

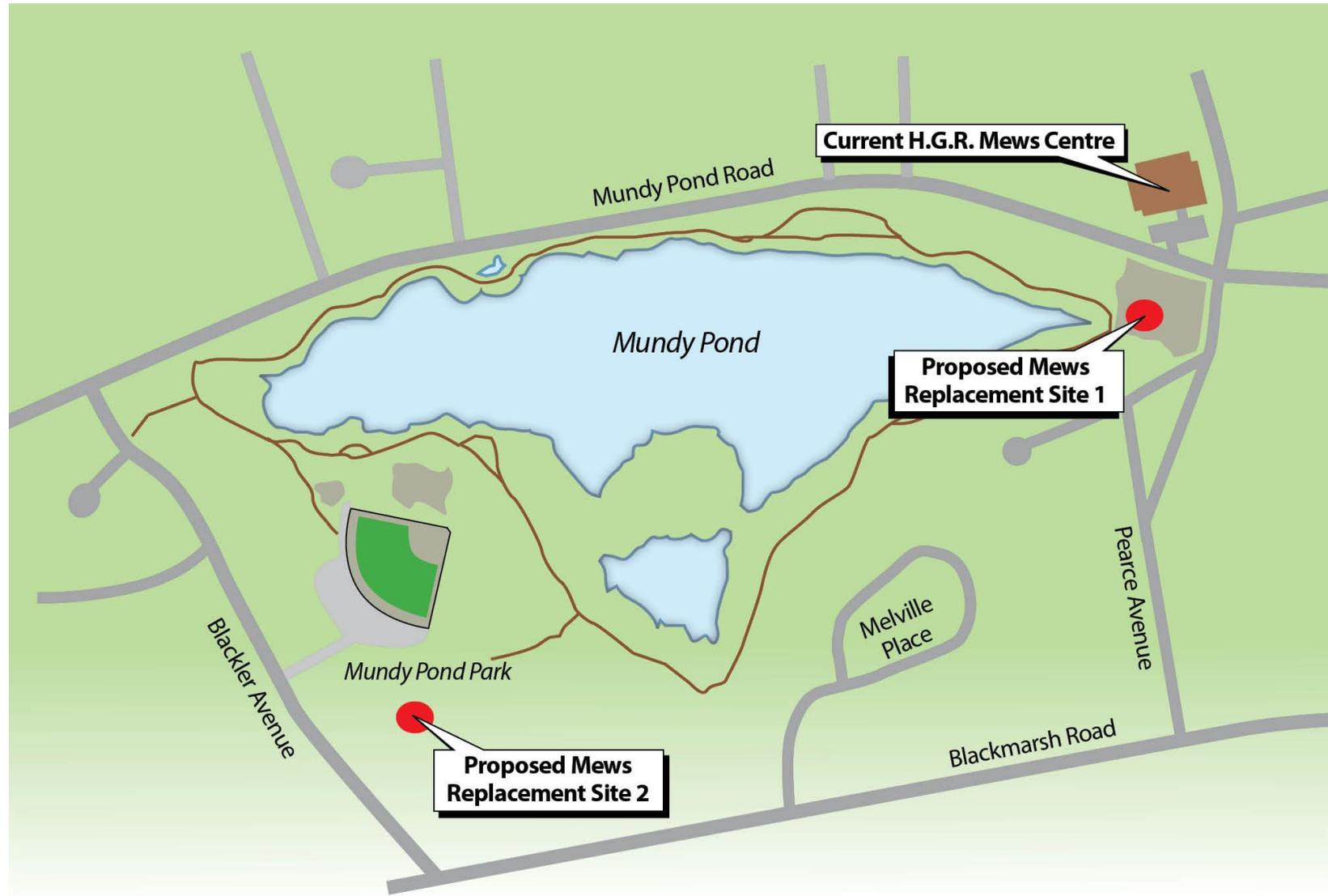
H.G.R. Mews Community Centre

Proposed Site Location Engagement Process 2019



What We Heard

August 2019



Disclaimer

This document aims to provide a summary of what was heard from participants during the engagement process. It is not meant to reflect the specific details of each submission word-for-word.

The City produces a What we Heard document for every city-lead project with public engagement to share back with the community the commentary collected and to ensure we heard you correctly.

The full scope of commentary including individual submissions and comments, as well as, the What we Heard document is used by city staff and Council to help inform recommendations and decisions.

Background for 2019 Public Engagement

- The City of St. John's is committed to the replacement of the H.G.R. Mews Community Centre. Public engagement on programming for the replacement facility took place in Spring 2018. At that time the proposed location was the gravel parking lot across the street from the current facility.
- During that engagement process, concerns were raised about the loss of green space, as well as other issues with the proposed location for the replacement.
- While that site was not excluded from consideration, the City decided to explore other potential locations in the area and undertook a geotechnical investigation of land in Mundy Pond Park to determine its feasibility as a location.
- Geotechnical investigations completed at both locations indicate either is an option and could accommodate a new facility.

2019 Engagement – Purpose and Process

- The 2019 phase of public engagement was designed specifically to seek feedback on the new proposed location for the Mews Centre replacement at Mundy Pond Park.
- Two in-person sessions were held on July 30, one from 10 a.m. to noon and the second from 6 to 8:00 p.m. Large visuals of the proposed locations, visuals of the entire area, and a visual of the new Kenmount Terrace Community Centre and Park were on display. Information from the 2018 engagement process and a Frequently Asked Questions document were made available as take-aways.
- Residents were encouraged to review the materials and share their opinions, concerns and ask questions about the proposed location to staff and Council who were in attendance.
- Participants also had the option of providing written feedback at the in-person sessions.
- Online at engagestjohns.ca, the [project page](#) was updated with visuals and a new discussion topic was added which stated:
 - *A new proposed site location for the H.G.R. Mews Community Centre replacement has been identified. The new site accommodates multiple recreation offerings all in one location. Check out the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) and map on this page and leave your comments and feedback here.*
- The project page was live and open for feedback from July 16 until August 8.



Promotion and Communications

- Post card to area residents (2,730 households) – issued July 12
- Public Service Announcement – July 17
- Materials on site at Mews including copies of the post card, digital sign, poster (July 16-30)
- Digital sign at Paul Reynolds Community Centre July 16-30
- Posters at City Community Centres (July 16-30)
- Signage on site in Mundy Pond Park entrance (July 17-30)
- City website News article on July 29
- E-mail newsletter delivered through engagestjohns.ca – more than 2,000 registered participants on July 19 and August 2
- Telegram advertisement (July 27)
- City's social media sites, Facebook events (reach 11,800) , Twitter posts (impressions, 8265) between Jul 17 and July 30
- Mundy Pond Community Facebook page – Ward Councillor replied to several postings and encouraged people to attend the engagement sessions or visit engagestjohns.ca
- Media interviews/coverage – July 17, VOXM and CBC; July 18, VOXM; July 29, NTV; July 30, CBC, NTV and VOXM



Approximately 80 people attended at least one of two in-person sessions on July 30, 2019

21 people left written feedback at the sessions

MHA James Dinn also attended

Boys and Girls Club board members attended



Emails

11 (some of whom also provided feedback at engagestjohns.ca)



Online at engagestjohns.ca

29 engaged participants. (These are participants who leave comments, respond to other people's comments or like or dislike comments.) Some people left numerous comments whereas others posted only one time.

599 unique visitors to the page, 356 of whom are categorized as "informed" meaning that they visited photos, read information on the page but did not leave comments



Stakeholder feedback from:

Pensioners Association – current users of Visitor Information Centre at Mundy Pond park

St. John's Soccer Association

Mile Zero Ultimate Frisbee

Softball Association

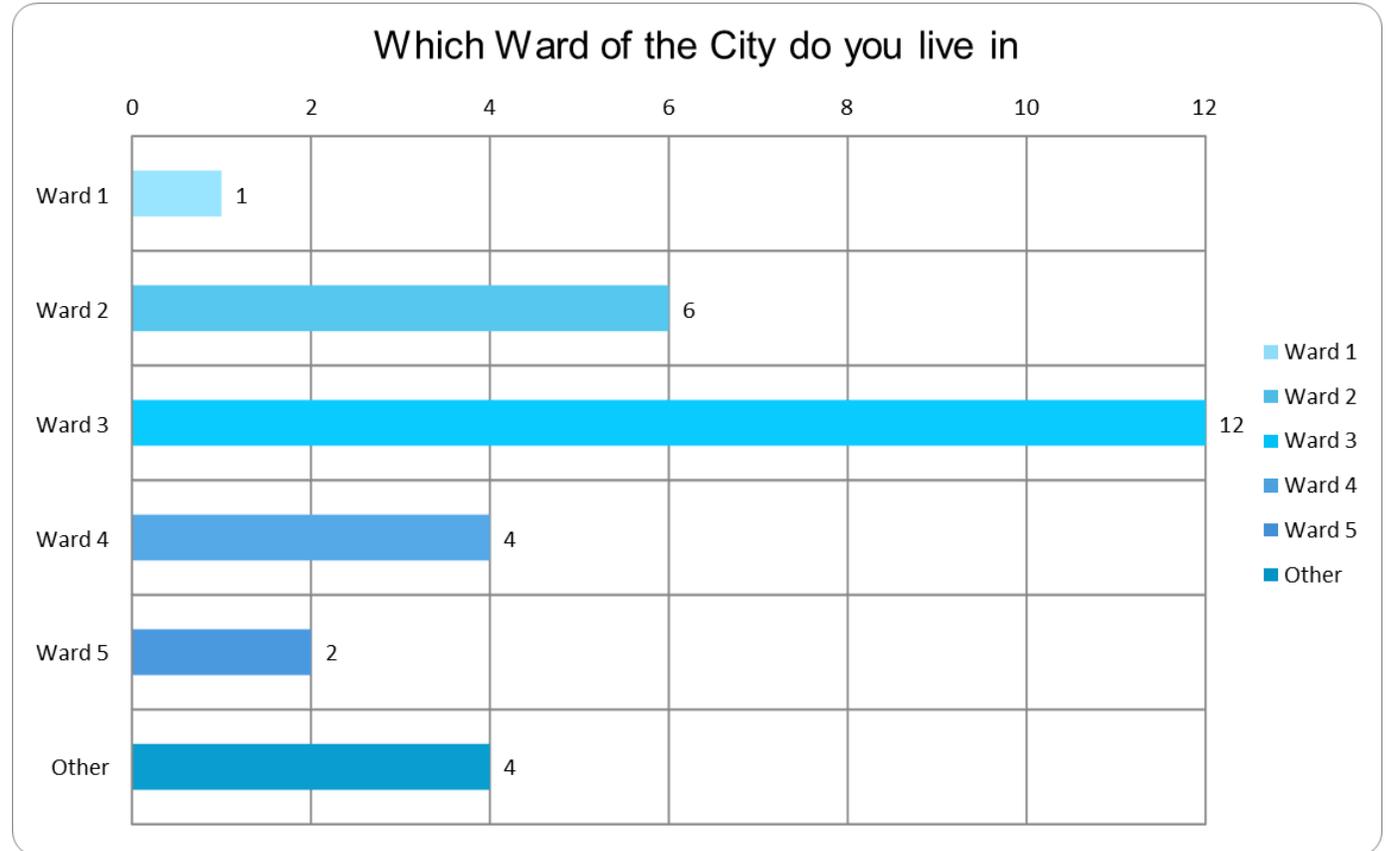
Mundy Pond Regatta Committee

City Inclusion Advisory Committee

Participation in Engagement Process

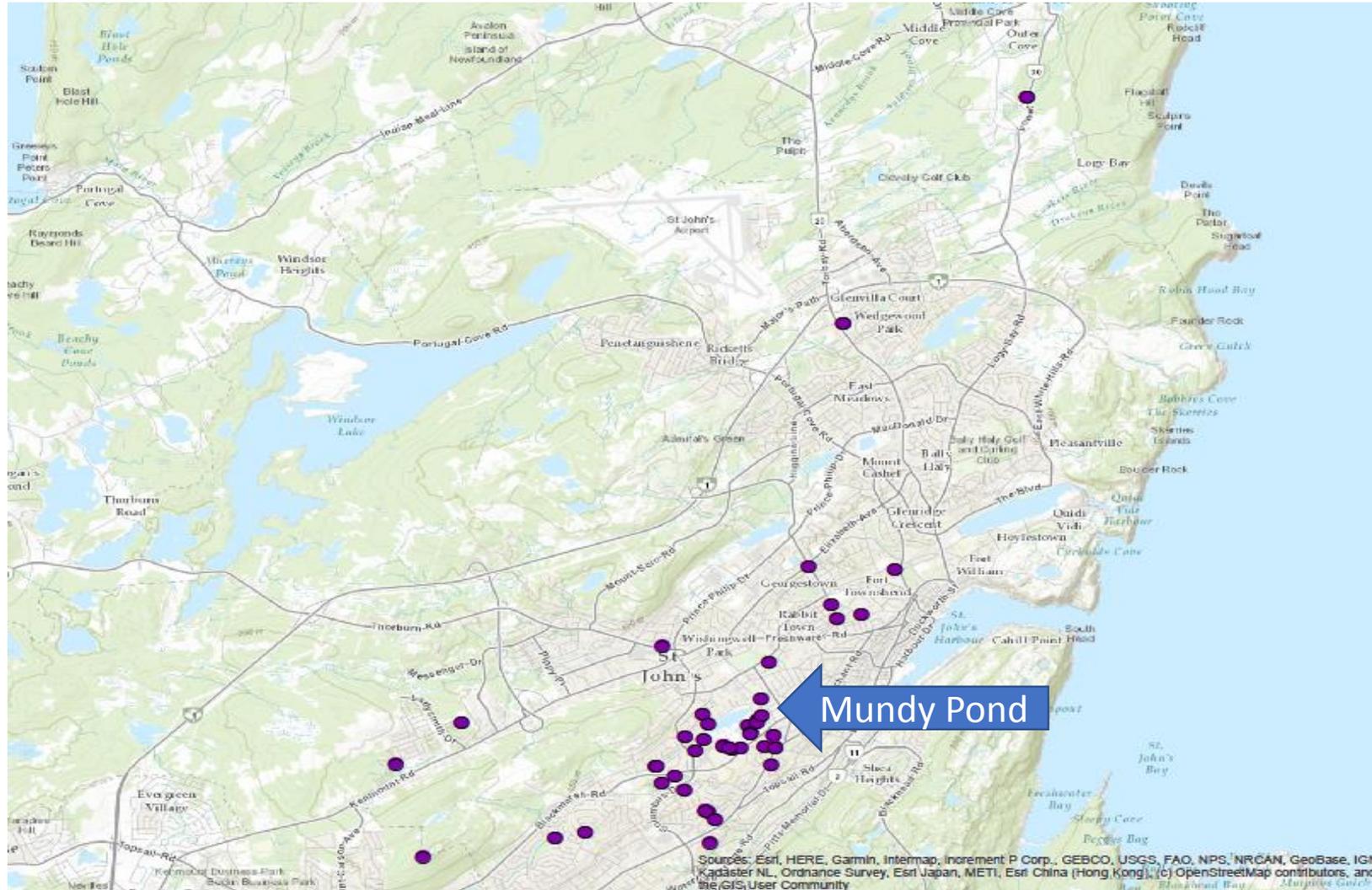
Where do participants live? (online participants)

41 % live in Ward 3 which is where the Mews Centre is located.



Where Do Participants Live? (in-person participants)

67% live in the Mews Centre area



What We Heard from Residents, and Users of the Existing Facility, about the New Proposed Location



Many people were supportive of the proposed location and preferred it within the recreation hub versus the gravel parking lot option proposed in 2018.



Most of those who were not in favour of the proposed location were in the immediate vicinity of Mundy Pond Park.



A couple of people suggested the City purchase another location such as 50 Mundy Pond Road and use the current location for a parking lot.



Several people suggested the City demolish the existing Centre and build there.



A couple of people suggested to look outside Mundy Pond but keep it in the West End.

What People Liked about the Proposed Location

- The proposed location will enhance the existing recreation hub.
- All amenities will be in one place.
- An existing trail system around Mundy Pond will provide connectivity to the park amenities.
- There will be adequate parking for all amenities.
- A Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities inclusive playground will be constructed at this location.
- There will be improved safety by having the building and parking lot together.
- The new centre would remain in the neighbourhood.
- Many people have used the Boys and Girls club and like that a relationship will continue with them in the new centre.

Some Concerns Raised about the New Proposed Location

Safety

- Children going across the pond in winter
- Location of building, out of the way and isolated
- Proximity of building adjacent to two parking lots

Traffic

- View that Blackler Avenue is already very busy with regular and industrial traffic and the new facility will bring more traffic to the area

Loss of soccer field

- Using the field as a location will result in a loss of green space
- Waste of tax payer money to remove something that is well used
- Loss of soccer amenities in the neighbourhood

Flooding

- View that soccer field was an infill and therefore is unsuitable for a building
- Concern for properties flooding

Loss of view of pond

- Properties backing on the park/pond will have their views impacted
- Negative impact on quality of life

Lighting and noise

- Too bright into people's windows
- Noise of equipment in the area, early morning snow clearing, back up warnings on City vehicles, HVAC systems

Impact on property

- View that the facility will reduce the value of their properties
- During construction there will be significant noise and disruption
- Rodents

Other Feedback

- Consider the placement/design of the building; maximize green space and keep the building as far away as possible from homes.
- Flip the building and parking lot – have the building closer to the water.
- Put the building in the centre of the park to be closer to all the amenities.
- Move the playground to be behind the building – consider how all components of the Park work together and consider design that supports safety.
- Lack of awareness of engagement sessions and time of year they were held:
 - Summer – challenge to get people involved
 - Lack of direct consultation with the immediate neighbours outside of open sessions
 - Two sessions in one day – lack of options for those on vacation
- Style of engagement session
 - Some people expressed disappointment that the session was not “town hall” style
- Mundy Pond is a community and all of the amenities in the area are well-used including the walking trail, skate park, softball field, etc.

What We Heard About Inclusion

If the Mundy Pond Park location is selected, the following would be important for consideration:

- An accessible bus stop on Blackler Avenue.
- Location of accessible bus stop relative to the proposed new site.
- Needs of service animals and provision of a comfort station for them at the site.
- Universal design practices, inclusion and accessibility for the building design.

What We Heard from Other Stakeholders

Boys and Girls Club

- Have not raised any concerns with the proposed location. Board members who attended the in-person session noted that they preferred Mundy Pond Park to the other option because it provided more access to amenities for the kids attending their programs and they like the recreation hub concept.
- Want to maintain relationship and partnership with the City of St. John's for their programming

Pensioners Association

- The group was not opposed to the location but if the visitor centre is to be torn down request that the City provide another space for their group to meet.

St. John's Soccer Association

- No concerns expressed with the proposed removal of the field at Mundy Pond Park.

Mile Zero Ultimate Frisbee

- Members raised concerns about the loss of green space in the redevelopment of the soccer field. They spoke about the availability of quality field space in the City for their sport and the importance of ongoing conversation with their group about any redevelopment of Ayre Athletic.

Softball Association

- Not opposed to the location. Wanted to know about softball lighting and wanted to keep their trailer.

Mundy Pond Regatta Committee

- Not opposed to the location. Were amenable to sharing a space with the softball association group. Would like the City to consider future regattas and provision for storage of the following: (4 – 14ft racing boats, 1 - 12ft. safety boat, would like a 8 x16 wharf).

Previous Engagement Feedback

Engagement on this project began in 2018.



For a detailed what we heard document from that engagement which outlines details about programming, visit the project page and view the What we Heard 2018 [document](#).

Next steps

- Recommendation on a location to Council by staff and a Council decision – Late August/September, 2019
- To stay informed about this project, visit engagestjohns.ca and register to receive e-mails.