

Community-Based Engagement in 2022: Learning from the Galveston Bay Public Perception Assessment

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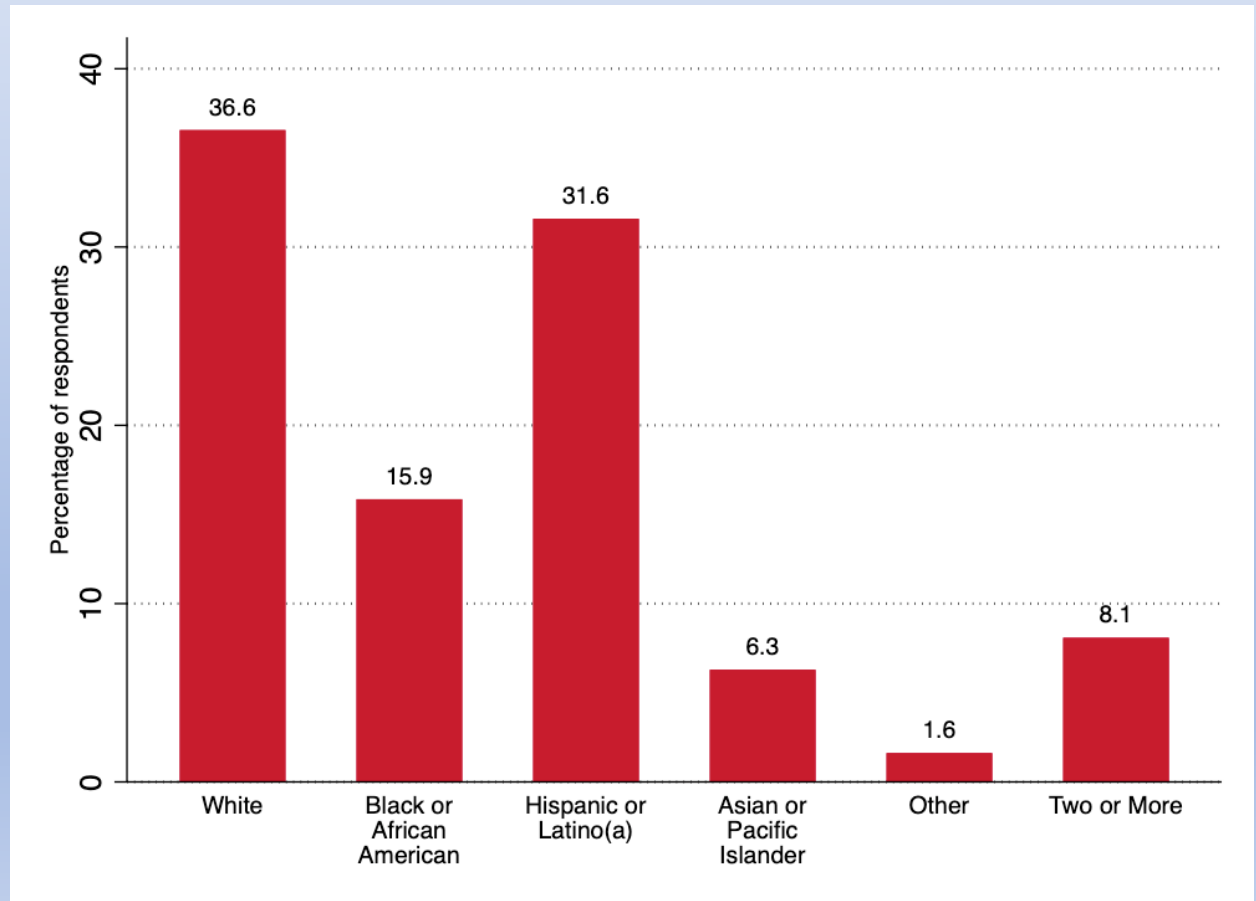
Public Perception Assessment and Community-Based Marketing for Galveston Bay



Overview of Evaluation and Respondents

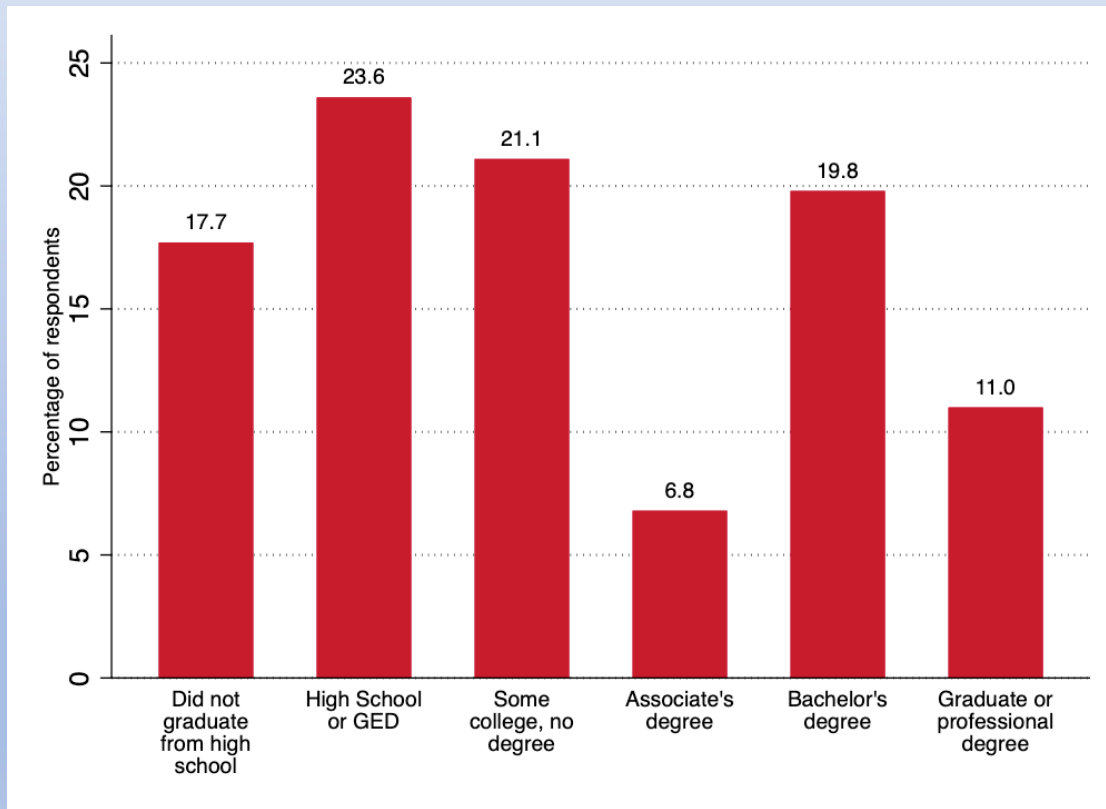
- Evaluation was fielded online between September 1 and December 9, 2020
- A total of 1,015 respondents from Brazoria, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Chambers, and Montgomery Counties
 - Largest number of respondents (77%) came from Harris County
- Half of the 1,015 respondents identified as female

Distribution of Respondents by Race and Ethnicity

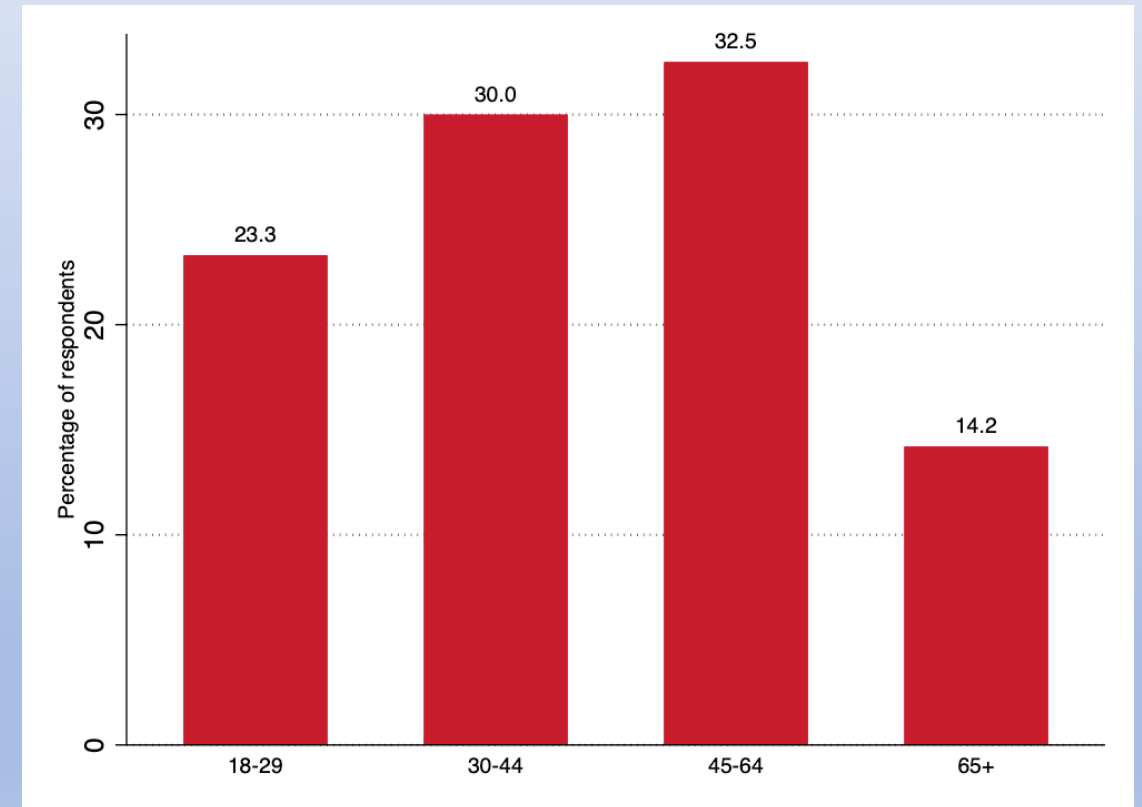


Overview of Evaluation and Respondents

Distribution of Respondents by Education



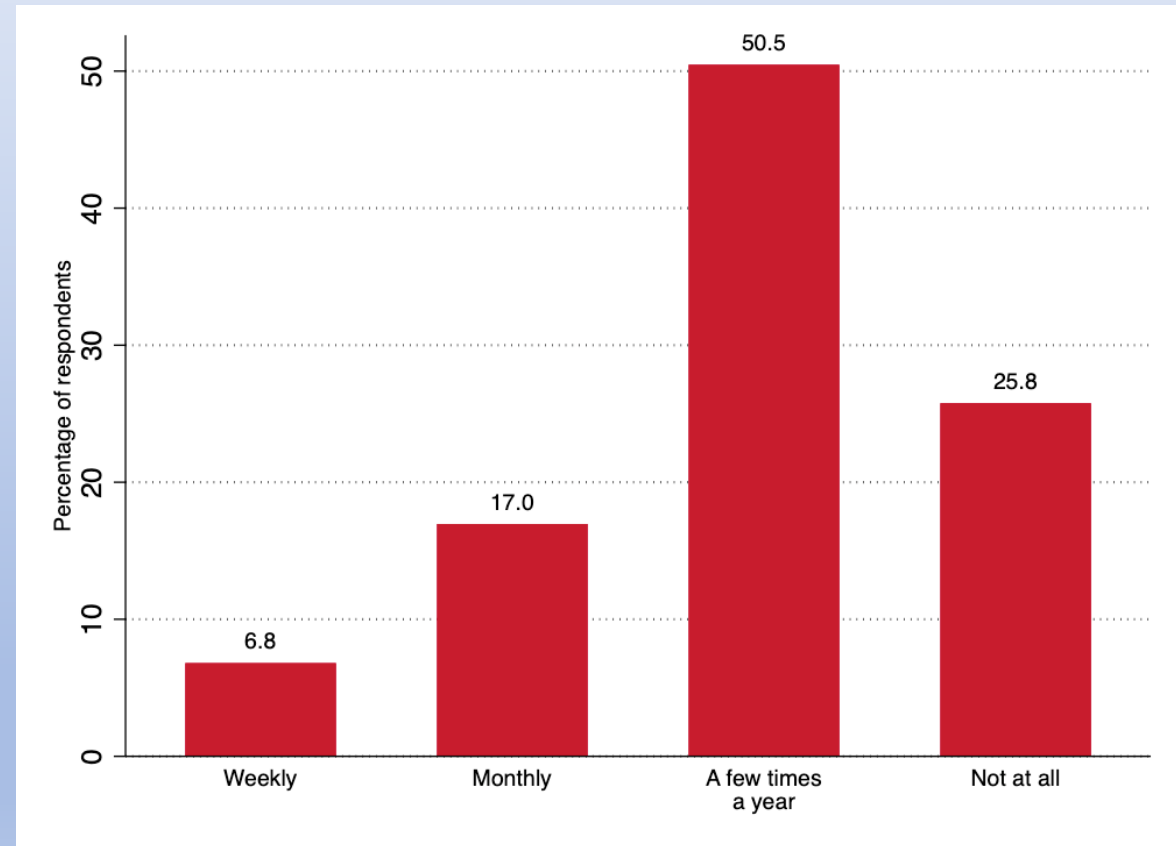
Distribution of Respondents by Age Groups



Utilization of the Bay and Surrounding Area

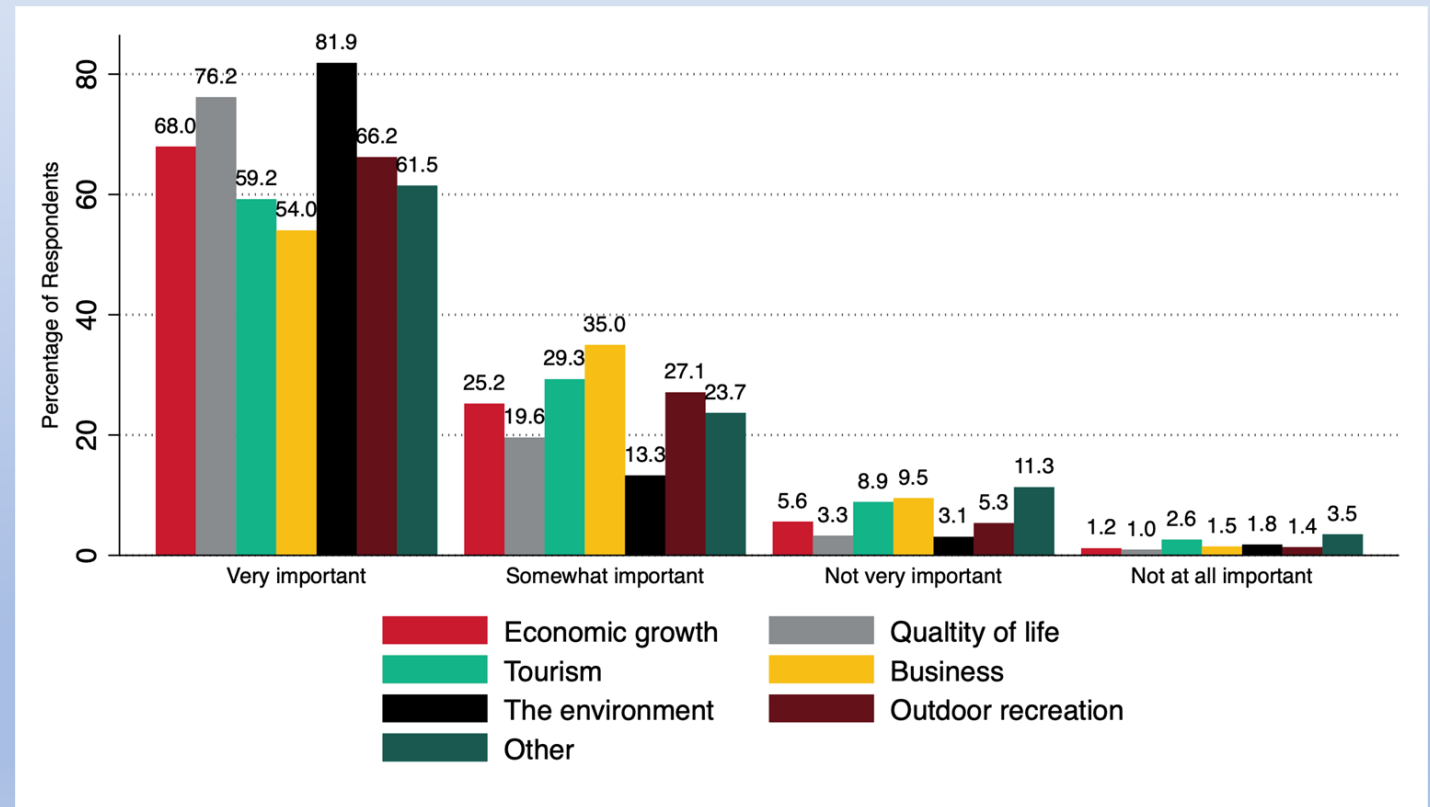
- 50% reported visiting Galveston Bay a few times a year in 2019
- Visiting the beach and dining were most common activities respondents engaged in
 - 50% and 46% of respondents, respectively, said they visited the beach or dined a few times
- 36% reported swimming, 34% visited natural areas, and 30% fishing and bird watching a few times in past 12 months

How frequently respondents used Galveston Bay in 2019



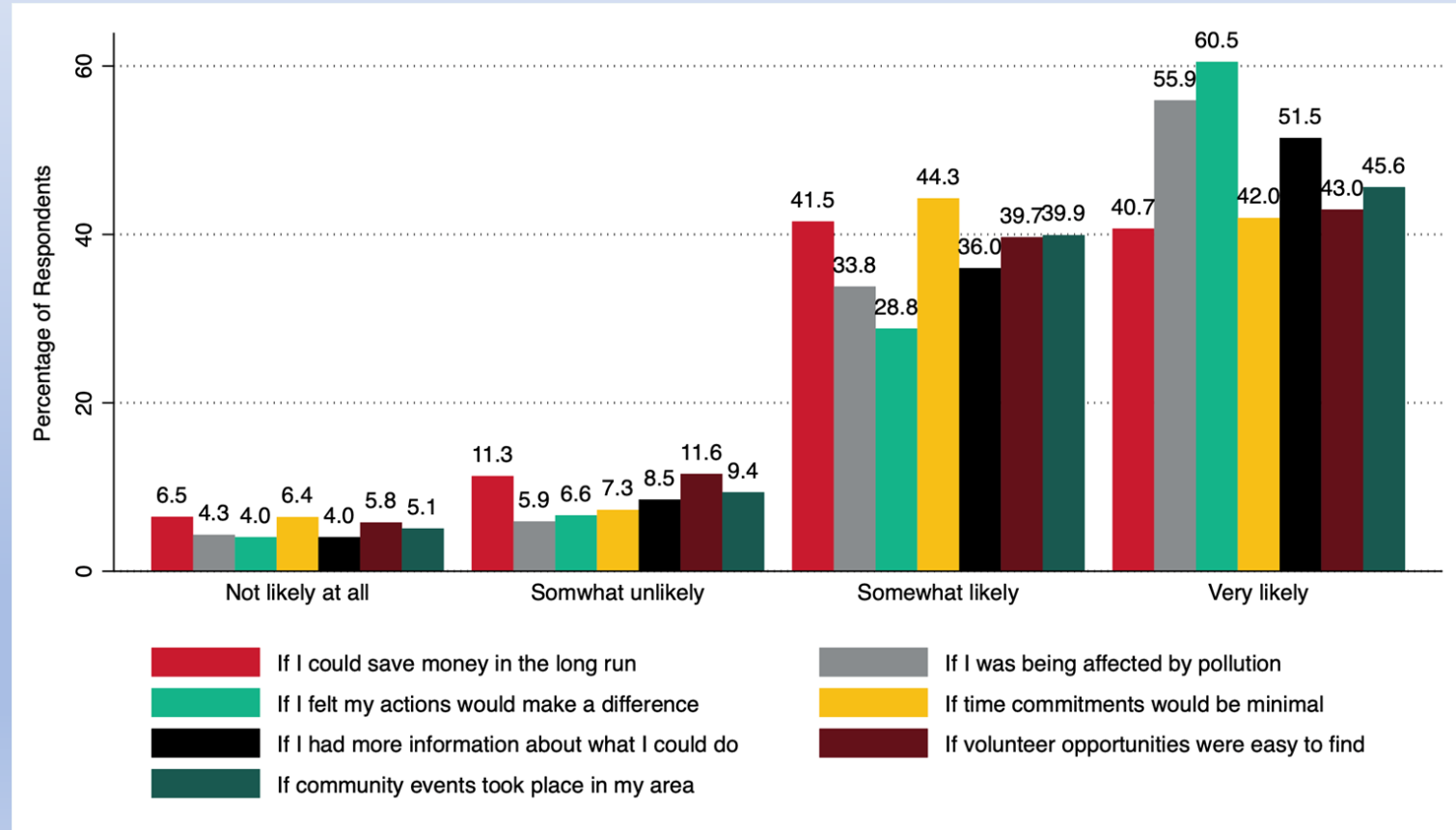
Importance of clean water to life, the environment, and economy

- Majority of respondents believed clean water was very important for each of six areas
 - The environment and quality of life top the list followed by economic growth
- Older age groups (30+) were more likely to say very or somewhat important than those between 18-29.
 - Overall, however, vast majority believe clean water is very important



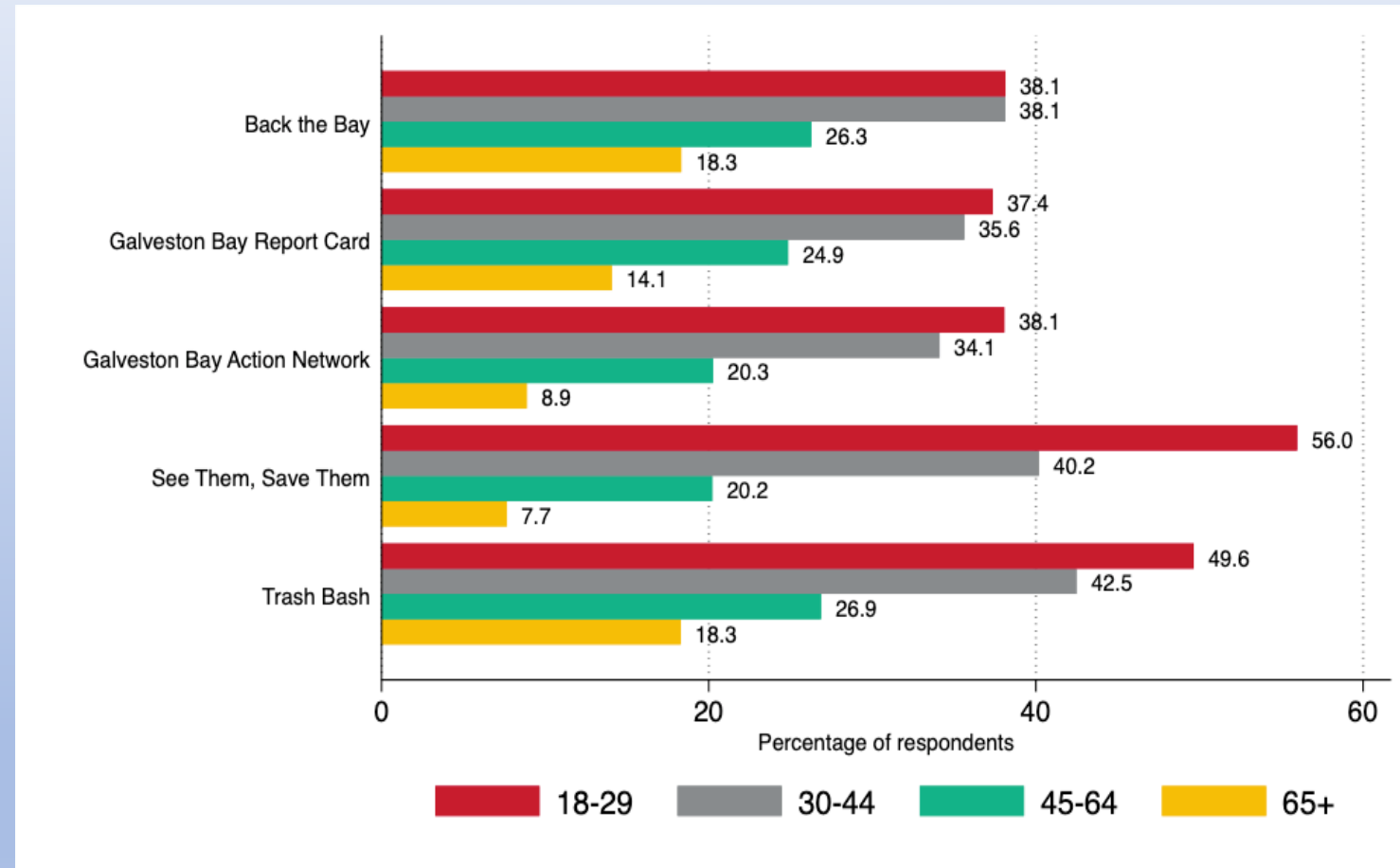
Likelihood of Engaging in Activities that Improve Health of Bays and Bayous

- Making a difference and being affected by pollution were important drivers of willingness
 - 61% said very likely if they felt their actions would make a difference
 - 56% were very likely to take action if they were being affected by pollution
- 52% said that they would be very likely if they had more information about what they could do
- 46% said that they would be very likely if there were community events taking place in their area
- Overall, few respondents said they were not at all likely to engage in such activities



Respondents' Familiarity with Galveston Bay Report Card and Other Initiatives

- Familiarity with programs was higher among younger age groups (18-44)
 - Recognition of See Them, Save Them and Trash Bash particularly high among 18-29.
 - Recognition was low (less than 20%) among respondents 65+
- Those who live about 50 miles or less also had greater familiarity
 - 39% of those living <50 miles were familiar compared to 30% of those living farther away



Community Partner Outreach

After the evaluation results were analyzed, the working group decided to connect with community partners and gain a more individualized insight and commitment for the CBSM pilot.

Things to note:

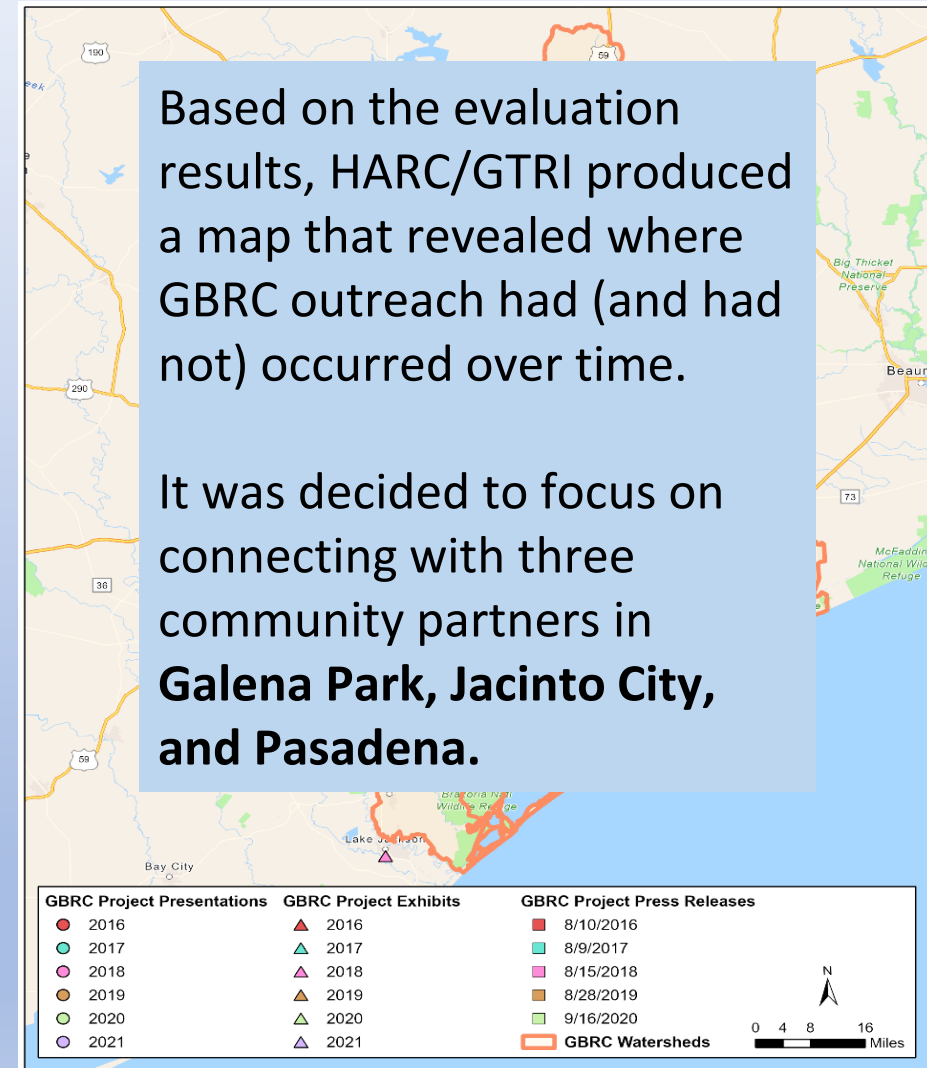
September 2021-January 2022: Research, conversations, and deliberation

Community engagement events and outreach were infrequent and inconsistent because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

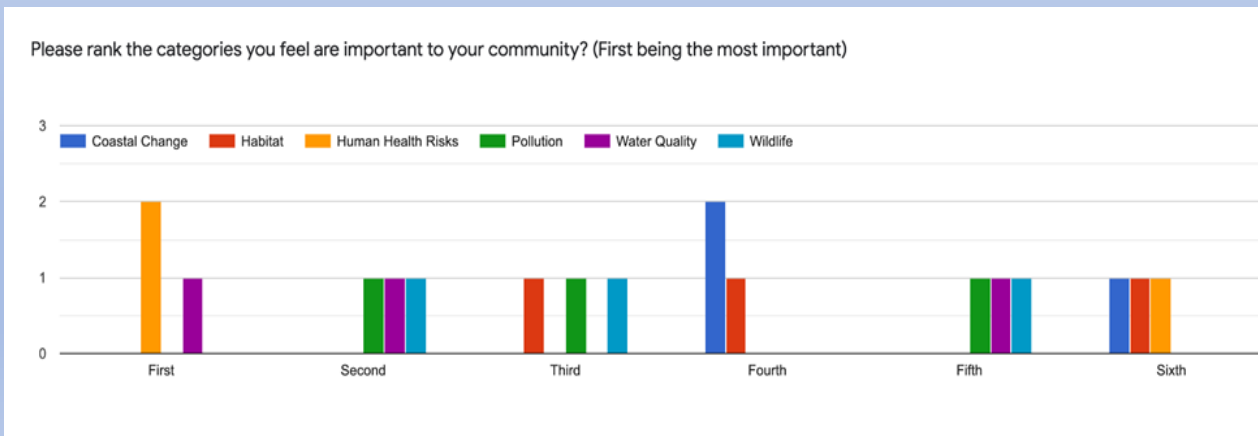
It was also acknowledged by the team and the advisory working group that the capacity of many communities was limited due to the multiple stressors of COVID-19 and other factors.

In the true spirit of collaboration, the team was respectful of the time and capacity of the communities and their leadership.

January 2022-May 2022: Connections, communication, and cultivation.



Building Relationships, Questionnaires, and Interviews (Sasha Francis, GBF)



1. What online resources or pages are utilized by your community to stay informed?
2. What resources or tools are needed for your community to better connect with the environment or take part in conservation initiatives?
3. What is most likely to help with transportation barriers? (ex: buses funded, events in community, along transit lines, etc.)
 - If events in the community are desired, can you suggest any gathering locations?



The Development of a Community Plan

- The combination of questionnaires and interviews led to the development of a community plan that could be adapted to support diverse communities moving forward.

Public Perception Assessment and
Community-Based Social Marketing (CBSM)
Campaigns to Enhance Conservation and
Educational Outreach Programs

Campaign Plan



Key Findings and Strategies

- **Investing Time** It was exceptionally challenging to connect with new partners during the COVID-19 pandemic because it takes substantial time. Time is needed to research potential community partner backgrounds and to support possible leads by asking: who is already doing the work and what are the shared interests?
- **Building Relationships** Once the connection is made, it is important to provide several opportunities to connect in order to support the building of a new community partner relationship. Starting out with e-mails and phone calls proved to be the most efficient launch point. As conversations began, listening was vital to accomplish this project's objective under all the circumstances. Moreover, COVID-19 impacts brought even more awareness that the task needed to be easy and the opportunities accessible. Ultimately, community partners responded well to being supported during already established or planned events first, and then became interested in collaborating on innovative activities like campaigns, presentations, and action events.
- **Partnership Cultivation** Strengthening partnerships over time is the balance of following up, but also offering space. Due to factors like employee turnover, department revamping, lack of resources, and a strain on time, it is important to stay in contact and support the community partner with patience and grace. These questions are especially important to consider when cultivating partnerships:
 - What do they need?
 - Can I create relevant, condensed, and digestible content to have them share with their community?
 - Are there accessible environmental events or activities close by that I can share?

Key Findings and Strategies Cont'd

- **Individualized Consideration** Unique communities need unique plans. Based on these findings, there is a general foundation that can be used to build a plan for a new community partnership. However, there are different barriers and benefits for each community that must be assessed and identified. Therefore, it is imperative to go through the previously listed practices to assess what needs to be considered for each community partnership.
- **Removal of Barriers** Questionnaires, discussions, and collaborations offer the opportunities to discover what the community partner's needs are and what needs can be removed to navigate towards sustainable behavior change. By removing those barriers, outreach opportunities can cause a greater impact and partners can communicate the benefits that support the community and the environment. Some barriers are easier to remove than others, however, challenging barriers offer the opportunity to brainstorm and support next steps together.
- **Communication of Benefits** Benefits are the key to supporting commitments and change. When the barriers are removed and benefits are understood, a momentum of positive change can begin. More importantly, the full process provides the tools and pathway to communicate effectively to the community. The understanding offers more than education or awareness, it offers the platform for civic action, environmental literacy, and advocacy. These questions are important to consider when communicating benefits:
 - What are the unique community values?
 - How do they get their information?
 - How to engage similar partners to share information?

Future Implications

- *Community Indicator Development (Slide 2, Draft)*
- *Key Findings and Strategies Documents*
- *Publishing with UH*
- *Future Research*

It is our genuine hope that this robust study will support future inquiries to bolster preserving and protecting Galveston Bay.



Dedication

We would like to dedicate study and presentation to Cynthia Clevenger. Without her support, guidance, passion, and belief, this project would not be.

Thank you for your **light** and **love** for the **Bay** and **communities**! We will work hard to continue in your steps.

Forever in our **hearts**.

