

**Executive Summary**  
**Prepared for Penn Praxis:**  
**Consumer Input for Strategic Planning for East and West Fairmount Park**  
**November 19, 2013**

Park Penn Praxis engaged The Melior Group, an independent marketing research and consulting firm in Philadelphia, to provide quantitative consumer input to its planning and civic engagement process for East and West Fairmount. During the week of August 19, 2013, The Melior Group conducted in-person interviews with 100 users of Fairmount Park and 100 residents of the area surrounding the Park (for a total of 200 interviews). Between September 13<sup>th</sup> and September 16<sup>th</sup> 2013, slightly over 500 general consumers living in the Philadelphia eight-county region participated in an online survey hosted by The Melior Group. Following are key findings from this research:

- **The samples of consumers who responded to the survey online and those who were interviewed within the Park and surrounding neighborhoods are different demographically.**
  - General Consumers: 66% female; 14% have children under 18; 47% from Philadelphia; 89% White/Caucasian
  - In the Park: 42% female; 28% have children under 18; 89% from Philadelphia; 54% White/Caucasian
  - In Neighborhoods: 67% female; 66% have children under 18; 92% Black/African American
- **Philadelphia's history rises to the top of what area residents see as best defining the City (55%).**
  - This is followed by many other qualities including the full range of educational opportunities (museums and colleges/universities) and entertainment in all its facets (restaurants, art/culture scene, and professional sports teams).
  - For one in ten respondents (9%), Fairmount Park itself makes Philadelphia special.
- **The natural beauty of the Park and the resident institutions that educate and entertain all who participate make Fairmount Park a valuable treasure to the City and the region.**
  - The nature trails, the trees and flowers, and the opportunity to engage with nature appeal to all segments.
  - The Art Museum, the Zoo, and the Mann Music Center all serve to enhance the experience with the Park.
- **People don't necessarily know which of the City's parks make up the Fairmount Park system and which represent East and West Fairmount Park. However, the value they see in the Park, overall, is significant. Almost everyone included in the research has visited a City park recently.**

- **Relative to the institutions within the Park, it is clear that what people value about Fairmount Park is also what they visit.**
  - The Art Museum (63%), the Zoo (39%), and to a lesser extent, Boathouse Row (33%) are iconic aspects of Fairmount Park. Those who are in the Park for recreational purposes value these as well; those who live in the neighborhoods add the Mann (29%) and the Please Touch Museum (35%) to what they enjoy.
- **The beauty of the Park is not lost on those who use it mainly for exercise or live nearby.**
  - They see its open spaces, its trees and landscaping, its tranquility, and its community value (in terms of a gathering place for nearby and other residents) as its specialness.
  - The more people know about the Park (including that the Art Museum and Zoo are within it), the more positive people are about it.
  - To almost everyone, the quality of life of the neighborhoods around Fairmount Park is enhanced by having the Park adjacent.
- **It is the relaxation opportunities – and all that this means – that matters most to consumers.**
  - They want to be in clean (93%), safe parks (95%), where they can play (66%), picnic (54%), or sit in comfort (81%). Fairmount Park is able to satisfy people’s needs for the most part.
  - There is consistency between what is important to people in a park they will use and Fairmount Park itself in terms of accessibility and activities to enjoy (exercise, picnic areas, special events, etc.).
  - The greatest gaps are with the feeling of safety and security and ample clean restrooms – with Park users and neighbors less than happy about these.
- **There are no consistent reasons for not using Fairmount Park.**
  - Mainly, people believe it is not within their travel patterns (too far [36%], difficult to get to [12%]); a lack of knowledge about what is available to them in the park (39%); or a lack of interest (11%) in what parks, in general, allow (e.g., exercising, sitting and relaxing, wandering). A substantial portion of non-users (17%) don’t see a need to go to Philadelphia for a park, when there are plenty of parks near where they live. These are not impediments to using the Park, simply rationales for not going.
- **There is no complaint about accessing Fairmount Park by automobile, by foot or by public transit, although people living in the neighborhoods would like more public transportation available to them (70%).**
  - About one-quarter (22%) of general consumers are actually driving through the Park on a regular basis; most of them drive onto Kelly Drive (48%).
  - There is no complaint about the availability of parking within Fairmount Park for those who use it. Most people who do not live in the neighborhoods drive to the Park (81%), so the lack of concern for adequate parking is a positive.

- **There is a great opportunity to tell the Fairmount Park story to area residents, since only one in ten (11%) know much about it and half (46%) indicate they are missing (useful) information about parts of the Park.**
  - Half (50%) of the respondents want to have a greater connection to the Park – with a high percentage (56%) saying they would value knowing more, regardless of what they already know.
- **Helpful in encouraging use of the Park will be enhancing visible police presence and assuring people that their safety and security are paramount. As well, people want new activities to engage them; developing ongoing programming and activities and inviting people to participate in these new programs and activities will help build interest.**
  - Increased lighting (57%) and more visible signage (53%) can help in presenting a positive safety position about the Park.
  - From a programmatic perspective, having more – or different – exercise and activity options; people who are active in the Park like to have new things to explore regularly. This is true, as well, for those in the surrounding neighborhoods – they should respond well to new activities that they can access for themselves and their families, including public art and performances.
- **The Park seems to be mostly for Philadelphians, including those living in the surrounding neighborhoods (with fewer using it from outside the City); they like the idea of being invited to participate in its beauty and success. They are the initial “target market.”**