

Mill Lake Master Plan Stage 3 – Engagement Summary

Council Meeting

April 8, 2025

Parks Recreation & Culture



Purpose

- Provide a summary of the recently completed community engagement on the Mill Lake Park Master Plan Preferred Concept, focusing on clarifying the community's perspective on items which arose during the Stage 2 – Exploring Options community consultation.
- To seek Council's endorsement of developing a comprehensive Draft Mill Lake Park Master Plan which will include amenities and infrastructure that received public support during Stage 3 engagement.

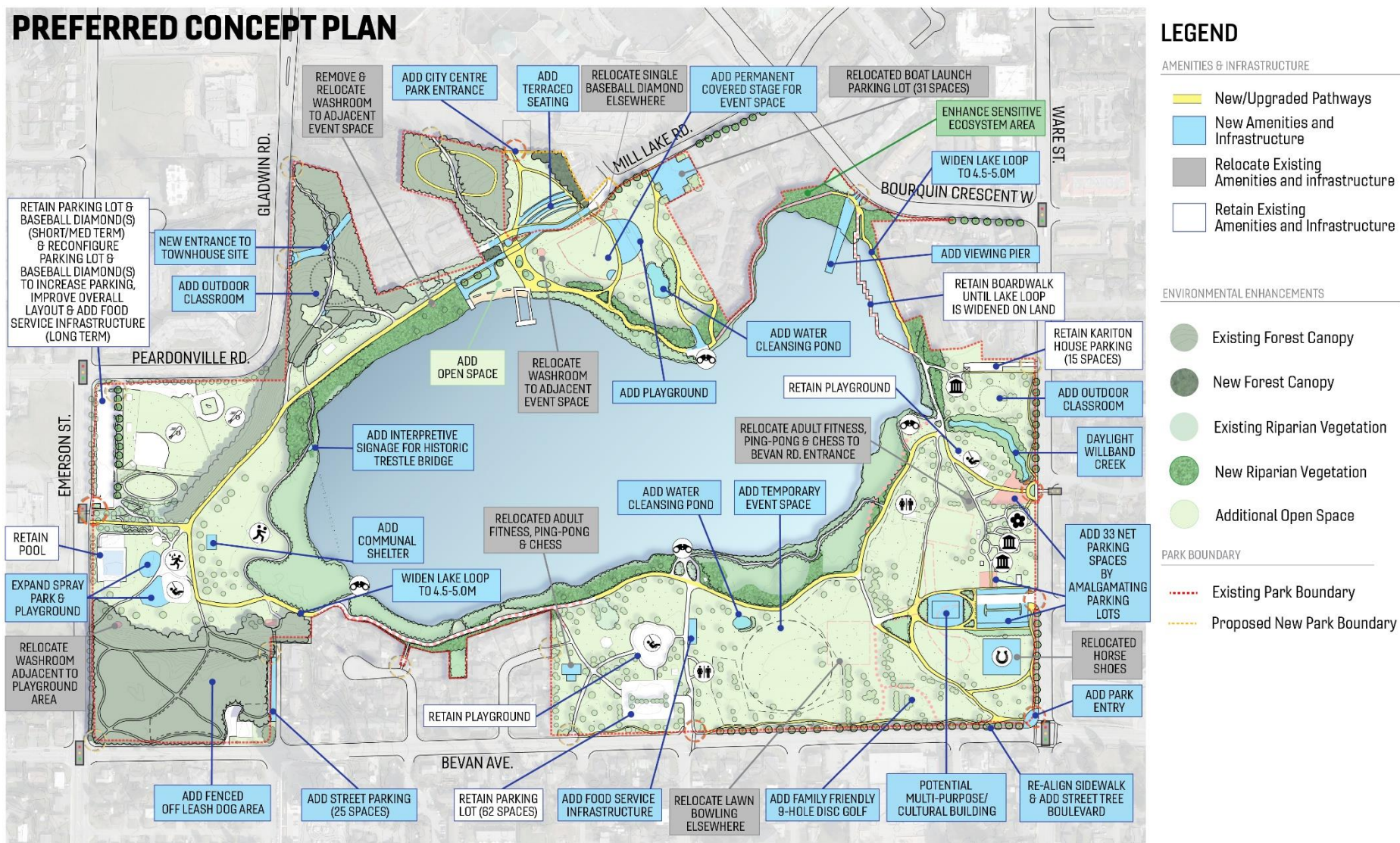


Background

- At the November 5, 2024 Regular meeting, Council received a report on the Stage 2 – Preferred Concept Plan, including engagement findings.
- That report noted the intent to undertake Stage 3 community consultation with a focus on unifying elements which were identified in Stage 2, and there was value in ensuring clarity of community support for various elements in the Preferred Concept Plan.
- Staff received direction from Council to proceed with Stage 3 work which included this next phase of engagement.



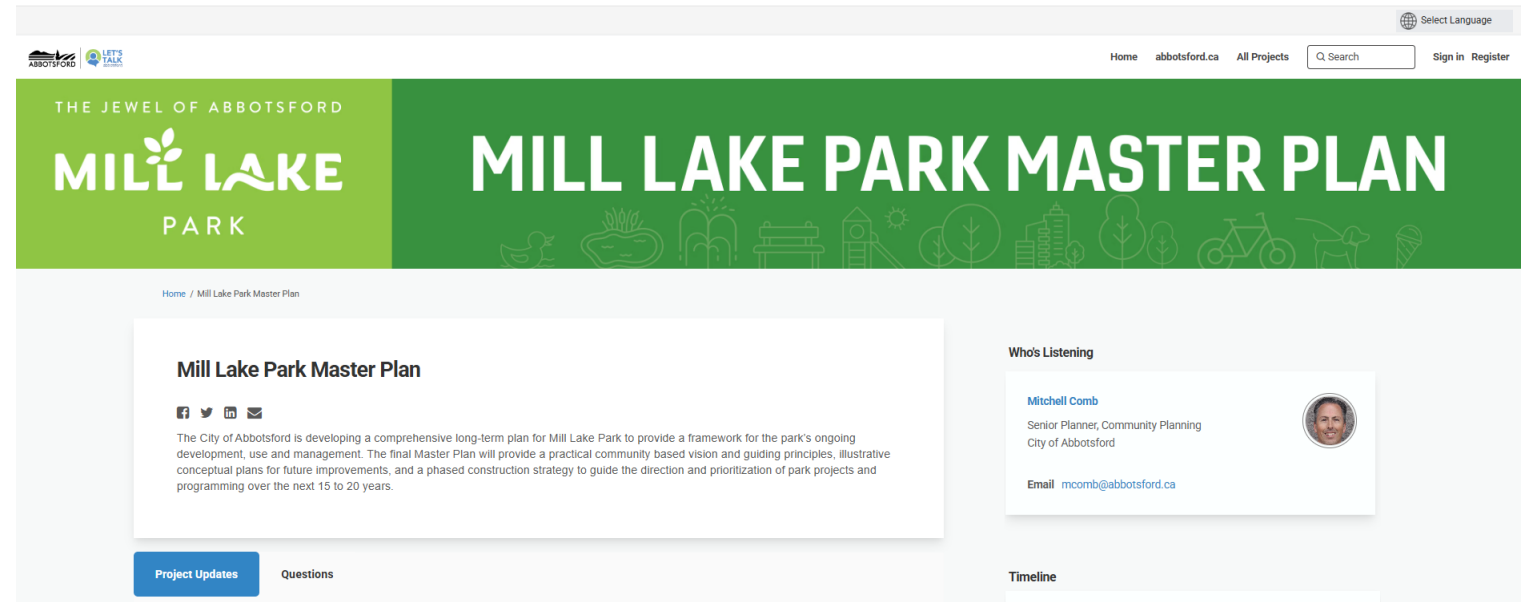
Background – Preferred Concept Plan (from Stage 2)



Discussion

Stage 3 Engagement

- Stakeholders
- Advisory Committees
- Let's Talk Abbotsford



Discussion

Stakeholders

- Phone conversations and emails with Abbotsford Horseshoe Club and property owners adjacent to Mill Lake Park
- Abbotsford Horseshoe Club was directly engaged as their organization is the only one which moves locations within the park
- Confirmation provided to other stakeholders that their Stage 2 input was considered in the Preferred Concept Plan or would be included for consideration in strategies under development



Discussion

Council Advisory Committees:

Presented the Preferred Concept and engagement results to...

- Community Culture and Environment Advisory Committee (November 14, 2024)
- Accessibility and Equity Advisory Committee (February 27, 2025)

Received input and feedback from both committees; both Advisory Committees expressed support consistent with the results of the Community Consultation Questionnaire.



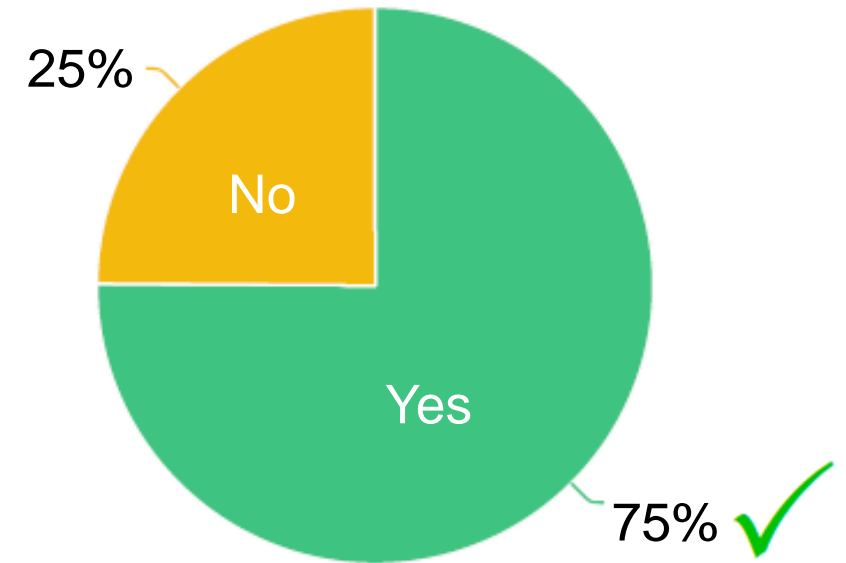
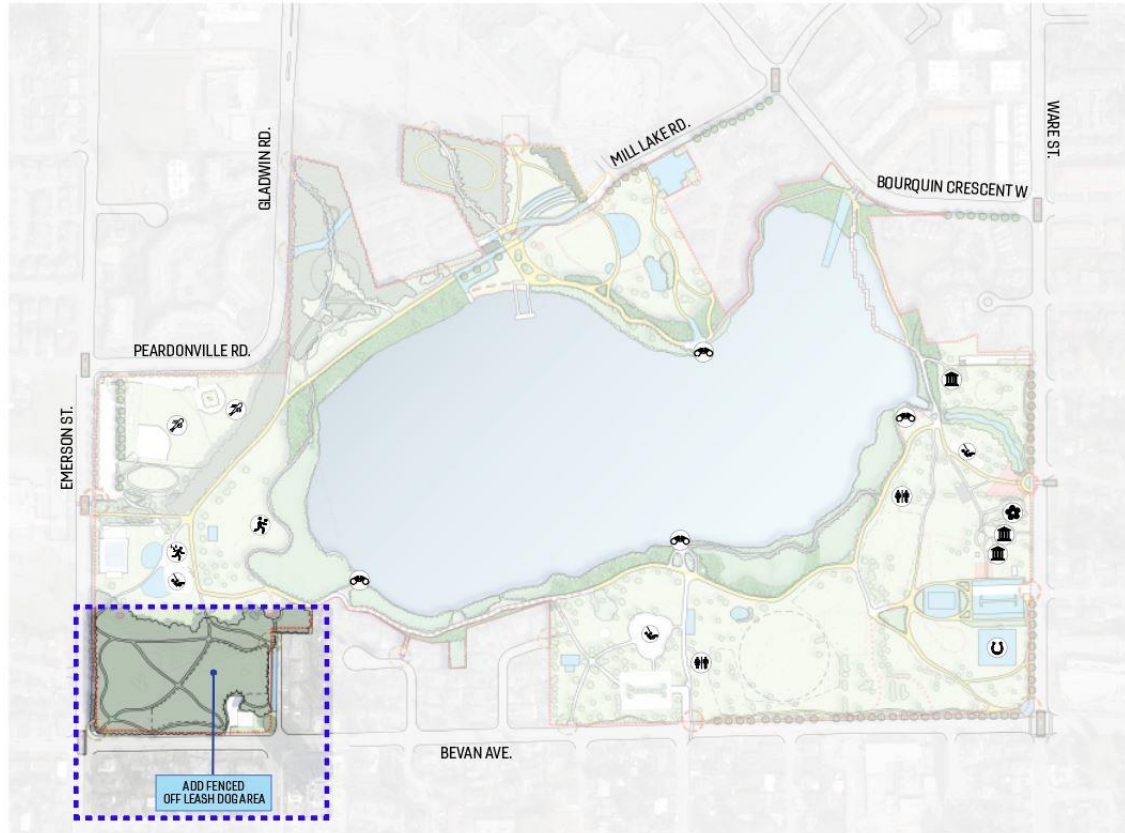
Discussion

Let's Talk Abbotsford activated to provide a community confirmation on important unifying elements of the Preferred Concept Plan

- Questionnaire Development (November – January)
- Open from January 28 to February 25, 2025
- Promoted through signage in the Park and typical communications channels
- Received **1,787 responses**

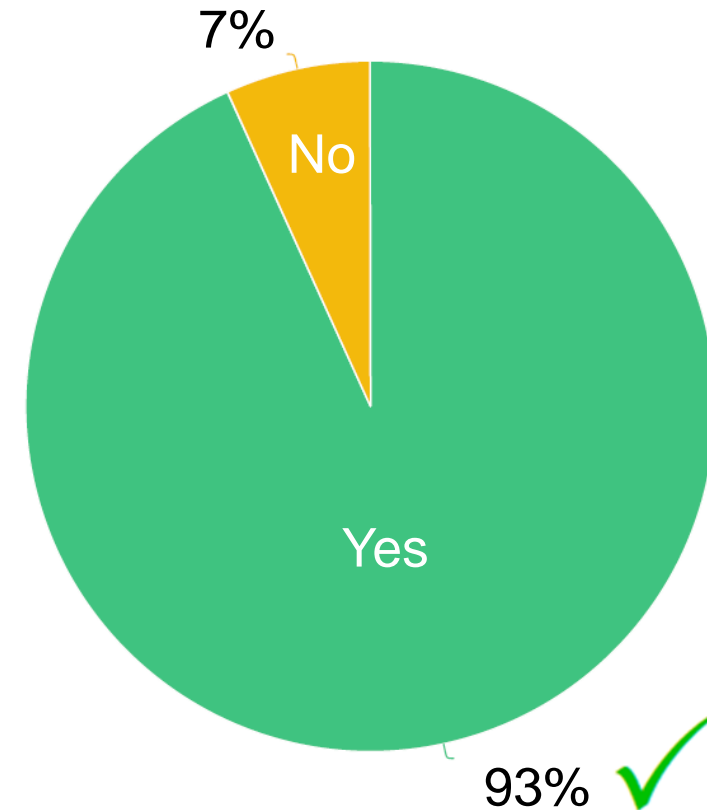


Question 1: Fenced Off Leash Dog Area



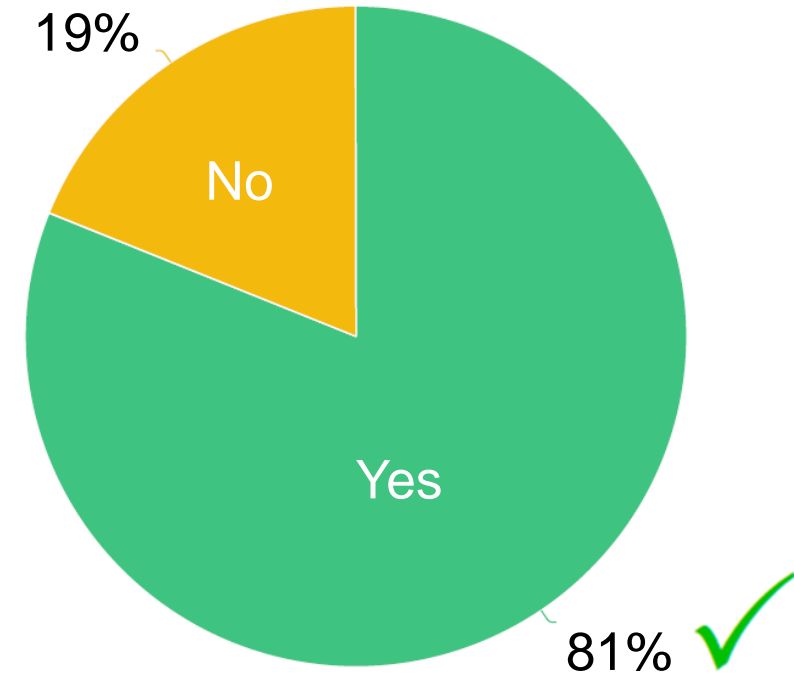
- Community consultation to date has identified interest in adding a Dog Park. Do you agree with the location of the proposed Dog Park?

Question 2: Centennial Pool



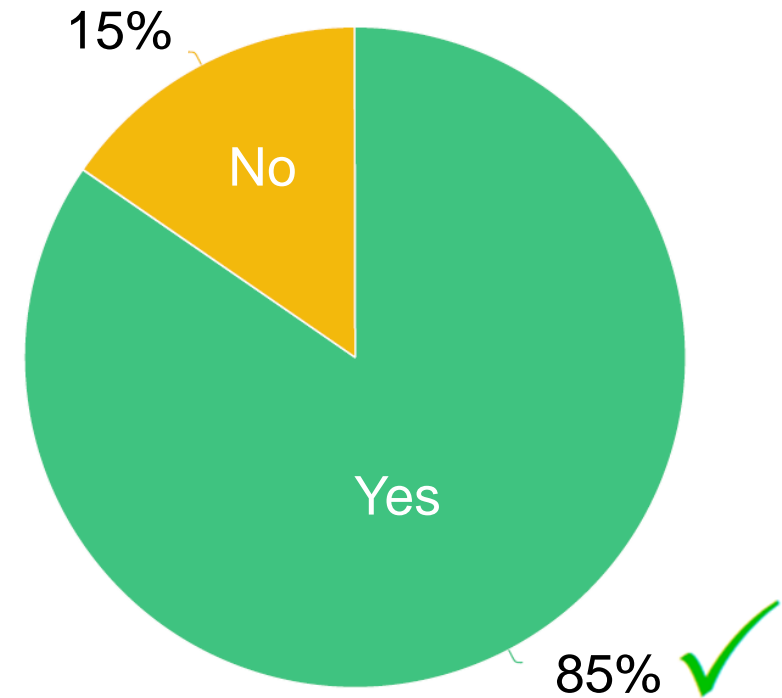
- Future plans for Centennial Pool will be informed by the Aquatic Services and Facilities Strategy which is underway. Previous engagement results indicated that respondents would like to keep Centennial Pool. Do you agree that the City should keep the pool within the park?

Question 3: Food Services in the Park



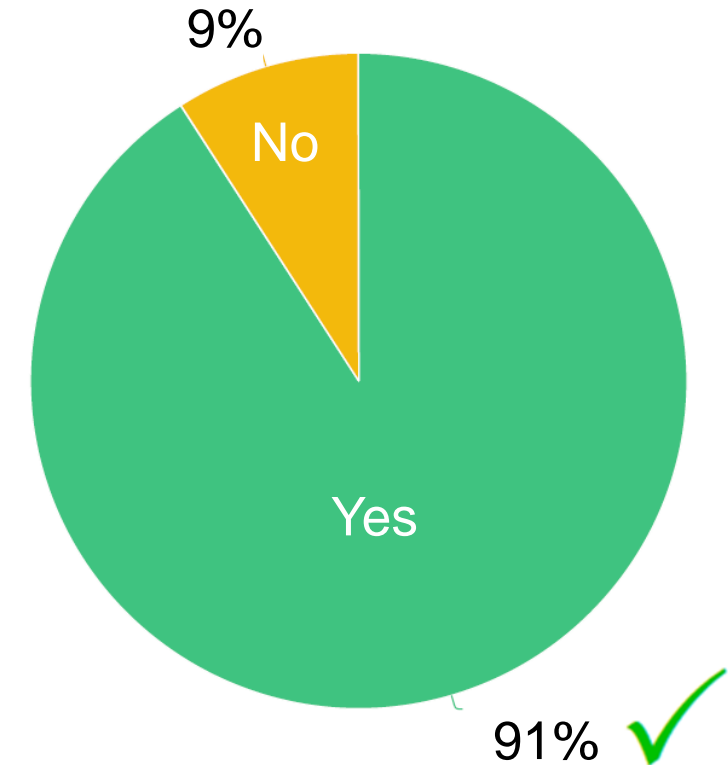
- In our previous Stage 2 survey, a majority of respondents preferred that the City include food services in the park. With this result, and anticipating that the form and function of food services could change over the life of the Master Plan (15 – 20 years), a food service location with the necessary infrastructure has been identified. Do you agree with the proposed location for adding food service infrastructure?

Question 4: Lake Loop Pathway Width



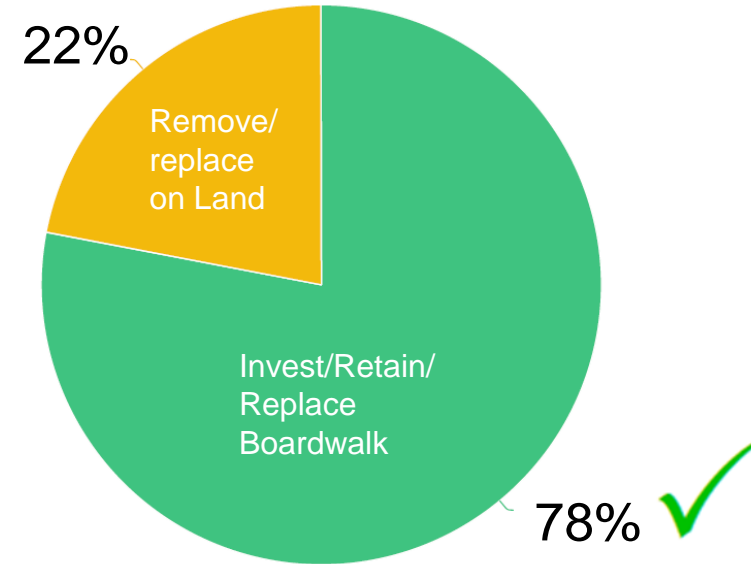
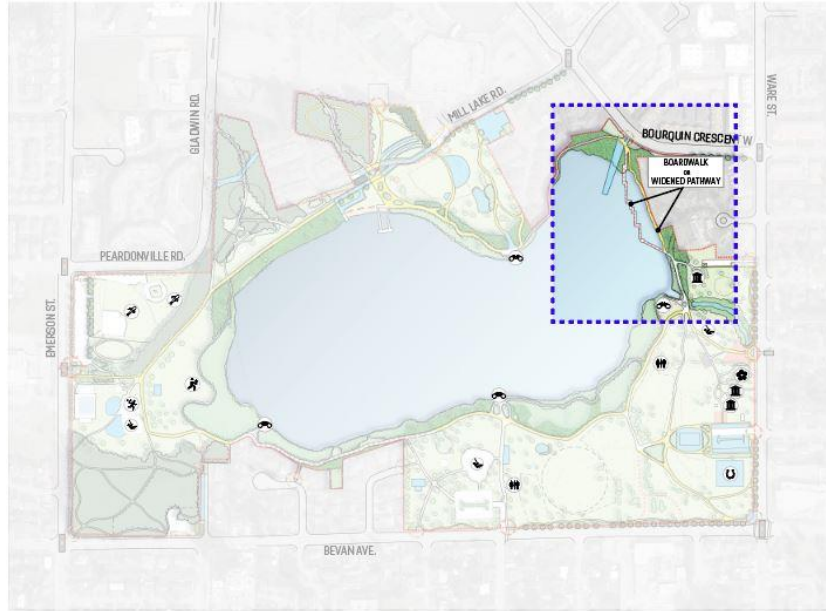
- We heard from respondents that the lake loop pathway can be shared by cyclists and pedestrians provided the pathway is wide enough. Currently the lake loop varies from 3 to 4 metres in width. The City is proposing to widen the lake loop to 4.5 to 5.0 metres in width, to provide comfortable access for all users (this proposed pathway width would include safety features such as lane markings and signage). Do you agree with the proposed widening of the lake loop pathway to 4.5 to 5.0 metres in width?

Question 5: Lighting in the Park



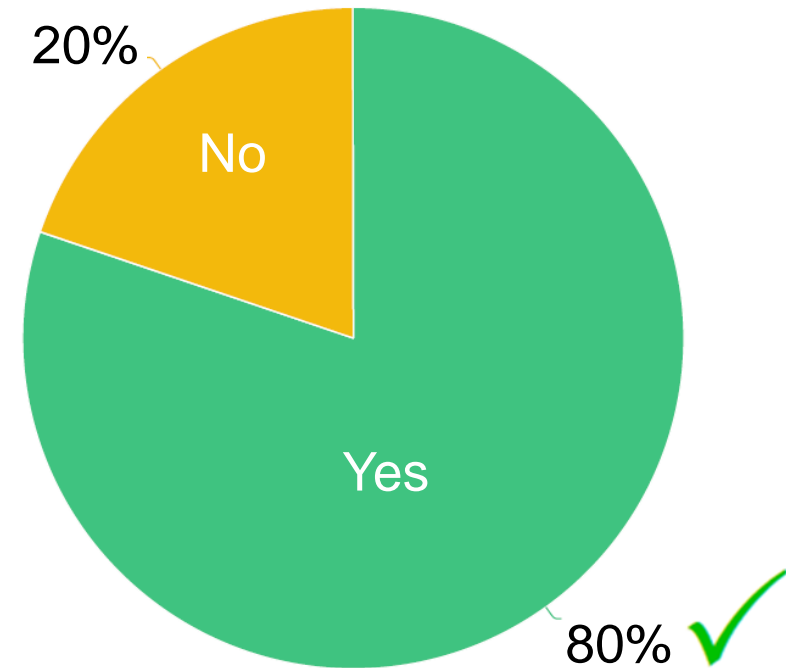
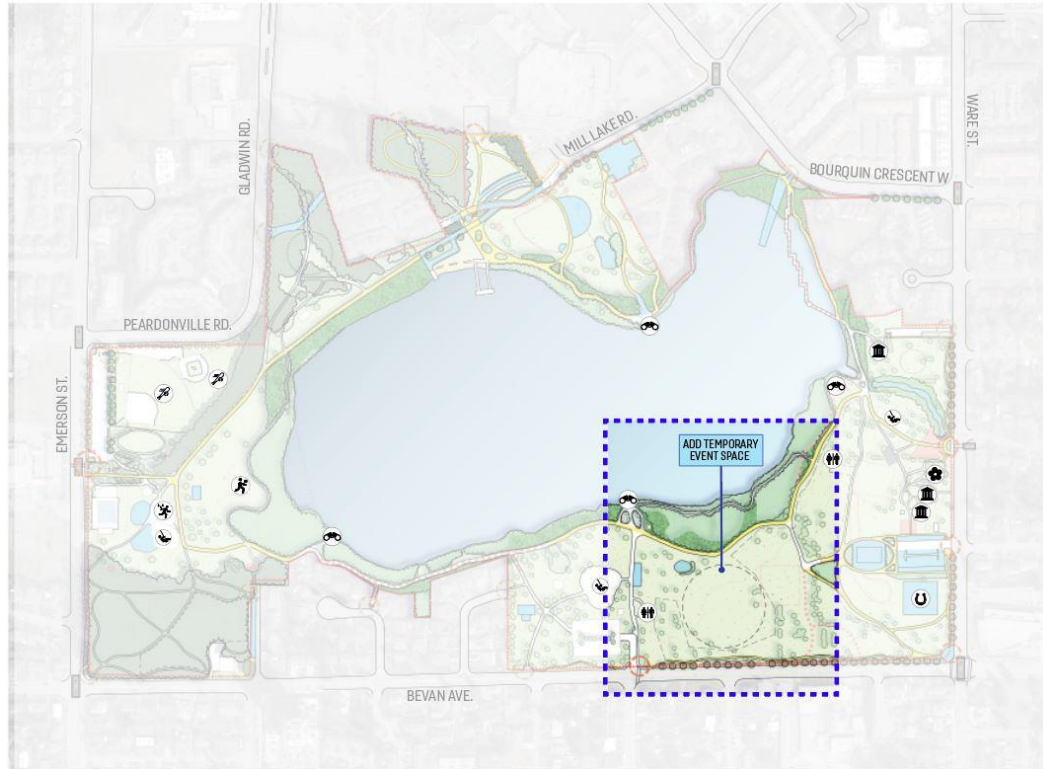
- A majority of respondents supported lighting in the park to extend the length of time spent in the park and to support safety. Do you support lighting pathway areas and parking lots in the evenings, to extend the length of time you could spend in the park?

Question 6: Lake Loop – Boardwalk or Pathway on Land?



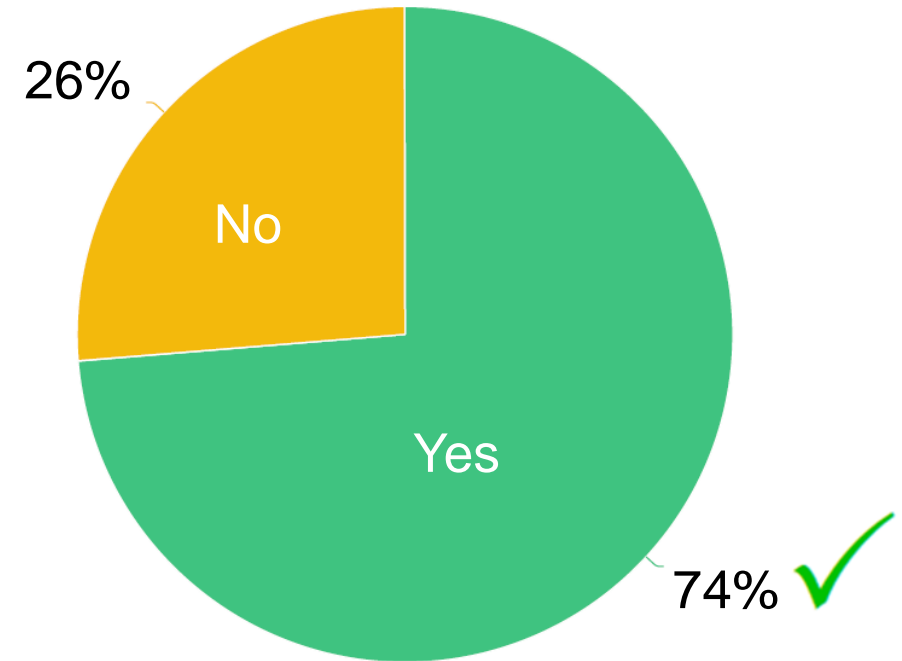
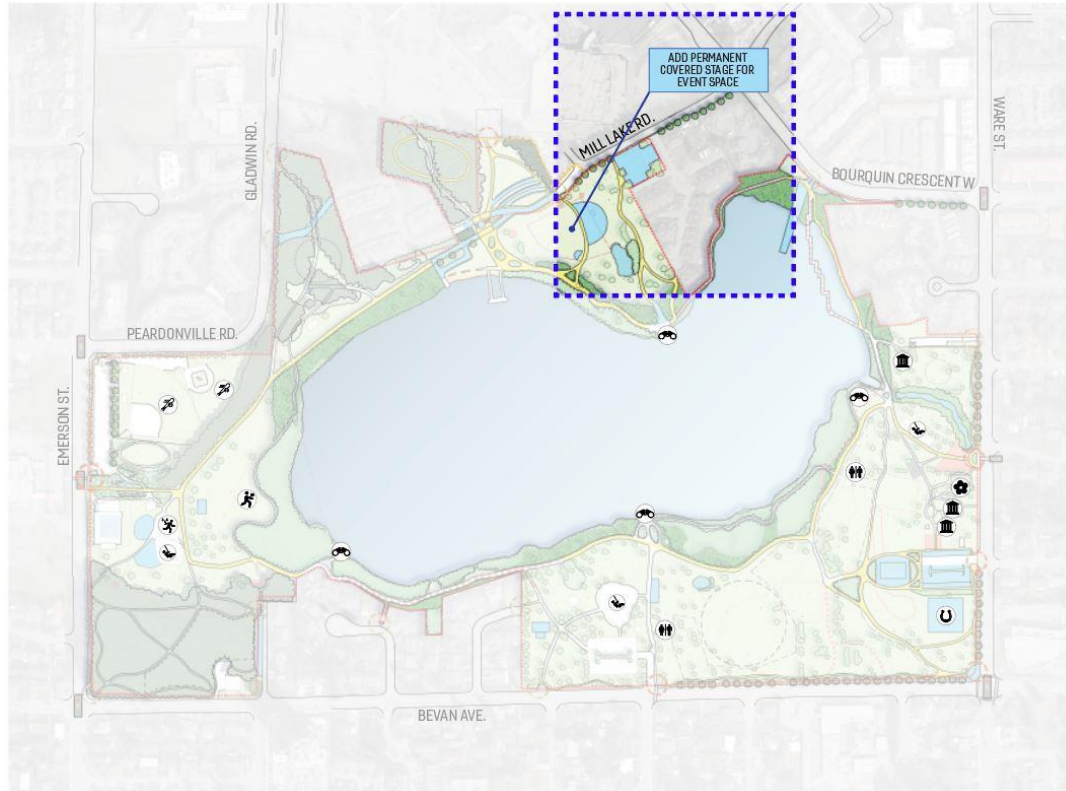
- Looping around the lake on a continuous route is a draw for residents, and this message was clear in the community input received during Stage 2 of the Plan. There are some accessibility and connectivity considerations for the boardwalk on the east end of the lake that are somewhat difficult to overcome over the long term and an eventual rebuild/replacement would be required. As a result, Stage 2 community consultation explored the idea of removing the boardwalk and replacing it with a pathway on the land to complete the loop around the lake.
- Unfortunately, this idea was interpreted by many as simply the removal of the boardwalk and, by association, the end of a full lake loop rather than a sequence of completing the lake loop on land, then removing the boardwalk at the end of its lifecycle. One of the objectives at the outset of developing the Preferred Concept was to ensure a full pathway loop around the lake with the highest possible degree of accessibility.
- When the boardwalk is nearing end of life, would you prefer to invest funds to replace and retain it, or replace it with a widened pathway on land (either of these options will still maintain a continuous loop around the lake)?

Question 7: Temporary Event Space



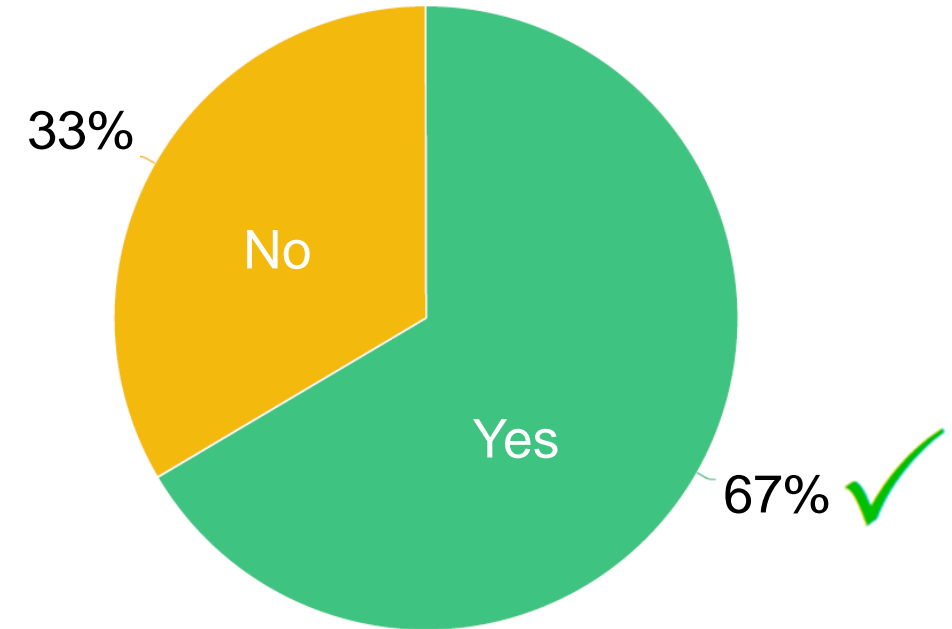
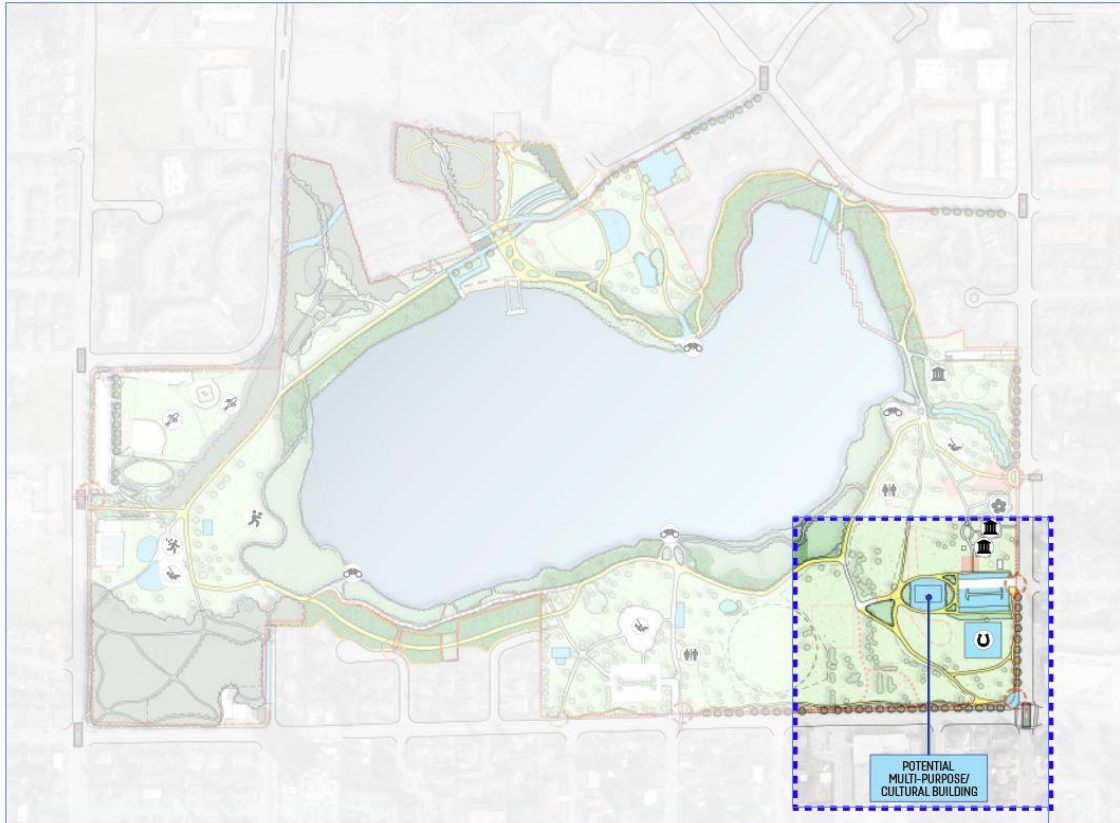
- To accommodate a temporary event space in the park, minimal infrastructure such as adding power outlets and a concrete pad (that normally serves as a gathering place with tables, but also accommodates a temporary stage) would need to be installed. Would you like to enhance the area shown in the map for a temporary event space area to hold larger performance related events such as festivals, concerts, holiday celebrations?

Question 8: Permanent Covered Event Space



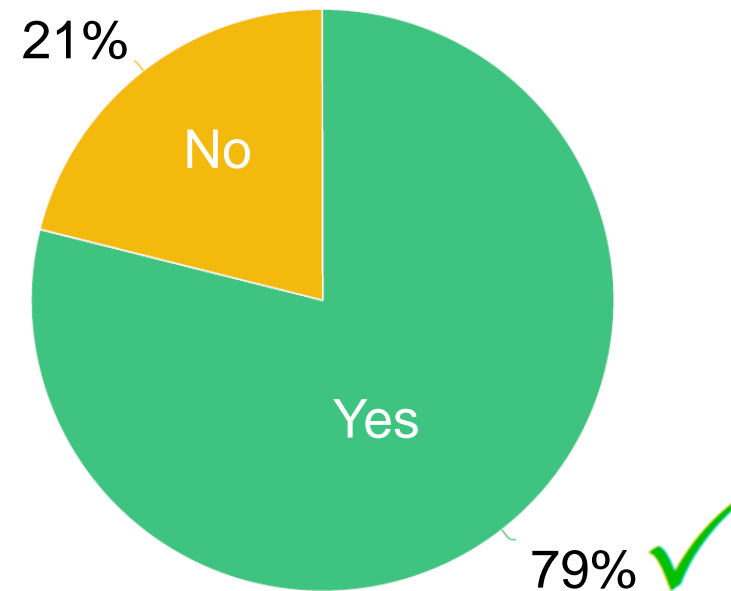
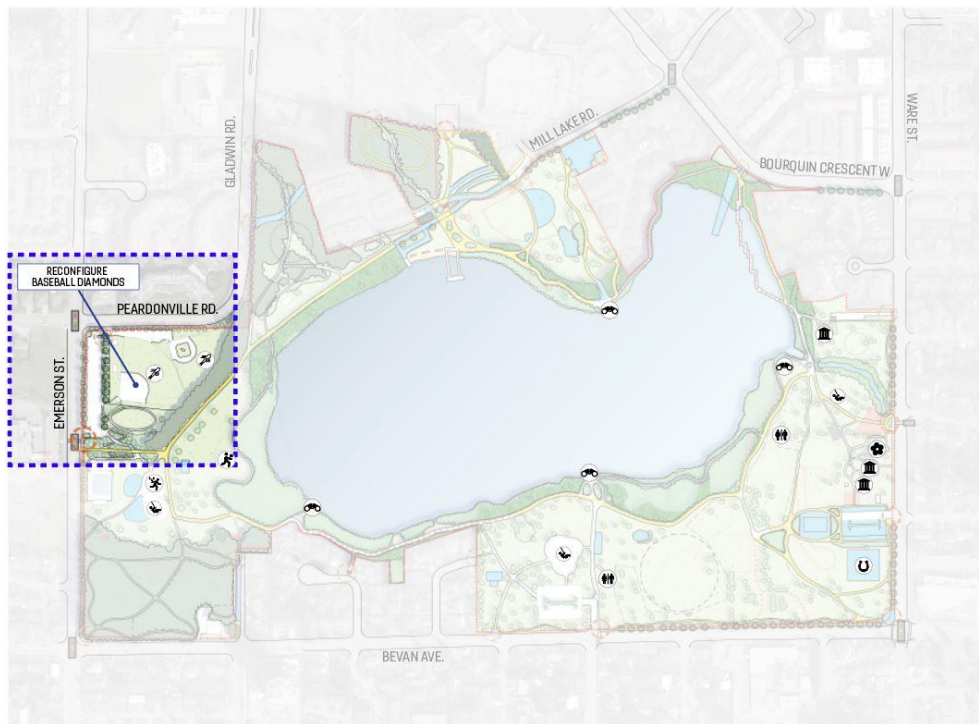
- Would you like to use the area shown in the map for a permanent covered event space area to hold smaller to mid-size performance related events such as buskers, concerts, outdoor theatre?

Question 9: Cultural Center/Multi-Purpose Building



- The proposed single-storey cultural center/multipurpose building would provide park users with a facility that could be used by various organizations, community programming (e.g. art exhibits, sports clubs or community meetings etc.), would you like to see this type of amenity built in the proposed location?

Question 10: Mill Lake Park Ball Diamonds



- The Centennial Ball Diamond is proposed to be removed after a suitable replacement location is achieved through the results of the Sport Field and Sport Court Strategy, and the two diamonds shown in the attached image would be reconfigured to better support community use. The reconfiguration would provide more functionality and convenience to the baseball diamonds and staff are proposing to add additional parking and food service infrastructure. Do you support reconfiguring the baseball diamonds in the area to enhance the user experience?

Next Steps

- Continue to develop a comprehensive Draft Mill Lake Park Master Plan which will include amenities and infrastructure that received public support during Stage 3 engagement.
- Report back to Council with a comprehensive Draft Mill Lake Master Plan for Council's consideration.



Recommendations

That Council direct staff to continue developing a comprehensive Draft Mill Lake Master Plan, which incorporates the Stage 3 community engagement results.

