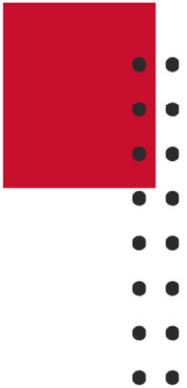




City of Houston 2025: Entertainment & News



Hobby School of Public Affairs
UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON



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Entertainment & News
April 2025**

The Hobby School of Public Affairs at the University of Houston conducted a survey of City of Houston registered voters to assess their preferences and opinions about a wide range of salient local issues. The survey was fielded between March 29 and April 4, 2025 by contacting City of Houston registered voters via SMS text messages through which they were directed to an online survey platform with the option to answer the survey in English or Spanish. Representative of the City of Houston population of registered voters, the analysis population of 1,400 has a margin of error of +/- 2.62%.

The overall study includes three reports. The first report examined the opinions of registered voters in Houston (also referred to as Houstonians throughout the report) on where the city is headed, the job performance of the mayor and the quality of life in the city, as well as Houstonians' satisfaction with city services, what they believe the most important problems facing Houston are, and the impact of a variety of factors on the quality of life in their neighborhood. A second brief report provided evaluations of six actual and potential Texas Congressional District 18 special election candidates by Houstonians residing in the district. This third report gauges the extent to which Houstonians visit area parks, assesses the source they rely on most for news about what is happening in Houston, and explores their opinions about the potential of a major theme park being built in Houston and of Houston getting a Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) team and a National Hockey League (NHL) team.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) Metroplex, with a population of 8.3 million, has the following:

- A Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) team (Dallas Wings).
- A National Hockey League (NHL) team (Dallas Stars).
- Two Major Arena Soccer League (MASL) teams (Dallas Sidekicks & Texas Outlaws).
- A Major League Cricket (MLC) team (Texas Super Kings).
- Two major theme parks (Six Flags Over Texas & Universal Kids Resort [opening in 2026]).

The Houston Metro Area, with a population of 7.8 million, does not have a WNBA team, a NHL team, a MASL team, a MLC team, or a major theme park.

60% of Houstonians are either very (31%) or somewhat (29%) enthusiastic about Houston getting a Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) team.

57% of Houstonians are either very (26%) or somewhat (31%) enthusiastic about Houston getting a National Hockey League (NHL) team.

45% of Houstonians are either very (17%) or somewhat (28%) enthusiastic about Houston getting a Major Arena Soccer League (MASL) team.

29% of Houstonians are either very (8%) or somewhat (21%) enthusiastic about Houston getting a Major League Cricket (MLC) team.

64% of Houstonians are either very (39%) or somewhat (25%) enthusiastic about Houston getting a major theme park like Disney World or Universal Studios in Orlando.

If Houston were to get a major theme park later this decade, 29% of Houstonians say they would visit it more than once a year, 27% would visit it once a year, 27% would visit it (but less than once a year), and 17% would never visit it.

48% of Houstonians report having visited Hermann Park during the past year.

46% of Houstonians report having visited Memorial Park during the past year.

33% of Houstonians report having visited Discovery Green during the past year.

37% of Houstonians say that local TV stations (on TV or online) are their main source of news about what is happening in Houston.

29% of Houstonians say that social media is their main source of news about what is happening in Houston.

16% of Houstonians say that the *Houston Chronicle* (in print or online) is their main source of news about what is happening in Houston.

11% of Houstonians say that local radio stations (on radio or online) are their main source of news about what is happening in Houston.

SURVEY POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS

White Houstonians account for 40% of this survey population, Latino Houstonians for 29%, Black Houstonians for 22%, Asian American Houstonians for 6% and others for 3%. Women represent 52% of this population, men 47% and those with another gender identity 1%. One-fourth (25%) of the population is between the ages of 18 and 34, 35% between the ages of 35 and 54, and 40% are age 55 and older. A little more than one-fourth (28%) of the respondents have a child under the age of 18 living with them, while 72% do not. Nearly two-fifths of the respondents (39%) have a four-year college degree while 61% do not. Democrats account for 54% of this population, Republicans for 31% and Independents for 9%, with 6% either unsure of their partisan identification or identifying with another party or group.

ENTHUSIASM FOR NEW PRO SPORTS TEAMS & A DISNEY STYLE THEME PARK IN HOUSTON

Houstonians were asked how enthusiastic they would be about Houston getting the following professional sports teams: a Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) team, a National Hockey League (NHL) team, a Major Arena Soccer League (MASL) team, and a Major League Cricket (MLC) team. They also were asked how enthusiastic they would be about a destination theme park resort similar to Disney World or Universal Studios in Orlando being opened in Houston. The response options were as follows: very enthusiastic, somewhat enthusiastic, not too enthusiastic, not at all enthusiastic and unsure, with the small number of unsure responses excluded from the analysis below.

Figure 1 provides information on the level of enthusiasm Houstonians have for Houston getting a Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) team. The WNBA currently has 12 teams, including the Dallas Wings (in Arlington), with three more teams scheduled to join the league over the next two seasons. Houston's former WNBA team, the Houston Comets, were in operation from the WNBA's founding in 1997 until 2008. Three-fifths (60%) of Houstonians are either very (31%) or somewhat (29%) enthusiastic about the idea of Houston getting a WNBA team, while 13% are not too enthusiastic and 27% are not at all enthusiastic.

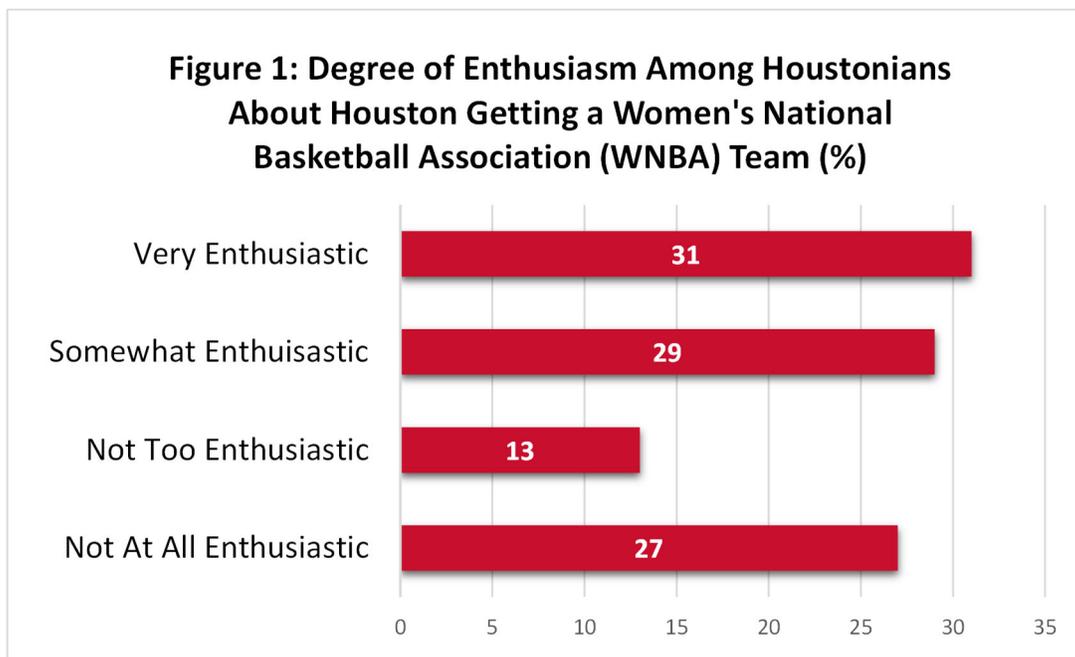


Figure 2 provides information on the level of enthusiasm Houstonians have for Houston getting a National Hockey League (NHL) team. The NHL currently has 32 teams, including the Dallas Stars. Almost three-fifths (57%) of Houstonians are either very (26%) or somewhat (31%) enthusiastic about the idea of Houston getting a NHL team, while 20% are not too enthusiastic and 23% are not at all enthusiastic.

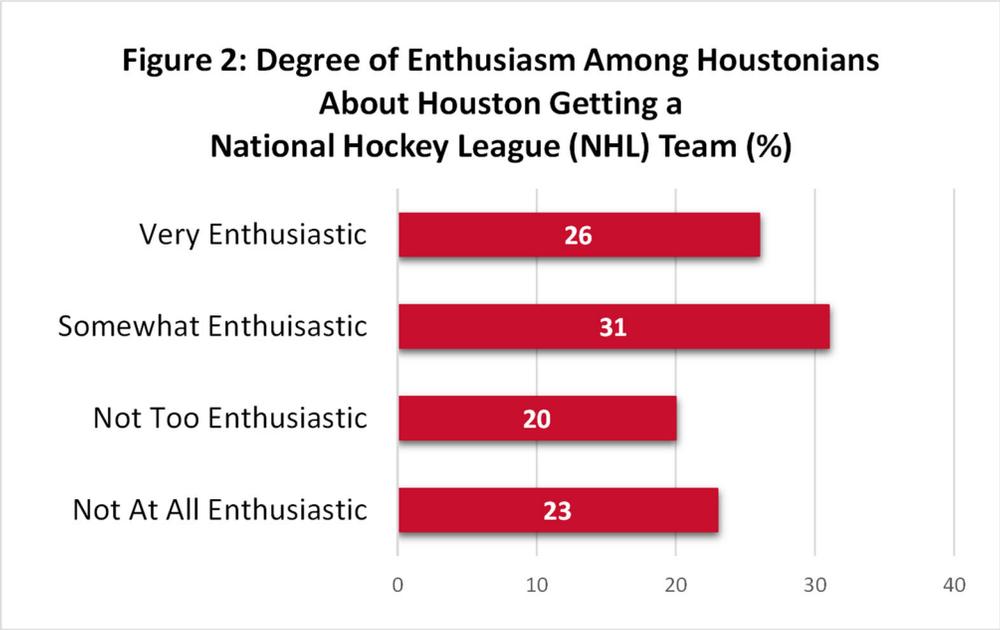


Figure 3 provides information on the level of enthusiasm Houstonians have for Houston getting a Major Arena Soccer League (MASL) team. The MASL currently has 12 teams, including two in the DFW Metroplex (the Dallas Sidekicks in Allen and the Texas Outlaws in Mesquite). Almost half (45%) of Houstonians are either very (17%) or somewhat (28%) enthusiastic about the idea of Houston getting a MASL team, while 23% are not too enthusiastic and 32% are not at all enthusiastic.

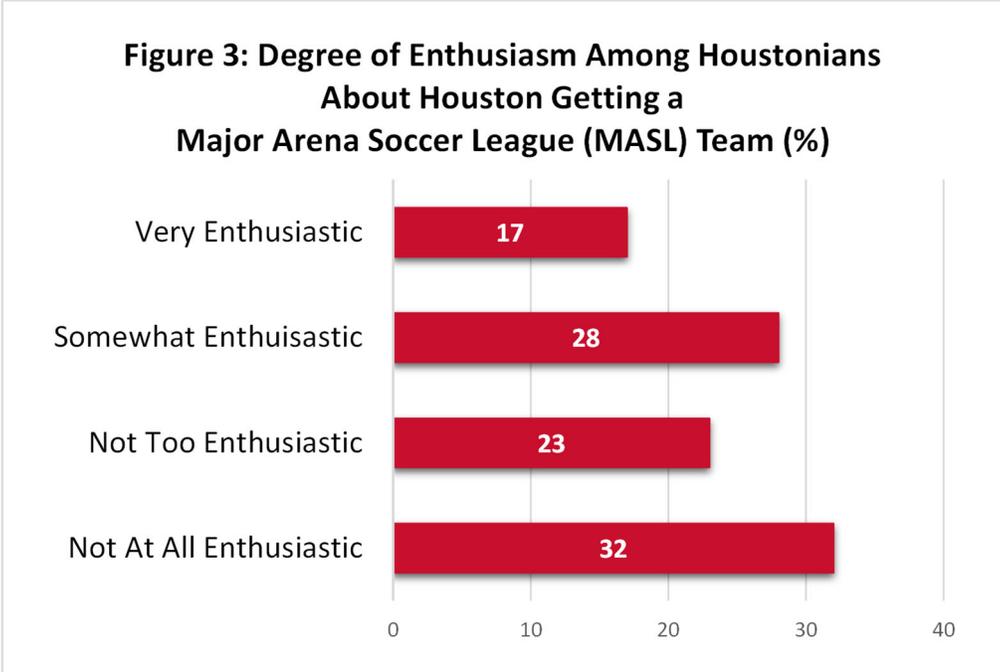


Figure 4 provides information on the level of enthusiasm Houstonians have for Houston getting a Major League Cricket (MLC) team. The MLC presently has six teams, including the Texas Super Kings in the DFW Metroplex (Grand Prairie). A little less than one-third (29%) of Houstonians are either very (8%) or somewhat (21%) enthusiastic about the idea of Houston getting a MLC team, while 24% are not too enthusiastic and 47% are not at all enthusiastic.

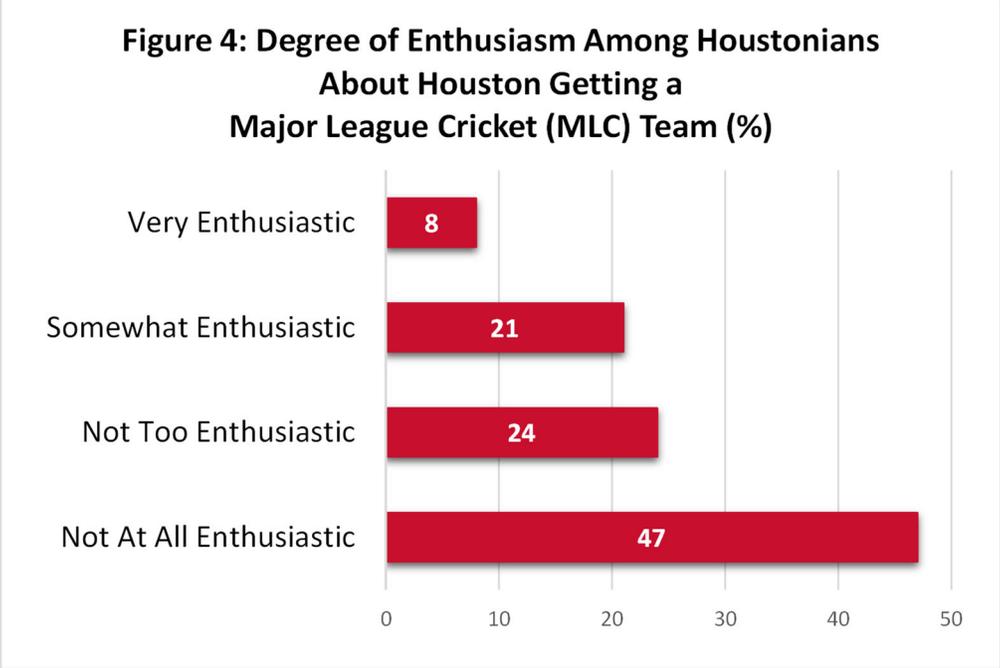


Figure 5 provides information on the level of enthusiasm Houstonians have for Houston getting a destination theme park resort similar to Disney World or Universal Studios. Texas currently has two major theme parks, Six Flags Over Texas in the DFW Metroplex (Arlington) and Fiesta Texas in San Antonio, with a third major theme park set to open in 2026 in the DFW Metroplex (Universal Kids Resort in Frisco). Houston has not had a major theme park since AstroWorld closed in 2005. Almost two-thirds (64%) of Houstonians are either very (39%) or somewhat (25%) enthusiastic about the idea of Houston getting a Disney World or Universal Studios-style theme park, while 16% are not too enthusiastic and 20% are not at all enthusiastic.

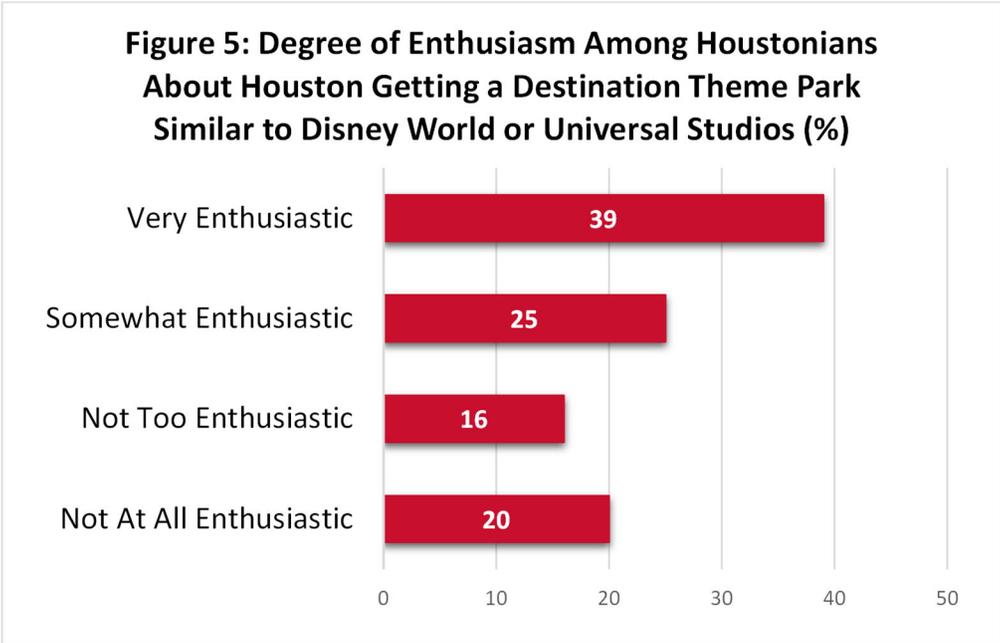


Table 1 provides the proportion of Houstonians who are very or somewhat enthusiastic about getting a WNBA team, a NHL team, a MASL team, a MLC team or a major theme park, broken down by gender, ethnicity/race, age, the presence of children under the age of 18 in the home, education, partisanship, and whether or not the person reported having attended a game of a Houston professional sports team over the past year.

Table 1: Proportion of Houstonians Who Are Very or Somewhat Enthusiastic About Houston Getting a WNBA, NHL, MASL and MLC Team & Theme Park Among Key Sub-Groups (%)

Socio-Demographic	Sub-Group	WNBA Team	NHL Team	MASL Team	MLC Team	Theme Park
Overall		60	57	45	29	64
Gender	Women	72	54	51	33	65
	Men	48	60	37	25	64
Ethnicity/Race	White	49	58	31	24	53
	Latino	62	60	58	29	66
	Black	84	54	52	35	82
Age	18 to 34	62	62	41	32	58
	35 to 54	58	63	51	29	68
	55+	62	49	48	26	65
Children under 18	Present in Home	59	62	46	28	73
	Not Present in Home	61	55	44	28	60
Education	College Degree	63	57	46	31	59
	No College Degree	59	57	44	27	67
Partisanship	Democratic	76	56	51	35	65
	Independent	58	65	48	36	65
	Republican	31	58	32	17	62
Houston Pro Sports Game	Attended in Past Year	62	65	47	30	67
	Did Not Attend in Past Year	58	46	41	28	60

Note: WNBA (Women's National Basketball Association), NHL (National Hockey League), MASL (Major Arena Soccer League), MLC (Major League Cricket).

WNBA. Women (72%) are significantly more likely than men (48%) to be either very or somewhat enthusiastic about Houston getting a WNBA team. Similarly, Black Houstonians (84%) are significantly more likely than both Latino (62%) and White (49%) Houstonians to be very or somewhat enthusiastic about getting a WNBA team, with Latino Houstonians also significantly more enthusiastic than White Houstonians. Finally, Houston Democrats (76%) are more than twice as likely as Houston Republicans (31%) to be either very or somewhat enthusiastic about Houston getting a WNBA team.

There are not any noteworthy differences in enthusiasm for a WNBA team among Houstonians which are related to age, the presence of children under 18 in the home, education, or attendance of a Houston pro sports team game over the past year.

NHL. The oldest Houstonians ages 55 and older (49%) are significantly less likely than Houstonians ages 35 to 54 (63%) and 18 to 34 (62%) to be either very or somewhat enthusiastic about Houston getting an NHL team. Houstonians who attended a pro sports game in Houston during the past year are significantly more likely than those Houstonians who did not attend a game to be either very or somewhat enthusiastic about Houston getting an NHL team, 65% vs. 46%, respectively.

There are not any noteworthy differences in enthusiasm for a NHL team among Houstonians which are related to gender, ethnicity/race, the presence of children under the age of 18 in the home, education, or partisanship.

MASL. Women (51%) are significantly more likely than men (37%) to be either very or somewhat enthusiastic about Houston getting a MASL team. Similarly Latino (58%) and Black (52%) Houstonians are significantly more likely than White Houstonians (31%) to be very or somewhat enthusiastic about Houston getting a MASL team. Finally, Houston Democrats (51%) are significantly more likely than Houston Republicans (32%) to be very or somewhat enthusiastic about Houston getting a MASL team.

There are no noteworthy differences in enthusiasm for a MASL team among Houstonians which are related to age, the presence of children under 18 in the home, education, or attendance of a Houston pro sports team game during the past year.

MLC. Houston Democrats (35%) are significantly more likely than Houston Republicans (17%) to be either very or somewhat enthusiastic about Houston getting a MLC team. Finally, while the Asian American population surveyed (6% of the total respondents) is too small for reliable statistical inference, it is noteworthy that among the Asian Americans surveyed, more than two-fifths (42%) are either very or somewhat enthusiastic about Houston getting a MLC team.

There are not any noteworthy differences in enthusiasm for a MLC team among Houstonians which are related to gender, ethnicity/race (with the previously mentioned minor exception), age, the presence of children under 18 in the home, education, or attendance of a Houston pro sports team game during the past year.

Theme Park. Black (82%) and Latino (66%) Houstonians are significantly more likely than White Houstonians (53%) to be either very or somewhat excited about Houston getting a major theme park. Similarly, Houstonians with children under the age of 18 in their home (73%) are significantly more likely than Houstonians without children under the age of 18 at home (60%) to be very or somewhat enthusiastic about Houston getting a major theme park.

There are not any noteworthy differences in enthusiasm for a major theme park among Houstonians which are related to gender, age, education, partisanship, or attendance of a Houston pro sports team game during the past year.

Figure 6 provides the distribution of the frequency which Houstonians say they would visit a major theme park similar to Disney World or Universal Studios in Orlando were it to open in Houston later this decade. More than one-fourth (29%) say they would visit the theme park more than once a year, 27% say they would visit once a year, 27% say they would visit less than once a year (but would visit the theme park), and 17% say they would never visit the theme park.

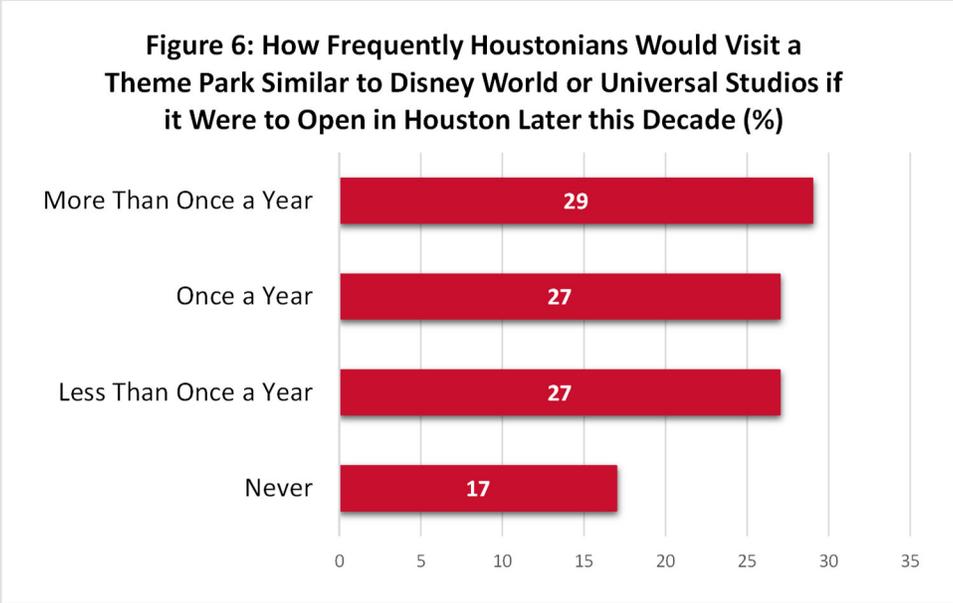


Table 2 provides the frequency at which Houstonians would visit a new Houston theme park, broken down by gender, ethnicity/race, age, the presence of children under the age of 18 in the home, education, partisanship, and whether or not the person reported having attended a game of a Houston professional sports team over the past year.

Table 2. Frequency At Which Houstonians Would Visit a New Houston Theme Park Among Key Sub-Groups (%)

Socio-Demographic	Sub-Group	More Than Once a Year	Once a Year	Less Than Once a Year	Never
Overall		29	27	27	17
Gender	Women	31	25	27	17
	Men	26	29	28	17
Ethnicity/Race	White	20	25	34	21
	Latino	36	25	23	16
	Black	40	30	25	5
Age	18 to 34	31	25	28	16
	35 to 54	35	29	23	13
	55+	23	25	30	22
Children under 18	Present in Home	40	29	22	9
	Not Present in Home	25	25	29	21
Education	College Degree	26	26	30	18
	No College Degree	31	27	26	16
Partisanship	Democratic	29	27	29	15
	Independent	31	25	21	23
	Republican	29	25	26	20
Houston Pro Sports Game	Attended in Past Year	31	27	28	14
	Did Not Attend in Past Year	25	26	27	22

The two most noteworthy socio-demographic sub-group differences regarding the prospective frequency of visiting the theme park revolve around ethnicity/race and the presence or absence of children under 18 in the home. Black (40%) and Latino (36%) Houstonians are significantly more likely than White Houstonians (20%) to say they would visit the theme park more than once a year. Similarly, Houstonians with children under the age of 18 at home (40%) are significantly more likely than Houstonians who do not have children under 18 at home (25%) to say they would visit the theme park more than once a year.

VISITING HERMANN PARK, MEMORIAL PARK & DISCOVERY GREEN

Houstonians were asked if they had visited three Houston parks during the past year: Hermann Park, Memorial Park, and Discovery Green. Figure 7 reveals that 48% of these Houstonians reported having visited Hermann Park during the past year, 46% having visited Memorial Park, and 33% having visited Discovery Green.

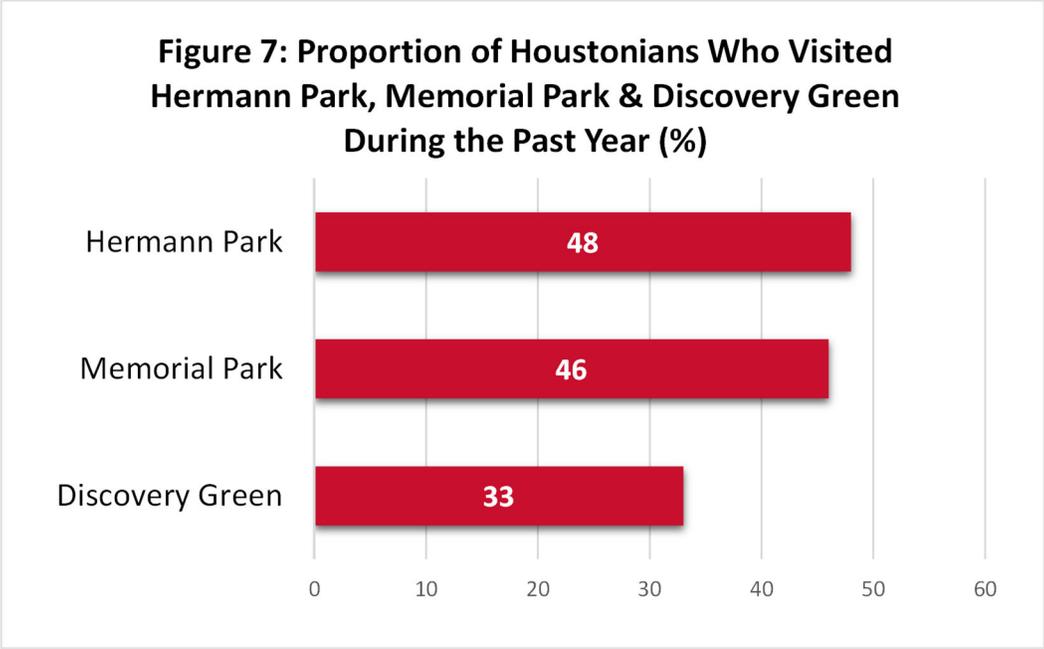


Table 3 provides the proportion of Houstonians who visited each park during the past year, broken down by gender, ethnicity/race, age, the presence of children under the age of 18 in the home, education, partisanship, and whether or not the person reported having attended a game of a Houston professional sports team over the past year.

Table 3. Proportion of Houstonians Who Visited Hermann Park, Memorial Park & Discovery Green Over the Past Year Among Key Sub-Groups (%)

Socio-Demographic	Sub-Group	Hermann Park	Memorial Park	Discovery Green
Overall		48	46	33
Gender	Women	49	41	35
	Men	47	53	30
Ethnicity/Race	White	47	49	27
	Latino	48	52	36
	Black	56	30	39
Age	18 to 34	58	55	43
	35 to 54	49	50	38
	55+	41	37	22
Children under 18	Present in Home	54	49	46
	Not Present in Home	46	45	28
Education	College Degree	54	52	35
	No College Degree	45	43	31
Partisanship	Democratic	53	46	34
	Independent	46	46	32
	Republican	40	47	30
Houston Pro Sports Game	Attended in Past Year	54	52	41
	Did Not Attend in Past Year	41	38	21

Women and men are equally likely to have visited Hermann Park (49% and 47%, respectively) and Discovery Green (35% and 30%) over the past year, while men (53%) were significantly more likely than women (41%) to have visited Memorial Park.

Black Houstonians (56%) were moderately more likely than Latino (48%) and White (47%) to have visited Hermann Park over the past year, but significantly less likely (30%) to have visited Memorial Park than White (49%) and Latino (52%) Houstonians. Black (39%) Houstonians were also notably more likely than White (27%) Houstonians to have visited Discovery Green during the past year.

The youngest Houstonians ages 18 to 34 were significantly more likely to have visited all three parks during the past year than Houstonians age 55 and older, with the gap the largest for Discovery Green (43% vs. 22%) and the smallest for Hermann Park (58% vs. 41%), with Memorial Park (55% vs. 37%) in between.

Houstonians with a child under the age of 18 living with them at home were significantly more likely than Houstonians without a minor living in their home to have visited Discovery Green (46% vs. 28%, respectively) and Hermann Park (54% vs. 46%), but not Memorial Park (49% vs. 45%).

Houstonians with a four-year college degree were significantly more likely than Houstonians without a college degree to have visited Hermann Park (54% vs. 45%, respectively) and Memorial Park (52% vs. 43%), but not Discovery Green (35% vs. 31%).

Democrats were significantly more likely than Republicans to have visited Hermann Park over the past year (53% vs. 40%, respectively), with, however, no noteworthy partisan differences in the proportions of Houstonians who visited Memorial Park (46% vs. 47%) and Discovery Green (34% vs. 30%) during the past year.

Finally, Houstonians who reported having attended at least one professional sports game in Houston over the past year were significantly more likely than those Houstonians who did not attend any pro sports games to have visited all three parks, with the gap the largest for Discovery Green (41% vs. 21%, respectively) and the smallest for Hermann Park (54% vs. 41%), with Memorial Park (52% vs. 38%) in between.

HOUSTONIANS' MAIN SOURCE OF NEWS ABOUT WHAT'S HAPPENING IN HOUSTON

Houstonians were asked which of four sources is their main source of news about what's happening in Houston. The four sources presented to them (randomly) included the following options: social media, local TV stations (on TV or online), local radio stations (on radio or online), and the *Houston Chronicle* (print or online). They also had the response option of "none of these."

Figure 8 provides the proportion of Houstonians who say that each one of the four sources is their main source of news about what's happening in Houston as well as the proportion who responded that none of these four sources is their main source of Houston-related news. Local TV stations (37%) are the main source of news about what's happening in Houston for the largest proportion of Houstonians, followed by social media (29%), the *Houston Chronicle* (16%) and local radio stations (11%), with 7% of Houstonians responding that none of these four sources are their major source of news about what's happening in Houston.

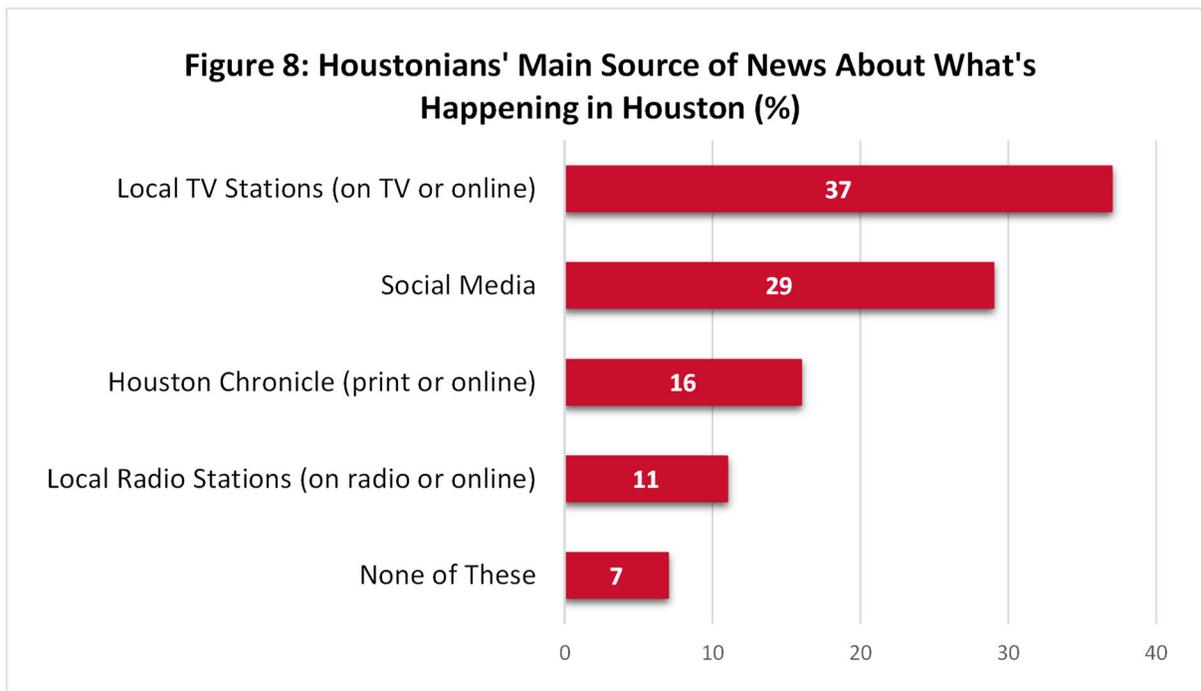


Table 4 provides the proportion of Houstonians who say that each one of the four sources is their main source of Houston news, broken down by gender, ethnicity/race, age, the presence of children under the age of 18 in the home, education, and partisanship.

Table 4. Houstonians' Main Source of News About What's Happening in Houston Among Key Sub-Groups (%)

Socio-Demographic	Sub-Group	Local TV Stations	Social Media	Houston Chronicle	Local Radio Stations	None of These
Overall		37	29	16	11	7
Gender	Women	40	31	15	9	6
	Men	35	27	16	13	9
Ethnicity/Race	White	34	23	22	14	7
	Latino	31	37	12	10	10
	Black	54	30	9	4	3
Age	18 to 34	17	49	17	10	7
	35 to 54	31	34	14	11	10
	55+	55	12	16	11	6
Children under 18	Present in Home	30	36	13	11	9
	Not Present in Home	40	26	16	11	7
Education	College Degree	35	24	21	12	8
	No College Degree	39	32	13	9	7
Partisanship	Democratic	40	25	20	11	4
	Independent	38	26	19	7	10
	Republican	35	32	8	12	13

The most noteworthy sub-group differences in the media source Houstonians rely on most for news about Houston revolve around ethnicity/race, age, and partisanship.

Black Houstonians (54%) are significantly more likely than White (34%) and Latino (31%) Houstonians to rely the most on local TV stations for their news about what's going on in Houston, while Latino Houstonians (37%) are significantly more likely than White Houstonians (23%) to rely on social media.

Houstonians age 55 and older (55%) are significantly more likely than both Houstonians ages 35 to 54 (31%), and, especially, the youngest Houstonians ages 18 to 34 (17%), to rely on local TV stations as their primary source for Houston news. Conversely, Houstonians ages 18 to 34 (49%) are significantly more likely than Houstonians ages 35 to 54 (34%), and, especially, Houstonians age 55 and older (12%), to rely on social media the most for their news about what's going on in Houston.

Finally, Houston Democrats (20%) are more than twice as likely as Houston Republicans (8%) to say that the *Houston Chronicle* is their main source of news about what is happening in Houston.

CO-INVESTIGATORS

Renée Cross, Senior Executive Director & Researcher, Hobby School of Public Affairs

Mark P. Jones, James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy's Fellow in Political Science, Rice University;
Senior Research Fellow, Hobby School of Public Affairs

RESEARCH TEAM

Maria P. Perez Argüelles, Research Associate, Hobby School of Public Affairs

Savannah Sipole, Research Associate, Hobby School of Public Affairs

COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

Diana Benitez, Program Manager, Web & Graphic Design, Hobby School of Public Affairs

Victoria Cordova, Executive Director of Communications, Hobby School of Public Affairs

Jeannie Kever, Communications Consultant

Celeste Zamora, Communications Manager, Hobby School of Public Affairs

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