



Economic impact of Bertram Chain of Lakes Regional Athletic Park event attendees, 2023

Prepared by Brigid Tuck, October 2023

Overview

The City of Monticello, in partnership with Wright County, created the 1,200-acre Bertram Chain of Lakes Regional Park. The park has many activities and amenities, including trails for mountain biking, skiing, hiking, and walking, an amphitheater, fishing pier, campground, and swimming beach.

In addition, Monticello is in the process of developing an athletic park. Bertram Chain of Lakes Regional Athletic Park is situated on 120 acres and offers 22 soccer fields, seven lacrosse fields, and 10 football fields. The fields are youth to international sized and are natural grass fields. Two of the soccer fields are championship-level fields. Other amenities at the athletic park include walking trails, potable water services, and on-site parking. The athletic park opened in 2012 and is operated by Monticello's Parks and Recreation Department.

The Bertram Chain of Lakes Regional Athletic Park attracts visitors from across Minnesota to events held on-site, introducing Monticello to the sports tourism market. Sports tourism is a growing segment of the tourism economy. Nationally, the number of sports tourists increased by nearly 6 percent between 2015 and 2019. During the same period, spending by sports travelers, event organizers, and venues increased by almost 17 percent.¹ Sports tourists include amateur adult and youth plus collegiate tournament participants.

The City of Monticello was interested in understanding how sports tourism related to the Bertram Chain of Lakes athletic fields impacts the city's economy. University of Minnesota Extension's economic impact analysis team collaborated with the city to design a project.

The goal of this project was to answer the following questions:

- How much do sports tourists spend in the community during their visit?
- Which businesses directly benefit from sports tourists?
- Which businesses indirectly benefit from sports tourists?
- What opportunities exist to increase the economic benefits of sports tourism in Monticello?



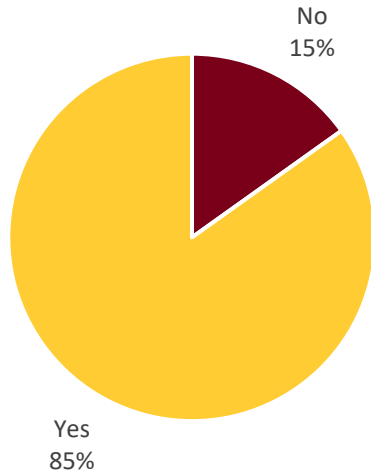
To reach these goals, volunteers with the City of Monticello surveyed attendees at events held during June and July of 2023. In total, volunteers collected 250 usable surveys. Events included a mix of soccer and lacrosse that were held on various days throughout the week.

During this period, the games were primarily league matches; there were no state or regional tournaments held.

Role of Bertram Chain of Lakes Regional Athletic Park in Driving Visits

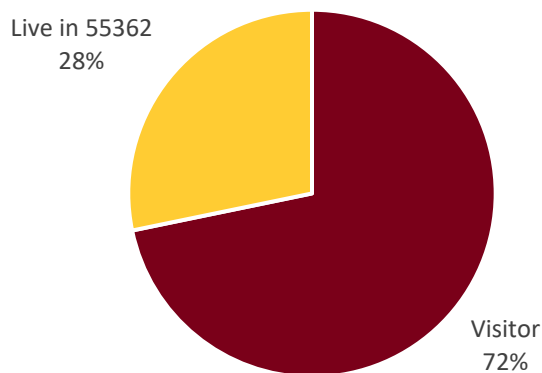
Athletic events draw people to Monticello. Eight of every 10 people at Bertram Chain of Lakes Regional Park athletic events were primarily there to attend an event (Chart 1).

Chart 1: Athletic Event Primary Reason for Travel to Monticello, Bertram Chain of Lakes Athletic Event Attendees, 2023



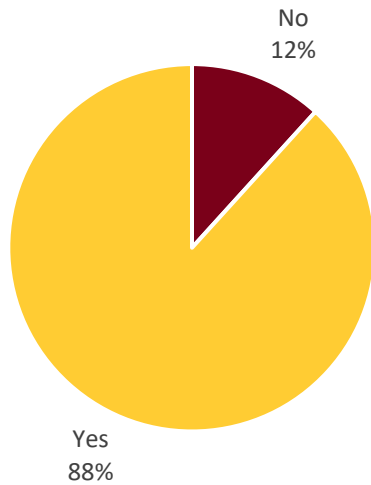
Most survey respondents lived outside Monticello. Nearly three of every four respondents indicated they did not live in the 55362 zip code (Chart 2).

Chart 2: Local Residents versus Visitors, Bertram Chain of Lakes Athletic Event Attendees, 2023



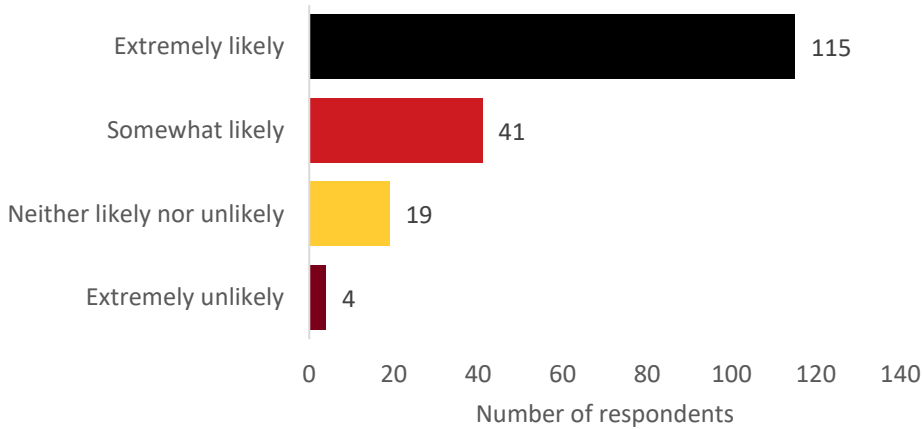
Many of the athletic event attendees had visited Monticello prior to the event (Chart 3).

Chart 3: Prior Visitor to Monticello, Bertram Chain of Lakes Athletic Event Attendees, 2023



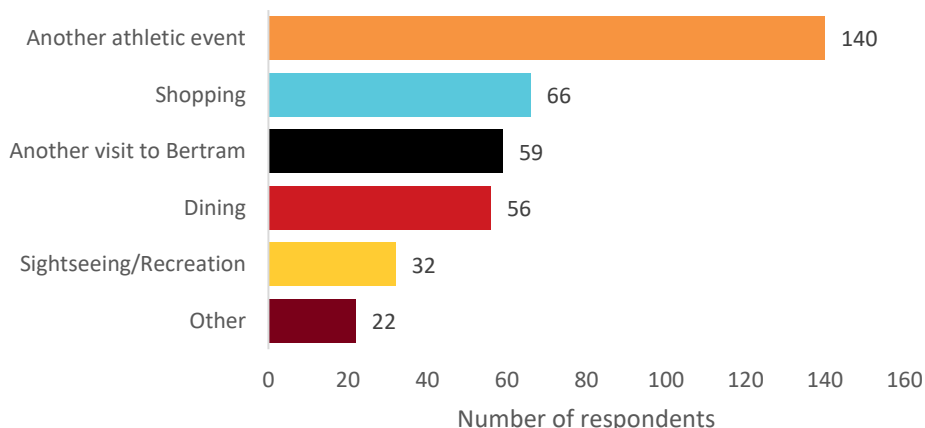
Athletic events drive current visits to Monticello. They are also driving future trips. Most people (88 percent) are likely to return to Monticello in the future (Chart 4).

Chart 4: Likelihood of a Return Trip to Monticello, Bertram Chain of Lakes Athletic Event Attendees, 2023



More than half (56 percent) of survey respondents planned to return for another athletic event. Other main reasons for return visits included shopping and another visit to Bertram Chain of Lakes Regional Park (Chart 5).

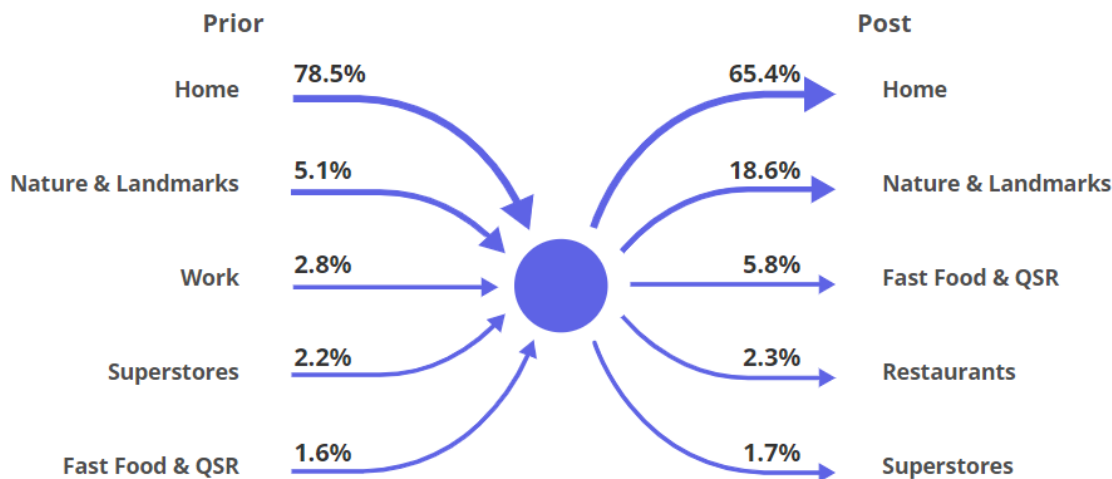
Chart 5: Main Reason(s) for Return to Monticello, Bertram Chain of Lakes Athletic Event Attendees, 2023



Mobile analytics data can provide insight into the visitor journey. Data from Placer.ai, which tracks cell phone movements, shows that most visitors to the athletic fields come directly from home (78.5 percent), followed by nature/landmarks (mostly other places in the park), work, superstores, and restaurants (Chart 6).

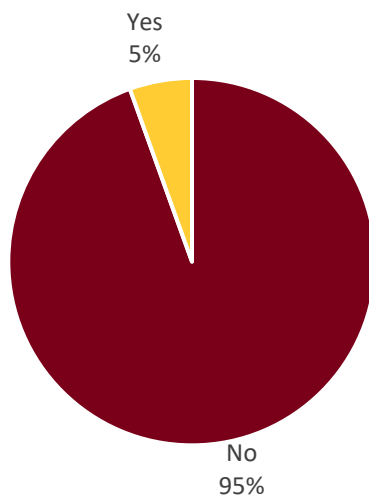
Following the event, many return home. However, 18.6 percent go to other nature and landmarks. A deeper dive into the data shows 17.3 percent go to another location within Bertram Chain of Lakes Regional Park, further demonstrating how the athletic fields bring people to the park.

Chart 6: Visitor Journey, Bertram Chain of Lakes Athletic Field Visitors



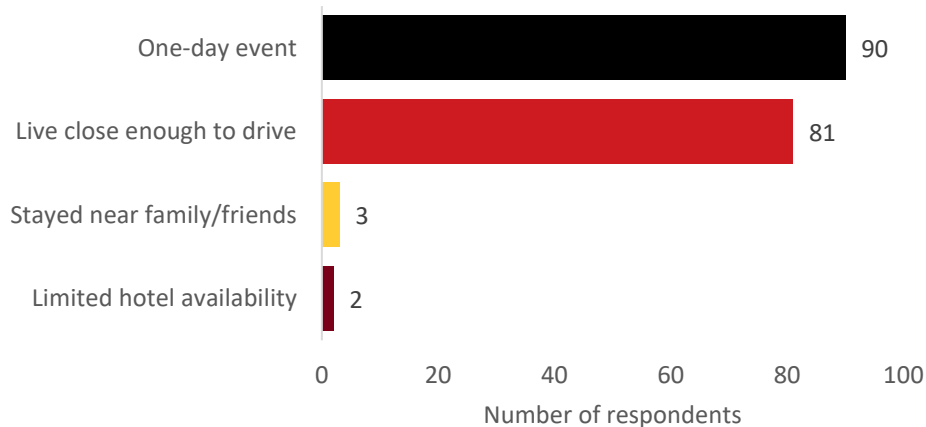
Only a handful of athletic event attendees spent the night in Monticello (Chart 7). The number of overnight visitors will likely vary from year to year, depending on the type of events hosted at Bertram Chain of Lakes Regional Park. Weekday soccer games tend to attract fewer overnight guests, while larger events, like state tournaments, attract higher numbers.

Chart 7: Spent the Night Away from Home, Bertram Chain of Lakes Event Attendees, 2023



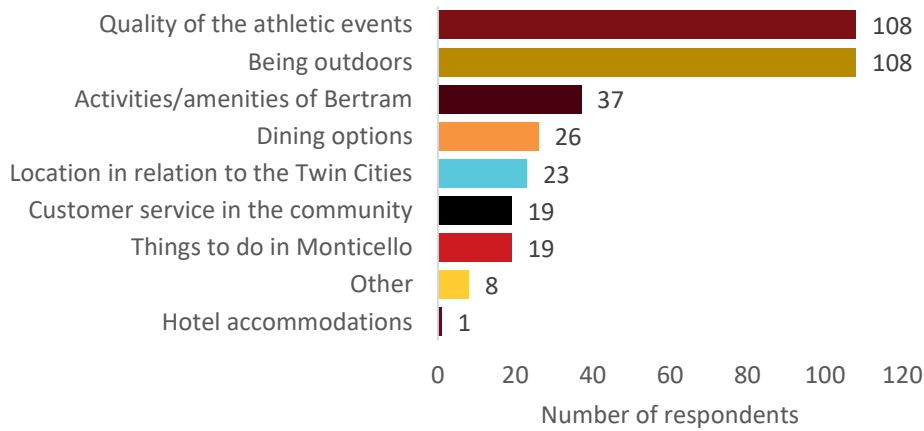
The primary reason people did not spend the night in Monticello was due to the nature of the event they attended. Many people attended a one-day event and chose to make the drive to/from the event the same day. Another large portion of the survey respondents lived close enough to drive back and forth (Chart 8).

Chart 8: Reasons for Not Staying the Night in Monticello, Bertram Chain of Lakes Athletic Event Attendees, 2023



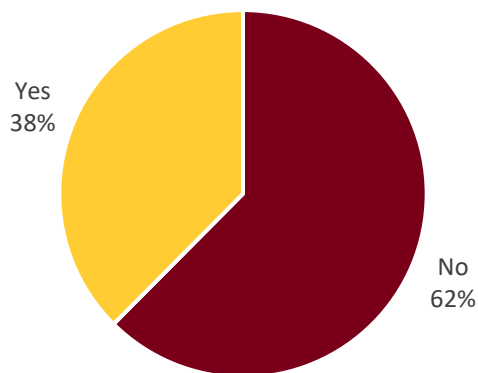
Survey respondents enjoyed Bertram Chain of Lakes activities and amenities. The quality of the athletic events and being outdoors (both attributes of the park) were the items that survey respondents indicated they enjoyed most about their trip to Monticello (Chart 9).

Chart 9: Most Enjoyable Aspects of the Trip, Bertram Chain of Lakes Athletic Event Attendees, 2023



While survey respondents enjoy Bertram Chain of Lakes Regional Park, there is room to increase use of other activities and amenities in the park. Roughly two of every three people did not visit another part of the park beyond the athletic fields (Chart 10).

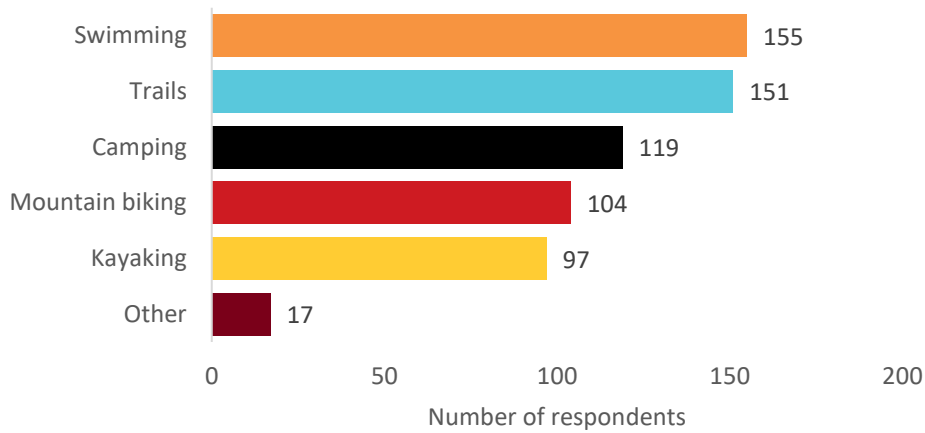
Chart 10: Aware of Park Amenities Beyond Athletic Fields, Bertram Chain of Lakes Athletic Event Attendees, 2023



Awareness of and Satisfaction with Bertram Chain of Lakes Regional Park

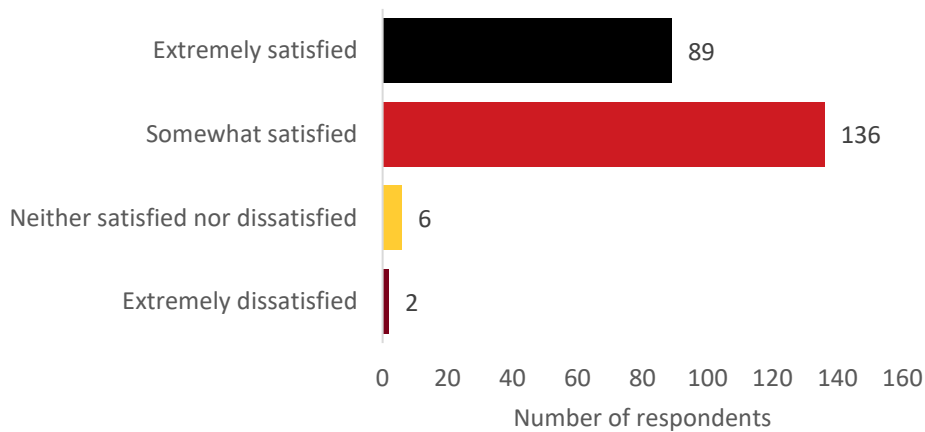
For those aware of other activities at Bertram Chain of Lakes Regional Park, the highest level of awareness was for swimming and the trails (Chart 11).

Chart 11: Aware of Specific Activities at the Park, Bertram Chain of Lakes Athletic Event Attendees, 2023



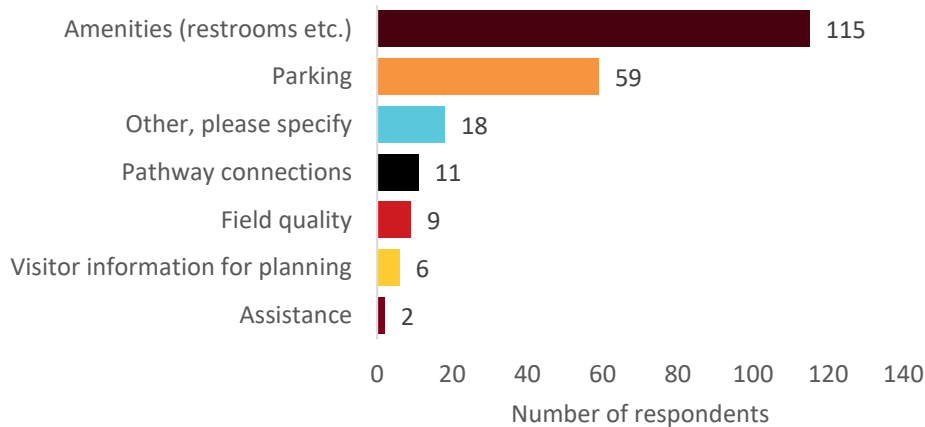
Overall, attendees of Bertram Chain of Lakes athletic events were satisfied with the facilities (Chart 12).

Chart 12: Satisfaction with Park Facilities, Bertram Chain of Lakes Athletic Event Attendees, 2023



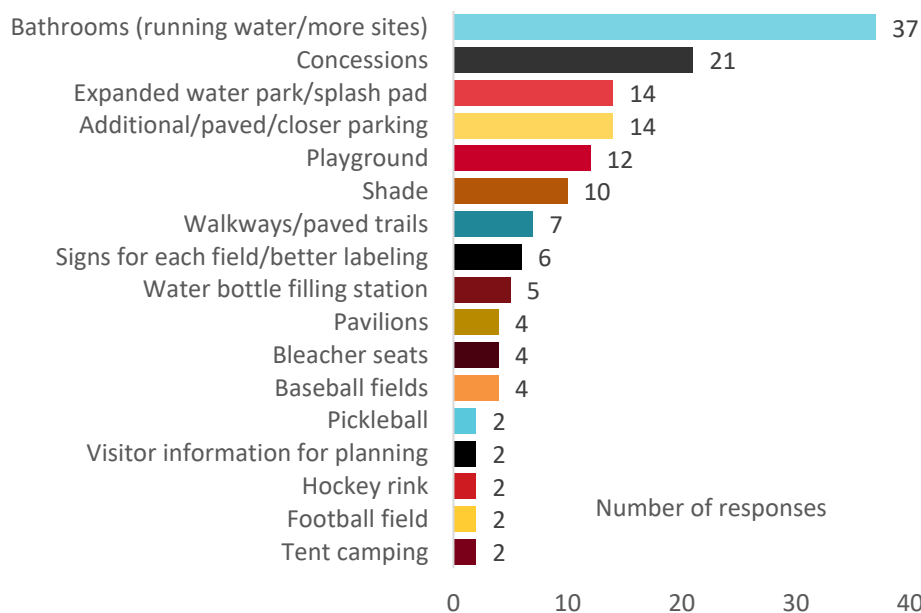
While overwhelmingly satisfied with the facilities, when provided a list of items they would like to see improved, respondents most commonly selected “amenities” (Chart 13). Amenities included restrooms, access to water, and concessions, among other items.

Chart 13: Items to Improve at the Park, Bertram Chain of Lakes Athletic Event Attendees, 2023



Survey respondents were invited to share suggestions via an open-ended question. Bathrooms received the highest number of suggestions (Chart 14). Attendees were interested in bathrooms located in a shelter with running water. There were also suggestions to have bathrooms at additional locations around the athletic facilities to get them closer to the fields. Concessions also received a significant number of nominations.

Chart 14: Open-Ended Suggestions for Improvements to Park Facilities, Bertram Chain of Lakes Athletic Event Attendees, 2023 (responses with more than one response)

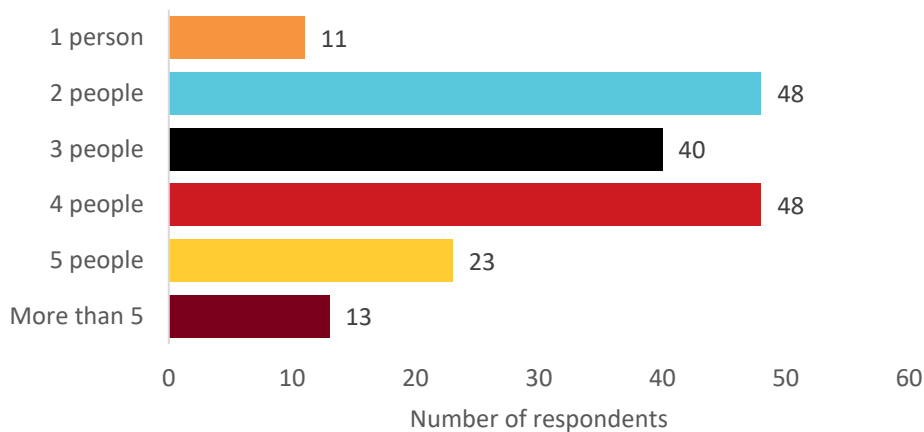


There were a variety of ideas listed only once. These included a maze, an AED device, basketball hoops, volleyball nets, a driving range, beer, gardens, hiking, tables, recycling, a tennis court, and skate ramps.

Party Size and Traveler Spending

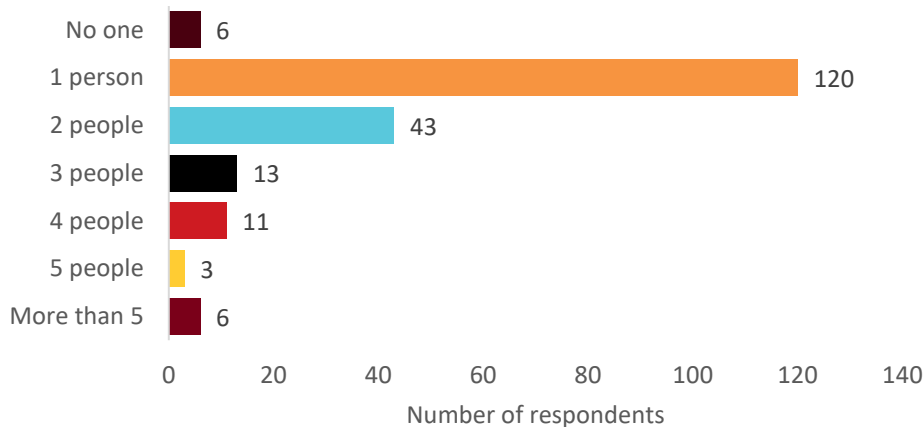
The number of people traveling to Monticello per travel party ranged, but most of the survey respondents came in parties of two to four people (Chart 15). The average across all survey respondents was 3.5 people.

Chart 15: Number of People Per Travel Party, Bertram Chain of Lakes Event Attendees, 2023



By and large, respondents reported one to two of the people in their travel party participated in events at Bertram Chain of Lakes Regional Park (Chart 16). Those indicating “no one” included respondents such as grandparents who traveled separately to watch their grandchildren. The average across all respondents was 1.7 people.

Chart 16: Number of People in Travel Party Participating in Event, Bertram Chain of Lakes Athletic Event Attendees, 2023



Economic Contribution of Athletic Events, Summer 2023

Economic impact includes direct, indirect, and induced effects. Direct effects are the initial change in the economy. For events, this is spending by attendees. It includes spending both at the event and at other businesses around the community. Indirect and induced effects are the economic activity generated at businesses throughout the region, even if they do not have visitors from the event. For example, soccer fans may not visit a local accountant, but that accountant might have a client who serves soccer fans at their business.

Direct Effects: Visitor Spending

For event economic impact studies, the analyst calculates the direct effect by multiplying the number of visitors by per person spending. The next section explains how Extension estimated the two components for this analysis.

Number of Visitors

For some situations, determining the number of visitors is simple. Ticketed events, for example, make it easy to track the number of people in attendance. Events with open gates (like youth soccer games), however, make attendance harder to measure.

To measure the number of visitors at Bertram Chain of Lakes athletic events, Extension started with a list of events held throughout the summer. Events included soccer, lacrosse, and ultimate disc golf (Table 1).

Table 1: Number of Attendees of Athletic Events at Bertram Chain of Lakes Regional Park, Summer 2023

	Number of Events	Players Per Team	Attendees Per Player	Local Attendees	Visiting Attendees	Total Attendees
Soccer						
10 and Under	15	9	2.5	338	338	676
12 and Under	14	11	2.5	385	385	770
14 and Under	6	13	2.5	195	195	390
16 and Under	3	13	2.5	98	98	196
Unknown	5	11	2.5	138	138	276
Youth jamboree		550 total	2.5	688	688	1,376
Lacrosse						
8 and Under	3	12	2.5	90	90	180
12 and Under	6	12	2.5	180	180	360
14 and Under	2	12	2.5	60	60	120
Ultimate Disc Golf						
Adult	3	40	2.5	0	300	300
Total				2,170	2,470	4,640

From there, Extension estimated how many players would travel with a team. For example, a U16 soccer team has 11 players on the field at a time. It's likely additional kids are "on the bench," so Extension assumed the team carried the players on the field plus two additional players for each team (home and away). The survey data shows 2.5 people travelled per player. Therefore, for a single U16 team, there would be 33 people in attendance. There were also two major events in

which Monticello provided total player figures—a soccer jamboree and three ultimate disc tournaments.

Based on this approach, Extension estimates 4,640 people attended activities at the Bertram Chain of Lakes Regional Park athletic fields in the summer of 2023.

Spending per Person

Spending per person came from the attendee surveys. On average, attendees of athletic events at Bertram who do not live within the zip code spent \$50.34 per day per person to attend their events (Table 2). In comparison, attendees from Monticello spent, on average, \$38.30.

Table 2: Average Spending Per Day Per Person, Monticello Bertram Chain of Lakes Athletic Events Attendees, 2023

Category	Visitors	Residents
Lodging	\$0.04	\$0
Transportation	\$11.30	\$5.10
Shopping	\$11.90	\$2.70
Groceries	\$10.10	\$3.10
Dining Out	\$8.40	\$1.60
Recreation/Attractions	\$1.50	\$0
Athletic-related	\$6.20	\$24.70
Misc.	\$0.90	\$1.10
Total	\$50.34	\$38.30

Given the number of attendees and the spending profiles, Bertram Chain of Lakes athletic event attendees spent an estimated \$218,323 during summer 2023 (Table 3). This is the direct effect of the attendees.

Table 3: Total Spending, Monticello Bertram Chain of Lakes Athletic Events Attendees, 2023

Category	Total Spending
Lodging	\$103
Transportation	\$40,470
Shopping	\$36,170
Groceries	\$32,660
Dining Out	\$24,530
Recreation/Attractions	\$3,590
Athletic-related	\$76,080
Misc.	\$4,720
Total	\$218,323

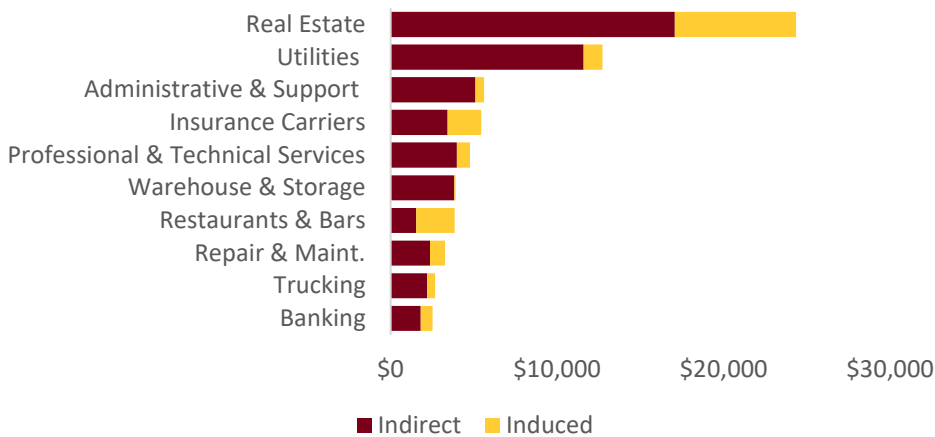
With indirect and induced effects included, Bertram Chain of Lakes athletic event attendees generated \$317,433 in economic activity during summer 2023. The attendees supported 10 jobs in the community (Table 4).

Table 4: Bertram Chain of Lakes Regional Park Athletic Event Attendees: Total Economic Contribution, 2023

Category	Output	Labor Income	Employment
Direct	\$218,323	\$72,340	6
Indirect	\$67,920	\$18,480	3
Induced	\$31,190	\$8,760	1
Total	\$317,433	\$99,580	10

Bertram Chain of Lakes athletic event attendees generated \$317,433 in economic activity. Of that, \$99,113 was created at businesses not necessarily visited by event attendees. The industries that benefited the most from the attendees (beyond direct visits) included real estate, utilities, and administrative and support services (Chart 17).

Chart 17: Top Industries Affected, Bertram Chain of Lakes Athletic Event Attendees, 2023



Real estate is a broad category, including items such as rents paid by businesses and mortgage payments by employees. Real estate is often one of the top industries impacted for two reasons. First, most businesses and employees spend money to occupy space. Second, most real estate needs are satisfied locally. When a Bertram Chain of Lakes athletic event attendee goes shopping at a local retail store, a significant share of that store’s local spending is to occupy the building. Utilities also experience a fair share of the impact from athletic events in Monticello. As with real estate, retail stores pay to keep their stores cool during the summer, and the spending is with local utility companies. Restaurants and bars would also have similar expenditures for space and

for cooling. Retail stores and restaurants are primary places that Bertram Chain of Lakes athletic event attendees visit during their trips to Monticello.

Opportunities to Increase Economic Impact

The City of Monticello continues to invest in Bertram Chain of Lakes Regional Park, including the athletic fields. As these investments are made, the economic impact should also increase. In reviewing the survey results, Extension recommends the following to boost economic impact.

- **Continue to host larger events, such as state tournaments.** During summer 2023, Monticello did not host any “marquee” events, such as a state tournament. State tournaments have previously been held at the park. Further development will also make the facilities more attractive for event planners.

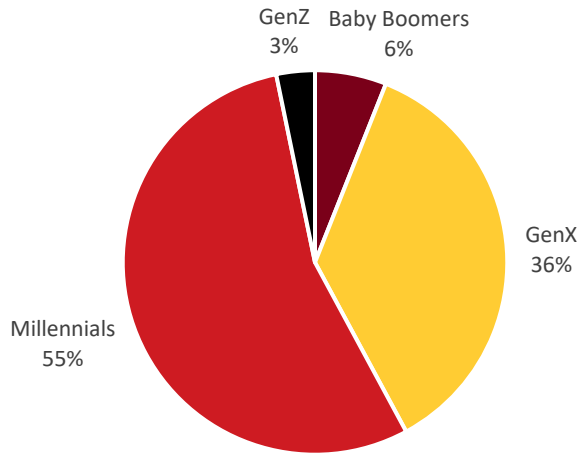
Hosting tournaments will drive economic activity on two levels. First, it will attract more visitors. The one-day soccer jamboree attracted 550 youth to the fields. Holding another event that attracts hundreds of people across two days would increase spending. In addition, previous Extension studies have shown that overnight visitors spend more than day visitors. Logically, overnight visitors have lodging expenses, but they also spend more on meals and entertainment, as they are in the community for longer periods of time. For example, a recent Extension study of youth ice event attendees showed day trippers spent \$64.50 per person, while overnight visitors spent more than double at \$133.30. In the Monticello example, if overnight visitors spent twice as much as day visitors, the per person spending would increase to \$101 per day. Adding one additional event with 550 participants would increase the economic impact of the athletic events to an estimated \$635,500.

- **Develop marketing materials to drive attendees to other Monticello attractions.** Compared with similar Extension studies, per person spending on dining out and recreation was lower among Bertram Chain of Lakes athletic event attendees. In addition, only about 20 respondents cited “dining options” and “things to do in Monticello” as the most enjoyable aspect of their trip to Monticello. This may have less to do with the dining and recreation opportunities in the city and more to do with an awareness level among attendees. Another contributing factor might be that many athletic event attendees drove shorter distances to attend and opted to return home. The city or its tourism partners may wish to develop marketing materials to target athletic event attendees. This may be as simple as a “fun things in Monticello” poster at the fields or a brochure to distribute during events.

Demographics of Survey Respondents

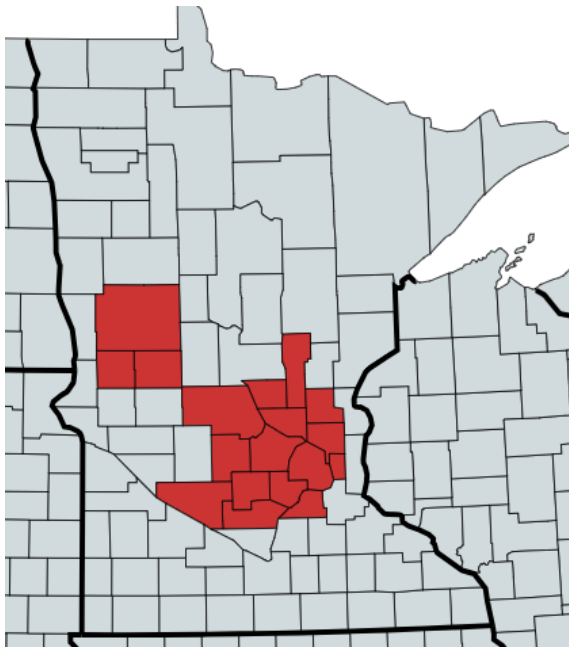
Survey respondents were primarily between the ages of 27 and 58, or of the GenX and millennial generations (Chart 18).

Chart 18: Age of Survey Respondents, Bertram Chain of Lakes Athletic Event Attendees, 2023



Survey respondents reported home addresses across Minnesota, but primarily within the Twin Cities metro area (Map 1 and Table 5).

Map 1: Home Zip Code Locations of Survey Respondents, Bertram Chain of Lakes Athletic Event Attendees, 2023



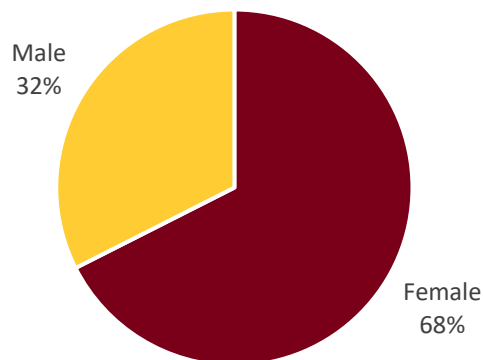
The highest share of attendees came from Wright, Sherburne, and Stearns counties.

Table 5: Respondents by County of Residence, Bertram Chain of Lakes Athletic Event Attendees, 2023

County	Number of Responses
Wright	77
Sherburne	47
Stearns	34
Hennepin	9
Ramsey	7
Benton	5
Carver	5
Anoka	4
Scott	4
McLeod	3
Grant	2
Mille Lacs	2
Douglas	1
Isanti	1
Meeker	1
Otter Tail	1
Renville	1
Sibley	1
Sanders (MT)	1

Survey respondents were more likely to be female (Chart 19).

Chart 19: Gender of Survey Respondents, Bertram Chain of Lakes Athletic Event Attendees, 2023



Respondents were primarily White, non-Hispanic (Charts 20 and 21).

Chart 20: Race of Survey Respondents, Bertram Chain of Lakes Event Attendees, 2023

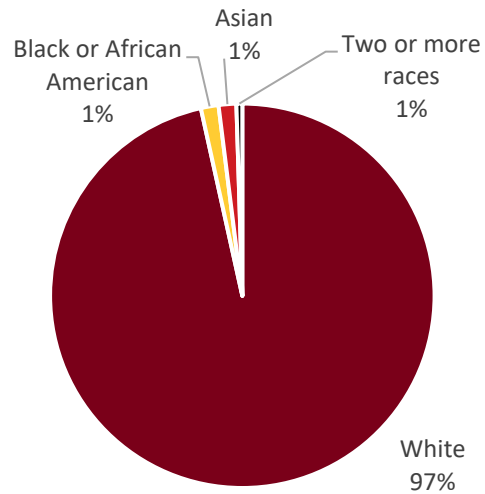
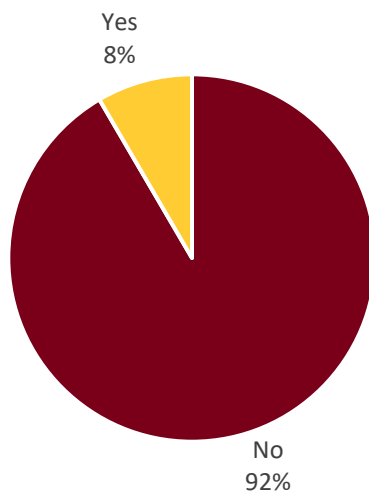


Chart 21: Hispanic or Latino Ethnicity, Bertram Chain of Lake Athletic Event Attendees, 2023



End Notes

¹ Tourism Economics. (2019). Sports tourism: state of the industry report 2019. Retrieved from https://www.sportseta.org/portals/sportscommissions/Documents/Reports/TourismEconomics%20-%20Sports%20ETA%20SOTI%20-%20FINAL_82620.pdf

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Appendix 1: Bertram Chain of Lakes Regional Park Athletic Event Attendee Questionnaire

1. Is today's athletic event your primary reason for traveling to Monticello? Yes No
2. Do you live in zip code 55362? Yes, please move to **Question 6** No, please continue with **Question 3**
3. Prior to today, have you ever visited Monticello? Yes No
4. How likely are you to make a return trip to Monticello in the next 12 months? (Check ONLY 1)
 Very likely Likely Unsure Unlikely Very unlikely
5. What would be the main reason(s) for your return trip to Monticello? (Check all that apply)
 Dining Shopping Sightseeing or Recreation Attending another athletic event
 Another visit to Bertram Chain of Lakes Park Other (Please specify: _____)
6. Please estimate your travel group's spending in Monticello during the past 24 hours (*For Monticello residents, include spending only related to the use of the athletic fields):
Lodging \$ _____ Transportation (includes gas) \$ _____ Shopping \$ _____
Groceries \$ _____ Restaurants/Bars \$ _____
Recreation/attractions \$ _____
Athletic-related activities \$ _____ On-site concessions \$ _____ Misc. \$ _____
(explain: _____)
7. How many people (including yourself) are included in your spending estimate? _____
8. How many of those people participated in the athletic event you traveled to Monticello for?

9. Have you visited or will you visit other areas of Bertram Chain of Lakes Park beyond the athletic fields on this trip? Yes No
10. Are you aware of the other activities available at Bertram Chain of Lakes Park, including (Check all the apply)?
 Swimming Camping Kayaking Mountain biking
 Trails Other (Please specify: _____)
11. Did you or will you spend a night away from home on this trip?
 Yes, please continue to **Question 12** No, please move to **Question 15**
12. How many nights, in total, did you or do you plan to spend away from home during this trip?
____ nights
13. If you stayed or are staying in Monticello, which type of accommodation did you use?
 Hotel/motel Resort/commercial cabin Vacation rental by owner Bed & Breakfast
 Bertram Chain of Lakes campground Other RV/camping location Home of a friend/relative

Other, please specify _____

14. If you stayed or are staying in another community, what was your primary reason for selecting that location? (Check only 1)

- I could not find an available hotel room(s) in Monticello
- I found a lower cost option in another community
- I found a higher quality option in another community
- I selected based on my loyalty to a certain hotel brand (ex. Hilton Honors)
- I found accommodations with -or- closer to family and/or friends
- My preferred type of accommodation (ex. VRBO) is/was not available in Monticello, please list your preferred accommodation here _____
- Other, please specify _____

Please skip to Question 16

15. What factors did you consider in your decision to not spend the night in during your trip? (Check all that apply).

- I attended a one-day activity that did not require a hotel stay
- Due to distance, I opted to drive to/from home
- I could not find an available hotel room(s) in Monticello
- Available rooms were outside of my budget
- I preferred a higher quality hotel
- The hotel brand (ex. Hilton) I preferred was not available
- I found accommodations with -or- closer to family and/or friends
- Other, please specify _____

16. What are (were) the most enjoyable aspects of your trip to Monticello? (Check all that apply)

- Quality of the athletic facilities
- Being outdoors
- Dining options
- Hotel accommodations
- Things to do in the community
- Activities/amenities in Bertram Chain of Lakes Park
- Customer service/friendliness of the community
- Location in relationship to the Twin Cities
- Other, please specify _____

17. If you could select one item to improve at the athletic park, what would it be?

- Field quality
- Parking
- Amenities (restrooms/water/concessions)
- Pathway connections
- Visitor information for planning
- Assistance
- Other, please specify - _____

18. Overall, how satisfied are you with the Bertram Chain of Lakes athletic facilities in Monticello? (Check ONLY 1)

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Unsure
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

19. If Monticello were to develop additional facilities at Betram Chain of Lakes, what features would you like to see?

Finally, a few questions about you.

What is your zip code? _____ **In what year were you born?** _____ **What is your gender?** Female
 Male
 Nonbinary

What is your annual household income (before taxes)?

Less Than \$25,000 \$25,000-49,999 \$50,000-\$99,999 \$100,000-149,999 \$150,000 or more

Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin (check one)? Yes No

What is your race? (Check all that apply)

American Indian or Alaska Native Asian Black or African-American White
 Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander Multiracial Other (Please specify _____)

Thank you for your participation!!

Date

Time