of the above: 2%

Other funding suggestions (listed by residents):

Federal money ? Benchmark other states' funding methods

? County sales tax Public fundraiser

Public/private ? Money from traffic fines

partnership ? Private sector Revenue bonds ? State lottery

(9) How important is it to you for the Hays County Commissioners Court to focus on the following activities?

		Extremely important	49
? Improving law enfor	rcement	Very important	35
(N=90)8) %	Moderately important	12
Extremely important	34	Slightly important	2
Very important	33	Not important	1
Moderately important	22	No opinion	1
Slightly important	5		
Not important	4		
No opinion	2		

Protecting air and water quality (N=919)%

Preserving open space and park land

(N=915) %

Extremely important	37	Extremely important	40
Very important	35	Very important	19
Moderately important	20	Moderately important	25
Slightly important	4	Slightly important	9
	3		5
Not important	3 1	Not important	2
No opinion	1	No opinion	۵
? Promoting economic	growth	? Building roads &	
(N= 9	008)%	transportation	
Extremely important	15	(N=91)	5) %
Very important	26	Extremely important	31
Moderately important	30	Very important	35
Slightly important	14	Moderately important	23
Not important	12	Slightly important	6
No opinion	3	Not important	4
-		No opinion	1
? Protecting property	rights	-	
(N= 9	17) %	? Guiding residential	and
<u></u>		•	
Extremely important	47	commercial develop	nent
		commercial developi (N= 91	
Extremely important	47	-	
Extremely important Very important	47 30	(N=914)	4) %
Extremely important Very important Moderately important	47 30 14	(<u>N= 91</u>) Extremely important	4) % 39
Extremely important Very important Moderately important Slightly important	47 30 14 5	(<u>N= 91</u>) Extremely important Very important	4) % 39 33
Extremely important Very important Moderately important Slightly important Not important	47 30 14 5 2	(<u>N= 91</u>) Extremely important Very important Moderately important	39 33 16
Extremely important Very important Moderately important Slightly important Not important	47 30 14 5 2	(<u>N= 91</u>) Extremely important Very important Moderately important Slightly important	39 33 16 6
Extremely important Very important Moderately important Slightly important Not important	47 30 14 5 2	(N=914) Extremely important Very important Moderately important Slightly important Not important	4) % 39 33 16 6 4 2
Extremely important Very important Moderately important Slightly important Not important	47 30 14 5 2	(N= 914) Extremely important Very important Moderately important Slightly important Not important No opinion	4) % 39 33 16 6 4 2
Extremely important Very important Moderately important Slightly important Not important	47 30 14 5 2	(N=914) Extremely important Very important Moderately important Slightly important Not important No opinion ? Improving quality of	4) % 39 33 16 6 4 2
Extremely important Very important Moderately important Slightly important Not important	47 30 14 5 2	(N= 914) Extremely important Very important Moderately important Slightly important Not important No opinion ? Improving quality of (N= 90)	4) % 39 33 16 6 4 2 f life 4) %
Extremely important Very important Moderately important Slightly important Not important	47 30 14 5 2	(N= 914) Extremely important Very important Moderately important Slightly important Not important No opinion ? Improving quality of (N= 904) Extremely important	4) % 39 33 16 6 4 2 f life 4) % 39
Extremely important Very important Moderately important Slightly important Not important	47 30 14 5 2	(N= 914) Extremely important Very important Moderately important Slightly important Not important No opinion ? Improving quality of (N= 90) Extremely important Very important Moderately important	4) % 39 33 16 6 4 2 f life 4) % 39 31
Extremely important Very important Moderately important Slightly important Not important No opinion	47 30 14 5 2	(N= 914) Extremely important Very important Moderately important Slightly important Not important No opinion ? Improving quality of (N= 904) Extremely important Very important	4) % 39 33 16 6 4 2 f life 4) % 39 31 19
Extremely important Very important Moderately important Slightly important Not important	47 30 14 5 2	(N= 914) Extremely important Very important Moderately important Slightly important Not important No opinion ? Improving quality of (N= 904) Extremely important Very important Moderately important Slightly important	4) % 39 33 16 6 4 2 f life 4) % 39 31 19 5

DEMOGRAPHICS of RESPONDENTS

? Zip code

	% (N= 929)
78610	16
78619	2
78620	12
78636	<1
78640	10
78652	2
78655	<1
78666	37
78667	1
78676	15
78680	<1
78692	<1
78731	<1
78736	<1
78737	5
78760	<1

? How long lived in Hays County

	<u>% (N= 929</u>
1-10 years	49
11-20 years	31
20 or more	20

? Which of the following best describes your household? $\frac{\% (N=927)}{}$

	% (IN=97
Live alone	13
Single parent with children	5
Couple	35
Couple with children	41
Multi-family	3
Other (non-specified)	3

? Race/Ethnicity

: Mace/Emmercy	
-	% (N= 908)
Hispanic/Mexican American	10
Black/African American	1
White/Anglo American	85
Asian American	1
Other	3

? Gender

% (N= 916)

Male	66
Female	34

? Year born

<u>% (N= 905)</u>
2
26
49
23

General comments from residents:

- ? Hays County needs more public fishing locations and dog parks
- ? Don't let Austin annex any more of Hays County land
- ? Thank you for caring
- ? Establish a running, biking, hiking trail alongside the rail
- ? I enjoy living in Hays County. Keep it country like
- ? I'd love to see Buda grow
- ? I appreciate your effort in getting grassroots input on this issue
- ? I think Jim Powers is doing a fine job
- ? Thank you for the opportunity to provide input
- ? We also need bicycle trails. Please plan these in.
- ? Need building codes to prevent unsightly and unsafe buildings
- ? Inform residents of new parks and recreation
- ? We need more trail recreation opportunities for hiking and biking
- ? Need more enforcement of laws regarding glass/styrofoam
- ? Need to encourage more growth and give incentives to large employers
- ? Adding parks and rec areas to Hays County would be wonderful
- ? Don't increase tax burden for more recreation and open space
- ? Need more bicycle space on roads leading into San Marcos
- ? I am retired on a fixed income and don't need new taxes
- ? Best site for park is the "Narrows" on the Blanco River
- ? We need parks for river, baseball and soccer use
- ? Unchecked development is destroying way of life. Act now.
- ? Light rail or mass transit needs to be developed
- ? Extra thought should go into planning for RV connections
- ? Thank you for your hard work
- ? Park and river access is necessary. Protect environmentally sensitive areas
- ? Now is the time to plan for future growth in Hays County
- ? We need bike trails and a loop around San Marcos to ease traffic
- ? I'd like natural areas with trails, benches or picnic tables
- ? College is too large. Restrict its growth
- ? Parks are important but others should also help pay for them
- ? I dislike the rapid growth but I guess it's inevitable
- ? We need to have open spaces
- ? There is horrific light pollution. Shield security lights
- ? Fix the roads
- ? Parks are used by all. Property owners shouldn't be the only ones to pay

- ? No more apartment homes. Keep the air and water clean
- ? County should not enter into long-term obligations for parks
- ? Dudley Park is a wonderful setting but trashy
- ? It would be nice to have bike route from San Marcos to Austin
- ? Buy back Spring lake from SWT and preserve it
- ? Need more parks in Hays County. Parks in Travis and Williamson are too crowded
- ? South West Texas University has ruined the San Marcos River
- ? The only way to protect green space is for county to buy it
- ? Decisions should be made for the long term (50-100 yrs)
- ? If you build, please relocate the wildlife
- ? Keep local politicians out of it
- ? Hays County is a great place to live. The water issue is more serious than parks and recreation
- ? It's too hot. A park with no trees is worthless
- ? It's not safe to take my kids to 5-mile dam anymore
- ? Hays needs a jogging trail that weaves through other parks and the river
- ? We need river access in Wimberley
- ? County needs to do more to conserve groundwater
- ? Allow dogs in all parks
- ? Do not take homeowners' parks
- ? Keep parks clean and family friendly
- ? We need tent camping areas with picnic tables
- ? Acquire land through donations by property owners.
- ? Do not increase taxes
- ? Tax all people; not just landowners
- ? Camping costs are too high
- ? County's parks are not nice places. Too much drinking and drugs
- ? A neighborhood park is needed in the Hunter Road area
- ? State and city are better to handle parks and recreation
- ? Eastern Hays County needs to be zoned and cleaned up
- ? Camping facilities would be great
- ? Acquire public land now before developers do and then manage development.
- ? City pool is too crowded to take children who are learning to swim
- ? No agency is less qualified to provide parks than county government
- ? May God be with you
- ? County needs to control its water to developers
- ? Existing roads need to be repaired
- ? County should work with cities to provide parks
- ? Need a combination of adult and child facilities.
- ? Combination of use fees and funding should be considered
- ? There is no public access to the river in Wimberley
- ? Roads should be paved before parks are built

Methodology

The Scripps Howard Texas Poll purchased a random sample of Hays County resident addresses from Survey Sampling, Inc. of Fairfield, Connecticut.

The Scripps Data Center in Abilene, which conducts all Texas Poll surveys, printed, mailed and received the completed Hays County surveys.

The survey began on April 24, when the Data Center mailed 2,000 surveys with self-addressed, stamped envelopes to Hays County residents. Of those, 374 residents completed and returned surveys by May 4, which is when the Data Center mailed post card reminder notices to residents who had not returned their surveys.

On May 14, the Data Center mailed a second survey, again with self-addressed, stamped return envelopes, to 1,300 residents who had not responded to the first survey or to the reminder notice.

A total of 943 Hays County residents returned the survey by June 20 – a 47 percent response rate.

To capture the results of the survey, The Texas Poll developed a database using SPSS software, an industry standard for statistical data collection and analysis. The Texas Poll input the survey results into the SPSS database and analyzed the data to compile the final report.

The Texas Poll and the Scripps Data Center

The Texas Poll is an evolution of the first statewide public opinion poll in the country, originally started in 1940 by polling pioneer Joe Belden.

The Texas Poll is the only ongoing, non-partisan quarterly public opinion survey in the state. The Texas Poll has gained a national and international reputation for methodological accuracy and innovation, and is the recognized authority on public opinion in Texas.

In addition to its quarterly survey, the Poll also conducts special surveys for government, corporations, organizations and others.

The Scripps Data Center in Abilene has been conducting surveys for Scripps Newspapers and other companies since 1996. The Data Center provides extensive training to interviewers and outlines the objectives of each project.

The Data Center employs highly qualified surveyors and a field director who is in charge of monitoring of the projects. Supervisors evaluate performance throughout the data collection period. All Data Center employees are required to sign a confidentiality and interviewer ethics statement.