

Data in Parks: Toolkit for Evaluating Park Use

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April 11, 2024

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Recommended Measures to Evaluate Park Use and Quality

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[Read More](#)

Defining Data

Evaluation in parks and recreation involves data in the form of numbers (quantitative) and narratives (qualitative). This resource provides fundamental knowledge and guidance for using these two data types.

[Read More](#)

Determining Your Capacity for Evaluation

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Evidence-Based Decision-Making

“Toolkit for Evaluating Park Use”

Decision, Aim, Objective, SMART Goal, Evidence-Based Decision

Evidence-Based Decision-Making

Decision, Aim, Objective, SMART Goal, Evidence-Based Decision

How to best allocate limited resources

- Which playground gets renovated

- Where to install pickleball courts

- What new programming do we add (where, when, who)

- Do we add competitive youth sports

- Are our programs reaching diverse/ intended audiences

Evaluation Trilogy

Criteria

What – and who – helps make the decision or meet the goal

Data

Evidence, information, and methods used (how, who)

Judgement

The decision, communication of results, and feedback loop

Evaluation Trilogy

Decision – Should we add programming at Main St. Park?

Evaluation Trilogy

Decision – Should we add programming at Main St. Park?

Criteria

Number of visitors per week

Evaluation Trilogy

Decision – Should we add programming at Main St. Park?

Criteria

Number of visitors per week

Data

Mobile phone data (use/ number of visitors)

Evaluation Trilogy

Decision – Should we add programming at Main St. Park?

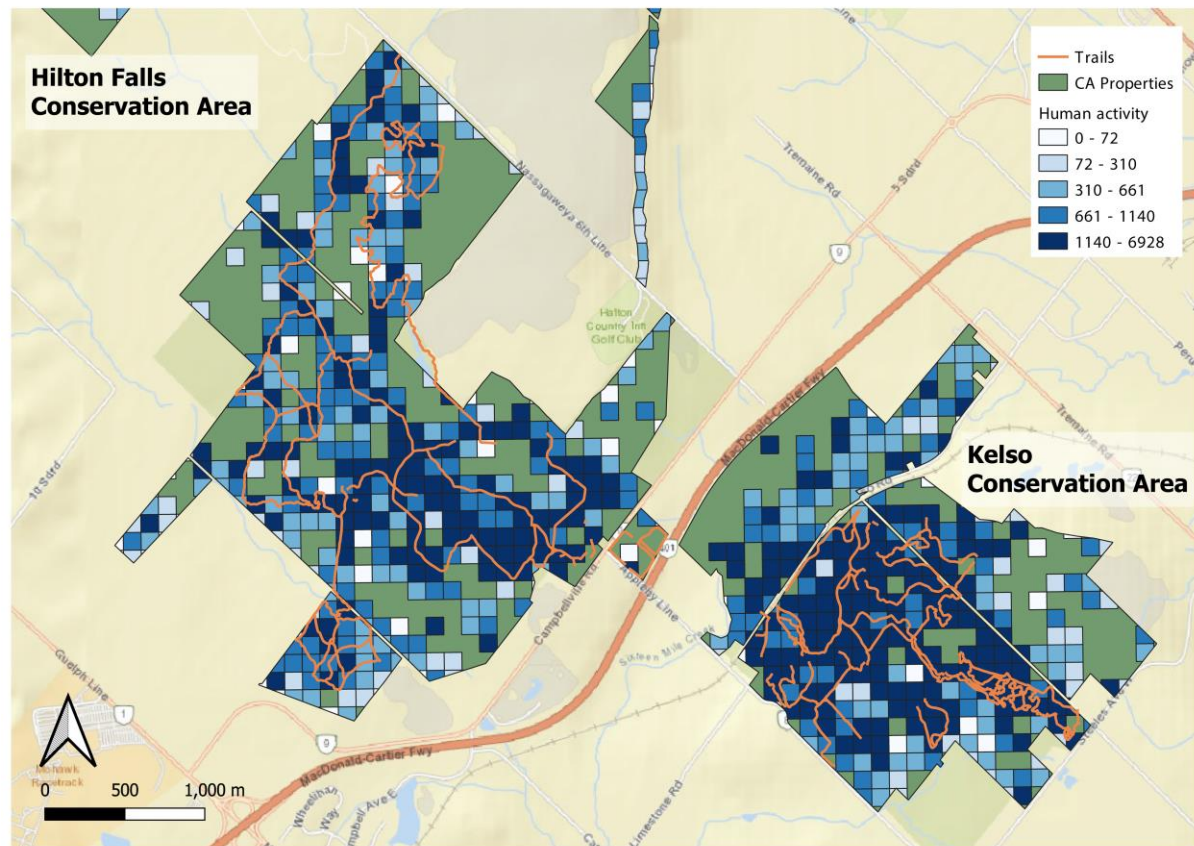
Criteria

Number of visitors per week

Data

Mobile phone data (use/ number of visitors)

Judgement



Using smartphone-GPS data to
quantify human activity in green
spaces
Alessandro Filazzola et. Al.



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SAFE GRAPH



STREETLIGHT

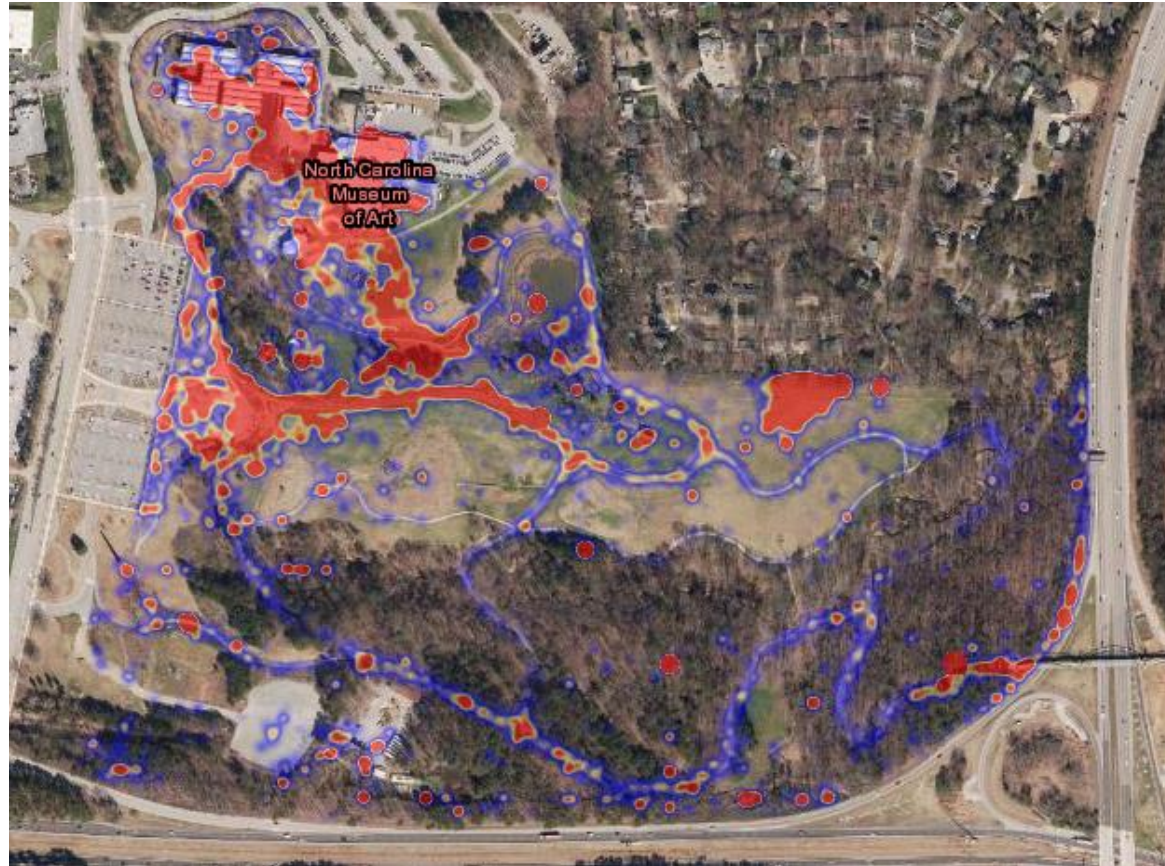


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Arrivalist[®]

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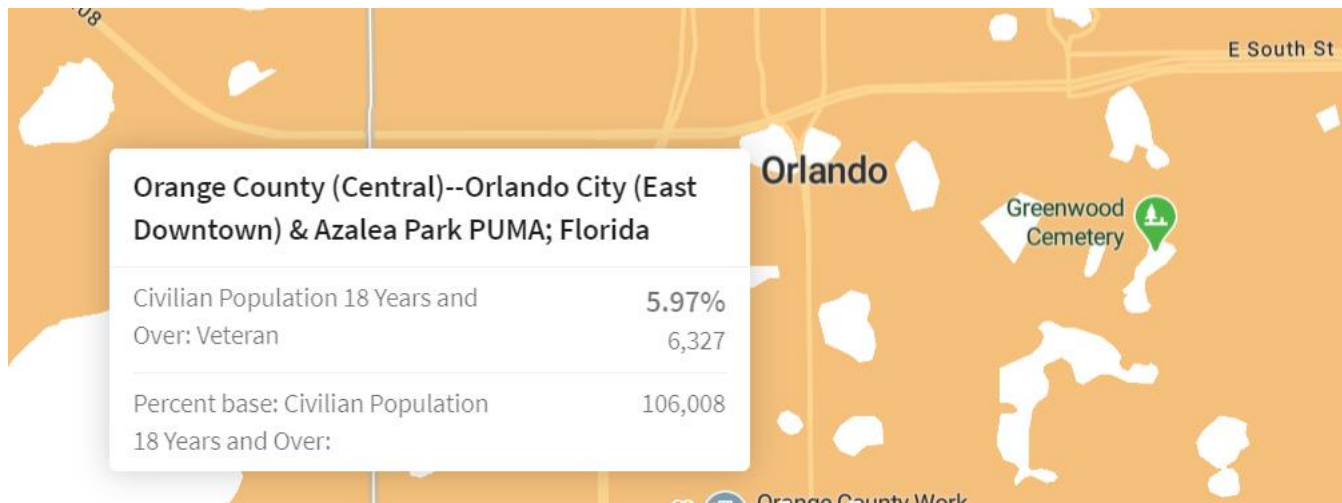
Types of data received: frequency, duration, unique* visitors, distance from park, location within park, general demographics

Best for: Changes across time, comparing pre/post, comparing multiple parks in same system

Types of parks: open spaces, porous, many entrance points

Considerations:

Price, company, proprietary data, limitations/assumptions, no data on why/how/intensity of use, communicating with community, privacy, geospatial error, data expertise, subscription service, youth generally do not carry a phone, certain activities are without phones, apps change, os change, laws & policies change





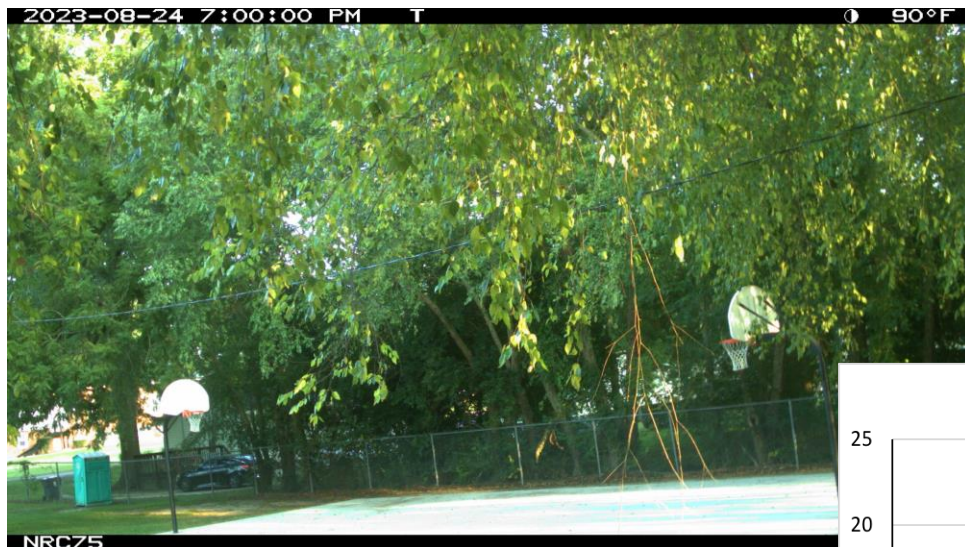
Types of data: number of users*, location in park, can get duration with video

Best for: Changes across time, comparing pre/post, comparing multiple parks in same system, identifying use of specific areas (playgrounds, pickleball courts)

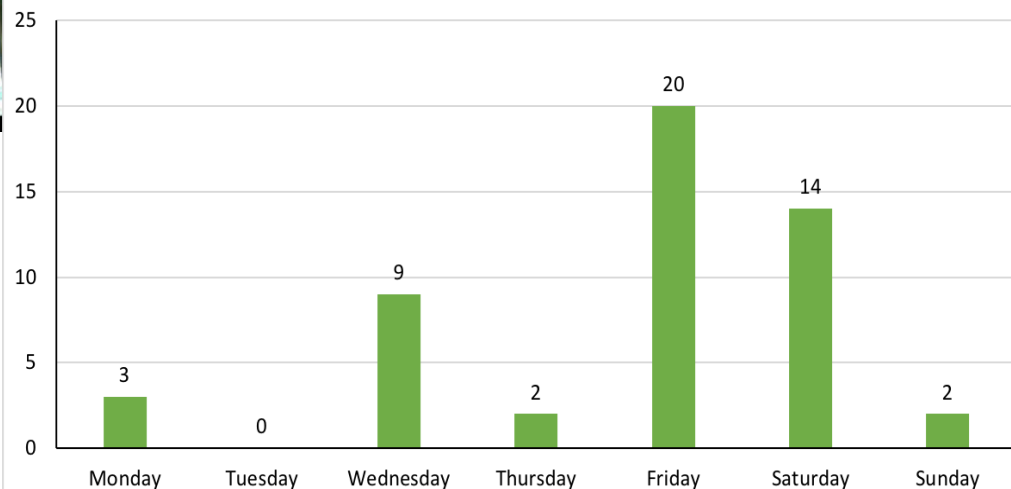
Types of parks: specific areas of interest and identified entrance points

Considerations:

Price, type of camera, limitations/assumptions, no data on why/how/intensity of use, communicating with community, privacy, data expertise (universities?), many images will be empty, access to images



Number of visitors_Zebulon Community Park – Basketball Court





Types of data: number of users*, location in park*, direction, cycling/walking

Best for: Changes across time, comparing pre/post, comparing multiple parks in same system, identifying use of specific areas (trails, greenways)

Types of parks: identified entrance points and trails/ greenways

Considerations:

Price, type of counter, limitations/assumptions, no data on why/how/intensity of use, proprietary, not ideal for many types of park use counts





Evaluation / Evidence-Based Decision:

The vision to build and revitalize parks as thriving gathering places for youth, families, and adults

Promote health and wellness-related activities



- New field house and restrooms
- Splash pad
- Upgraded and expanded playground
- Fitness equipment
- Basketball court



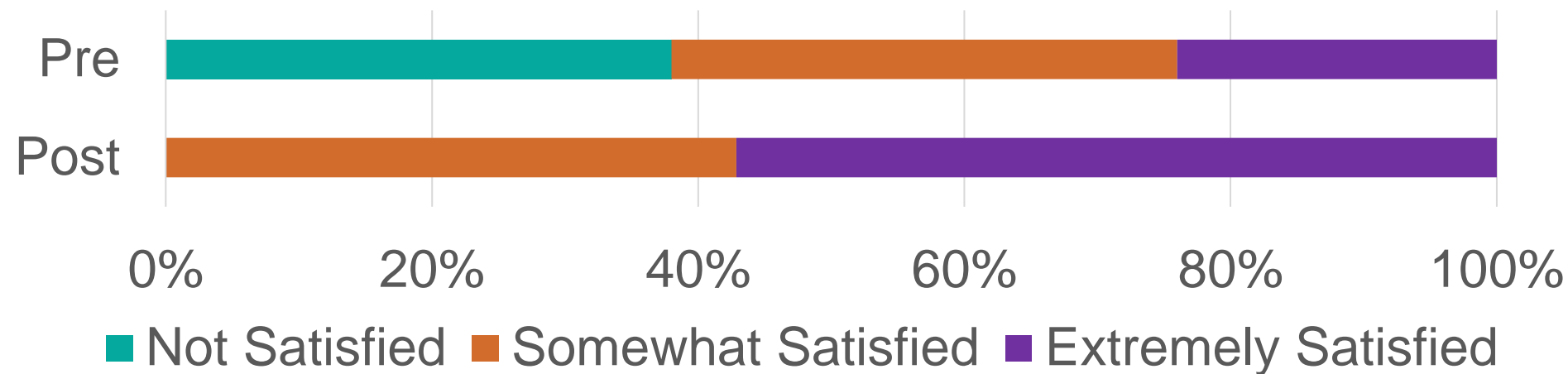
- Park use
- Activity and recreation
- User satisfaction
- Social capital
- Built environment
(including park access)
- Perceived and actual safety
- Economic impact



4. How satisfied were you following your ABC Park visit regarding each of the following?

	Extremely	Somewhat	Not at All	Didn't Use/ Not Applicable
Facilities and play equipment for kids	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Presence of supervision/staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Presence of other kids	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Availability of open spaces	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fountains, restrooms and other services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Programs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
General cleanliness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Overall visit	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Satisfaction with Facilities and Playing Equipment for Kids



Types of data: attitudes, beliefs, willingness to pay, satisfaction, preferences, etc.

Best for: Understanding current use patterns and preferences

Types of parks: all

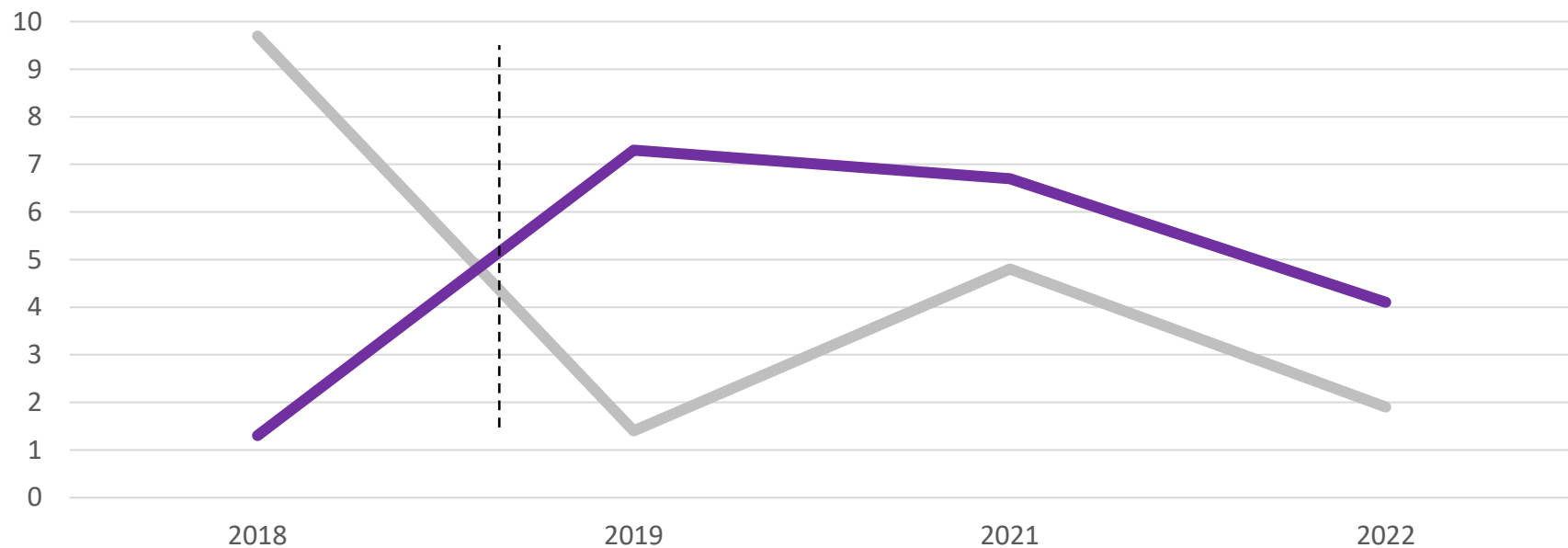
Considerations:

Delivery of survey, reaching those not currently engaged with P&R, bias,
getting people to respond, making sure only asking questions that you
can respond to and find useful

Park ID: _____ **Date:** ____/____/____ **Day of week:** _____ **Round:** _____
Target area ID: _____ **Period:** 10am 3pm 4:30pm 6pm **Observer ID:** _____ **Start time:** _____
Conditions of target area: Accessible Supervised Equipped Usable Organized - F / I Dark Empty
Shade cover: Predominately shade Shade/sun mix Predominately sun **Adult role:** Not present Staff Parent/caregiver

Participants		White			Black			Asian			Latino			Other/Unsure		
Female	Primary Activity	Sed	Mod	Vig	Sed	Mod	Vig	Sed	Mod	Vig	Sed	Mod	Vig	Sed	Mod	Vig
0-4 years																
5-10 years																
Teen																
Adult																
Senior																
Participants		White			Black			Asian			Latino			Other/Unsure		
Male	Primary Activity	Sed	Mod	Vig	Sed	Mod	Vig	Sed	Mod	Vig	Sed	Mod	Vig	Sed	Mod	Vig
0-4 years																
5-10 years																
Teen																
Adult																
Senior																

18 and Under Use Per Hour, On Playgrounds, Swings, and Basketball Courts (December non-School Hours)



Types of data: number of users*, location in park*, who, intensity

Best for: Changes across time, comparing pre/post, comparing multiple parks in same system, identifying use of specific areas

Types of parks: a;;

Considerations:

Training and reliability, can be very time intensive, no data on why/preferences, many empty hours

Evaluation Trilogy

Decision – Should we add programming at Main St. Park?

Criteria

Number of visitors per week



Data

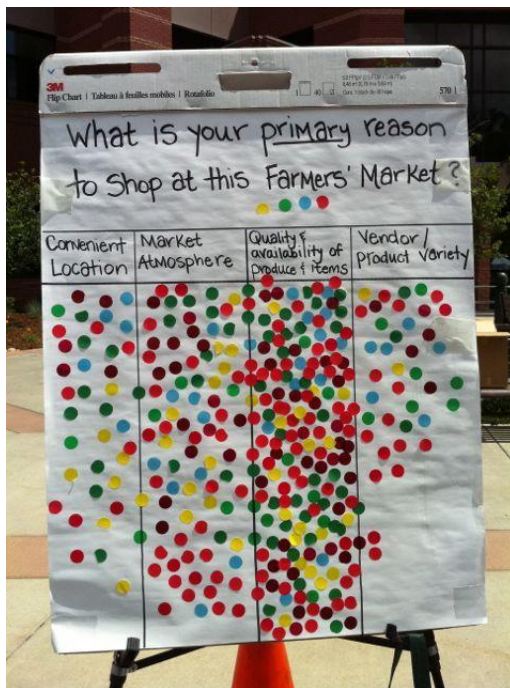
Capacity, budget, resources, partners, community needs, etc.



Judgement

Community and Stakeholders

Who impacts and is impacted by the data



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