

SECTION 6

**COMMUNITY
VISION**

SECTION 6.1:

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROCESS INTRODUCTION

This *Open Space and Recreation Plan* (OSRP) comes out of the ideas and information provided by residents and staff over the course of seven years through programming, public meetings, surveys, field work, planning, and more. In preparation for this update, BPRD conducted two additional outreach efforts: the *Parcel Priority Plan* (PPP) outreach which focused on how to grow the park system and the OSRP outreach which asked about the existing park system and the services the Parks Department provides. Other work that informed this update include:

- More than 100 capital improvement projects across the city that included whole park renovations, court, and field repairs
- Planning projects
- Urban Forest Plan
- Parcel Priority Plan
- Moakley Vision Plan
- Boston Common Master Plan
- Franklin Park Action Plan
- Recreational programming
- Land acquisition and protection: community-led and City-led projects
- Cultural programming
- Design and development review: large development project review (Article 80), construction within 100 feet of a park (Boston Municipal Code Section 7-4.11), design within the public right-of-way (Public Improvement Commission), Boston Planning and Development Agency neighborhood planning documents (PLAN), and Boston Transportation Department corridor planning.

The Planning Process and Public Participation portion of Section 2 (Introduction) described the use of meetings, online surveys, and social media to survey public opinion on the park system as it is now and the park system as it might be. The results of the surveys are presented in Section 6.2.

A brief statement of community goals and priorities will be presented in Section 6.3, Statement of Open Space and Recreation Community Goals.

SECTION 6.2:

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE AND RESULTS

PARCEL PRIORITY PLAN SURVEY RESULTS

JANUARY 2020-NOVEMBER 2020

Does the city need more open space?

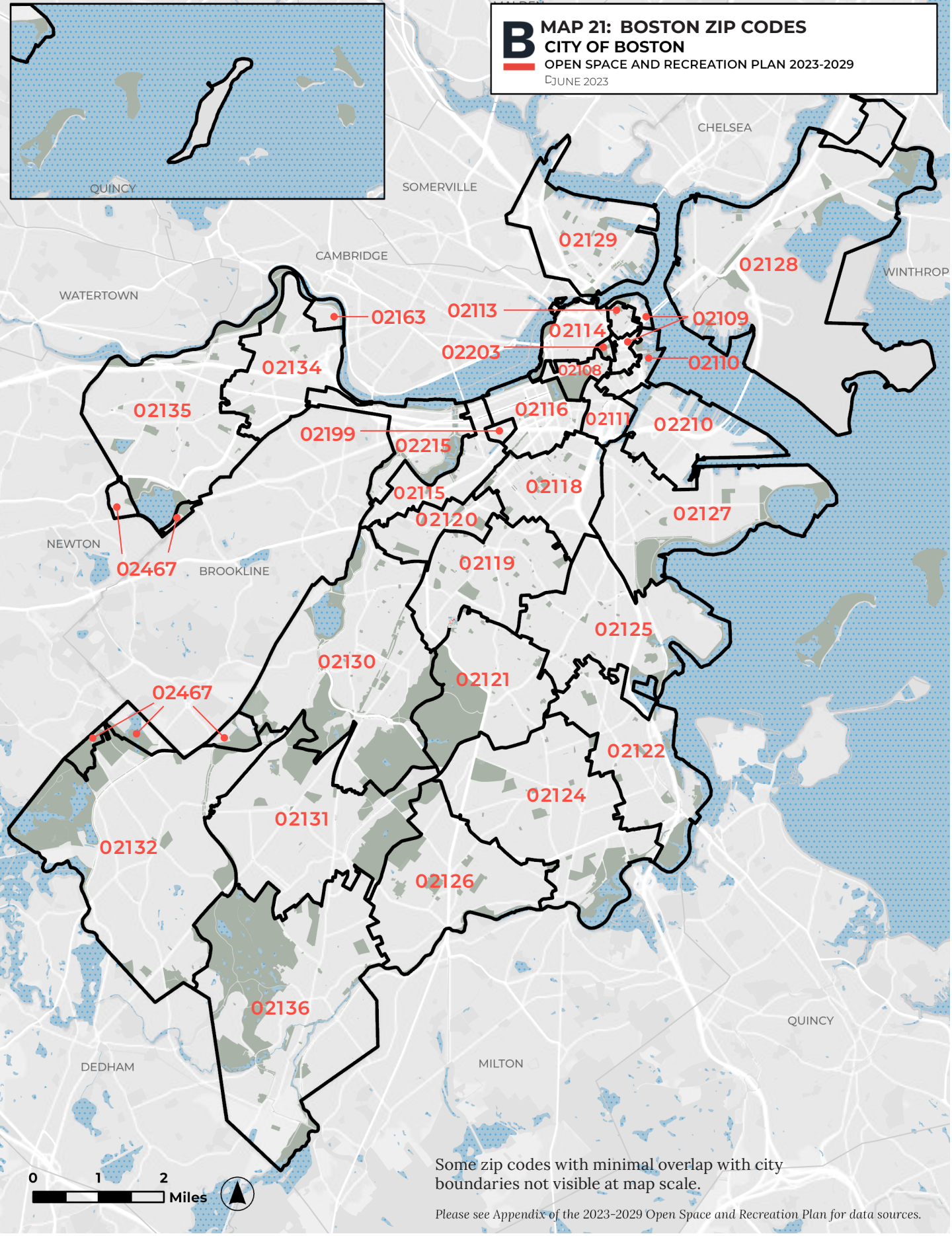
	# of responses
More	1,137
Not more	47
Don't know	34
TOTAL RESPONDENTS	1,218

What should the City of Boston prioritize in identifying lands for protection or acquisition? Select all that apply.

	Total votes
Increasing open spaces that provide opportunities for recreational activities and community events.	578
Increasing areas that help address climate-related issues -- such as excessive flooding or heat.	704
Providing areas that connect existing open spaces to each other.	617
Increasing open space in neighborhoods that have limited park access currently or are experiencing significant increases in population.	948
Protecting areas of conservation or ecological value.	708
Other	72

Where do you think it is important to have open space? (for results see: MAP 22: PPP SURVEY (PINNED LOCATIONS))

B MAP 21: BOSTON ZIP CODES
CITY OF BOSTON
OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLAN 2023-2029
JUNE 2023



Why did you choose this location?	
	Total votes
The surrounding community doesn't have enough green open space. Neighbors need access to green open space here.	676
This area is really hot and needs a shady space.	90
This area would connect to other open spaces and/or trail networks.	281
During strong storms, water flows into this area and causes flooding.	78
This is a natural area that should be protected.	672
Other	146
TOTAL LOCATIONS PINNED	1,943

Examples of write-in responses*:

- Prioritize protecting historic structures and spaces.
- More open space for neighborhoods of color.
- Maintain open space as development increases.
- This parcel is used and maintained by community members as a park.
- Address economic injustices that limit residence access to nature.
- Stop the loss of open space to large apartment buildings.
- This is a low-income area that's often overlooked when locating new parks
- Need more playgrounds, especially for ages 5+.
- Have numerous open spaces close together for climate resilience and better air quality.
- Enhance the tree canopy so we have healthy, thriving trees.
- We already have enough parks.
- Create accessible green space for all ages and abilities.
- Protect bird havens.
- Improve air quality.
- Connect the Emerald Necklace.

*Write-in responses may be edited for clarity or brevity.

Respondents by zip code			
Zip code	# of respondents	Zip code	# of respondents
02021	1	01880*	1
02026	0	01801*	1
02108	13	01960*	1
02109	6	02133*	1
02110	13	02138*	2
02111	9	02140*	2
02113	3	02143*	1
02114	25	02144*	1
02115	37	02148*	3
02116	106	02169*	2
02118	45	02190*	1
02119	29	02218*	1
02120	50	02225*	1
02121	12	02315*	1
02122	17	02446*	6
02124	52	02451*	1
02125	64	02478*	1
02126	7	03301*	1
02127	36	06443*	1
02128	57	10524*	1
02129	92	14213*	1
02130	131	02476*	2
02131	132	01116*	1
02132	27	02482*	1
02134	27	01960*	1
02135	29	21113*	1
02136	42	TOTAL ALL ZIP CODES	1,169
02151	0		
02152	0		
02163	0		
02186	0		
02199	2		
02203	0		
02210	11		
02215	55		
02459	0		
02467	2		

*Zip code outside Boston.
Zip code margin of error: Some responses submitted via phone or email did not come with a respondent zip code. In these cases, the priority locations were mapped (as seen on the following map) but the zip codes of respondents cannot be mapped. As a result, some zip codes may show a small undercount in the number of respondents.

OPTIONAL DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

Do you or someone in your household have a disability or chronic health condition that affects access to, or enjoyment of, open space?

	# of responses
Yes	165
No	935
Prefer not to say	118
TOTAL	1,218

What is/are the age(s) of someone/the persons you care for in your home? Choose all that apply.

	# of responses
0-12	213
13-18	62
18-25	57
25+	451
This does not apply to me	443
Prefer not to say	61

What is your age?

	# of responses
0-9	2
10-19	3
20-34	278
35-54	433
55-64	175
65-84	225
85+	7
Prefer not to say	95
TOTAL	1,218

What is your gender?

	# of responses
Female	672
Male	421
Non-binary/third gender	12
Prefer to self-describe	0
Do not wish to answer	113
TOTAL	1,218

Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?

	# of responses
Yes	56
No	996
Prefer not to say	166
TOTAL	1,218

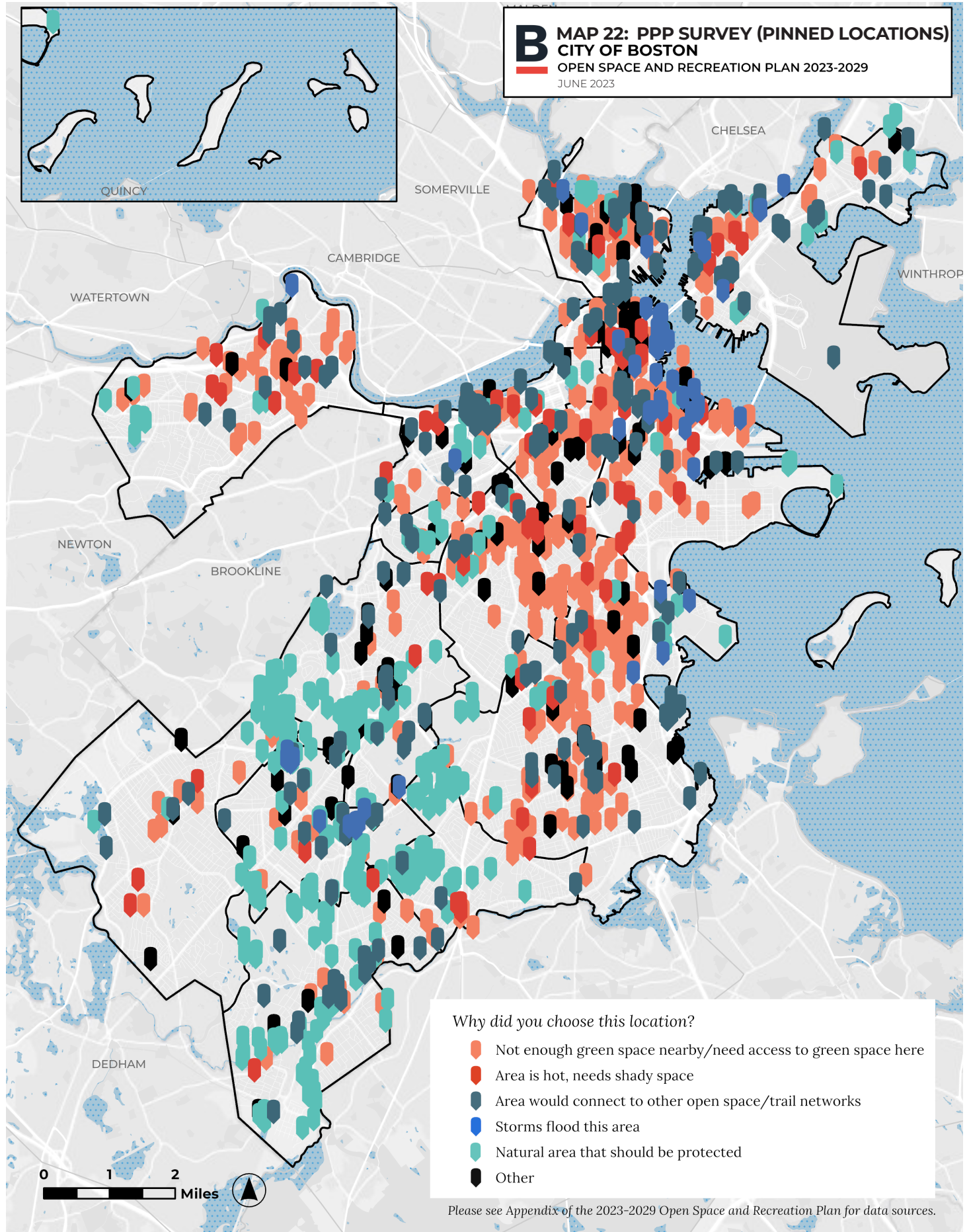
What is your race? Choose all that apply.

	# of responses
American Indian or Alaska Native	2
Asian Indian	16
Black or African American	63
Chinese	14
Filipino	1
Guamanian or Chamorro	0
Japanese	0
Korean	4
Native Hawaiian	0
Other Pacific Islander	0
Samoan	0
Vietnamese	0
White	855
Some other race	43
Prefer not to say	220

Survey responses by language

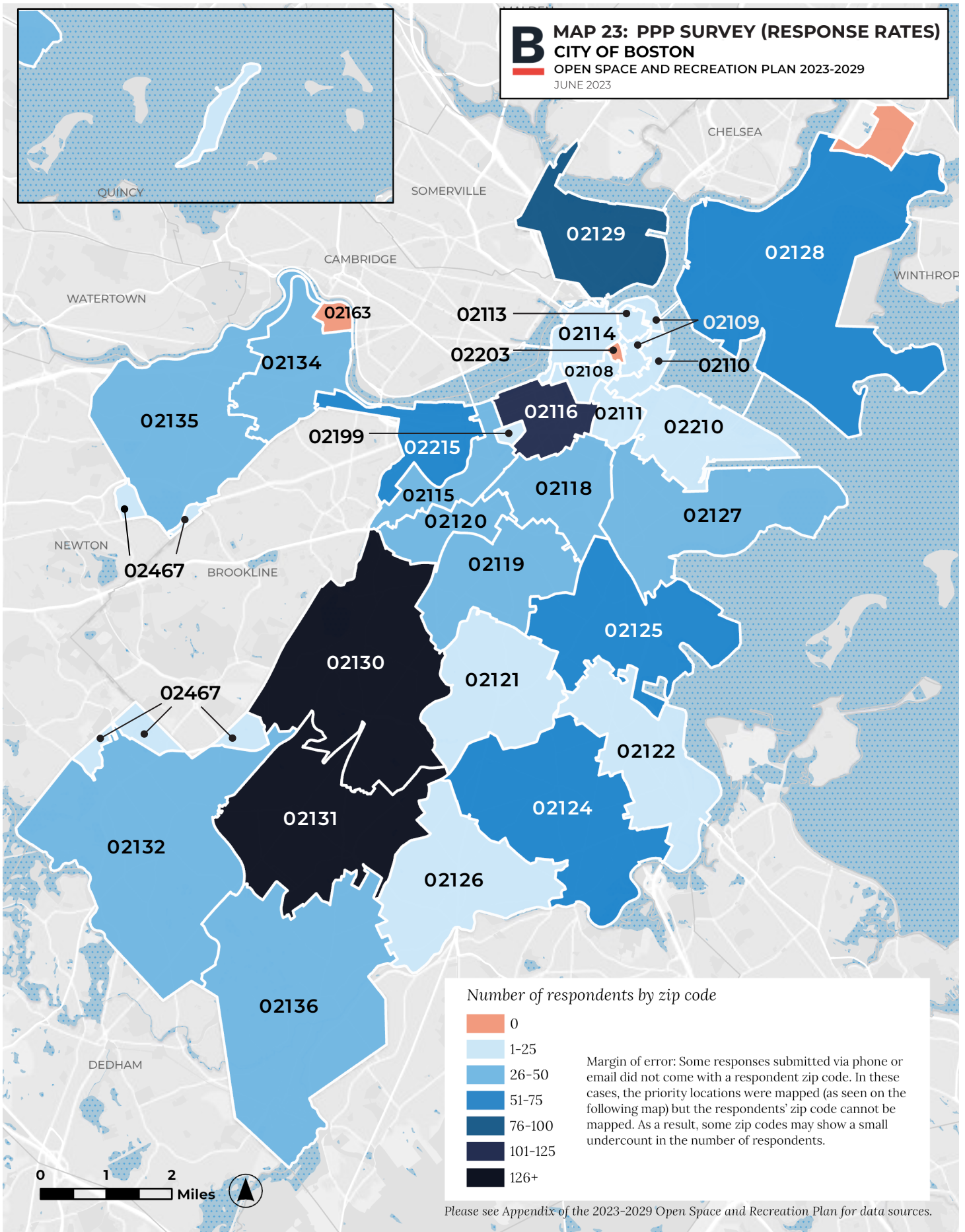
	# of responses
Spanish	5
Haitian Creole	0
Vietnamese	0
Traditional Chinese	3
Cape Verdean	0
Portuguese	0
English	1,210
TOTAL	1,218

See MAP 23: PPP SURVEY (response rates). Some zip codes not visible at map scale.



Please see Appendix of the 2023-2029 Open Space and Recreation Plan for data sources.

B MAP 23: PPP SURVEY (RESPONSE RATES)
CITY OF BOSTON
 OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLAN 2023-2029
 JUNE 2023



Please see Appendix of the 2023-2029 Open Space and Recreation Plan for data sources.

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLAN SURVEY RESULTS

APRIL 14, 2022-MAY 31, 2022

Part I of II: Are you aware of the...

	Yes	No	Total # of responses
...City's 311 system for reporting park maintenance needs?	844	202	1,046
...free sports activities and fitness programs offered?	422	624	1,046
...online permitting system for reserving use of BPRD managed facilities (athletic fields, picnic areas, event spaces)	388	662	1,050
...opportunity to provide input at Parks Department-led community meetings during the design process for park improvement projects?	504	544	1,048
...programs and events that are provided by the Parks Department?	576	474	1,050

Part II of II: If you are aware, how satisfied are you with the... (on a scale of 1-5 where 1 is "not at all satisfied" and 5 is "very satisfied")

	1	2	3	4	5	Total # of responses	Average score	Median score
...maintenance of the parks that you use?	84	150	291	284	122	931	3.2	3
...recreational sports and fitness activities offered?	9	25	161	159	55	409	3.5	4
...Boston Parks permitting system	24	43	144	105	42	358	3.3	3
...public input process for park improvement projects?	44	68	159	144	60	475	3.2	3
...events and programs offered?	16	26	248	221	56	567	3.5	3

Additional satisfaction questions

	1	2	3	4	5	Total # of responses	Average score	Median score
How satisfied are you with the quality of the Boston parks and recreation system as a whole?	36	105	405	422	80	1,048	3.4	3
Are the parks you visit welcoming?	58	166	330	348	134	136	3.3	3

Part I of II: Are the parks you visit providing high-quality spaces for you to do the activities you enjoy?

1	2	3	4	5	Total # of responses	Average score	Median score
58	166	330	348	134	136	3.3	3

Part II of II: If not, what features or facilities should we provide to better meet your needs? Check all that apply.

	Total votes
More restrooms	632
More natural areas	474
More dog parks	352
More picnic or barbecue areas	330
More passive areas	278
More splash pads/water play features	244
More youth soccer fields	203
More tennis courts	165
More tot lots/children's play areas	154
More adult soccer fields/multi-sport fields	153
More pickleball courts	127
More synthetic turf fields	118
More basketball courts	114
I am satisfied	64
More ball diamonds	51

Examples of write-in responses*:

- Exercise equipment especially for seniors.
- More street hockey.
- More trees and other vegetation.
- More trash cans and trash pickup.

Are there any challenges or barriers that prevent you from enjoying Boston's parks and/or the programs we offer? Check all that apply.

	Total votes
Lack of information	331
Timing of programs + events is not convenient for me	151
Programs lack social or cultural relevance	91
Language barriers	9
Lack of parking	197
Limited bike or walking access	168
Limited access by transit	132
Lack of programs that interest me	154
Feeling unsafe at the park	190
Feeling unsafe getting to the park	97
I don't feel welcome	43
None	137

Examples of write-in responses*:

- Lack of restrooms and benches.
- Hard to find safe place to exercise unless you play a ball sport.
- Unclear permitting process.
- Trash and debris.

What can the Boston Parks and Recreation Department do to improve the quality of the parks in Boston? (write-in responses)

This question had 675 responses. Major themes included:

- Maintenance - more regular maintenance, better trash management (more barrels, more frequent emptying).
- More restrooms.
- Access to spaces within parks and programming and overall access getting to parks (esp. for adults, seniors, those with disabilities, bikes, pedestrians).
- Support community-run programming and artists, more art in parks.
- Lack of transparency and access to parks decision-making.
- Protect and preserve natural areas and features (esp. trees) and create more natural spaces.
- More shade.
- Regulate dogs in parks (more dog areas, strong enforcement of leash laws, pet waste issues).
- Increase budget for maintenance and staffing.

*Write-in responses may be edited for clarity or brevity.

What is the best way to reach you to share information about park events and activities? Check all the apply.

PART I	Email	Social media	Website/Event calendar
From a community group	518	352	337
From the City of Boston	833	546	596

PART II	# of responses
Community newsletter	568
Printed flyer or postcard	520
Temporary sign at the park	459

Respondents by zip code			
Zip code	# of respondents	Zip code	# of respondents
02021	0	01040*	1
02026	1	01230*	3
02108	6	01776*	1
02109	13	01864*	1
02110	4	01905*	1
02111	8	02123*	1
02113	11	02138*	2
02114	22	02139*	3
02115	30	02140*	3
02116	36	02141*	1
02118	28	02142*	1
02119	37	02144*	1
02120	12	02145*	1
02121	23	02322*	1
02122	19	02343*	1
02124	55	02445*	5
02125	30	02446*	1
02126	27	02458*	1
02127	49	02478*	1
02128	30	02730*	1
02129	95	03031*	1
02130	217	03130*	1
02131	80	03136*	1
02132	37	34231*	2
02134	18	TOTAL ALL ZIP CODES	1,054
02135	45		
02136	62		
02151	0		
02152	0		
02163	0		
02186	1		
02199	0		
02203	0		
02210	6		
02215	15		
02459	0		
02467	1		

*Zip code outside Boston.

OPTIONAL DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

Do you or someone in your household have a disability or chronic health condition that affects access to, or enjoyment of, open space?

	# of responses
Yes	133
No	885
Prefer not to say	36
TOTAL	1,054

What is your age?

	# of responses
0-9	2
10-19	6
20-34	185
35-54	517
55-64	142
65-84	168
85+	5
Prefer not to say	29
TOTAL	1,054

What is/are the age(s) of the people in your household? Check all that apply.

	# of responses
This does not apply to me.	133
0-12	347
13-18	163
19-25	83
25 and over	754
Prefer not to say	56

What is your gender identity?

	# of responses
Female	666
Male	285
Non-binary/third gender	15
Prefer to self-describe	0
Do not wish to answer	88
TOTAL	1,054

See MAP 24: OSRP SURVEY (response rates).
Some zip codes not visible at map scale.

<i>Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?</i>	
	# of responses
Yes	70
No	879
Prefer not to say	105
TOTAL	1,054

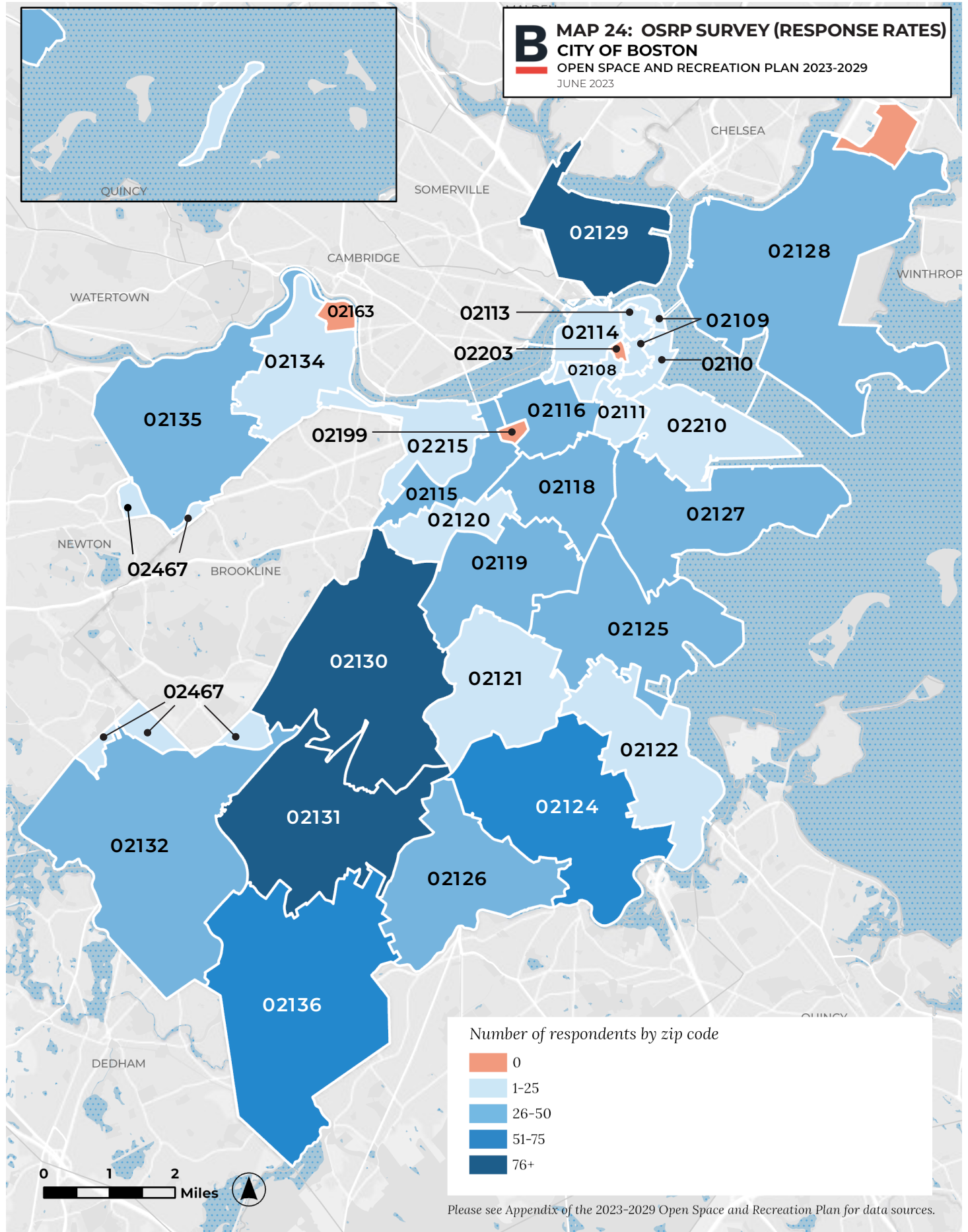
<i>What is your race or ethnicity? Check all that apply.</i>	
	# of responses
American Indian or Alaska Native	13
Asian Indian	15
Black or African American	86
Black or Caribbean American	29
Cape Verdean	4
Chinese	24
Filipino	3
Guamanian or Chamorro	0
Japanese	7
Korean	5
Native Hawaiian	0
Other Pacific Islander	2
Samoan	0
Vietnamese	5
White	717
Some other race	51
Prefer not to say	156

<i>Survey responses by language</i>	
	# of responses
Arabic	0
Cape Verdean Creole	0
Chinese	1
English	1,051
French	0
Haitian Creole	1
Portuguese	0
Russian	0
Somali	0
Spanish	1
Vietnamese	0
TOTAL	1,054

RESPONDENTS

While efforts were made to engage residents from historically marginalized and currently excluded communities (see Section 2.3), we gathered very few survey responses in these areas. The majority of respondents identified as having one or more of these characteristics: woman, between the ages of 35-54, white, and not Hispanic or Latino. The vast majority of responses were through the English-language survey. Residents from the 02130 zip code, which is largely made up of Jamaica Plain, were overrepresented in the responses as was the case in the 2008-2014 and 2015-2021 surveys. Other areas of the city that made up a large share of responses were: Back Bay/Beacon Hill, Charlestown, and Roslindale zip codes. Areas of the city that received substantially fewer responses included zip codes for: Mattapan, the Fields Corner and Grove Hall areas of Dorchester, the Washington Park area of Roxbury, Allston-Brighton, Central Boston, and the Seaport area of South Boston.

Neither the PPP nor the OSRP survey received a statistically significant number of responses and so we will be careful in drawing broad conclusions from the surveys alone. This is where conversations and other projects over the last seven years come together to form a more complete picture.



SECTION 6.3

STATEMENT OF OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION COMMUNITY VISION AND GOALS

INTRODUCTION

Based on community input, the City of Boston through its Parks and Recreation Department prepared a set of community goals that will inform the Analysis of Needs (Section 7) and develop the plan's Goals and Objectives (Section 8).

VISION

What is an ideal open space and recreation system? This is what we have heard through this planning process and over the course of work in the last seven years:

- Community-led decision making about the design, care, programming, and expansion of open spaces
- Continual improvement and innovation in open space design, maintenance, and programming, with a particular emphasis on preparing for natural hazards and climate change
- Improved access to open space through:
 - Inclusive and culturally diverse design and programming
 - Well-designed streetscapes, greenways, trails, and bikeways between parks and along the seashore and riverbanks linking neighborhoods as well as open spaces
 - Enhanced public transit, improved vehicular routes
- Open space with access to public amenities that may affect ability to visit or stay in a park: drinking fountains, restrooms, shade structures, safety lighting, relevant and accessible passive or active park features
- Spaces that are safe and welcoming to all walks of life
- An equitable permitting process that is clear, accessible, and timely
- Open space with robust, accessible, and culturally diverse programming for the arts, sports, fitness, and recreation

- Park system that responds to changing demographics and provides youth and adults alike with opportunities for healthy activity
- Open space that provides room for dog activity that enforces the rules around management of dog activity in parks
- Open space that is well-maintained with clean spaces, safe equipment, and thriving vegetation. This includes natural areas and urban wilds with trails that are protected, maintained, and interpreted
- Partnerships to create, fund, and enhance permanently protected and publicly accessible open space
- Stable and enhanced funding for the citywide maintenance and expansion of the park system
- Acquisition of key open space parcels to:
 - Expand access to the park system
 - Provide permanent public spaces
 - Safeguard the ability to gather and protest freely
 - Provide safe, enjoyable space outside the home
 - Establish community gardens
 - Protect viewsheds, watersheds, and habitats, buffer existing open spaces
 - Provide needed recreational facilities
 - Reduce community vulnerabilities to the impacts of climate change, including extreme heat, flooding and sea level rise

GOALS

Based on a review of previous goals and policies, the current community setting, current assessment of environmental conditions, and a review of public input including the results of the open space plan survey, three primary goals emerged:

1. Protect, maintain, manage and improve the City of Boston's open space system to maximize the benefits that this infrastructure provides
2. Sustain and expand an open space system that is equitable, publicly-owned, permanently protected and available to all
3. Promote resilience by supporting the critical relationship between the urban natural environment and quality of life in the city