

Wabamun Area Vision

Stage 1 Public Engagement Summary

June 2022

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Project Introduction

Parkland County is creating a long-range vision for the Wabamun Area. The Wabamun Area Vision will inform the future of the region, helping the County make consistent, coordinated decisions about planning and development. This is a planning process that will result in two planning documents:

- **The Wabamun Area Long Range Plan** will provide high level vision and direction for the broader Wabamun Study Area around Wabamun Lake, identifying opportunities for growth, development, and collaboration over the next 30 years.
- **The Hamlet of Wabamun Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP)** is a land use plan specific to the Hamlet. This plan will provide future land use, transportation, servicing, and public space priorities along with a series of actions to revitalize the area over the next 15 years.

Project Timeline

The Wabamun Area Vision process started in Winter 2021 and will be completed in Spring of 2023. Understanding and learning from local knowledge and community feedback is critical for creating plans that will serve this transitioning area effectively. There are four main stages of engagement as part of the planning process.

- **Stage 1: | Spring 2022**
The first phase of engagement confirmed the draft vision and pillars and gathered insights and ideas from the community on issues and opportunities in the Wabamun Area. This stage is summarized in this report.
- **Stage 2: | Summer 2022**
Stage two will involve gathering feedback on the Wabamun opportunities mapping completed to date and brainstorming implementation actions for the area.
- **Stage 3: | Fall 2022**
Stage three will involve showcasing the draft Long Range Plan and prioritizing actions for the Hamlet Area Redevelopment Plan.
- **Stage 4: | Spring 2023**
Stage four includes the public hearing for the Hamlet Area Redevelopment Plan and associated Municipal Development Plan and Land Use Bylaw amendments.

Engagement Approach

Why We Engaged

The aim of this first stage of engagement was to introduce the project, gather feedback on the draft vision and pillars, and collect information about issues and opportunities in the area. The feedback will be used to refine the vision and pillars and as input into the opportunities analysis for the project.

Who We Engaged

In Stage one, we engaged with the general public, including residents of and visitors to the Wabamun Area as well as other Parkland County residents.

How We Engaged








Stage 1 engagement consisted of an online survey that included an online mapping tool. In addition to the online survey, participants could also pick up a paper version from the Parkland County office to fill out. A total of 411 people completed a survey and 231 comments were collected through our online mapping tool.

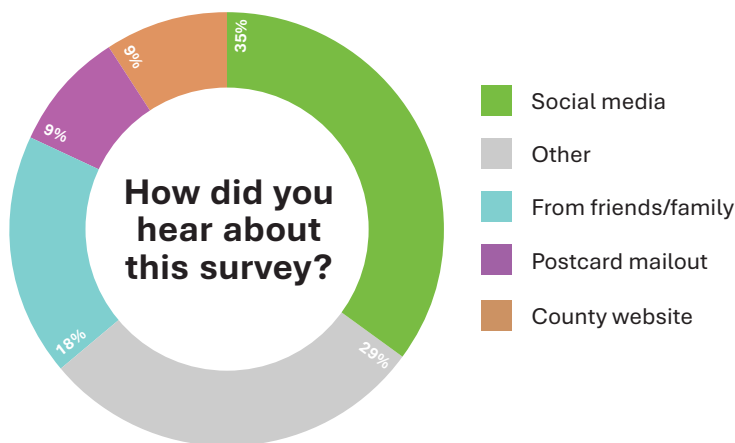
Stage 1 engagement was open from **April 4 to May 23, 2022**.

411
ONLINE SURVEY
RESPONSES

231
ONLINE MAP
COMMENTS

1200+
UNIQUE VISITORS
TO THE WEBSITE

RESOURCES	DESCRIPTION	STATS	AUDIENCE
Engagement Opportunities			
 Public Survey	<p>The online survey was the primary means used to collect input from residents.</p> <p>Paper copies were available for pick up at the County office.</p>	411 Survey Respondents	Public
 Mapping Tool	<p>Opportunity for people to provide spatial comments on a map of the study area.</p>	231 comments	Public
Communications Tactics			
 Project Webpage	<p>All project information was available on the project website at wabamun.ca.</p>	1200 unique webpage visits	Public
 Social Media	<p>Posts on Facebook and Twitter directing people to the online survey.</p>	2 posts, 4 likes, 11 interactions, 29 shares	Public
 County Tax Notice	<p>A general note on parkland County's ongoing initiatives and a link to the website was provided in the notice of assessment on May 19, 2022.</p>	21,177 people received the notice	Public
 Emails	<p>An email with the survey link was sent to the summer villages and to those subscribed to the Parkland County Wabamun update list on April 4, 2022.</p>	63 emails sent	Public
 Postcard	<p>Postcards were sent to homes, farms, and businesses with a Wabamun postal code. The remaining postcards were placed in the brochure rack at PCC with other Wabamun-related publications.</p>	651 postcards sent out	Public



Most participants told us they heard about the survey through social media or through other communications including:

- County email update
- Summer village update / notification
- Wabamun Sailing Club
- Trans Alta website
- WWMC / watershed management
- Business chamber

Engagement Findings

What We Asked

The aim of the first phase of engagement was to introduce the project, gather feedback on the draft vision and pillars, and collect information on issues and opportunities in the area.

Through the online survey, we asked about participant demographics, their level of agreement with the draft Vision, and a series of questions related to the draft pillars about existing issues and opportunities. At the end of the survey, participants also had the option to contribute to the online mapping tool.

Demographics: We asked the age of participants and whether they were a resident, seasonal resident, or visitor to the Wabamun Area. Depending on the response, participants were asked some of the following follow-up questions including:

- Where do you live in the Wabamun Area?
- Which months of the year do you typically live in the Wabamun Area?
- Where is your permanent residence?
- Would you ever consider becoming a permanent resident of the Wabamun area? (If you wish, please explain)

Vision: We asked for input to both confirm and refine the draft vision statement.

- Does the draft vision align with your wishes for the future of the Wabamun Area?
- Have we missed anything in the vision?

Pillars: We asked several questions related to each of the six pillars to explore current issues and opportunities in the area.

- What natural features should be protected and celebrated in the Wabamun Area?
- What types of economic development actions do you think would help to increase jobs in the Wabamun Area?
- Are there any types of job, services, or businesses that you would like to see in the Wabamun Area?
- What recreation activities do you love to do in the Wabamun Area?
- How could the municipality encourage more year-round recreation in the Wabamun Area? Are there any opportunities for new amenities or activities?
- What would help connect the Wabamun Area better?
- How should space / land be prioritized?
- What role should the Hamlet of Wabamun play in the broader region?
- What types of housing are needed in the Wabamun Area to support existing and new residents?
- What does the Wabamun Area need to attract and retain the following types of residents? (Young professionals, Families, Retirees, Newcomers, Other)
- What makes the Wabamun Area unique?
- What aspects of the Wabamun Area should be highlighted to promote it as a year-round destination?

Online Mapping Tool: Participants could place comments spatially on a map of the study area. There were three types of pins that participants could select: like, issue, and reimagine.

Key Findings

There were several key themes that were present throughout the survey responses.

Protection of Wabamun Lake

A critical theme arising from this phase of engagement was the need to emphasize Wabamun Lake as the central pillar of the Wabamun Area Vision. The lake was the number one mentioned natural feature that should be protected and celebrated. Many expressed their concerns over the health of the lake and the potential impacts of additional development and recreation traffic in the area. Wabamun Lake is the main reason that people choose to live, recreate, and do business in the area, which is why it was felt that protecting the lake should be the fundamental guiding element of any future plans.

Natural Areas and Recreation

Within the comments there was a tension between opinions surrounding the protection of natural areas and the desire for new recreation and tourism developments to support increased use. Some participants felt that increasing visitor traffic and public access would threaten lake health and would impact the quiet rural character of the area. On the other hand, other participants mentioned that they wanted to see increased access to the lake, more interconnected trails, and new amenities and development to support tourism-based economic development. Some of these participants expressed that there was no point in protecting natural areas and the lake if no one is able to enjoy them. A few comments indicated a need for balance between these priorities, to ensure ecological health and responsible recreation.

Opportunities for Seniors and Youth

Many participants emphasized the need for amenities and services for both seniors and youth in the Wabamun Area. Seniors' housing was the most selected housing type that people felt the area needed. When asked about recreation and services, many said they wanted to see gathering places for seniors, additional health services, and supportive living facilities. Additionally, many commented on the lack of opportunities for youth, including recreational amenities (e.g. arenas, skateparks, affordable baseball diamonds, other sports teams) as well as the lack of entry level jobs for teens in high school or post graduation.

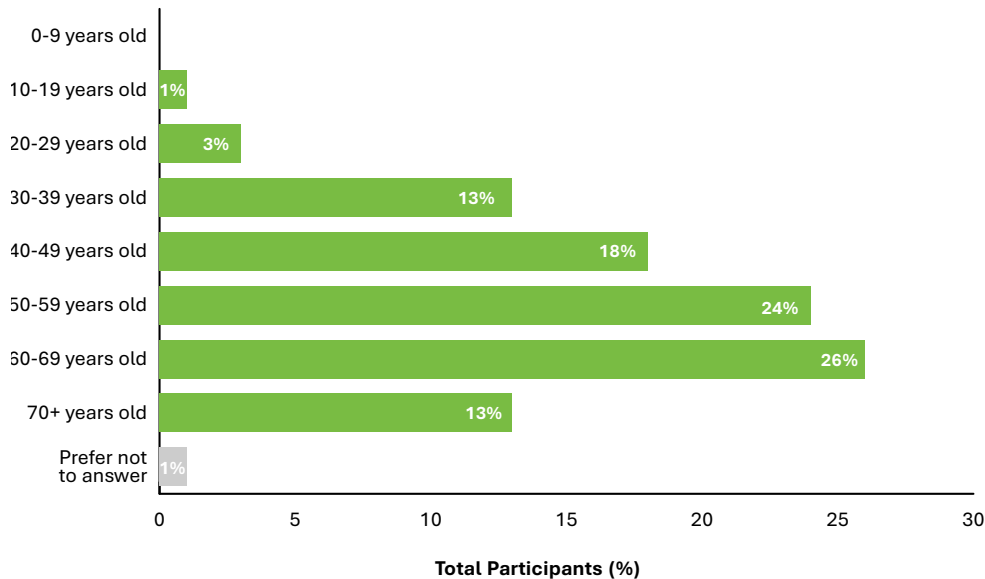
EXAMPLE COMMENTS:

- "...I just don't want to see the area I choose to live turn into something busy. I looked for a long time and decided to settle in a small lake community. Very quiet and relaxing year round. This is very new, so I'm intrigued to see the different ideas that do come to the table."
- "I think you've captured everything, but I don't think all of the components are equal. Thriving natural landscapes are foundational and what attract homeowners, businesses, etc. to the area - the other five pillars are secondary."
- "Would like to see more emphasis on thriving natural landscapes to maximize protection of the lake and the watershed."
- "Recreational use can be done responsibly and protect the lake and the environment. We must remember people use the lake and areas for recreational purposes and is why people have chosen the Wabamun Lake area."
- "I would like to see more emphasis around waterfront recreational development. Although I may not be part of the popular opinion."
- "The stress needs to be placed on the health of the lake. Increased visitor traffic isn't the answer to that."

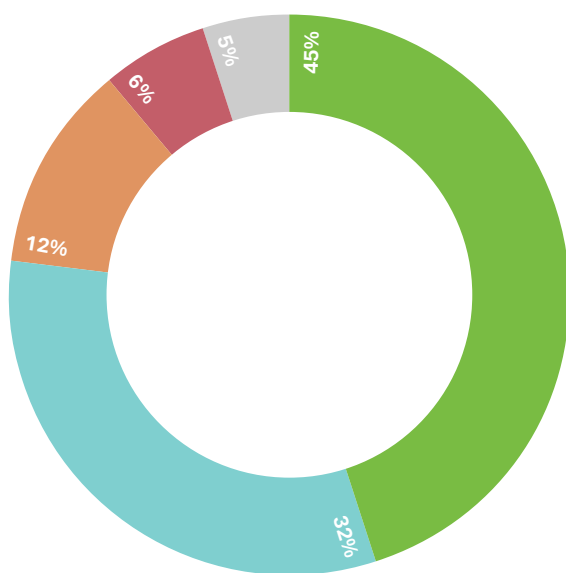
Demographics

To better understand who was participating in the online survey and where they are from, we asked a series of demographic questions.

How old are you?



Over half of participants (63%) said they were 50 years old or older, indicating a high level of engagement from older adults. Only 4% of participants were 29 or under. The remaining 31% were between 30-49 years old. There were no participants 9 years of age or younger.



Are you a...

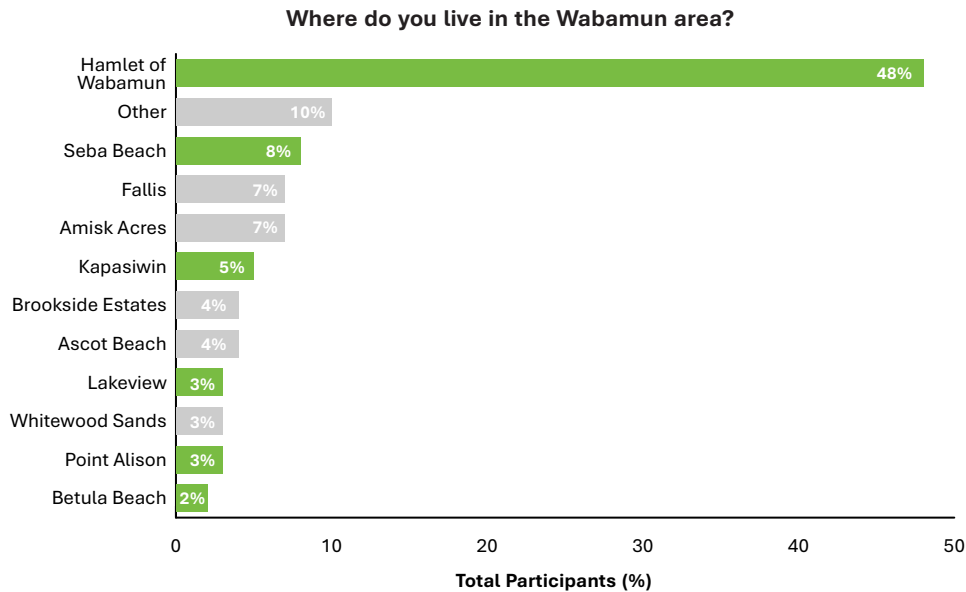
- Permanent resident of the Wabamun area
- Seasonal/temporary resident of the Wabamun area
- Permanent resident of another area in Parkland County
- Visitor to the Wabamun area
- Other

OTHER

- Sailing or yacht club member
- Out of province visitor
- Wabamun property owner
- Municipal employee
- Previous business owner
- Concerned citizen of Alberta
- Live near the Wabamun area
- Grew up in Wabamun or nearby

Most survey participants were either permanent (45%) or seasonal residents (32%) of the Wabamun area. An additional 12% were residents from other areas of Parkland County and 6% were visitors to the area. There was a total of 20 “other” responses to the question, summarized to the right.

Permanent Residents of Wabamun



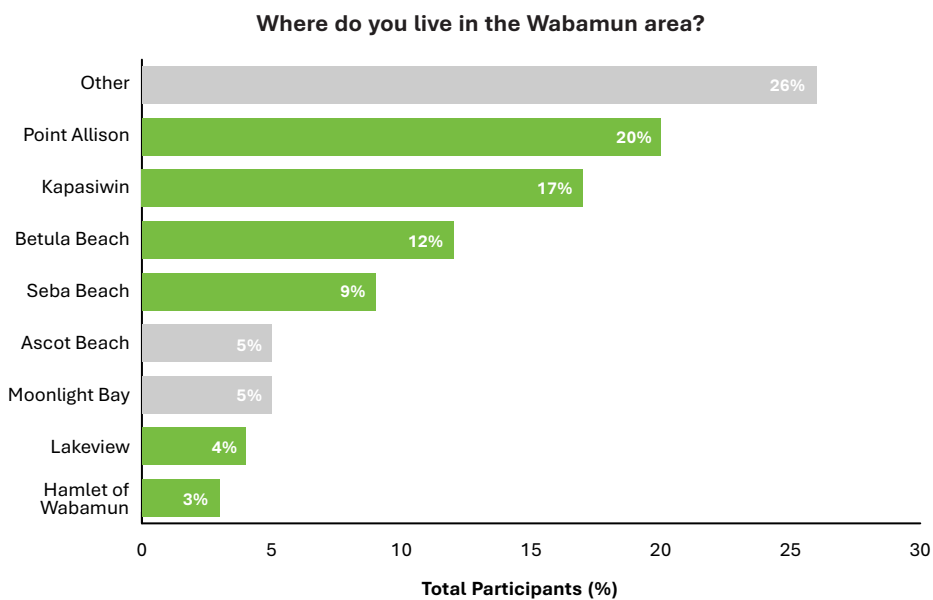
OTHER

- Rich's Point
- Woodland Acres
- Duffield
- Moonlight Bay
- Darwell
- Entwistle
- Paul Band
- Magnolia area
- Lake Isle

- Multiple Choice Answer
- Other

Of those who selected permanent resident, nearly half (48%) said they live in the Hamlet of Wabamun. There were participants who also lived in several of the summer villages. Approximately 10% of participants said they lived in an “other” location that was not listed (shown in grey and summarized to the right).

Seasonal residents of Wabamun



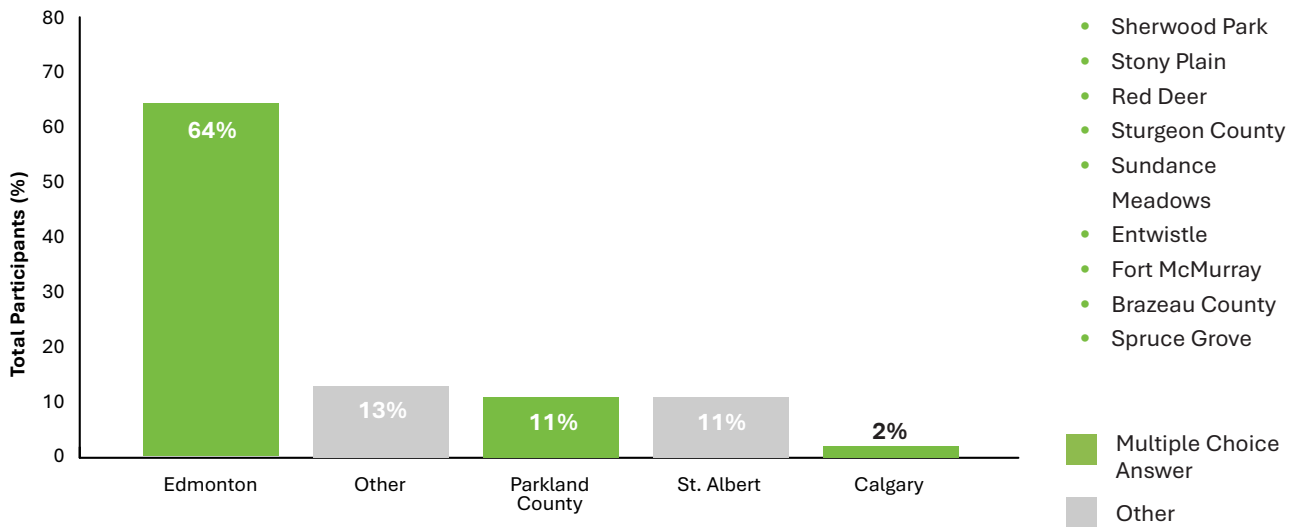
OTHER

- Fallis
- Sundance Meadows
- Sunshine Bay
- Rizzie Beach
- Rosewood Beach
- Amisk Acres
- Sherwin
- Marine Drive Estates
- Gardener's Cove
- Rich's Point
- Whitewood Sands

- Multiple Choice Answer
- Other

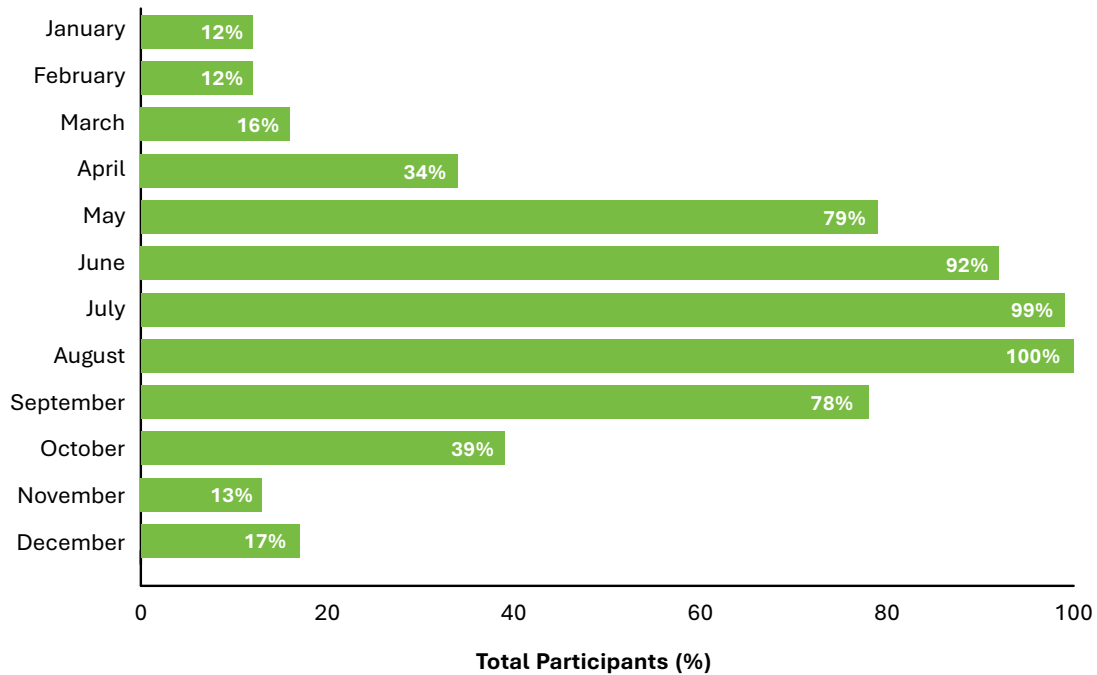
Just above a quarter (26%) of seasonal residents said they were from areas other than the Hamlet or one of the summer villages. Of the summer villages, 20% lived in Point Allison, 17% in Kapasiwin, 12% from Betula Beach, 9% from Seba Beach, and 4% from Lakeview.

Where is your permanent residence?



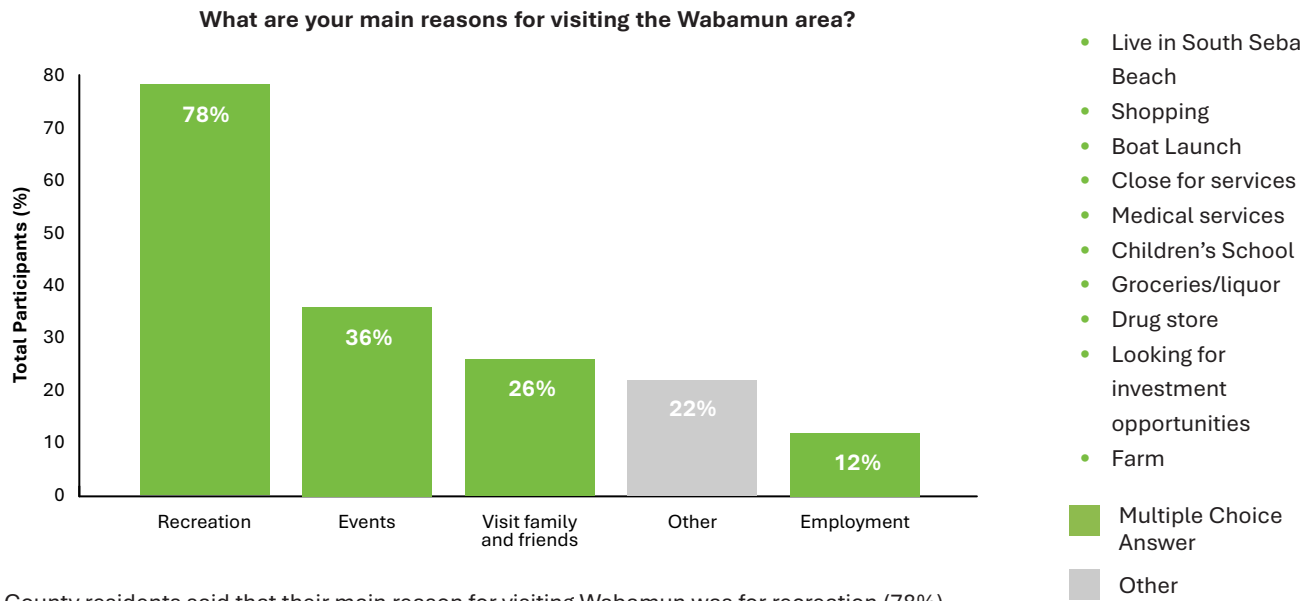
Of the seasonal residents, 64% said that they were from Edmonton. Another 11% said they were from Parkland County and 11% from St. Albert. Only 2% said they were from Calgary. Another 13% said that they were from somewhere else.

Which months of the year do you typically live in the Wabamun area?



Most seasonal residents indicated that they typically live in Wabamun during the summer months from June to August. May and September were also popular months, seeing over 70% of seasonal residents. There were just over 10% of seasonal residents who said they live in Wabamun throughout other times of the year, including the winter months.

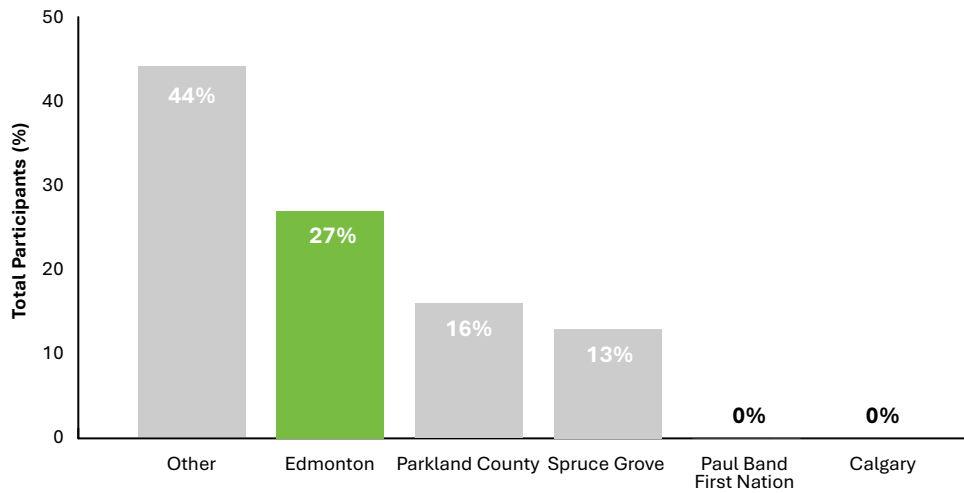
Permanent County residents



County residents said that their main reason for visiting Wabamun was for recreation (78%). Approximately 12% said they work in the Wabamun Area.

Visitor/Other

Where is your permanent residence?



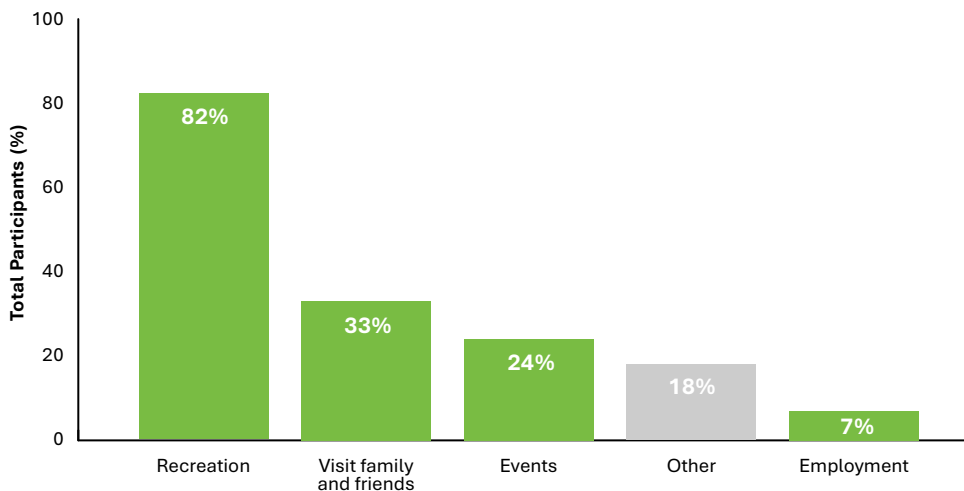
Of the participants who were visitors to the Wabamun area, 44% said that they were from an area other than Edmonton (16% from Parkland County, 13% from Spruce Grove, and others noted to the right). None of the visitors selected that they were from Paul Band First Nation or Calgary.

OTHER

- Stony Plain
- Seba Beach
- Vancouver Island
- Ontario
- Parkland County
- Genesee
- Lac Ste. Anne
- Manitoba
- Acheson
- Darwell
- Duffield
- Edson
- Fort McMurray

- Multiple Choice Answer
- Other

What are your main reasons for visiting the Wabamun area?



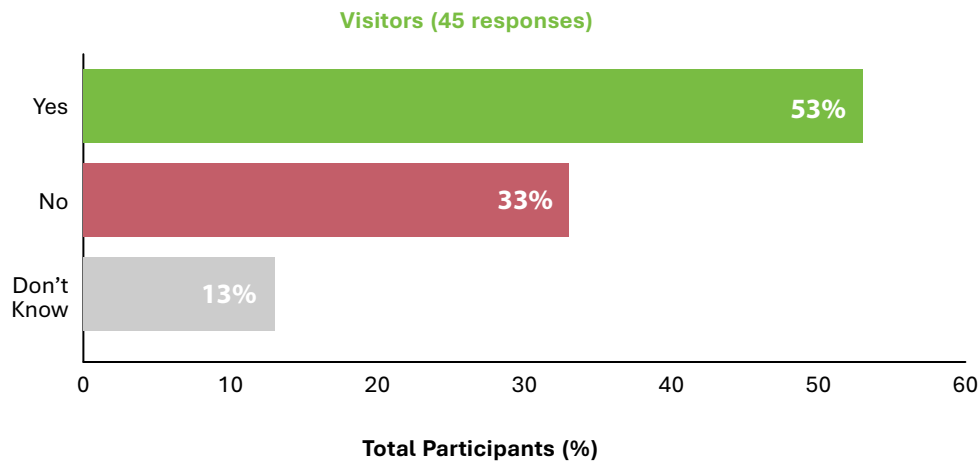
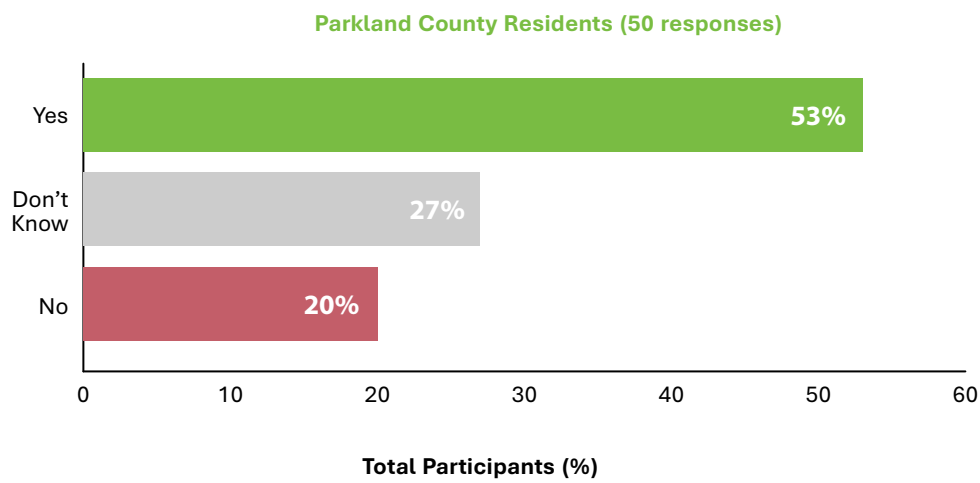
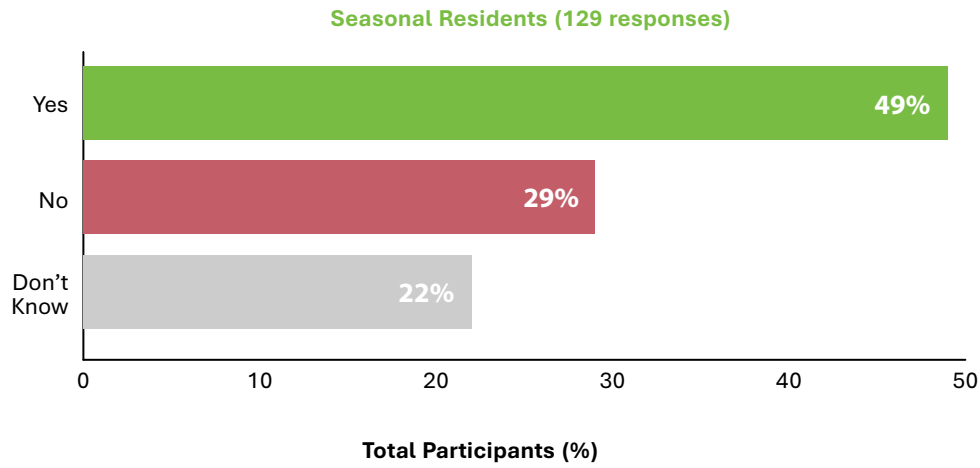
Visitors said that their main reason for visiting the area was for recreation (82%), followed by visiting friends and family (33%). Approximately 7% said they visit to work in the Wabamun area.

OTHER

- Live here in the country
- Mail & groceries
- Contract work with generaton
- Own a lot there
- Groceries
- Home town
- Shopping
- I own a Business

- Multiple Choice Answer
- Other

Would you ever consider becoming a permanent resident of the Wabamun Area?



Would you live in Wabamun?

Non-permanent residents of Wabamun were asked if they would ever consider becoming a permanent resident of the area. Just about half of participants said that yes, they would consider it. Many said that they would like to retire in the area and that the reason they do not live in Wabamun full time now is due to the long commute from Edmonton, employment, and/or having children. Lifestyle was a main reason that participants said they would consider living in Wabamun, including:

- Proximity to nature (not a far drive for some from Edmonton – far enough to feel like you’re not in the city but not too far)
- Lakeside living, which is valued by those who visit and participate in water activities
- The quiet atmosphere
- Love of the village community

There were several reasons that people said they would not consider living in Wabamun full-time. The commute is far from Edmonton and some people had concerns about the drive in the winter. Some felt that the area is too remote and they had concerns about safety (e.g. break-ins, other crime). These comments noted that Wabamun is very quiet and is a great place to vacation but does not provide the lifestyle and amenities that a city like Edmonton can provide. Further to this, many participants said that they felt that the schools and the hospital are too far away. A few participants said that their current seasonal properties are not winterized, so it is not possible to be there during the colder months. Others mentioned that they were unsure if buying property in Wabamun was a good investment and saw the area only as a summertime recreational destination for water sports.



Image: Tobias Mandat

Vision and Pillars

Vision

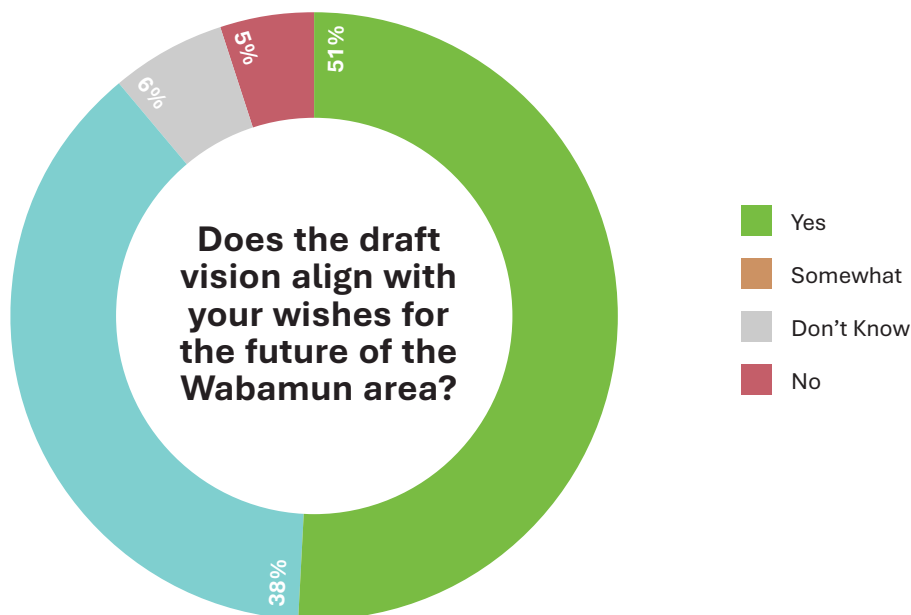
There was overall agreement with the draft vision and pillars. Over half (51%) of respondents indicated that the vision for the Wabamun Area aligns with their wishes for the future of the Wabamun area. A further 38% said that the vision somewhat aligns with their wishes for the area. A total of 5% of participants said that the vision does not align with their wishes. In addition to the multiple choice question, 147 people provided comments on the vision and whether they felt anything was missing.

The largest theme arising from these comments was that participants wanted to see a greater emphasis placed on lake stewardship and lake health. Many felt that protection of the lake should be the fundamental pillar of the vision and should be placed or weighted higher than the rest of the pillars. Participants also wanted to see greater connections and relationships between the pillars, feeling that many of the other pillars were particularly dependent on protection of the natural landscape and the lake.

Within the comments there was a tension between opinions surrounding the protection of natural areas and increasing tourism and recreation activities in the area. Some participants felt that increasing visitors would threaten lake health or had concerns that this would impact the quiet rural character of the area. On the other hand, other participants mentioned that they wanted to see increased access to the lake, expressing that there is no reason to protect the lake if no one can enjoy it. A few comments indicated a need for balance between these priorities.

IS ANYTHING MISSING?

- Greater emphasis on lake health
- Safety / addressing crime
- Affordability
- Indigenous perspectives and collaboration
- Agriculture
- More amenities for youth, children, and seniors
- More explicit mention of tourism
- Collaborative governance (informed by meaningful engagement with the community)
- Community services and supports (e.g. medical, education, etc)
- Development of new businesses
- Milestones to track progress and demonstrate success



Pillars

Thriving Natural Landscapes

Wabamun Lake was the most important natural feature that participants said needed to be protected and celebrated (161 of 298 comments). Participants shared that they specifically want to see protection of water quality, water levels, the overall watershed, fish habitat, and shoreline / riparian areas of the lake. A few comments mentioned the protection of views, public access, and existing trails around the lake while others wanted to see more limited access to natural areas. There were specific concerns about development impacts to the lake, especially stormwater, erosion, and septic impacts on water quality.

In addition to the lake itself, many people mentioned specifically wanting to see wildlife and habitat protected and celebrated. This includes fish habitat, bird nesting areas, wetlands, streams / riparian areas, and forests. Protecting East Pit Lake was also specifically mentioned.



NATURAL FEATURES TO PROTECT AND CELEBRATE

- Wabamun Lake (watershed, water quality, water level, shoreline, views)
- Wildlife and habitat (fish, birds, other)
- Forests and vegetation
- Streams, wetlands, and riparian areas
- Existing trails and water access
- East Pit Lake



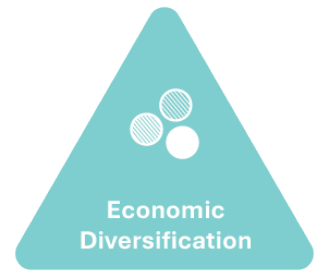
Image: Tobias Mandat

Economic Diversification

Of the listed economic development actions, the top selected was “providing additional services to attract more people who can work from home” (61% of answers). Following this was “provide economic incentives for businesses / industry” (49% of answers) and “enable more home-based business opportunities” (40%). Zoning more lands for employment areas was the least selected option (19% of answers).

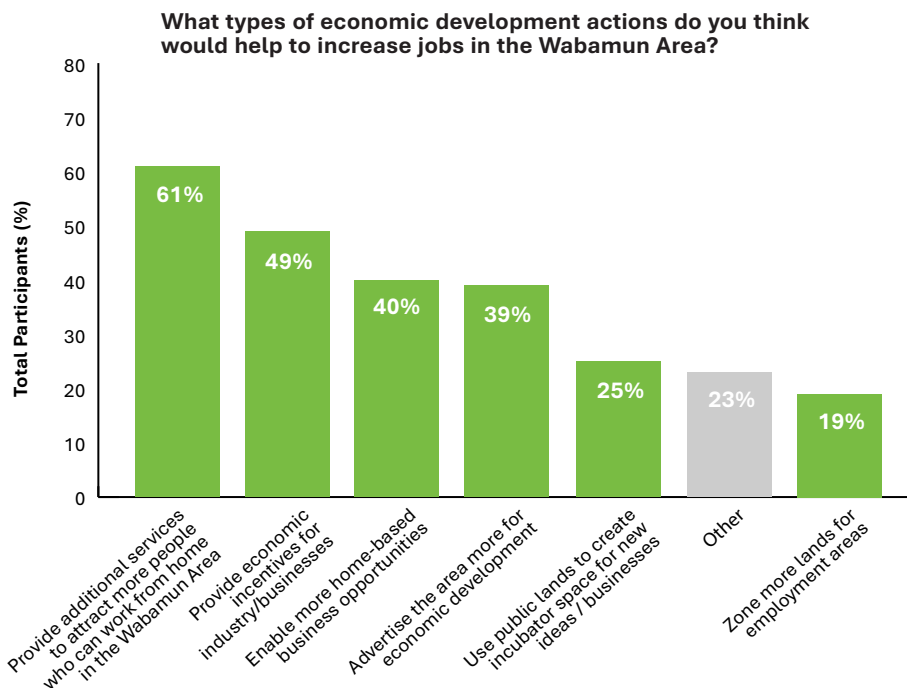
There were 74 “other” responses to the question. Many comments provided additional suggestions for economic development actions, which are listed to the right. These included ideas such as providing transit connections, providing better internet, filling vacant buildings, and incentivizing green energy, among others. A few comments also noted the need for economic development to consider impacts to the lake, natural areas, and current residents. There were a few concerns about economic development in general, as some participants do not want to see any additional growth or new jobs in the area.

A total of 209 participants told us what types of jobs, services, or businesses they would like to see in the Wabamun Area. There was a broad range of answers, which are reflected on the next page. Many wanted to see specific types of retail and community services, such as medical services, seniors supports, and fitness / recreation centres, to serve local residents. Other participants wanted to see more recreation and tourism focused jobs and businesses, such as tours, recreation equipment rentals, spas, and accommodations. More food services, such as restaurants, breweries, bakeries, and coffee shops were also suggested. There were some concerns about new development, particularly along the waterfront, or a desire for development not to get too large in size. Others felt that development should be concentrated into nodes rather than sprawl across the whole area along the highway. There were a few comments that also spoke to the need for more businesses that could employ youth and that would better support persons with a disability.



OTHER

- Need larger area approach (consider other communities in Power Alley)
- Provide supports and incentives for small businesses
- Provide better internet
- Freshen up tired businesses / fill vacant buildings
- Allow for more industrial development in existing industrial sites
- Provide bus service to spruce grove
- Prioritize low impact recreation and tourism development / sustainable development
- Develop a lakeside village
- Incentivize carbon capture / green energy projects
- Bring in more boutique businesses / franchise businesses
- More winter activities
- More events
- More lake access
- Revisit waterfront plan
- More supports for seniors



Are there any types of job, services, or businesses that you would like to see in the Wabamun Area?

COMMUNITY SERVICES

- Seniors living / services and long term care
- County offices / public works
- Medical services (e.g. dentist, optometrist, extended care, physio, massage)
- Church
- Parks
- Children's activity centre
- Off leash dog parks
- Upgrade library
- Police / RCMP station
- Internet provider / local utility services

RETAIL AND LOCAL SERVICES

- Groceries
- Bakery
- Clothing store
- Insurance
- Liquor stores (both more and fewer)
- Office supplies
- Building contractors (e.g. electrical, plumbing, etc)
- Lawyer
- Accountant
- Non-profits
- Shopping
- Big box retail (e.g. Costco, Walmart)
- More banks
- Coffee shops
- Gas station
- Vape store
- Dollar store
- Hunting / sporting store
- Craft / hobby store
- Veterinarian
- Tech store

WELLNESS

- Gym / fitness / yoga
- Wellness centre
- Rec centre
- Esthetics
- Wildlife sanctuary

DINING AND ENTERTAINMENT

- Restaurants, cafes, diners, drive-thru, fine-dining
- Brewery
- Art galleries
- Pub

- Farmer's market (permanent)
- Indigenous history / sharing
- Museum
- Arcade
- Mini golf
- Amusement rides
- Event venue

RECREATION & TOURISM

- Tourist information centre
- Golf course
- Campground
- Hotel
- Lakefront resort
- Bed and breakfasts / Vacation Rental by Owner (VRBO) (e.g. AirBnB)
- Equipment rentals (e.g. paddling, etc)
- Destination learning centre (e.g. Hollyhock resort in BC), nature based businesses, outdoor experiences
- Boat inspection and wash station (invasive species)
- Winter activity centres
- RV and boat storage facilities / RV and boat repair / sales
- Red apple
- Sport facilities
- All season cabin rentals

INDUSTRY AND ENERGY

- Clean industry / light industry
- Sustainable businesses
- Training for those out of industry
- Nuclear power
- Green energy
- Greenhouses / agriculture

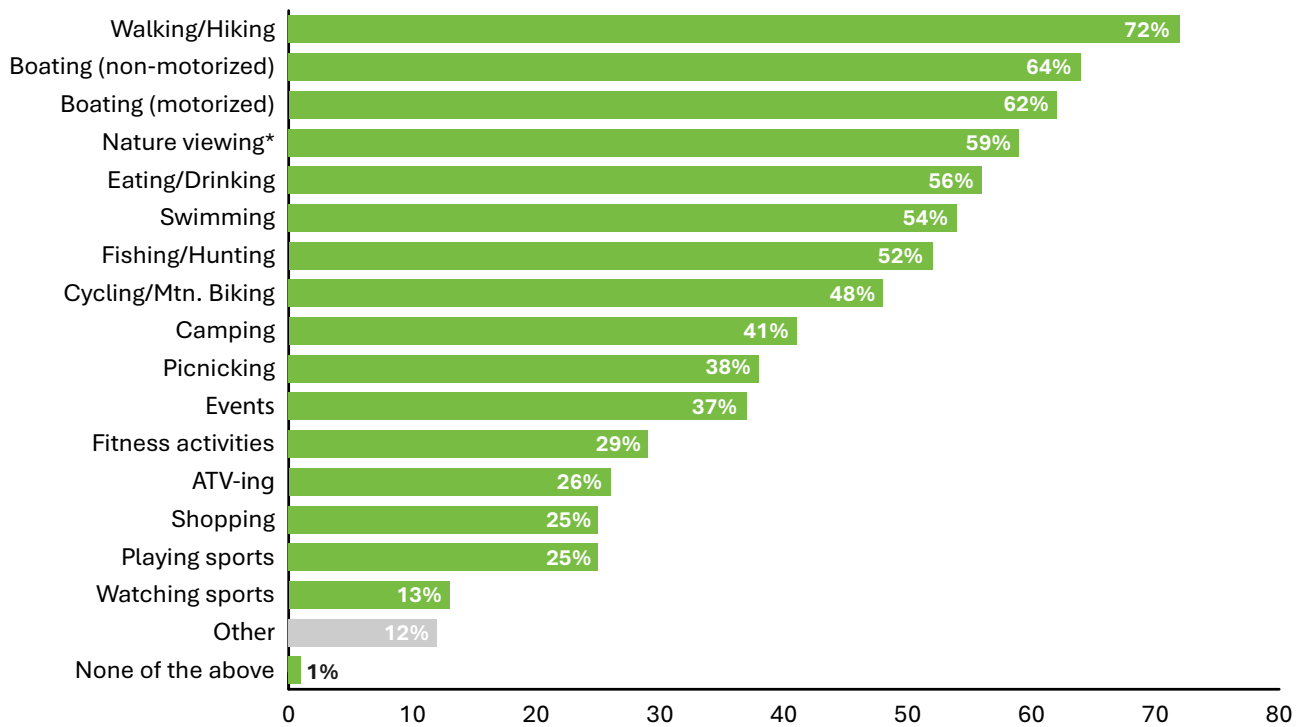
Attractive Recreation & Amenities

The three most popular activities in the Wabamun Area are walking and hiking (72%), non-motorized boating (64%), and motorized boating (62%). Of those who answered the question, less than 1% stated they do not participate in any recreation activities. Approximately 12% of those who answered selected “other” and provided another activity. These additional activities are summarized to the right.

The survey also asked what the County could do to encourage more year-round recreation. We received 218 responses to the question. Participants suggested a variety of different amenities and incentives to encourage more year round recreation, which are summarized on the following page.



What recreation activities do you love to do in the Wabamun Area? Select all that apply.



*includes bird watching & photography

Total Participants (%)

OTHER RECREATION ACTIVITIES

- All of the above
- Snowmobiling
- Cottage living
- Socializing
- Being alone
- Sailing
- Tennis / pickleball
- Cross-country skiing
- Snowshoeing
- Windsurfing
- Stand up paddle boarding
- ATV-ing
- Recreational sport shooting (gun club)
- Beach volleyball
- Golf
- Art walks / musical events
- Stargazing
- Motorcycle rides
- Skiing

How could the municipality encourage more year-round recreation in the Wabamun Area? Are there any opportunities for new amenities or activities?

EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

- Fishing derbies
- Snowmobile rallies
- Winter festival, ice sculptures
- Fest 99.3 and Dragonfly Festival
- Fireworks
- Events and activities for kids
- Concerts
- Hockey, volleyball, baseball, and other sport tournaments
- Rodeos
- Guided walks / tours – promote existing businesses
- Classes (yoga /fitness, crafts, cooking, baking, computers)
- Mural walk
- Farmer’s market

RECREATION FACILITIES

- More affordable amenities for residents (e.g. ball diamond, boat launch)
- Arena
- Indoor swimming pool
- Recreation centre / gym / multi-sport hub
- Indoor sports courts / pickleball
- Curling rink
- Downhill ski hill
- Yoga studio
- Sports clubs
- Recreation / leisure focused on mind growth and nature retreat (e.g. Hollyhock, BC)
- Wellness centre and workshops (e.g. nutrition, exercise, art, science, children’s activities)
- Sports lessons
- School gyms rentals
- Winter equipment rentals (e.g. snowshoes, skis, ice fishing huts, etc)
- Lake equipment rentals (e.g. boats, kayaks, etc)
- Warming facilities / centre for winter activities
- More campgrounds / cabins
- Wabamun Sailing Club (already exists)
- Outdoor education
- Library upgrades

TOURIST AMENITIES

- Hotels

- Short term rentals / AirBnB
- Arts & culture hub
- Spa (like Kananaskis)
- Condos by the tracks / post office rentable / sellable
- Tourist / service jobs
- Touristy updates to town

TRAILS & PARKS

- Trails around the lake / beside rail line
- Snowmobiling / sledding trails
- Cross country ski trails
- Mountain biking trails
- Network of connected parks
- Bike lanes along roads
- Dog parks
- More waterfront park amenities
- Winter trail maintenance

RECREATION AMENITIES

- Picnic sites & BBQs / ovens
- Places to socialize (restaurants / food trucks)
- More liquor stores
- Low-impact recreation sites
- Skating rinks
- Golf course
- More / less ATV areas
- More for children and families
- Skate park
- Minigolf
- Waterslide
- Longer water park open season and hours
- Toboggan hill

SUPPORTING AMENITIES

- More parking for boats / trailers / RVs
- More garbage cans
- Public washrooms / changing areas (Leave bathrooms at the marina open year-round)

LAKE & WATERFRONT

- More boat launches / public (not just resident) access / better marina
- Ice fishing amenities
- Ice sailing / sports on the frozen lake
- Better beaches / more accessible beaches

MANAGEMENT / ENFORCEMENT

- Parking weekday pass for residents / no parking fees for waterfront / better traffic and parking management
- More enforcement (e.g. noise, boats, motorized vehicles destroying trails etc) vs. less enforcement / fun ruining
- Concerns about crime and vandalism
- Leave as is / no more development / overused already
- Capacity limit for visitors
- Concern over restricting boat access at the end of range roads and prices to use the dock
- More funding to maintain roads

DEVELOPMENT

- More private development and recreation areas
- Use the south side of the lake so the train isn't an inconvenience / remove the train tracks

OTHER

- Some doubt about County's ability to action / implement this
- Allow golf carts in the hamlet
- Assist start up businesses
- More advertising of existing amenities

Strategic Development

Participants ranked new trail networks as the most important way to better connect the Wabamun area. Improved lake access and increased vehicle transportation networks were ranked second and third respectively. Public transit was the least important for participants.

Participants were also asked how land should be prioritized in the future (see following page). Space for nature was ranked as the most important, followed closely by space for public amenities and parks. Space for residential development and for employment development were not as important to participants and were ranked third and fourth respectively.

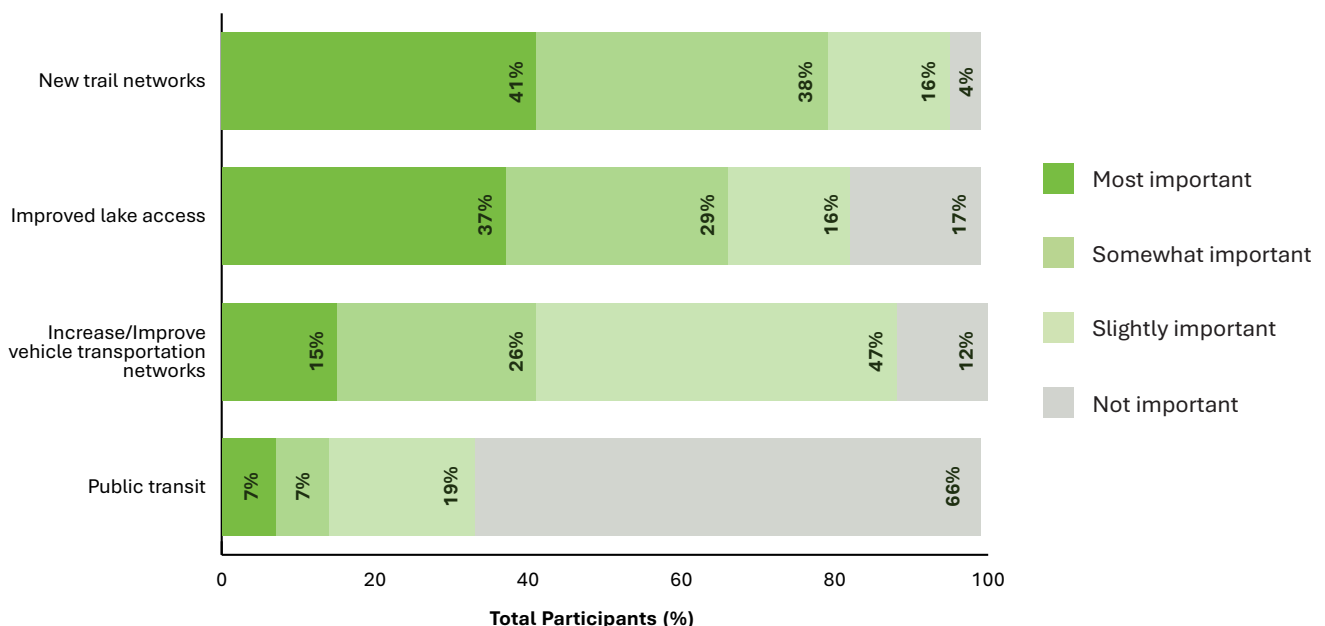
When asked what role they see Wabamun playing in the broader region, most participants (60%) mentioned that they see Wabamun as a visitor destination. Many participants also mentioned that they see the role of Wabamun as being a dining and entertainment centre (57.6%) as well as an area for new and expanded recreational opportunities (57.2%). Participants also mentioned that they saw Wabamun as a civic and cultural hub in the region. There was slightly less support for the Hamlet of Wabamun serving as an area for residential and employment growth. Most participants voiced that Wabamun should be an area for growth in the region, though 17% are opposed to growth in the hamlet.

Overall, participants see Wabamun as a central hub in the region. Many participants mentioned that Wabamun should serve as a central business hub, transportation hub, or arts and culture hub. The Hamlet should be a central gathering place for residents of the region, as well as an administrative and service centre. Some participants mentioned that they want Wabamun to be more than a seasonal destination and would like it to become a year round community.

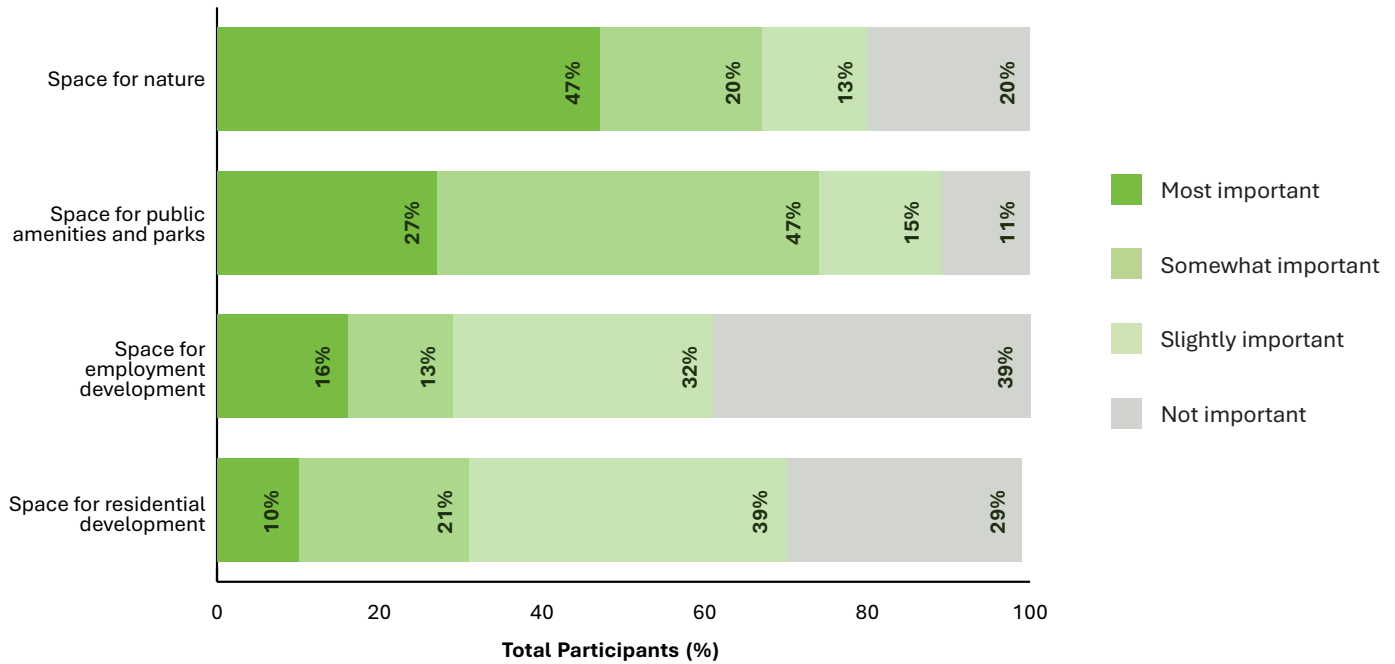


What would help connect the Wabamun Area better?

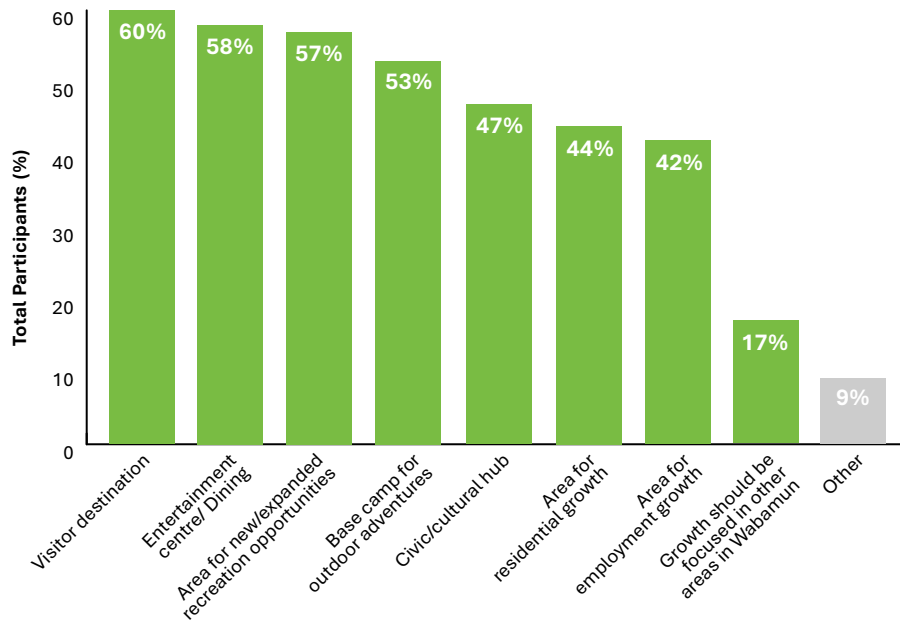
Order the choices from most to least important.



How should the space/land be prioritized?
Order the choices from most to least important.



What role should the Hamlet of Wabamun play in the broader region?



OTHER

- A central hub for business, transportation, arts & culture, and services
- Year round community
- More amenities should be located within the hamlet
- More small businesses, shopping, and local industry needed
- Need more waterfront amenities
- Upgrade boat launch
- Some participants do not want the community to get bigger

Community Growth

When asked about the types of housing needed in Wabamun to support future growth, participants mentioned that they wanted to see more seniors housing (52%) and single-detached dwellings (47%). A number of participants also mentioned that they wanted more assisted living facilities (32%). There was less support for other forms of housing, including housing for 2+ person households (29%), multiple unit housing (28%), housing for 1-2 person households (22%), and subsidized affordable housing (21%). Around 9% of participants did not support any of the housing options provided.

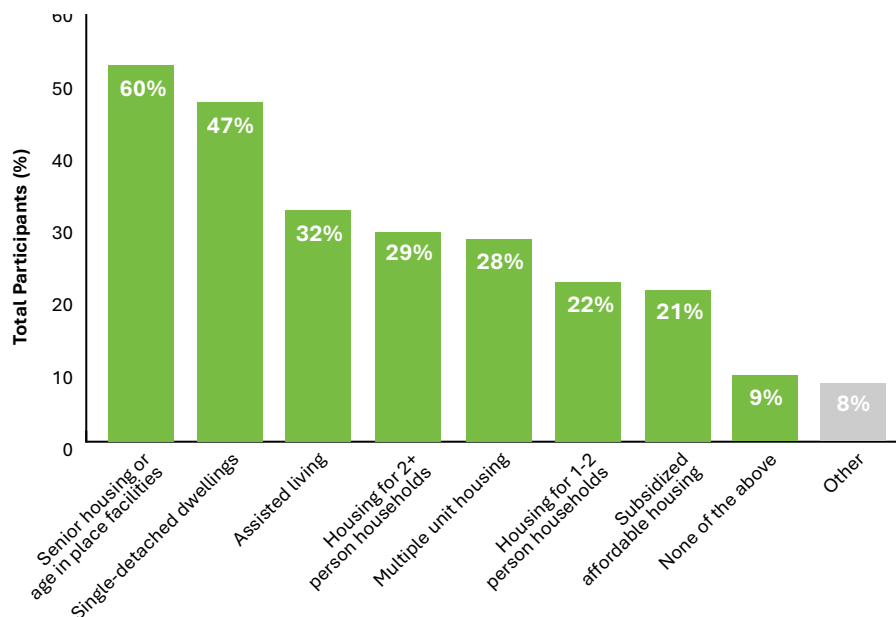
Participants expressed the desire to see more housing for middle class families rather than more expensive waterfront properties. They were concerned about the price of these properties as well as their impact on the lake. Participants also mentioned that they wanted housing to remain affordable and attractive for professional families. Tiny homes and rental homes were also frequently mentioned.

Many participants stated that Wabamun needs increased economic development in order to attract young professionals. High-speed internet access was one of the most commonly mentioned areas for improvement. Participants also mentioned the need for increased employment opportunities, as well as work from home opportunities. The need for more businesses, services, and commercial spaces was also raised by many participants, as well as the desire for more housing options.

The need to cater to children and youth was also emphasized, in order to attract more families to Wabamun. This includes the need for good schools and youth programs, as well as libraries and extracurricular activities for children and youth. Childcare was also mentioned as important for families. Recreation and community amenities were also mentioned, including a desire for more trails, parks, and sports facilities.



What types of housing are needed in the Wabamun Area to support existing and new residents?



OTHER

- More middle class housing rather than expensive waterfront properties
- Housing should be affordable and attractive
- Tiny home options for people who want to downsize
- More rental housing
- Concerns about impact of housing on lake and riparian loss

Participants indicated the need for seniors' amenities and leisure opportunities in order to attract more retirees to the Wabamun area. This includes seniors clubs or a seniors centre that would allow seniors to socialize or participate in activities such as pickleball. Low impact recreational opportunities like walking trails are also needed. Health care and medical facilities are seen as essential to attracting retirees to the area. Housing options such as retirement communities, seniors housing, or assisted living facilities are also desirable. Participants also noted the importance of creating a safe and quiet environment for retirees to enjoy.

Participants expressed the importance of community in attracting newcomers to the Wabamun area. Creating a welcoming community is essential for newcomers. There were some suggestions of creating a welcome package or committee to help create a sense of community for newcomers and to provide social support. Volunteer and social opportunities are also important, as well as cultural spaces. Jobs and affordable and diverse residential options were also seen as critical to attracting newcomers.

What does the Wabamun Area need to attract and retain the following types of residents?

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

- High speed internet
- Employment opportunities, including work from home options
- Businesses, services, and commercial spaces
- Amenities like restaurants, coffee shops, and a spa or brewery
- Entertainment and vibrancy
- Commuting options such as buses and trains
- Trails, parks, and recreational/ sports amenities
- Lake views and access
- Proximity to Edmonton should be advertised
- Quality of life
- Environmental sustainability is key
- Some mention of not wanting young professionals

FAMILIES

- Good schools, youth programs, and extracurricular activities
- Childcare services

- Variety of vibrant indoor and outdoor activities, including winter or all season sports (within hamlet)
- Health care services
- Community services and facilities
- Existing infrastructure needs upgrading
- Recreational access to the water and better waterfront amenities
- High speed internet
- Safety is a big issue

RETIREEES

- Seniors amenities and leisure opportunities like a seniors centre
- Healthcare and medical facilities
- Retirement communities, assisted living facilities, affordable housing, and tiny homes
- Safe and quiet environment
- Amenities like food, recreation, and health facilities located close by
- Senior's buses or shuttles to appointments
- Grocery delivery
- A civic square or other public places

- A sense of community is important
- Lake should be protected

NEWCOMERS

- Welcoming community (including a welcome package or committee)
- Volunteer, social, recreation, and cultural opportunities
- Jobs and diverse residential options
- Internet access is essential
- Moving incentives might be useful
- Public access to the lake
- Language and integration services
- Public transportation
- Better community maintenance
- Reduce racism
- Some participants did not want newcomers

OTHER

- Art galleries and artistic endeavours
- Municipal bus service
- Reduce government regulations
- More off-leash dog parks
- Safety and lack of police presence
- More health care professionals are needed

Cohesive & Engaging Identity

Three key themes emerged from participant responses about the area's uniqueness and identity: Wabamun Lake, the area's proximity to Edmonton, and the nearby protected areas. Participants described the lake as foundational to the area's identity and expressed a desire to protect it and enjoy it through recreation. They mentioned the short drive from Edmonton, but appreciated how the area maintained a small-town feel. They also showed pride in the area's protected areas, especially Wabamun Lake Provincial Park.



Participants voiced the desire for the lake to be highlighted and promoted. They mentioned the need to protect the lake and enhance its use year-round. Many participants mentioned that there should be more waterfront activities around the lake and that these activities should extend throughout the year. However, there were some concerns with year-round activities around the lake, as some participants mentioned that the lake needs time to recover from the use that occurs during the summer. Participants also mentioned that Wabamun's proximity to nature should be used to promote the area as a year-round destination. More winter activities are also needed.

THEMES: UNIQUELY WABAMUN

- Lake Wabamun
- Proximity to Edmonton
- Small town feel
- Proximity to provincial park
- Relative affordability of the community
- Landscapes and natural setting
- The tight knit beach community
- Art scene
- Giant dragonfly statue

THEMES: YEAR ROUND DESTINATION

- Lake should be highlighted and promoted
- Year-round waterfront uses
- Lake needs to recover in the winter
- Promote Wabamun's natural landscapes
- Connect with the provincial park
- More trails and activities like icefishing, etc
- Dragonfly identity should be highlighted
- Need beach improvements and upgrades to the marina/boat launches
- Some people think the area should not be promoted

Online Map Summary

At the end of the online survey, participants were invited to add feedback using an online mapping tool. Comments could be added under three categories: likes, issues, and reimagine. A total of 231 comments were received on the map: 80 like, 63 issue, and 88 reimagine comments. A map indicating the location of these comments can be found on the following page.

Most of the 'Like' responses were found in the areas around the Wabamun hamlet, Fallis, and Seba Beach. Most of the 'Issue' comments were located on the north side of Wabamun Lake. There were also some 'Issue' comments on the western part of the lake near Seba Beach. The areas that participants pointed to for reimagining were mostly along the southern side of Wabamun Lake. Participants also had suggestions for reimagining the Hamlet and Seba Beach.

Participants mentioned a number of things that they enjoyed about the Wabamun area. Specifically, comments stated enjoyment of the beaches and swimming in the lake. Various trails and recreational opportunities were also identified throughout the area.

A number of issues were also tagged on the map. There were some concerns with the lack of parking in the area. There was also some comments on boat access in the area, with concerns over maintenance and impacts on the lake as well as on other recreation users.

Reimagine comments indicated a desire for more access to the water and repurposing of the reclaimed lands for recreational amenities and habitat restoration. This included ideas for moving the train tracks, creating new trail links, and redeveloping waterfront areas.

LIKES

- Love the beach – great for swimming
- Excellent trails – great places to walk or cycle
- Need public lake access and better maintenance of the lake
- Great for recreational activities like camping, sailing, fishing, and kayaking
- Desire for amenities along the waterfront including a boardwalk

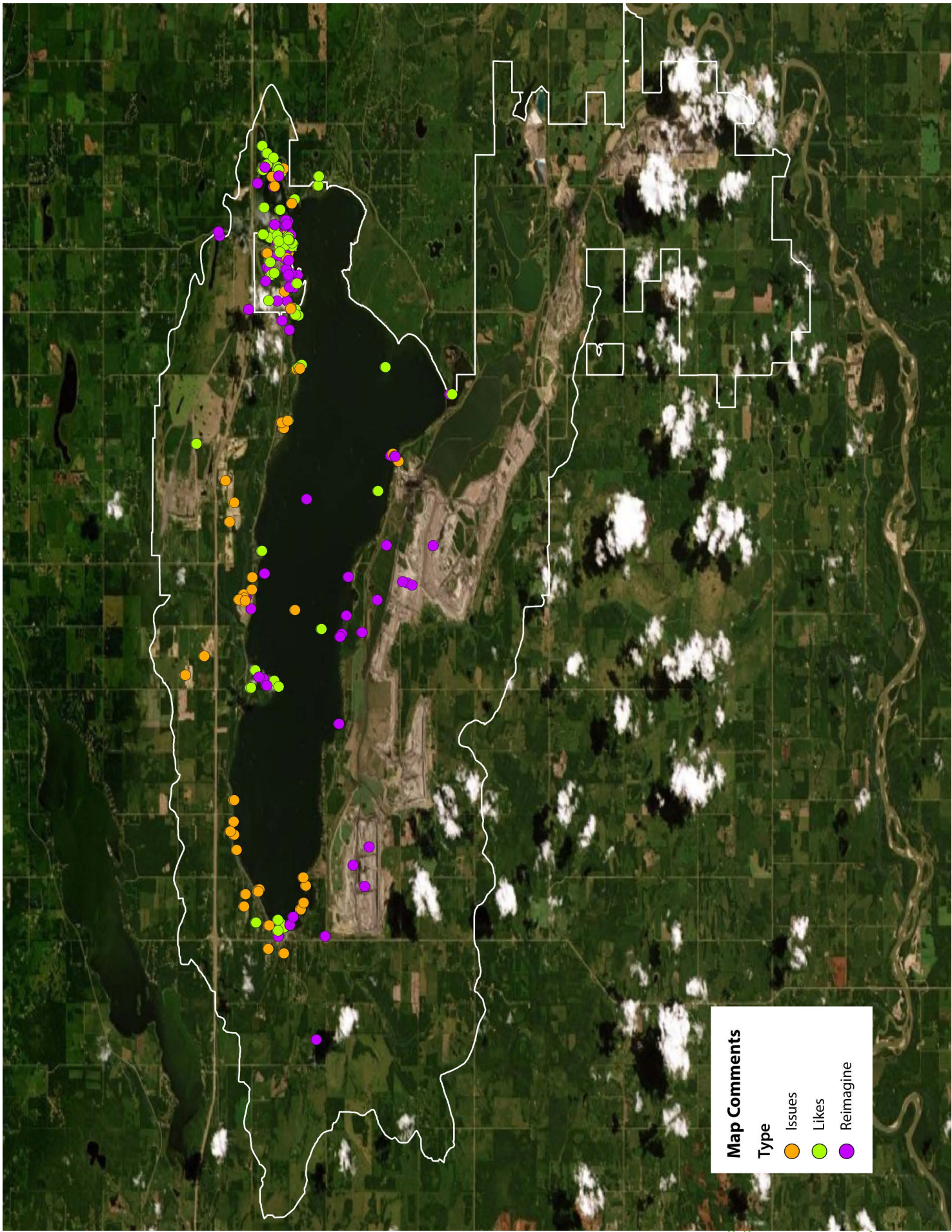
- More dining and entertainment options
- Potential with the Dragonfly Festival
- Increased access to Goosequill Bay and the Canal District

ISSUES

- Lack of parking
- Parking should be free
- Boat launch needs improvement including maintenance and expansion
- Train tracks are disruptive – the train is loud and fast and there are derailment concerns
- Many habitats have been destroyed by development and are currently impacted by motorized boats
- Concerns over erosion and runoff
- Residential lots are being used for recreation – this is taxing on infrastructure
- No wake zones should be enforced
- A lack of access for non-boating uses
- Campgrounds are too big

REIMAGINE

- Need public access to the water
- More trails are needed
- Needs to be balance for other recreational users, not just boaters
- More boating limited areas are needed
- Area should be redeveloped and could include a beach, boat launch, boardwalk, recreational amenities, and a natural area
- Area is currently too industrial – should be made more natural with some small businesses and tourism opportunities
- Incentives to attract a brewery
- A toboggan run near East Pit Lake
- More festival and event spaces
- Reclaim wildlife and lessen impact on lake
- Reclaimed lands could be used for natural spaces, recreation, or a provincial park space
- Build a hotel and conference centre
- Desire to move train track
- Potential for pedestrian overpass to improve walkability



Next Steps

Thank you to everyone who participated in Stage 1!

Your feedback will be integrated into our analysis and used to refine the vision and pillars.

Details about Stage 2 will be released soon – stay tuned to wabamun.ca for updates.