The United States government process is open to the public, allowing the public to be involved with decisions that will shape their lives. Even though government planning is open to the public, professionals still dominate the planning process and make the final decisions which shape government policy. Citizens who participate in the planning process would like to feel as if the professionals who are making the final decisions use the input that they provide. Public input is important to the field of recreation. Users of developed parks will be more satisfied if their input is considered in the master planning process. In general, participants who are involved in these planning processes feel as if they are effective.

The research design for this study was a cross sectional, relationship study. The purpose of this study was to determine the relationships between perceived effectiveness of public input, access and availability of information, understanding of the process, setting and timing, fairness of the process and onsite participation. A non-experimental post-test survey was used.

This study found that participants in the Boone County Fairgrounds master planning process perceived their input to be effective. The participants’ perceived effectiveness was affected by their understanding, perception of fairness, setting and timing, and access and availability to information.

The results of this study prove that the public who participate in master planning processes feel as if their input is used by the professionals who make the final decisions. To create a more satisfied user group, park planning professionals should involve the public in the decision making process.