



CITY OF YELLOWKNIFE

**GRACE LAKE NORTH
RECREATIONAL SPACES
CONSULTATION REPORT**

Submitted to:
CITY OF YELLOWKNIFE

By:
Department of Planning and Development
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1 BACKGROUND

The City of Yellowknife is interested in residents' feedback regarding public spaces, access to water and recreation around Grace Lake. The City has recently sold residential land in the Grace Lake North area and is now planning the recreational portions of the neighbourhood.

The intent of the Grace Lake North Recreational Spaces Consultation was to collect the ideas of the general public in order to ensure the best result for residents and visitors alike. This report summarizes those findings.

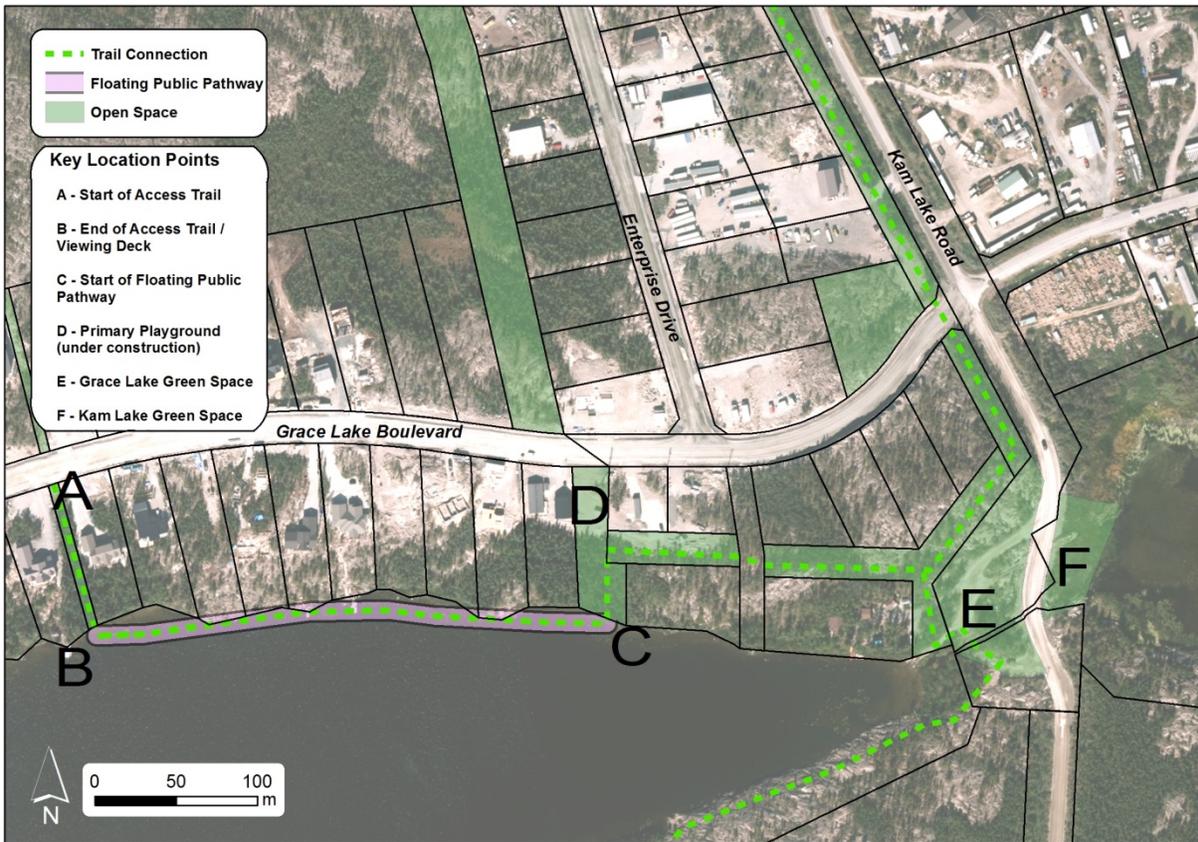


Figure 1 - Consultation Map

2 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT METHODS

A survey tool was used for the Grace Lake Engagement; and included in Appendix A.

A topic was launched on PlaceSpeak, including the survey, background resources, and a notice board for open discussion. The topic opened for residents on September 16, 2016 and closed on September 30, 2016.

Three open house sessions were held at City hall, with approximately 30 participants in attendance. An informal poll during public engagement sessions revealed that the vast majority of participants were residents of the Grace Lake North residential subdivision.

In total, 53 surveys were completed, and over 12 people contributed to the PlaceSpeak discussion board. Many people contributed to the consultation in multiple formats.

On the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum of Public Participation, this engagement was conducted at the 'Consult' level. This level requires obtaining public feedback on alternatives developed, and keeping the public informed with updates and on how the public input influenced recommendations.

3 SURVEY RESULTS

3.1 Activities Currently Enjoyed or Planned In Grace Lake Area

Q1: What are the main activities that you currently do, or plan to do, in the Grace Lake area? (select all that apply)

Most frequently mentioned were accessing the water, launching canoes/kayaks, and skiing/snowshoeing.

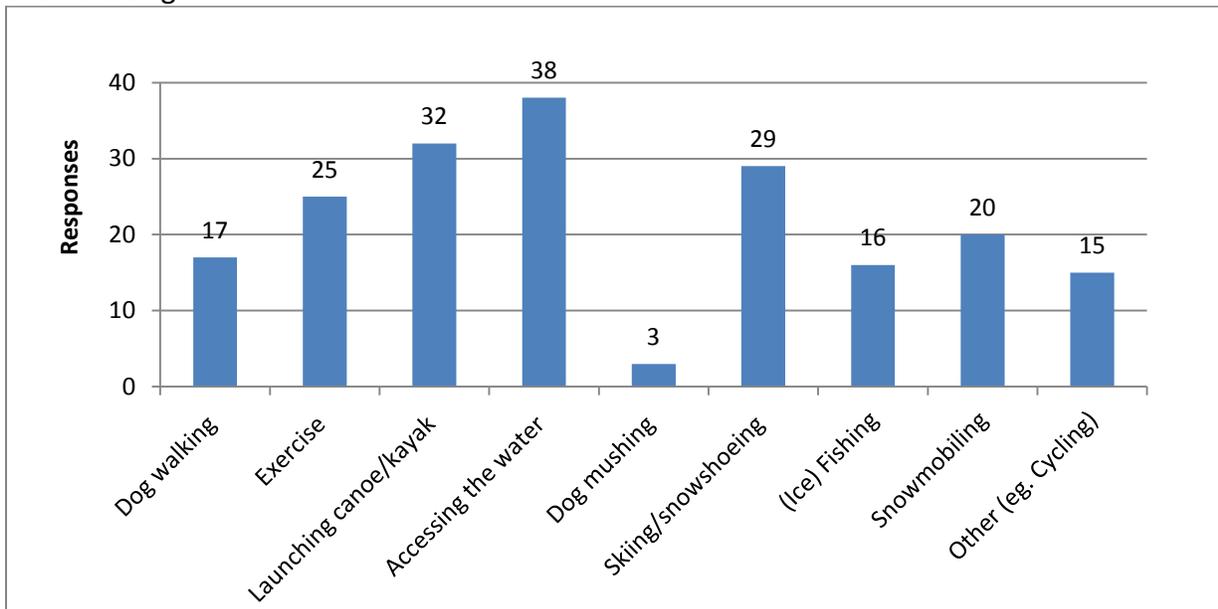


Figure 2 - Current or Desired Activities in the Grace Lake Area

3.2 200m Floating Public Boardwalk

Q2: One of the proposals currently included in the development plan is a 200m floating public pathway connecting Points B and C (see map). Do you believe this floating pathway should be a:

Please choose only one of the following:

- **Low priority**
- **Moderate priority**
- **High priority**

A floating public boardwalk connecting Points B and C is included in the current Grace Lake Development Scheme By-law, however, received minimal support from the participants. As seen in Figure 3, a low priority (87%) was given to the floating public boardwalk connecting Points B and C. 13% of respondents gave the floating boardwalk a moderate or high level of priority.

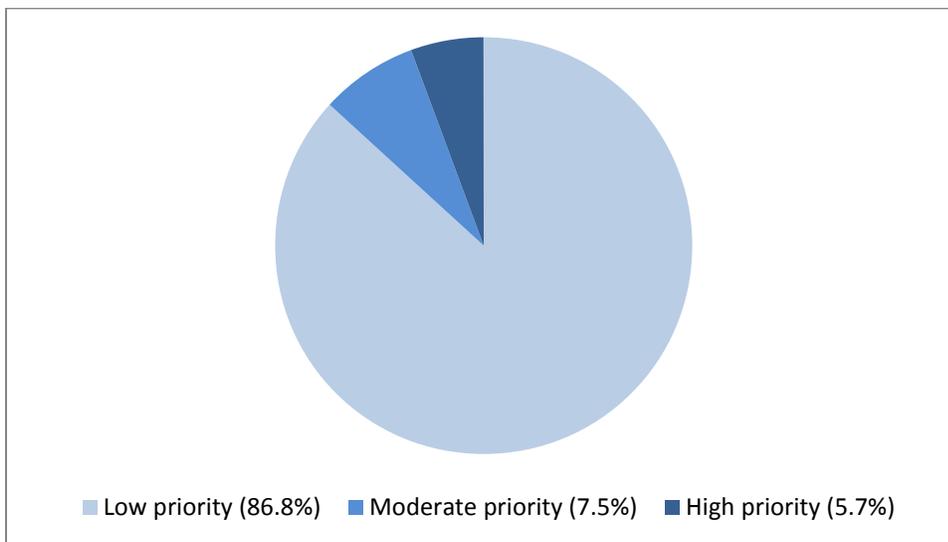


Figure 3 - Support for a Floating Boardwalk

3.3 Public Trail to Grace Lake in 6 m Right-of-Way

Q3: An Access Trail connecting Points A to B (see map) is proposed. Do you believe this trail to Grace Lake should be a:

Please choose only one of the following:

- **Low priority**
- **Moderate priority**
- **High priority**

Overall, 47% of respondents rate this as a high priority, and 26.5% rate it as low or moderate.

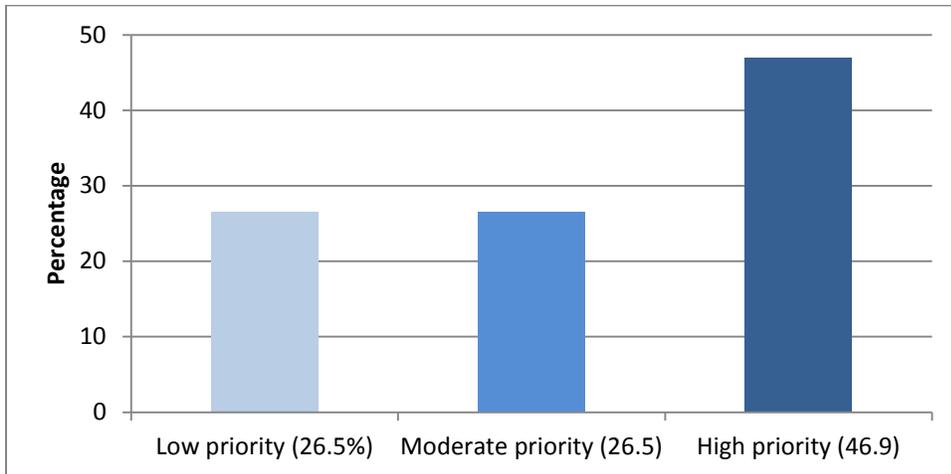


Figure 4 - Support for a Public Pathway Connecting Points A and B

3.4 Termination of Access Path

Q4: If the Access Trail connecting Points A to B were constructed, how do you believe it should terminate?

Please choose only one of the following:

- **Terminate at Point B with no viewing platform**
- **Terminate at Point B with a viewing platform**
- **Continue along to Point C in the form of a floating public pathway, and connect to the larger trail network.**

The majority of respondents (64.4%) believe if the pathway were built, it should terminate with a viewing platform. A minority believe it should terminate with no viewing platform (20%) or connect to Point C via a floating public pathway (15.6%).

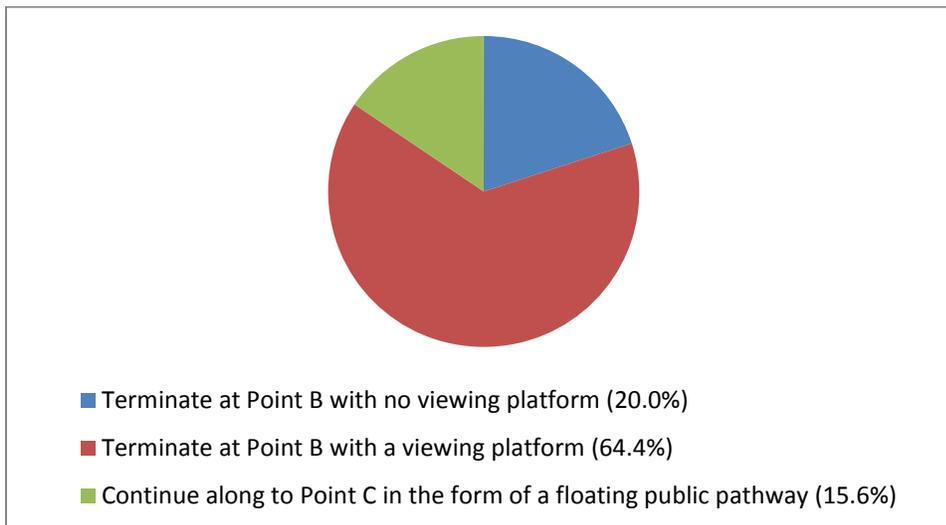


Figure 5 - Preference for Termination of A-B Trail

3.5 Points E and F: Basic or More Significant Development

Q5: At the east end of Grace Lake, a green space is being considered at Point E, which could include a picnic table and a place to launch non-motorized vessels. Considering the map and cost table, how would you prioritize proposed basic development of this green space?

Please choose only one of the following:

- **Low priority**
- **Moderate priority**
- **High priority**

Q6: Point E could also feature as a more developed green space. In addition to basic development with water access (as mentioned in Question 5), this could include installation of a dock, as well as additional seating, parking, and other amenities. Considering the map and cost table, how would you prioritize a more significant development of this green space?

Please choose only one of the following:

- **Low priority**
- **Moderate priority**
- **High priority**

In response to Questions 5 and 6, respondents prioritized minimal interventions to preserve the natural look and feel of Grace Lake.

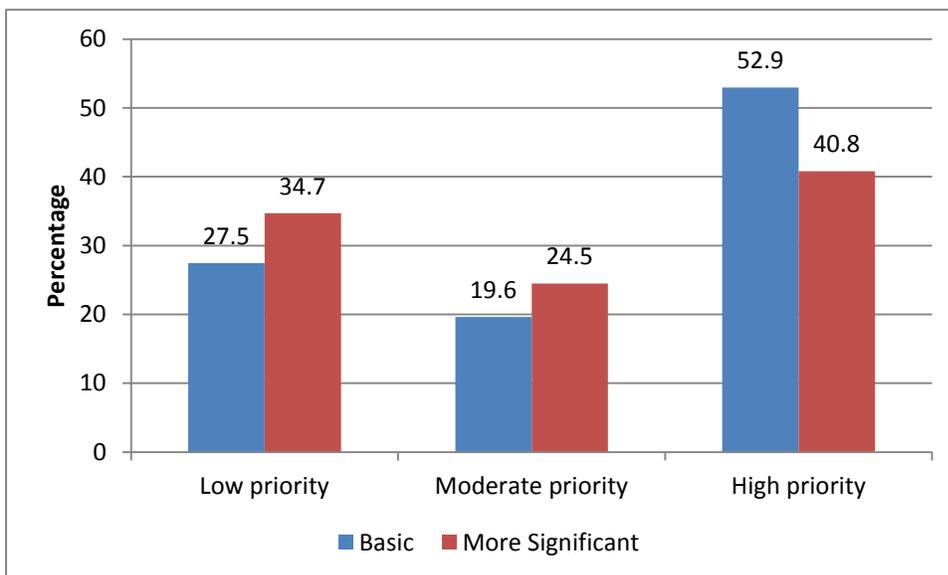


Figure 6. Priority for Minimal or More Significant Development of Green Space at Point E

Q7: Point F could also feature as a more developed green space. In addition to basic development with water access (as mentioned in Question 6), this could include installation of a dock, as well as additional seating, parking, and other amenities. Considering the map and cost table, how would you prioritize a more significant development of this green space?

Please choose only one of the following:

- **Low priority**
- **Moderate priority**
- **High priority**

Compared to Point E, respondents did not prioritize the development of the green space at Point F on the west end of Kam Lake. 28% rated minor improvements of Point F as a high priority, while 52.9% rated minor improvements to Point E as a high priority.

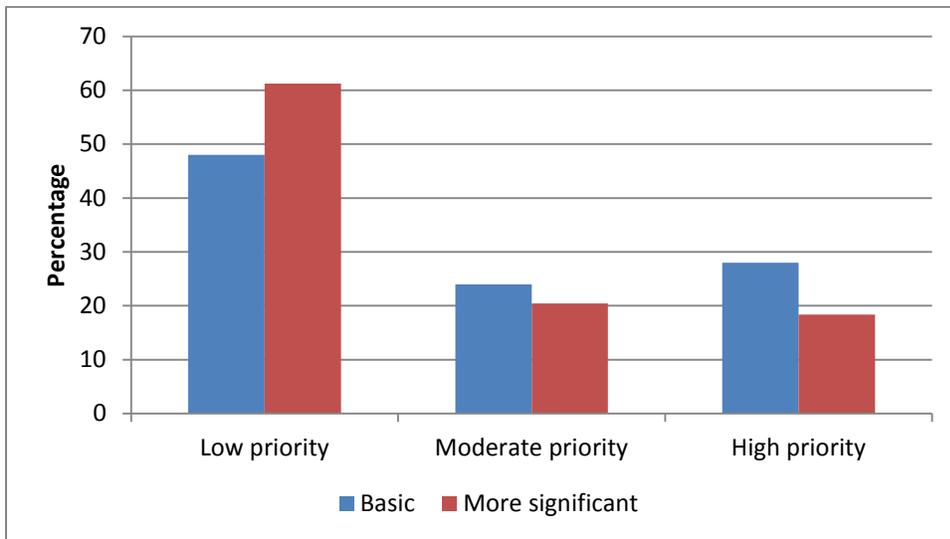


Figure 7. Priority for Minimal or More Significant Development of Green Space at Point F

4 FEEDBACK FROM OPEN HOUSE SESSIONS

During the open house sessions, a number of other issues outside the scope of the survey were raised. They relate to revisions to the trails and green space amenities in the Grace Lake Development Scheme By-law. The topics raised do not represent the opinions of all open house participants. Likewise, not all topics relate directly to the trail and green space amenities; however, they are included in this report as certain topics may be considered for future improvements in the area.

An informal poll during public engagement sessions revealed that the vast majority of participants were residents of the Grace Lake North residential subdivision.

4.1 Public Trail to Grace Lake in 6 m Right-of-Way

The connection between Point A and B, from Grace Lake Boulevard to the north shore of Grace Lake was discussed in the open house sessions. Opinions were divided, with approximately equal numbers in support and opposition.

4.2 Connecting Playground to Other Green Spaces

Many residents attending the public sessions expressed support for the trail connections from Points C to D and C to E on the Consultation Map (Figure 1). While this was not specifically included as a survey question, the strong support for these connections indicates that residents appreciate nature trails connecting multiple public amenities.

4.3 Maintaining Grace Lake as a Natural Area

At the public sessions, there was a near unanimous opinion expressed that Grace Lake represents a special natural feature in Yellowknife and should be protected as much as possible. Specific concerns were expressed relating to Grace Lake's water quality, diverse animal life, and overall levels of noise and activity. Recommendations included limiting access to motorized watercraft by designing access points to accommodate non-motorized vessels only and exploring by-laws restricting motorized boats.

4.4 Walking and Cycling in the Grace Lake Area

Several participants noted that it is unsafe to walk and bicycle from Grace Lake to nearby locations and facilities such as the Multiplex. Several participants expressed a desire for active transportation amenities such as on-street or off-street multi-use pathways outside the area, which would serve residents as well as other Yellowknifers. Other participants, however, stated that funds from the Grace Lake North Subdivision should be used exclusively within the subdivision area.

4.5 Environmental Concerns on Grace Lake

It was noted that the Grace Lake is extensively used by dog mushers, and concerns were raised about the level of dog feces this generates. This environmental concern relates both to the use

of the frozen lake in the winter months, as well as the impact of this waste on the natural ecosystem when it enters the lake.

5 PLACESPEAK COMMENTS

The City's public consultation platform, PlaceSpeak, was also used as a venue for discussion, accessing the survey, and leaving comments. All three discussion topics posted are included below as well as all public comments.

"What advice would you give to City staff as we plan for the future of this residential and recreational area?"

- 1. I would say that the most attractive feature of living on Grace Lake Boulevard is that it's quiet, clean, fairly private and the lake is not over run with people and their boats. Keep this in mind, you've already made the mistake of developing the other side of the lake for the sale of lots. Grace Lake is a small and narrow lake it wouldn't take much more activity to ruin its beauty.*
- 2. I would like to see as much of the surrounding nature preserved. There is already a spot off Kam Lake Road that provides small watercraft access with a parking lot and garbage cans. One of the best things about this neighbourhood is that you can live in the city, but still feel as though you are away from town when out on the lake. As a born and raised Yellowknifer, I enjoyed playing in the woods that was undeveloped and I hope that my kids will continue to have this as they grow up. Please leave the lake and surrounding area alone, we don't need walkways and trails. People have used Grace Lake for decades without all this fancy development. The playground is a really nice spot for kids to go play in a safe area, but other than that, Grace Lake is awesome*
- 3. We need public trails around the lake so that everyone can enjoy the beautiful scenery and nature of this area. I don't agree with privatizing all the waterfront so that only a select few can enjoy it. This is our lake, and our city. Presently we need to work with what we have available to build walking trails. In the future, trails, green space, and recreational spaces should be planned in advance before the lots are sold.*
- 4. I think that the city needs to follow through with the original plan. I'm not for the expensive floating board walk and would rather see this money put towards having the trails along BOTH sides of the lake and having more than one access point to the lake is a must. There is already access at the beginning but there should be another access point in the middle or at the end of Grace Lake Road. These were in the plan before homes were built and should not be changed to accommodate these owners. I agree with Jennifer Broadbridge on having public access to this lake. It's for everyone not just the lake view home owners.*
- 5. Being a resident on Grace Lake Blvd. I agree with having public access to the lake in several locations. There is one at the beginning already and there should be another half way down the road (at least) where it was intended to be in the first place. I also agree there should be a public trail on the shore line for everyone to enjoy.*
- 6. Do this consultation before the lots are sold. Trails and parks should be built so neighbours understand where they are before they buy and build. Floating boardwalk is stupid. Use that \$ to build a bike trail along Kam Lake to downtown, so these people can get to work.*

7. *Oh and put a place to comment in the survey! Would love to see one of these for Grace Lake South soon, before the lots are sold!!!!*
8. *I live there and was looking forward to the trail and access points to the lake. I don't know why we have to discuss it. Do it like it was planned before I bought it!!!!!! Grace lake is not just for us, it's for the public. Good idea on the bike lane in kam lake!!!! That would be great for everyone.*
9. *The area is naturally beautiful because of the rock and the lake. Spend some time to understand the topography and natural routes on the site - including the lake in winter. There is clear evidence of use already - recognize it. Make sure public access points are practical and accessible. Think about views. Keep it natural - don't add a lot of infrastructure unless there are plans to maintain it. And finally - as a lesson learned, think about the benefits of including public recreation use in the planning right from the start - it appears to have been, but it's odd that the public is being asked about it now (possibly again).*
10. *I would like to see the trail around the lake, following the natural landscape, starting of course with Grace Lake North. A boardwalk around areas on the lake would require much more maintenance. However it is constructed, I'm excited about the prospect of having another trail system within the city. A parking spot and dock area to set the canoe in the water would be wonderful.*
11. *1) NO BOARDWALK 2) Public Access 3) No motorised boating 4) nature trail (similar to Frame lake) 5) Absolutely no privatization of the shoreline.*
12. *No boardwalks - cost of maintenance being the major factor. Definitely as much of a pathway as possible in the area. It's a beautiful area to relax in.*
13. *There is always a tension between home owners and the public about recreational space around bodies of water. Grace lake was a recreational place long before it hosted the gigantic homes it now has. The public needs these spaces to be provided and residents around Grace Lake need to understand waterfront is public space.*

“Please describe the current recreational activities that you enjoy taking part in in this area? Which additional activities should be made possible?”

- 1. I would love to see naturalized walking trails around this beautiful lake. More public trails so that all Yellowknifers and visitors can enjoy this beautiful part of town. I also like the idea of having a dock for non motorized vehicles (so as to not disturb homeowners who live in this area wih loud motorcraft)*
- 2. I've used the lake for canoeing in the summer and skiing in the winter. A trail system around the lake, as planned, would add to the trail system in Yellowknife. Would definitely use it :) Suggest using the natural landscape rather than the floating boardwalk (for maintenance reasons.)*
- 3. Canoeing. A walking trail would be greatly appreciated. I agree that there should be no motorized boats, seadoos, etc. on the lake.*

“If there is one feature you would like to see added to Grace Lake recreational facilities, what would it be?”

- 1. It would be nice to see a walk way down to the water where it was originally planned.*
- 2. Public trail around the lake (like at Niven and Frame Lake)*
- 3. Protection from motorized vehicles*
- 4. A trail system around the whole lake would be the top of my wish list but that doesn't appear to be an option; therefore, as much of a trail system as possible. Dock access for canoes would be very much appreciated.*

Appendix A

Background Information Provided in Survey

Public Access to Waterfront

In previous consultations related to Grace Lake and other development initiatives, City staff have regularly heard from residents that access to the water is a priority. This feedback has been taken into consideration when planning the initial stages of Grace Lake, and continues to be a central priority in this consultation.

Lake Use

Many different recreational activities can be enjoyed in the Grace Lake area. These include dog sledding, skiing, hiking, (ice) fishing, canoeing, and many more. We look forward to hearing how you use this area, and the recreational opportunities you hope to see there.

Grace Lake Area Development Plan

When the Grace Lake Residential Subdivision was initially planned, Grace Lake Development Scheme By-law No. 4676 was adopted. This area development plan includes a floating public pathway along the north shore of Grace Lake (Point B to C), a playground area (Point D), and several smaller green spaces (Points E and F).

More information is available at www.yellowknife.ca/gracelake

Resulting from this By-law, the purchase agreement for properties on the north shore of Grace Lake includes clauses detailing the City's development plans for the area - the proposed features of the trail, a floating public pathway, and provisions for buffer and open spaces. Property owners may construct a private dock connecting to the public floating pathway, and only after the construction of the public pathway.

Installation of Playground

Following public consultation in the summer of 2016, the final configuration of the playground planned for the park at Point D was completed and construction completed in the fall of 2016.

Accessibility

Where possible, the City of Yellowknife prioritizes accessible development to accommodate residents with disabilities and impaired mobility. The playground (Point D) will be accessible. However, other trails and pathways will remain natural trails, taking advantage of the terrain.

Current Consultation

Since the adoption of the area development plan, residents have started to move into the Grace Lake area and new ideas have been suggested of how to best take advantage of the area's natural surroundings. This survey is intended to collect the ideas of all residents in order to ensure the best result for residents and visitors alike.

Projected Costs

A sum of \$400,000 was set aside from the sale of land in the Grace Lake North area, and will be used to fund the proposed projects, in the order of priorities as they emerge from this survey. The estimated costs of various components of the projects are highlighted in the table shown below (Appendix B). The total project cost will be capped at \$400,000 as accounted for in Land Development Fund. Any additional costs are indicated in a separate column.

You may wish to refer to this cost table as you answer the questions below.

Appendix B

Class D Estimates Provided for Consultation

Description	Location	Construction cost accounted for by Land Development Fund	Additional Costs
Access trail from Grace Lake Boulevard to Grace Lake	A – B	\$40,000	
Year-round viewing deck for viewing Grace Lake	B	\$40,000	
Floating Public Pathway	B – C	\$250,000	
Grace Lake green space	E	Basic development: \$35,000 More significant development: \$35,000-\$100,000	
Kam Lake green space	F	N/A	Basic development: \$35,000 More significant development: \$35,000-\$100,000
Primary playground (open summer 2017)	D	\$120,000	