ST. BONIFACE OUTDOOR AQUATIC PARK

Public Engagement Summary

Background

We are exploring what a new outdoor aquatic park in St. Boniface could look like and where it could go. Many existing pools in St. Boniface are reaching the end of their life.

The *Winnipeg Recreation Strategy* recommends replacing aging facilities and investing in larger outdoor pools that can better meet current and future recreation needs. The project looked at potential locations, design options, and cost estimates for a future aquatic park in St. Boniface.

Engagement

In fall 2024, we gathered input from residents on their future aquatic needs. This included feedback on potentials sites, criteria, and amenities for the proposed St. Boniface Aquatic Park.

Residents were invited to participate in an online survey and an open house at Champlain Community Centre. Three stakeholder meetings were held. The following table summarizes the public and stakeholder engagement opportunities.

Table 1: Public engagement opportunities

Date	Activity	Details
October 28, 2024 – December 04, 2024	Public survey	1,751 respondents
November 1, 2024 – 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. November 1, 2024 – 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. November 4, 2024 – 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.	Stakeholder meetings	6 attendees 3 attendees 2 attendees
November 14, 2024	Open house	56 attendees

Promotion

Public engagement opportunities were promoted using the following methods:

- Project webpage – 3,541 unique visits from October 28 to December 4, 2024
- News release – October 28, 2024
- Five Facebook posts to over 41,000 followers – October 28, 2024 to December 02, 2024
- Five X posts to over 130,000 followers – October 28, 2024 to December 02, 2024
- Email to 133 project subscribers – October 28, 2024
- Digital ad display at nearby libraries and arenas – October 30 to December 3, 2024
- Postcards delivered local libraries, community centres and arenas within the St. Boniface ward - October 31st and November 1, 2024.

- Newspaper ad in La Liberté – November 6, 2024
- City of Winnipeg public engagement newsletter with 5,672 subscribers – October 28 and November 21, 2024

Examples of promotional materials are available in Appendix A.

Who we heard from

Out of the 1,751 participants who provided a postal code, most lived in areas that overlap with the St. Boniface ward. Thirty-three percent lived in the R2H area, 25 percent in R2J, and 10 percent in R3X (see Figure 1).

More than half of respondents had children living at home (58 percent). Most respondents were between 35-54 years old (57 percent). See Figure 2 below.

Figure 1: Location of participants

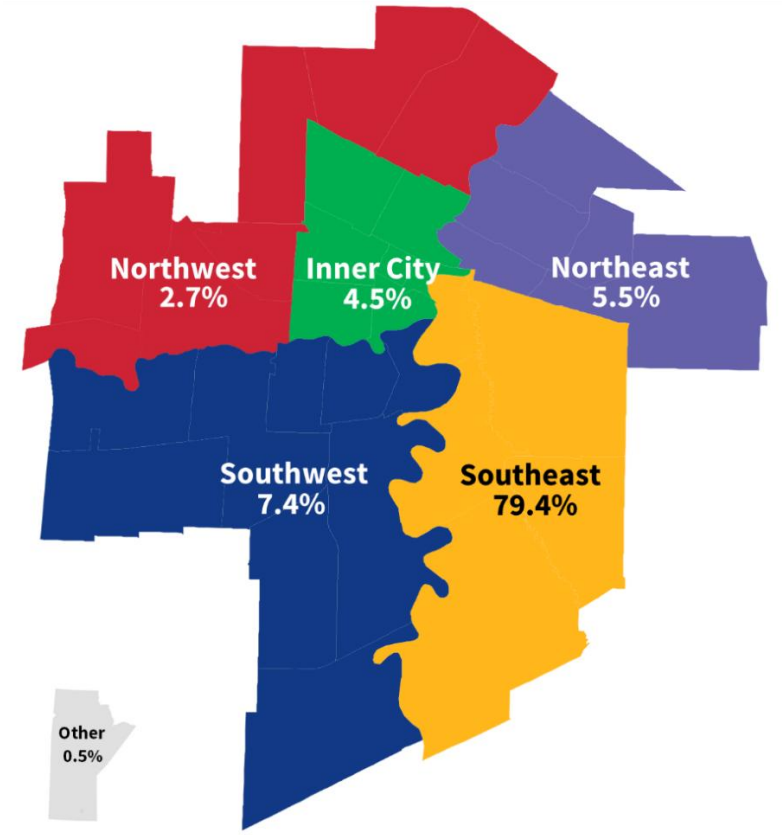
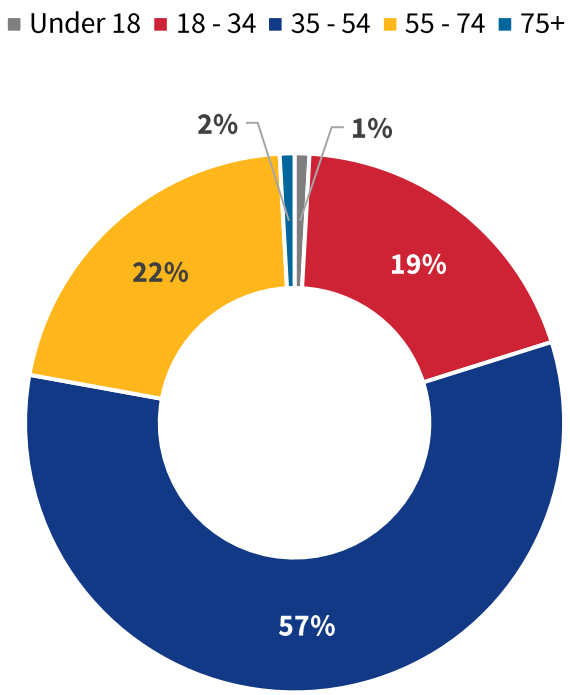


Figure 2: Age of participants



What we heard

Public input

Participants that attended the open house or took the online survey were asked about amenities for the proposed aquatic park and criteria for selecting a site.

Percentages below show respondents who rated each item very important or somewhat important.

Pool amenities

Participants were told the site would include a heated outdoor pool. They were asked to rate the importance of other potential pool amenities.

Waterslides – 79%

Accessible beach entry – 78%

Spray pad or spray features – 73%

Diving Boards – 60%

Lanes for lap swimming – 56%

Site amenities

Participants were told the site would include a pool building with washrooms, showers, and changerooms. They were asked to rate the importance of other potential site amenities.

Shaded picnic area – 89%

Greenspace with grass and trees – 85%

Outdoor lockers – 69%

Lounge chairs – 67%

Outdoor showers – 67%

Transportation criteria

Participants were asked to rate the importance of transportation criteria for selecting a site.

Lots of parking on the site – 79%

Close to transit – 73%

Close to a bike route – 71%

Lots of parking on nearby streets – 65%

Park criteria

Participants were asked to rate the importance of park criteria for selecting a site.

Minimize the number of trees removed – 77%

Minimize the size of trees removed – 76%

Minimize impacts to greenspace – 73%

Service criteria

Participants were asked to rate the importance of service criteria for selecting a site.

Replace a pool that is reaching its end-of-life – 67%

Minimize impacts to exiting recreation – 61%

Close to high poverty areas –44%

Potential sites

Participants were told that early assessments identified three potential sites for the proposed outdoor aquatic park. They were asked what they liked or disliked about each site.

Norwood Community Centre

Participants liked (276 comments):

- Its central location and access by walking, cycling and transit
- That it would replace the former Norwood pool
- Its proximity to existing neighbourhoods and downtown

Participants were concerned about (143 comments):

- Parking and increased traffic
- Impacts to existing recreation and green space
- Whether there is enough space for the proposed aquatic park

Provencher Park

Participants liked (214 comments):

- Its central location and access by walking, cycling, and transit
- Its proximity to existing neighbourhoods and lower-income areas

Participants were concerned about (124 comments):

- Parking and increased traffic
- Impacts to existing green space, trees, and recreation amenities
- Replacing the existing pool and spray pad

Water Tower District

Participants liked (196 comments):

- The amount of space available for the aquatic park and parking
- The ability to design a new site with fewer impacts to existing recreation and green space
- Its location near areas that have lost or may lose outdoor pools

Participants were concerned about (216 comments):

- Access by walking, cycling, and transit
- Its distance from existing residential areas
- Nearby industrial uses and odours

Some participants preferred keeping or replacing smaller neighbourhood pools instead of building one larger aquatic park.

Complete results from the open house and online survey are available in Appendix B.

Stakeholder input

Stakeholder organizations were given an overview of the project and potential sites. They discussed the sites and shared the following input:

- Some stakeholders preferred keeping existing pools open or building two or three smaller pools instead of one larger aquatic park.
- Stakeholders noted the importance of community pools for learning to swim and providing opportunities for activities such as swimming and aquasize for seniors.
- Stakeholders raised concerns about walking, cycling, and transit access to some potential sites.
- Greenspace, trees, and shade were important.
- Admission should be affordable for low-income families.

Stakeholder meeting notes are available in Appendix C.

How input was considered

Provencher Park is the recommended location for the proposed St. Boniface Outdoor Aquatic Park. Input from the public and stakeholders was considered as part of the site review and helped inform the proposed amenities.

Table 2 summarizes key themes from engagement and how they were considered in the recommendation.

Table 2: What we heard and how it was considered

What we heard	How it was considered
Amenities	
More than half of participants rated each proposed pool amenity as very or somewhat important.	The concept design includes waterslides, a beach entry, a spray pad, diving boards, and lanes for lap swimming.
Shaded picnic areas and greenspace with grass and trees were the highest-rated site amenities. Stakeholders also noted the importance of greenspace and trees for shade.	Provencher Park has grass and mature trees that could provide shade and a natural setting. Canopies are also proposed to provide shade on the pool deck.

What we heard	How it was considered
Site criteria	
Onsite parking and access to transit were the highest-rated transportation criteria. Stakeholders also discussed parking and access to the potential sites.	Provencher Park has existing parking. This would be shared with Notre Dame Community Centre and Arena. More than 60 additional parking stalls are also proposed. The proposed aquatic park could be accessed by transit from Provencher Boulevard.
Protecting greenspace and minimizing the number and size of trees removed were important to participants. Stakeholders also emphasized the importance of trees and shade.	The proposed aquatic park would replace the existing Provencher Outdoor Pool. This would reduce impacts to greenspace and the number of trees that would need to be removed.
Replacing a pool near the end of its life and minimizing impacts to existing recreation were important to participants.	The proposed aquatic park would replace the Provencher Pool. Provencher Pool was built in the 1960s and is near the end of its life. The basketball court is proposed to be relocated within Provencher Park.
Other feedback	
Participants and stakeholders said admission should be affordable, especially for low-income families. *"The cost for citizens to use this facility must be nominal. If people cannot afford the cost to get in, they cannot access any of this."* - Survey respondent	The existing Provencher Park Spray Pad would remain free to use. Admission to the proposed aquatic park would be the same as other heated outdoor pools in Winnipeg. Discounted admission and free or low-cost swim times would also be available.
Some participants and stakeholders preferred keeping existing pools open or building smaller community pools instead of one larger aquatic park. *"The City of Winnipeg should allocate the funds reserved for this huge project to save our three (3) community outdoor pools (Happyland, Windsor and Provencher) and rebuild Norwood which are all situated within*	Many outdoor pools in St. Boniface are reaching the end of their life. The Winnipeg Recreation Strategy recommends a mix of larger destination outdoor pools and smaller community pools. It also identifies Provencher Outdoor Pool for redevelopment. The proposed aquatic park would replace Provencher Outdoor Pool and improve the level of service offered.

What we heard	How it was considered
a two (2) kilometer walking radius within each community." – Survey respondent	
Some participants suggested building an indoor aquatic park so it could be used year-round. *"Selecting a site with an indoor pool would further benefit the people with the most potential to use it. Since the plan is to use tax dollars for construction, why not at least attempt to create something that Manitobans can use year-round instead of for an approximate 6 months?"* – Survey respondent	The *Winnipeg Recreation Strategy* recommends a mix of indoor and outdoor facilities to provide recreation opportunities. The area is already served by Bonivital Indoor Pool, which received a $9.88 million upgrade in 2025.

Next steps

We are recommending Provencher Park as the location for the St. Boniface Outdoor Aquatic Park. The recommendation will be presented to City Council for their review and a decision.

If Provencher Park is approved as the site location, we will begin preliminary design. This work will look at the site layout and ways to reduce impacts to existing trees and park features. We will also continue to work with stakeholders as the design moves forward.

More funding will be needed for detailed design and construction. Future funding will be considered through the City's annual budget process.

Appendices

Appendix A – Promotional materials
Appendix B – Survey results
Appendix C – Stakeholder meeting notes