The Winter Texan Report

2015-2016 SURVEY

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

ROBERT C. VACKAR
College of Business and Entrepreneurship
BUSINESS AND TOURISM RESEARCH CENTER

The Winter Texan Report

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The University of Texas
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Executive Summary

Each year, retirees from all over the U.S. and Canada venture to the Rio Grande Valley area to spend the winter. These retirees, known as Winter Texans, provide a substantial boost to the region's economy. In an effort to better understand their activities, interests and impact on the region, the Business and Tourism Research Center in the Robert C. Vackar College of Business and Entrepreneurship Business and Tourism at The University of Texas-Pan American and now The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley has conducted research on this market for 30 years.

This year's study included 925 Winter Texans respondents and 85 RV and mobile home park manager/owner respondents. Most of the Winter Texan participants submitted their responses through the online version of the questionnaire (54.7%) while the remainder (45.3%) completed a very similar hard copy survey inserted in the Winter Texan Times and the WelcomehomeRGV newspaper. The results of both the Winter Texan and the Park surveys are summarized here in five sections: demographic characteristics and health status, stay characteristics, expenditures in Mexico, expenditures in the Valley, and the Park Study.

Demographic Characteristics

The average Winter Texan participating in this year's study:

- is male (51.7%),
- is 72.3 years of age,
- is married (83.5%),
- is white (98.3%),
- has been retired for more than a year (88.9%),
- has some college (36.6%) or a bachelor's, graduate or professional degree (37%),
- is in a 2-person household (86.5%),
- has an annual household income of $65,000 with 56.7% of Winter Texans having an income between $30,000 to $70,000, and
- comes from Canada (17.6%), Minnesota (14.3%), Iowa (11.5%), Missouri (7.8%), Illinois (7.6%), (7.2%), or Michigan (7.2%).

Further, Winter Texans 65 years of age and older participating in this study are, on average, more educated and have a higher household income level than their counterparts in the U.S. population in general. There are fewer Winter Texans in the 65 to 69 age range but more in the 70 to 74 age range than in the U.S. population in general.

Stay Characteristics

Knowing where Winter Texans live while in the Valley, how long they stay, why they come and what they do while in the Valley is crucial to providing for their needs so they will continue to come and significantly impact the region's economy. During their stay in the Rio Grande Valley, the typical Winter Texan in this study:

- has come to the Valley for 11.7 years,
- stayed in the Valley for 133 days, and
- owns a Valley residence (89.9%)
  - 53.6% own a mobile home/park model
  - 29.2% own an RV
  - 7.1% own a house or condo

As in past years, most Winter Texans come to the Valley because of:

- the climate (91.6%),
- friendly people (68.6%),
- the social activities (55.9%), and
- a winter vacation (52.2%)

The most popular Valley activities for this year's study participants include:

- visiting flea markets
- attending festivals
- visiting historical sites
- attending music or jam sessions
- going to the beach

Overwhelmingly, the Winter Texan study participants plan to return to the Valley next year (95.3%), suggesting their satisfaction with the area. They reported that poor health (64%) or family reasons (36.0%) would be the most likely reasons to prevent them from returning.

Economic Impact

Included in this year's report is a study of RV and mobile home parks where most Winter Texans typically stay. Using a listing of parks and information from questionnaires completed by park managers or owners, an estimated 96,000 Winter Texans or 51,000 households were in the Valley during the 2015-2016 winter season.

On average, Winter Texans visited Mexico (86.6%) for an average of 5.2 trips during their stay in the Valley. They spent an average of $80 to $187 per trip, depending on the method used for estimation. With about 51,000 Winter Texan households in the Valley, the average, direct economic impact of Winter Texans on Mexico border towns is about $30.6 million.

On the U.S. side, Winter Texan households spent an average of approximately $10,775 on routine, monthly purchases and about $4,088 on major, one-time purchases. This represents an average expenditure in the Valley of about $14,863 per household. By multiplying this average household expenditure times the estimated 51,000 Winter Texan households in the Valley, this study estimates that Winter Texans spent about $760 million, in nominal dollars, while in the Valley in 2015-2016.

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The Winter Texan 2016 Study

For more than 40 years, retirees from the northern parts of the United States and Canada have traveled to the Rio Grande Valley (RGV) to spend their winters in the temperate climate of South Texas. The RGV or "Valley" region spans the area from South Padre Island to Rio Grande City. This 110 mile region borders on Mexico and the Gulf of Mexico and offers visitors of all ages a wide variety of activities throughout the year.

The combination of warm winter weather, numerous outdoor activities, numerous RV and mobile home parks, friendly people, and a low cost-of-living are powerful incentives in attracting wintering visitors. Since 1987, the now named Business and Tourism Research Center in the Robert C. Vackar College of Business and Entrepreneurship, Business and Tourism at The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) has conducted research about these winter visitors to the Valley to examine their opinions, activities, expenditure patterns, and especially, their economic impact on the region. Prior studies indicate that the retired winter visitors to the Valley, dubbed "Winter Texans," typically stay anywhere from 3 weeks to 6 months and have had a direct impact on the regional economy of $92 million in 1987 to more than $803 million in 2010.

This report presents the results of two different studies essential to estimating the number of Winter Texans in the RGV region. The first study was conducted among Winter Texans whereby a questionnaire was distributed to Winter Texans via an insert in two Winter Texan-targeted newspapers and was made available online. The results from this study are presented in this report in four sections. The first section details the demographic characteristics of the Winter Texan study respondents and their health status. The second section presents respondents' stay characteristics (length of stay, type of housing, etc.), activities engaged in while in the RGV and the likelihood of returning to the RGV next year. The last two sections itemize Winter Texan expenditures by spending category first in Mexico border towns and then in the RGV. Most of the study results are shown along with results from past Winter Texan reports since 2006 to better understand changes in the Winter Texan market over the time period.

The second study, shown in Section 5, was conducted among RV/mobile home parks owners and managers. Because most Winter Texans live in RV/mobile home parks, the RGV park managers/owners are sent a questionnaire designed to determine the number of Winter Texans living in the parks during the Winter Texan season. An estimate of the number of Winter Texans in the RGV may then be drawn by generalizing responding park Winter Texan numbers to the population of Winter Texan parks. Results from both studies are then used to estimate the number of Winter Texans in the RGV during 2015-2016 and their economic impact on the region's economy.

The next section explains the methodology used in the Winter Texan study.

WINTER TEXAN STUDY: METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A questionnaire designed to determine the demographic and stay characteristics of Winter Texans and their spending while in the RGV was developed a number of years ago. Much of this original questionnaire was used in this year's study for consistency purposes. The main sections of the questionnaire, as shown in Appendix A, contain questions about home state, Valley stay characteristics (length of stay, type of housing, etc.), and participation in various activities while in the Valley.

The questionnaire also asks respondents to report their monthly and one-time expenditures while in the Valley as well as their travel to and expenditures in Mexico border towns.

As in the prior four studies, this year's questionnaire was inserted into 25,000 copies of the Winter Texan Times (January 21sth issue) and in the WelcomehomeRGV newspaper (February 3rd issue).

These seasonal publications specifically target Winter Texans, are distributed for free to RV and mobile home parks, restaurants and other venues frequented by Winter Texans throughout the RGV. A link to the questionnaire along with an invitation to participate in the survey was also placed on the websites of The Winter Texan Times and Welcome Home RGV. Finally, Winter Texans were encouraged to participate in the online survey through RGV newspaper articles and a radio show interview.

Participants were asked to either complete the questionnaire online at *www.utrgv.edu/wintertexan* or to send the completed hard copy to the Business and Tourism Research Center by mail before February 26, 2016. No envelopes or prepaid stamps were provided. Participating respondents were promised the chance to enter a drawing for a Kindle Fire.

Study Limitations

This study is subject to limitations that should be taken into account when interpreting the results, as are all studies. For example, participants in the research were self-selected and may not represent the Winter Texan population as a whole. Further, the respondents may have answered survey questions incorrectly by intent, by failure to remember correctly or simply by data entry error. When obvious, these errors were deleted from consideration. This year's questionnaire was also very long and many respondents may have opted out or completed the questionnaire in stages which may have affected their responses. Finally, respondents may not have understood the questions correctly and thus responded erroneously.

These types of errors are present in almost all survey research and should be considered when interpreting the results. For this study, the results should be interpreted within a large margin of error—about plus or minus 10 percent—to account for survey and sampling error.

Note: Due to rounding, percentages in the tables and figures provided in the narrative of the study results may not sum to exactly 100%. Note also, that all dollar figures provided are in current, nominal U.S. dollars and have not been manipulated to be adjusted to real dollars.

STUDY RESULTS

Survey Returns and Return Method

A total of 925 useable questionnaires were received from respondents who were self-identified as Winter Texans. About 619 respondents began the study online and 428 surveys were returned by mail but 44 surveys were omitted because the respondents indicated not being Winter Texans and 78 were omitted because they were mostly incomplete.

Of the Winter Texan responses used in the analysis, 506 were submitted online (54.7%) and 419 were submitted by mail (45.3%). The results, shown in Figure 1, indicate that Winter Texans are increasingly online, reflecting the national trends in increased computer and Internet use among older adults.

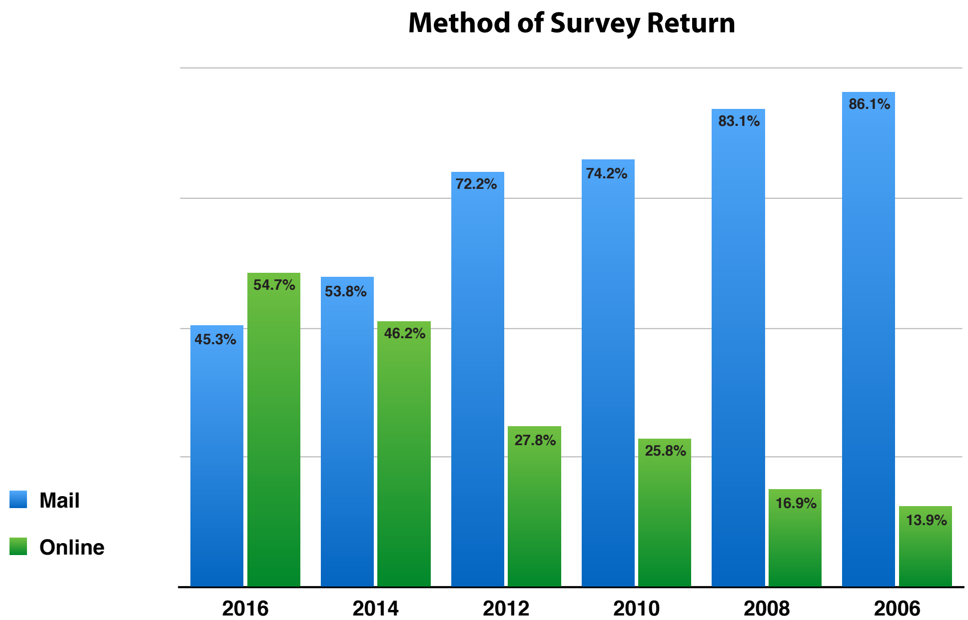


Figure 1. Method of survey return

Results: Demographic Characteristics

On average, Winter Texans participating in the 2016 study are 72.3 years of age, married (83.5 percent), Caucasian (98.3 percent), and have been retired for more than one year (88.9 percent). Most respondents are male (51.7%) and 56.7% have an annual household income between $30,000 and $70,000, with an average income of $65,000.

The following section details the demographic characteristics of Winter Texans in this year's survey and compares the results with the demographic characteristics of Winter Texans in the past five studies to better understand the changing demographic profile of Winter Texans. This section also compares this year's demographic results with those of the 65 year and older age group according to the United States Census data.

The census data is extracted from the 2010 American Community Survey data available online at www.census.gov. This age group is used for comparison purposes because most Winter Texans (86%) are in that age group. This comparison allows a better understanding of the demographic profile of Valley Winter Texans as compared to that of the U. S. population in general.

The demographic characteristics examined in this study include age, gender, ethnicity, marital status, education level, household income, and employment status. Each of these characteristics and the relevant comparisons are presented next.

Age

The average age of Winter Texans participating in the 2016 study is 72.3 years of age, with respondents' ages ranging from 21 to 102. Figure 2 shows the average age of Winter Texans participating in the current and past five surveys and shows that the average age has increased by about 5.2%.since 2006.

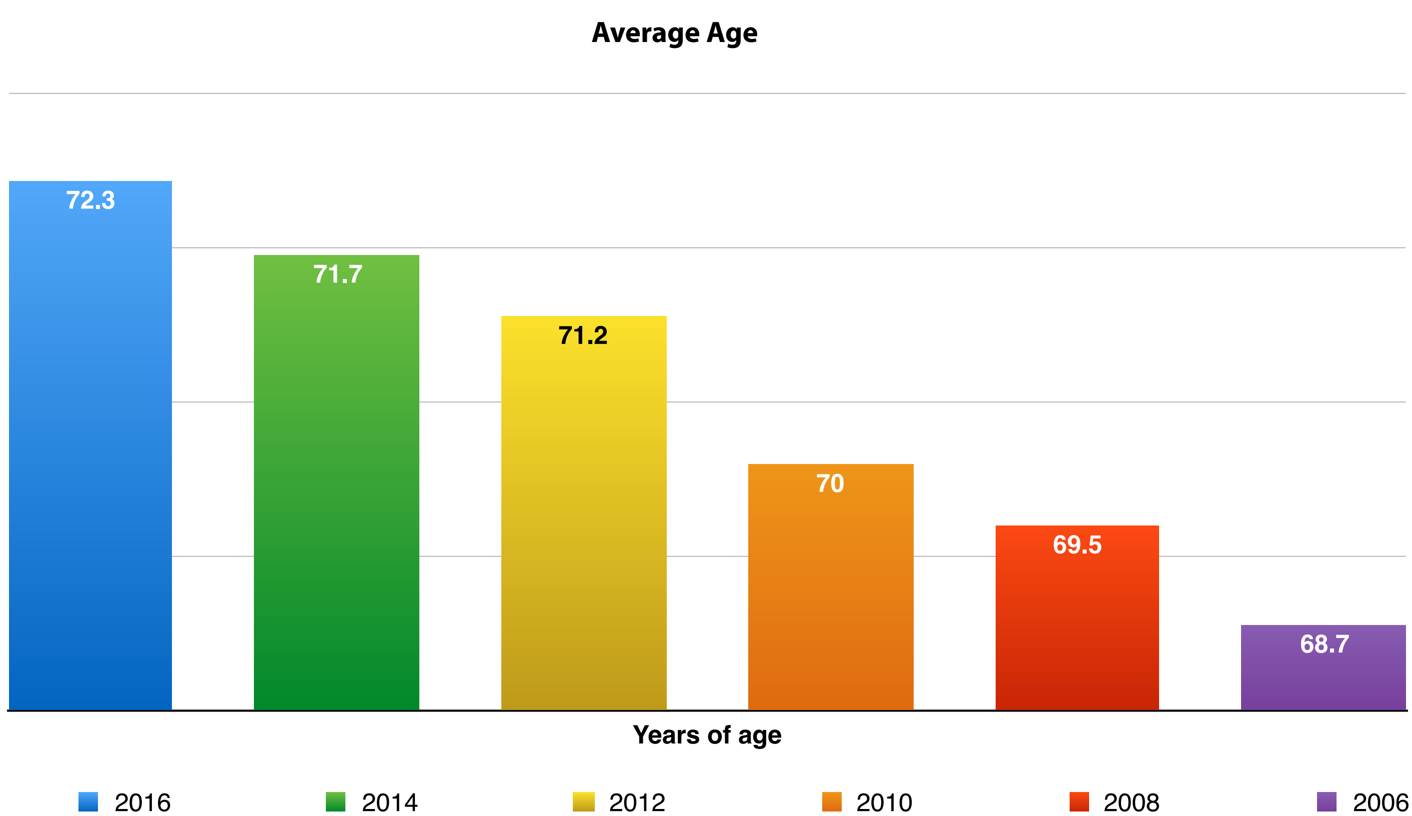


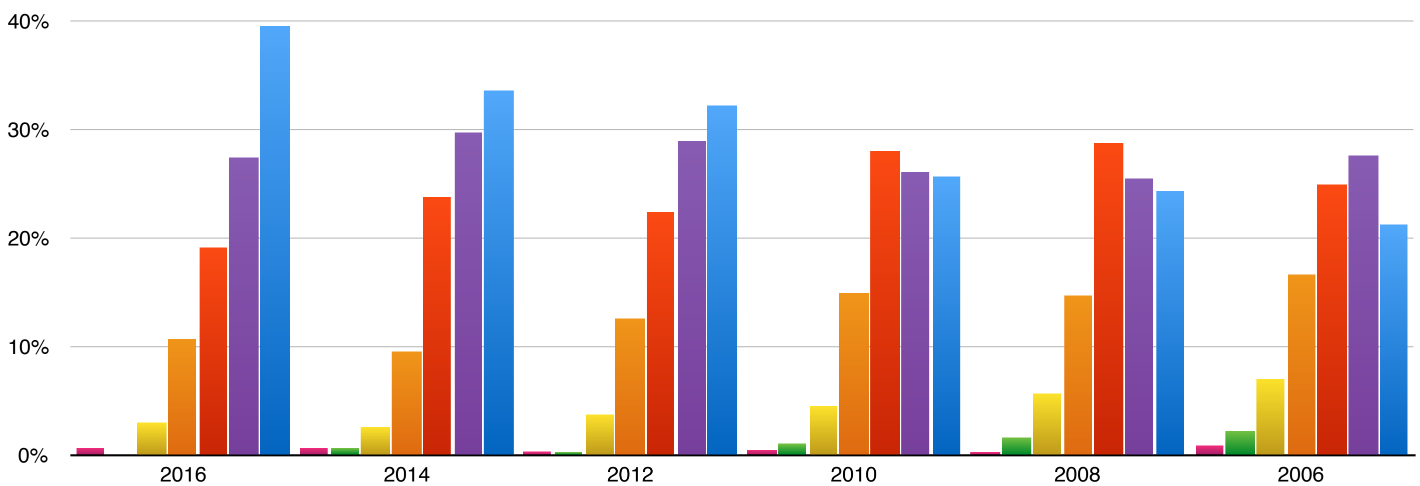
Figure 2. Average age

The age distribution of Winter Texans participating in this year's study is reported in Figure 3. Not surprisingly, most Winter Texans are 65 years of age or older (85.9%). Except for the 2014 survey, more Winter Texans are 65 years of age or older and fewer are under 65 years of age than in previous surveys. For example, in 2006, 26.3% of Winter Texans were younger than 65 years of age, but in 2016, 14% were younger than 65. This suggests that the Winter Texan population in the Valley, as a whole, is aging. Several reasons may account for this finding.

First, fewer new 'young' (under 65 years of age) Winter Texans may be coming to the Valley or they may be deferring retirement for economic or other reasons. Second, some 'young' Winter Texans from prior years may be staying home or trying new places instead of returning to the Valley.

Third, more new, older Winter Texans may be coming to the Valley. Fourth, the regular, returning Winter Texans may be staying healthy longer and continuing to return to the Valley. Thus, the percentage of older Winter Texans to younger ones would increase. Traditionally, health is the primary reason that Winter Texans give if they were not to return to the Valley, so that if they stay healthy, they return. Finally, the younger Winter Texans may not be participating in this study while the older ones are participating.

Age Distribution of Respondents by Year



	2016	2014	2012	2010	2008	2006	2016
Less than 50	0.5%	0.5%	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%	0.7%	0.5%
50 to 54 years	0.1%	0.6%	0.2%	1.0%	1.5%	2.2%	0.1%
55 to 59 years	2.8%	2.6%	3.7%	4.5%	5.5%	6.9%	2.8%
60 to 64 years	10.6%	9.5%	12.5%	14.8%	14.6%	16.5%	10.6%
65 to 69 years	19.1%	23.7%	22.3%	27.9%	28.6%	24.9%	19.1%
70 to 74 years	27.3%	29.7%	28.9%	25.9%	25.4%	27.5%	27.3%
75 years and over	39.5%	33.5%	32.2%	25.6%	24.3%	21.2%	39.5%

Figure 3. Age distribution

Figure 4 is a comparison of the age distribution of Winter Texans who are 65 years and older to that of the corresponding age group in the U.S. population. The U.S. 65 and over population data used in this study for comparison purposes were obtained from the American Community Survey available online at www.census.gov. For the purposes of this analysis, only Winter Texans in the 65 and older age group are considered.

The 2016 study indicates that proportionately there are more 70 to 74 year-old Winter Texans in the RGV than in the U. S. population in general, but fewer Winter Texans in the 65 to 69 year-old age category than in the U. S. population. Winter Texans in the 75 year-old and older category are proportionately about the same as in the U. S. population, in general.

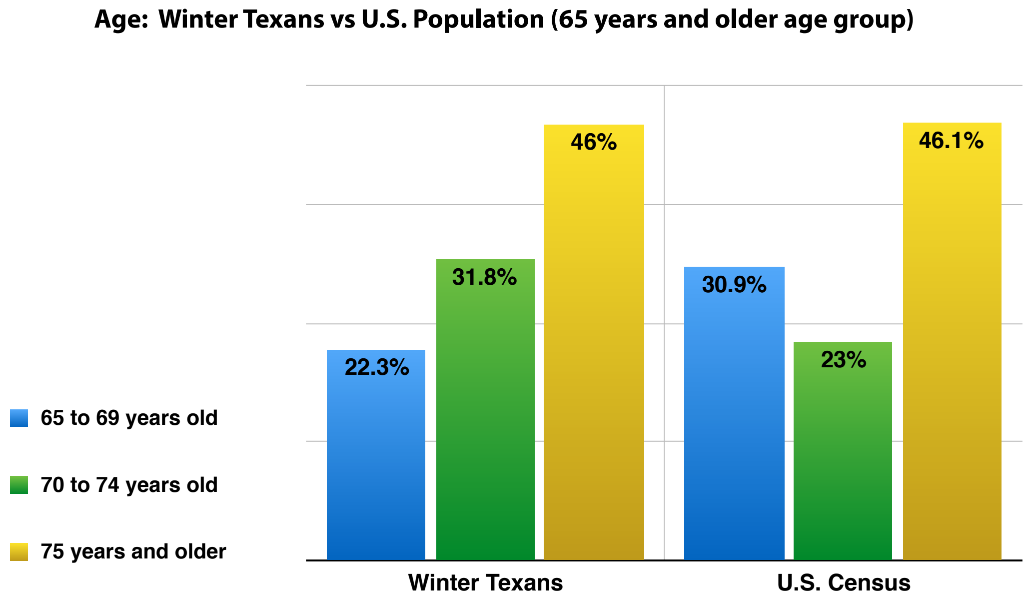


Figure 4. Age comparison

Gender

Figure 5 shows that most 2016 Winter Texan study respondents are male (51.7%), contrary to all past Winter Texan studies where most respondents were female.

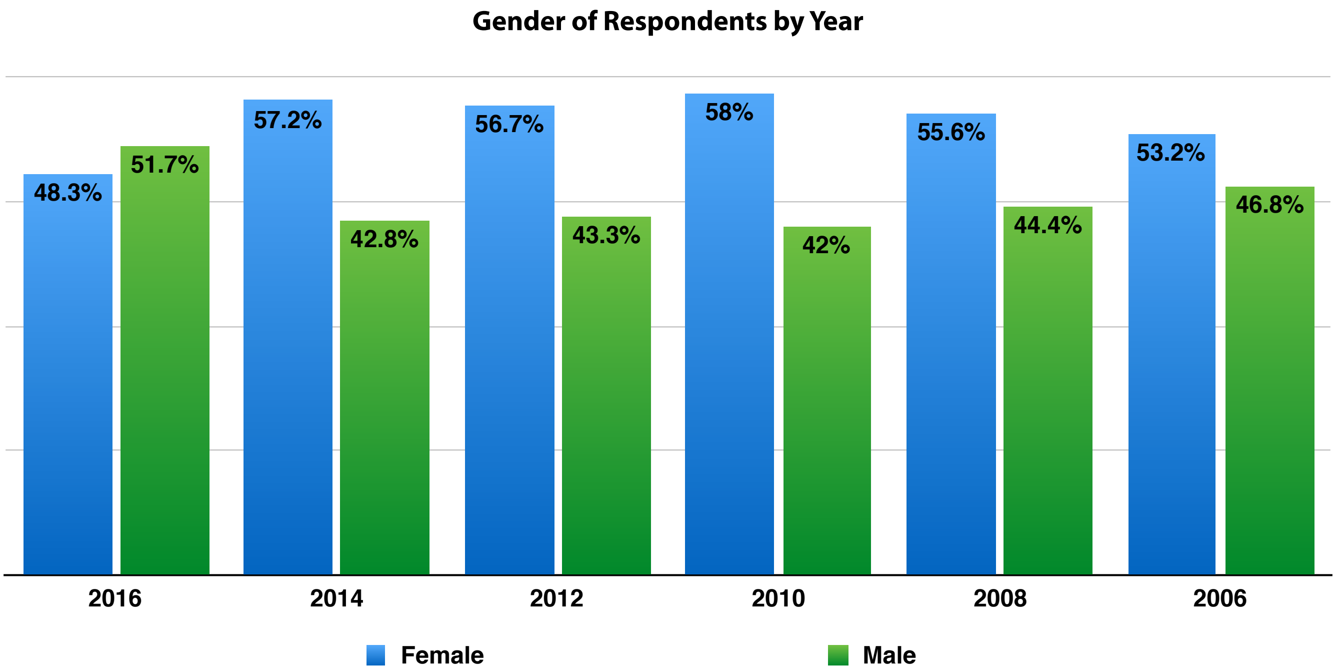


Figure 5. Gender

The higher representation of males in the study sample, is contrary to the U.S. population where 56.9% of the 65 and older group is female, as illustrated in Figure 6.

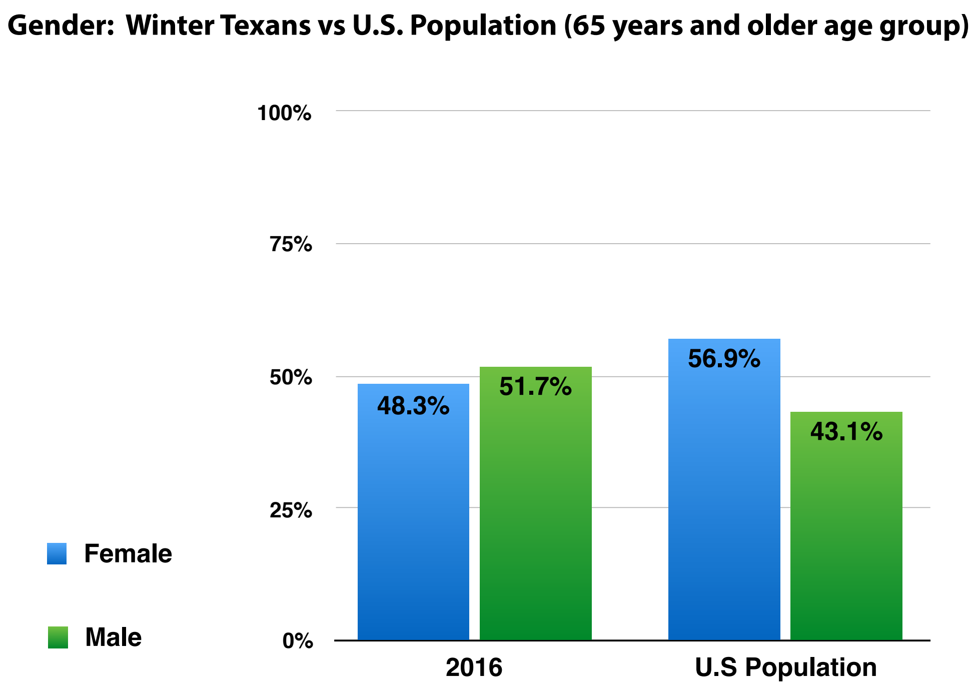


Figure 6. Gender comparison

Race

As Figure 7 shows, Winter Texans almost exclusively consider themselves white. The figure also shows that Winter Texans have been predominantly white over the past years of study.

In the general U.S. 65 and over population, 85.1% are considered white, according to U.S. census data.

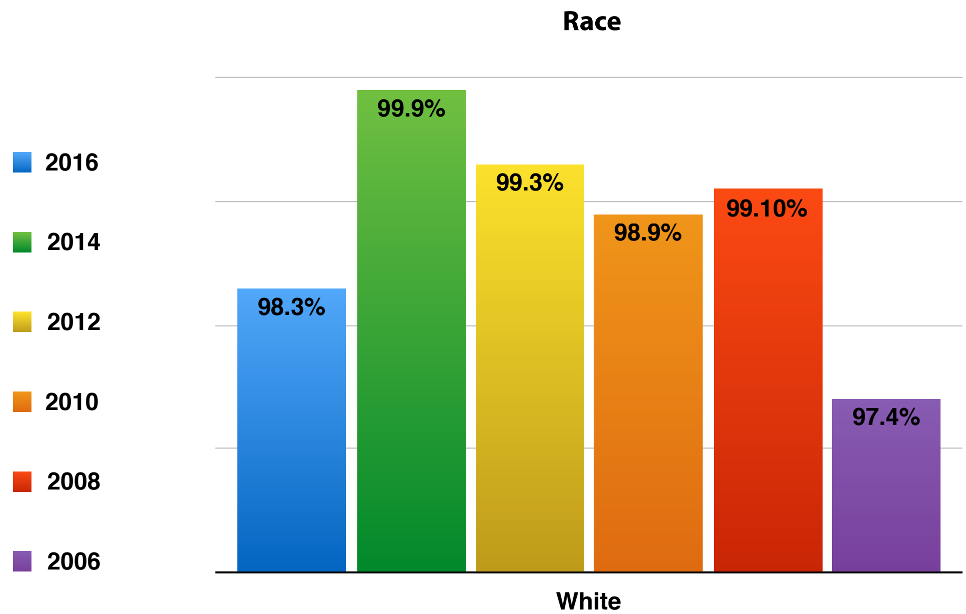


Figure 7. Percent of white respondents

Marital status

As in prior years, most Winter Texans are married as seen in Figure 8. The trends for the marital status of Winter Texans shows an increasing number who consider themselves either widowed or single. This finding is consistent with the finding that Winter Texans are increasingly older.

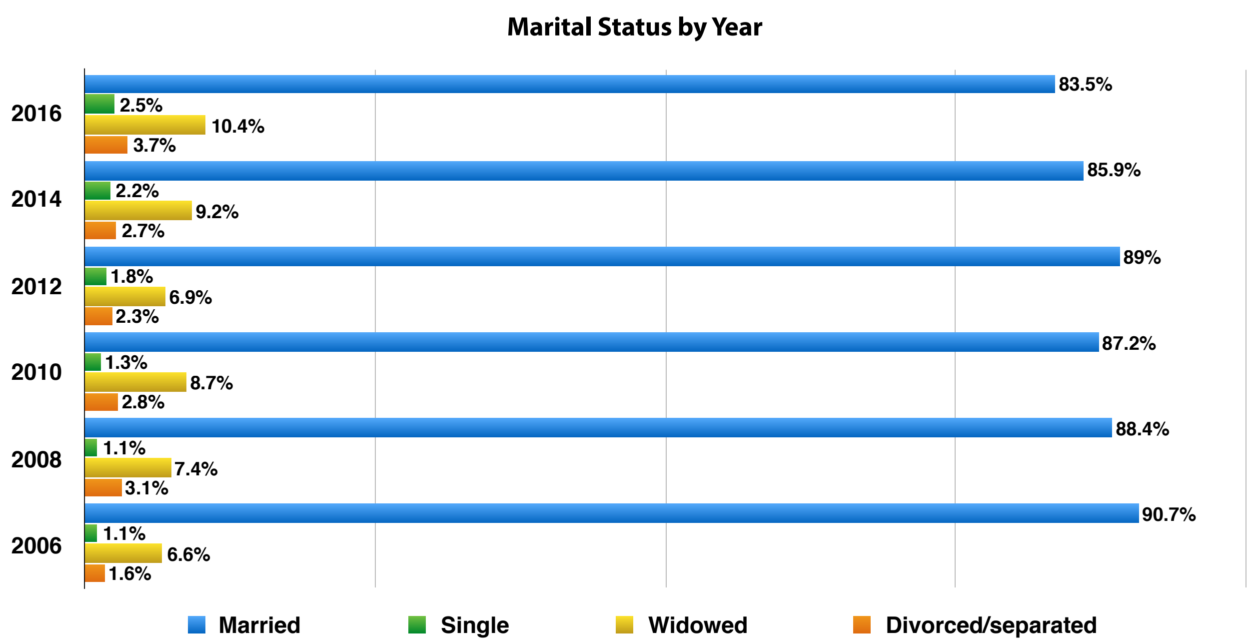


Figure 8. Marital status

Figure 9 compares the marital status of this year's Winter Texan respondents to that of the 65 and older U.S. population group. A far greater percentage of this year's Winter Texans are married compared to that of the general U.S. 65 years and older population.

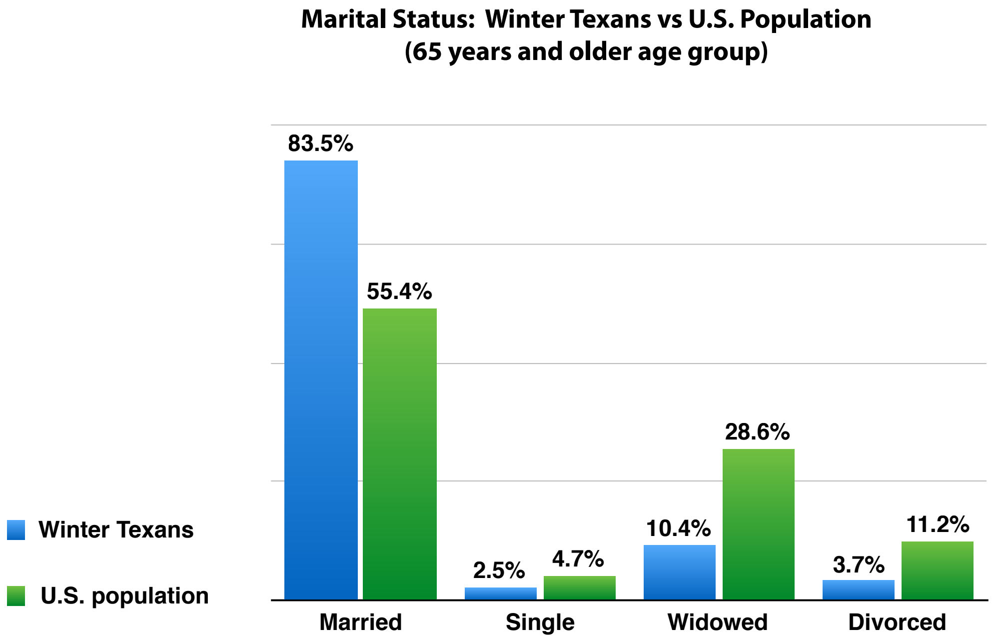


Figure 9. Marital status comparison

Despite the fact that about 12.9% of Winter Texan respondents in the 2016 survey are single or widowed, 11.7% report having only one person in their household. Most Winter Texans, 86.5%, have two people in their household and 1.1% report having a three-person household as shown in Figure 10.

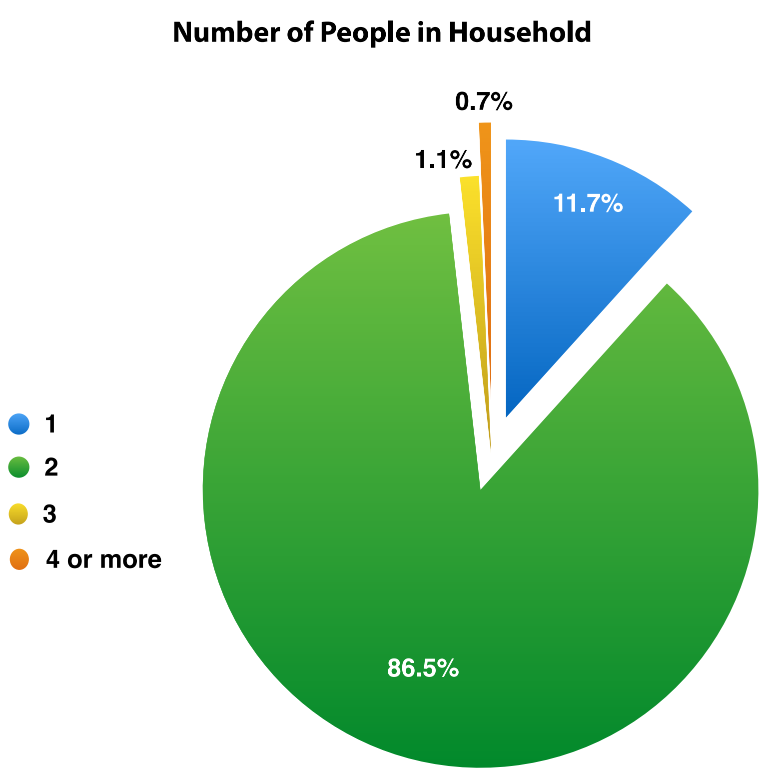


Figure 10. Number of people in Winter Texans' households

Education

Figure 11 shows that in 2016, an increasing number of Winter Texans responding to the survey attended college and fewer reported having no high school diploma. In total, 36.6% had some college and 37% reported having a bachelor's or higher degree. More Winter Texans than ever reported having a graduate or professional degree.

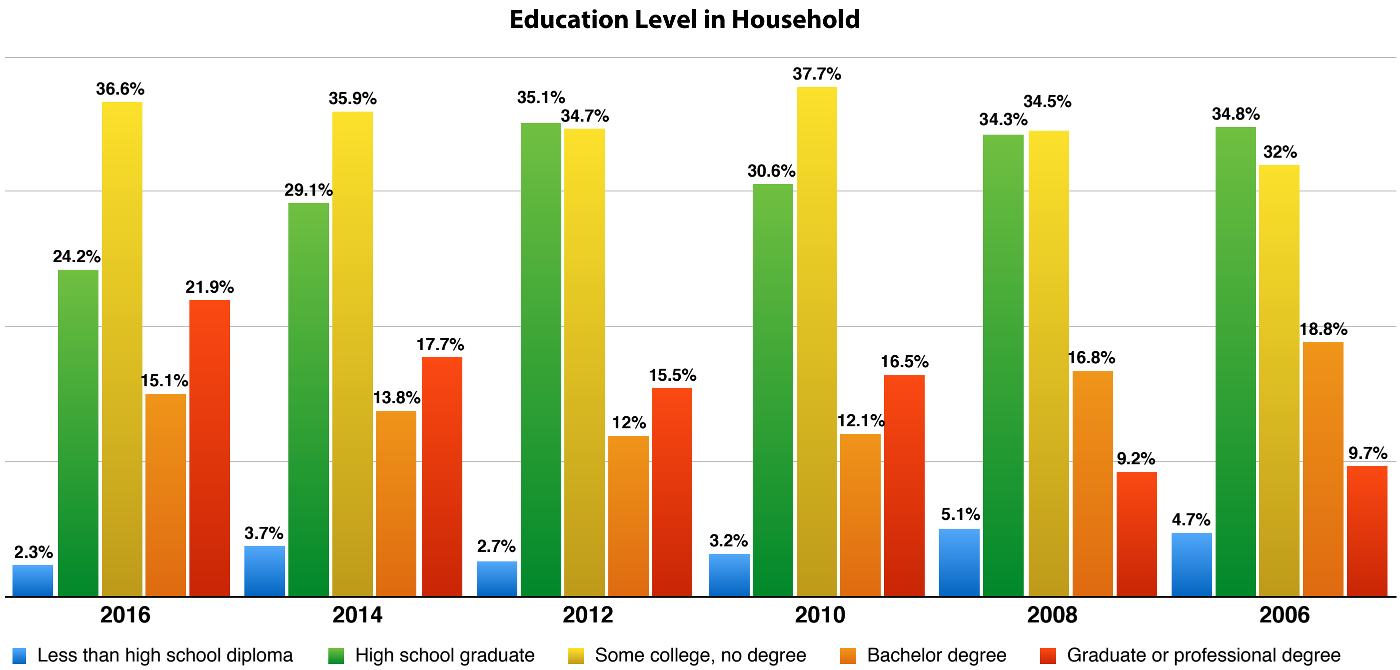


Figure 11. Education level

In general, Winter Texans are more educated than their counterparts in the general U.S. population.

Figure 12 shows the comparison of the education level of the 2016 study sample with that of the U.S. 65 years and older population. As shown, only 2.3% of the Winter Texans do not have a high school diploma as compared to 22.1% of the general population. On the other hand, 36.6% of the Winter Texans had some college education as compared to 22.2% of the general population. Following a similar pattern, a greater number of the Winter Texans have Bachelor's or higher degrees (37%) than that of the general over-65 population (21.3%).

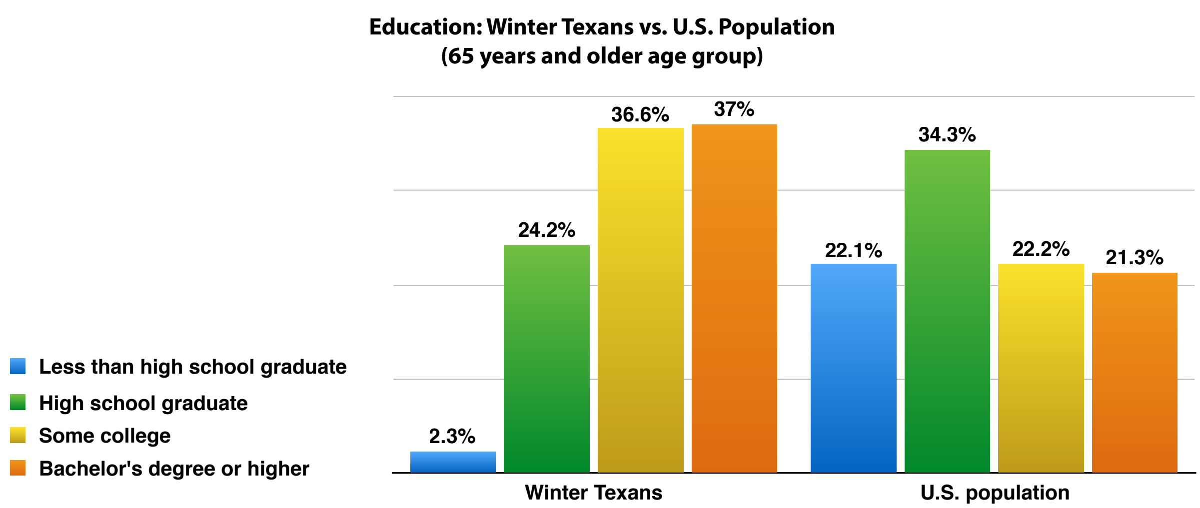


Figure 12. Education level comparison

Income

The average annual household income for Winter Texans participating in the 2016 study is about $65,000. This income level represents a percentage increase in nominal household income of 10.2% since 2014 and 29.8% since 2006 as indicated in Figure 13.

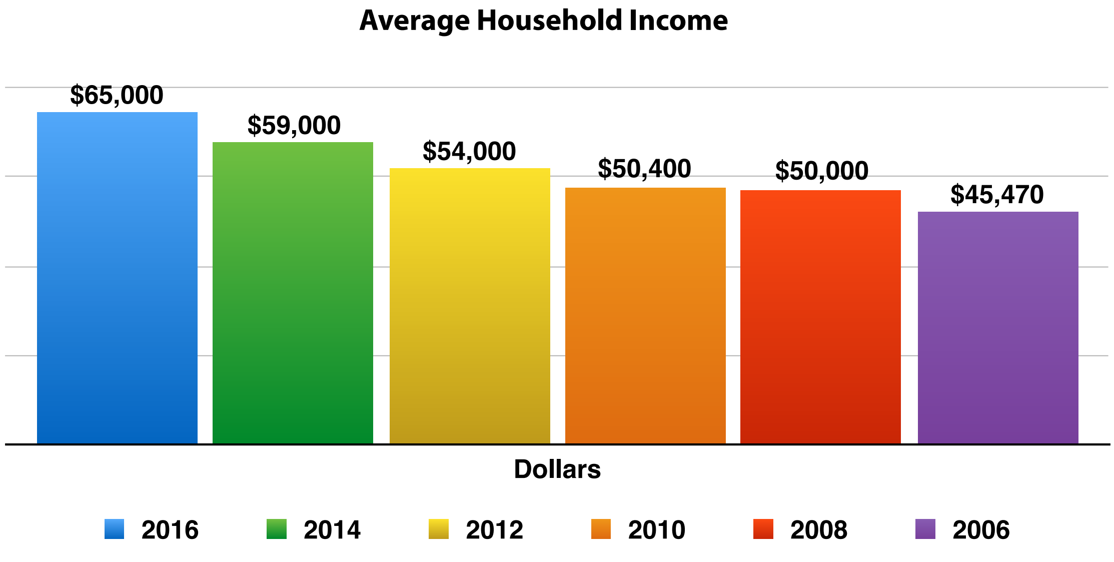
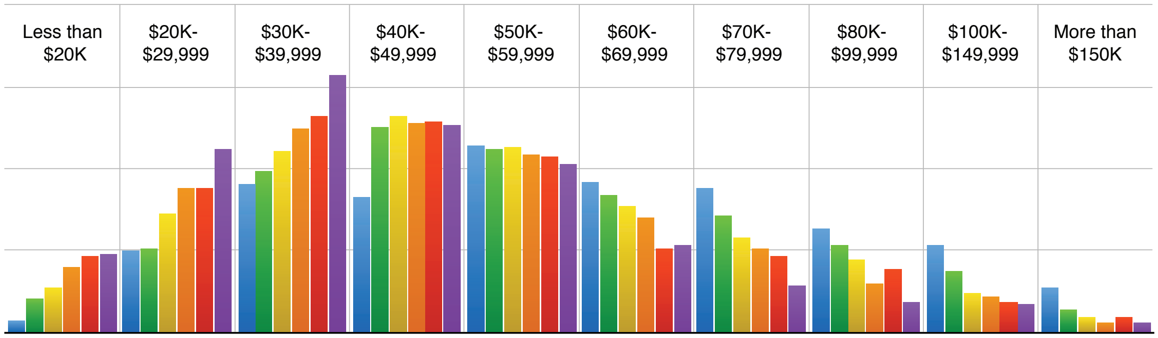


Figure 13. Annual household income

The distribution of income by income category has also changed since 2006. As seen in Figure 14, the household income of Winter Texans has increased; with fewer 2016 Winter Texans reporting nominal income levels in the low range and more in the higher income range. About 48.4% of 2016 Winter Texans were in the $60,000 or higher income category whereas 38.8% of 2014 Winter Texans, 31.6% of 2012 Winter Texans, 26.8% of 2010 Winter Texans, 24.4% of 2008 Winter Texans and 18.2% of the 2006 Winter Texans reported having incomes in the same category.

Annual Household Income by Year



	2016	2014	2012	2010	2008	2006
Less than $20K	1%	3.1%	4%	5.9%	7%	7.2%
$20K- $29,999	7.4%	7.7%	10.9%	13.2%	13.3%	16.7%
$30K- $39,999	13.5%	14.8%	16.6%	18.7%	19.9%	23.6%
$40K- $49,999	12.3%	18.9%	19.8%	19.1%	19.4%	19%
$50K- $59,999	17.2%	16.7%	16.9%	16.3%	16.1%	15.4%
$60K- $69,999	13.7%	12.6%	11.5%	10.6%	7.6%	8%
$70K- $79,999	13.2%	10.7%	8.6%	7.6%	6.9%	4.2%
$80K- $99,999	9.5%	7.9%	6.7%	4.5%	5.8%	2.7%
$100K -$149,999	8%	5.6%	3.5%	3.2%	2.7%	2.5%
More than $150K	4.0%	2.0%	1.3%	0.9%	1.4%	0.8%

Figure 14. Income level

Figure 15 compares the income distribution of Winter Texans to the 65 years and above age group nationally. A higher percentage of Winter Texans (87.4%) report having incomes in the $30,000 to $100,000 range relative to their counterparts in the general population (44%). Proportionately, more Winter Texans than 65+ year olds in the U.S. population, in general, report having a household income over $100,000 (12.0% versus 11.0%). On the other hand, a much smaller percentage of Winter Texans report having an income of less than $20,000 (1% for Winter Texans versus 29.4% nationwide).

Income: Winter Texans vs. U.S. Population (65 years and older age group)

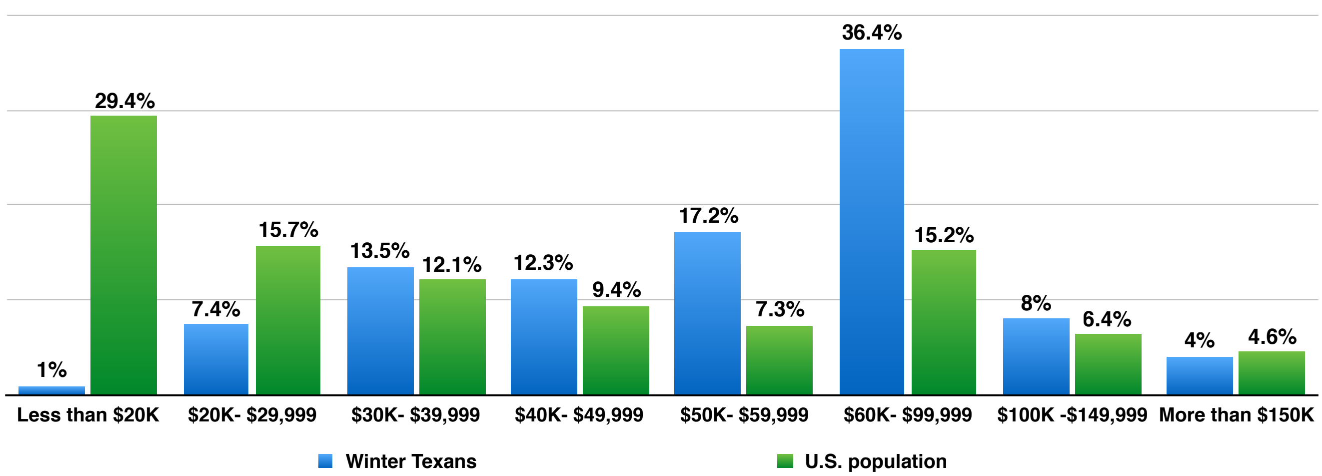


Figure 15. Household income comparison

Employment status

The majority of Winter Texans (91.7%) are retired (see Figure 16) with only 2.8% of those retiring in the past year. Fewer Winter Texans in 2016 reported working full-or part-time than in prior years.

Employment Status by Year

	2016	2014	2012	2010	2008	2006
Retired more than one year	88.9%	87.5%	89.2%	88.1%	86.3%	86.3%
Retired within past year	2.8%	2.1%	2.7%	2.8%	3.5%	4%
Unemployed looking for a job	0%	0.2%	0.1%	0.3%	0.1%	0.1%
Work full-time	0.9%	1.3%	1%	0.2%	1%	0.7%
Work part-time	4.9%	6.3%	5.5%	6.1%	6.7%	6.4%
Other	2.5%	2.7%	1.5%	2.5%	2.4%	2.5%

Figure 16. Employment status

The employment status of Winter Texans is compared to the employment status of the U.S. 65 year olds and over population in Figure 17. The graph shows that a greater percentage of Winter Texans (94.2%) are retired or are not in the work force as compared to 84.0% of the general U.S. population of the same age group. No Winter Texans reporting being unemployed as compared to the general U.S. 65 years and over population (1.3%).

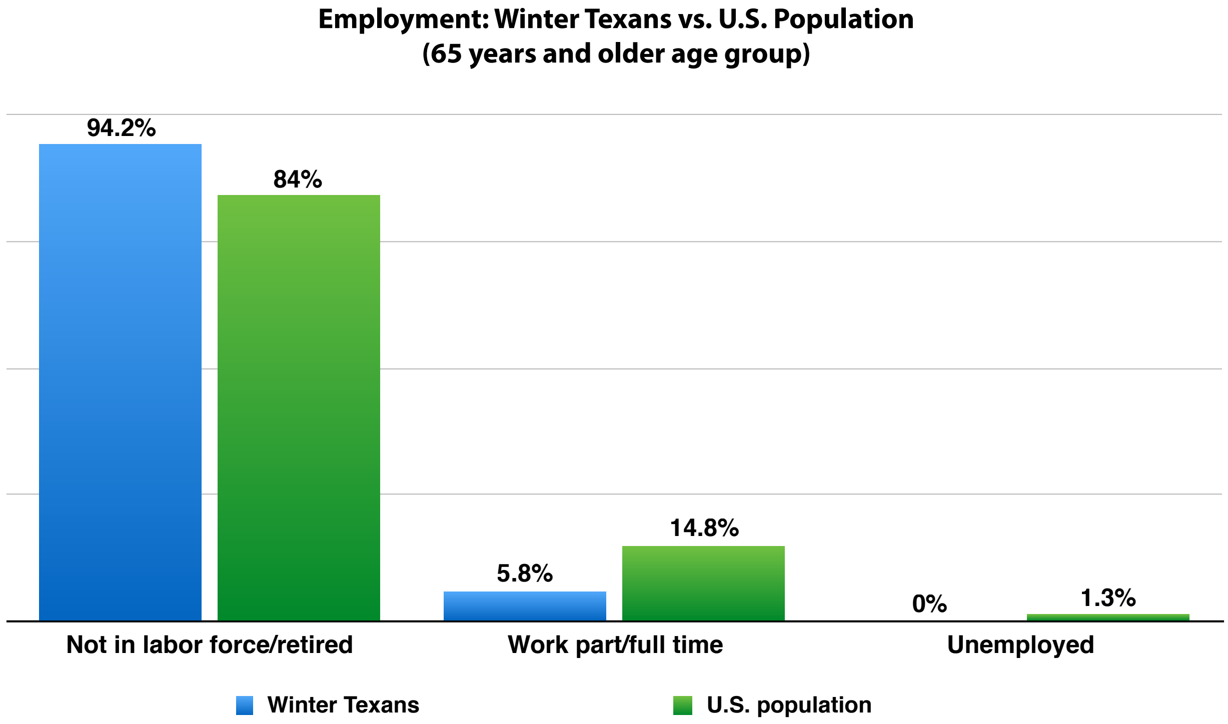
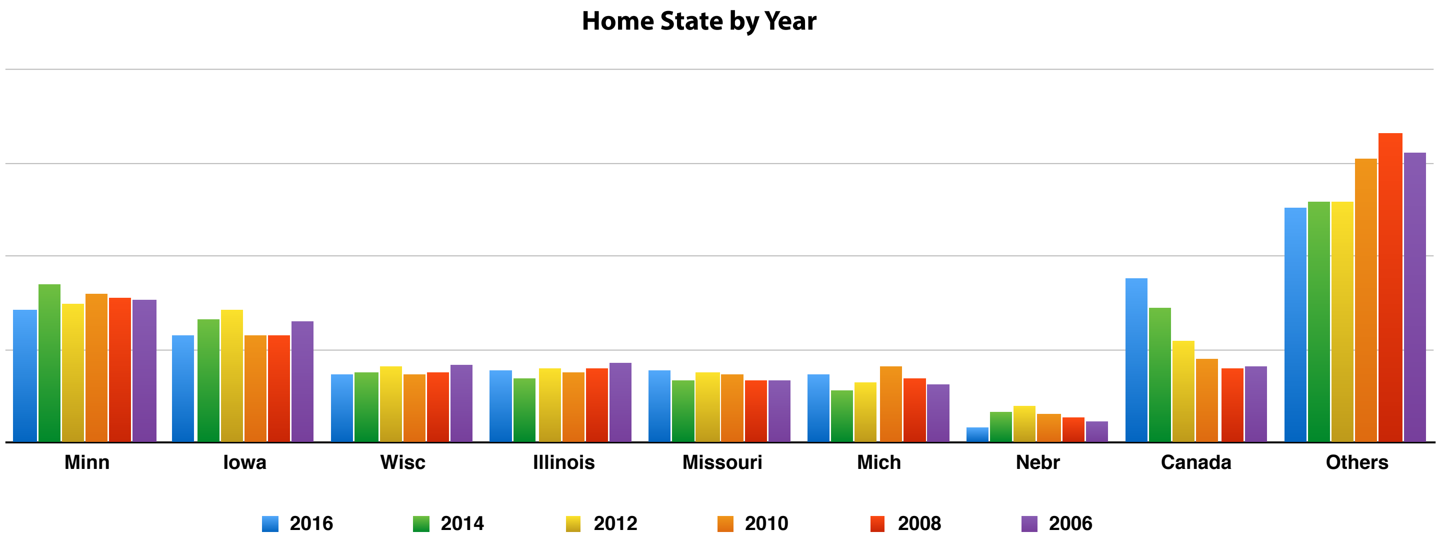


Figure 17. Employment status comparison

Home State

The top home states/country of Winter Texans are shown in Figure 18. In 2016, most Winter Texans came from states within the U.S. although 17.6% came from Canada. Of those Winter Texans from Canada, most are from Ontario (41.6%), followed by Manitoba (29.2%), Quebec (9.9%) then Saskatchewan (6.8%).

The state with the largest share of Winter Texans is Minnesota (14.3%), followed by Iowa (11.5%), Missouri (7.8%), Illinois (7.6%), Wisconsin (7.2%), and Michigan (7.2%). Other states in the 2016 survey are grouped together into the "Other" category which accounts for just over a quarter of this year's total survey respondents. The proportion of Winter Texans by state appears fairly stable over time. However, in this year's study, proportionately more Winter Texans are from Canada than in any other prior survey.



	2016	2014	2012	2010	2008	2006
Minnesota	14.3%	16.9%	14.9%	15.9%	15.6%	15.4%
Iowa	11.5%	13.1%	14.2%	11.6%	11.6%	13%
Wisconsin	7.2%	7.5%	8.2%	7.2%	7.4%	8.4%
Illinois	7.6%	6.9%	8%	7.4%	7.9%	8.5%
Missouri	7.8%	6.6%	7.5%	7.2%	6.7%	6.7%
Michigan	7.2%	5.6%	6.5%	8.2%	6.9%	6.3%
Nebraska	1.6%	3.2%	4%	3.1%	2.7%	2.3%
Canada	17.6%	14.4%	10.9%	9%	7.9%	8.2%
Others	25.3%	25.8%	25.8%	30.4%	33.3%	31.2%

Figure 18. Home state

RESULTS: HEALTH

Respondents in this year's study were also asked to rate their health. Most Winter Texans reported being in Excellent to Very Good health (53.2%). Only 8.2% of respondents rated their health as fair or poor as shown in Figure 19.

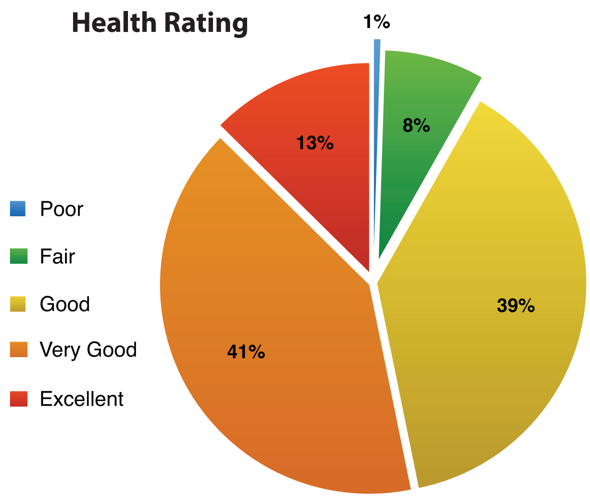


Figure 19. Self-reported health rating

RESULTS: STAY CHARACTERISTICS

The primary purpose of the biennium Winter Texan studies is to determine the economic impact of Winter Texans on the Valley economy. An understanding of each component of Winter Texans' visit is needed to accomplish this goal. For example, factors such as how long Winter Texans stay in the area, the types of housing they have while in the RGV and the types of activities as well as attractions they participate in while in the Valley all impact the region. This section details those Valley stay components.

Days spent in the Valley

Figure 20 shows that the average stay of the 2016 Winter Texans in the RGV is 133 days. The largest proportion of survey respondents reported staying 150 days (16.5%). About 16.0% reported staying 120 days, 12.1% stayed 180 days and 11.1% stayed 90 days. In all 84.1% of study respondents reported staying between three to six months.

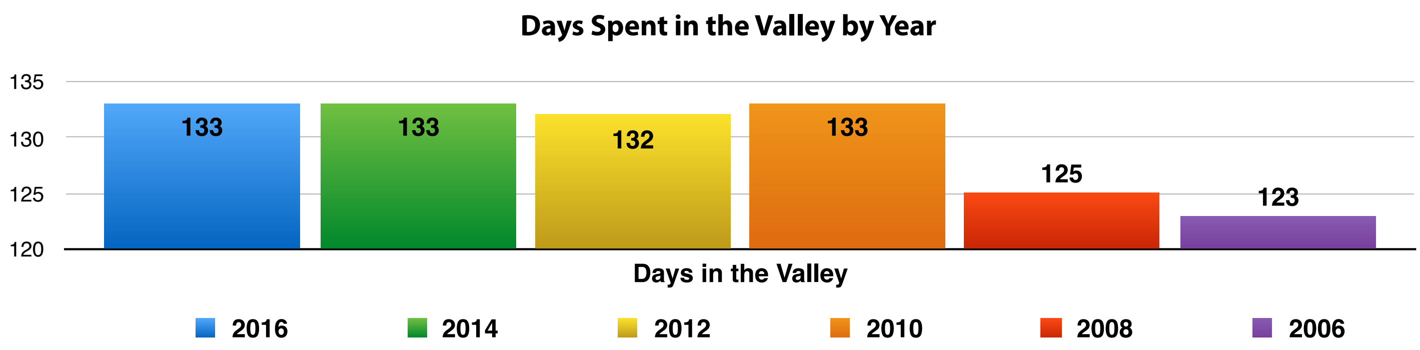


Figure 20. Days spent in the Valley

Years coming to the Valley

Including the current trip, this year's respondents indicated having come to the Valley an average of 11.7 years. As shown in Figure 21, this year's Winter Texans had come to the Valley for slightly more years than Winter Texans in the past. About 3.0% of the study respondents reported coming to the Valley for only one year (see Figure 22) and the largest percentage of respondents, 10%, reported coming for eight years. A total of 53.9% of respondents had come to the Valley for 10 years or less.

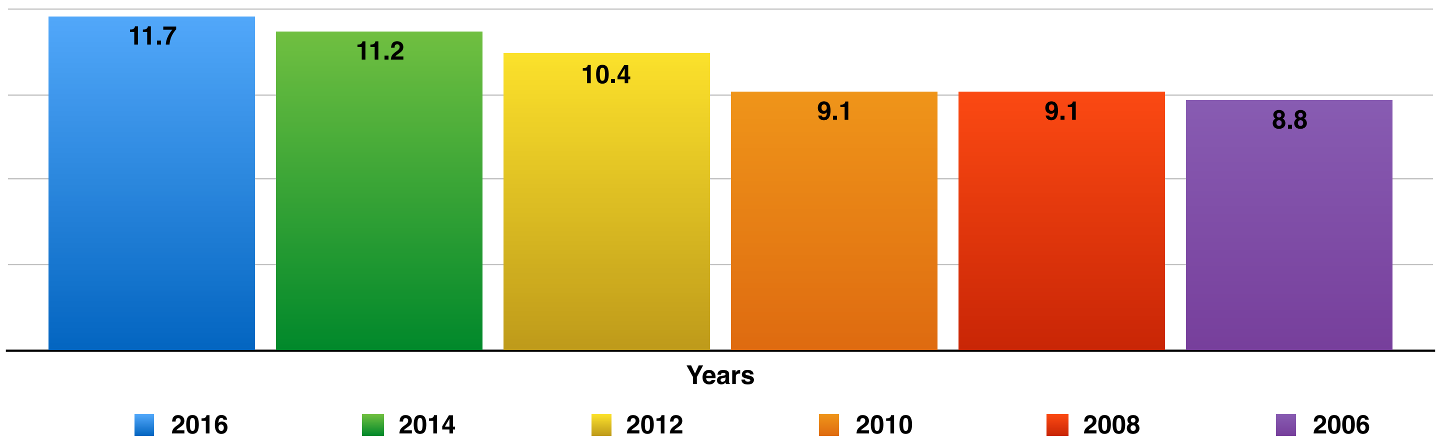


Figure 21. Years coming to the Valley

First time in the Valley

The number of first-time Winter Texans to the Valley is useful in understanding whether the Valley is able to attract new Winter Texans who might supplant Winter Texans who become too old to continue their annual trek to the Valley. This year, 3% of study respondents indicated that this was their first time in the RGV. This percentage is the same as that reported in the last study but represents the fewest first-timers since the data has been collected in 2006 as shown in Figure 22.

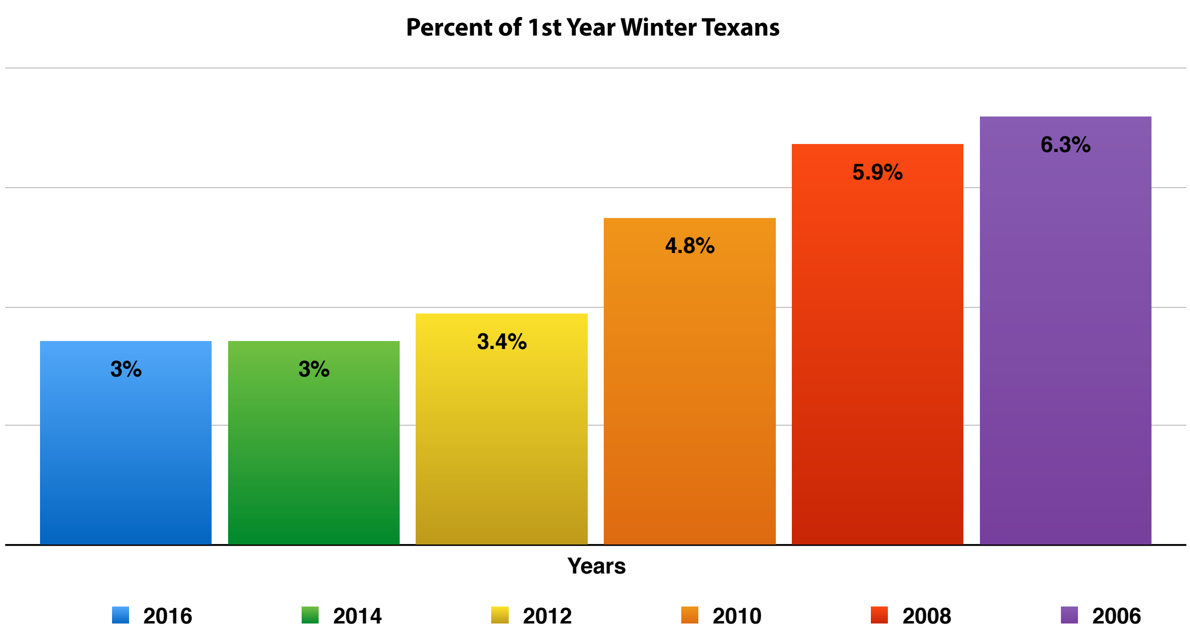
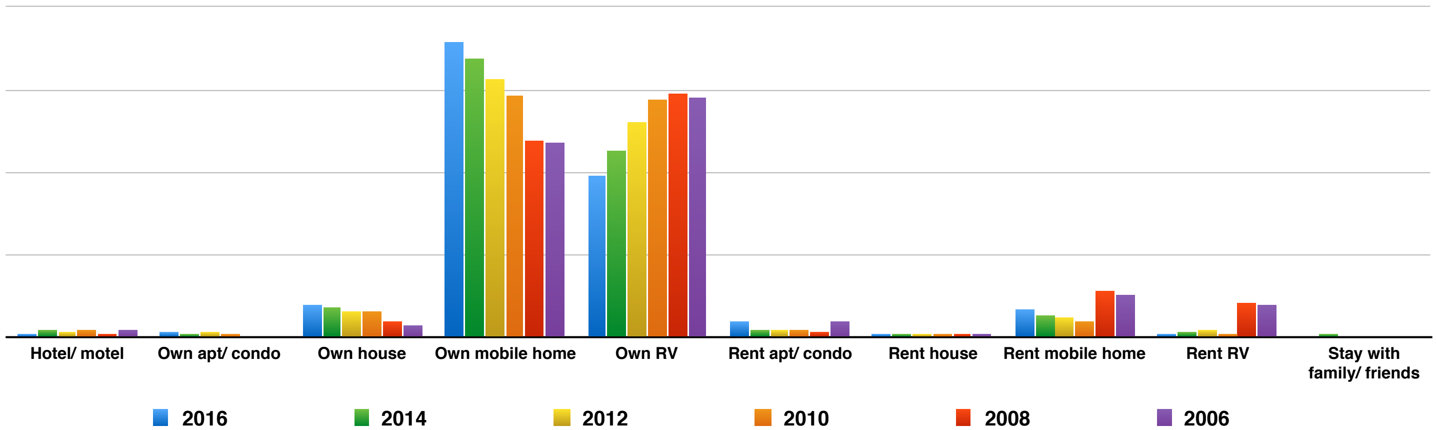


Figure 22. First-time Winter Texans

Housing Type

While in the Valley, the housing types most often used by Winter Texans are shown in Figure 23. As in prior years, most Winter Texans own a local place of residence. A total of 53.6% of Winter Texan respondents live in their own mobile home/park model while 29.2% live in their own recreational vehicle (RV) during their stay in the Valley. A total of 88.7% of all Winter Texan respondents live in RVs or mobile homes/parks—in RVs or in mobile homes or park models. The graph also shows that more Winter Texans are choosing to own their residence—other than RV—of any type, with proportionately more owning their own home—house/condo or mobile home. In 2016, 60.7% of Winter Texans owned their RGV property (house, condo or mobile home) as compared to 38.0% in 2006. While the largest increase is seen in mobile home ownership, Winter Texan respondents have also increased their ownership of houses and condos in the RGV.

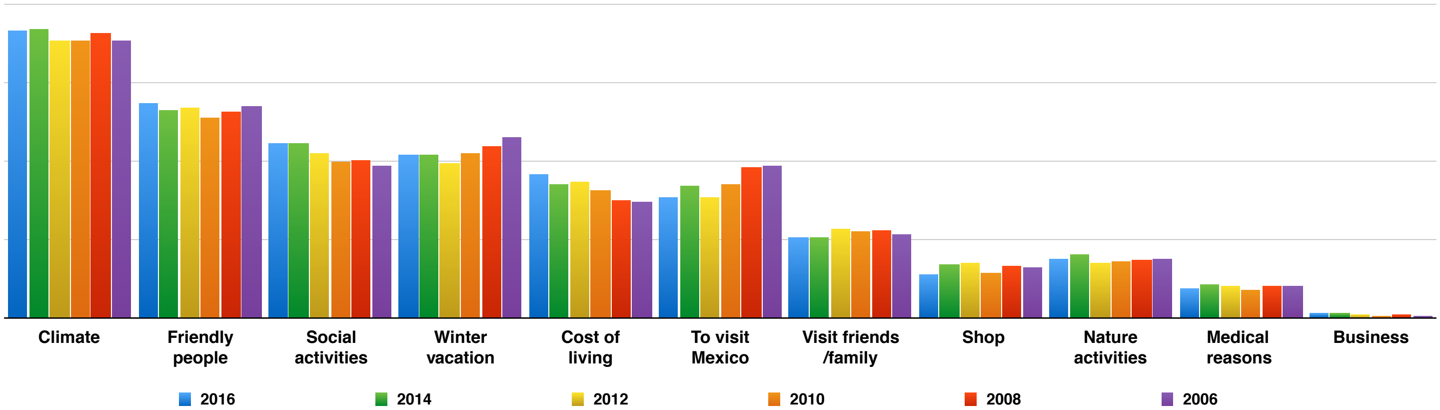


	2016	2014	2012	2010	2008	2006
Hotel/ motel	0.5%	1.4%	1.0%	1.2%	0.6%	1.2%
Own apt/ condo	1.1%	0.7%	0.9%	0.6%	0.1%	0.4%
Own house	6.0%	5.6%	4.9%	4.7%	2.8%	2.1%
Own mobile home	53.6%	50.7%	46.9%	44.0%	35.8%	35.5%
Own RV	29.2%	34.0%	39.1%	43.3%	44.3%	43.7%
Rent apt/ condo	2.8%	1.4%	1.3%	1.4%	1.0%	2.7%
Rent house	0.8%	0.6%	0.6%	0.5%	0.6%	0.7%
Rent mobile home	5.1%	4.1%	3.8%	3.0%	8.5%	7.7%
Rent RV	0.8%	1.1%	1.2%	0.8%	6.4%	6.0%
Stay with family/ friends	0.1%	0.6%	0.3%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%

Figure 23. Housing type

Why visit the Valley

The climate, friendly people and social activities are primary reasons that Winter Texans come to the Valley each year, as seen in Figure 24. Also important to many Winter Texans are taking a winter vacation, the cost of living, and, for some, visiting Mexico.



	2016	2014	2012	2010	2008
Climate	91.6%	92.3%	88.6%	88.4%	90.9%
Friendly people	68.6%	66.4%	66.9%	63.9%	65.6%
Social activities	55.9%	55.7%	52.7%	49.8%	50.4%
Winter Vacation	52.2%	51.9%	49.5%	52.7%	54.7%
Cost of living	45.9%	42.5%	43.4%	40.7%	37.3%
To visit Mexico	38.6%	42.1%	38.4%	42.5%	47.8%
Visit friends /family	25.7%	25.5%	28.2%	27.6%	28.1%
Shop	13.8%	16.9%	17.6%	14.4%	16.8%
Nature activities	18.9%	20.2%	17.3%	18.1%	18.3%
Medical reasons	9.1%	10.6%	10.1%	8.7%	10.2%
Business	1.5%	1.6%	1.2%	0.9%	1%

Figure 24. Reasons why Winter Texans come to the Valley

Activities

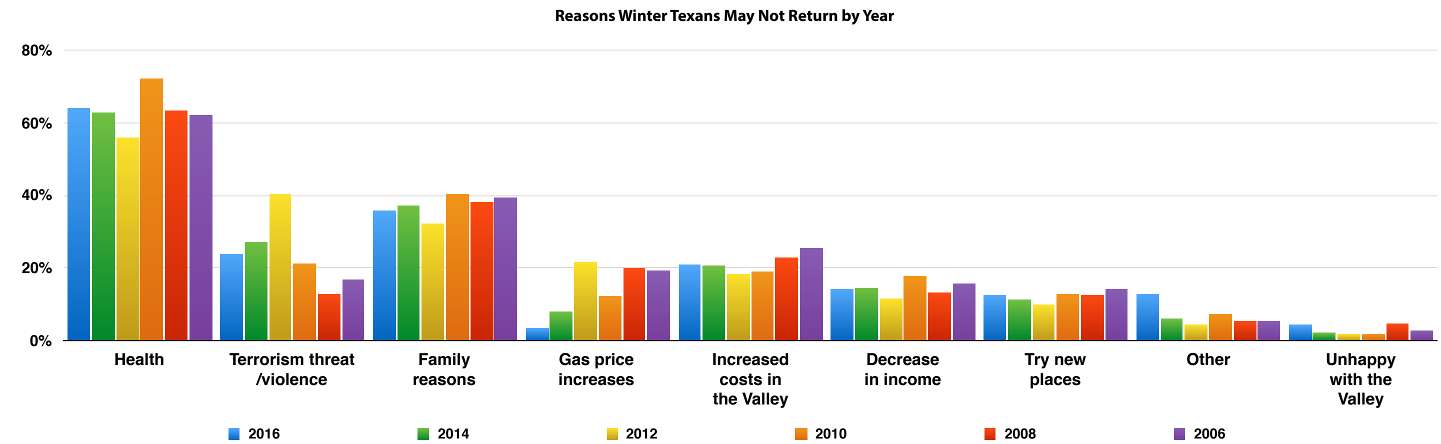
This year's survey asked respondents how frequently they participated in various listed activities while in the RGV. As Table 1 shows, the activities that almost all Winter Texans participated in at least sometimes include visiting flea markets (97.7%), a historical site (90.4%), going to the beach (88.9%), festivals (88.2%) and musical productions or jam sessions (86.9%). Activities that Winter Texan respondents were least likely to participate in at all include softball (92.2%), golf ((63.1%) and fishing (61.4%).

Table 1. Level of Participation in Selected Activities

Activity	Never	Rarely or sometimes	Often or a lot
Music/jams	13.1%	49.7%	37.3%
Flea markets	2.3%	63.1%	34.5%
Exercising	18.4%	45.7%	35.9%
Dancing	35.5%	37.8%	26.7%
Golf	63.1%	13.4%	23.5%
Volunteering	26.5%	48.1%	25.5%
Bicycling	44.6%	35.9%	19.6%
Festivals	11.8%	74.1%	14.1%
Crafting	37.0%	42.3%	20.7%
Sight-seeing in Mexico	26.5%	59.9%	13.5%
Beach	11.1%	73.7%	15.2%
Wildlife/nature refuges	19.2%	69.7%	11.1%
Historical sights	9.6%	80.2%	10.2%
Libraries	41.4%	50.5%	8.1%
Birding	48.9%	42.2%	9.0%
Museums	23.6%	69.3%	7.1%
Fishing	61.4%	33.0%	5.6%
Travel tours	37.4%	59.2%	3.3%
Softball	92.2%	5.5%	2.3%
Zoo	39.3%	58.0%	2.7%

Why not return

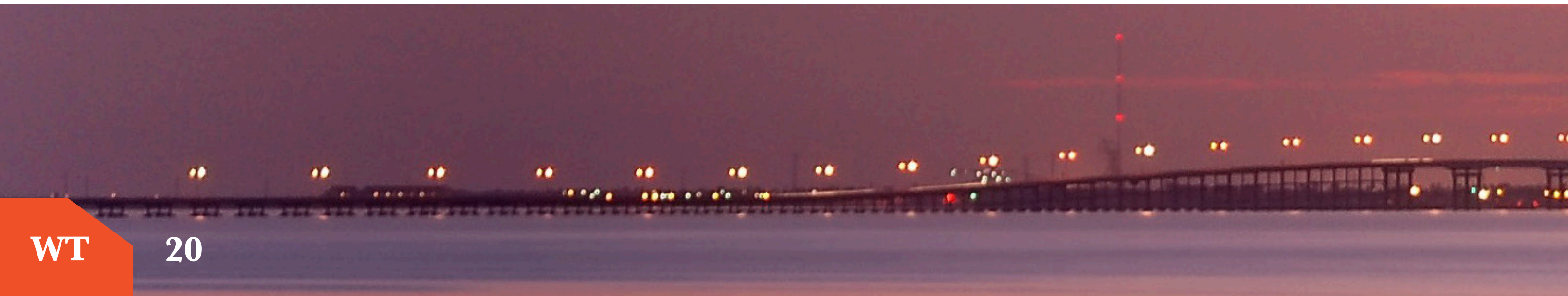
When asked, an overwhelming majority of 2016 Winter Texans (95.3%) plan to return to the Valley next year. If they could not return, however, the most likely reasons given were related to health (64.0%), family issues (36.0%), terrorism or threat of violence (24.0%), and increased costs in the Valley (20.8%) as depicted in Figure 25. Compared to Winter Texan responses after the 2010 drug cartel violence in Mexico, Winter Texans are increasingly much less concerned about terrorism or threat of violence as a reason for not returning to the Valley but are more concerned about health and being unhappy with the Valley as reasons not to return. These findings suggest that concerns about Mexico violence or the 2014 surge of undocumented immigrants and security forces to the Valley is not pervasive. The concern of Winter Texans about not returning because of health and family is consistent with the trend that the Winter Texan population is aging.



	2016	2014	2012	2010	2008	2006
Health	64%	62.7%	55.9%	72.2%	63.3%	62.2%
Terrorism threat/ violence	24%	27.2%	40.3%	21.2%	12.7%	16.8%
Family reasons	36%	37%	32.2%	40.5%	38%	39.5%
Gas price increases	3.4%	8%	21.5%	12.2%	19.8%	19.3%
Increased costs in the Valley	20.8%	20.7%	18.3%	18.9%	23%	25.6%
Decrease in income	14.1%	14.3%	11.4%	17.8%	13.3%	15.7%
Try new places	12.5%	11.3%	9.8%	12.7%	12.6%	14.2%
Other	12.8%	6%	4.5%	7.2%	5.4%	5.4%
Unhappy with the Valley	4.3%	2.2%	1.7%	1.9%	4.8%	2.8%

Figure 25. Reasons Winter Texans may not return to the Valley

This year's study also asked respondents to indicate where they would go next winter if they did not return to the Valley. Only 24 respondents indicated that they would spend next winter in a place other than the Valley. Of those, ten would go to another state such as Florida or Arizona, 4 would go to another country or take a cruise and 11 would be staying home next year.



RESULTS: EXPENDITURE PATTERNS IN MEXICO

Most Winter Texans (86.6%) reported making one or more trips to Mexico as shown in Figure 26.

The average number of trips was 5.2. The figure also shows Winter Texan visits to Mexico border towns since 2006. Both the number of Winter Texans visiting Mexico border towns and the number of trips taken have declined since 2006, reaching a low in 2012, which corresponds to the heightened drug violence in Mexico beginning in spring of 2010. This year's study's respondent visits to Mexico where almost identical to those of 2014 respondents but still had not returned to the highs experienced in 2006 and 2008.

Percentage Traveling to a Mexico Border Town and Average Number of Trips per Year

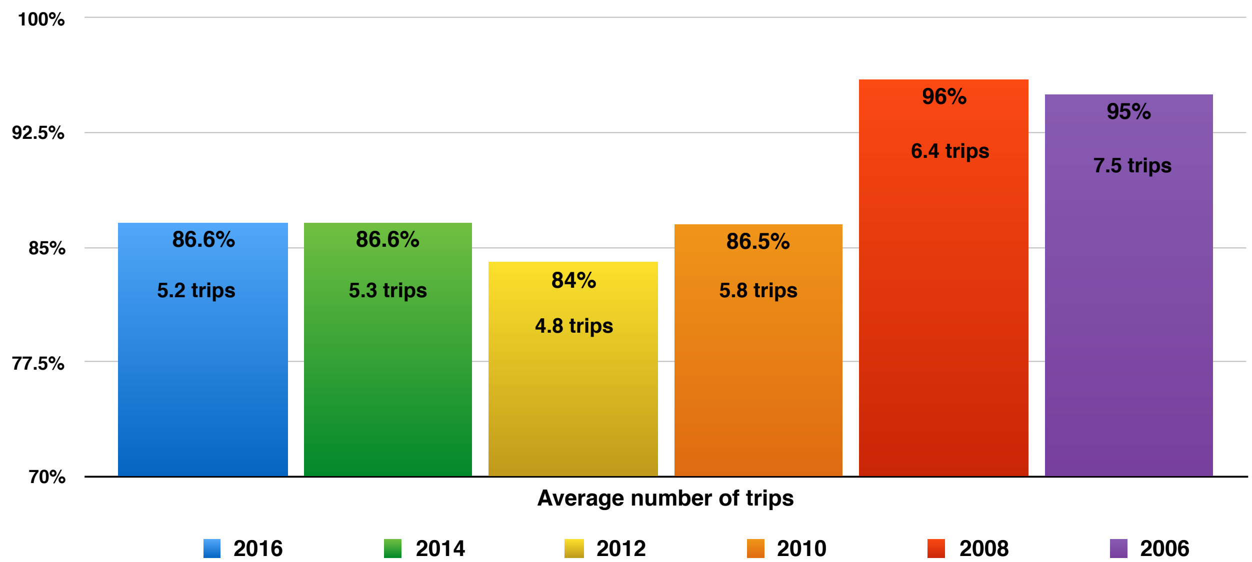
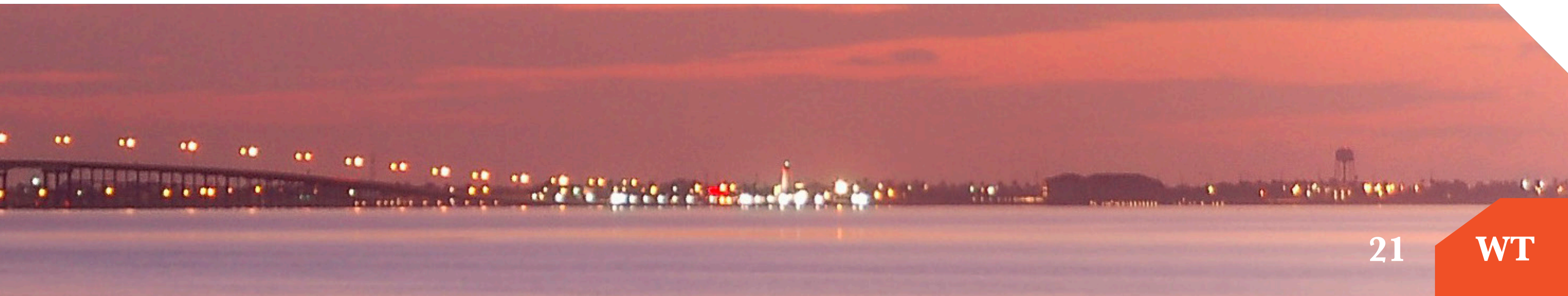


Figure 26. Winter Texan travel to Mexico border towns

Winter Texan spending in Mexico border towns is estimated in two ways. First, respondents were asked to indicate about how much money they spent per trip to Mexico, on average. A total of 86.6% of the 2016 study Winter Texans reported spending an average of $80 per trip to a Mexico border town, down from an average of $92 per trip as reported in 2014. Second, respondents were asked to estimate how much they spent in Mexico, on an average trip, in one of seven different spending categories. Averaging spending by category, Winter Texans spent an average of $187 per trip to Mexico as shown in Table 2. The difference between the two spending methods is likely attributable to large purchases made during one trip that are not made during other trips. For example, a respondent reported spending an average of $25 on each trip to Mexico but indicated spending $2,000 on dental expenses per trip.



The Table 2 results show reported spending in Mexico by expenditure category in 2016.

Winter Texans' average nominal spending in Mexico in 2016 had increased slightly from prior years with Winter Texans spending the most money on shopping items (74.5% spent an average of $36), on dining (66.8% spent an average of $27), on prescriptions (51.6% spent an average of $92) and on dental (38.1% spent an average of $227).

Table 2

	Percent making a purchase	Average $ purchase	2016 Weighted spending	Percent making a purchase	Average $ purchase	2014 Weighted spending
Shopping	74.5%	$35.73	$26.61	75.8%	$38.74	$29.36
Dining	66.8%	$26.97	$18.02	68.2%	$25.86	$17.64
Prescriptions	51.6%	$91.58	$47.23	49.5%	$64.07	$31.71
Dental	38.1%	$226.75	$86.29	40.9%	$197.08	$80.61
Sightseeing	4.2%	$43.90	$1.85	3.1%	$37.91	$1.18
Doctor	0.9%	$116.25	$1.01	1.4%	$179.90	$2.52
Other	11.5%	$56.18	$6.44	9.5%	$75.43	$7.17
Total weighted average spending			**$187.44**			**$170.18**

	Percent making a purchase	Average $ purchase	2012 Weighted spending	Percent making a purchase	Average $ purchase	2010 Weighted spending
Shopping	74.3%	$37.96	$28.20	74.8%	$37.63	$28.15
Dining	64.5%	$27.76	$17.91	70.0%	$28.13	$19.69
Prescriptions	49.4%	$80.62	$39.83	54.7%	$83.17	$45.49
Dental	37.8%	$185.41	$70.08	37.3%	$148.31	$55.32
Sightseeing	3.4%	$61.35	$2.09	9.8%	$36.79	$3.61
Doctor	1.8%	$123.89	$2.23	7.6%	$11.62	$0.88
Other	8.8%	$49.78	$4.38	12.1%	$84.91	$10.27
Total weighted average spending			**$164.72**			**$163.41**

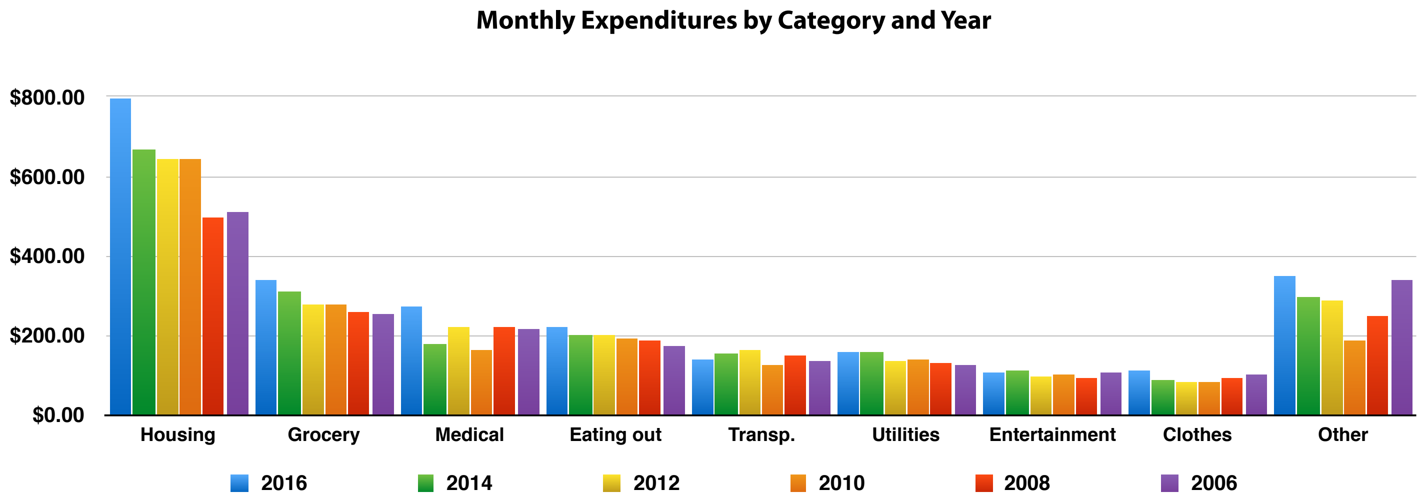
Table 2. Average Spending in Mexico Border Towns

The total, direct economic impact of Winter Texan spending in Mexico border towns is calculated by multiplying the average expenditure per trip by the total number of trips to Mexico. Using both the reported average expenditure amount and the calculated amount, the estimated direct economic impact of each Winter Texan household in Mexico border towns ranges from $416 (or $80/trip x 5.2 trips) to $972 ($187 x 5.2 trips) per household, with a midpoint of $694. If the total number of Winter Texan households in the Valley is 51,000 and 86.5% visited Mexico 5.2 times, then the estimated direct economic impact of Winter Texans in Mexico during 2015-2016 is $30.6 million, with the range from $18.4 million to $42.9 million.

RESULTS: EXPENDITURE PATTERNS IN THE RIO GRANDE VALLEY

While in the Valley, Winter Texans spent money on both routine, monthly purchases, such as groceries and housing, and on one-time major expenditures, such as furniture and appliances. Graphs comparing nominal monthly expenditures and one-time purchases from 2006 to 2016 are provided in Figures 27 and 28. Figure 27 shows that for monthly purchases, 2016 Winter Texans, on average, spent more in nominal dollars than in prior years on housing, groceries, medical, eating out, utilities and clothing.

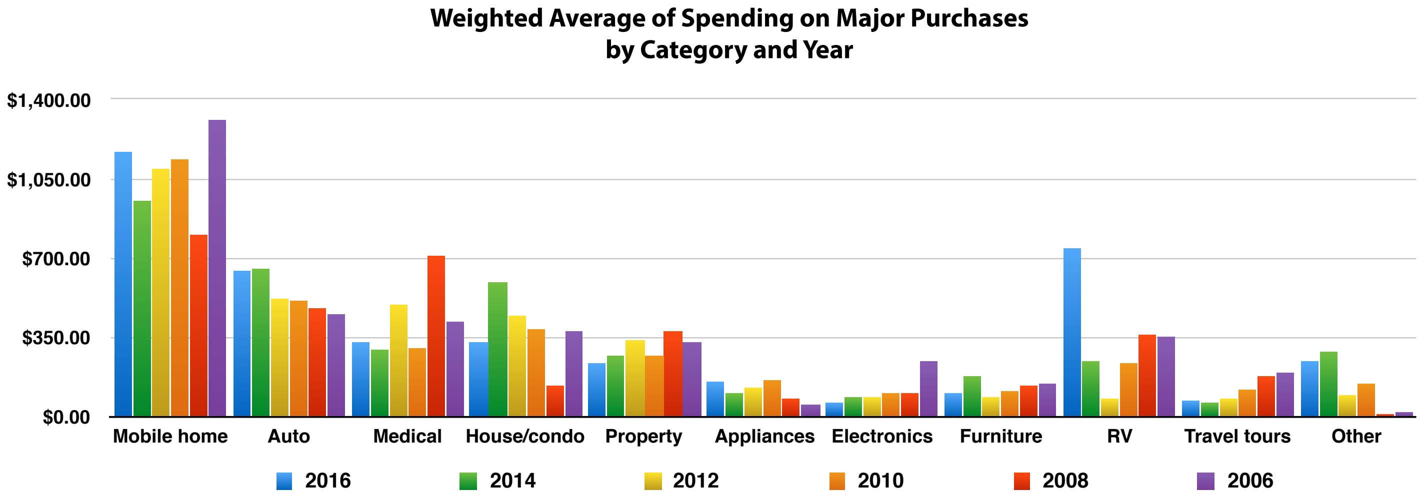
Average expenditures on transportation and entertainment expenses were slightly below similar expenditures as reported in 2014.



	2016	2014	2012	2010	2008	2006
Housing	$793.00	$668.00	$643.00	$641.00	$496.00	$509.00
Grocery	$338.00	$313.00	$278.00	$277.00	$259.00	$254.00
Medical	$274.00	$179.00	$220.00	$165.00	$221.00	$217.00
Eating out	$220.00	$204.00	$200.00	$191.00	$189.00	$175.00
Transp.	$138.00	$155.00	$166.00	$124.00	$148.00	$133.00
Utilities	$160.00	$158.00	$135.00	$138.00	$130.00	$126.00
Entertainment	$107.00	$110.00	$97.00	$103.00	$92.00	$108.00
Clothes	$110.00	$90.00	$85.00	$85.00	$94.00	$100.00

Figure 27. Average monthly expenditures by spending category

The 2016 Winter Texans also spent more money on major, one-time purchases while in the Valley as seen in Figure 28. They spent more in 2016 than in 2014 on their mobile homes, medical, appliances, RVs and travel tours but spent less on their automobiles, house/condos, property, electronics, furniture and other types of major purchases.



	2016	2014	2012	2010	2008	2006
Mobile home	1164	954	1091	1138	802	1311
Auto	644	650	522	507	479	453
Medical	331	299	496	306	708	423
House/condo	329	596	445	387	133	379
Property	240	268	336	274	379	330
Appli-ances	150	106	129	161	79	57
Elect-ronics	65	87	88	107	104	247
Furniture	106	178	90	113	136	149
RV	744	246	83	238	363	352
Travel tours	70	60	81	119	180	192
Other	244	290	93	149	15	20

Figure 28. Weighted average spending on major purchases

The estimated average expenditures of Winter Texan households by category are shown in Table 3, first by monthly spending categories then by major purchase categories.

Category	2016	2016 Weights	2016	2014	2012	2010	2008	2016	2014	2012	2010	2008
Groceries	$338	1	$338	$313	$271	$277	$259	$1,463	$1,387	$1,190	$1,229	$1,076
Eating out	$220	1	$220	$204	$196	$191	$189	$954	$906	$863	$845	$782
Housing	$793	1	$793	$668	$653	$641	$496	$3,433	$2,961	$2,873	$2,840	$2,059
Utilities	$160	1	$160	$158	$134	$138	$130	$693	$701	$591	$610	$541
Transportation	$138	1	$138	$155	$161	$124	$148	$597	$688	$710	$551	$613
Entertainment	$107	0.78	$84	$86	$79	$60	$72	$465	$488	$348	$366	$300
Clothing	$110	0.68	$75	$61	$62	$34	$70	$478	$400	$273	$265	$291
Medical	$274	0.31	$85	$54	$75	$83	$87	$1,185	$791	$331	$345	$360
Other	$348	0.13	$45	$37	$46	$78	$37	$1,509	$1,317	$203	$149	$154
Average monthly spending/ household			$1,938	$1,739	$1,677	$1,625	$1,488	$10,775	$9,639	$7,383	$7,198	$6,177
Major Purchases:												
Electronics	$254	0.26						$65	$87	$88	$107	$104
Automobile	$2,558	0.25						$644	$650	$522	$507	$479
Appliances	$686	0.22						$150	$106	$129	$161	$79
Medical	$1,277	0.26						$331	$299	$496	$306	$708
Travel tours	$330	0.21						$70	$60	$81	$119	$180
Furniture	$585	0.18						$106	$178	$90	$113	$136
Mobile home	$6,411	0.18						$1,164	$954	$1,091	$1,138	$802
Property	$1,460	0.16						$240	$268	$336	$274	$379
RV	$6,200	0.12						$744	$246	$83	$238	$363
House/condo	$5,430	0.06						$329	$596	$445	$387	$133
Other	$2,330	0.1						$244	$290	$93	$149	$15
Average one-time purchases/household								$4,088.00	$3,733	$3,454	$3,501	$3,378
Total spending per household during stay on all items								$14,863	$13,372	$10,837	$10,699	$9,555

Table 3. Winter Texan Household Spending in the Valley by Expenditure Category for 2008-2016[1]

The table shows that Winter Texans spent more on routine purchases this season—approximately $10,775—as compared to prior seasons—a nominal percentage growth of 11.8% from 2014 and 74.4% from 2006.

Considering both monthly and one-time expenditures, the 2015-2016 Winter Texans spent $14,863 while in the Valley, an 11.2% increase over the 2013-2014 Winter Texan expenditure level as seen in Figure 29.

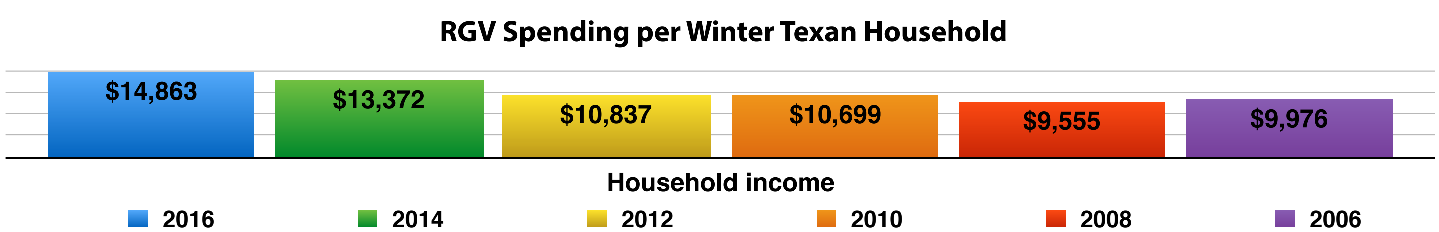


Figure 29. RGV Spending

THE 2016 PARK STUDY

Introduction

To estimate the total number of Winter Texans who stayed in the Valley during the year, survey questionnaires were mailed or faxed to local recreational vehicle (RV) and mobile home (MH) parks. The results from this survey and those from the survey of Winter Texans are used to estimate the total number of Winter Texans in the Valley during 2015-2016 as well as the direct economic impact that the Winter Texans have on the region.

Estimating the number of Winter Texans in the Valley is extremely difficult for a number of reasons. First, many Winter Texans own their own residence as shown previously in this study and time actually spent at an owned residence is difficult, if not impossible, to determine. These residents come and go without any way of tracking their presence. Second, often the RV and MH parks do not track the numbers and turnover of Winter Texans in their parks. The park may not know if a particular visitor is a Winter Texan or a transitory tourist. Third, some parks likely track occupancy of sites but not necessarily turnover with respect to different Winter Texans. Additionally, the parks have no real way of keeping track of Winter Texan visitors when the visitors own their own mobile home/park model in the park. Fifth, many parks do not participate in the study, perhaps skewing the results. Finally, an accurate tally of the population of parks—the number of parks and sites in the park—is a critical component of the estimation process but is virtually impossible to confirm. For example, different respondents from the same park replied to this year's questionnaire, each with different site and Winter Texan numbers. Despite these challenges, information from a directory of parks and from the park respondents willing to provide information about their experiences with Winter Texans allows an estimate of the number of Winter Texans in the Valley during the 2016 season, bearing in mind the flaws with obtaining the estimate.

Park Study Methodology

A questionnaire designed to determine the number of Winter Texans staying in mobile home and RV parks was developed based on the questionnaire used in prior Winter Texan studies. The questionnaire, shown in Appendix A, asked park manager/owners to indicate how many RV and mobile home/park model sites are in their park, how many of the sites are owned by Winter Texans, how many were rented by Winter Texans and what percent of the park was occupied by Winter Texans during the peak time of the season. Park owners/managers were also asked to estimate how many total Winter Texan households were in their park during the season and if this number was more or less than the number of Winter Texans last year, two years ago and more or less than five years ago. Finally, park owners/managers were asked to indicate what changes or trends they experienced with Winter Texans this year.

All Rio Grande Valley Mobile Home and RV parks are listed in the Park Directory 2014-2015 Edition published by the Winter Texan Times and available at http://wintertexantimes.net. The parks listed in the Directory with working fax numbers were sent a questionnaire. Respondents were asked to fax, email or mail the questionnaire to the Business and Tourism Research Center.

RESULTS: PARK POPULATION

The Park Directory 2014-2015 Edition lists 284 RV/mobile home parks and subdivisions in the Rio Grande Valley region specifically for Winter Texans. The Directory shows that 239 parks have a total of RV 33,434 RV sites with the number of sites ranging from 2 to 1,269 RV sites for an average of 140 RV sites per park. The Directory lists 219 parks as having a total of 22,857 MH sites with the number of sites ranging from 2 to 700 with an average of 104 MH sites per park. Taken together, the Directory reports a total of 56,291 RV and MH sites with an average of 198 sites per park. RV sites represent 59.0% of all sites in Valley parks while 41.0% of sites are MH sites as shown in Figure 30.

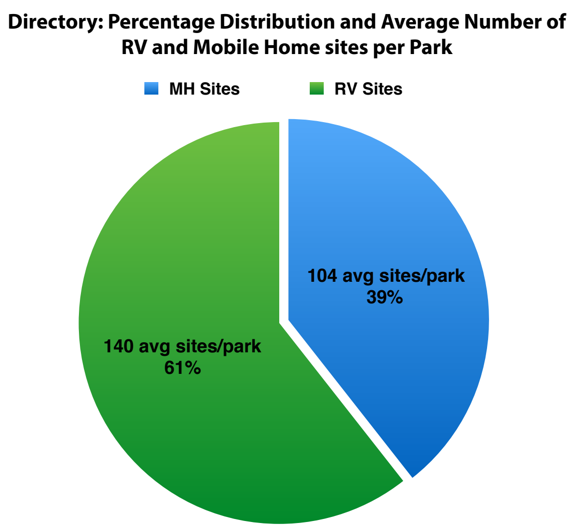


Figure 30. Directory: RV and mobile home sites per park

RESULTS: PARK SURVEY

Questionnaires were faxed to about 234 of the RV and MH parks with fax numbers as listed in the Park Directory 2014-2015 Edition. A number of faxes were not working numbers so attempts were made to contact all nonrespondents by phone to ask for participation. Eventually, 85 surveys were returned and considered usable in the park study (36% response rate).

Many of the questionnaires, however, were incomplete or the data provided was incorrect. For example, the respondent may have reported having 100 Winter Texan-owned mobile homes/park models but then indicated that only 40 Winter Texans households were in the park this year. Accordingly, adjustments were made to reflect total likely Winter Texans where appropriate.

In total, 83 parks reported having a total of 16,179 RV sites and 72 parks reported having 11,539 MH sites. Of all parks sites reported, 58% are RV sites while 42% are MH sites as seen in Figure 31. The average number of RV sites for all reporting parks is 195 per park and the average number of MH sites is 160 (see Figure 32) for an average of 326 total sites per park. The proportion breakdown of RV sites and MH sites in all Valley parks as reported in the park survey is consistent with that of the Park Directory although the average number of sites reported in the survey is substantially more than the average reported in the Park Directory.

Park Site Ownership

Park survey participants were asked to indicate how many RV sites and MH sites were owned by Winter Texans and how many were rented by Winter Texans during the season. A total of 31 parks reported having 2,724 (16.8% of all RV sites) owned by Winter Texans and 45 parks reported having 6,451 (55.9% of all MH sites) owned by Winter Texans. As for renting, 73 parks reported renting 7,572 RV sites (46.8% of all RV sites) to Winter Texans and 51 parks reported renting 3,145 MH sites (27.3% of total MH sites)) to Winter Texans. These results are shown in in Figure 32.

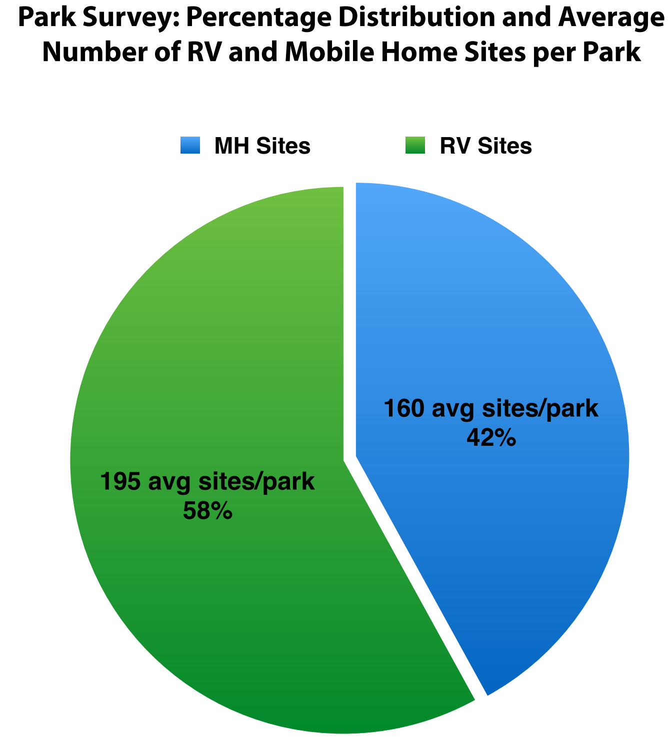


Figure 31. Park Survey: RV and MH sites/park

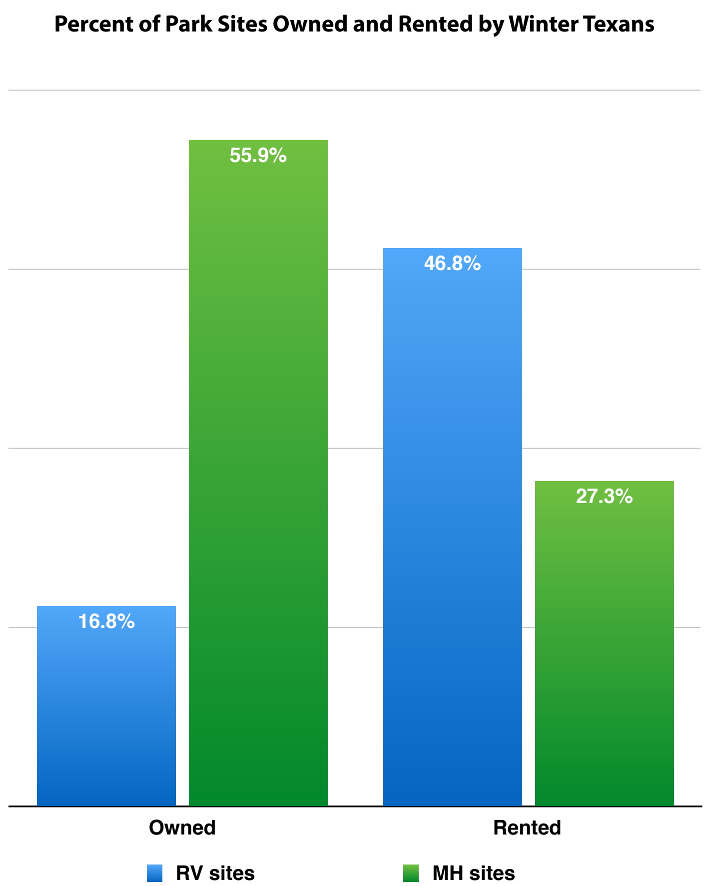


Figure 32. Percent of park sites owned by Winter Texans

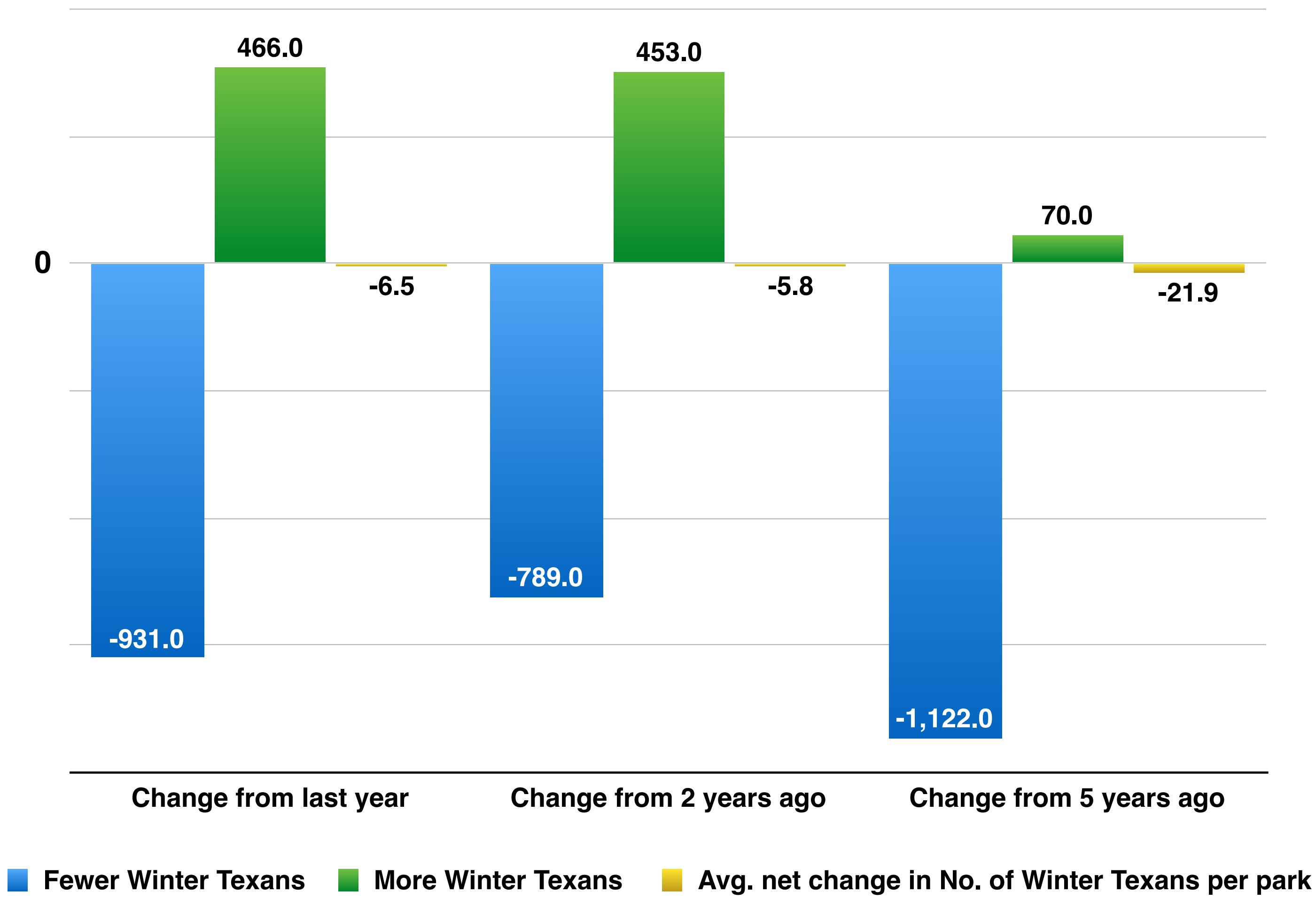


Figure 33. Changes in the number of Winter Texans in parks

Change in Park Occupancy

As an additional check on the number of Winter Texans staying in the parks, park owners/mangers were asked to indicate whether or not they had more or fewer Winter Texans in their parks this year as compared to last year, two years ago and five years ago.

A total of 72 park survey respondents reported the change in Winter Texans occupancy in their park from last year, with 17 parks having a total of 466 more Winter Texans, 34 parks having 931 fewer Winter Texans and 21 parks having no change. As shown in Figure 33, the net change in Winter Texans from 2015 to 2016 is an average of 6.5 fewer Winter Texans per park. Similarly, 12 of 58 parks reported having a total of 453 more Winter Texans this year than two years ago, 23 reported having 789 fewer Winter Texans than two years ago and 23 reported having the same number of Winter Texans as two years ago for a net average change of 5.79 fewer Winter Texans per park. A total of 48 park survey respondents reported the change in Winter Texans occupancy in their park from five years ago, with 8 parks having a total of 70 more Winter Texans, 18 parks having a total of 1,122 fewer Winter Texans and 22 parks reporting no change. The net change per park from five years ago was 21.9 Winter Texans per park.

In summary, park survey respondents reported having a per park average of 6.5 fewer Winter Texans during 2015-16 than in 2014-15, 5.8 fewer Winter Texans per park on average than in 2013-14 and 22 fewer Winter Texans on average per park than in 2011-12. In general, these study findings suggests that the number of Winter Texans has declined significantly over the last five years. The decline in the number of Winter Texans in RV/MH parks over the last few years is substantiated by a number of comments about trends made by park owner/managers. A listing of all park owner/manager comments about Winter Texan trends is provided in Appendix B.

RESULTS: ESTIMATING THE NUMBER OF WINTER TEXANS IN THE VALLEY

An estimate of the number of Winter Texans in the Valley during the 2015-2016 season may be determined by combining the results of the park survey with the results of the Winter Texan survey. The estimate should be considered with a wide margin of error, however, because the estimate depends on a number of assumptions as follows:

- 87% of Winter Texans households consist of two people (from the WT Survey results);
- 89% of Winter Texans stay in RVs or MH parks (from the WT Survey results);
- Average number of Winter Texans in parks as determined by the Park Survey is 200;
- Average Winter Texan park occupancy rate ranges from 68.3% to 71.8% considering the calculation method used:

  (1) Divide the total number of RV and MH sites rented and owned by Winter Texans by the total number of RV/MH sites in parks. This calculation as derived from the 2016 park survey data yields an average Winter Texan park occupancy rate of 71.8%.

  (2) Average the survey responses to the question that specifically asks the Winter Texan occupancy rate in the park. The 2016 Park Survey respondents reported an average Winter Texan occupancy rate of 68.3%.Four different estimates of Winter Texans in the Valley for 2015-2016 are shown in Table 4 using the information provided previously:

Method	Park sites	Park HHs	Non Park HHs	Total WT HHs	Total WTs
Method 1: Avg. No. WT in parks from survey x number of parks	200 x 284	56,800	7,020	63,820	119,344
Method 2: 71.8% Calculated occupancy rate x number of total park sites	56,291	40,398	4,993	46434	86,832
Method 3: 68.3% Reported occupancy rate x number of total park sites	56,291	38,468	4,754	44,216	82,684
Method 4: Reported -6% change (47,309 HH in 2014)		44,407	5,496	51,115	95,586
Average		**45,034**	**5,566**	**51,396**	**96,111**

Table 4. Estimations of Winter Texans in the Valley for 2015-2016

As shown in Table 4, the number of Winter Texans in the Valley may range from 82,700 to 119,000 depending on how the number is calculated. An average of the four different methods yields an average, rounded estimate of the number of Winter Texan households in the Valley during 2015-2016 as about 51,000 or 96,000 total Winter Texans.

DIRECT IMPACT OF WINTER TEXANS ON THE VALLEY ECONOMY

With the estimate of the number of Winter Texans in the Valley determined, the impact that Winter Texans have on the region's economy can thus be derived. About 51,000 Winter Texan households were in the Valley during the 2015-2016 season and spent an average of $14,900 per household (from Table 2). This means that Winter Texans made a direct economic contribution of $760 million to the Valley's economy during the 2015-2016 season. This result, along with results from prior studies, is shown in Table 5.

Year	Number of Winter Texans	Average expenditure per household per visit	Direct Dollar contributions (in millions)
1986-87	71,000	$2,592	$92
1987-88	76,000	$4,053	$154
1988-89	79,000	$4,051	$160
1989-90	81,000	$4,765	$193
1990-91	79,000	$ –	–
1991-92	84,000	$4,762	$200
1992-93	87,000	$5,103	$222
1994-95	97,000	$5,155	$250
1996-97	120,000	$5,317	$319
1998-99	124,000	$5,306	$329
2000-01	143,000	$4,601	$329
2002-03	123,000	$4,065	$250
2004-05	127,000	$6,614	$420
2005-06	127,000	$9,976	$634
2007-08	127,000	$9,555	$607
2009-10	144,000	$10,700	$803
2011-12	133,400	$10,800	$751
2013-14	100,000	$13,400	$710
2015-16	96,000	$14,900	$760

Table 5. Direct Impact of Winter Texans on Valley Economy

CONCLUSIONS

The 2015-2016 Winter Texan study reports the demographic characteristics, stay characteristics, and expenditure patterns of 925 Winter Texans who participated in the study. This report also compares responses from this year's Winter Texans to those of Winter Texans since 2006.

In general, most characteristics of this year's study participants are similar to respondents from past studies. For example, as in past years, this year's average study respondent is married and Caucasian with at least some college education, is in a two-person household and has been retired for more than one year. This year, Winter Texan households had an average income level of about $65,000, up from prior years.

This year's study participants had come to the Valley for an average of 11.7 years, stayed in the RGV for 133 days and owned their Valley residence, usually a mobile home/park model or a RV. The period of time Winter Texans stay in the Valley remained relatively consistent with past studies' findings but the proportion of Winter Texans who own their own residence, including a house, has increased over time while the ownership of RVs has declined.

The demographic and stay comparison of Winter Texans over the past five years suggests a trend of an aging Winter Texan population, which is not being replaced by a younger Winter Texan retiree group. This finding could be a warning call for the area tourism industry to focus more efforts on attracting younger travelers to replace aging Winter Texans as their health—and travel to the Valley—declines. The trend could be explained by factors not related to age, however. For example, Winter Texans who participate in the study may not be representative of nonparticipants.

As in prior years, typical respondents come to the Valley for the climate, the friendly people, the social activities, and as a winter vacation. While here, the activities most enjoyed by Winter Texans, as indicated by their responses of "often" or "a lot", include music jams, exercising and flea markets and are least likely to participate in softball, golf and fishing. As in previous years, most Winter Texan study participants plan to return to the Valley next year (95.3%).

The 2015-2016 Winter Texan respondents spent an estimated $30.6 million in Mexico border towns during their stay in the Valley. They also report spending slightly more on an average trip to Mexico than in past years. The proportion of Winter Texans who reported making at least one trip to Mexico as well as the average number of trips was about the same as in the prior survey year, but still well-below the peak of 96% visiting Mexico in 2008. This may mean that many Winter Texans are still concerned about perceived violence on the Mexican border and are choosing to remain on the U.S. side while in the Valley

Finally, and most importantly, this year's study estimated the direct economic impact of Winter Texans on the Valley economy. Winter Texans reported spending an average of $14,900 per household while in the Valley, up by 11.2% from the prior study. However, the number of Winter Texans in the Valley is estimated at 51,000 Winter Texan households, a decline of about 4%. Nevertheless, Winter Texans' total spending in the Valley during the 2015-2016 season is estimated at $760 million.

Taken together, results from this study suggest the substantial influence that Winter Texans have on the Valley and the Valley economy. Thus, Valley residents, business and governmental officials should continue to make Winter Texans feel welcome to the area and continue outreach efforts to ensure that younger, baby boomer Winter Texans are coming to the Valley to replace their aging predecessors. These baby boomers may have different needs and interests which should be examined in future studies and addressed to continue the trend of an ever increasing positive impact of Winter Texans on the Valley economy.

APPENDIX A: SURVEY INSTRUMENTS

Winter Texan Survey

Thank you for your responses to this important research. Please answer each question in this survey then return by mail OR COMPLETE ONLINE at http://utrgv.edu/wintertexan by **February 26** for a chance to win a cash prizes or a Kindle Fire.

Mail to: Tourism Research Center
UTRGV – College of Business
1201 West University Dr., Edinburg, TX 78539

For additional information contact
Dr. Penny Simpson at 956.665.2829

****All information is CONFIDENTIAL****

1. **Are you a Winter Texan?** ❑ Yes ❑ No
2. **What is your home state or province?** ____________ state
3. **What is your home zip code/postal code?** __________ zip
4. **How many days will you most likely be in the Valley?** ______ days
5. **Counting this trip, how many years have you been coming to the Valley?** ______ years
6. **What type of housing do you use while in the Valley? (select one)**
   - ❑ Stay with family/friends ❑ Hotel/motel
   - ❑ Own RV ❑ Rent RV
   - ❑ Own mobile home ❑ Rent mobile home
   - ❑ Own apartment/condo ❑ Rent apartment/condo
   - ❑ Own house ❑ Rent house
7. **What are your reasons for coming to the Valley? (check all that apply)**
   - ❑ Winter vacation ❑ Friendly people
   - ❑ Shopping ❑ To visit Mexico
   - ❑ Medical reasons ❑ Social activities
   - ❑ Climate ❑ Nature activities
   - ❑ Business ❑ Cost of living
   - ❑ Visit friends/family ❑ Other__________

8. How often do you visit or participate in the following activities while in the Valley?	Never	Rarely	Some-times	Often	A lot
Sight-seeing in Mexico	1	2	3	4	5
Travel tours	1	2	3	4	5
Flea markets	1	2	3	4	5
Historical sites	1	2	3	4	5
Beach	1	2	3	4	5
Wildlife/nature refuges	1	2	3	4	5
Fishing	1	2	3	4	5
Museums	1	2	3	4	5
Golf	1	2	3	4	5
Festivals	1	2	3	4	5
Music/jams	1	2	3	4	5
Libraries	1	2	3	4	5
Birding	1	2	3	4	5
Bicycling	1	2	3	4	5
Zoo	1	2	3	4	5
Volunteering	1	2	3	4	5
Softball	1	2	3	4	5
Exercising	1	2	3	4	5
Crafting	1	2	3	4	5
Dancing	1	2	3	4	5

9. **List any other activities you enjoy**______________________

IN MEXICO BORDER TOWNS:

10. **About how many trips will you make to a Mexico BORDER town this visit to the Valley?** __________ **# of trips**
11. **On average, how much do you spend, in dollars, ON EACH TRIP to a Mexico BORDER town?** $_ _ _ Dollars spent each trip
12. **In dollars (no cents), please estimate how much you spend, on average, per trip to a Mexico BORDER town on the following:** (round to nearest dollar)
    - $ ____ Shopping $ ____ Sight-seeing
    - $ ____ Dining $ ____ Prescriptions
    - $ ____ Dental $ ____ Doctor
    - $ ____ Other ______________________
13. **IN THE VALLEY: Please estimate the average MONTHLY amount your household spends on the following while you are IN THE VALLEY** (round to nearest dollar--no cents):
    - $ ____ Groceries $ ____ Medical
    - $ ____ Eating out $ ____ Housing
    - $ ____ Entertainment $ ____ Clothing
    - $ ____ Transportation $ ____ Utilities
    - $ ____ Other______________________
14. **Please estimate your TOTAL expenditures on the following *MAJOR* PURCHASES while in the Valley this visit:**
    - $ _____ Appliances $ _____ Auto
    - $ _____ Electronics $ _____ RV
    - $ _____ Mobile home $ _____ Property
    - $ _____ House/condo $ _____ Medical
    - $ _____ Travel tours $ _____ Furniture
    - $ _____ Other ____________________
15. **How much in TOTAL dollars (no cents) do you think you will spend while in the Valley this visit?** $______________

16. **Do you plan to return to the Valley next year?** ❑Yes ❑ No
If not, where will you go next Winter? ________________

18. **Why would you NOT return to the Valley** (check all that apply)

- ❑ Health
- ❑ Family reasons
- ❑ Gas price increases
- ❑ Decrease in income
- ❑ Other (specify) ______________________________
- ❑ Increased costs in the Valley
- ❑ Try new places
- ❑ Violence or terrorism
- ❑ Unhappy with the Valley

19. **In general, how would you rate your health?**

❑ Poor ❑ Fair ❑ Good ❑ Very good ❑ Excellent

20. **How many more years do you expect to live?** ______ **years**

21.Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following:	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Compared to others my age, I take less medicine.	1	2	3	4	5
Compared to others my age, I think I'm in better health.	1	2	3	4	5
I really don't have any physical problems	1	2	3	4	5
I enjoy having control over my own destiny.	1	2	3	4	5
My family is the most important thing to me.	1	2	3	4	5
I am proud to have a close-knit family.	1	2	3	4	5
Nothing is more important to me than my family	1	2	3	4	5
I think I have more self-confidence than most people my age.	1	2	3	4	5
When I set my mind to achieve something, I usually achieve it.	1	2	3	4	5
I am usually able to get what I want.	1	2	3	4	5
I have high self-esteem.	1	2	3	4	5
22. In general, how strongly do you agree or disagree that YOU ARE someone who...					
Is talkative	1	2	3	4	5
Tends to find fault with others	1	2	3	4	5
Does a thorough job	1	2	3	4	5
Is depressed, blue	1	2	3	4	5
Is original, comes up with new ideas	1	2	3	4	5
Is reserved	1	2	3	4	5
Is helpful and unselfish with others	1	2	3	4	5
Can be somewhat careless	1	2	3	4	5
Is relaxed, handles stress well	1	2	3	4	5
Is curious about many things	1	2	3	4	5
Is full of energy	1	2	3	4	5
Starts quarrels with others	1	2	3	4	5
Is a reliable worker	1	2	3	4	5
Can be tense	1	2	3	4	5
Prefers work that is routine	1	2	3	4	5

23.In general, how strongly do you agree or disagree with the following:	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel that I have little influence over the way people behave.	1	2	3	4	5
Success in dealing with people seems to be more a matter of the other person's moods and feelings at the time rather than one's own actions.	1	2	3	4	5
Many times I feel that I have little influence over things that happen to me.	1	2	3	4	5
Sometimes I feel that I don't have enough control over the direction my life is taking.	1	2	3	4	5
I set financial goals for the next few days for what I want to achieve with my money.	1	2	3	4	5
I set financial goals for the next 1-2 months for what I want to achieve with my money.	1	2	3	4	5
I set goals for the next few days for what I want to achieve with my time.	1	2	3	4	5
I set goals for the next 1-2 months for what I want to achieve with my time.	1	2	3	4	5
I prefer to have control over what I do and when I do it.	1	2	3	4	5
I try to avoid situations where someone else tells me what to do.	1	2	3	4	5
I enjoy making my own decisions about the distribution of my wealth.	1	2	3	4	5
I enjoy having control over my own destiny.	1	2	3	4	5
My family has friends or others who provide emotional support when needed.	1	2	3	4	5
In my family, we talk openly with each other about difficult topics.	1	2	3	4	5
I usually plan well ahead for most activities including purchases.	1	2	3	4	5
I have the same likes and dislikes as I did when I was in my 20s.	1	2	3	4	5
My personality, temperament, beliefs, values and life goals are the same as when I was in my 20s.	1	2	3	4	5
I don't worry about being able to control my worries and feelings.	1	2	3	4	5
Emotions never cause problems in my life.	1	2	3	4	5
It seems like I handle my life better than most other people.	1	2	3	4	5
I let my thoughts and feelings come and go without trying to control or avoid them.	1	2	3	4	5
I do the things I want to do, even if it makes me anxious or feel nervous.	1	2	3	4	5
When I feel anxious, worried or depressed I note these feelings but live my life the way I want to.	1	2	3	4	5

24. In general, how strongly do you agree or disagree with the following:	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I regularly donate to charitable causes.	1	2	3	4	5
I frequently participate in volunteer work.	1	2	3	4	5
I am willing to help strangers.	1	2	3	4	5
I believe that practicing small acts of kindness towards strangers provides its own reward.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel that not everyone is capable of helping themselves.	1	2	3	4	5

25. How do you identify your political leanings:

- ❑ Extremely liberal
- ❑ Liberal
- ❑ Slightly liberal
- ❑ Moderate/middle of the road
- ❑ Slightly conservative
- ❑ Conservative
- ❑ Extremely conservative

Some products and services such as wills and preplanned funerals are designed for the end of life. Please answer the following questions thinking about those types of purchases.

26. Do you currently have a will?
❑Yes ❑ No ❑ plan to soon ❑ Do not plan to have one

27. Do you currently have a preplanned funeral?
❑Yes ❑ No ❑ plan to soon ❑ Do not plan to have one

28. To what age do you expect to live? ______ years old

29. If you do NOT currently have a will or pre-planned funeral, please help us understand why:	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I don't want to discuss my death with my family.	1	2	3	4	5
Talking about my death would stress out my family	1	2	3	4	5
I have plenty of time remaining to preplan my funeral.	1	2	3	4	5
I don't know anyone who can help me plan my funeral.	1	2	3	4	5
I don't want to discuss my funeral with anyone else.	1	2	3	4	5
Funeral directors who promote preplanned funerals are not trustworthy.	1	2	3	4	5
I have plenty of time to get a will before I die.	1	2	3	4	5
I don't know anyone who can help me write a will.	1	2	3	4	5
I don't want to discuss a will with anyone else.	1	2	3	4	5
I don't want anyone to know about my estate until I die.	1	2	3	4	5
Lawyers who prepare wills are not trustworthy.	1	2	3	4	5

Other reasons?______________________________________

30. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following:	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Writing a will for distribution of my estate is very important to me.	1	2	3	4	5
Prepaying and planning for my own funeral is very important to me.	1	2	3	4	5
I think it is important for people to preplan for their end of life purchases.	1	2	3	4	5
I think it is a shame if people do not plan for their end of life purchases ahead of time.	1	2	3	4	5
I would regret not making my end of life purchases.	1	2	3	4	5
Making purchases now for my end of life is the right thing to do.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel a personal sense of responsibility to prepare now for the end of my life.	1	2	3	4	5
I must protect my family and heirs by preparing now for the end of my life.	1	2	3	4	5
It is my responsibility to plan for distributing my estate when I die.	1	2	3	4	5
I'm very satisfied with my decisions about a preplanned funeral.	1	2	3	4	5
I'm very satisfied with my decision about a will.	1	2	3	4	5
Overall, I'm very satisfied with my decisions concerning the end of my life.	1	2	3	4	5
Most people who are important to me approve of my planning for my funeral.	1	2	3	4	5
Most people who are important in my life think I should plan for my funeral.	1	2	3	4	5
Most of my friends have planned for their funerals.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel that I have plenty of funds to pre-plan a funeral.	1	2	3	4	5
My funds may not be adequate to provide me with my ideal funeral.	1	2	3	4	5
I am not worried about funds for pre-planning a funeral.	1	2	3	4	5
Most people who are important to me approve of me creating a will.	1	2	3	4	5
Most people important to me think I should have a plan for allocating my wealth.	1	2	3	4	5
Most of my friends have a last will and testaments in place.	1	2	3	4	5
I want to have control of how my wealth will be distributed after my death.	1	2	3	4	5
Funds used on the creation of a will is money well spent.	1	2	3	4	5
I am not at all afraid to die.	1	2	3	4	5
The thought of death seldom enters my mind.	1	2	3	4	5
It doesn't make me nervous when people talk about death.	1	2	3	4	5
The thought of death never bothers me.	1	2	3	4	5

30. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following:	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
My family has the means to take care of my end-of-life expenses.	1	2	3	4	5
I anticipate conflict among family members upon my death.	1	2	3	4	5
My family will honor my wishes without the need for any end-of-life documents.	1	2	3	4	5
My family can be counted on to make good decisions regarding my estate.	1	2	3	4	5
I want a great deal of control in planning my funeral.	1	2	3	4	5
Preplanning a funeral is useful.	1	2	3	4	5
A preplanned funeral is beneficial.	1	2	3	4	5
Preplanning a funeral is a valuable activity.	1	2	3	4	5
Having a will in place is useful.	1	2	3	4	5
Having a will is beneficial.	1	2	3	4	5
Creating a will is a valuable activity.	1	2	3	4	5
31. Based on your past experience:					
Planning for death is necessary.	1	2	3	4	5
Preplanning for death is essential.	1	2	3	4	5
Preplanning made the process easier for grieving family and friends.	1	2	3	4	5
32. Thinking about making purchases for the end of your life makes you feel…					
Uncomfortable	1	2	3	4	5
Anxious	1	2	3	4	5
Sad	1	2	3	4	5
Relieved	1	2	3	4	5
Helpless	1	2	3	4	5
In control	1	2	3	4	5
Accomplished	1	2	3	4	5
Secure	1	2	3	4	5
Peace of mind	1	2	3	4	5
Fearful	1	2	3	4	5
Difficult	1	2	3	4	5
Safer	1	2	3	4	5
Pleased	1	2	3	4	5
Stressed	1	2	3	4	5
Proud	1	2	3	4	5

33. Which would you prefer? ❑ Cremation ❑ Burial

34. Do you have a cemetery plot? ❑Yes ❑ No

35. Can you think of a product that you currently have that you just can't live without—a product that makes your life better? What is the product and in what way does it make your life better?

36. What comments or recommendations do you have for city officials in the Rio Grande Valley?

37. Including yourself, how many people are in your household while in the Valley? __ __ **# of people in household**

38. What is your age? __ __ years old

39. What is your gender? ❑ Male ❑Female

40. What is your ethnicity?

❑ White ❑ Hispanic ❑ Mixed
❑ Black ❑ Asian ❑ Other __________

41. What is your marital status?

❑Married ❑Single ❑Widowed ❑Divorced/separated

42. What is your highest educational attainment?

❑Less than high school ❑High school graduate
❑Some college, no degree ❑Associate's degree
❑Bachelor's degree ❑Graduate/professional degree

43. What is your current employment status?

❑Work full-time ❑ Retired within past year
❑Work part-time ❑ Retired more than one year
❑Unemployed (looking for a job)
❑Other ________________

44. What is your combined annual household income?

❑less than $20,000 ❑$60K-$69,999
❑$20K-$29,999 ❑$70K- $79,999
❑$30K- $39,999 ❑$80K- $99,999
❑$40K- $49,999 ❑$100K-$149,999
❑$50K-$59,999 ❑ more than $150,000

45. Would you agree to serve on a consumer panel where you might be contacted up to 2 times a year for your opinion about issues or products? ❑ Yes ❑ No

ENTRY FORM for PRIZES

Name ______________________________

Valley address ______________________________

City: ______________**Phone Number** ______________

e-mail address ______________________________

All information is confidential. Winners will be notified no later than March 12.

COMPLETE ONLINE AT www.UTRGV.edu/WinterTexan
OR mail to: Tourism Research Center
UTRGV – College of Business
1201 W. University Blvd
Edinburg, TX 78539

This research has been reviewed by the UTRGV Institutional Review Board (IRB). Please contact the IRB if you have questions about your rights as a research subject (956-665-2889 or irb@utrgv.edu).

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!!!

RESULTS: PARK POPULATION

Please help us determine how many Winter Texans came to the Valley this year by completing this short survey. The survey is conducted by The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Business and Tourism Research Center and all information is confidential.

Park Name ________________________ Park Manager ________________________

RV occupancy questions about THIS WINTER SEASON:

1. How many total RV sites are in your park?
   #_________ sites
2. How many total RV sites are owned by Winter Texans?
   #_________ sites
3. How many different Winter Texans households rented an RV site in your park:
   This year? #_______ Last year? #________
4. What percent of all RV spaces in your park was occupied by Winter Texans at the peak time this winter?
   _________%

Mobile home/park model occupancy questions about THIS WINTER SEASON:

1. How many total mobile home and park model sites are in your park? #_________ sites
2. How many total mobile home and park model sites are owned by Winter Texans? #_________ sites
3. How many different Winter Texan households rented a mobile home/park model space in your park: This year? #_______ Last year? #________
4. What percent of all mobile home and park model spaces in your park was occupied by Winter Texans at the peak time this winter?
   ___________%

How many different Winter Texan households were in your park this year?
_______ # of households

Compared to **last year**, about how many **more** or **less** Winter Texans did you have?
_______ # **more** Winter Texans _______ # **less** Winter Texans or _________ about the same

Compared to **two years ago**, about how many **more** or **less** Winter Texans did you have?
_______ # **more** Winter Texans _______ # **less** Winter Texans or _________ about the same

Compared to **five years ago**, about how many **more** or **less** Winter Texans did you have?
_______ # **more** Winter Texans _______ # **less** Winter Texans or _________ about the same

What changes or trends did your park experience with Winter Texans this year?

Other Comments?

Does your park offer tenants a written rental agreement? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Want a summary of RESULTS? Please check the box and provide your address ☐

Address: ______________________________ City ____________________ Zip ___________

Name: ___________________________________ e-mail address ______________________

Ways to return this survey:

Mail to: Tourism Research Center
UTRGV – College of Business
1201 W. University Blvd.
Edinburg, TX 78539

E-mail:
penny.simpson@utrgv.edu

Fax to:
956.665.2085

Questions? Call Dr. Penny Simpson at 956-665-2829.

APPENDIX B: PARK MANAGER/OWNER COMMENTS ABOUT TRENDS

- 20% of park was purchased for Toll Road that will be coming in.
- 3/4 of my residents enjoy park activities and games. Board games and play golf, pot lucks, fish fries, etc. dancing. 1/4 is just happy home everyday. Once a week happy hour in Progresso that's their life and very happy, too.
- 40% of my site are Canadian. Large losses due to currency
- A large decline in Canadians. The Canadian that did come had to leave due to a change in insurance.
- Always seeks new ideas on how to better our community. This people are so energetic they volunteer and use their strategies from home.
- Bad Exchange rate with Canadian Dollar; 60% of the occupants are 55 and older and the group is aging fast. But the big problem was the drop in the Canadian Dollar. Too expensive for Canadians too come
- Biggest hit was Canadians b/c of currency. Border violence
- Canadian Exchange
- Canadians did not come due to exchange rate and higher taxes. WT are getting older and their children do not want to go to Texas; they prefer to go to the Bahamas. Younger people cannot afford. Have more locals, especially professionals such as dentists, doctors, and teachers. He expects the Winter Texan parks will be converted to Family Parks in the future
- Does not actively seek to rent to Winter Texans; prefers to rent to college students. Says they are permanent and are more profitable
- Dramatic drop in Canadians
- Due to health and age issues, many homes are for sale. Positive advertising to the communities up north. Such as Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Canada, etc. is needed regarding the RGV in South Texas
- Everyone was happy to be here.
  Great weather sure helped.
  Under New Management.
- Everything was the same except amount of people. We were down due to illness and deaths. Only one didn't come because of the Canadian Dollar. Two Canadians sold out this year.
- From year to year, similar number of households, but fewer months per household
- Had more elderly people die or health reasons did not come down and were selling out.
- Health issues, age, selling going home to live, renters purchasing park models, spouse deaths. Shorter periods.
- I forgot to mention that we have a lot of Canadians that say they will not return next year if their currency continues to be at this rate. It's very concerning to see what the NEW Winter Texan will be like in the next 5-10 yrs. The NEW RVer will not be as loyal as the OLD Winter Texan, which will hurt the schools, churches, hospitals, and libraries that are used to getting volunteer winter Texans. The New RVer wants to travel all parts of the country and to other countries. In fact, a big trend going on now in the Valley are rentals because the young winter Texans want to come visit the area first before investing in an expensive RV. Hope this helps. I'm looking forward to seeing the numbers. My prediction is that we are lucky if we saw 100,000 Winter Texans this past season compared to 150K in previous years
- Illness and age
- Improvements of lots of cleaner, new managers, painting in rec hall. FYI: We will have 15 new residents this next season. Hopeful for more. Some are in their 60s.
- Larger rigs with more slide outs and 50 amp service

- Larger rigs with more slideouts and 50 amp sunrise 55-70 age group
- Less Canadians, more war generation leaving due to illness or death (age 76 and up). Less baby boomers coming
- Less people came, mostly due to health issues
- Less Winter Texans coming to the Valley
- Longer stay
- Lot of Canadians had to sell park model because of the dollar and their age
- Lower fuel price-More winter Texans
- Many of the older owners are selling and moving closer to families so we are getting many new people
- More natives staying at the park, less Winter Texans. Winter Texans are just getting older and the younger people don't go south anymore.
- More new people as RV'ers, lots of in-house sales, about 25-35
- More off the Road RV's and people staying longer
- Much more positivity
- Need a lot of activities. Want to rent.
- New to the resort, sorry don't know answers
- No Canadians; Exchange Rate is bad. People are passing away or just one spouse is left
- Number of Winter Texan declining rapidly. Age/Health are main issues. There is no new generation of Winter Texans
- Selling units (illness or age)
- Our park is occupied by all local residents
- Our rent is a lot cheaper than the rest. A lot of people switched over to our park. Mostly from the Midwest
- People are getting grumpier; they want everything for free.
- People did not show up; bad year this year.
- Properties were exclusively winter Texans. People from Mexico and Central America are moving in and bought several spaces. They drove the Winter Texans out. Winter Texans don't want to mix with Mexicans. Racism.
- Reduced length of stay, mostly by later arrival. Much more concern about rates. Many more visitors currently in other parks looking for a different park to stay in.
- RGV is not helping to advertise the valley up north. As a whole RGV needs to campaign for the Valley or will see a large decline in reserves
- Shorter stays by Canadians. Canadian dollar caused many to reconsider coming at all.
- Significantly less people from Canada; lot of people are passing away or moving into assisted living
- The attendance was down. We have many more homes for sale than in prior years. Canadian economy really hit us hard. The Valley (RGV) needs more out of advertising to get more numbers.
- The Canadian business stayed strong with no decline.
- There are less and less Winter Texans in the past 2 and 5 years. There are more workers, most of them work in the pipeline jobs
- There has been a steady increase of Winter Texans. They are coming later in the season, we usually expect them to arrive in November but now they are coming in mid-December.
- Things are pretty much the same; WT don't go to Mexico anymore. They just stay here.
- This next generation is not following the parents' footsteps. They would much rather go and rent an economic motel for 2-3 months
- We don't have any Winter Texans in our park. Just people from the Valley. RV sites were converted to mobile home sites. We only want permanent residents.
- Winter Texan are older and not returning due to age or illness.
- Winter Texans are more careful with their money. Canadians cannot afford to come anymore because of the exchange rate. A lot of people quit coming because they are getting too old
- Winter Texans were actually buying MH and PM instead of renting.
- WT dying off; more locals are renting. Still at 100% occupancy; still cannot accommodate because WT RV's are getting too large
- Younger people

The Winter Texan Report