



# WEASELHEAD/GLENMORE AREA NATURAL HABITAT MANAGEMENT PLAN

2023

## WHAT WE HEARD REPORT

An overview of the project, engagement activities, range of input received and the themes that were raised.

# Weaselhead/Glenmore Area Habitat Management Plan

Engage Resource Unit What We Heard Report

May 2023

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Throughout this report, you will find a selection of images and associated information, that were submitted to <https://engage.calgary.ca/weaselheadHMP/> using the 'Take a Photo! Leave a Photo!' feedback section. These photos were taken throughout the Weaselhead/Glenmore Natural Habitat Area and exemplify the biological and ecological diversity of the parks.



*American Pelicans breed in large colonies on isolated islands in freshwater lakes or shallow wetlands. They feed mainly on fish in shallow waters. Pelicans may form long lines to push fish into shallow water where it is easier to catch them. Active colonies are decreasing in number raising impact concerns of disease, predation or contamination events occur.*

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## Introduction

### Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide a comprehensive and transparent summary of the feedback, opinions, and insights gathered from interest holders, participants, and the public regarding the Weasel/Glenmore Area Habitat Management Plan.

It aims to distill and present the key themes, concerns, and recommendations expressed by Calgarians, ensuring their voices are heard and used to inform decision-makers, plan development, and future actions. By documenting the perspectives and sentiments of those who have contributed, this report facilitates informed decision-making, fosters accountability, and promotes effective communication and collaboration.

### Project Overview

The Urban Conservation portfolio of Calgary Parks and Open Spaces is seeking to develop a 10-year habitat management plan for the Weaselhead /Glenmore-area parks located on along the Elbow River in SW Calgary.

The project will be led by the Habitat Management section of Urban Conservation and will draw on the skills and expertise of various city staff throughout the management planning process. Internal contributors within various Calgary Parks portfolios and other business units will be engaged to provide input into shaping the management plan and its implementation. External contributors and Indigenous Peoples to be brought in to better understand past, present and future use of the park and to contribute to the future vision for the parks and the resulting management plan.

The primary question the project seeks to answer is:

How can Calgary Parks and Open Spaces collectively manage habitat within the Weaselhead/Glenmore habitat area in a consistent way to ensure positive and measurable biodiversity outcomes?

Biodiversity is defined by the International Union of Conservation as the variability among living organisms—animals, plants, their habitats and their genes—from all sources including terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems, and the ecological complexes of which they are part. This includes diversity within species, between species, and of ecosystems.

*Cow Parsnip typical habitats are near water in rich, moist soil along stream banks, in wet ditches and in meadows. In the Weaselhead It grows well in partial shade along floodplain forests. Cow parsnip blooms in late May to late June. White Admiral Butterflies are found in shady deciduous woodlands, along the edges of the forest. Their diet includes nectar from small white flowers and rotting fruit.*



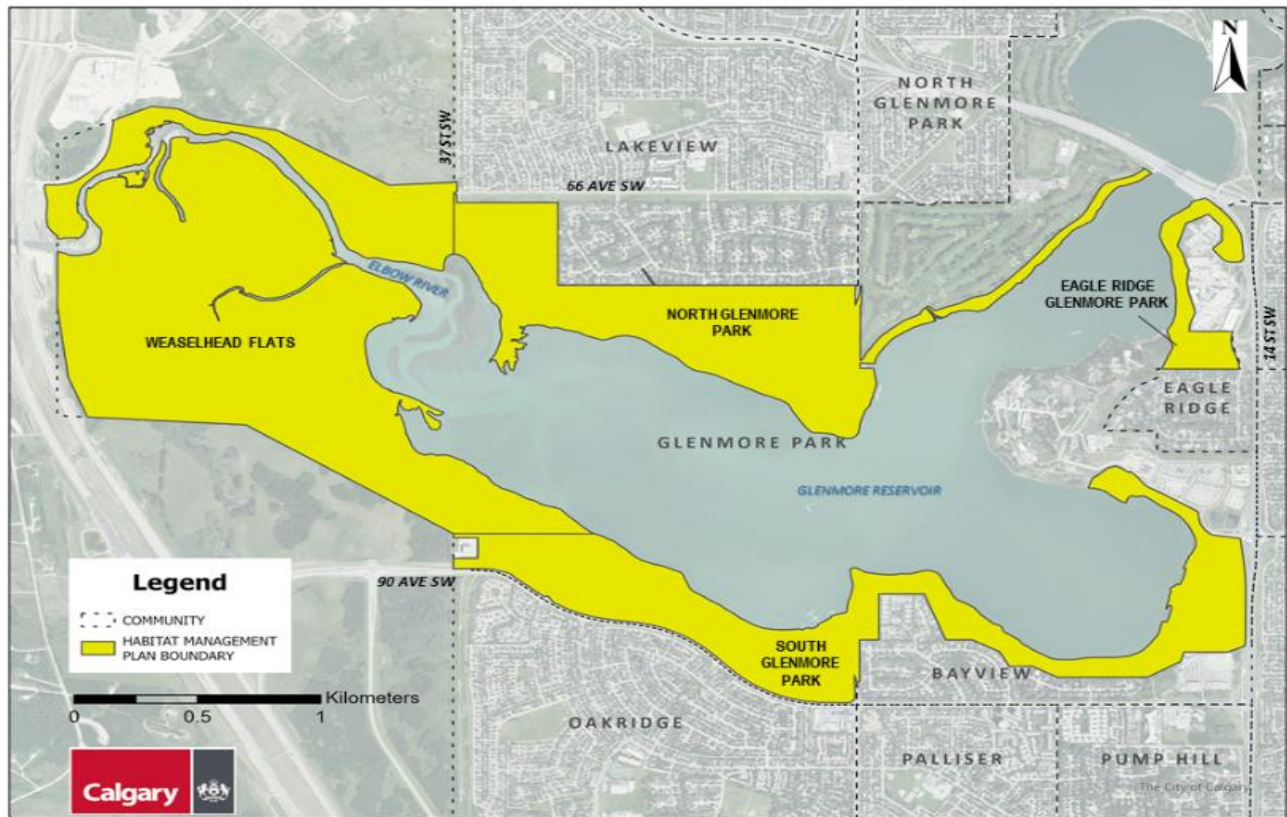


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The yellow area in the map below shows the area covered by the Weaselhead/Glenmore Habitat Management Plan.



*Map of the Weaselhead/Glenmore Area for the Habitat Management Plan.*

## Project Objectives

The final deliverable of this project is the creation of the Weaselhead/Glenmore Area Habitat Management Plan report, with accompanying maps and figures (as per the Habitat Management Plan Framework, Calgary Parks and Open Spaces 2022.)

## Project Alignment

This work will provide the direction necessary to achieve the Weaselhead/Glenmore Natural Area Management Plan. The guiding document for the Weaselhead/Glenmore Habitat Management Plan is the Habitat Management Plan Framework (2022).

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## Engagement Scope and Overview

Engagement ran from March 1 to March 31, 2023. We invited participants to provide insight on what they valued and what their concerns were for the Weaselhead/Glenmore area.

### Engagement objectives

In this engagement, we wanted to:

- Understand the areas that are important to the community.
- Understand what environmental areas were most concerned about and why.

The purpose of this engagement was to:

- Better understand, past, present and anticipated future park usage and associated issues/usage impacting the natural environment.
- Understand the areas that are important to the community.
- Understand what environmental areas were most concerned about and why.
- Provide opportunity for community members, the public, Rights Holders, etc., input into shaping the Weaselhead Glenmore Habitat Management plan.
- Grow knowledge of and support for the management plan implementation period.
- Participants, community members, etc., feel they have been given ample opportunity to share their ideas and perspectives.
- Participants feel an increased sense of pride and stewardship towards Weaselhead-Glenmore Habitat Management Plan.
- Participants feel they have a better understanding about the decision-making process that went into the Weaselhead Glenmore Habitat Management Plan.

The feedback collected will help to inform and shape our strategies, policies, and actions, ensuring they align with the needs, preferences, and concerns of our community. It will play a pivotal role in driving positive change, fostering inclusivity, and enhancing the overall effectiveness of our initiatives, ultimately leading to more responsive and impactful outcomes.

### Who we engaged with

In collaboration with the project team, the Engage Resource Unit conducted engagement with the following groups:


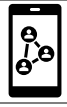



- General public
- Community associations
- Ward 11 Office
- Special interest groups
  - Weaselhead Preservation Society
  - Calgary River Valleys
  - Community Groups

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## How we communicated engagement opportunities

	Format	Description	Audience
	Engage Portal Page	<a href="https://engage.calgary.ca/weaselheadHMP">www.engage.calgary.ca/weaselheadHMP</a>	General Public
	Social Media	Posts on The City's social media channels: Facebook, Twitter and Instagram (organic and paid)	General Public
	Email	Emails to interested and impacted parties.	e.g., Calgary River Valleys, Bird Friendly Calgary, Nature Calgary
	Collaboration	Weaselhead Preservation Society Neighbourhood Project Co-ordinator (City of Calgary NPC)	Community Associations Area specific groups
	Advertising	BOLD Signs Sounding Boards	General Public

## What We Asked

Engagement with the public took place from March 1 – 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023 and included the Engage portal page (<https://engage.calgary.ca/weaselheadHMP>), online Lunch 'n' Learns, online open house, and a series of accessible pop-ups in the park.

	Engagement Opportunity	Audience	Format, Date, Location	Participation
	Engage Portal Page	General public Interest groups	Online, March 1 – 31, 2023, <a href="https://engage.calgary.ca">www.engage.ca</a>	3,794 visitors 1,404 feedback responses
	Pop-ups	General public Interest groups	South Glenmore (March 18) Weaselhead Park (March 25)	21 35
	Information Session	General Public Interest groups	Online (March 15)	12
	Lunch 'n' Learns	General Public Interest groups	Online (March 7, 16 and 23)	10

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## The Portal Page (main)

<https://engage.calgary.ca/weaselheadHMP>

The main portal page included the following feedback mechanisms:

1. The Primary Question - participants answered the project's primary question using open text.
2. Question & Answer was divided into five sections:
  - i. Tell us about yourself
  - ii. Values
  - iii. Management practices
  - iv. Future thinking
  - v. Parting thoughts
2. Social Mapping Tool – participants were asked to note concerns and usage of the Weaselhead/Glenmore area on a map of the area.
3. Ask an Expert - participants asked a question, and a subject matter expert (SME) provided a timely response.
4. Photo Gallery - participants posted images of the Weaselhead/Glenmore area.

## The Portal Page (secondary)

<https://engage.calgary.ca/weaselheadHMP/family-feedback-and-activities>

The project subpage offered two family friendly self guided nature walks and asked for feedback after participants went for a walk.

1. Quick poll
2. Photo gallery
3. Visioning activity

## Lunch 'n' Learns (online)

We held three one-hour drop-in sessions from 12:00 pm – 1:00 pm on March 7, 16 and 23, 2023. These sessions provided the opportunity to meet members of the project team, ask questions and express appreciation or concerns.

## Park pop-ups (in-person)

Park Pop-ups and Barrier Free Nature Walks

We held two in person pop-ups from 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm on March 18, 2023 in South Glenmore park and March 25, 2023 in North Glenmore park. We provided two 45-minute barrier-free nature walks with parks staff at each pop-up. Binoculars, folding chairs, walking sticks and snow grips/ice cleats were provided. An ASL translator was also onsite. Accessible for those with guide dogs, mobility devices (walkers, wheelchairs, sight canes, etc.), strollers or limited mobilities. Participants learned more about the Weaselhead/Glenmore Area Habitat Management Plan and provided feedback.



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## Open House (online)

We held a virtual open house from 5:30 pm – 7:00 pm on March 15, 2023. There was a brief presentation on the Weaselhead /Glenmore Area Habitat Management plan followed by a moderated question and answer period.



*Deer move to various parts of Weaselhead Park and North Glenmore Park during the night or day depending on whether they wish to drink water, feed or rest. They depend heavily on their keen sense of hearing.*

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## What We Heard

### The Portal Page (main)

The following is an overview of the feedback gathered from the Engage portal page:

<https://engage.calgary.ca/weaselheadHMP>

### The Primary Question

*How can Calgary Parks and Open Spaces collectively manage habitat within the Weaselhead/Glenmore area in a consistent way to ensure positive and measurable biodiversity outcomes?*

Six themes emerged out of the primary question. Within each major theme, there were a smaller subset of topics.

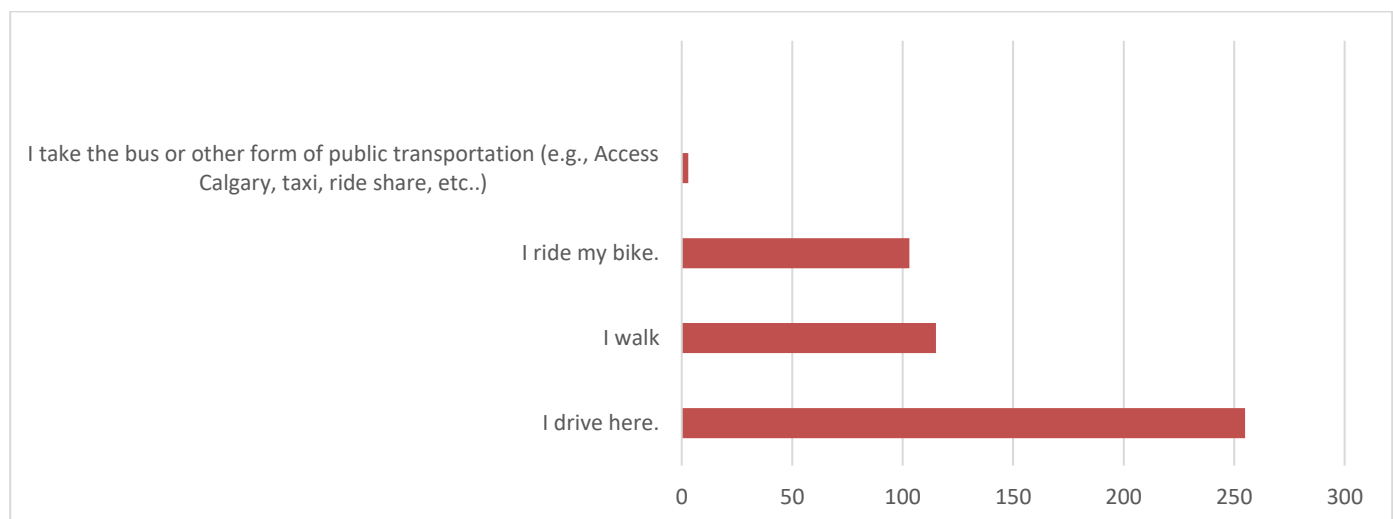
1. Human Impacts (dogs, cyclists, overuse)
2. Environment (leave it as is, biodiversity – fauna, bio-diversity – flora)
3. Enforcement and Education (enforcement, education)
4. Management Practices (Resources, water management, monitoring, partnerships and collaboration)
5. Restrictions (closure of areas, trails and pathways)
6. External Impacts (Stoney trail/ring road, development, pollution)

For a detailed summary of the input provided, please see the [Summary of Input](#) section.

### Question & Answer

Q1. *How do you usually get to the Weaselhead/Glenmore area?*

Most participants get to Glenmore Park by driving (255 respondents), followed by walking (115 respondents) and riding their bikes (103 respondents) with the lowest number taking the bus or other form of public transportation (3 respondents)



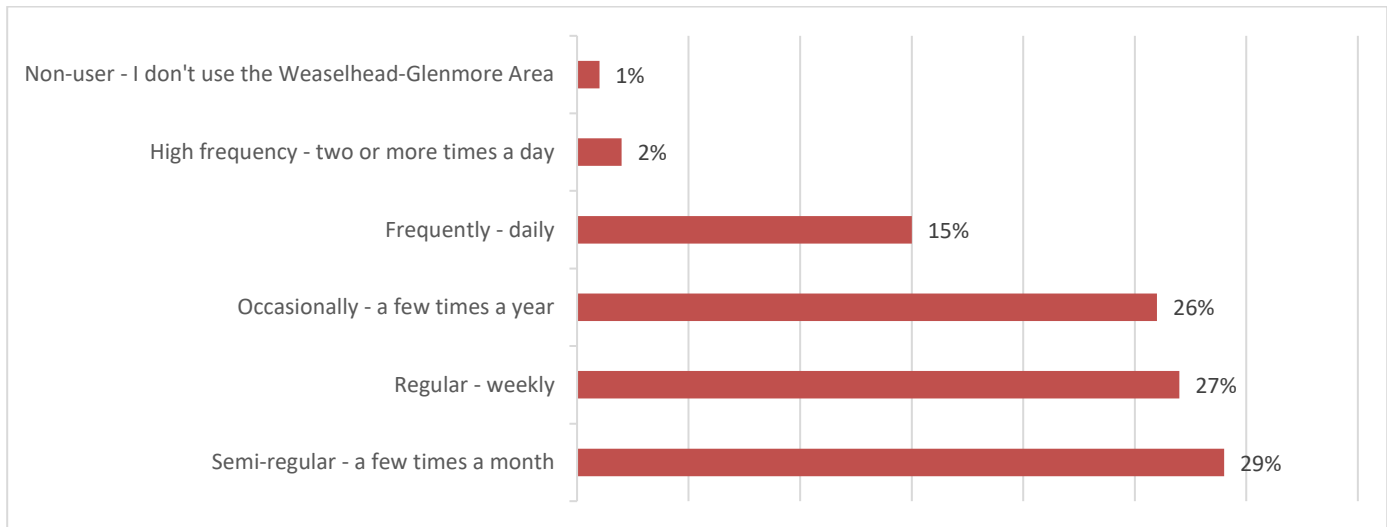
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## Q2. How often do you use the Weaselhead/Glenmore area?

The highest number of participants (29 percent) use the area on a semi-regular basis, followed by a regular basis (27 percent), then occasionally use (26 percent) followed by frequent users (15 percent). High frequency users were low (2 percent) and lastly non-users (less than 1 percent).



## Question 3. How do you use the Weaselhead/Glenmore area?

Participants' responses were grouped into two areas of recreation (passive and active).

The top active recreation usages were:

1. Walking/Running/Hiking
2. Cycling
3. Water sports (kayaking, paddleboarding, swimming (river), fishing)
4. Winter sports (skiing, skating, snowshoeing)
5. Play (pump track, playgrounds)

The top passive recreation usages were:

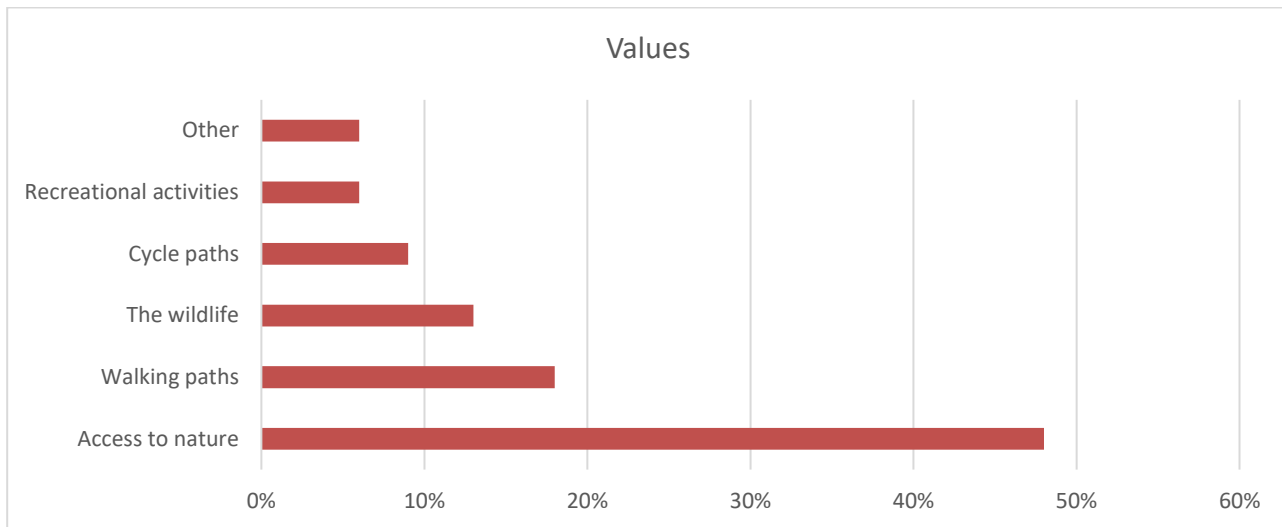
1. Bird watching
2. Enjoying the flora, fauna and natural environment
3. Photography
4. Health and mental wellness

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Question 4. What do you value most about the Weaselhead/Glenmore area?



Question 5. Would you mind telling us a bit more about the answer you chose in the previous question?

The top three themes were:

1. Environmental (urban natural park, biodiversity, protected area)
2. Health and Wellness
3. Infrastructure (e.g., maintenance and usage of trails and pathways and other amenities such as picnic sites, washrooms, etc.)

For a detailed summary of the input provided, please see the [Summary of Input](#) section.

Question 6. Rate your level of support for the potential use of the following habitat management practices in the Weaselhead/Glenmore area.

Management Practice	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose
Creation of dog-free zones	58%	19%	13%	10%
Volunteer planting & stewardship events	65%	31%	2%	2%
Targeted grazing using sheep	40%	43%	10%	7%
Naturalization of underused mowed park space to create natural buffer for drinking water protection	65%	25%	6%	4%
Wildlife friendly fencing to protect sensitive areas	52%	30%	10%	8%
Increased enforcement of by-laws and regulations	53%	28%	9%	9%

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Management Practice	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose
Increased educational signage	56%	31%	7%	6%
Trail network planning and rehabilitation of less used trails to reduce habitat fragmentation	59%	26%	6%	8%
Seasonal partial park /trail closures for wildlife in sensitive areas	51%	29%	8%	12%
Altered parks hours to allow wildlife more time/space to use the habitat	37%	36%	15%	13%

*Question 7. Thinking about the Weaselhead/Glenmore area 5 years from now, what do you think will be the most valuable? What about 10 years? What about 20 years?*

The top areas of value were:

1. Environment specific (protection, preservation and conservation, naturalization, biodiversity, water)
2. Accessibility
3. Development
4. Health and wellness

Participants also voiced concerns regarding:

1. External developments (ring road, densification, etc.)
2. Human impacts (dogs, cyclists, overuse, etc.)
3. Pollution (light, noise, garbage, etc.)

For a detailed summary of the input provided, please see the [Summary of Input](#) section.

*Question 8. Is there anything else you'd like us to know about the Weaselhead/Glenmore area?*

Most participants spoke about wanting to protect and preserve the area which included:

1. Education and awareness (bylaw, signage, knowledge sharing)
2. Sustainability and succession planning
3. Concerns centered around the ring road, overdevelopment and overuse

Emergent themes included:

1. Access to the park – both on restrictions and closures, as well as keeping it accessible for all users
2. Amenities (some comments wanted more, while others wanted fewer amenities)

For a detailed summary of the input provided for questions please see the [Summary of Input](#) section.



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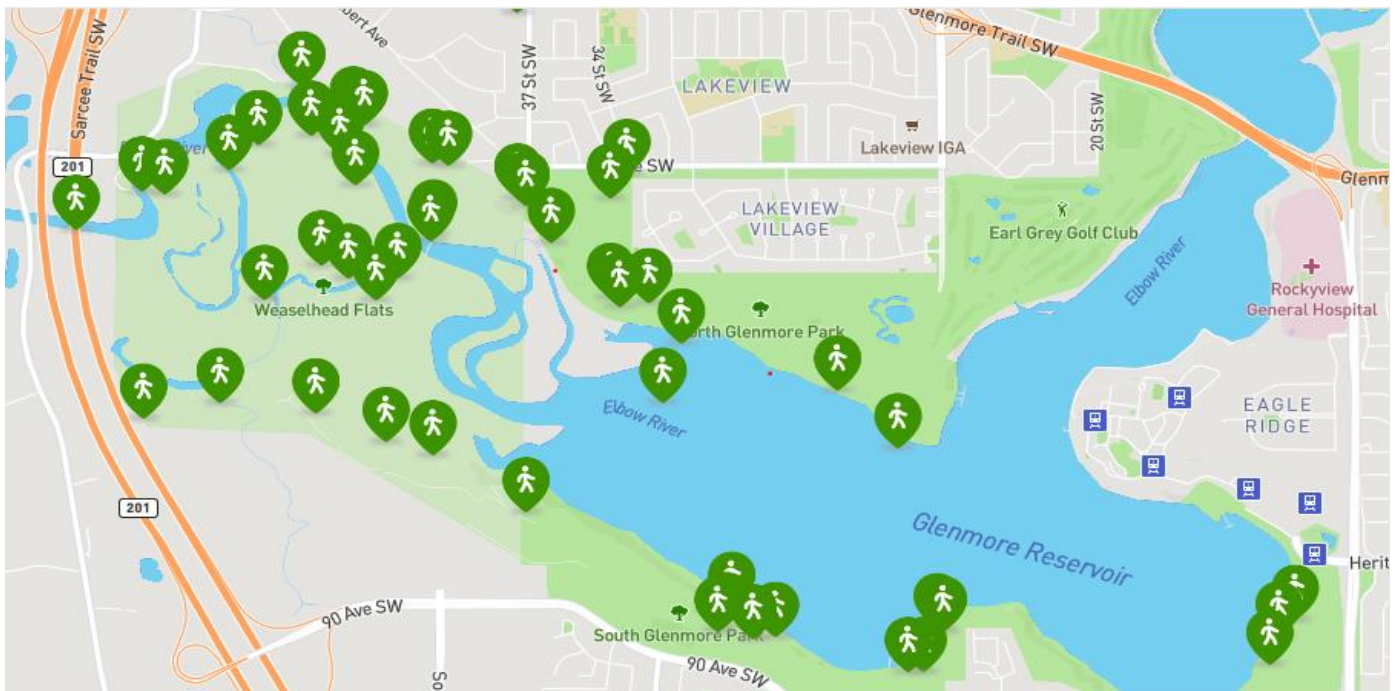


*The Eastern Kingbird is a black and white, large headed flycatcher with a white tipped tail. They are easy to spot and often perch in the open atop trees or along utility lines or fences. They fly with very shallow, rowing wingbeats and a raised head, usually accompanied by metallic, sputtering calls. Eastern Kingbirds are visual hunters, sallying out from perches to snatch flying insects in river valleys. They are very pleasing to watch. They are declining in Prairie and Parkland eco-zones.*

## Social Mapping

*Social Map 1: How do you use the Weaselhead/Glenmore area?*

Walking and running.

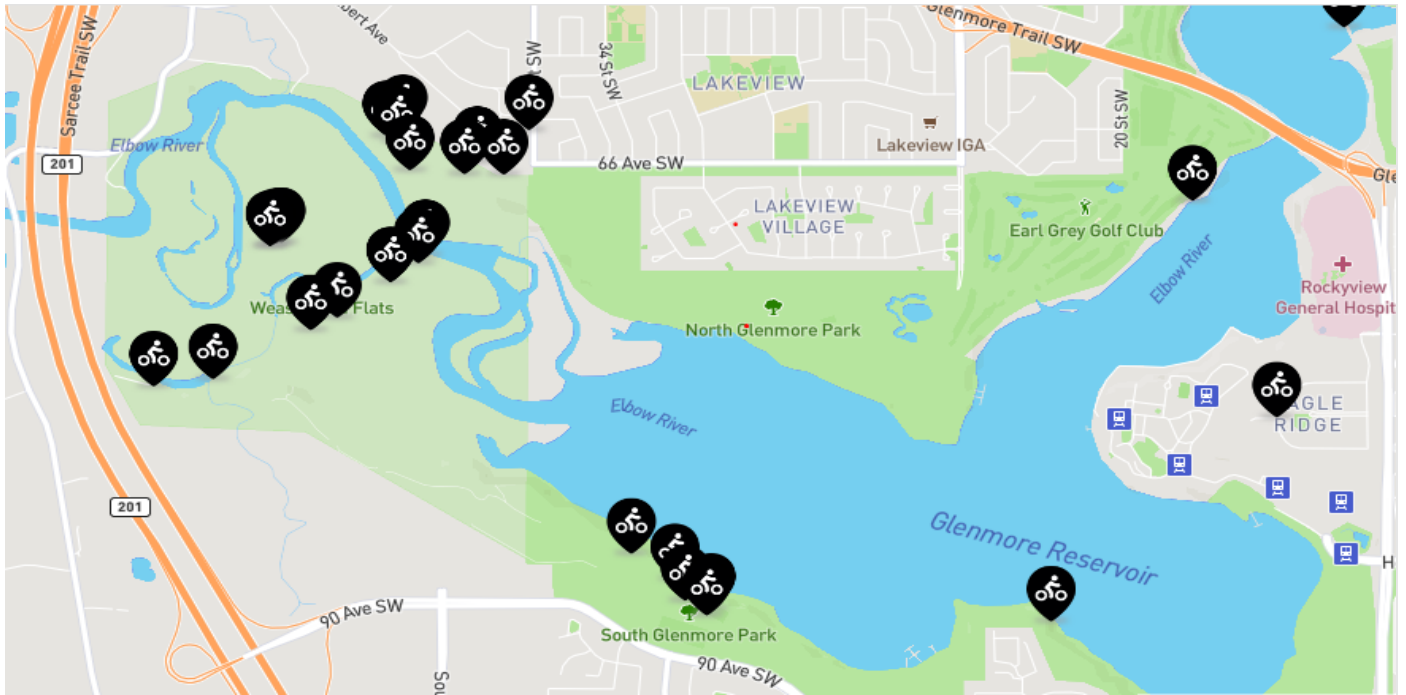


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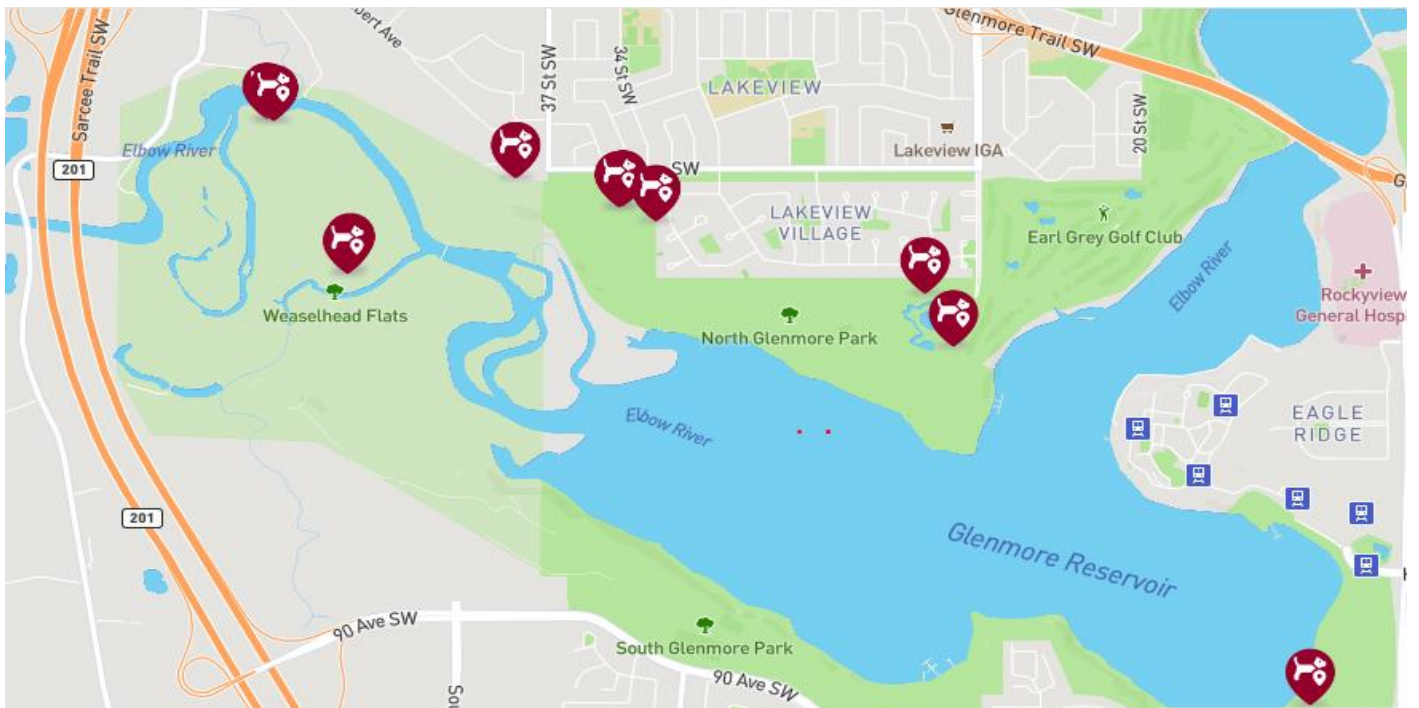
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Cycling.



Dog walking – on leash.



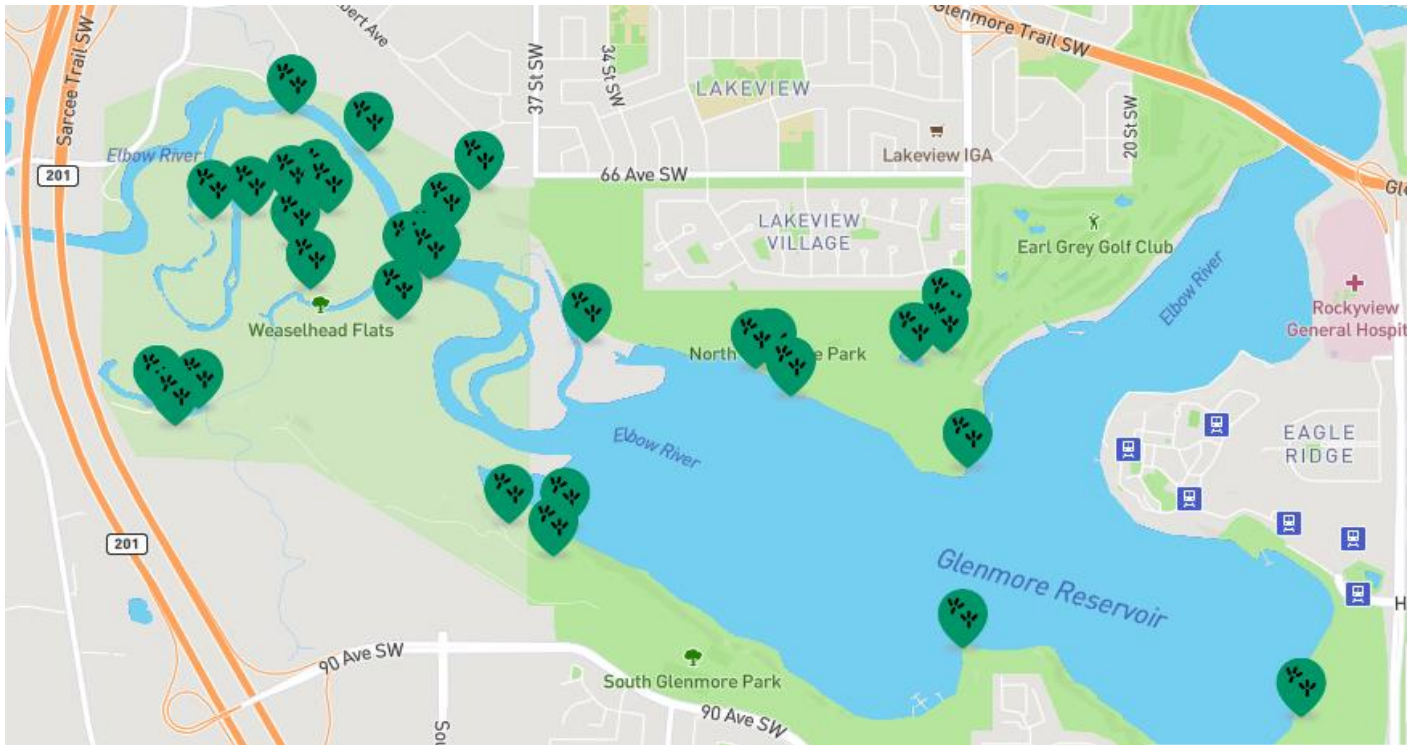


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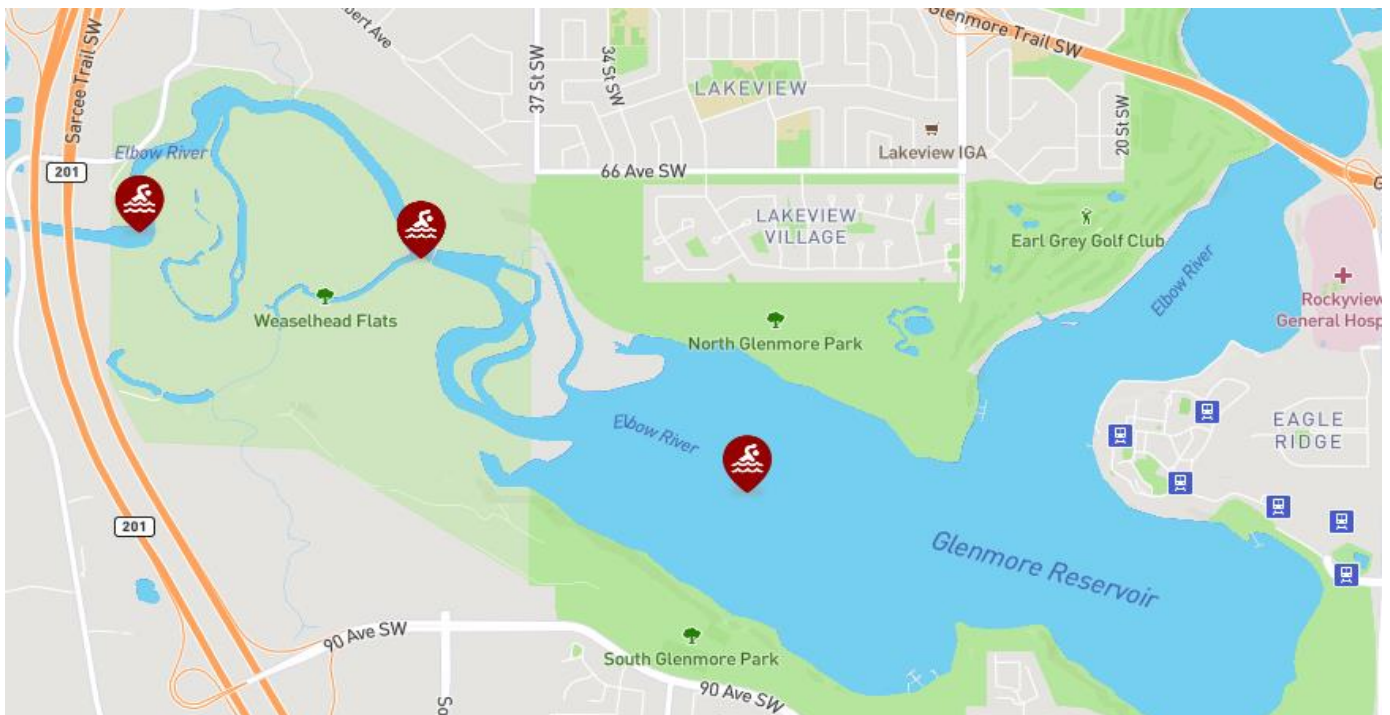
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Bird watching.



Swimming.

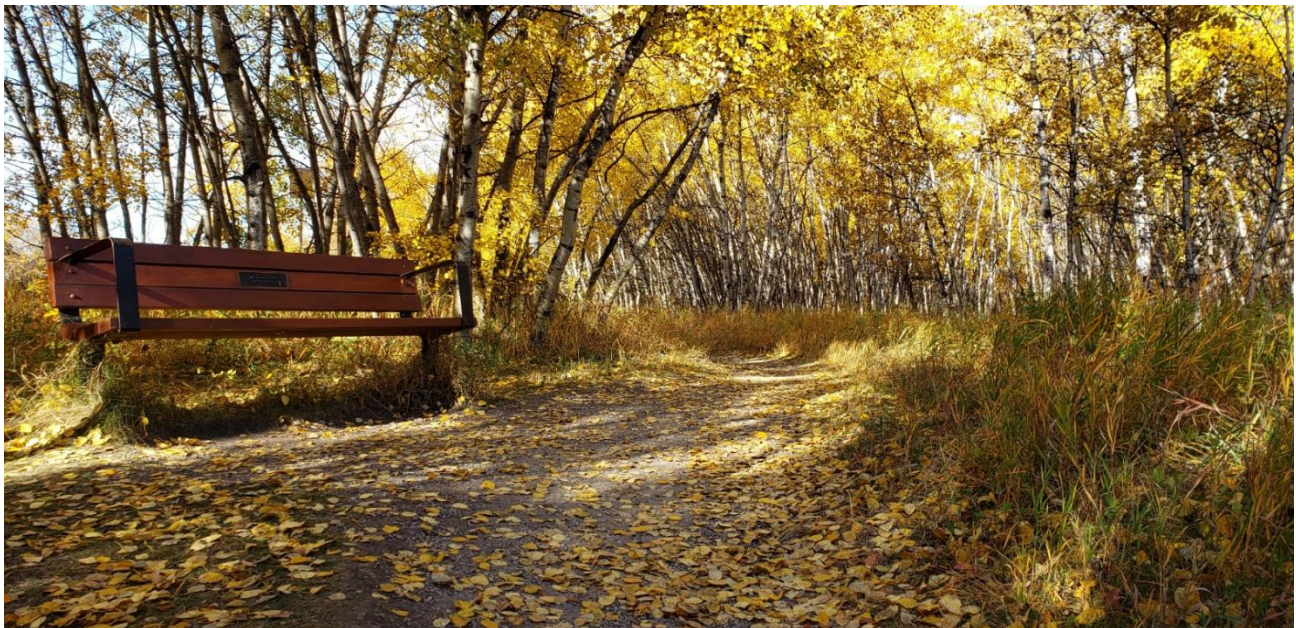
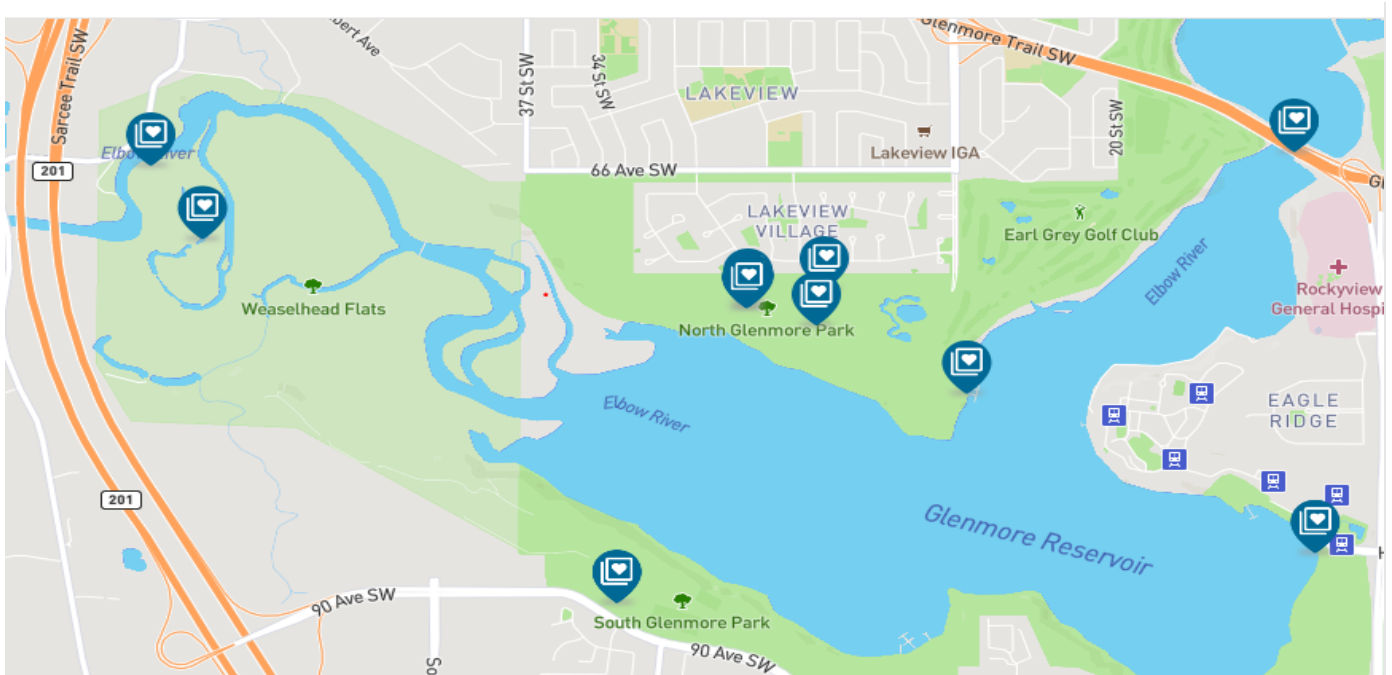


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Wellness.



*This shows one of the reasons why the Glenmore and the Weaselhead are so special.*



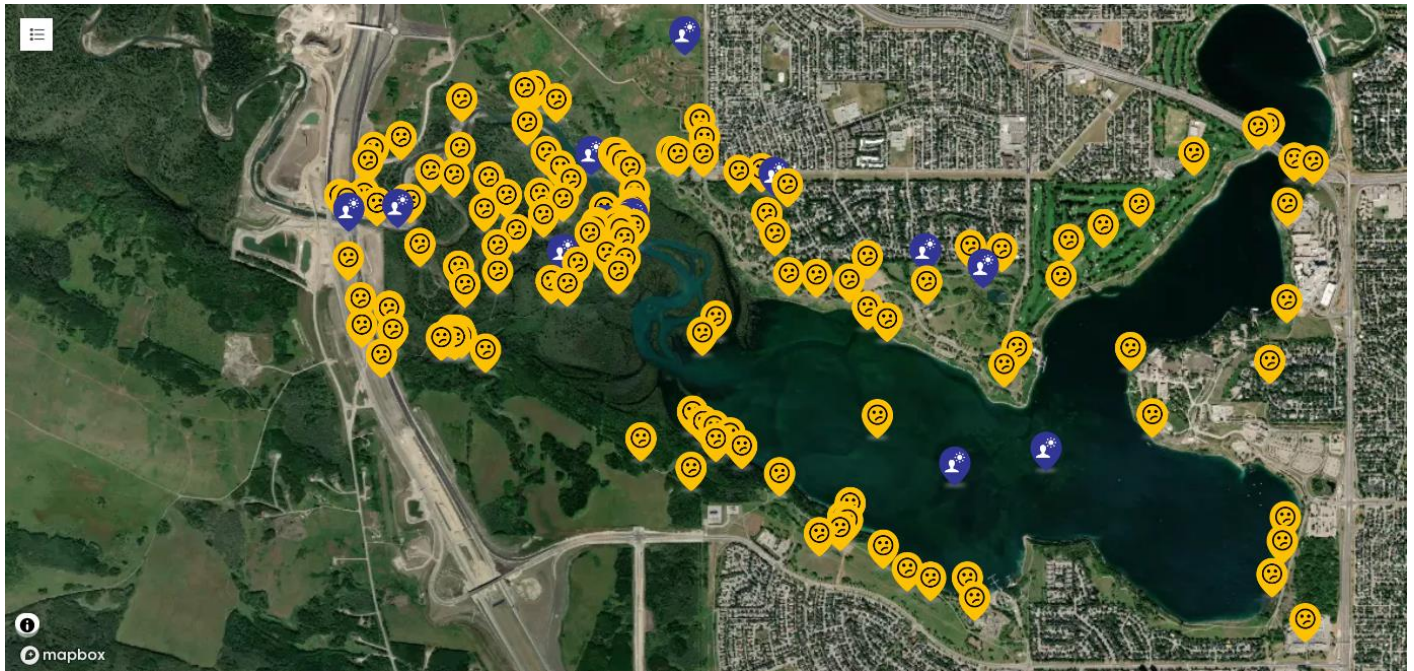
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## Social Map 2: What are your concerns for the area?

The yellow markers represent concerns. The blue markers represent other comments.



### Take a photo! Add a photo!

We received 160 photographs consisting of flora, fauna and landscapes of the Weaselhead / Glenmore area. Many of the flora and fauna images included species identification and a brief description of location and/or behaviour. For a detailed summary of the input provided, please see the [Summary of Input](#) section.

*Prairie Crocus (spring).*



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## Ask the Experts

*Do you have a question about the Weaselhead/Glenmore Habitat Management Plan? We'll group similar questions together and answer them as one (note: this is a pre-moderated Q & A; harassing, abusive or non-inclusive speech won't be posted).*

We received 21 submissions. Questions included but were not limited to trail management - both in summer and winter, cyclist concerns, UXOs, and human impacts.

For a detailed summary of the input provided, please see the [Summary of Input](#) section.



*Weaselhead Valley Mature Coniferous Growth Forest-Dec 2016*

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## The Portal Page (secondary)

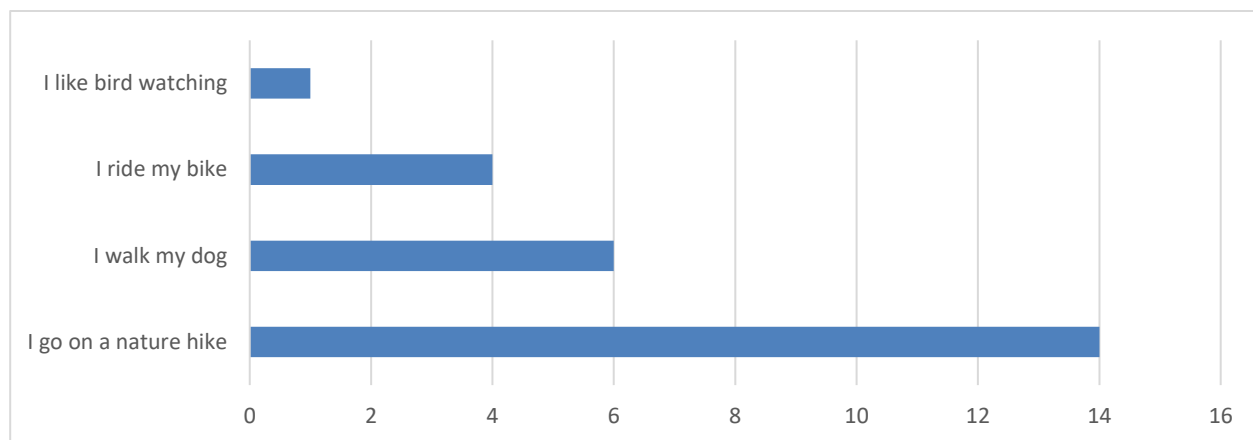
This was a secondary page linked from the main portal page:

<https://engage.calgary.ca/weaselheadHMP/family-feedback-and-activities>

### Quick Poll

*How do you connect with nature?*

Most participants take nature hikes (14), followed by walking their dog (6), then bike riding (4) and lastly, birdwatching (1).



### What are your priorities?

*After taking a walk through the Weaselhead/Glenmore area, what do you think is the most important thing about it?*

#### Verbatim comments

- *There are places in the park where you can feel completely surrounded by nature.*
- *It is a sanctuary for wildlife and a vital ecosystem. It was here for thousands of years before human settlement. It needs preserving.*
- *Its natural beauty, now unspoiled. Wildlife sightings are frequent and special. Usage of the area must be managed to preserve this area.*
- *I love the area, however every spring the smell is foul from all the people who walk their dogs more off leash than on and don't pick up.*
- *You can completely forget the city within a short distance of the parking lots, walking this park year-round is important to my well-being.*
- *Keeping it natural and safe; separate pathways for bikers and walkers - no dogs off leash anywhere in the park area.*

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- *Encouraging people to visit, be able to meander the trails and develop a love of nature that will encourage them to want to protect it.*
- *A natural getaway from the city but still within the city, with easy accessible spaces to enjoy the park.*
- *A little piece of the foothills/parkland ecotone right in town. A buffer around our drinking water, free of dog excrement and racers.*
- *How lucky we are to have such a park only minutes away from where I live*
- *That it be kept as natural as it is today while supporting multiple types of activities*
- *Habitat and home for an amazing variety of wildlife.*
- *Accessibility to nature in your backyard and respect for the park and wildlife (i.e. no off leash dogs)*

**Tell us your preservation ideas for the Weaselhead/Glenmore area.**

- *I am not sure what to do but it is getting way too hectic and crowded. People are not good stewards of the sensitive area.*
- *No more development such as buildings or paving - keep the area as natural as possible to preserve this lovely area.*
- *Prohibit dogs*
- *Offer family friendly educational activities that for community engagement: forest bathing, animal tracking/identification, nature crafts.*
- *Educate/enforce existing laws concerning dogs & bikes. End attempts @ obfuscation in signage evident everywhere around the reservoir.*
- *It would be nice if there was educational signage to educate people as to why certain rules and bylaws are in place to protect the park*



*Wildflower North Glenmore Park Stormwater Pond.*

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## Summary of Input

### The Portal Page (main)

#### The Primary Question

*How can Calgary Parks and Open Spaces collectively manage habitat within the Weaselhead/Glenmore area in a consistent way to ensure positive and measurable biodiversity outcomes?*

Six themes emerged out of the primary question. Within each major theme, there was a smaller subset of topics. Summaries of each theme along with verbatim (unedited) comments are presented below.

#### Human Impacts (dogs, cyclists, overuse)

*“There is a lot of misuse of the pathways with bikes and with people with dogs. Is there a better way to monitor this, for the safety of the others who use the park and for wildlife?”*

*“Enforce dog on leash rules. Restrict bikes to established paths. Block unplanned paths and revegetate unplanned paths [...]”*

*“Keep the pathways well maintained and bikes only on the paved paths. Concerned about the over crowding of picnic areas especially in South Glenmore Park.”*

Human impact on natural environment parks, such as those caused by dogs and cyclists, can have both positive and negative consequences. While the Weaselhead/Glenmore Area offers valuable recreational opportunities and promote physical activity, they also raise concerns about habitat disruption, wildlife disturbance, and ecosystem degradation. Striking a balance between human enjoyment and preserving the delicate balance of these natural environments is a challenge that park management and visitors must address collaboratively.

#### Environment (leave it as is, biodiversity – fauna, bio-diversity – flora)

*“Picking the most important value is a place to start. You have already identified the importance of biodiversity and I think it is an essential aspect of sustainability for a city. I think it should be the primary value of the Weaselhead. [...]”*

*“I really think it should be left alone, leaving it as it is! People can enjoy it in its wilderness state. Developing it more would change the natural landscape of it, people enjoy it for its naturalness.”*

Preserving the environment in the Weaselhead/Glenmore Area is essential to maintain biodiversity, which includes the diverse flora and fauna that call these areas home. Leaving these ecosystems as they are, ensures the continued existence of countless species and the protection of their habitats, contributing to the overall health and resilience of the planet's natural heritage. Conservation efforts and responsible human interaction are crucial to safeguard the delicate balance of these environments and support the flourishing biodiversity within them.



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## Enforcement and Education

*“Protection/Engagement/Education then Enforcement. Perhaps a small outdoor "Nature Pavilion" (In the underused Polo Park area) as an Education Resource Centre for kids and adults. Show what natural plants/wildlife you can see in the park, and explain why it needs to be protected.”*

*“Prevention of habitat destruction and animal disturbance includes preventing cyclists from entering non-designated trails, off leash dogs, dog feces left behind. Enforcement with substantial fines would benefit this fragile ecosystem. The complaint system in place is non-effective.”*

Education and enforcement play vital roles in the responsible management of natural environment parks. Through education, visitors can gain an understanding of the importance of preserving these fragile ecosystems, learn how to minimize their impact, and appreciate the beauty and value of these areas. Enforcement of park rules and regulations is equally crucial to ensure that visitors adhere to guidelines that protect the environment, wildlife, and other visitors. Striking a balance between educating the public and enforcing the rules is essential in maintaining the integrity and sustainability of these natural areas for future generations to enjoy.

## Management Practices (Resources, water management, monitoring, partnerships and collaboration)

*“Consistent measurements of biological and social components to monitor the integrity and diversity of the system with adaptive management providing the flexibility to reset the course where necessary.”*

*“I know the ecological importance and significance of this area. It is a privilege to access it. I think you need to manage it by dropping the hammer. Do all the management steps you outline, and we might have a chance of saving it.”*

Effective management practices in natural environment parks encompass a range of critical aspects. Resource management involves the responsible allocation and conservation of resources, ensuring the park's sustainability. Water management addresses the protection and efficient use of water sources, vital for both the ecosystem and human needs. Monitoring systems enable park authorities to track environmental changes, species populations, and visitor impact, aiding in informed decision-making. Partnerships and collaborations with organizations, local communities, and government agencies are essential for pooling resources and knowledge to address conservation challenges collectively.



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## Restrictions (closure of areas, trails and pathways)

*“Secure animal corridors using people restriction fencing in weaselhead elbow river flats. Add extend single walking/biking loop on flats. Restrict access to path way only.”*

*“Ensure that cyclists and dogs don't go into the areas where they are currently prohibited so as to protect the environment. The non-paved paths have appropriate signs but it seems many, many people disregard the signs.”*

Implementing restrictions, including the closure of certain areas, trails, and pathways in natural environment parks, is a necessary step to protect the fragile ecosystems and ensure visitor safety. These measures are often enacted during sensitive times, like breeding seasons or in response to adverse weather conditions. While restrictions may inconvenience some visitors, they are essential to minimize human impact, prevent habitat disturbance, and maintain the overall integrity of the park. Responsible stewardship and understanding from the public play a key role in supporting these protective measures and preserving the park's natural beauty for the long term.

## External Impacts (Stony trail/ring road, development, pollution)

*“Restore the wetlands that the ring road destroyed.”*

*“We need protect the area from the potentially harmful impact of surrounding roads, pollutants, and pollutions through accessing scientific and conservational knowledge and resources. We also need to ensure natural areas are not further developed or encroached upon and establish robust buffer zones.”*

Natural environment parks face various external impacts, such as the construction of Stony Trail, noise pollution, and nearby developments. These factors can disrupt the tranquility and ecological balance of the park. Noise pollution from nearby urban areas can disturb wildlife and diminish the quality of the visitor experience. The encroachment of development can have lasting consequences, altering the park's surroundings and fragmenting habitats. Careful planning, environmental impact assessments, and community engagement are crucial in mitigating these external impacts, ensuring the long-term conservation of these precious natural areas. Balancing human needs and environmental preservation is a challenge that requires foresight and collaboration.

*The Muskrat is a medium sized rodent which carries out activities important to the ecology of wetlands. They are also a prey species for some predators.*



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## Question & Answer

Question 5. Would you mind telling us a bit more about the answer you chose in the previous question?  
(Question 4. What do you value most about the Weaselhead/Glenmore Area?)

The top three themes were:

1. Environmental (urban natural park, biodiversity, protected area)
2. Health and Wellness
3. Infrastructure (e.g., maintenance and usage of trails and pathways and other amenities such as picnic sites, washrooms, etc.)

Within each theme, there was a smaller subset of topics. Summaries of each theme along with a selection of verbatim (unedited) comments are presented below.

### Environmental (e.g., urban natural park, biodiversity, protected area)

*“The area is home to beautiful plants and animals. I love that this is protected and accessible in Calgary.”*

*“It is important to me to have natural areas in my city. It is great for fostering a love of wild places with my children. It’s also a great area to see migratory birds and other wildlife.”*

*“[...] it really is lovely to have access to nature within walking distance from my house. I have seen moose, deer, bobcats, coyotes, beavers, muskrats and a huge variety of birds in the park. It helps me relieve the stresses of my day.”*

Preserving and enhancing urban natural parks, along with protecting biodiversity in these areas, is of paramount importance in our efforts to create sustainable and healthy urban environments. These protected areas not only offer recreational and educational opportunities but also serve as vital habitats for diverse flora and fauna. By safeguarding these green spaces and promoting responsible land management, we can ensure that present and future generations can enjoy the myriad benefits of urban natural parks while fostering a deeper connection to the natural world.

### Health and Wellness

*“The main purpose of my walks is for my health and wellness. I love the peace and relaxation I find in this park. The wildlife and diverse nature is awesome. Other users are respectful of the area and a pleasure to meet strike up a conversation.”*

*“Spending time in the park contributes to my physical and mental health and my social connection to fellow park users. I value access to this natural space in the heart of the city [...].”*

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Time spent in natural environment parks has a profound impact on both mental and physical well-being. The serene and tranquil surroundings of these parks provide an ideal escape from the stress and demands of modern life. Engaging with nature through activities like hiking, bird-watching, or simply enjoying the scenery can promote mental clarity, reduce anxiety, and boost overall mental health. On the physical side, these parks offer opportunities for exercise, whether through hiking, biking, or other activities.

## **Infrastructure (e.g., maintenance and usage of trails and pathways and other amenities such as picnic sites, washrooms, etc.)**

*“The area is large enough, and facilities in place allow for kayaking, biking, running and hiking for hours in a natural environment. It is one of top natural recreation areas in the City.”*

*“Appreciate that bikes and walkers are separate. Appreciate the numerous washrooms. Appreciate the views from the trail above the reservoir. Appreciate that the trails are paved.”*

*“[...] I tend to spend more time biking in park, but I enjoy all of these aspects. I love biking in this area because of the easy access to see the birds and animals and ride through trees, but I also enjoy the winter games and the unpaved walking areas. I think the diversity of the recreational opportunities of the parks in the area is its greatest asset.”*

Infrastructure in natural environment parks, including the maintenance and usage of trails, pathways, and amenities like picnic sites and washrooms, is essential for providing a safe and enjoyable visitor experience. Well-maintained trails and pathways enable visitors to explore the park while minimizing their impact on the environment. Proper maintenance ensures the safety of these routes and preserves their natural character. Amenities such as picnic sites and washrooms enhance the comfort and convenience of park visits, encouraging people to spend more time in nature. Adequate facilities reduce the environmental footprint of park-goers by providing essential services in a controlled manner.

Striking a balance between infrastructure development and environmental conservation is crucial, as it helps accommodate the needs of visitors while protecting the natural beauty and ecological integrity of these treasured spaces. Responsible management and community engagement are key to achieving this delicate balance.

## **Question 7. Thinking about the Weaselhead/Glenmore area 5 years from now, what do you think will be the most valuable? What about 10 years? What about 20 years?**

The top areas of value were:

- Environment specific (protection, preservation and conservation, naturalization, biodiversity, water)
- Accessibility
- Development
- Health and wellness

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## Environment specific (protection, preservation and conservation, naturalization, biodiversity, water)

*"[...] Keeping the area as wild and undeveloped as possible would benefit all flora and fauna. The parks have plenty of picnic and socializing areas outside of the Weaselhead as it is, so no more are required in the 5 year time frame."*

*"Riparian areas are objectively the most ecologically valuable places."*

*"Pretty simple - preserving and enhancing the naturalized areas and wildlife. Access to areas like these will be essential for a healthy city especially as it continues to densify."*

Environment-specific practices, such as protection, preservation, conservation, naturalization, biodiversity, and water management, are invaluable for the preservation of parks. These approaches are the foundation of responsible stewardship and have many crucial benefits:

1. **Protection:** Protecting the park from human impact, habitat destruction, and pollution is essential to maintain its natural beauty and ecological health.
2. **Preservation:** Preservation involves safeguarding the park's unique features, and ecosystems.
3. **Conservation:** Conservation efforts aim to sustainably manage resources within the park. This includes responsible resource allocation, which prevents overuse and depletion, and minimizes the ecological footprint of visitors.
4. **Naturalization:** Naturalization practices help restore and enhance the park's natural state. This may involve re-establishing native plant species, creating wildlife corridors, and reducing the impact of human infrastructure to maintain a harmonious coexistence with nature.
5. **Biodiversity:** Biodiversity is the heart of any natural park, and conserving a wide variety of species is essential. A diverse ecosystem is more resilient, adaptive, and healthy, offering greater benefits to the environment and society.
6. **Water Management:** Responsible water management ensures the protection of water sources within the park.

## Accessibility

*"For each timeframe, the most valuable is to preserve is as a natural area that is still somewhat accessible."*

*"Improve the pathways to make them accessible for all, wheel chairs, seniors electric carts. Allow people with pets on leash, on the trails, which might require more enforcement to keep the pets leashed. twining the bike / walking paths to move pedestrians away from speedy cyclists. The dirt trails are the only safe place to walk a dog in summer. stop building boardwalk trails and then raise the water level 2 years later a wash them out. convert some trails in into to nordic ski in winter"*

Accessibility is immensely valuable to a park as it ensures that the benefits and beauty of these natural spaces are available to a diverse range of people.



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1. **Inclusivity:** Making naturalized parks accessible ensures that everyone, regardless of their age, physical abilities, or background, can enjoy the natural environment. It fosters inclusivity and allows more people to connect with nature.
2. **Physical and Mental Health:** Access to naturalized parks promotes physical well-being by encouraging physical activity like walking, hiking, and recreational sports. It also supports mental health by providing a peaceful and serene environment that can reduce stress and anxiety.
3. **Educational Opportunities:** Naturalized parks can offer educational programs and opportunities for people to learn about local flora, fauna, and the environment. Accessibility ensures that everyone can participate in these learning experiences.
4. **Environmental Stewardship:** When people have easy access to parks, they are more likely to develop an appreciation for the environment, which can lead to greater support for conservation and responsible park use.

## Development

*“As development continues around the Weaselhead area with the Tsuu T’ina Taza developments and increased use of the ring road, this area will continue to exist as an oasis in an increasingly loud and busy area.”*

The impact of development around a park can have negative and unwanted consequences. It requires careful planning and consideration. Here are some key points regarding this impact:

1. **Biodiversity and Habitat Disruption:** Uncontrolled or poorly planned development can disrupt wildlife habitats and lead to a loss of biodiversity, potentially affecting the delicate balance of ecosystems within the park.
2. **Increased Human Impact:** Greater development may result in increased human activity and potential stress on the park's natural resources and infrastructure, including issues related to litter, pollution, and trail erosion.
3. **Cultural and Historical Preservation:** Development should consider the preservation of cultural and historical elements within and around the park, maintaining their significance and educational value.
4. **Balancing Conservation:** Striking a balance between development and conservation is a critical challenge. Careful planning and sustainable development practices can help protect the park's ecological integrity while benefiting the community.

## Health and Wellness

*“I think the most valuable part of this area will continue be for people to slow down and connect to our natural environment.”*

*“The natural wildlife and plant life first and foremost, now and in the far future. Having access to as pristine as possible natural areas for citizen's mental health and leisure, without putting undue pressure on the wild inhabitants of the area with ensure future generations have the same opportunities.”*

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The value of health and wellness in a natural environment park is immeasurable. City parks offer an oasis of physical and mental well-being, providing numerous benefits:

1. **Physical Health:** Natural environment parks offer opportunities for physical activities such as hiking, jogging, cycling, and more.
2. **Mental Health:** Being in nature has a calming effect on the mind, reducing stress, anxiety, and depression. Natural parks provide a sanctuary for mental rejuvenation and self-reflection.
3. **Fresh Air and Clean Environment:** The clean, unpolluted air in these parks enhances respiratory health and contributes to overall well-being.
4. **Connection to Nature:** Spending time in nature fosters a deeper connection to the environment, nurturing a sense of purpose and mindfulness.
5. **Community and Social Wellness:** Natural parks often serve as gathering places for communities, promoting social interaction, cohesion, and support networks contributing to emotional well-being.
6. **Recreation and Leisure:** Natural parks provide spaces for leisure and recreation, encouraging people to relax, unwind, and enjoy life, all of which are crucial for holistic well-being.

Participants also voiced concerns regarding:

External developments (ring road, densification, etc.)

*"Protect nature/wildlife from development that will further encroach on their habitat. Already you can hear and see the ring-road signs and traffic on its west side. It will get worse not better. In 5 years, mankind will destroy the environment as being from Signal Hill many animals have been coming into our area or killed by the ring-road as their homes were destroyed. I fear the fresh air, sights and sounds of what used to be quiet, protective, sensitive and beautiful will be lost forever."*

*"Most valuable would be if the highway were gone. It feels so much less natural with the hum of the highway and visible electronic billboards which will only grow in the next 20 years. I still see it's value as a great public space though it feels less and less like a natural space. Raising the level of the dam has altered the space dramatically, the river is no longer accessible for much of the year, more trees fall into the river from the elevated water."*

Human impacts (e.g., dogs, cyclists, overuse, etc.)

*"Greater protection of the habitat, including efforts to prevent people from willfully destroying habitats (my poor beaver friends 😞), reducing sound pollution ranging from the road din to students screaming, people running with music blasting, car radios blasting in the parking lot so loud you can hear it deep in the park. Keep the lesser accessed areas accessible. It's where I find peace with nature. No smoking - anything yuck!!! And no alcohol allowed. No fires."*

*"The inner city is rapidly losing trees and greenspace. It is funneling more and more people into the only remaining greenspaces such as river park and weaselhead. As a result, they are degrading quickly and have multiple conflicts. It's really hard to see happen now and I don't imagine it will improve in the future."*

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Pollution (light, noise, garbage, etc.)

*"Seeing the results of the Stoney trail ring road on this area. The noise pollution in the weaselhead flats can be loud."*

*"[...] Need to be concerned about impacts from noise, lighting, pollutants, overuse (loving to death). Protect & conserve it."*

Specific feedback was also included as to what will be seen as valuable in 5, 10 and 20 years.

## Five years from now (2028)

*Laying out infrastructure to support growing visitation from rising local population*

*the area is managed with the priority to maintain biodiversity. Outreach helps people understand how they can enjoy the area without conflicting with this aim.*

*restoration to sensitive natural areas and defined spaces for both park users and wildlife. Introduction of native wild flowers and grass areas restored, "goat" trails restored and no longer visible. This includes spawning fish in the upper elbow.*

*Reduce underused mowed park space for better habitat and clean water. Increase and maintenance of riparian areas to reduce flood and drought impacts and increase biodiversity*

*Restoring natural setting. Formal and enforced access areas.*

## Ten years from now (2033)

*Factoring in the changing climate and its effects of bio-diversity*

*it is part of a urban ecological network designed to increase biodiversity, provide city-wide ecological services, offset carbon emissions. It remains accessible for recreation that does not conflict with this.*

*park is self healing and returning to natural native form. Less daily visitors = more diverse outdoor space. More wildlife return.*

*Increase of habitat diversity and intact corridor with wild spaces kept wild.*

*wild setting with formal access areas with full enforcement of bylaws.*

## Twenty years from now (2043)

- *Creating proactive zoning and protection laws to maintain the natural areas from urban development encroachment"*
- *It is embedded in a robust network of connected green spaces. Their value is widely understood by citizens.*
- *park still exists and is considered protected under provincial law*

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- *the tree canopy will be healthy and diverse.*
- *sustained commitment to vegetation renewal and full enforcement of bylaws.*

## Question 8. Is there anything else you'd like us to know about the Weaselhead/Glenmore area?

Most participants spoke about wanting to protect and preserve the area which included:

- Education and awareness (bylaw, signage, knowledge sharing)
- Sustainability and succession planning
- Concerns centered around the ring road, overdevelopment and overuse

### Preservation and protection

*"The river took a major course correct a number of years ago will likely happen again. Spending money in understanding and monitoring the wildlife at the weaselhead will probably provide valuable insights on how best to minimize impact on the wildlife there. Natural wildlife corridors ie Elbow River and others not yet identified should be respected and mitigation measures implemented where appropriate."*

### Education and awareness (e.g., bylaw, signage, knowledge sharing)

*"Please be courageous. Reducing hours, access to paths or areas for dogs won't initially be popular but they are necessary. Wildlife don't have a lot of choice now for alternatives. We do. I have seen off leash dogs allowed to harass coyotes on the ice and people also disturbing wildlife. We can do much better with positive reinforcement and education. City run ambassadors would be terrific."*

*"I've lived in Calgary and Alberta for nearly 50 years. In that time I've watched every park I'm familiar with (both municipal and provincial) deteriorate, some massively - despite being nominally protected, though obviously not protected from the very people whose job it is to do the protecting. Changes or 'developments' - however minor they may seem - add up over time. This seems difficult to understand for many. Just leave the park alone, and come down hard on those who ignore the rules."*

### Sustainability and succession planning

*"Wetlands are proven to improve water quality, mitigate flooding, water storage during peak river flowrates, reduce erosion and also reduce greenhouse gases by storing carbon dioxide. They support biodiversity of plants & animals. Weaselhead is a precious resource we must protect. The pathway system provides opportunities for exercise and stress management, and needs to be maintained and extended. Separate paths for bikes and pedestrians would be greatly appreciated by both groups."*

*"I'd like to see the area expanded and more habitat created. Effective enforcement of existing bylaws would stop the small minority from abusing the area and improve everyone's enjoyment. More educational opportunities would help the next generation see the value of preservation of the environment. What can we do to encourage growth in the local wildlife population and flora?"*

### Concerns centered around the ring road, overdevelopment and overuse



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*"It is a refuge in an ever-expanding city and needs to be valued. The SWCRR is an example of the how the value was not placed on environmental concerns and we need to do better."*

*"Avoid unnatural impacts from horses, dogs, & invasive human use. : ) Note the Calgary Metropolitan Region Board is proposing setbacks from rivers to the 1 in 200 year flood level so the City should work to that target (step back from the river as opportunity arises). Ensure NO motorized boats on the reservoir. The Springbank Reservoir upstream will remove the beneficial rejuvenation to biodiversity, locally & downstream (also in terms of time) from high water from a more than a 1 in 5 year event."*

*"I have long lamented the lack of informative signage regarding what uses are permitted in what areas, especially when it comes to dogs. It's not scientific but I have found the farther off the main paved path people & their dogs go, the more likely they are to have them off leash. I would like to see the Beaver pond area rehabilitated after all the damage caused by the Ring Road construction. It really is a smelly mess there. It would also be nice to have some noise barriers."*

Emergent themes also included:

- Access to the park – both on restrictions and closures, as well as keeping it accessible for all users
- Amenities (some comments wanted more, while others wanted fewer amenities)

### **Access to the park – both on restrictions and closures, as well as keeping it accessible for all users**

*"The bicycles off paved trails need to be better monitored. Also - I worry about kids jumping off the green bridge over the river down in the Weaslehead with varying water levels. Don't make more trails, but also don't restrict access to walkers/joggers without REALLY good reason!"*

*"Limiting public access to the park (seasonal closures, pathway closures, decreased hours) defeats the purpose of having a space like this. I do not support those initiative."*

*"Maintaining free public access for adults, children , parents & seniors essential to a healthy lifestyle in Calgary"*

*"While pathways provide great access for non-motorized travel, access by public transit is very limited which continues to encourage vehicle access to the park. It would be great if shuttle transit from chinook/heritage station/BRT stops could be part of the plan."*

### **Amenities – more**

*"I am enjoying the new recreational areas. (Ping pong, Telescopes, skating and curling.) Do not want to see them extended into the natural areas and am more in support of naturalizing the underused areas. Need to be more careful with the size/frequency of events allowed in the park as some seem to really restrict the general public access and use in the summer."*

*"Some more bbqs etc. would be nice but keep them out of the deep areas so as not to conflict with nature."*

*"Why can't we have a cafe/pub with a south facing patio and view of the lake?"*

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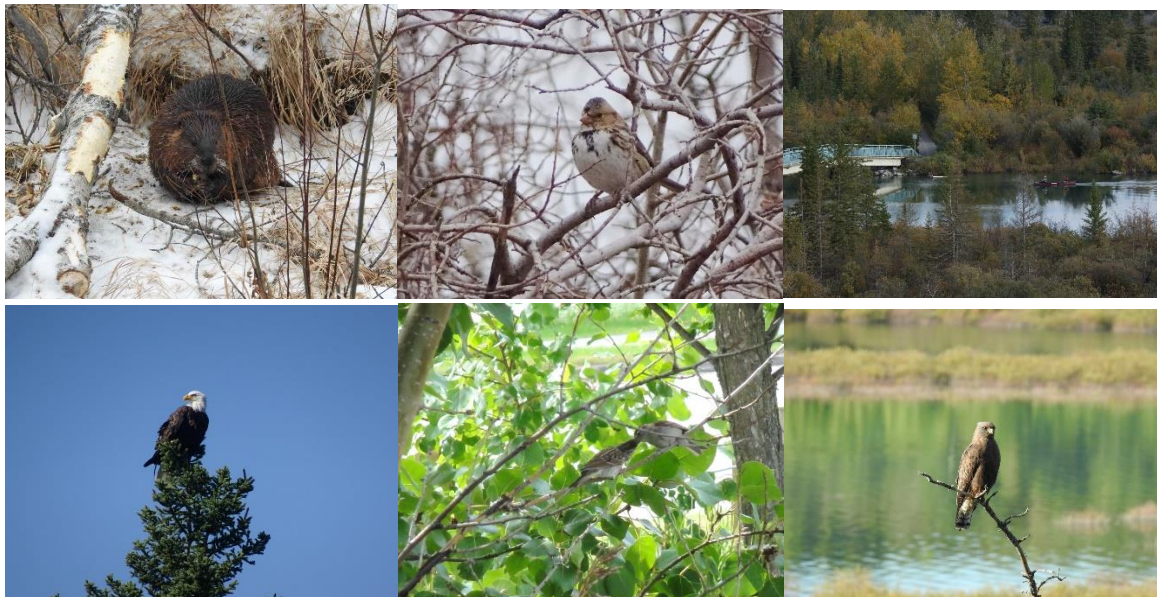
## Amenities – fewer

*“The Covid times proved the value of open and quiet places. All the development in South Glenmore Park could have been accommodated in current manicured green spaces and sport fields without any disruption to their uses and would have preserved the open ambiance of the South Glenmore Park and Weaselhead environments.”*

*“Keep it wild; resist the temptation of introducing commerce in the area.”*

*“Please do not build extra recreational structures in S Glenmore Park. Please ensure the City / Province influences the Tsuut'ina to avoid development & building to the very edge of the Weaselhead.”*

Take a photo! Leave a photo!



The following summary of input is comprised of images with species identification attached to them. An annotated version can be found in the Take a Photo! Leave a Photo! verbatim document. All images can be viewed at <https://engage.calgary.ca/weaselheadHMP/>.

American Goldfinch Pair  
American Kestrel-Sensitive Species Status  
American Robin  
American Tree Sparrow-  
American White Pelicans- Weaselhead Delta  
American Wigeon Hen & Ducklings at N.G.P.  
Stormwater Pond  
American Wigeon(male)

Bald Eagle-Sensitive Status  
Barn Swallow  
Barrow's Goldeneye  
Beaver  
Belted Kingfisher & Red-breasted Nuthatch  
Black-capped Chickadee  
Black-crowned Night Heron (Sensitive Status) &  
SalamanderBlue-winged Teal Pair

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Bobcat	Mink
Bohemian Waxwing	Minnows in Weaselhead Wetlands
Brown Creeper-Sensitive Species Status	Muskrat
Brown Thrasher	Northern Goshawk (juvenile)-Sensitive Species Status
Bufflehead (female & male)	Northern Rough-winged Swallow (Juvenile)
Butterfly	Northern Saw-whet Owl
Cedar Waxwing	Northern Shoveler Pair
Cedar Waxwing Feed on Berries	Northern Shrike
Chipping Sparrow Feeding Fledgling	Olive-sided Flycatcher-Canadian Species at Risk
Cinnamon Teal Pair-	Osprey-Sensitive Status
Common Goldeneye	Pacific Loons on the Reservoir
Common Merganser (female) -Elbow River/Weaselhead	Peregrine Falcon
Common Merganser Family	Pied-billed Grebe (juvenile)-Sensitive Status
Common Snipe-Weaselhead Park Pond	Pileated Woodpecker
Cooper's Hawk	Pine Siskin
Cow Parsnip & White Admiral Butterfly	Prairie Crocus
Crow	Red Squirrel-
Deer	Red-breasted Nuthatch
Double-crested Cormorant	Red-eyed Vireo
Eastern Kingbird-Sensitive Species Status	Red-tailed Hawk
Eastern Phoebe-Sensitive Species Status	Regional pathway moose
Female Merlin Falcon	Ring-necked Duck
Flicker-Male	Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Golden Bean-Weaselhead	Ruby-crowned Kinglet
Golden splendor	Rusty Blackbird-Species At Risk Act-Special Concern
Goldeneye Ducklings	Savannah Sparrow
Grasing Sheep	Say's Phoebe-Sensitive Status
Gray Catbird	Snowshoe Hare
Great Blue Heron-Sensitive Species Status-	Solitary Sandpiper
Great Horned Owl-N. Glenmore Park Stormwater Pond-Mar 12 2015	Sora-Sensitive Status Species
Greater Yellowlegs	Special Space
Green-winged Teal (male)	Spotted Sandpiper
Harris's Sparrow	Spruce Grouse
Hermit Thrush-	Swainson's Hawk
Hooded Merganser (male)	Tennessee Warbler
Horned Grebe Pair	Thirteen-lined Ground Squirrel
Immature Olive-sided Flycatcher	Tree Swallow
Indian Paintbrush	Veery-Weaselhead Park-
Killdeer	Violet-green & Cliff Swallows
Least Flycatcher w/ Nestlings	Warbler Fledgling
Lesser Scaup Pair	Warbling Vireo
Lincoln's Sparrow	Western Grebe-At Risk Status
Long-tailed Duck Pair	Western Tanager(male)-Sensitive Species Status
Mallard Hen & Ducklings	Western Tanager-Femal
Mallards	Western Wood-pewee-May Be At Risk Status
Merlin Falcon	White-breasted Nuthatch

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White-throated Sparrow  
White-winged Crossbill

White-winged Scoter-Sensitive Species Status-  
Glenmore Reservoir  
Wood Ducks

Yellow Warbler (male)-Weaselhead Park

## Ask an Expert<sup>1</sup>

1. **Question:** Do you consider determining the role of the park in climate change? i.e., carbon sinks and fluxes assessment?

**Question Details:** Weaselhead Park provides multiple ecosystem functions but there is lack of information about carbon cycle of the area. How and to what degree the park is contributing to carbon sequestration? Information related to carbon sinks and sources may help to understand the role of the park in changing climate. More precisely, this information may be used to determine the value of the park in case of development projects such as the construction of the South-West Calgary Ring Road.

**Response:** While we haven't yet performed any site or park specific evaluation of carbon sequestration, The City is working towards this through our new Climate Implementation Strategy (<https://www.calgary.ca/environment/climate/implementation-plan.html?redirect=/climateplan>). We have plans in 2023 to test the City's new natural infrastructure valuation tool at a natural area park as part of its habitat management plan. Results and lessons learned from this test will inform how we assess and understand the role individual parks play in municipal climate change mitigation.

2. **Question:** Why does 311 not have access to pathway marker locations?

**Question Details:** I have tried reporting several pathway issues (trees/branches down) to 311 and because I don't have the App and Internet data to drop a pin, it is very difficult to explain problem locations to 311. Emergency Services can map out exact locations for the pathway markers but 311 cannot. With 311 only using street addressing, it takes forever to report issues.

**Response:** Thank you for this question. It has been captured and will be included in the final What We Heard Report. The information you're looking for is outside the scope of the Habitat Management Plan so we suggest you reach out to 311 so the enquiry can be properly logged & sent to the right group for response.

3. **Question:** Why is the city so viciously anti-dog in this area?

**Question Details:** Why is there no off-leash dog park or area anywhere near the reservoir? It's obviously a popular place for people with their dogs, but the city ignores this and doesn't accommodate.

**Response:** The City is simply trying to protect the sensitive habitat and minimize wildlife conflicts in this area. There is a large off-leash area located along 66<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Lakeview, across the street from the Weaselhead parking lot. As well, there is a large off-leash area located on the west side of

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<sup>1</sup> Questions and Questions Details have not been edited in order to maintain transparency in report backs.



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Oakridge which begins extends from 90th Avenue down to Anderson. The City provides 157 public off-leash dog parks for residents and their dogs to enjoy. The City has designed its on-leash rules within natural areas in order to reduce the risks of pet-wildlife conflicts and to protect the safety of park users, their canine companions and native wildlife residing in the parks. To find off-leash opportunities in your neighborhood, check out Off-leash area locations in parks ([calgary.ca](http://calgary.ca)).

4. **Question:** Why are beaches and swimming allowed in Habitat Management Plan Area?

**Question Detail:** You gave this answer: "The City has no jurisdiction over the beach area frequented by nude recreationists, as this is a provincially owned island in the Elbow River." However, the beach use we are asking about is actually within the habitat area indicated with yellow on your map. Not sure what Provincial island you are referring to. Please reply to concern about beaches east of ring road. It's happening along this stretch, so how will City make itself aware of activity in this area and protect it?

**Response:** Within The City's habitat management planning process, we inventory and collate data on habitat impacts (e.g., invasive species, areas of habitat and trail degradation), habitat condition or health, current park uses and the locations of rare species and habitats. Areas that are highly sensitive to disturbance and/or showing symptoms of overuse will be among the top priorities for restoration and other park management actions within this new 10-year plan. Please help us by adding any specific locations to the web-map that you're aware have issues or impacts on natural habitats.

5. **Question:** Does the City of Calgary accept nude recreation at Weaselhead to be a lawful and valid form of recreation?

**Question Detail:** "It seems pretty straight forward that something allowed to happen in a park for 20+ years is either legitimate or Calgary is a lawless city where people are allowed to break the law in broad daylight (and google maps) with impunity. If it's illegal, shut it down. If it's legal, acknowledge as much. Quit ignoring it as if it doesn't exist. Do the right thing here, Calgary."

**Response:** We appreciate concerns raised about debris, waste, impacts to trails and shoreline habitats. All information provided by Calgarians pertaining to the ecological health of Weaselhead-Glenmore parks is valuable and will help City Ecologists pinpoint improvement areas for habitat protection and user experience for our 10-year management plan. The City has no jurisdiction over the beach area frequented by nude recreationists, as this is a provincially owned island in the Elbow River. Swimming in the Elbow River directly above The City's drinking water reservoir is, however, prohibited under Calgary's Water Utility Bylaw.

6. **Question:** Snow clearing

**Question Detail** "There was a q about snow clearing thru the Weaselhead and I want to respond to the response. FCPP has similar challenges. They plow to about an inch of the surface of the paved path, cannot use any product and have hills equally steep and curved as those in Weaselhead. Perhaps you could consult their maint contractors for how they do it? By not clearing the City

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deprives many of our neighbours the ability to access that nature. So many people cannot walk that packed snow path."

**Response:** There are actually a few reasons why we only clear to the top of the hill. We are prohibited from adding any materials to the surrounding environment by Urban Conservation, as the sand/salt mixture would saturate the environment and alter much of the plant life here, allowing invasive species to take root and encroach into the site. Doing so would also salinate existing water supplies and impact the fauna living near the beaver dams. Keeping in mind we are prohibited from adding any materials to the surrounding environment, it should be noted that snow inherently has some traction capability, while pavement with a thin layer of ice on top has much less. While smaller equipment would be a possibility to cross the bridge leading into Weaselhead from the north side, smaller equipment also has the disadvantage of requiring much more time to clear a section such as this. The sharp turning curve of the pathway at the south side of the Weaselhead, and the unstable conditions of the pathway near the beaver ponds, this location is unsafe for equipment to travel due to the nature of the design here. If a piece of equipment lost traction anywhere along that area it would foreseeably slide all the way to the bottom, hitting whatever (of whomever) happened to be on that pathway at the time, possibly breaking through the handrail and going over the steep drop-off. Many individuals use this area as a natural refuge from the surrounding urban environment during the winter, including the Weaselhead/Glenmore Preservation Society, and part of the natural experience here is the uncleared, untouched surfaces. For these reasons we strongly discourage snow clearing services throughout the site. I hope this helps.

7. **Question:** Why are bicycles allowed to go at breakneck speeds in the Weaselhead? My husband and I avoid it on busy days due to the bicycles. Not good for walkers.

**Question Detail:** My husband and I love to get out and walk. I walk the 6 k back and forth to Heritage Park once a week at least. But we avoid the north Weaselhead due to the speed at which the bicyclers go in the park. We don't feel safe and if hit by a bike we could be badly injured. It is not just a bike park, yet the bicyclers go sailing through, hitting their bells as though everyone has to make way for them. I am a bit tired of it actually.

**Response:** Hi there, Thank you for this question and concerns. It will be included in the final What We Heard report. The speed limit is 20 km/hr. Please call Bylaw if you see unsafe behaviour, and 911 if there is an emergency. <https://www.calgary.ca/bike-walk-roll/bike-laws>. Pathways are multi-use and all users are to stay on the right side of the pathway unless passing slower moving users. Passing is permitted except where there is a double line in the centre. Cyclists, walkers and runners should be mindful of the safety of other pathway users. More information can be found at <https://www.calgary.ca/bylaws/parks-pathways.html>

8. **Question:** Snow clearing through Weaslehead and lower Bayview paths?

**Question Detail:** Can snow clearing be implemented through the Weaslehead and along the lower Bayview paths?

**Response:** There are actually a few reasons why we only clear to the top of the hill. We are prohibited from adding any materials to the surrounding environment by Urban Conservation, as the sand/salt mixture would saturate the environment and alter much of the plant life here, allowing

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invasive species to take root and encroach into the site. Doing so would also salinate existing water supplies and impact the fauna living near the beaver dams. Keeping in mind we are prohibited from adding any materials to the surrounding environment, it should be noted that snow inherently has some traction capability, while pavement with a thin layer of ice on top has much less. While smaller equipment would be a possibility to cross the bridge leading into Weaselhead from the north side, smaller equipment also has the disadvantage of requiring much more time to clear a section such as this. The sharp turning curve of the pathway at the south side of the Weaselhead, and the unstable conditions of the pathway near the beaver ponds, this location is unsafe for equipment to travel due to the nature of the design here. If a piece of equipment lost traction anywhere along that area it would foreseeably slide all the way to the bottom, hitting whatever (of whomever) happened to be on that pathway at the time, possibly breaking through the handrail and going over the steep drop-off. Many individuals use this area as a natural refuge from the surrounding urban environment during the winter, including the Weaselhead/Glenmore Preservation Society, and part of the natural experience here is the uncleared, untouched surfaces. For these reasons we strongly discourage snow clearing services throughout the site. I hope this helps.

9. **Question:** Must we tolerate dog excrement in our drinking water?

**Response:** All dog owners must carry the means to and remove their dog's waste immediately from any City public lands, under City bylaw. Please call 311 to report issues.

10. **Question:** Why is a nude beach destination advertised in this protected area by CalgaryNudeRecreation? Is this their say-so or is it sanctioned by the City?

**Question Detail:** If CNR has proclaimed this beach on their own will anything be done to protect the habitat? If this is sanctioned by the City will we be providing toilets/garbage service as users will be there for extended periods of time? Already there is evidence of human garbage, waste and toilet paper in the bushes along these shores. A "beach" use of any kind in this highly sensitive habitat area seems to be in conflict with a mandate for habitat preservation and should not be allowed for any park user.

**Response:** We appreciate concerns raised about debris, waste, impacts to trails and shoreline habitats. All information provided by Calgarians pertaining to the ecological health of Weaselhead-Glenmore parks is valuable and will help City Ecologists pinpoint improvement areas for habitat protection and user experience for our 10-year management plan. The City has no jurisdiction over the beach area frequented by nude recreationists, as this is a provincially owned island in the Elbow River. Swimming in the Elbow River directly above The City's drinking water reservoir is, however, prohibited under Calgary's Water Utility Bylaw.

11. **Question:** UXO in Weaselhead?

**Question Detail:** What's the status on UXO (unexploded ordnance) in Weaselhead / Glenmore area? Have any recent been found? Is it still a concern? If so, what scans can be done to reduce the concern?

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**Response:** As a previously active military site from the 1940-50 era, the Weaselhead is an Unexploded Ordnance, or UXO, Legacy Site known as the Calgary-Sarcee Training Area. This site and others across Canada are catalogued and managed under Canada's Department of National Defence (DND) UXO program. Though Weaselhead Park is safe to be used for biking, hiking and general recreational activities, UXOs are a consideration in the Weaselhead/Glenmore area anytime major earth moving activities occur, for example after the 2013 flood and whenever there is construction occurring within the park. The City works with the federal Department of National Defense to screen any area where major soil disturbance or displacement needs to take place to ensure it is safe for the scheduled activity and trained DND staff conduct periodic monitoring in the area. More information on how these UXO Legacy site are managed by the federal government can be found at [How we protect Canadians from UXO - Canada.ca](https://www.canada.ca/en/department-of-national-defence/services/uxo-legacy-sites.html).

12. **Question:** Emergency access

**Question Detail:** I am aware that the area in between the cement bridge (beaverPond) and the Barry Erskine bridge is a problem for emergency vehicle access. Is it a true statement that it has been acknowledged and an emergency vehicle only exit off the Ring Road will be built to connect the regional pathway to the exit just south of the beaver pond. (on existing abandoned dirt road)

**Response:** This is a great question. We'll do some investigating with our colleagues and get back to you directly. Thanks!

13. **Question:** Concern about selling off park space and development

**Question Detail:** The city recently demonstrated that they can rezone and sell off regional park space for development (at Richmond Green Park). What kind of guarantees and protections (other than the political "trust us, we won't!") does this area have to ensure it cannot be sold off for development, or to fund city coffers on a whim at a future date? Why is there no permanent zoning or legal protection for parks and natural areas?

**Response:** The current Habitat Management Plan is intended to balance desired recreational uses with the importance of this natural area, which The City of Calgary sees immense value in. The Habitat Management Plan will provide clarity on future uses in the area, and urban development is well outside the range of uses we're looking at accommodating in the park. There will be no development in Weaselhead Park. Natural areas within the Weaselhead-Glenmore management plan area are designated by The City as Major and Special Protection natural areas according to Calgary's Council-Approved Natural Area Management Plan. Within these natural area park types, priority is given to preserving native habitat of provincial and regional significance.

14. **Question:** Define "under used" trails please.

**Question Detail:** "For the question: "Trail network planning and rehabilitation of less used trails to reduce habitat fragmentation", which trails are these that are considering rehabilitating?"

**Response:** The City of Calgary maintains a healthy network of official City pathways and trails throughout our parks system – 1107 and 150 linear kilometers respectively, in fact! Some of the trails we may identify in a habitat management plan as 'less' or 'under' used have been created by users outside of The City's carefully thought-out trail network planning process. While these provide



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excellent park user access to off-the-beaten track areas of the park, too much use or the wrong location of a trail can put sensitive plant species at risk of local extinction. As habitat fragmentation is the number 1 driver of biodiversity loss globally, The City needs to consider how current and future trail usage provides the best balance between preserving local flora and habitat for fauna with allowing Calgarians to continue to have rich nature experiences in the Weaselhead-Glenmore area. Tell us where you most enjoy being in the park!

15. **Question:** Define "less used trails" please.

**Question Detail:** "When the question asks "'Trail network planning and rehabilitation of less used trails to reduce habitat fragmentation'", which trails does this mean?"

**Response:** I hope our response in the previous question about under-used trails answered this as well.

16. **Question:** Wondering why the paved pathway through the Weaselhead is not cleared/maintained during the winter months?

**Question Detail:** The pathway is only cleared to the top of the hill. It is pretty treacherous and walked/biked by so many people.

**Response:** There are actually a few reasons why we only clear to the top of the hill. We are prohibited from adding any materials to the surrounding environment by Urban Conservation, as the sand/salt mixture would saturate the environment and alter much of the plant life here, allowing invasive species to take root and encroach into the site. Doing so would also salinate existing water supplies and impact the fauna living near the beaver dams. Keeping in mind we are prohibited from adding any materials to the surrounding environment, it should be noted that snow inherently has some traction capability, while pavement with a thin layer of ice on top has much less. While smaller equipment would be a possibility to cross the bridge leading into Weaselhead the north side, smaller equipment also has the disadvantage of requiring much more time to clear a section such as this. The sharp turning curve of the pathway at the south side of the Weaselhead, and the unstable conditions of the pathway near the beaver ponds, this location is unsafe for equipment to travel due to the nature of the design here. If a piece of equipment lost traction anywhere along that area it would foreseeably slide all the way to the bottom, hitting whatever (of whomever) happened to be on that pathway at the time, possibly breaking through the handrail and going over the steep drop-off. Many individuals use this area as a natural refuge from the surrounding urban environment during the winter, including the Weaselhead/Glenmore Preservation Society, and part of the natural experience here is the uncleared, untouched surfaces. For these reasons we strongly discourage snow clearing services throughout the site.

17. **Question:** As a trail runner I use all the side trails in the northern, western, and southern areas of the Weaselhead. They are lovely, quite, and really fun trail running. I'd be extremely disappointed to see any of them be decommissioned. I've seen nature lovers, and walkers use them as well. Its a great way to get away from the pavement."

**Response:** N/A

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18. **Question:** Bike

**Question Detail:** I would like to see a bike path goes from Griffith woods park to Glenmore Reservoir area, so that people will have access between those two locations.

**Response:** Thank you for this feedback. I will ensure it is forwarded to our team and included in the final What We Heard Report.

19. **Question:** Biodiversity of the park

**Question Detail:** How will animals cross from the park over the future ring road

**Response:** In planning the SW Calgary Ring Road, the Alberta Government identified areas along the ring road that were priority sites for wildlife crossing. Coinciding with major water courses, the Elbow River and Fish Creek, provincial engineers designed traffic overpass structures with the intent to allow wildlife to cross under the roadway along the banks of these waterways. Parks & Open Spaces continues to monitor wildlife presence and movement within the Griffith Woods to Weaselhead-Glenmore parks natural corridor using wildlife trail cameras to help inform how we continue to support wildlife moving into and around the city.

20. **Question:** Don't allow a few people to speak for all of Lakeview.

**Question Detail:** For example, there are some very outspoken Lakeview residents who seem to think they speak for I wish to ensure that a few Lakeview residents, who complain a lot, and seem to think they are speaking for all of Lakeview, do not take control. There are many Lakeview residents who like the idea of bathrooms in the new building at the east entrance to North Glenmore Park. There are also many of us who love the frisbee golf, the skating pathways, the lookout points with viewfinders, the cross-country ski tracks, etc. Don't listen to those few Lakeview residents who complain.

**Response:** Thanks for your feedback. We'll be sure to include this in What We Heard Report.

## Park pop-ups

This is the feedback gathered by conversation or comments written on poster boards.

Likes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Having a natural park in the city.</li><li>• The biodiversity - flora and fauna</li><li>• Easy to access</li><li>• Active recreation opportunities (the pump track, the skating rink and other amenities)</li><li>• Being close to the reservoir</li><li>• It can inform people who need to be informed</li><li>• Habitat/vegetation protection is key. Perhaps more educational messaging/signage to explain why</li><li>• The pathway system</li></ul>
Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Natural forested area to see birds/critters</li><li>• Nature</li><li>• Natural trails</li></ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bike paths and pump tracks</li><li>• Hiking trails in the city</li><li>• Views of the reservoir</li><li>• Walking paths</li><li>• Nature</li><li>• Cross-country skiing!</li><li>• I like the playground</li><li>• I bike to work on these trails, Love it.</li><li>• Skiing is a good add on in Wintertime</li><li>• Leave nature, animals, open spaces, thank you for your support</li><li>• Morning walks</li><li>• This is heaven</li><li>• I love it the way it is</li></ul>
Concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Noise in Weaselhead</li><li>• Cyclists – speeds, safety, off trail usage</li></ul>
Future thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Need a balance between natural spaces and developed/manicured spaces (Concern? Re. don't get too imbalanced)</li><li>• Two paths in more areas – bike versus people</li><li>• Dog walking paths – not on asphalt bike paths which can be dangerous for the dogs)</li><li>• Would be nice to have more park benches and picnic tables</li><li>• Kayaking, and water activities, the expanding trails, and amenities</li><li>• More education signage for the park. Especially important for newcomers who want to learn more!</li></ul>

### Verbatim

For a verbatim listing of all the input that was provided online, please see the separate [Verbatim Responses](#) documents.

## APPENDIX A: References

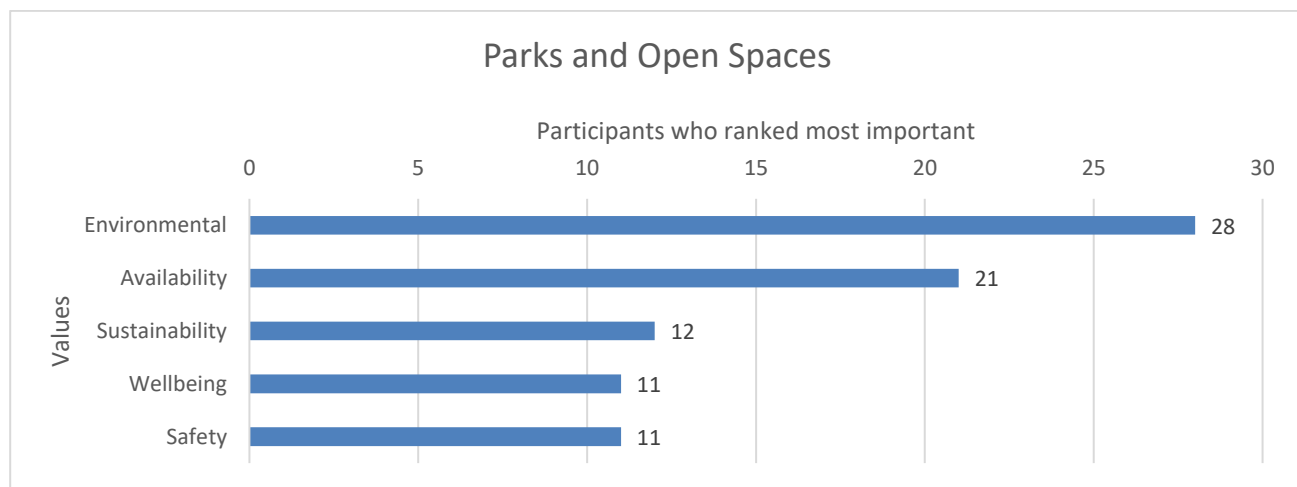
What We Heard Report – Service Plans and Budgets 2023 – 2026

### *Parks and Open Spaces*

Descriptions of the values you were asked to rank for this service are below:

- Wellbeing: Year-round opportunities for social interaction, community vitality, nature appreciation and leisure activities.
- Availability: Neighbourhood parks are readily accessible to all communities.
- Safety: Parks and open spaces are safe.
- Sustainability: Our natural environment is conserved through stewardship, planning and management contributing to urban resilience.
- Environmental: We recognize that healthy ecosystems are essential to our personal, community, and economic well-being.

The graphic below indicates the number of participants who ranked the values of Parks and Open Spaces as most important.



The graphic above is one way to show you the result of what is valued most from engagement. The table below is the ranking based off the average rank (1 to 5: one being the highest rank and five being the lowest rank) from all participants. Sharing the results in a different format helps us improve inclusiveness and understanding.

Ranking	Value	Average Ranking
1.	Environmental	2.46
2.	Availability	2.60
3.	Sustainability	2.77
4.	Safety	3.23



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5.	Wellbeing	3.25
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The following are the most frequent themes identified regarding why Parks and Open Spaces and its values matter.

- Stakeholders want more access to parks and green spaces. They want more neighbourhood parks and less selling of existing green spaces (e.g., ball diamonds).
- A healthy city results in healthy lives. Stakeholders state that our green spaces improve our communities, our families, and mental and physiological health.
- Maintenance of green spaces is also seen to be essential to our communities. This includes but is not limited to the mowing of grass, the proliferation of weeds and invasive plants, and dying trees and bushes.

## What We Heard – Service Plans and Budgets 2019-2022 (phase 3)

Service	Current Service Level Recommendation	Sentiment we heard through engagement	Detailed explanation
Parks & Open Spaces	↔	↑	Generally we heard a preference for this service level to increase because it would help ensure good maintenance and provides good opportunity for social and recreational activities. Some comments indicate a desire for playgrounds for a wider age range and increased focus on safety.
Urban Forestry	↓	↑	Those who found this important indicated that trees improved quality of life, environmental value, and beautification. People supported the maintenance of old trees and supported watering of young trees so they take better. People did not support the reduction in planting new trees. They wanted to see more trees planted especially since they felt the tree canopy has not yet recovered from past weather events.

## What We Heard – Service Plans and Budgets 2019-2022 (phase 2)

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Line of Service	Verbatim Comment
Parks and Open Spaces	allows us to gather as families/communities
Parks and Open Spaces	Makes the world/life better!
Parks and Open Spaces	Makes life better & socializing @ dog park
Parks and Open Spaces	We need green spaces
Recreation Opportunities	Healthy living. Place for building community
Recreation Opportunities	Recreation is important to channelise youth energy
Parks and Open Spaces	Open places create a hub & opportunity for people to meet & connect. Dog parks are needed where it is not simply a close small fenced area but bigger populations.
Urban Forestry	One of the best things about the city is the countless possibilities to experience outdoor activities in real, big parks as well as having a large presence of trees within city limits.
Parks and Open Spaces	The city needs more trees. The trees (that are planted) need to be <u>watered</u> .
Urban Forestry	keeps our neighbourhood green and healthy
Urban Forestry	Partner with local agencies & non profits to support learning in different communities
Parks and Open Spaces	Leisure space to 'hang out' with family, friends, visitors, fellow immigrants.
Parks and Open Spaces	I like the parks because they are a place to play.
Parks and Open Spaces	The city gives us Parks and they will give us Parks for exercise [included drawing of a playground on a sunny day]
Urban Forestry	Calgary has forestry so kids can learn safety
Parks and Open Spaces	To play and have fun. Relax in nature
Parks and Open Spaces	Protecting the wild life
Parks and Open Spaces	Park and open spaces for bikers, skater and more
Parks and Open Spaces	I like helping nature, plants and other living things.
Parks and Open Spaces	I think parks and open spaces are good because people love to have fun!
Parks and Open Spaces	Parks and open spaces are important to me because I love to play on parks. And they are important because they let us play outside more often.
Parks and Open Spaces	I like parks it is good because you can go for a run or walk and can enjoy! :)

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Parks and Open Spaces	I think if you build a park or take down a park and put up a new one, always ask for opinions from the community. [included drawing of a heart]
Urban Forestry	Calgary has urban forests for children to get new learning experiences.
Parks and Open Spaces	Definitely we need more trees and green areas
Parks and Open Spaces	Increasing budget to Parks for community enhancement as current funding is way too low & HOAs unable to water & cut green spaces properly
Urban Forestry	More trees needed
Urban Forestry	More trees the better. I see areas on my street (Saddlebrook Dr.) where more trees could be planted. City owned trees grow very slow. Are they planted in ideal soil conditions?
Urban Forestry	Please + trees
Environmental Management	Avoid taking too much recreational areas (parks) in order to build buildings and stores, since that can affect wildlife and vegetation.
Environmental Management	Clean air, water are human rights issue. Future generations need to build up rather than out & it will help save money on the city of Calgary