

## PARK IMPROVEMENT SURVEY



March 2021

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## 1) Greensborough Speaks on the Future of Swan Lake Park

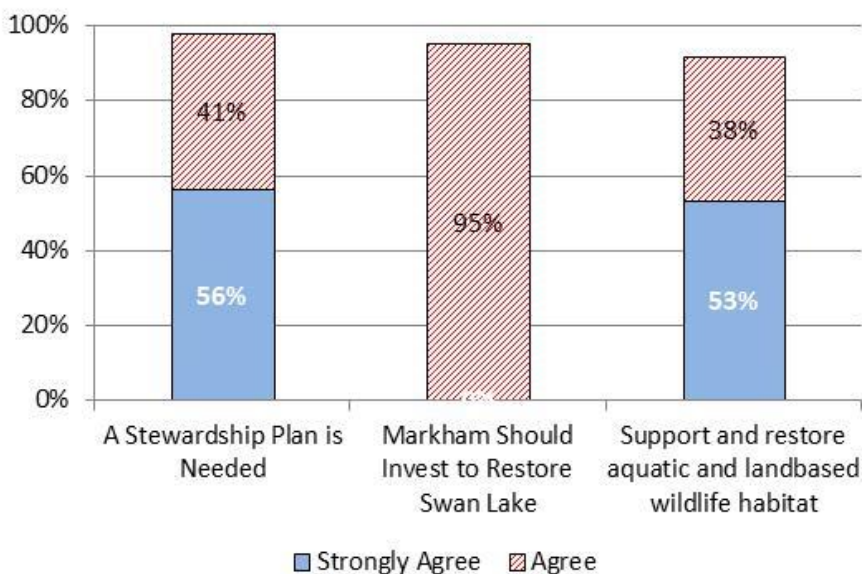
367 residents of the Greensborough area in Markham outlined their views on what should become of Swan Lake and Swan Lake Park in a Park Improvement survey initiated by Friends of Swan Lake Park.

Over the next few months, Markham Council will establish long-term goals for Swan Lake and Swan Lake Park. Critical to defining a Park Improvement program or establishing water quality goals is to first clarify what the community expectations are for the lake and park.

The following report summarizes the results of the survey questionnaire posted on the Friends of Swan Lake Park website during February and March 2021 (see Appendix C). Many respondents added specific comments and suggestions which are provided in Appendix A.

### Residents Vote for Restoration Backed By a Long-term Stewardship Plan

Area residents clearly support a long-term plan that involves investment in sustainable solutions and restoration of the aquatic and land-based habitat.



95% supported the estimated \$2 million investment in long-term sustainable solutions.

91% supported restoration of both the aquatic life in the lake and the land-based habitat.

97% felt it was important that Markham establish a long-term sustainable Stewardship Plan for Swan Lake and Swan Lake Park.

Respondents encouraged Markham to address the issues in Swan Lake Park. One stating that:

*“The Swan Lake Improvement program is proceeding at a slower than necessary rate. I urge the City of Markham pursue in earnest 1) accelerated water improvement plan for sustainable wildlife, fish life, and plant life 2) the establishment of long-term water quality guidelines for Swan Lake; and, 3) a long-term Fish Management program for Swan Lake.”*

While another added:

*“The City should invest in these types of projects without using cost as a reason not to. Nature has huge benefits to the community beyond cost analysis. This has been proved by the overwhelming numbers of people using the trail system during Covid. Markham's focus on lower tax rates is short sighted, money invested in parks is well spent.”*

### Residents Stress Need for Higher Goals for Water Quality

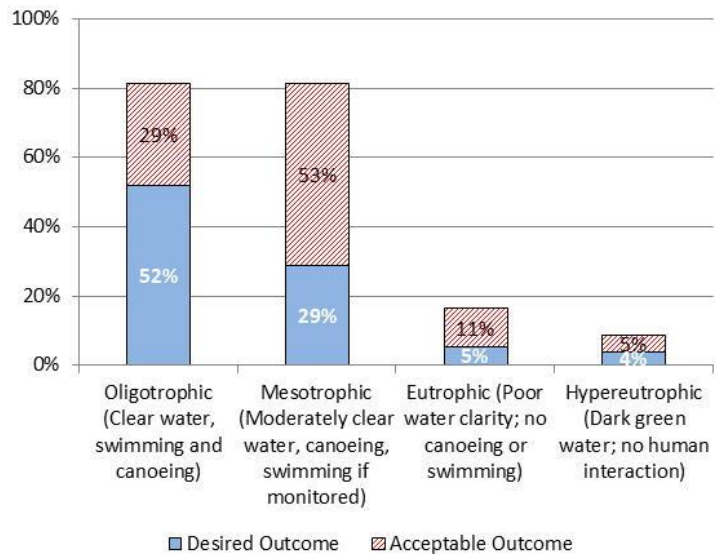
Discussions on Park Improvement are inter-related to water quality objectives for Swan Lake.

Scientists categorize water quality environments into “Trophic States”. Swan Lake is categorized as a hypereutrophic lake, the lowest quality and highest risk category. The lower quality levels of eutrophic and hypereutrophic are not environmentally stable and continual damage to the aquatic and plant life can be expected - as well as posing a potential ongoing health risk to humans and animals due to cyanobacteria.

The city of Markham has proposed a 5-year cycle of chemical treatments that may stabilize Swan Lake as eutrophic. Only 16% supported Markham’s proposed long-term goal of eutrophic status while just 9% found the interim goal and the current hypereutrophic state as desired or acceptable.

The mesotrophic category represents a more stable environmental goal with better community options and has been recommended by the Friends of Swan Lake Park as the long-term goal. It is, however, a challenging objective that, if feasible, will require a comprehensive program that addresses all of the underlying factors contributing to the deterioration in water quality.

**Hypereutrophic Conditions 2020**

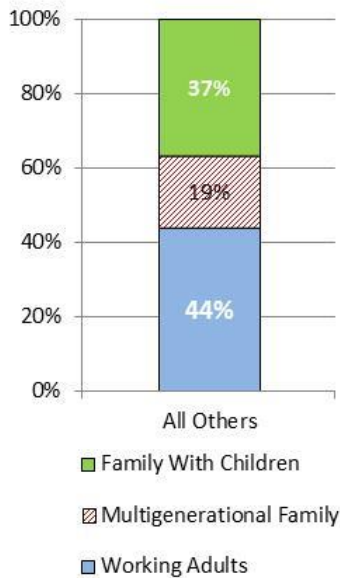


81% of all respondents indicated that the goal of restoring Swan Lake to the best rating (oligotrophic) was either the desired outcome (52%) or an acceptable outcome (29%). Similarly, 82% supported the Friends of Swan Lake Park recommended goal of a mesotrophic level as either the desired (29%) or an acceptable outcome (53%).

Respondents tied the water quality to the importance of environmental balance in the park.

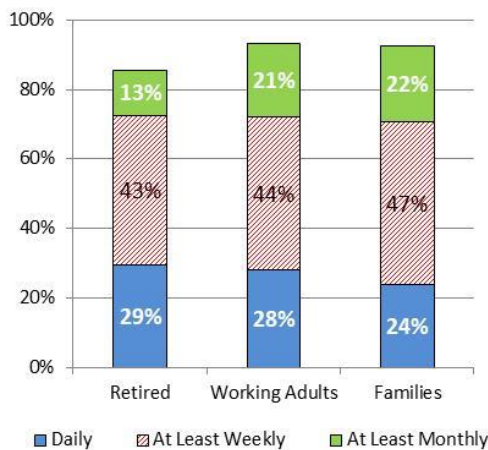
*“I continue to be most concerned about the water quality of the lake. I like the natural feel of the park and it does support a wide variety of birds.”*

**2) The Community of Swan Lake Park**



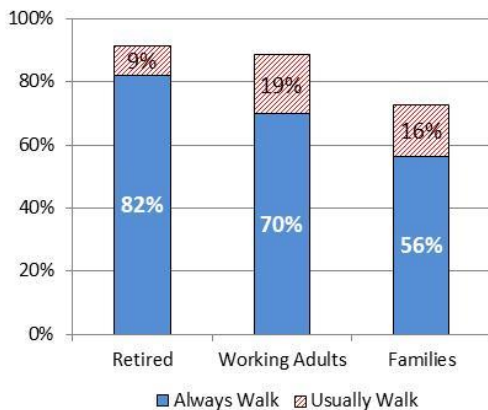
About 73% of the 367 respondents were retired while 44% of all other respondents declared to be part of households of working adults only, 37% as families with young children and 19% as multi-generational families. The responses of the families with young children and those of multi-generational residents have been categorized as “families” in the following charts.

The responses were generally consistent amongst the groups but there were some differences in views between retired respondents and the other categories in terms of park use and areas that need improvement. Where material, the differences have been highlighted in the following charts.



Swan Lake Village and the Amica Retirement residence represent a large retirement community bordering on the park; however 12% of the retired respondents reside in the adjacent neighbourhoods.

Retired respondents and working adults are more frequent users of the park with 28-29% indicating they visited the park daily during the warm weather while 43-44% indicated they visited at least once a week. By comparison 24% of the families visit the park daily and 47% at least once a week.



91% of the retired respondents and 89% of the working adults indicated they either always walk or usually walk to the park. However only 70% of the families indicated they either always or usually walk. 27% of families with children indicated that they always or usually drive.

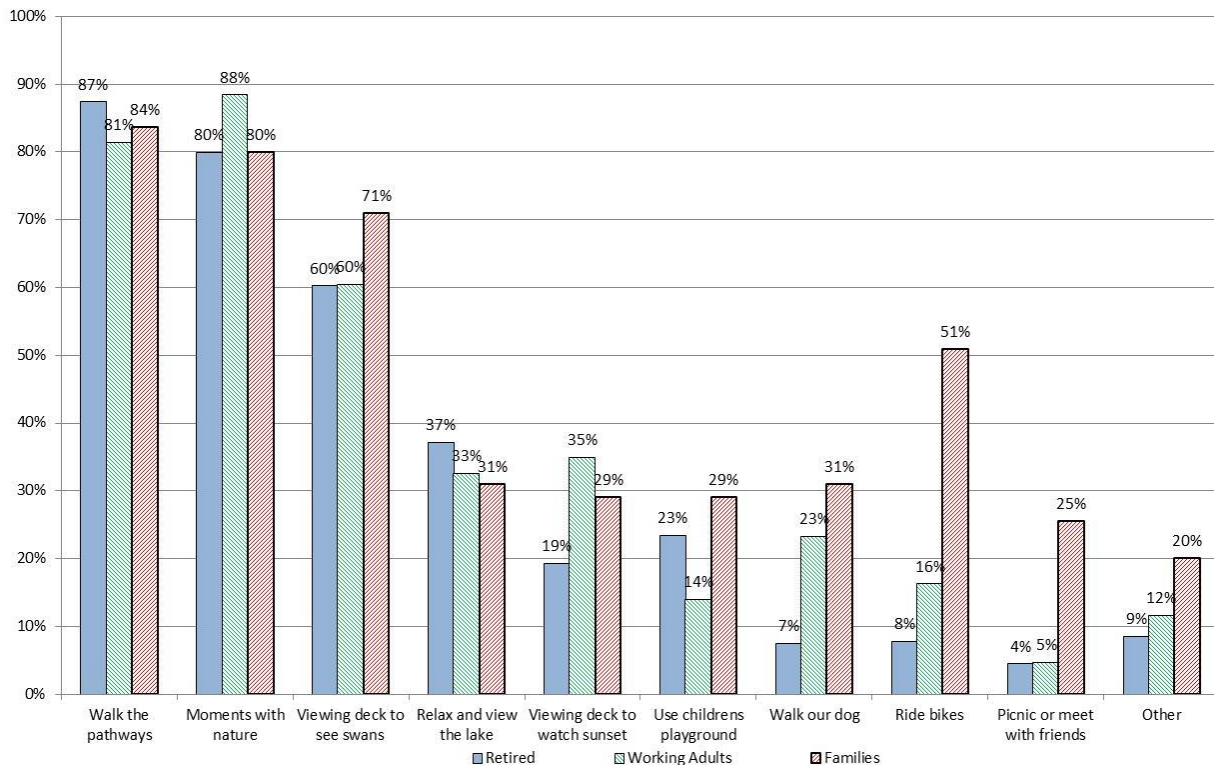
21% of the retired respondents and 12% of all other respondents reported that someone in their household faced mobility challenges. A few respondents noted use of motorized wheelchairs and scooters while several others noted the importance of well-maintained pathways and the need for safe pedestrian entrances into the park.

### Current Park Usage

Going Awesome Places recently cited Swan Lake Park as one of the best parks in Markham for “easy hikes and forest therapy”. Check it out at <https://goingawesomeplaces.com/best-parks-in-markham>

Respondents agree. 86% of all respondents indicated the primary reason for going to the park was to walk the pathways, 81% to enjoy a few moments with nature and 62% to visit the dock to see swans.

Bike riding was cited as a popular use of the park by families (51%) while walking their dog was a popular use for both families (31%) and for working adults (23%). The children’s play area was used primarily by families (29%) and by retired respondents (23%). Other reasons cited for visiting the park included bird watching, photography and a quiet place to read a book.



Respondents cherished the ability to get close to nature. Comments include:

*“Park space is invaluable in a city. As housing density increases what parks we save and maintain for future generations will become gold and diamonds for those generations.”*

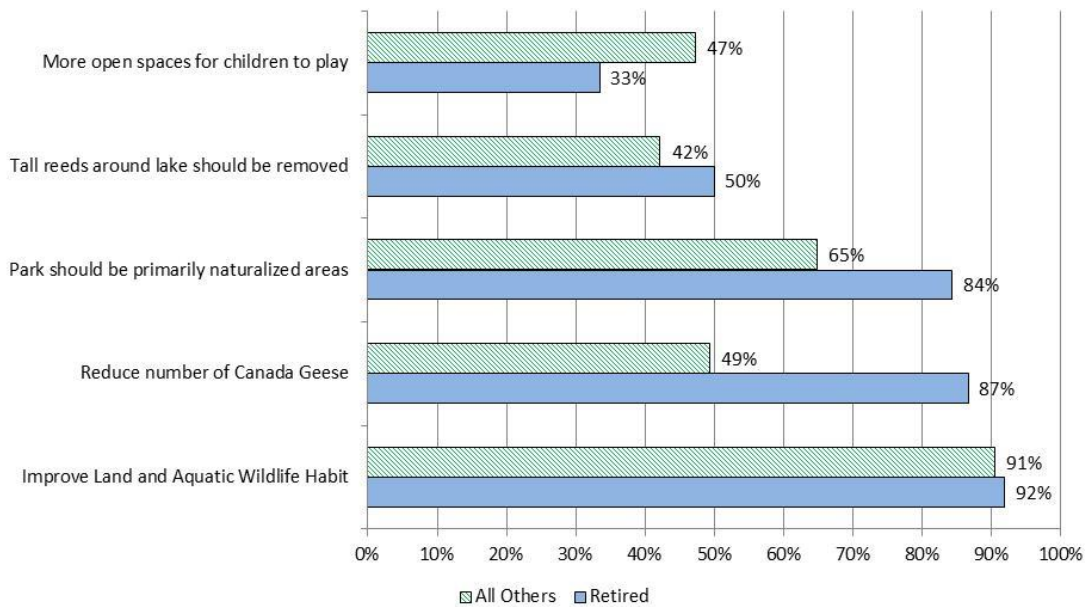
*“Swan Lake park area encourages families to get out and enjoy nature. ... I live behind the park and it gives me great pleasure to see people enjoy the Park and all it has to offer. Children playing, people walking their dogs, Seniors getting their daily exercise, Young riding their bikes. So what is wrong with getting our Town Representatives to make it the best they can. I often go through the park with my Garbage Bag and pick up sticks and clean the park. I love Markham and know the town will do the right thing for our ENVIRONMENT and its PEOPLE.”*

### 3) A Restful Nature Hub in a Hyperactive Markham Community



Markham manages Swan Lake Park as a “Natural Spaces, Wildlife Places” park. Natural areas such as Swan Lake Park provide shelter and food for wildlife, remove pollutants from air and water, produce oxygen through photosynthesis and provide valuable recreational and educational opportunities.

There was strong community support to maintain the park as a naturalized setting with over 91% encouraging support for land and aquatic habitat.



Comments from respondents include:

*“We live in such a busy world that it is like Mana from Heaven when you get the chance to relax near water and a natural Park with a few animals like Birds and Fish and Turtles.”*

*“Swan Lake is a beautiful tranquil setting where peace can be found, whatever the town decides they should try and maintain these qualities for its visitors and the wildlife that inhabit the area.”*

*“We walk the area because it's semi natural, green, peaceful and calming. We also bring family members and friends to the park to show off our natural spaces and wildlife. If you allow more human recreation then we will not be using the park and it will be like most other parks in the city. Others we've taken there agree that it's special because of the minimal human interference and recreation.”*

## Haven for Birds and Many Other Species



Courtesy of Don Fowler (2019)



Courtesy of Don Fowler (2019)

Swan Lake Park is home to a rich diversity of wildlife making it a popular destination for nature photographers and bird watchers. Several of the respondents provided detail commentary on the value of Swan Lake Park as a bird sanctuary. One respondent commented:

*“I would like to point out the thriving biodiversity that relies on Swan Lake Park each year. This park is a refuge for migrating birds and this habitat needs to be protected. Almost thirty species of warblers have been recorded in the park, along with vireos, thrushes, sparrows and many other species. I have personally seen almost 100 species of birds. This park has also hosted a migrant Eastern Whip-poor-will, a threatened species in Ontario and a Golden-winged Warbler, a species of special concern in Ontario. Additionally, there has been an Audubon's subspecies Yellow-rumped Warbler. This subspecies' range is in western North America, and this record has represented what seems to me to be the first record for York Region. I believe that it is extremely important that this park continues to be the natural refuge that it currently is.”*

eBird.org, a reporting site for bird watchers, lists 139 identified species in Swan Lake Park. This compares to 153 species reported at the much larger Milne Park and 116 at Toogood Pond.

Area residents have identified three species of turtles resident in Swan Lake. In the survey, several respondents noted their concern about the extensive loss of turtles in Swan Lake in 2019 – 2020 to professional poachers, encouraging Markham to initiate greater enforcement efforts.

Comments included:

*“People are taking away the turtles which have lived at Swan Lake for many decades. Please acknowledge this by putting up signs banning turtle removal and require provincial or city personnel to do what they can to discourage this practice. This is interfering with nature and taking away the enjoyment of interaction with the animals found here. Soon they may be extinct without some sort of support from the public.”*

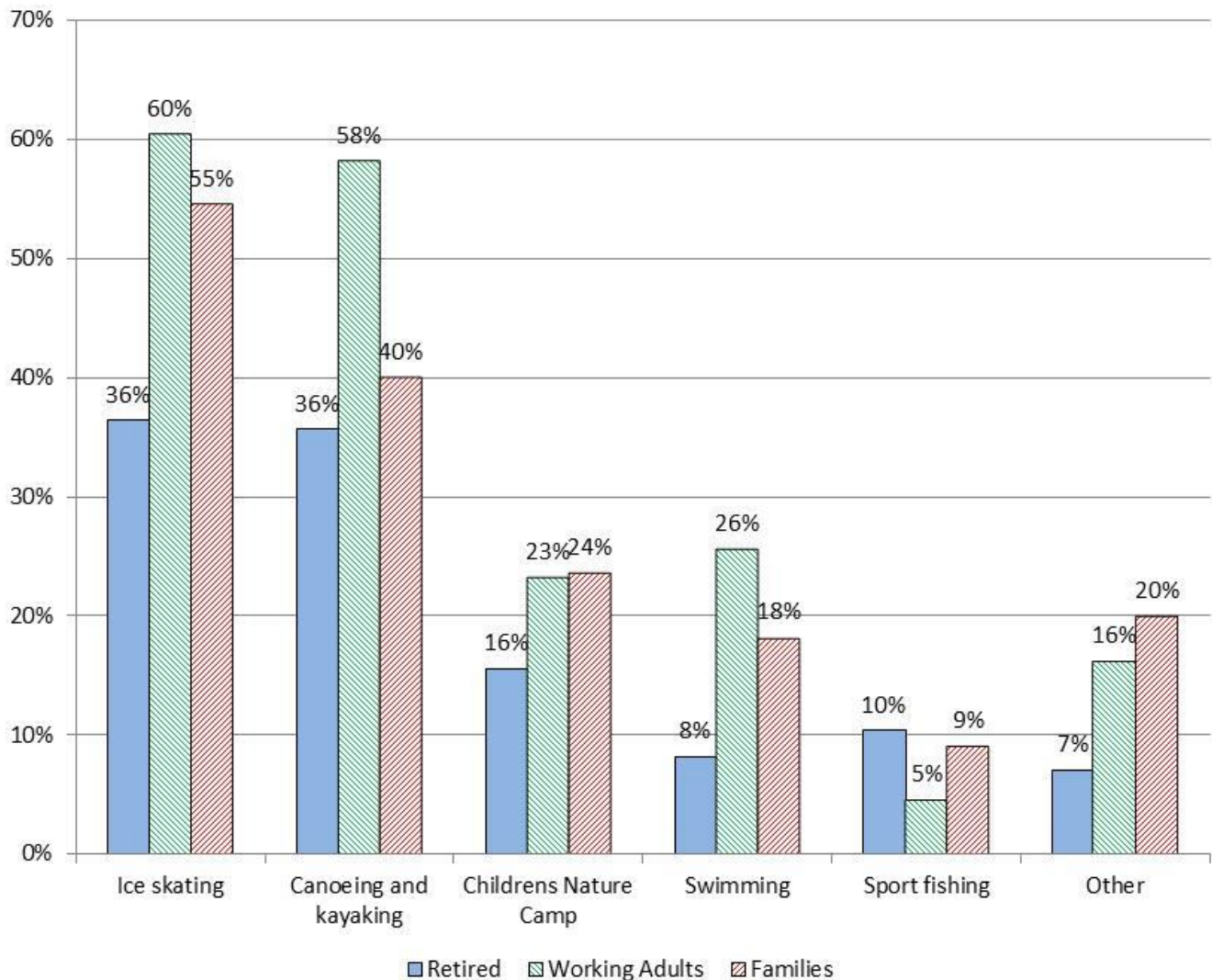
Friends of Swan Lake Park have identified 12 mammal species and 34 different insect species. Appendix B provides an updated listing of the various species identified in Swan Lake Park.



## 4) Community Vision for Swan Lake Park

### Support for Elements of the Original Vision

The original vision for Swan Lake Park, set out by the developers in the 1990s and accepted by Markham officials at that time, was for Swan Lake Park to provide community engagement for water based sports, sports fishing, ice skating and as a venue for a children’s nature camp. These objectives were never realized and due to the current poor water quality could not be supported today. Only the hardiest of fish species can survive in Swan Lake today and due to the presence of cyanobacteria, the water presents a health risk to both humans and small animals.



60% of the working adults, 55% of the families and 36% of the retired respondents would like to see ice skating on the lake. 58% of the working adults said they would like to see canoeing and kayaking on the lake while 40% of families and 36% of retired respondents also support water based sport activities.

Overall 23% of the respondents with families and working adults supported use of the park as a children's nature camp. 26% of the working adults and 18% of the families supported swimming in the lake. There was less support for sport fishing amongst all of the groups.

Most comments demonstrated a bias towards minimizing human interaction and placing the focus on maintaining a natural, but accessible environmental getaway. Comments included:

*"Swan Lake should be taken care of but I disagree with fishing and canoeing/kayaking in the lake. It should be maintained as a natural habitat for the fish and wild life. The paths should also be maintained but kept natural as possible."*

*"Ideally, to have improved water quality, to support natural wildlife of all kinds, can allow all to enjoy the beauty of nature at its best. Too much human activity can & will destroy the natural beauty of the lake & park if canoeing, fishing & swimming is allowed. ... The lake & wildlife is to be viewed. It must be respected for its natural beauty & hopefully the city monitors the health of the water for many years to come!"*

*"We have been living in Greensborough since 2003. ... We love Swan Lake and the wooded path because it's a natural area where we can enjoy a quiet stroll several times a week. It is an escape where we enjoy connecting with nature - not people. The very last thing we want is for it to get developed further, and become busy with activities. There are already so many places for youth to play in the neighbourhood. Leave Swan Lake and the wooded path as-is so adults and seniors can enjoy it too or you will push them out. Stop and think about how the quality of life will change for people who need serene, quiet nature near their home. It will be a very sad day if it becomes a park-like attraction in any way. We are open to some sort of water quality improvement if necessary (for wildlife and the ecosystem) otherwise - that's it. Please do NOT develop our beloved Swan Lake and Park or the appeal of living by it will be greatly reduced for many long-time residents."*

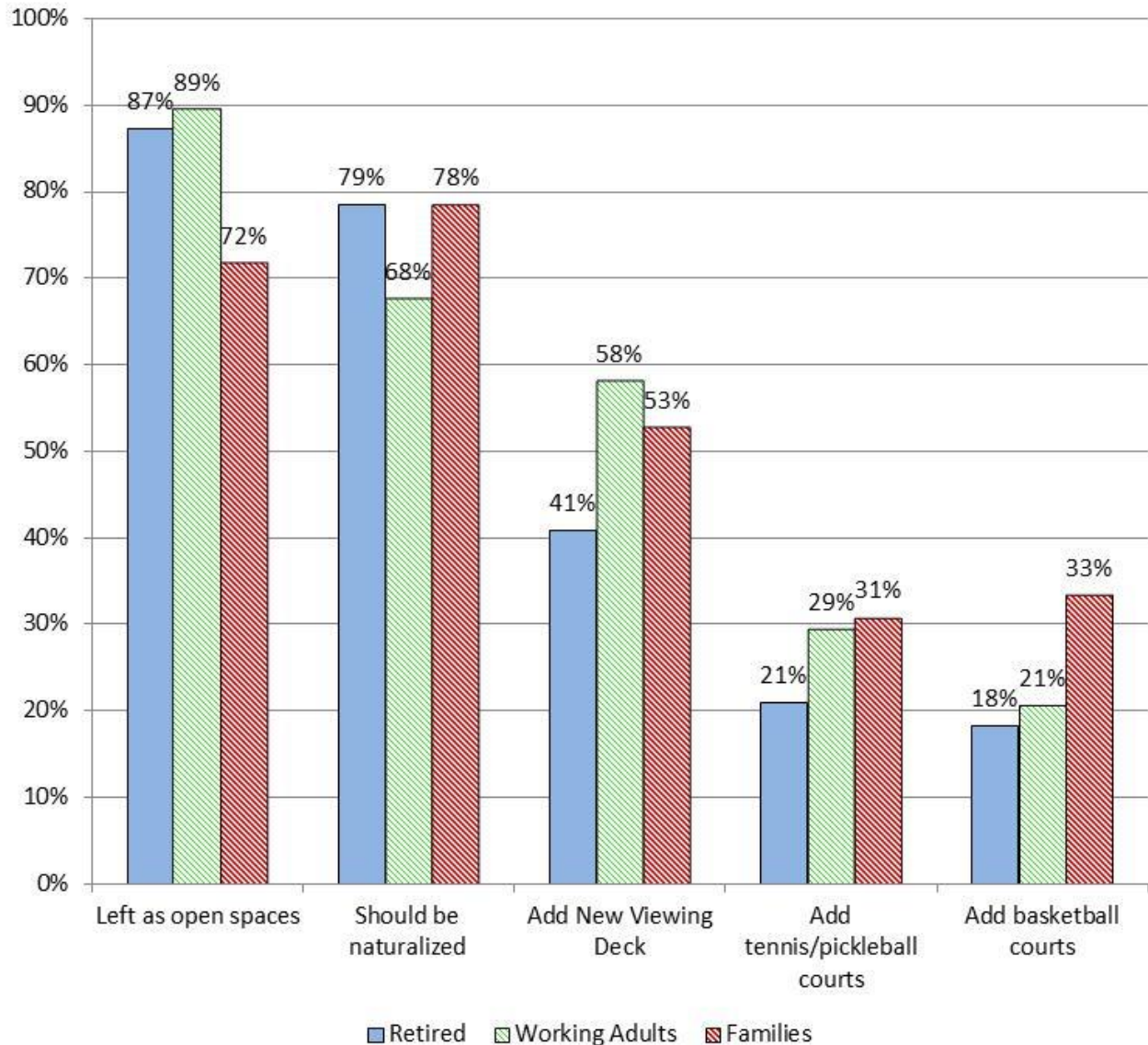
But not all agree:

*"I believe there is enough space in the overall Swan Lake Park area to support adding the basketball/tennis courts as well as adding new natural elements to increase the number of trees/vegetation in the park. The addition of the pathways and some benches is a great step forward in making this a valued area for residents to enjoy the park but I believe more can be done to add additional elements to make the space enjoyable for younger people (tweens/teens) as well. I think adding basketball courts are a good idea for this age group. Adding these elements though should not detract from the nature retreat that Swan Lake is."*

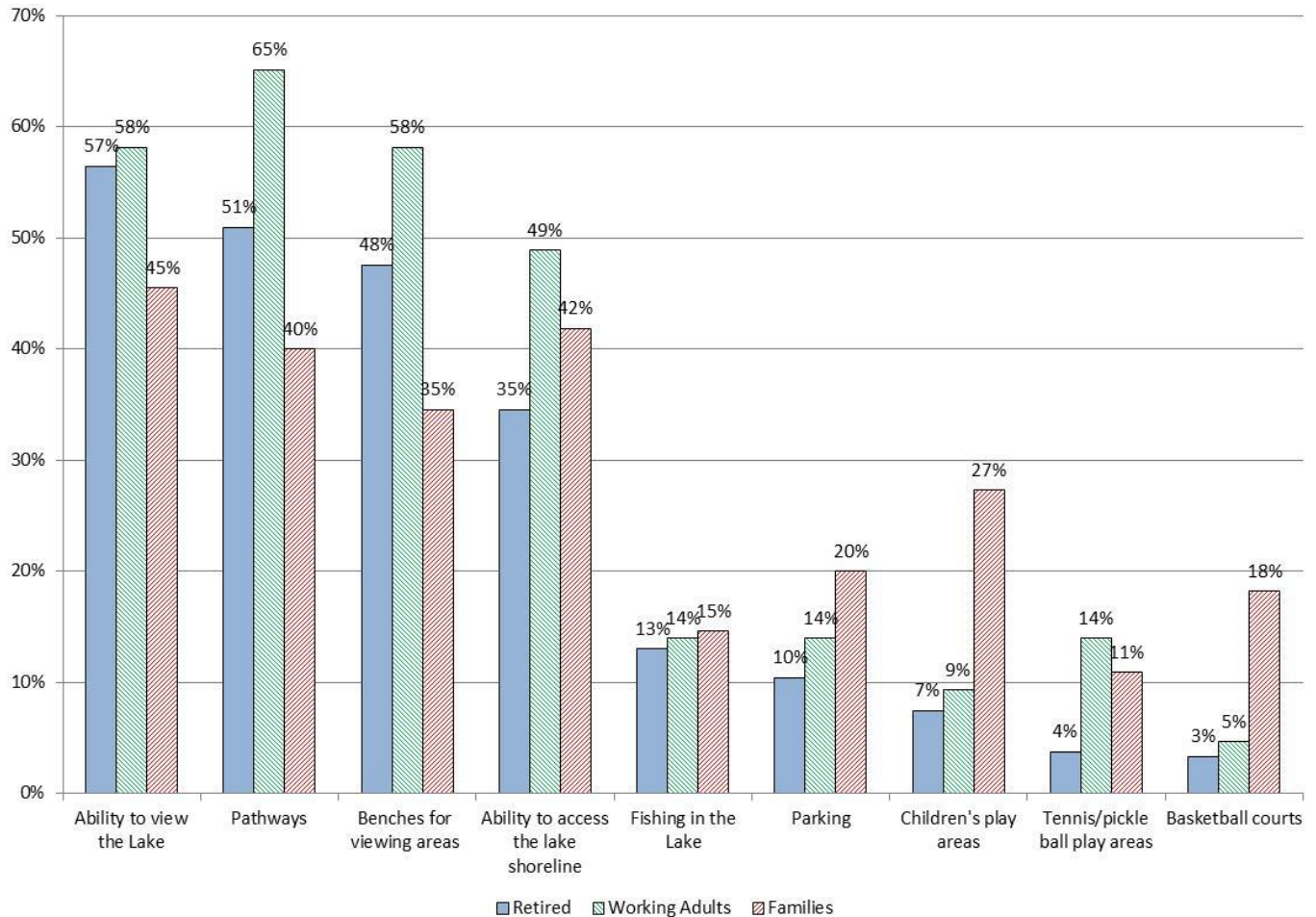
### Vision for New Park Area Along Williamson Road

In the fall of 2019, new pathways were completed along the south-end of the lake, making it possible to circumnavigate the entire lake and providing greater access to residents along the Williamson Road corridor on the west of the park.

The new addition included new open park areas along Williamson Road but with limited areas to view or access Swan Lake from the new parkland.



When asked what should become of the new park area, 85% of all respondents agreed it should be left as open space and 77% felt it should be naturalized. Households consisting of working adults (58%) and families (53%), who primarily live near Williamson Road, agreed that a new viewing deck should be added to the western shoreline. 31% of families supported adding tennis courts and basketball courts (33%). Those ideas garnered less support from retired respondents.

**5) Park Amenities: Needed or In Need of Improvement**


When asked what amenities are needed, or in need of improvement, respondents most often cited a greater ability to view the lake, pathways and benches for viewing areas and access to the shoreline.

Families cited the children's play area (27%) and parking (20%). Support for new amenities such as pickle ball, tennis or basketball courts were relatively low as was interest in fishing in the lake.

A number of respondents expressed concern about park maintenance and the conditions of the pathways and several suggested the need for washrooms and improved parking.

*"More accessibility and opportunities to see the lake from all sides of the lake. On the Williamson road side - missed connection to the lake."*

*"Pathways should be maintained in the winter. Some repaving of the paths needs to happen to deal with the upheavals."*

*"Make all walkways hard surface. Consider winter maintenance to allow safe use of walkways."*

*“Provide toilets near the playground.”*

*“I get tired of picking up garbage there or seeing garbage cans overturned & dumped and beer bottles and cans thrown in the amongst the trees and ashes from a campfire that were set in the evening by kids sitting in the dark drinking beer there. Will there be washrooms? There are at Toogood Pond, but they're rarely open for the public to use, which defeats the purpose of having them. Available washroom facilities at parks are one thing lacking in Markham etc. I always find washroom facilities when I go photographing birds in Toronto or Scarborough Parks and all around Durham Region.”*

*“Parking must be improved for those who drive into the park. Since the removal of the empty lot beside the dock, people have started to use the private parking spots allocated for guests of Amica residents. This is a huge problem for those of us with family members living in Swan Lake Amica. Please address this parking problem ASAP. Perhaps a few visits by our by law officers would alleviate this problem.”*

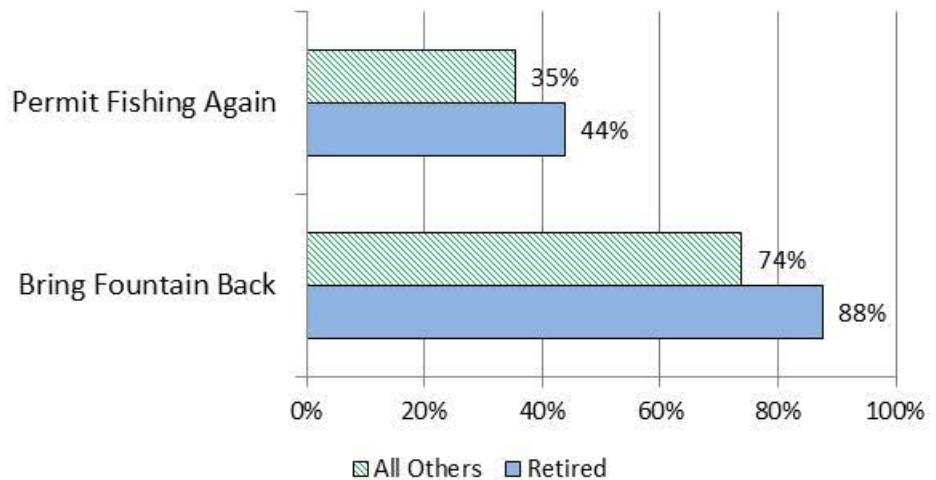
## Impact of Cyanobacteria



There are moderate levels of cyanobacteria in Swan Lake. Cyanobacteria can be harmful to humans and deadly for small animals.

Each summer a fountain has been installed by the city of Markham at the south end of the lake near the viewing deck. In 2020, Markham posted health risk warning signs and in response to residents' concerns about the fountain spraying cyanobacteria into the air, Markham removed the fountain and introduced a temporary ban on fishing in the lake.

Once water quality is improved, 88% of retired respondents and 74% of all other respondents would like to see the fountain brought back while 44% of the retired and 35% of all others supported restoration of fishing.



**The Swans of Swan Lake**

Traditionally every summer the residents of Swan Lake Village have sponsored the installation of domesticated Mute Swans in Swan Lake. In 2020, due to Covid, the domesticated Mute Swans were not brought to Swan Lake. As a result, two wild Trumpeter Swans made Swan Lake their summer home. The two Trumpeters have been tagged and are part of a program to encourage restoration of the wild trumpeter swans in southern Ontario. Trumpeter Swans are native to Ontario while Mute Swans are not. The Mute Swans chase away Trumpeter Swans so they will not co-exist.

**Domestic Mute Swans (Orange Bill)**

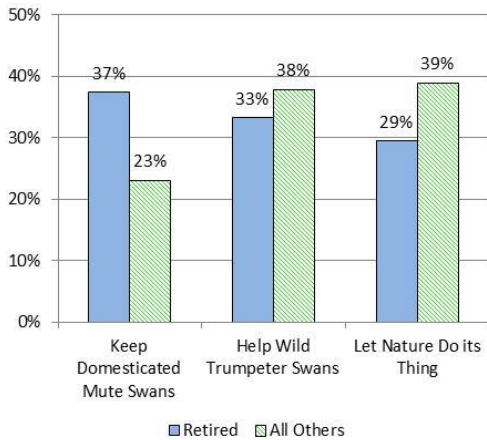


Courtesy of Ross Lunan

**Wild Trumpeter Swan (Black Bill)**



Courtesy of Don Fowler



70% of retired respondents would like to see either the Mute Swans (37%) or the Trumpeter Swans (33%) be supported while 29% of the retired respondents would prefer that we not get involved and let nature do its own thing.

61% of all other respondents would provide support to the swans but there is a greater preference for the settlement of Trumpeter Swans (38%). These respondents also had a greater preference (39%) for not getting involved.

**6) Friends of Swan Lake Park**

The Friends of Swan Lake Park are residents of Markham committed to saving Swan Lake and Swan Lake Park through environmental best practices. To solicit responses to the survey, 15 volunteers delivered 900 flyers to homes around Swan Lake Park plus email notices were sent to 650 homes in Swan Lake Village and to Amica. A special thank you to Deputy Mayor Don Hamilton for including notice in two of his weekly email updates to Markham residents and to Ward 5 Councillor Andrew Keyes for his continued support. Information on the issues facing Swan Lake and Swan Lake Park and the current City of Markham plans are available on our website at [www.friendsofswanlakepark.ca](http://www.friendsofswanlakepark.ca).

**Appendix A: Respondents Comments**
**#16) Do you have other areas of concern, suggestions or comments to share?**

Categorized by primary focus of the comments (with Respondent Number)

**Community Role**

360	My 'other' reasons for walking round the lake: bird and habitat watching, casual chance encounter with friends and a chat with new acquaintances, mood enhancing and so beneficial to individuals. Amica, Swan Lake Village residents deserve full maintenance of the lake and park, as do the residents of Markham itself.
359	The wetlands south of Swan Park Road need to be restored to a natural habitat for wildlife. The Williamson Road side area is highly sloped and does not lend itself to play areas or sports
355	It has been my life experience that it is almost impossible to reduce the popular of Canada Geese without drastic measures which could cause concern with residents who believe in preserving wildlife at all costs. The street i live on is right opposite the park and I pass it several times a week. I feel that if additional sports options are supported they should be built on the west side of Williamson where the existing tennis courts etc are now. I have only lived in Markham for 3 years but have lived in the TGA all my life. One of the things I am most proud of in Toronto, Durham and York Region is the green spaces and the numerous parks that are available to all the
333	Personally I would like to support Swan Lake Park being kept clean as possible while encouraging wildlife and especially birds. I am not in favour of swimming in the lake or of canoeing. There already is a children's playground in the park and I don't see the need for another one there, there are also green spaces and sports fields close by so I would be disappointed if any of it was converted to active playing fields/courts.
345	Go to the park for bird watching, id plants, reading
344	Go to the park to watch birds, ID plants, read, drive scooter
244	I would like to see the city do whatever it can to support the natural sustainability of wildlife. ABSOLUTELY NO FISHING!!!! I have seen fishing wire hanging from trees and floating on the lake. I think we need to do whatever we can to help wildlife thrive especially as their habitats are continually being encroached on. I do love seeing Romeo and Juliet every year.
209	Park space is invaluable in a city. As housing density increases what parks we save and maintain for future generations will become gold and diamonds for those generations.
188	Swan Lake park area encourages families to get out and enjoy nature. It is everyone's responsibility to get it at its best ability of Water - Air - and Land . I live behind the park and it gives me great pleasure to see people enjoy the Park at all it has to offer. Children playing - People walking their dogs - Seniors getting their daily exercises- Young riding their bikes - So what is wrong with getting our Town Representatives to make it the best they can. I often go through the park with my Garbage Bag and pick up stick and clean the park . I love Markham and Know the town will do the right thing for our ENVIRONMENT and its PEOPLE .
153	Swan Lake park should be maintained as a community park and not a recreational and tourist attraction as TooGood Pond is now. Human interaction should be kept to an extent which allows wildlife to flourish.

150	Keep the swan lake area in the nature way, only need to ensure it is safe to tour around the lake and able to access more shoreline.
119	My mom lives at Amica. The lake provides nature access to seniors along with attracting activity which she enjoys watching.
97	<p>It should be monitored more</p> <p>Large groups smoking up and making others nervous to walk</p> <p>Also lots of garbage and beer bottles always around</p> <p>I like it as a natural habitat to enjoy from our stressful lives and show kids some beautiful nature</p> <p>We have plenty of basketball and tennis courts and play areas for children and teens</p> <p>This is something we do not have a lot of in Markham</p> <p>To enjoy nature and there are lots of photographers that go and we should encourage more wildlife to come</p> <p>Not take it away by letting people canoe and swim</p> <p>This was a beautiful haven during the past year of Covid</p> <p>I walked every day after work to rejuvenate my mind and soul</p> <p>It was a blessing and would have been lost without it</p> <p>What a joy let spring was to see plants and wildlife return and the blue herons</p> <p>I got some amazing photos</p>
87	<p>I think everyone agree that Swan lake and the park near it is and should keep to be LOCAL, QUIET and NATURAL area. I would disagree any proposal to change it. We have swimming pool and lot of facilities in Connell Communication Center and other places(even very close to the lake) in our cities. I don't want to see a lot of people playing (sport, fishing, canoeing, children activities etc.) here. I don't want to see a lot of tourism. No need to create a new viewing deck or dock as the current one is always empty, and there are far enough space around the lake to view the lake. Also I don't agree to bring facility to sell ice cream here. It may bring more grabage and noises, and more worse, commercial activities to this natural area. It is a local park and small lake. Do we need to buy ice cream when we are walking in the park near our home?</p>
67	We need nature, not sports activities. Markham is losing our nature rapidly to developers! It's all about tax revenue !
49	<p>While walking past the new seniors home, there seems to be a large waterfront area. This would be an awesome backdrop for a festival during the summer to feature local artisans and/or musicians on a platform-type of stage. I think it'd be beautiful. While I don't intend for the area to become commercialized, it would be nice to connect the community and support local artists. The seniors in the new residence would have something entertaining within walking distance or even perhaps from the balcony of their residence or communal/party room.</p> <p>I hope my answers above don't contradict each other. I love and promote the natural space, but also think it'd be great to have tennis or basketball courts near Williamson. A look out on that side of the lake would also be wonderful!</p> <p>Lastly, to elaborate on one of my choices in your survey, I'd love the natural surroundings to be somewhat maintained from a safety standpoint (uneven/broken pathways used by many seniors), rails where there are steep inclines/declines (again for our seniors). It's been quite icy lately! Some of the benches were placed at various look out points, but in some areas, the brush has grown so much over the years that some benches literally face reeds or overgrown plants. So while I believe we should keep it as natural as possible, I do believe that there is a need for some maintenance.</p>



83	<p>I so appreciate the naturalness of the area. The park to the west is fine for families and children, teenagers to play, picnic etc. However I strongly encourage that the pond itself be left as natural as possible. I would not like to see parking and large groups of people descending on weekends to fish and swim. It is a beautiful natural habitat and let's leave it that way. Perhaps an ice cream stand for hot summer days but do not want to see a touristy atmosphere. It should be a place to walk and play and sit and look at nature. Period.</p>
57	<p>15 year resident within 10 minute walk. Can't believe what has recently transpired over the past few years.</p> <p>No fishing - I personally clean up all the garbage these people leave almost daily. They spend their entire days there and go home leaving garbage from food to hooks, fishing line, sun screen empty bottles, water bottles. It is dirty and unsafe for the swans, fish, ect. They actually leave bikes and dirty gloves. Awful.</p> <p>No cycling on Swan Lake grounds. People have no cycling etiquette and accidents are happening. This trail has been used for seniors and predominately adults. We need to encourage seniors to feel confident and safe to go for their daily very important walks to maintain and sometimes improve livelihoods. Especially during our ever changing landscape with Covid. The most vulnerable humans along with children. Our jobs to protect the elderly please by their senior living residents.</p> <p>I would ask for more benches for the seniors to enjoy the views to be with nature and talk to us that use this space for our walks, meditation and calmness. We are losing this space to accommodate the ever growing families. I have a 15 year old son and knew our options for his needs....Too good Pond, Milne, and all the other developments that we have built for communities primarily targeting families and more major developments in the works.. No further development on these grounds. Our Seniors and adults need our calm natural space.</p>
4	<p>It would be nice to have more spaces to allow a clear view of the lake. Tall grasses and shrubs obstruct the view in many places on the paths. There are even public benches that do not allow any view anymore other than the tall grasses between the lake and the paths...</p> <p>It would also be nice if the city cleared 1 - 2 feet of space on each side of the paths to allow walker to keep a safe distance and also provide people riding bikes more space to avoid hitting people walking,</p> <p>There are tennis and soccer fields in the park across the street (Williamson) already. This is very nice.</p>
8	<p>Stress is a contributing factor to poor health. Swan Park has been significant in these colour coded Covid-19 times in relieving a lot of the stress produced by cabin fever. It is my hope that we can work with nature to keep it healthy for all creatures' benefits even in post pandemic times.</p>

### Accessibility

345	Improved wheelchair and scooter accessibility needed, safer pathways
344	Improved wheelchair and scooter accessibility needed, safer pathways
146	<p>There is no safe way to cross Williamson Road from one park to the other. At the intersection of Williamson Road and Swan Park Road the road to the north not only curves away but also has a dip in it which prevents pedestrians as safe sight line. In addition the sidewalks direct pedestrians to this crossing point. This is an on going safety issue for all residents but for children, the elderly and for anyone requiring extra time to cross it is " an accident waiting to happen!" This is a well used park area by all, it is a space that even in its present state offers a variety of activities.</p> <p>There are few designated parking spaces.</p>
141	Love the park and walkways. My father lives in Amica and this area is his daily outing. He is in a wheelchair - so maintained, paved pathways are a must. I also come here with my son for bike riding (we used the playground when he was younger). It would be great if basketball and/or tennis were added as well.
72	I like it. Sometimes the bike paths and walking people are at odds. Not sure what the solution is.?
44	I would like to see the path kept clear during winter for wheelchair use.
19	Fix the walkway that runs behind Amica so walkers do not need to walk on roads or in parking lot.

### Park Use: Fishing/Canoeing/Swimming

307	Fishing should be banned as fishermen dispose of tackle in an irresponsible way causing harm to the birds and animals and creating bad smells.
339	Swan Lake should be taken care of but I disagree with fishing and canoeing/kayaking in the lake. It should be maintained as a natural habitat for the fish and wild life. The paths should also be maintained but kept natural as possible.
334	I disapprove of recreational activities for the water (swimming, canoeing, fishing) as these pose risks for lawsuits which the city does not need or want. Neither do I as a taxpayer.
325	Do not believe it desirable to have swimming/ boating on the lake.
213	I don't think swimming and boating of any kind are appropriate for Swan Lake.
293	In addition to canoes and kayaks would suggest no motorized conveyances allowed so paddle boards and such would also be included.
105	<p>I would prefer that swimming and canoeing on the lake not be allowed.</p> <p>There is already enough inappropriate activity on the lake that causes issues such as people wearing down the nature to gain access, feeding the geese and groups leaving garbage around the park.</p>

Park Environment

358	Keep it as natural as possible - it has been a great retreat during COVID and I plan on continuing to visit and explore the area with the children, a natural playground.
316	This is a wonderful natural wildlife habitat which should be supported by all the community. Where else can you go for a lovely walk, see the birds and wildlife, for senior citizens who live here, We cannot cover all the space we have left with more houses and condos.
314	I get concerned about how fishing, canoeing & swimming in the lake could get out of hand if not properly monitored. More manpower to monitor these activities increases costs to maintain appropriate activities & behaviours. This can & will become prohibitive for the city. Therefore, improving water quality is imperative for marine & bird life and human enjoyment. Ideally, to have improved water quality, to support natural wildlife of all kinds, can allow all to enjoy the beauty of nature at its best. Too much human activity can & will destroy the natural beauty of the lake & park if canoeing, fishing & swimming is allowed. There are so many now, who do not respect the surrounding area. It is appalling. No one reads the signs. Signs are all in the wrong locations! The lake & wildlife is to be viewed. It must be respected for its natural beauty & hopefully the city monitors the health of the water for many years to come!!
315	We live in such a busy world that it is like Mana from Heaven when you get the chance to relax near water and a natural Park with a few animals like Birds and Fish and Turtles.
286	Thank you for your concerns. The park is a place for residents of Amica and Swan Lake to enjoy nature, therefore I feel that it should be clean but also left as natural as possible so that it is a quiet haven for visitors.
227	Il think that the Swan Lake area should be allowed to become a natural wetland.
139	Swan Lake is a beautiful tranquil setting where peace can be found, whatever the town decides they should try and maintain these qualities for its visitors and the wildlife that inhabit the area.
68	We have been living in Greensborough since 2003 (phase 1 of the new homes). We love Swan Lake and the wooded path because it's a natural area where we can enjoy a quiet stroll several times a week. It is an escape where we enjoy connecting with nature - not people. The very last thing we want is for it to get developed further, and become busy with activities. There are already so many places for youth to play in the neighbourhood. Leave Swan Lake and the wooded path as-is so adults and seniors can enjoy it too or you will push them out. Stop and think about how the quality of life will change for people who need serene, quiet nature near their home. It will be a very sad day if it becomes a park-like attraction in any way. We are open to some sort of water quality improvement if necessary (for wildlife and the ecosystem) otherwise -that's it. Please do NOT develop our beloved Swan Lake and Park or the appeal of living by it will be greatly reduced for many long-time residents.
47	Leave the area as a natural preserve
46	I think the park should be left as a natural area. There is a playground area for children already and open spaces for ball playing. Everything else should be left as natural as possible. Was very happy to see the path extended around the pond in front of Amica

39	Swan lake is important, but the entire watershed that runs from behind SBA and continues east to Swan lake needs to be considered in this planning. All are connected as wildlife like to travel (and so do the weeds).
35	I would love to see many/more flowers and gardens, and maybe even a bridge or gazebo somewhere. There are too many geese and swans leaving bird poop everywhere which is part of the reason why I never go there anymore (aside from the pandemic of course). I think the park should be groomed with a balance of sustainability and aesthetics. The space is lovely but the park is very ugly and drab. It should be as nice and open as berczy park.
25	We walk the area because it's semi natural, green, peaceful and calming. We also bring family members and friends to the park to show off our natural spaces and wildlife. If you allow more human recreation then we will not be using the park and it will be like most other parks in the city. Others we've taken there agree that it's special because of the minimal human interference and recreation
10	Let it be wild, thats what I love about it- don't interfere with nature at least in swan lake area. By inviting more humans to this area, you are going to commit crime of pushing natural habitat out of this beautiful area.
107	Would like to see more monitoring of the turtle trapping and signs posted stating it's not allowed. The water quality should be improved for all wildlife not just for plants, fish and recreational activities. Would like to see a program put in place to remove the invasive plants and native plants planted. The west side of the lake should be left in a natural state for the benefit of supporting wildlife habitat and conservation. Would prefer to see native Trumpeter swans as compared to introduced non native Mute Swans

## Water Quality

221	I did not answer #12 in the survey as I was not comfortable with the wording of any of the options. I would have strongly agreed to "clear water, a wide range of plants and fish; sport fishing
151	I continue to be most concerned about the water quality of the lake. I like the natural feel of the park and it does support a wide variety of birds.
63	Keep the lakes natural as much as possible
58	Why does the choice for clean lake water and a healthy wildlife environment have to be linked with the possibility of swimming and canoeing? Neither activities belong in this quiet refuge and both present strong concerns for safety and overuse.
15	Make the water swimmable
12	The water quality should be number one priority in order to get the fish population back then fishing activities for the kids can begin

Birding Destination

26	<p>In spring and fall the wooded area on the north west side of the lake hosts a very healthy migration of song birds. Local birders "flock" to the area to respectfully observe these beautiful warblers in a very natural setting. Care must be taken to ensure a healthy natural habitat for migration and local song birds and water fowl should be an essential element in this planning of the outcomes. This is near Williamson so care must be taken not to over develop that park area to the detriment of the natural wooded area and birds that use it. Birding is an additional important outcome to plan for. Also a healthy habitat for the Painted and Snapping turtle population is important. Management of Canada Geese is likely necessary at the same time.</p>
308	<p>The water level in Swan Lake dropped noticeably over the last year which is another cause for concern. Swan Lake is a destination for Birders in the area. The nature and wildlife must be a priority in any decisions that are made. Thank you.</p>
292	<p>Many migratory birds flock to Swan Lake in the Spring. We should support this site as a stopping off place for them. They seem to like the Manitoba Maples which should not be removed without a study of their importance.</p>
73	<p>A wide range of birds nest in Swan Lake and MANY more - dozens of species - migrate north and south through the park during spring and fall. We know because we photograph them. As well, many Heron (Great Blue Heron, Black Crowned Night Heron, Green Heron), Osprey and Gulls feed from the lake and nest elsewhere. If we infringe on the existing habitat by installing boat ramps, additional walkways, decks, remove plants, etc. the birds will go elsewhere. Then we'll have something akin to Mount Joy Pond, sterile and unappealing.</p>
66	<p>Swan Lake is a gem. Do you know that over 200 different birds along with ducks &amp; waterfowl return there every Spring? Do you know 21 different warblers stop there for a few days or nest &amp; breed in those trees? That Black-crowned Night Herons breed there, along with Green Herons &amp; Great Blue Herons visit the pond from their rookery high in the trees on Taunton Rd? Have you ever looked up in the trees at Swan Lake to see two Baltimore Oriole nests that two breeding pair build there every year? Have you seen the Osprey, Belted Kingfishers or Caspian Terns that dive for fish in that pond? Have you seen the turtles, garter snakes, frogs, foxes, possums, raccoons, mink &amp; muskrats there? Most people only notice Romeo &amp; Juliet the Mute Swans and turtles on a log or the Koi &amp; Carp in the pond because most people are rushing through on their power walk or riding bikes and don't have a clue the nature that surrounds them there. Do you know that Swan Lake is a birding Hot Spot &amp; that people from all over Ontario come to photograph the birds &amp; wildlife there? You will not have flocks of Trumpeter Swans and will only see 2-3 at the most on one pond. I have never seen more than 3 at Reesor Pond North, Reesor Pond South, Milne Conservation, or any water catch basin in Markham or Durham Region in 12 yrs. I record their yellow wing tag numbers whenever I'm able to read them and send that info to organizations tracking them in Ontario &amp; North America. We have two Swans native to Canada the Trumpeter &amp; Tundra Swans. Mute Swans are the invasive species like the carp, koi, and turtles at Swan Lake.</p>

40	<p>Swan Lake is a natural gathering place for migratory birds. My husband and I walk the park daily during the spring to see birds that are on route to their breeding spots such as chestnut sided warblers,, canada warber and other warbler species, tanagers and indigo buntings, northern parula , We have seen throughout the year black crowned night herons, blue herons and orioles as well as coomon species such as chicadees, and sparrows. The warer should be cleaned up to attract more waterfowl and provide thm a resting slot as they migrate to their breeding grounds. Thus is very important to me. please consider stopping the removal of turtles as we saw happen this summer, there were very few as compared to previous years. Basketball courts etc are available at other parks close by. There is a splash pad and playground area a reading near the lake. We have very few natural green spaces around our neighbourhood. This one needs to be protected but the water needs to be cleaner. Many elderly adults at Amica enjoy a quiet strole around the lake or view it from their patios/ Windows.</p>
6	<p>A lot of new buildings built beside the lake and many trees are lost, also all around the lake are opened to access. My concern is that lots of birds (including migration birds) may lost their habitat, and they will not coming any more.</p>
32	<p>Swan Lake park is a treasure that we need to protect. Each year a wide variety of rare birds migrate through this park and it provides very important habitat for these birds. This is a unique place that wildlife really depends on, removing natural spaces in favour of more recreational activity, will put untold stress on wildlife and they really need this, they depend on it. I would be happy to provide more information on the types of birds that are seen each year at Swan Lake park, it really is very impressive and a great jewel for Markham. Over 138 different species have been recorded in the park ( source: eBird.org ).</p>
29	<p>Swan Lake is a unique jewel in Markham. We have so few green spaces that have such a high impact on the environment around us. Swan Lake is a key migration stop for birds that require a safe and suitable place to restore their energy reserves in the Spring. It is an area that gets frequent common migrants and unique rare species that is so vital for the health of bird populations. During Spring Migration you will see many birders and casual nature lovers observing the many species on a daily basis. Ebird is a good reference site where you can see the vast diversity and sheer numbers of birds that are spotted every year. Swan Lake is a wonderful environmentally sensitive area that has a unique and critical role in our city. I would be happy to provide additional information on the impact of this special park and its impact on the environment, wildlife and the people in our city.</p>
24	<p>I would like to point out the thriving biodiversity that relies on Swan Lake Park each year. This park is a refuge for migrating birds and this habitat needs to be protected. Almost thirty species of warblers have been recorded in the park, along with vireos, thrushes, sparrows and many other species. I have personally seen almost 100 species of birds. This park has also hosted a migrant Eastern Whip-poor-will, a threatened species in Ontario and a Golden-winged Warbler, a species of special concern in Ontario. Additionally, there has been an Audubon's subspecies Yellow-rumped Warbler. This subspecies' range is in western North America, and this record has represented what seems to me to be the first record for York region. I believe that it is extremely important that this park continues to be the natural refuge that it currently is. Please reach out to me if you would like any more information regarding the importance of Swan Lake to migrating birds.</p>

Turtle Poaching

301	I am extremely concerned about the illegal removal of the turtles which used to be plentiful in the lake.
179	The turtle poachers need to be stopped and fined or put in jail. They have stolen hundreds of turtles and have altered certain parts of the lake to provide areas where turtles will likely sunbathe at which time they will capture the creatures.
163	I'm concerned about "poaching" and exportation of turtles. They need our support including extraordinary financial penalties for people caught doing so. This may require wildlife patrols
354	<p>Most people enjoy the forested or naturalized area of the park. This has the most use and the most traffic. Open spaces are not used that much (this could be confirmed by a headcount). Since the forested area especially on the north shore attracts the most people, you might consider answering the demand and extending forested areas on the northeast and west sides of the lake. This would also take the pressure off of the limited forested/naturalized area on the north side (which is significantly degraded and were it not for half a dozen locals, would be littered with hundreds of bottles of alcohol, and debris from BBQs). I would recommend permanent park wardens to regulate the park for illegal consumption of alcohol, drugs and fires. Also, as we know, organized poaching of turtles in Markham has been thriving for decades. The poachers are linked to human trafficking and guns - these are criminal gangs and the penalties for trading illegally in endangered species is significant. They have had free mobility in Markham for decades, profiting in the illegal international trade. An Ontario painted turtle sells for \$1,800.00 on the international market according to the Environment Canada officer I spoke to (Mr. Lupert). These criminals need to be charged and driven out by force. I would recommend a park Warden or private security company on site this Spring and summer to enforce our federal and provincial laws (they apply to private property as well)</p> <p>is very small relative to the number of people who use it now, and projections for the future.</p>
136	people are taking away the turtles which have lived at swan lake for many decades. please acknowledge this by putting up signs banning turtle removal and require provincial or city personnel to do what they can to discourage this practice. this is interfering with nature and taking away the enjoyment of interaction with the animals found here. soon they may be extinct without some sort of support from the public.
348	Stop the turtle poachers from illegally taking almost all of the turtles from the lake.

**Park Amenities**

353	More accessibility and opportunities to see the lake from all sides of the lake. On the Williamson road side - missed connection to the lake.
348	I go to park to take pictures of nature and wildlife. View of lake from benches on path along the north east shore beside Swan Lake Village - grasses and vegetation have blocked the original view of the lake.
347	The circle at the entrance to Swan Lake Village needs to be redesigned to join Amica and Swan Lake Village. Should be used for Nature Clubs
341	Install low deck for paddle boat rentals (canoes & kayaks). Water level. A small number of fish would help the environment of the lake but too many fish could bring unwanted birds (cormorants).
330	Limited parking
318	Like European civilised natural settings to be enjoyed we should consider an inn like restaurant setting, perhaps year round. Canadian settings always very sterile & devoid of the human/natural appreciation ... lattes, desserts, lunches...especially in winter .. how civilised & conducive to community enjoyment! I'm always aghast at seeing one bench, few plantings in neighbourhood parks.
300	Many of the scrub trees around the shore of the lake should be trimmed or removed. These trees are getting too tall and block the view of the lake. If the area is left to grow wild, the woods will become an area where teenagers will go to party or the drug dealers will use it for their illicit activities.
250	The walkway around the lake should be continuous especially at the new Amica development.
218	I hope there should be a circular walking trail so people can walk along the lake side to enjoy the scenery, sunset etc.
214	Use open areas to organize fitness activities for seniors Install fitness equipment in open areas for adults and seniors
184	I feel there is enough playground area and equipment available near swan lake park and one further up on Bur Oak
127	Provide toilets near the playground.
114	I believe there is enough space in the overall Swan Lake Park area to support adding the basketball/tennis courts as well as adding new natural elements to increase the number of trees/vegetation in the park. The addition of the pathways and some benches is a great step forward in making this a valued area for residents to enjoy the park but I believe more can be done to add additional elements to make the space enjoyable for younger people (twens/teens) as well. I think adding basketball courts is a good idea for this age group. Adding these elements though should not detract from the nature retreat that Swan Lake is.
95	Perhaps a small concession stand - ice cream, coffee, tea, drinks
92	Make all walkways hard surface. Consider winter maintenance to allow safe use of walkways.



37	<p>The walking trail around Swan Lake needs to be improved and completed so that it becomes a path that connects full circle (ie. so people can walk or bike continuously in a full circle around the lake). There needs to be parking available, as simply stopping on the side of the road where there is no safe / designated parking area is dangerous.</p> <p>The playground area for children needs to be improved. The play structure does not provide for much fun or play. In keeping with the natural beauty of the area, perhaps an Earthscape Play / adventurous play type of playground or multiple type of play areas along the trail paths would be best.</p> <p>The splash pad area needs more mature shade tree areas and flat areas for parents / families to have "stations" nearby while they supervise children playing.</p> <p>Mature shade trees, especially to find rest from the hot sun in the summertime would be very much appreciated.</p>
3	<p>Could the open field in front of Swan Park Road (beside the playground) be made a temporary ice hockey rink in the winter?</p>
343	<p>Finish the walk way on south side of lake.</p>
86	<p>Always make it a multiple used facilities, such as tennis and pickle ball combined together.</p>
293	<p>Basketball courts and pickleball courts should be lit with timers so the lights go out at 10:30 or 11:00 PM. Concern would be potential vandalism which certainly initially might be address with quality cameras.</p>
199	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Enlarge pathways around the park</li> <li>* Prohibit cycling/ skating on the pathway</li> <li>* Increase signage to deter visitors from littering the grounds around the area and throw used coffee cups on shore line</li> <li>*Indicate names of plants and trees (Botanical and common names)</li> </ul>
195	<p>Where benches are placed, some perennial gardens, native flowering plants would enhance areas.</p>
192	<p>There are tennis courts [2] on the other side of Williamson Rd and sports ares beyond, so organized sports are not required at the Swan Lake Park. The turtles need to be given greater protection from poachers.</p>
109	<p>Parking must be improved for those who drive into the park. Since the removal of the empty lot beside the dock , people have started to use the private parking spots allocated for guests of Amica residents. This is a huge problem for those of us with family members living in swan lake AMica. Please address this parking problem ASAP. Perhaps a few visits by our by law officers would alleviate this problem.</p> <p>Swimming and water activities are concerning . Will the City be providing life guards if this becomes a reality? All My kids were employed by the city as life guards and swim instructors. Safety for all water activities are paramount</p>
100	<p>Wider path, maybe designated lanes to avoid collisions. How about a store for a ice cream? A zamboni for smoothing out the ice in the winter?</p>
14	<p>Yes,you should put gates around the lakes so that no one will trip and fall in the lake.</p>

7	I would like to see more colors in the park like planting flowers in some open areas along Williamson Rd. and at the far end of Swan Park Rd. Also, a bike lane would be great for the biker and helps to avoid accident.
66	<p>I have lived in Markham 45 yrs. and have photographed birds &amp; wildlife for 12 yrs. now at Swan Lake. I hope to see it left in it's natural state. For such a small area it attracts a lot of different birds and there are so many other options at other parks for people who want a place that they can picnic and play sports at or a place to swim, but there are few options in the Village of Markham that's a quiet spot to enjoy nature. I get tired of picking up garbage there or seeing garbage cans overturned &amp; dumped and beer bottles and cans thrown in the amongst the trees and ashes from a campfire that were set in the evening by kids sitting in the dark drinking beer there.. Will there be washrooms? There are at Toogood Pond, but they're rarely open for the public to use, which defeats the purpose of having them. Available washroom facilities at parks are one thing lacking in Markham etc. I always find washroom facilities when I go photographing birds in Toronto or Scarborough Parks and all around Durham Region.</p> <p>Maybe the money would be better spent providing washroom facilities at all parks that currently have baseball diamonds &amp; soccer fields etc. instead of building another tennis court or basketball court in Markham without washroom facilities and leaving Swan Lake in its natural state.</p>

### Park Maintenance

356	I would strongly support an organized/volunteer garbage pick up by the community. The amount of waste in Swan Park, waking trails, and natural areas is out of control. I also find that the people who are fishing the lake tend to leave a lot of garbage as well. That is consistent with the wetlands immediate to the west toward Markham Road as well.
248	water should be improved. Cleanup garbage. Remove some of the reads along shore line that overtake the lake. No fishing no boats no swimming.
247	In the past I have seen people through garbage in the smaller pond to the north. Perhaps dredging these water areas needs to be done.
245	I would like to see a few more areas cleared of shrubs, etc., to enable better visibility of the lake and water fowl. It probably isn't feasible but I am leery of walking on pathways through the park in the winter, worried about ice patches and fear of falling as I usually walk alone.
238	On our first walk around this supposed 'Green Space' we were shocked by the debris left by people who've walked through this area. There should be an organized attempt to clean up the garbage surrounding Swan Lake.
232	I mentioned pathways. With the pandemic, and likely around for quite a while, even when it is over,, I believe the pathway around the lake should be cleared nd made safe for winter walkers. I take as my example, my hometown, Ottawa, where the walking areas are kept clear in winter, as so many are walking in the Covid days for exercise.
226	Needs better garbage pick up schedule and heavy fine on trash dumping
215	Since the basin in which the lake sits was used as a depository for old refrigerators, freezers and other items in the 80's and 90's, a one time dreg operation is required to remove these toxic items.

191	If the drains on the roads within Swan Lake empty into the lake stop using the high levels of salt on the roads. Should the lake be dredged?
149	Pathways should be maintained in the winter. Some repaving of the paths needs to happen to deal with the upheavals.
124	The new Amica construction has been dumping styrofoam construction debris into Swan Lake. Why haven't they been held responsible?
101	Clear and maintain walkway all around the lake.
54	Clean up the bricks dumped at the North west corner of the lake
50	There is a very, very bad problem with trash and littering in and around the lake.
43	Keep area clean with regular garbage & recycling receptacles and collection.
38	Right now you can not walk around Swan Lake because of the swan excrement all over the walkways and entrance to the area. It is unsafe for our grandchildren which is quite a shame because it is a nice place to take them for a walk. Even the sidewalks across the street are a mess! Very disheartening.
348	Garbage should be removed from bins more often. A few more bins are needed at the top of the hill (lookouts) and at the park bench at the end of the path running down from the hill beside the shoreline.

### City of Markham Responsibilities

305	The Swan Lake Improvement program is proceeding at a slower than necessary rate. I urge the City of Markham pursue in earnest 1) accelerated water improvement plan for sustainable wildlife, fish life, and plant life 2) the establishment of long term water quality guidelines for Swan Lake; and, 3) a long term Fish Management program for Swan Lake.
291	Illegal Drug Activities (selling and buying) of Narcotics take place in certain areas of the Park - noticeably close to the Swan Lake Village residents access gate on the North End. This is most prevalent in Summer months, and involve school age boys and girls. Markham Council should require By-Law Enforcement Officers to patrol regularly.
207	Why not ask competing Real Estate firms with strong vested interests in the area to make application with formal suggestions/plans to visually improve the park over the long term? If their plans are approved their ensuing hard costs would be at THEIR expense (both short and long term) then commensurately rewarded with significant but tasteful park signage acknowledging their contributions. This is a win-win strategy as presumably their investment should positively affect local real estate values --and their ensuing real estate commissions.
186	I would support the investment to restore Swan Lake and Swan Lake Park for a less amount of money perhaps \$50,000 per year to restore and maintain the area.
130	Since the Lake was central to the area development and the City owns the Lake then I don't see how Markham can "walk away" from responsibility to maintain the lake.
53	The City should invest in these type of projects without using cost as a reason not to to them. Nature has huge benefits to the community beyond cost analysis. This has been proved by the overwhelming numbers of people using the trail system during Covid. Markham's focus on lower tax rates is short sighted, money invested in parks is well spent.

## Appendix B: Wildlife of Swan Lake Park

Swan Lake Park is home to a rich diversity of wildlife. But this wildlife is threatened by the deteriorating water conditions in Swan Lake and the erosion of sustainable terrestrial habitat in Swan Lake Park due to the unchecked intrusion of invasive plants.



In a report dated April 18, 2018, City of Markham's Wildlife Services, notes that Markham's interactions with wildlife are guided by the following principles:

1. Wildlife has intrinsic, ecological, economic, social and cultural value.
2. Markham residents desire healthy and sustainable wildlife populations.
3. The City will endeavour to identify and protect natural heritage systems and wildlife habitats to conserve biodiversity for future generations.
4. The City recognizes the importance of planning and managing natural heritage resources at a landscape/watershed scale in order to provide for wildlife connectivity, a diversity of habitat types and sizes, and to consider water-related functions.

Friends of Swan Lake Park are asking the City to address the deteriorating conditions in Swan Lake and Swan Lake Park immediately. They can start by engaging the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority ("TRCA") to undertake a biological assessment of the aquatic and terrestrial habitats in Swan Lake and Swan Lake Park. This important foundation work will set the stage for development of a meaningful protection and restoration program for the Swan Lake and Swan Lake Park.

**Swan Lake Park Bird Sightings Recorded on ebird.org March 14, 2021**

1	Alder Flycatcher	41	Chestnut-sided Warbler
2	American Black Duck	42	Chimney Swift
3	American Coot	43	Chipping Sparrow
4	American Crow	44	Clay-colored Sparrow
5	American Golden-Plover	45	Cliff Swallow
6	American Goldfinch	46	Common Grackle
7	American Pipit	47	Common Loon
8	American Redstart	48	Common Merganser
9	American Robin	49	Common Raven
10	American Tree Sparrow	50	Common Tern
11	Baltimore Oriole	51	Common Yellowthroat
12	Bank Swallow	52	Cooper's Hawk
13	Barn Swallow	53	Dark-eyed Junco
14	Bay-breasted Warbler	54	Domestic goose sp. (Domestic type)
15	Bay-breasted/Blackpoll Warbler	55	Double-crested Cormorant
16	Belted Kingfisher	56	Downy Woodpecker
17	Black-and-white Warbler	57	Downy/Hairy Woodpecker
18	blackbird sp.	58	Eastern Kingbird
19	Blackburnian Warbler	59	Eastern Phoebe
20	Black-capped Chickadee	60	Eastern Whip-poor-will
21	Black-crowned Night-Heron	61	Eastern Wood-Pewee
22	Blackpoll Warbler	62	Empidonax sp.
23	Black-throated Blue Warbler	63	European Starling
24	Black-throated Green Warbler	64	Field Sparrow
25	Blue Jay	65	flycatcher sp. (Tyrannidae sp.)
26	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	66	Fox Sparrow
27	Blue-headed Vireo	67	Gadwall
28	Blue-winged Teal	68	Golden-crowned Kinglet
29	Blue-winged Warbler	69	Golden-winged Warbler
30	Brown Creeper	70	goose sp.
31	Brown Thrasher	71	Gray Catbird
32	Brown-headed Cowbird	72	Gray-cheeked Thrush
33	Bufflehead	73	Great Blue Heron
34	Cackling Goose	74	Great Crested Flycatcher
35	Canada Goose	75	Greater Scaup
36	Canada Warbler	76	Greater White-fronted Goose
37	Cape May Warbler	77	Greater Yellowlegs
38	Caspian Tern	78	Greater/Lesser Yellowlegs
39	Catharus sp.	79	Green Heron
40	Cedar Waxwing	80	gull sp.

**Swan Lake Park Bird Sightings Recorded on ebird.org March 14, 2021**

81	Hairy Woodpecker	120	Rock Pigeon
82	Hermit Thrush	121	Rose-breasted Grosbeak
83	Herring Gull	122	Ruby-crowned Kinglet
84	Hooded Merganser	123	Ruby-throated Hummingbird
85	Horned Grebe	124	Ruddy Duck
86	Horned Lark	125	Scarlet Tanager
87	House Finch	126	Sharp-shinned/Cooper's Hawk
88	House Sparrow	127	Snow Goose
89	House Wren	128	Solitary Sandpiper
90	Indigo Bunting	129	Song Sparrow
91	Killdeer	130	Spotted Sandpiper
92	Least Flycatcher	131	Swainson's Thrush
93	Magnolia Warbler	132	swallow sp.
94	Mallard	133	Swamp Sparrow
95	Mallard/American Black Duck	134	Tennessee Warbler
96	Merlin	135	tern sp.
97	Mourning Dove	136	Tree Swallow
98	Mourning Warbler	137	Trumpeter Swan
99	Nashville Warbler	138	Turkey Vulture
100	Northern Cardinal	139	Veery
101	Northern Flicker	140	Virginia Rail
102	Northern Parula	141	warbler sp. (Parulidae sp.)
103	Northern Rough-winged Swallow	142	Warbling Vireo
104	Northern Waterthrush	143	White-breasted Nuthatch
105	Orange-crowned Warbler	144	White-crowned Sparrow
106	Osprey	145	White-throated Sparrow
107	Palm Warbler	146	Willow Flycatcher
108	peep sp.	147	Wilson's Snipe
109	Philadelphia Vireo	148	Wilson's Warbler
110	Pied-billed Grebe	149	Wood Duck
111	Pine Warbler	150	Yellow Warbler
112	Prairie Warbler	151	Yellow-bellied Flycatcher
113	Red-bellied Woodpecker	152	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
114	Red-breasted Merganser	153	Yellow-rumped Warbler
115	Red-breasted Nuthatch		
116	Red-eyed Vireo		
117	Redhead		
118	Red-tailed Hawk		
119	Ring-billed Gull		
120	Ring-necked Duck		

The following summary of terrestrial wildlife and insects in Swan Lake Park was compiled based on photographs and sightings of Don and Cindy Fowler, members of the Friends of Swan Lake Park.

	<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Photographed</b>
<b>Mammals</b>			
1	Beaver		
2	Black Squirrel		2019
3	Coyote		
4	Eastern Chipmunk	Tamias striatus	2007-2019
5	Eastern Cottontail Rabbit		2007-2019
6	Grey Squirrel		2019
7	Mink		
8	Muskrat		
9	Raccoon	Procyon lotor	2007-2019
10	Red Fox		2014-2019
11	Red Squirrel		2019
12	Skunk (very young)		2019
<b>Turtles</b>			
1	Eastern Midland Painted Turtle		2007-2019
2	Large unidentified turtle		2019
3	Red-eared Slider		2012-2019
4	Snapping Turtle		2007-2019

	<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Photographed</b>
<b>INSECTS</b>			
1	Bald Faced Hornet		2017-2019
2	Black Blowfly		2018
3	Black Saddlebags Dragonfly		2019
4	Black-tipped Darner Dragonfly	Aeshna Tuberculifera	2017
5	Bumble Bee		2007-2019
6	Cabbage White Butterfly		2018
7	Canada Darner Dragonfly		2019
8	Carolina Grasshopper	Dissosteira Carolina	2019
9	Carpenter Bee		2014-2019
10	Common Whitetail Dragonfly		2017-2019
11	Eastern Amber Dragonfly		2019
12	Eastern Black Swallowtail Butterfly		2019
13	Familiar Bluet Damselfly		2018-2019
14	German Yellow Jacket Wasp	Vespula Germanica	2017
15	Great Black Wasp		2019
16	Green Blowfly		2018-2019
17	Honey Bee		2016-2019
18	Japanese Beetle		2017-2019
19	Large White Butterfly		2019
20	Monarch Butterfly		2007-2019
21	Mustard White Butterfly		2016-2018
22	Narrow-headed Marsh Fly	Helophilus fasciatus	2017
23	Orange Sulfur Butterfly		2018
24	Painted Lady Butterfly		2017-2019
25	Pecks Skipper Butterfly		2017-2019
26	Question Mark Butterfly		2018-2019
27	Red Admiral Butterfly		2017-2019
28	Red-legged Grasshopper		2019
29	Slender Spreadwing Damselfly		2019
30	Viceroy Butterfly		2017-2019
31	Western Conifer Seed bug	Leptoglossus Occidentalis	2019
32	Widow Skimmer Dragonfly		2019
33	Yellow-legged Mud-dauber	Sceliphron Caementarium	2019
34	Western Tiger Swallowtail Butterfly		2018 - SL Village



## Appendix C: Park Improvement Survey Questionnaire



March 2021

**Help Shape the Future of Swan Lake Park!**

In 2021, Markham Council will be discussing the long term goals for Swan Lake and Swan Lake Park. The results from this survey will be shared with Council, so this is an opportunity for you to help shape the future of both Swan Lake and Swan Lake Park.

**1) Are you a resident of Markham?**

- Yes  
 No

**If yes, where in Markham do you live? Choose one.**

- Swan Lake Village  
 Amica  
 Other, but within walking distance of the Park  
 Other, but far enough that I need to drive

**2) How would you describe your household?**

- Family with young children  
 Family, multi generations  
 Working adult(s) only  
 Retired adult(s) only

**3) Does anyone in your household face mobility challenges?**

- Yes  
 No

**4) Each year, how frequently do you visit the Park in the warm weather. Choose one.**

- Daily  
 At least once a week  
 At least once a month  
 Only once in a while  
 Never

**5) How do you typically get to the Park? Choose one.**

- Always walk  
 Usually walk  
 Always drive  
 Usually drive  
 Other

6) **Why do you visit the Park? Indicate any that apply to your household.**

- To walk the pathways
- To walk our dog
- To ride bikes
- To enjoy a few moments with nature
- To go to the viewing deck to see the swans, wildlife
- To go to the viewing deck to watch the sunset
- To relax on the benches and view the lake from the lookouts
- To take my children/grandchildren to the playground
- To picnic or meet with friends
- Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

7) **What areas need to be added or improved in Swan Lake Park?**

- Children's play areas
- Tennis/pickle ball play areas
- Basketball courts
- Pathways
- Fishing in the Lake
- Ability to access the lake shoreline
- Benches for viewing areas
- A new viewing deck or dock on the west side, near Williamson Road
- Ability to view the Lake
- Parking

8) **The original vision for Swan Lake Park included recreational activities that are not currently available.**

**Which of the following activities would you like to see in Swan Lake Park?**

- Swimming
- Canoeing and kayaking
- Sport fishing
- Ice skating
- Childrens Nature Camp
- Any others? Specify at end of survey.

9) **Markham has designated Swan Lake Park as a "Natural Spaces, Wildlife Places" park. What does this mean to you? Indicate if you agree or disagree.**

1) Strongly Agree      2) Agree      3) Disagree      4) Strongly Disagree

- The park should be primarily naturalized areas, minimal groomed areas
- The park should have more grass areas, more open areas for children to play
- The tall reeds around the lake should be removed to provide better views of the lake
- We should try to reduce the number of Canada Geese in the Park and Lake
- We should support and improve habitat for land and aquatic wildlife

10) **In 2020, two wild Trumpeter Swans, part of a province wide program to restore Trumpeter Swans to Ontario, made Swan Lake their summer home. If Trumpeter Swans adopt a lake as their home they may settle in flocks, regularly producing offspring. Traditionally Swan Lake Village has placed two domesticated Mute Swans in the lake. The Mute Swans tend to chase Trumpeters away so the lake will not support both.**

**What is your view with regard to the swans of Swan Lake. Choose only one.**

- I believe we should support programs that would encourage the wild Trumpeter Swans to settle in Swan Lake
- I would like to see the return of the domesticated Mute Swans each year
- I believe we should let nature unfold naturally and not get involved

**11) What should be done with the new park area along Williamson Road?**

- 1) Strongly Agree      2) Agree      3) Disagree      4) Strongly Disagree
- It should be left as open spaces
- It should be used for tennis/pickleball courts
- It should be used for basketball courts
- It should be naturalized

**12) What level of water quality would you like to see in Swan Lake? Rate each outcome.**

- 1) Desired Outcome      2) Acceptable Outcome      3) Bad Outcome      4) Indifferent
- Clear water; wide range of plants and fish; swimming and canoeing possible
- Moderately clear water; good range of plants & fish; canoeing; swimming if monitored
- Poor water clarity; limited range of plants and fish; no human interaction
- Water dark green; only a few plants and fish; no human interaction

**13) Due to concerns over the possible health risk due to signs of cyanobacteria in Swan Lake, the fountain was removed and fishing temporarily banned. Once water quality is improved should the City remove these bans?**

- 1) Strongly Agree      2) Agree      3) Disagree      4) Strongly Disagree
- The fountain should be brought back
- Fishing should be permitted again

**14) Swan Lake is a unique water body. It does not fall under the regulatory umbrella of the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority so there is no applicable environmental regulatory framework. Should there be a Stewardship Plan for Swan Lake Park?**

- 1) Strongly Agree      2) Agree      3) Disagree      4) Strongly Disagree
- As Steward of Swan Lake Park, Markham should establish a long term, sustainable Stewardship Plan recognizing the broader community and environmental role of Swan Lake and Swan Lake Park with management goals and responsibilities addressing all recreational and environmental elements.

**15) Markham Council is being asked to commit to a long term plan for the restoration of the water quality in Swan Lake. Preliminary estimates are that a sustainable plan for restoring and maintaining Swan Lake are in the order of \$1.5 - \$2.0 million over 20 years, or about \$75,000 - \$100,000 per year. The cost of restoring the land based elements has not been determined yet.**

- Is this a good use of city funds? Choose one.**
- I support the investment to restore Swan Lake and Swan Lake Park
- I believe there are better uses for the city's funds

**16) Do you have other areas of concern, suggestions or comments to share?**

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**17) If you would like to be kept up to date on the activities in Swan Lake Park, please give us your name and email (optional)**

Name

Email

**18) If you would like to be a volunteer with the Friends of Swan Lake Park, please give us your name and email (optional)**

Name

Email