CONFIDENTIAL

August 2021

Cherokee Park Scenic Loop 2021 Community Study

Over the past few years, the Louisville Metro Government has implemented several changes to Cherokee Park's Scenic Loop vehicle usage. With the intent to keep its residents engaged and informed of the traffic patterns along the Scenic Loop, Louisville Parks and Recreation has partnered with IQS Research to further its comprehensive community input process. IQS Research designed and implemented a survey measuring park usage and perceptions of the current traffic restrictions among Jefferson County residents to guide future use and access.

IQS RESEARCH

308 North Evergreen Road, Suite 200
Louisville, KY 40243
P: 502-244-6600
www.iqsresearch.com

PROJECT MANAGER

Shawn Herbig
President
sherbig@iqsresearch.com

About IQS Research

Now in our 23rd year, IQS Research is a custom research and data analytics firm. We provide precise and actionable insights about your employees, communities, customers, and markets. We are the trusted partner that decision-makers rely on, not just to answer questions, but to enable meaningful change.

For more information, please visit www.iqsresearch.com.

Material Accuracy

The intent of the Cherokee Park Scenic Loop 2021 Community Study and this subsequent report is to provide accurate and authoritative information about Louisville residents' perceptions of The Scenic Loop vehicle traffic usage. IQS Research makes reasonable effort to ensure that all data are collected, analyzed, and portrayed in an accurate and factual manner. However, there is no guarantee that these data are without flaws or that the use of these data will prevent differences of opinion or disputes, and IQS Research bears no responsibility for their use or consequences.

Cherokee Park Scenic Loop 2021 Community Study

Background and Methodology

At the end of June 2021, Louisville Parks and Recreation implemented its most recent change to Cherokee Park's Scenic Loop vehicle usage. The previous no-vehicle usage was updated to permit vehicle access to two parts of the loop: Hogan's Fountain and the rugby field. IQS Research designed and implemented an 18-question survey measuring usage of the Scenic Loop and perceptions of the Scenic Loop's vehicle usage to obtain feedback on these recent changes.

In total, this study draws upon feedback from two surveys:

- General Community Survey: this survey was conducted via an online panel and provided a balanced sample representative of Jefferson County residents who are 18 years and older. The survey opened on August 5. In total, this survey received 478 valid responses, yielding a 4.48% margin of error at the 95% confidence level.
- Open Community Survey: this survey was socialized by Louisville Parks and Recreation starting August 6, 2021. The survey was open to anyone, and in total, received 1,302 qualified usable responses. Feedback was gathered via an online survey and a community meeting held on August 17, 2021, at 5:30 PM at the Hogan's Fountain Pavilion in Cherokee Park.

No incentives were offered to respondents directly from IQS Research. All surveys were closed by August 17, 2021. IQS Research conducted data quality checks, examining responses from the general community and open community surveys for incidents of straight-lining, answer consistency, gibberish comments, speedy response times, duplicate IP addresses, and other factors that could disqualify the data. To be included in the final sample, respondents were required to have passed the aforementioned quality checks and answer at least 50% of the questions shown to them.

Summary of Overall Findings

1. Those who participated in the general community survey hold differing opinions and characteristics than those who participated in the open community survey.
    - General community survey respondents have a preference for fully lifting the vehicle traffic restrictions at the Scenic Loop while those who participated in the open community survey would prefer to keep the current restrictions.
    - The open community survey respondents are the "power users" of the Scenic Loop at Cherokee Park. As they are frequent users, familiar with the current restrictions, and believe the outcome of the policies put in place are important.
2. For the most part, those who prefer keeping the current vehicle restrictions in place at the Scenic Loop feel safer because of them.

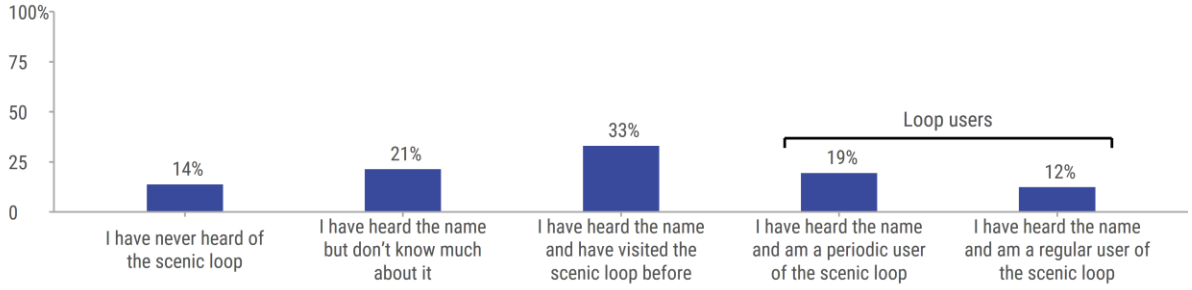
General Community Survey

Familiarity & Usage

Overall, the majority of the general community survey respondents have visited Cherokee Park at least once. It is rare for a respondent to be unaware of Cherokee Park. The same can be said about the Scenic Loop at Cherokee Park, as most respondents have heard of the area. Moreover, 31% are regular visitors of the Scenic Loop.

Many general community survey respondents have visited the Scenic Loop in Cherokee Park. Moreover, it is common for them to utilize the loop on a routine basis.

"How familiar are you with the scenic loop in Cherokee Park?"



Among the 64% of respondents who have at least visited the Scenic Loop at Cherokee Park, driving is the most common mode of transportation for traveling to the Scenic Loop. Though, it is not uncommon for respondents to travel to Cherokee Park by foot, as this is the case for 34% of them. While at the Scenic Loop, respondents are most frequently visiting the loop to walk it. In contrast to the 72% who use it for walking, 54% of respondents use the loop to drive through the park leisurely.

Vehicle Policy

Prior to taking the survey, a slight majority of respondents were not familiar with the traffic restrictions at the Scenic Loop. Reflective of this are the 58% of respondents who quantify their level of familiarity with a "1 – Not at all familiar" or "2" using a five-point scale. In comparison, 26% of respondents indicated that they are familiar with the vehicle traffic policies at the Scenic Loop.

Before answering further questions about the vehicle restrictions, respondents were provided the following statement:

"The Scenic Loop is a paved road through Cherokee Park.

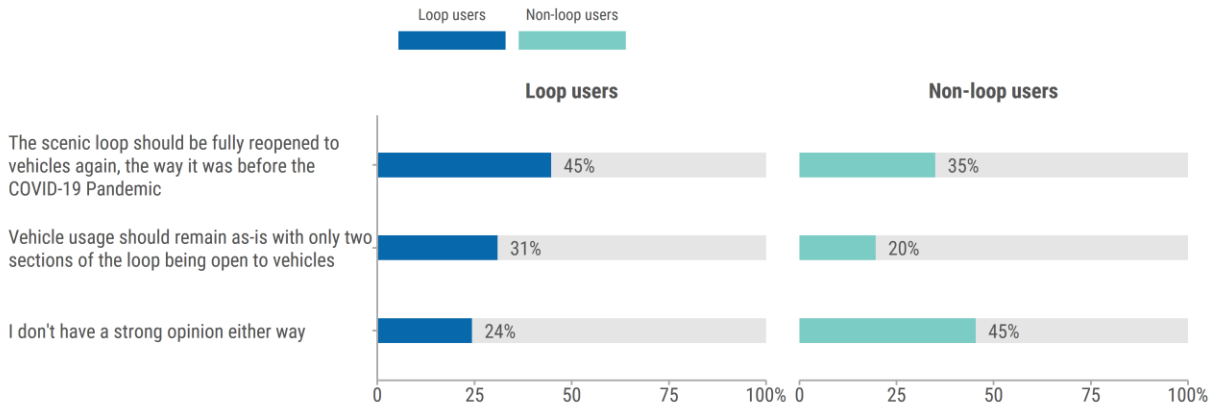
Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the road was split down the middle with ½ of the roadway used by vehicles and bicyclists and the other ½ used by walkers, runners, and pedestrians. During this time, vehicles had one-way access to the entire Scenic Loop.

During the pandemic, the Scenic Loop was closed to vehicles to allow for increased social distancing. Currently, two sections of the loop (Hogan's Fountain and the rugby field area) are open to vehicles and the rest of the loop is closed to vehicles."

Now informed of the vehicle usage changes that have occurred at the Scenic Loop, respondents offer their opinions on what they believe the vehicle restrictions should look like going forward. Both loop users and non-loop users alike are more inclined to advocate for having the Scenic Loop fully reopened to vehicles. However, it is not uncommon for respondents from either group to favor keeping the current restrictions as-is, as demonstrated in the chart below by the one in three loop users and one in five non-loop users who support the current vehicle traffic restrictions.

There is not a majority agreement among loop users or non-loop users on what the vehicle traffic usage should be at the Scenic Loop going forward.

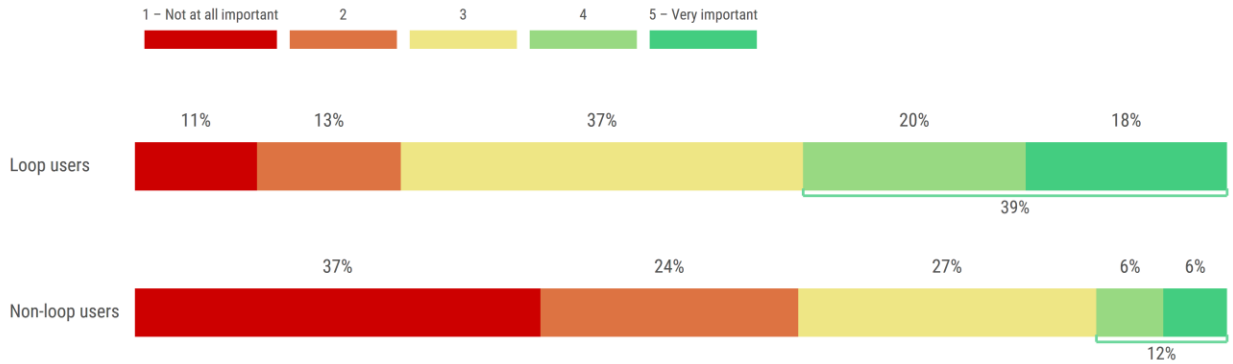
"Based on what you know and how you use the scenic loop, what is your preference for how vehicle usage should be handled going forward?"



Between those who routinely visit the Scenic Loop and those who do not, respondents who regularly frequent the Scenic Loop are three times more likely to feel that vehicle usage is important to them personally. Both loop users and non-loop users are more likely to believe that this issue is important to the city of Louisville than feel this issue holds any value to them personally.

Those who routinely use the Scenic Loop at Cherokee Park are more likely to feel the future vehicle traffic usage is important to them personally than non-loop users.

"All things considered, how important is this issue to you personally?"

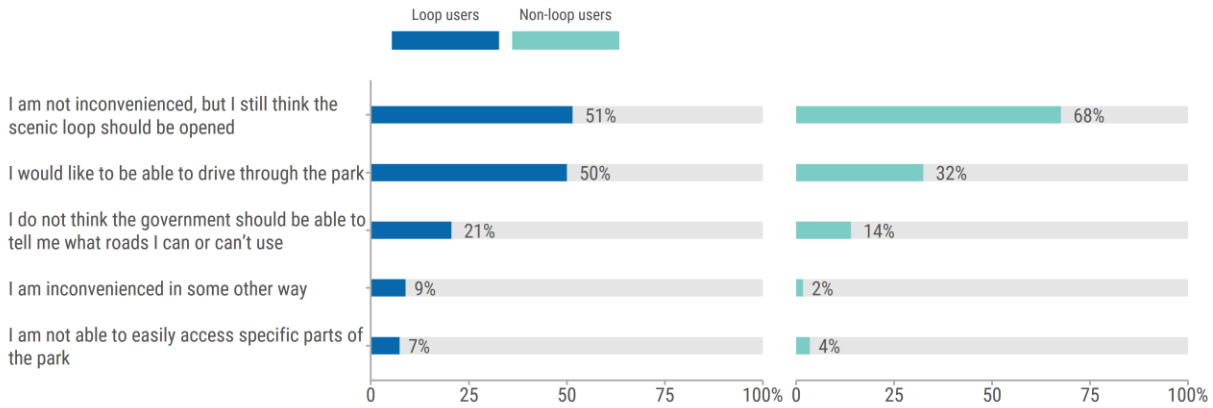


General Community Survey respondents who believe the Scenic Loop should be fully accessible to vehicles

To gain a deeper understanding of the motivation behind respondents who want the park to be fully reopened to vehicles, we asked them to identify the inconveniences these restrictions have posed. These respondents commonly indicate that the current restrictions do not inconvenience them personally, though they still believe they should be lifted. Furthermore, this is the most frequent answer among both loop users and non-loop users. However, we find that it is almost equally common for loop users to also indicate that they want the ability to drive through the park.

It is common for general community survey respondents who believe the Scenic Loop should be fully accessible to vehicles to also admit that having the traffic restrictions is not an inconvenience to them, personally.

"In what ways have the current vehicle restrictions on the scenic loop caused you problems?"

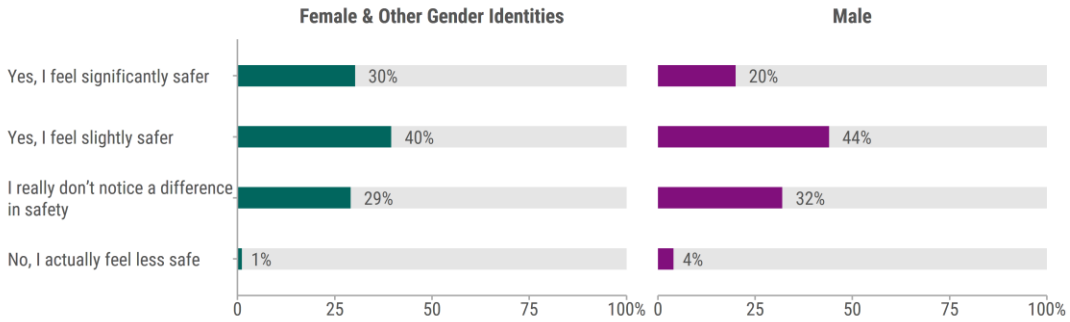


General Community Survey respondents who believe the Scenic Loop should remain partially restricted to vehicle traffic

We asked respondents who believe the current vehicle restrictions should remain as-is how these policies have impacted their perceived safety and find that it positively impacts many. The extent of this difference is more commonly slight than major. When the impact is not positive, the restrictions predominantly have no bearing on one's perceived safety, as opposed to eliciting a feeling of being less safe.

Respondents who want the park to keep its current vehicle restrictions in place largely feel safer because of them.

"Do you feel safer with the current vehicle usage restrictions?"

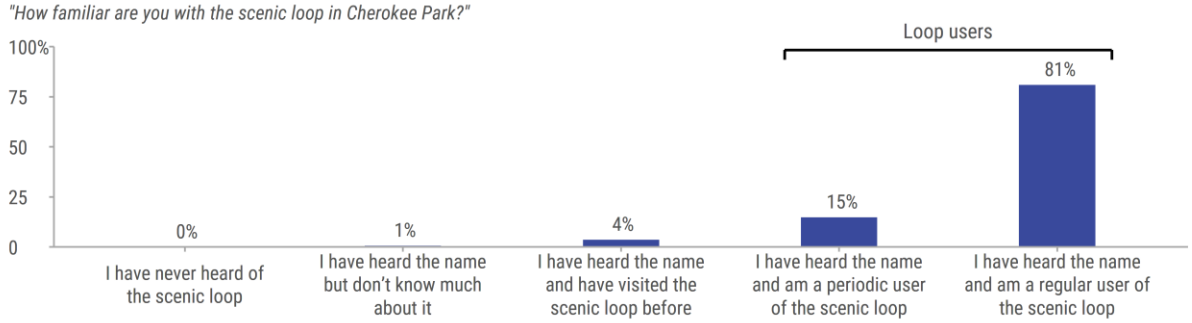


Open Community Survey

This section will highlight the differences found between the general community survey and the open community survey. Starting with park usage, we find that those who participated in the open community study are substantially more likely to be regular visitors of Cherokee park and loop users than general community survey respondents.

Those who participated in the open community survey are significantly more likely to be a frequent user of the loop than general community survey respondents.

"How familiar are you with the scenic loop in Cherokee Park?"

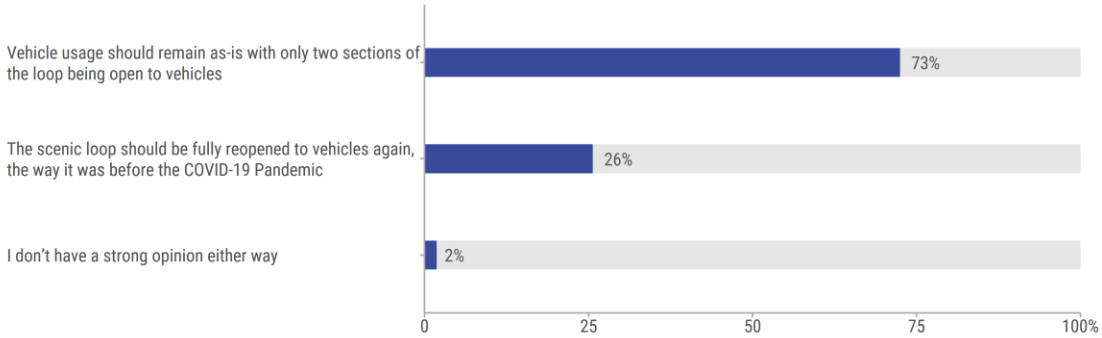


We also find differences in modes of transportation: those who participated in the open community survey are more likely to walk and less likely to drive to the Scenic Loop than the general public. Fifty-five percent of open community respondents typically walk when traveling to the Scenic Loop. In addition, we find driving is a common method of transportation for 63% of respondents when visiting the Scenic Loop. When looking at familiarity with the vehicle policies at the Scenic Loop, as expected, the open community survey respondents are more familiar with the current restrictions than the general public. Compared to the 26% of general community respondents who indicated that they were familiar with the current vehicle restrictions prior to the survey, 89% of the open community respondents would describe themselves as familiar with the current vehicle policies.

When asking about their preference of the future direction of the vehicle traffic usage at the Scenic Loop, the perceptions of open community respondents differ from those of the general community survey. As demonstrated in the chart below, open community respondents are largely in favor of keeping the current vehicle restrictions in place.

Open community survey respondents favor keeping the vehicle traffic usage as-is, with partial access at the Scenic Loop.

"Based on what you know and how you use the scenic loop, what is your preference for how vehicle usage should be handled going forward?"

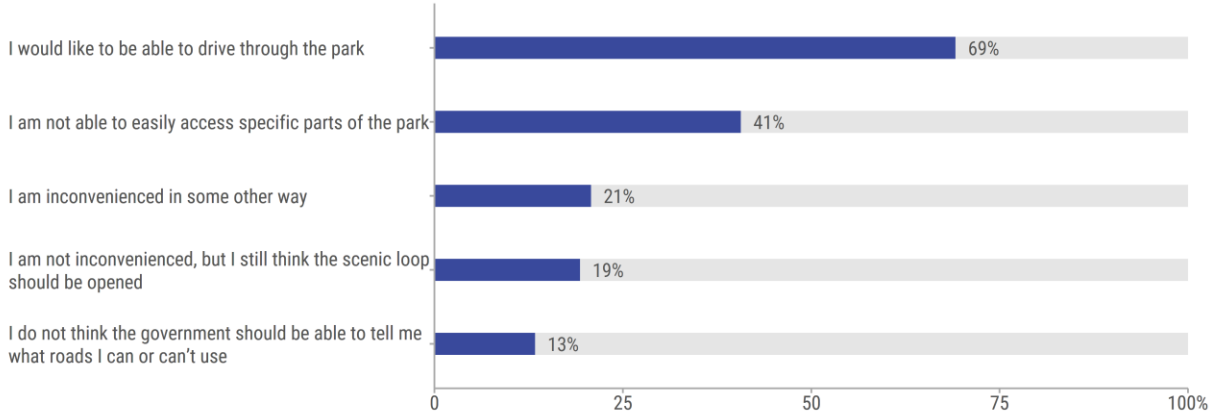


Open community respondents are more than twice as likely to feel that the decision of which vehicle traffic usage to implement is important to the city and themselves personally than the general public. Eighty-eight percent of open community respondents believe this issue is important to them, while 71% feel it is important to the city of Louisville.

When asked to provide reasoning for their views regarding the vehicle traffic restrictions at the Scenic Loop, respondents feel they are more affected than the general public. For instance, it is more common among open community respondents to feel that they have been inconvenienced during their park experience as 69% would like to drive through the park, and 41% specify that they cannot access specific parts of the park.

Those who participated in the open community survey and are in favor of full vehicle accessibility at the Scenic Loop feel that they have been inconvenienced during their loop experience due to the vehicle restrictions.

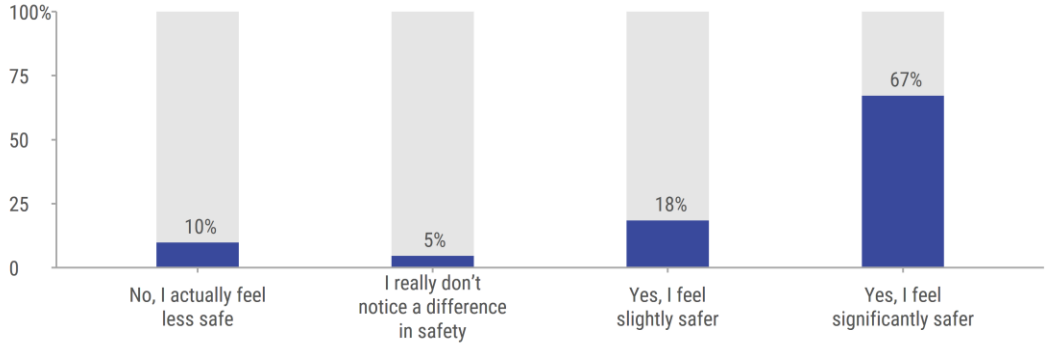
"In what ways have the current vehicle restrictions on the scenic loop caused you problems?"



Similarly, when those who prefer to keep the current vehicle restrictions in place are asked how the current policies have affected their perceived safety, 67% indicate that they feel significantly safer. In comparison, 28% of the general public expressed a similar sentiment.

Those who participated in the open community survey and want the park to keep its current restrictions predominantly feel safer because of them.

"Do you feel safer with the current vehicle usage restrictions?"



General Community Meeting

At the general community meeting, respondents were provided the option to leave comments instead of completing the full survey. Eleven respondents opted to leave comments; these comments were then categorized by the respondent's demonstrated preference for the vehicle restrictions at the Scenic Loop. Among these respondents, 64% favor leaving the vehicle restrictions as-is with partial vehicle accessibility.

Those who shared feedback at the community meeting hold a preference for leaving the vehicle traffic restrictions in place.

Categorized responses to: Please share any comments or feedback you have regarding traffic patterns along Cherokee Park's Scenic Loop.