

City of Kelowna

OPERATIONAL REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT OF MUNICIPAL BOATING FACILITIES

FINAL DRAFT

JANUARY 2023

URBAN SYSTEMS
#304-1353 ELLIS STREET,
KELOWNA, BC V1Y 1Z9

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SYSTEMS

OPERATIONAL REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT OF MUNICIPAL BOATING FACILITIES

FINAL DRAFT

PREPARED FOR:

City of Kelowna
1435 Water Street
Kelowna, BC V1Y 1J4

PREPARED BY:

Urban Systems Ltd.
304 – 1353 Ellis Street
Kelowna, BC V1Y 1Z9
Tel: (250) 762-2517

Prepared By: Natasha Elliott, P.Eng., PTOE
Transportation Engineer

DATE ISSUED:	June 13, 2022	Working Draft
	September 4, 2022	Draft
	December 16, 2022	Draft R1
	January 24, 2023	Final Draft

FILE: 0467.0534.01

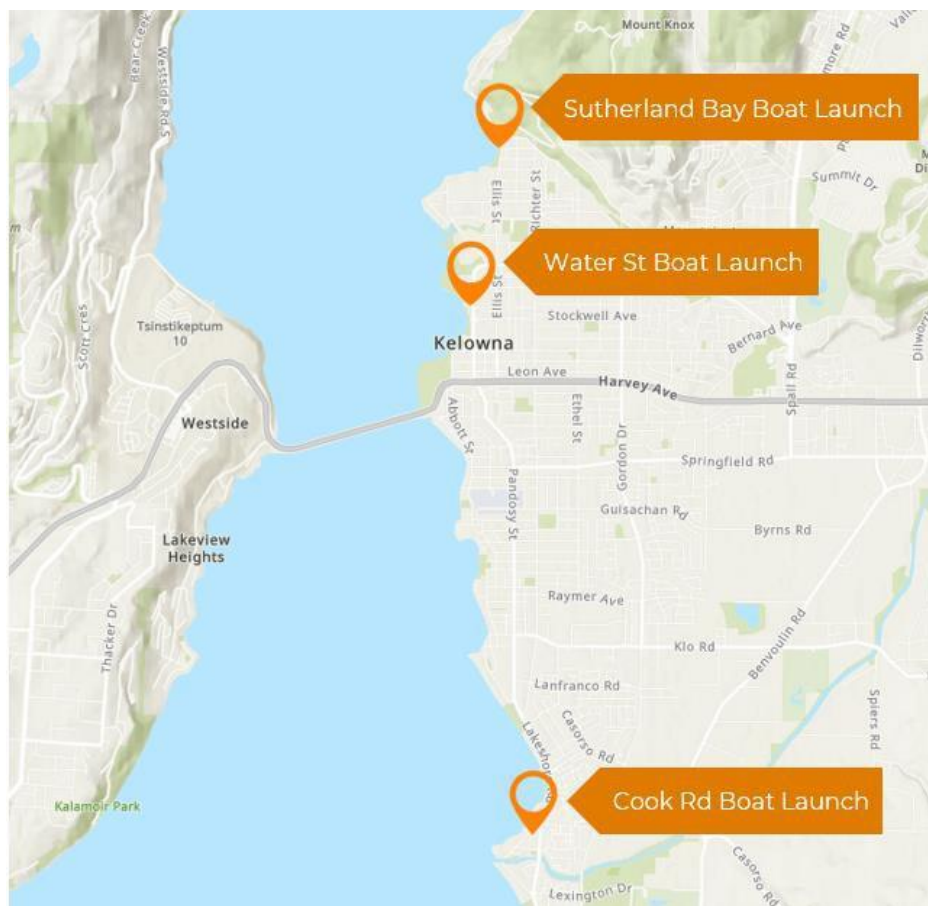
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Increasing marine traffic on Okanagan Lake has made the effective operation and management of boat launch facilities increasingly challenging. The City of Kelowna (the City) has retained Urban Systems Ltd. (Urban Systems) to complete an Operation Review and Assessment for the City's municipal boating facilities. The following report is a holistic review of the municipal boating facilities, associated amenities, and operating models, with the intent to provide a 15-year strategy to guide decision-making about improvements to existing facilities, planning for expansion of facilities, daily operations, and monetization and overall cost recovery.

The three primary boat launch facilities operated and managed by the City were reviewed as a part of this study: the Cook Road, Water Street and Sutherland Bay Park (Sutherland Bay) boat launches. All three boat launches service Okanagan Lake, as shown in **Figure 1.1** and described below. The boat launch in Cedar Creek Park was not reviewed as part of this study since it is very small and only suitable for launching small boats.

Figure 1.1: Study Boat Launch Locations



COOK ROAD

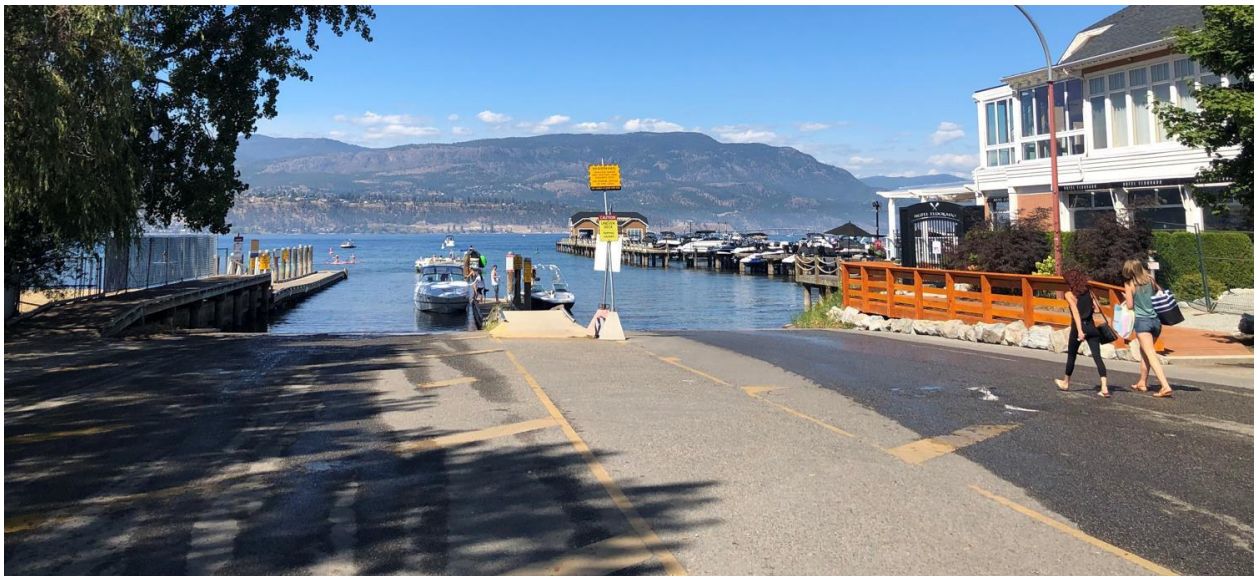
The Cook Road boat launch is situated between the Eldorado Hotel at the north, and residential property at the south. The launch is accessible from the Cook Road / Lakeshore Road intersection and exits onto Truswell Road. The launch features two ramps with capacity for four simultaneous launches, two docks, and areas for queuing and staging. A pay parking lot is located at the launch with capacity for 41 single vehicles and 52 vehicles with trailers. The 2022 summer season parking rates for single vehicles were \$1.25 per hour or \$10.50 per day while the rates for vehicles with trailers are \$5.25 per hour or \$26.50 per day.

The Cook Road launch was reconfigured in 2021 to improve traffic circulation. The changes included limiting vehicles to one-way traffic within the launch and parking areas, queueing area improvements, new staging and tying area, and separating single vehicle parking from trailer parking.

Upgrades to increase pedestrian accessibility and safety were also completed.

The Aqua Boat Club is located adjacent to the launch and provides both valet and boat sharing services at the Cook Road launch. The Aqua Boat Club valet service uses a machine lift to quickly launch and remove boats from Okanagan Lake.

Figure 1.2: Cook Road Boat Launch



WATER STREET

The Water Street boat launch is located at Kelowna's downtown waterfront, accessible from Water Street and situated between commercial properties, including restaurants and the Marriott Grand Okanagan Resort. The popular Waterfront Promenade pedestrian path crosses the launch site between the boat ramp and public parking, as shown below in **Figure 1.3**.

The launch features two ramps with capacity for four simultaneous launches, and three docks. Minimal space is provided for boat launch traffic, with no designated area for queueing or staging boats. A pay parking lot is also located at the launch site with a capacity of 18 single vehicles. In addition, there are eleven (11) short-term, 30-minute parking stalls for use by the public for loading/unloading of equipment onto watercraft. The 2022 summer season parking rates for single vehicles were \$1.25 per hour. No parking for vehicles with trailers is provided at this boat launch; however, some launch users have been observed parking vehicles with trailers at the Prospera Place parking lot operated by Impark. For oversized vehicles the parking rate is \$8 per hour, \$45 for 12 hours, or \$80 for 24 hours. These rates are substantially higher than the rates charged by the City at the Cook Road launch.

Boat rental, valet, and water taxi services use the Water Street launch through various companies with offices and boat storage located off-site.

Figure 1.3: Water Street Boat Launch (Google Maps, 2016)



SUTHERLAND BAY

The Sutherland Bay boat launch is located within Sutherland Bay Park, adjacent to Knox Mountain and is accessible at the Cambridge Avenue and Ellis Street intersection. Limited facilities are provided, and the launch is only suitable for small boats due to shallow water and sandbanks. Amenities include one unpaved ramp, which has capacity for two simultaneous launches and public washrooms. Docks are not provided. Unrestricted on-street parking is available along Ellis Street.

Figure 1.4: Sutherland Bay Park Boat Launch (Google Maps, 2016)



2.0 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Data collection and analysis was performed with the intent of understanding the challenges and opportunities at each launch site.

2.1 DATA SOURCES

The three data sources used in the launch analysis include:

- On-site counts and surveys
- Cook Road parking database
- Water Street video footage

Each data source is described in further detail below.

Please note that all data collected through the 2021 season may be underestimated due to the impacts of the COVID-19 Public Health Orders in place at that time and local wildfires, which likely resulted in lower-than-average boat launch user numbers.

ON-SITE DATA COLLECTION

On-site data collection was conducted in August 2021. The data collection dates are summarized below in **Table 2.1**.

Table 2.1: On-site Data Collection Dates

Date	Location	Weather
Wednesday, August 18 th , 2021 3pm-8pm (5 hours)	Cook Road, Water Street	Sunny, High of 27° C, Calm
Friday, August 20 th , 2021 3pm-8pm (5 hours)	Sutherland Bay	Sunny, High of 27° C, Windy
Saturday, August 28 th , 2021 12pm-5pm (5 hours)	Cook Road, Water Street	Sunny, High of 26° C, Calm
Sunday, August 29 th , 2021 12pm-5pm (5 hours)	Sutherland Bay	Sunny, High of 30° C, Calm

The on-site data collection provided counts of the number of boat launch users, in addition to surveying users at the launch ramps and queues, when possible. A total of 93 launch users were surveyed.

COOK ROAD PARKING DATA

The City provided Urban Systems access to payment transactions at the Cook Road boat launch parking lot, which were used to determine long-term demand trends. The payment transaction data includes dates, times, and durations from 2018 to 2021. The Cook Road parking lot was closed for upgrades between October 2020 and May 2021. Prior to the upgrades, the lot configuration combined single vehicles and vehicles with trailers.

The new configuration includes two separate lots for single vehicles (Lot 618A) and vehicles with trailers (Lot 618B). Additionally, parking fees for vehicles with trailers increased to \$5/hour

or \$25/day following the upgrades. It is assumed that vehicle with trailer parking demand closely represents launch demand since parking alternatives near the launch are limited.

WATER STREET VIDEO DATA

The City provided Urban Systems access to camera footage at the Water Street launch. Four days of launch counts were completed using the camera footage, chosen based on parking patterns at the Cook Road launch, as summarized below in **Table 2.2**.

Table 2.2: Water Street Video Dates

Date	Condition (Based on Cook Rd Data)	Weather
Thursday, July 8 th , 2021	Typical Weekday	Sunny, High of 25° C, Calm
Saturday, July 10 th , 2021	Typical Weekend	Sunny, High of 27° C, Calm
Sunday, July 18 th , 2021	Busy Weekend	Sunny, High of 28° C, Calm
Friday, July 23 rd , 2021	Busy Weekday	Sunny, High of 29° C, Calm

2.2 DATA TRENDS

The data described above was used to determine the following boat launch demand and observations.

2.2.1 GENERAL TRENDS

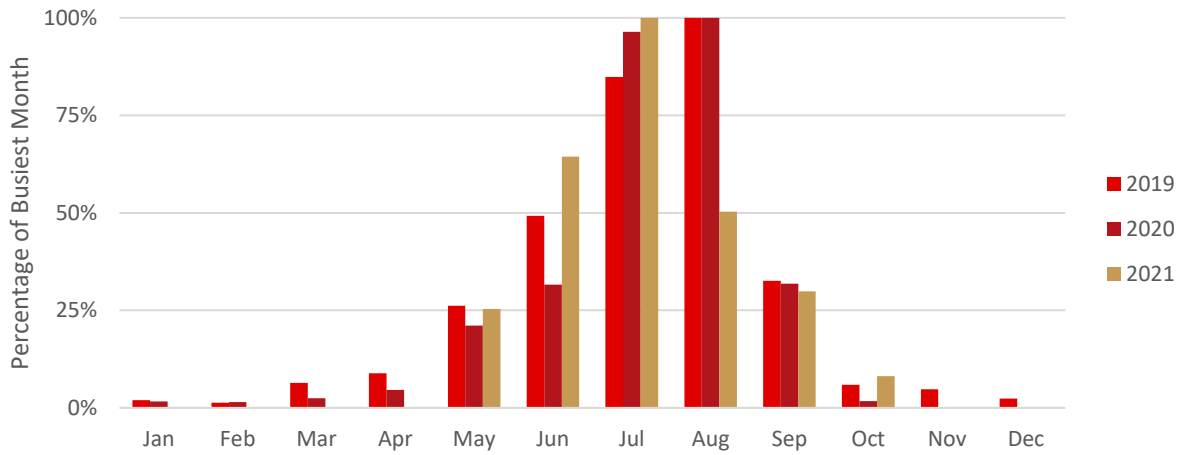
Seasonality, user location, and launch duration are applicable to all launch locations, as described in the following section.

SEASONALITY

Seasonal launch demand between 2019 and 2021 is shown below in **Figure 2.1**. Launch seasonality was derived from parking payment transactions at Cook Road; however, it is assumed to be applicable to all launch locations.

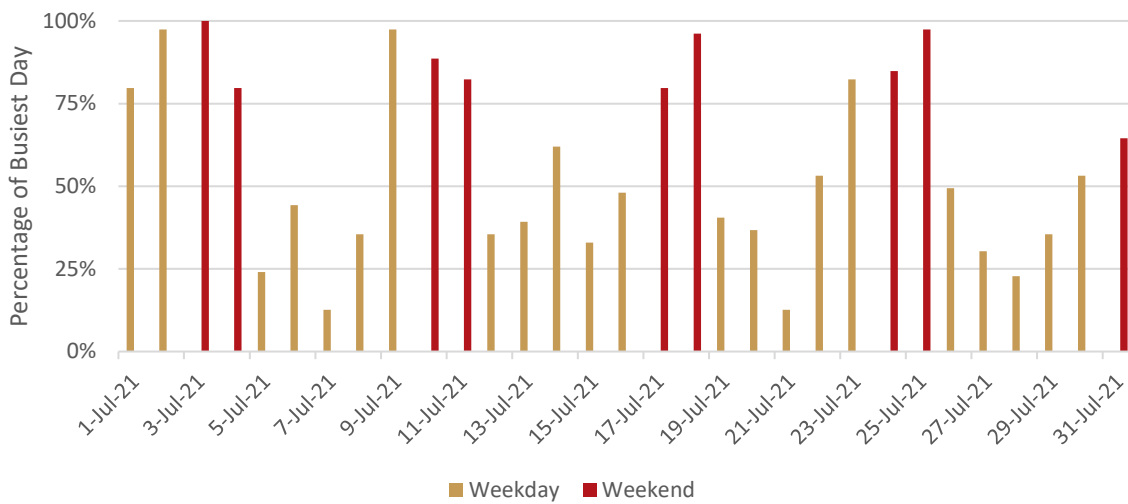
Launch utilization is highest in July and August, which represents 100% of the peak monthly demand. Inconsistencies between years are attributed to the ongoing COVID-19 Public Health Orders (2020/21) and a severe wildfire season (2021) in the Okanagan, as boat use is heavily influenced by weather and travel. The Cook Road parking lot was closed for upgrades between October 2020 and May 2021; therefore, no data is available for these months.

Figure 2.1: Seasonality



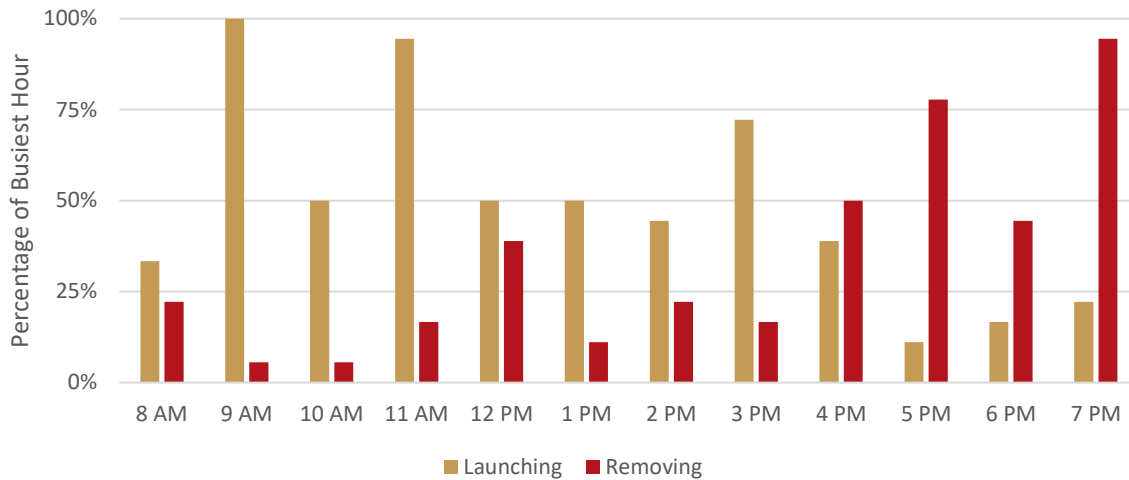
Launch demand is higher Friday through Sunday compared to weekdays, as shown below in Figure 2.2.

Figure 2.2: Monthly Demand (Cook Road, July 2021)



There is no clear peak hour for launch use, as shown below in **Figure 2.3**. Boats are typically launched in the morning and afternoon and removed in the evening.

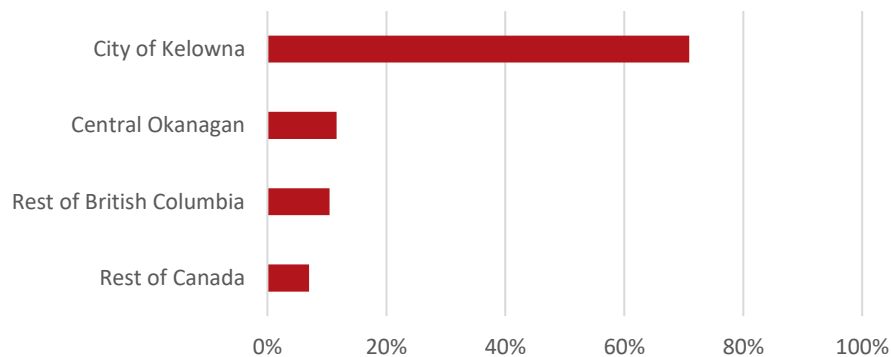
Figure 2.3: Typical Weekend Launch Use (Water Street, July 10th, 2021)



USER LOCATION

Approximately 70% of all launch users are from the City of Kelowna, as shown below in **Figure 2.4**. User location was determined through the data collection at the three launch locations. The survey was conducted while Public Health Orders advised against travel to and from the Interior Health Region, and therefore the proportion of local users may be higher than a typical year.

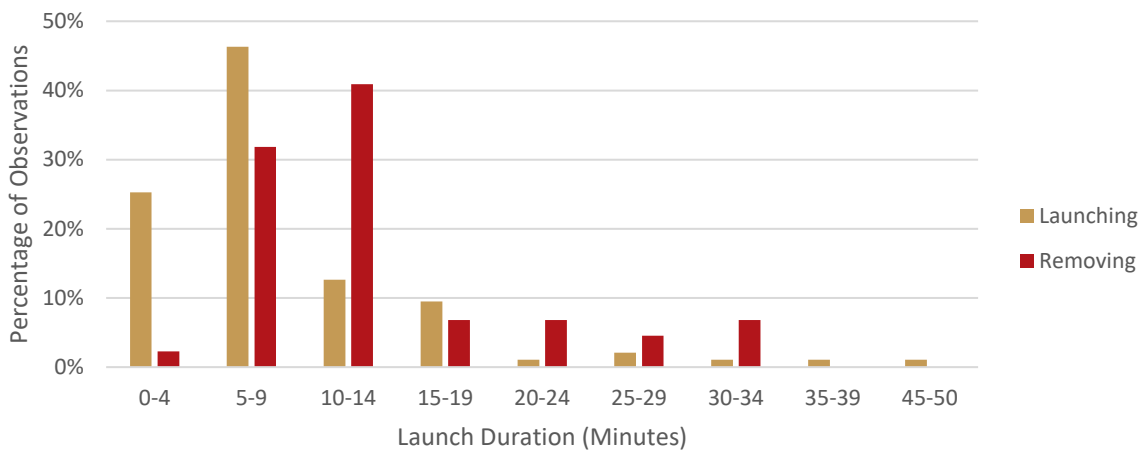
Figure 2.4: User Location



LAUNCH DURATION

The average time a user spends launching or removing a boat is 10 minutes, as calculated from the moment the user’s vehicle leaves the queue to when the vehicle is off the ramp. The time to launch a boat into the water is typically faster than removing a boat, as shown below in **Figure 2.5**. Launch duration was measured from a sample of 139 launch times at Water Street. Cook Road launches are anticipated to have faster average launch times due to the efficiency of the Aqua Club boat valet vehicles.

Figure 2.5: Launch Durations (Water Street)



2.2.2 COOK ROAD

The following describes demand, capacity, and user type at the Cook Road launch.

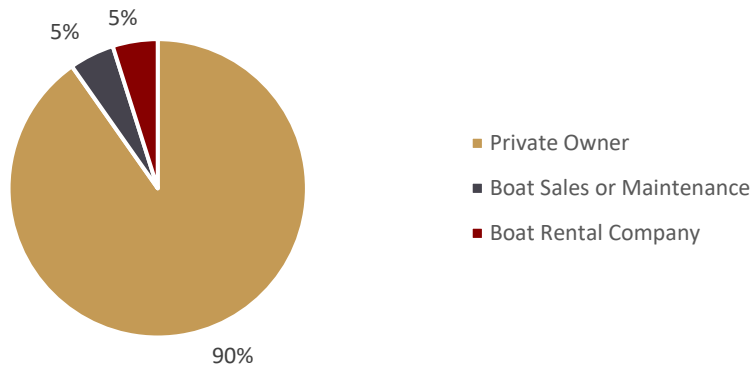
DEMAND

Annual demand at the Cook Road boat launch is estimated to be between 15,000 and 20,000 users per year. The estimated demand was derived from a combination of on-site counts and parking data for August 2021 with seasonal factors applied. Demand is highly variable and impacted by weather and local fires.

LAUNCH USERS

Based on 41 in-person survey responses conducted at the launch site, approximately 90% of Cook Road users are private boat owners, as illustrated below in **Figure 2.6**. The remaining users consist of boat sales, maintenance, and rentals. Aqua Club boat valet users were not surveyed due to launch speed.

Figure 2.6: Cook Road Launch Use



QUEUEING AND CAPACITY

The Cook Road launch has a designated queueing area which allows approximately eight to ten boats to queue at the entrance of the ramp before blocking Cook Road. The longest queue observed during on-site data collection was eight boats, which did not impede onto Cook Road.

Urban Systems observed a peak hour of 25 boats launched at Cook Road. Based on a launch duration sample taken at Water Street, the estimated launch capacity at Cook Road is approximately 23 boats per hour, with an average launch duration of 10 minutes and a ramp capacity of four simultaneous launches. However, the Cook Road launch capacity is likely underestimated due to the faster launch times of the Aqua Club Boat Valet, more space, designated queueing and staging areas, and limited boat rental and pedestrian activity.

2.2.3 WATER STREET

The following describes demand, capacity, and user type at the Water Street boat launch.

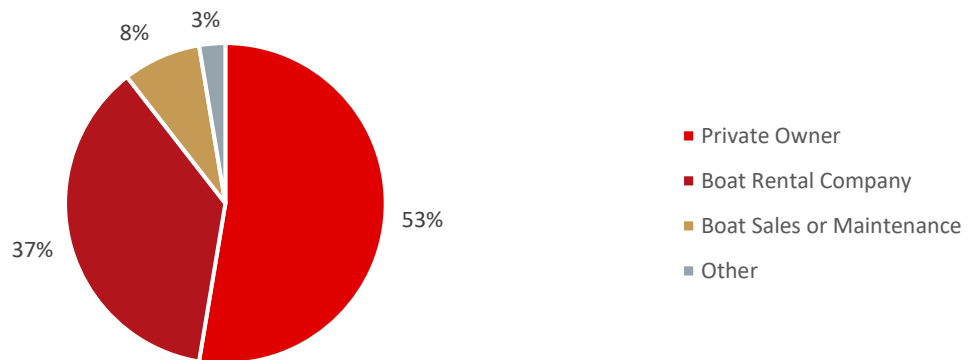
DEMAND

Annual demand at Water Street is estimated to be between 10,000 and 15,000 users per year. The estimated demand was derived from July 2021 site counts with seasonal factors applied. Demand is highly variable and impacted by weather and local fires. The 2021 demand may be underestimated due to the impacts of the COVID-19 Public Health Orders and local wildfires.

USER TYPE

Approximately half of the 38 launch users surveyed at the Water Street boat launch were private boat owners, as illustrated below in **Figure 2.7**. A high presence of boat rental companies also operate at the Water Street boat launch, consisting of almost 40% of users. During the site visit, Urban Systems noticed that boat rental companies frequently conduct their business (paperwork, instruction) while occupying the ramp. The remaining users are boat sales and maintenance, and one launch by Central Okanagan Search and Rescue.

Figure 2.7: Water Street Launch Users



QUEUEING AND CAPACITY

The Water Street launch does not have a designated queuing area; however, users typically queue along the north edge of the lot to allow free movement for other traffic. The queueing capacity is limited to approximately three vehicles with trailers before overflowing onto Water Street.

Observations from the video review shows the queue reaching capacity approximately three times per day on weekdays and eight times per day on weekends, overflowing onto Water Street three of those times. The longest duration of the queue observed on Water Street was approximately 15 minutes.

Periodically, queues would form while ramp space was available. Two scenarios causing this were observed:

- If the ramp is full, or nearly full, users will stage boats in the queue area, which often takes longer than an opening on the ramp. The queue will either be held, or users will go around.
- Users waiting to remove a boat will wait in the queue area for extended periods of time, causing confusion on ramp availability for other users.

Vehicles without boats were observed using the queueing area causing launch users to queue in the through lane and block traffic, as shown below in **Figure 2.8**.

Figure 2.8: Water Street Blocked Queue Lane



General traffic flow was also observed during the Water Street video review. Vehicles are frequently driving around the lot, with pedestrians and vehicles typically both yielding to each other. The pedestrian path is not restricted to the designated crosswalk and the path for launch users impedes the pedestrian crosswalk twice while reversing onto the ramp, as shown in **Figure 2.9**. The longest observed delay is when all three users (launch users, parking vehicles, and pedestrians) meet at the south half of the crosswalk.

Figure 2.9: Water Street User Path



The estimated capacity at the Water Street launch is approximately 23 boats launched per hour, based on the observed average launch duration of 10 minutes and ability to launch four boats simultaneously. This is consistent with the observed peak hour of 23 boats counted on-site.

2.2.4 SUTHERLAND BAY

The following describes demand, capacity, and user type the Sutherland Bay boat launch.

DEMAND

Annual launch demand at Sutherland Bay is estimated to be between 2,000 and 4,000 users per year. The estimated demand was derived from August 2021 site counts with seasonal factors applied. Demand is highly variable and impacted by weather and local fires. Additionally, the site counts were taken when the water level in Okanagan Lake was extremely low, making this launch unusable for medium to large boats. A more typical year could have higher demand than the above estimate.

LAUNCH USERS

Based on 11 surveys completed at the Sutherland Bay launch, all users were launching privately owned boats.

QUEUEING AND CAPACITY

The Sutherland Bay launch capacity is approximately 12 boats launched per hour. The maximum queue observed was one boat.

2.2.5 LAUNCH SUMMARY

A summary of estimated launch demand, capacity, observed volumes and other launch attributes is provided below in **Table 2.3**.

Table 2.3: Launch Summary

	Cook Road	Water Street	Sutherland Bay
Annual Demand	15,000 – 20,000	10,000 – 15,000	2,000 – 4,000
Hourly Capacity	23 / 25 ¹	23	12
Peak Hour Observed	25	23	10

¹ The estimated capacity based on 10 minute average launch time per boat is 23, while the observed maximum capacity is 25. See Section 2.2.2 for further information.

3.0 ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES

The following engagement activities were completed for this project:

- In-person observations and survey at the boat launches (August 2021)
- Online community survey (March-April 2022)
- Industry workshop (March 2022)
- Intergovernmental workshop (April 2022)

Key outcomes from each of the surveys are summarized below.

3.1 IN-PERSON SURVEY AT LAUNCHES

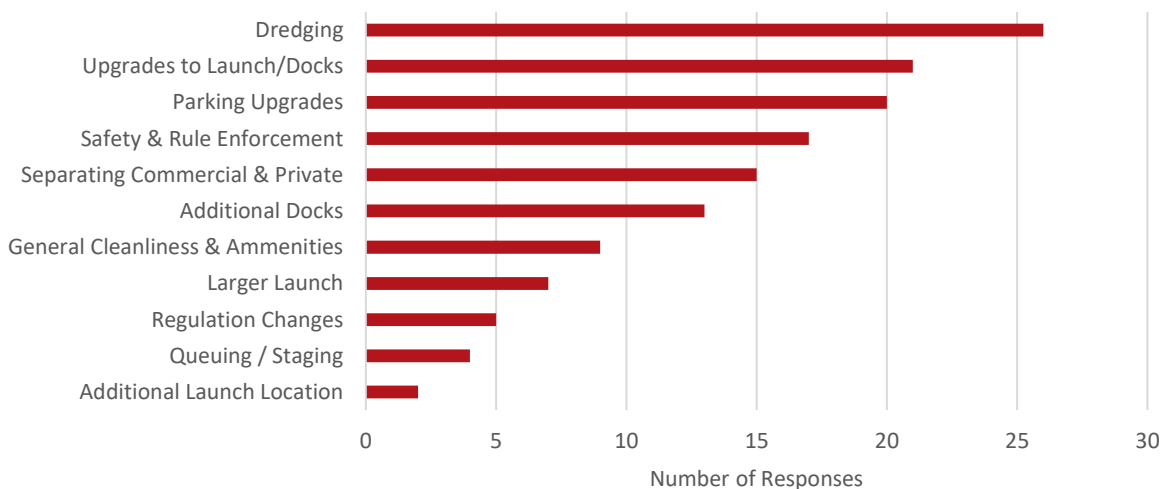
In-person engagement was conducted at the launch sites by surveying users while in launch queues and ramp area. The following section summarizes the key findings from the survey.

Approximately 50% of surveyed launch users chose the launch based on location. This was particularly relevant at Water Street and Sutherland Bay, whereas Cook Road users valued location, but also parking and launch availability as equally convincing amenities.

When asked if users would be willing to pay a fee that would contribute directly to launch upgrades, 65% of users overall responded that they would be willing to pay. Water Street, which has a significant presence of commercial boat use, showed approximately 90% of users willing to pay a fee. Cook Road, however, only had 45% of survey respondents willing to pay a user fee. Feedback on the resistance to paying a user fee at Cook Road included mention of the recent parking cost increase.

Users were also asked to provide open-ended input on launch improvements. The top three improvements identified by users include dredging, launch / dock upgrades, and parking upgrades, as shown below in **Figure 3.1**.

Figure 3.1: Launch Improvements (Open-ended Survey Responses)



Appendix A includes a comprehensive summary of the in-person survey results.

3.2 ONLINE COMMUNITY SURVEY

An online community survey was open on the City of Kelowna's Get Involved platform from March 5 to April 3, 2022. It provided resident and visitor perspectives which has helped to shape the context and understanding of boat launches specific to the City of Kelowna.

A total of 441 respondents completed the survey. Overall, many respondents expressed challenges with the congestion at boat launches due to a high volume of users, particularly at Water Street boat launch. A high level of concern was raised regarding the safety of pedestrians at this launch, as many feel it is unsafe to walk in the area because it is extremely busy with traffic and trailers. Additionally, parking was noted as a key challenge at all three boat launches. Other concerns noted by respondents included pollution and environmental concerns, negligence of commercial operators, safety of non-motorized users and access to the lake. 65% of respondents do not believe the City's three existing boat launches meet current demand.

Respondents believe that parking availability (for boat trailers) (74%) and how busy it is (70%) are most important in a boat launch, followed by traffic flow (68%) and depth of the launch (64%).

Appendix A includes a comprehensive summary of the community survey results.

3.3 INDUSTRY WORKSHOP

A workshop for industry representatives was held on March 29, 2022. It was a virtual session held over 2 hours that consisted of a presentation and several breakout sessions to discuss the project, existing conditions and operations, maintenance, and cost recovery.

In general, workshop attendees have a similar vision for City-owned boat launches, which relies on the core principles of safety, efficiency, and fair cost recovery. However, there are differences in opinions on how to achieve these objectives and whether there should be a focus on enhancing existing facilities, redistributing the demand along the lakeshore by increased boat launch supply, or both.

Workshop attendees felt the City's role should continue to own, operate, and maintain the existing boat launches and to ensure that they meet the user's expectations for the level of service. Additional areas for improvement include improved parking, signage, education, and enforcement. There may be a role for the provision of land for private operation, which provides an opportunity for redistribution of demand.

Appendix A includes a comprehensive summary of the industry workshop.

3.4 INTERGOVERNMENTAL WORKSHOP

A workshop for intergovernmental representatives was held on April 26, 2022. The purpose of the workshop was to connect with intergovernmental partners and seek their perspectives on Central Okanagan boat launches and to inform about the development of a 15-year plan for City of Kelowna's boat launches.

Observationally, the demand for boat launches has increased significantly; workshop attendees indicated concerns over the potential for boating spillover into neighboring jurisdictions with the implementation of the 15-year plan. Participants also highlighted the need to discuss overall lake capacity and use by boats as improvements to boat launches take place.

Several key topics emerged through discussion including options for on-water moorage to address the commercialization of boat launches. However, issues were also raised with this approach such as potential risk to sensitive habitats and challenges with creating access to mooring locations. There are also concerns that increasing capacity could induce further demand and exacerbate existing environmental issues. As the City of Kelowna and other jurisdictions consider boat launch redevelopment, there should be a mechanism in place to address environmental issues such as invasive species.

Overall, attendees were in agreement that a regional approach would create the most value to align jurisdictional objectives and ensure that gaps are not created with a lack of coordination. A high level of engagement was desired from other jurisdictional partners in the preparation and development of the plan.

Appendix A includes a comprehensive summary of the intergovernmental workshop.

4.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTIVES

A set of *guiding principles* and *objectives* for boat launch management have been developed to inform decision making and the development of a boat launch management strategy. The *guiding principles* are value statements based on Imagine Kelowna and what the team heard through the engagement activities. The *objectives* are more specific statements of what the boat launch management strategy is trying to achieve. The *objectives* reflect the values contained in the *guiding principles*.

4.1 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The guiding principles for boat launch management are:

- Fairness
- Sustainability (Environmental and Financial)
- Collaboration
- Service Excellence

These were informed by the Imagine Kelowna principles and goals in addition to what we heard during the engagement activities.

4.2 OBJECTIVES

The objectives for the boat launch management strategy are:

1. **Focus on the user experience**
 - a. Endeavor to provide an excellent experience that is safe for boat launch and waterfront users.
2. **User-pay cost recovery**
 - a. The boat launch operations, maintenance and renewal will pay for itself.
3. **Balanced Okanagan Lake access**
 - a. Enable lake access for all users while considering the carrying capacity of the lake and impact of recreation.
4. **Explore partnerships**
 - a. Innovate on partnership opportunities for service delivery.

These objectives were developed based on the guiding principles and will be used as the basis of the development and evaluation of the boat launch management strategy.

APPENDIX A

WHAT WE HEARD ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

City of Kelowna

Boat Launch Operations and Management Plan

What We Heard Engagement Summary

January 2023



INTRODUCTION

Okanagan Lake was noted as an important community asset throughout the [Imagine Kelowna](#) process and residents shared the importance of balancing recreational quality of life opportunities with environmental protection, water quality, and public ownership of the waterfront.

The City's boat launches require significant annual maintenance to ensure they remain functional, and their management and operations represents a tangible and practical opportunity to ensure fair and equitable lake access for residents, visitors, and businesses alike.

We are creating a 15-year plan to navigate the future of our City's boating facilities, to ensure our public amenities are accessible for all and preserved for years to come.

To better understand perspectives on City-owned and operated boat launches the City engaged with the public and stakeholder. This report summarizes what was heard throughout the engagement process.

ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

A total of four engagement opportunities were undertaken to support this project: one in-person survey, one online community survey, one workshop for industry representatives, and one workshop for intergovernmental partners:

93
RESPONDENTS

In-Person Survey / August 18, 2022 – August 29, 2022

This in-person survey was conducted at the different launch sites by surveying users while in launch queues and ramp area from August 18, 2022 to August 29, 2022. The users were asked a variety of questions about the launch site, including fees and possible improvements.

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RESPONDENTS

Community Survey / March 5, 2022 – April 3, 2022

This online community survey was open on the City of Kelowna's Get Involved platform from March 5 to April 3, 2022. It collected resident and visitor perspectives which has helped to shape the context and understanding of boat launches specific to the City of Kelowna, their uses, and what their management and operations look like in the future.

14
ATTENDEES

Industry Workshop / March 29, 2022

This 2-hour virtual meeting held via Zoom provided industry representatives with the opportunity to inform the development of a 15-year plan for the City of Kelowna's boat launches that reflects industry perspectives. Industry representatives included Tourism Kelowna, tour operators, rental companies, boat clubs, supply stores, and marinas.

6
ATTENDEES

Intergovernmental Workshop / April 26, 2022

This 2-hour virtual meeting held via Zoom provided an opportunity to connect with intergovernmental partners. The workshop provided an opportunity to share perspectives on Central Okanagan boat launches and to inform neighbouring communities about the development of the 15-year plan.

ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

The overall objectives of this engagement were:

- To inform City of Kelowna residents and stakeholders on the project, process, and provide an opportunity for feedback in a way that is interesting and easy to understand.
- To consult with City of Kelowna residents on the value and use of lake-affiliated public amenities, such as boat launches and the services offered around them.
- To consult with key stakeholders (private companies, local tourism associations, regional, and First Nation governments, etc.) on the impact of operational changes to City-owned boat launches.
- To inform City of Kelowna Mayor and Council on the outcomes of the project and to provide sound rationale for decision-making.

WHAT WE HEARD

What we heard from participants through the four formal engagement opportunities is summarized in the subsections below.

In-Person Survey / August 18, 2022 – August 29, 2022

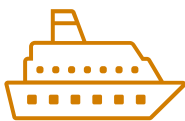
SURVEY OVERVIEW



93 total respondents



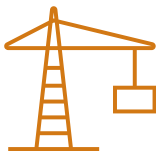
71 % of respondents live in the City of Kelowna



76 % of respondents are private owners



65 % of respondents are willing to pay a user fee to contribute to launch upgrades



19 % of respondents identified dredging as a needed improvement



48 % of respondents chose their boat launch according to location

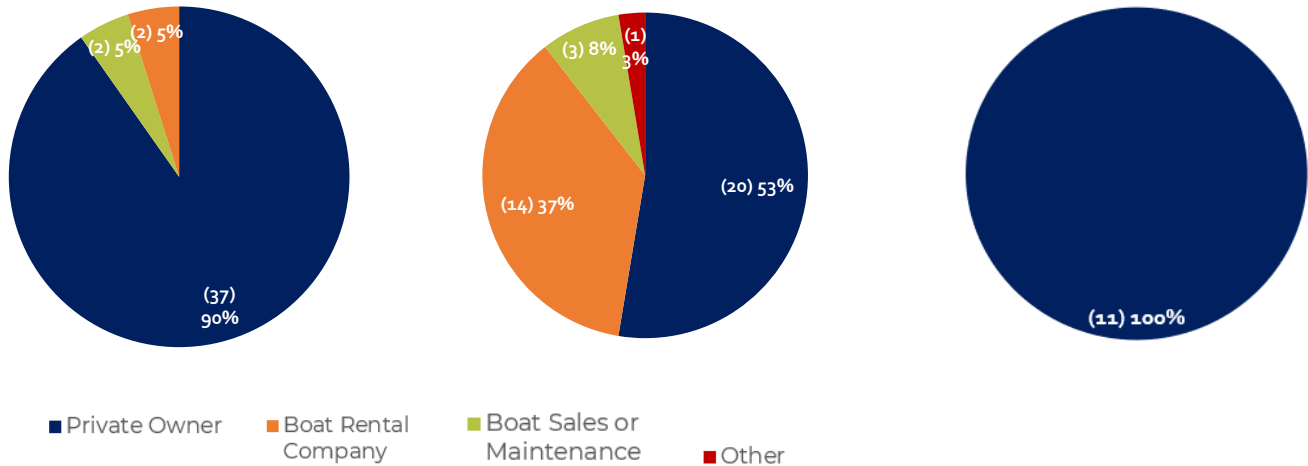
IN - PERSON SURVEY - WHAT WE HEARD

1. What type of boat launch user do you identify as?

Cook Road Boat Launch (n=41)

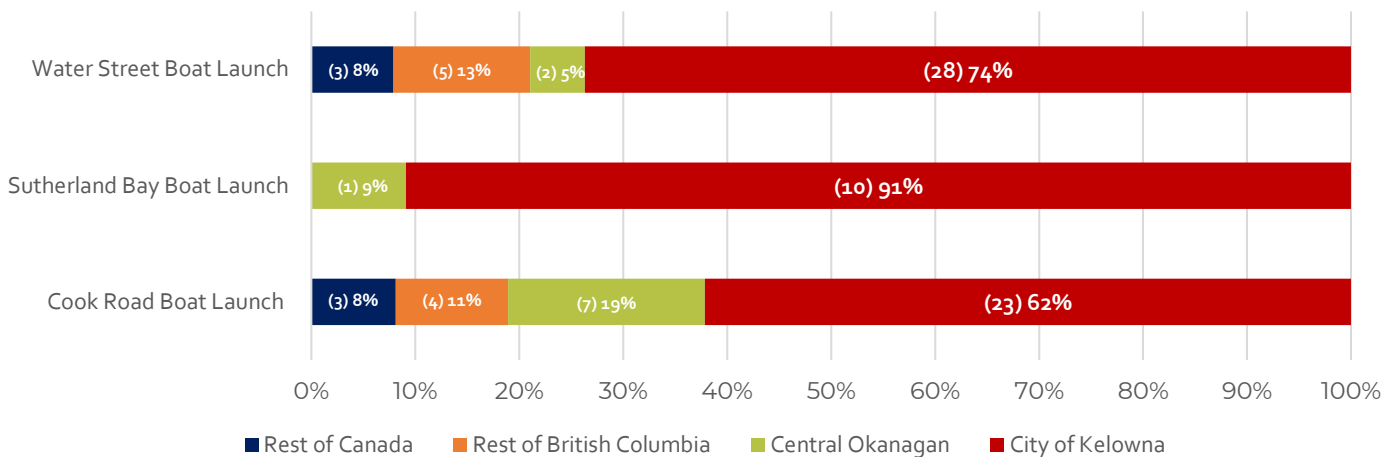
Water Street Boat Launch (n=38)

Sutherland Bay Boat Launch (n=11)



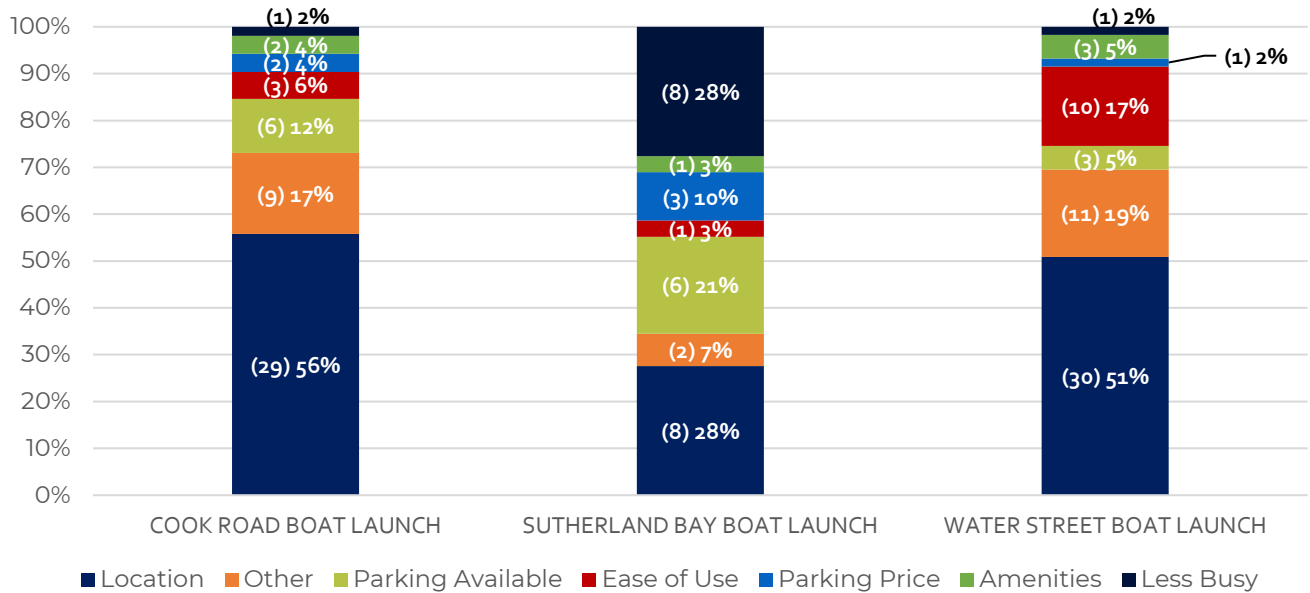
Both Cook Road (90%) and Sutherland Bay (100%) boat launch users that were surveyed were found to generally be private owners. However, the Aqua Club boat valet users at Cook Road were not captured in the survey due to the launch speed. Water Street boat launch users have a mix of user types, with 53% being private owners and 37% being boat rental companies.

2. Where do you/your clients live? (n=86)



Overall 71% of the boat launch users live in the City of Kelowna. Sutherland Bay boat launch had the highest percentage of City of Kelowna residents (91%), with the majority of Water Street and Cook Road users (74% and 62% respectively) also being from the City of Kelowna. The survey was conducted while Public Health Orders advised against travel to and from the Interior Health Region, and therefore the proportion of local users may be higher than a typical year.

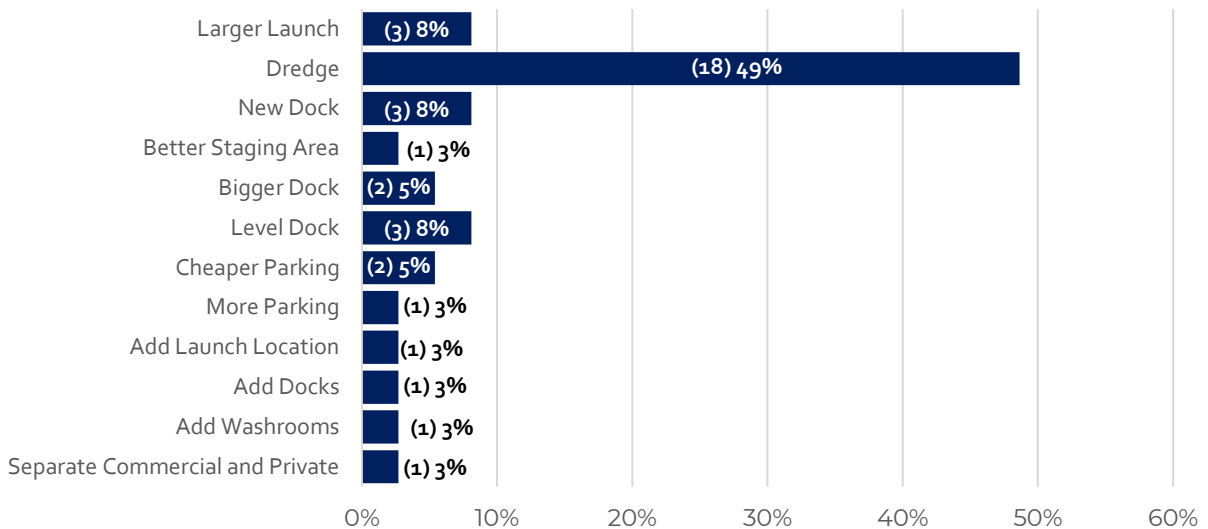
3. Why did you choose this launch location? (n=140)



Throughout all three boat launches, location was the most selected answer at 56%, 28% and 51%. 'Other' can be described as things such as water depth, safety of rocks, and boat launch rating.

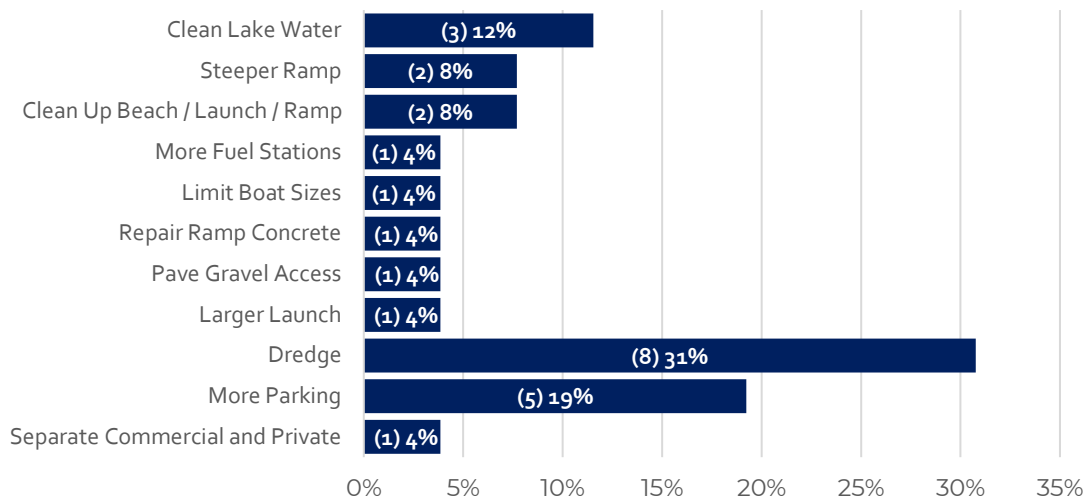
4. How would you improve this boat launch?

Cook Road Boat Launch (n=37)



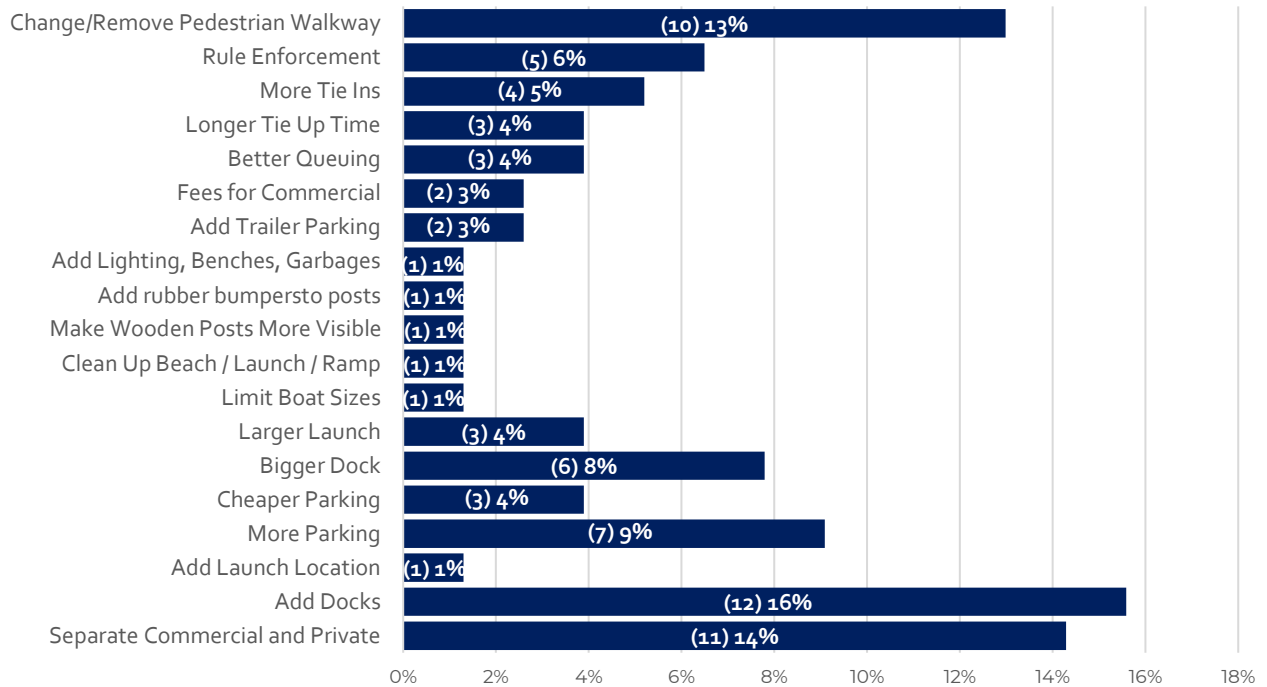
The top improvement identified for the Cook Road boat launch is dredging, with 49% of the respondents recommending it.

Sutherland Bay Boat Launch (n=26)



Most respondents at the Sutherland Bay boat launch identified dredging (31%) to improve the launch. The second most common improvement identified by users was more parking (19%).

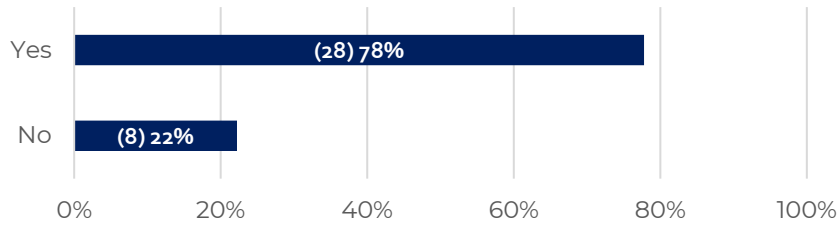
Water Street Boat Launch (n=77)



At the Water Street boat launch adding more docks (16%), separating commercial and private users (14%) and to change/remove the pedestrian walkway (13%) were the most commonly identified improvements.

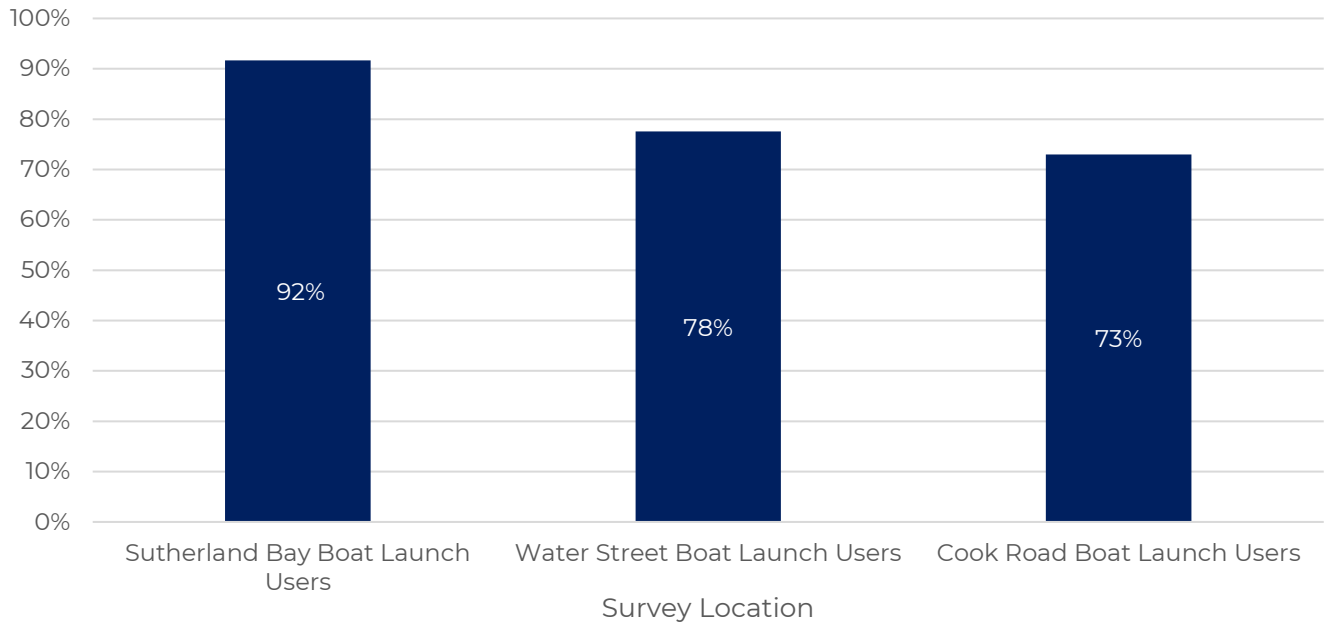
5. Do you park your vehicle and trailer on-site? (n=36)

Cook Road Boat Launch



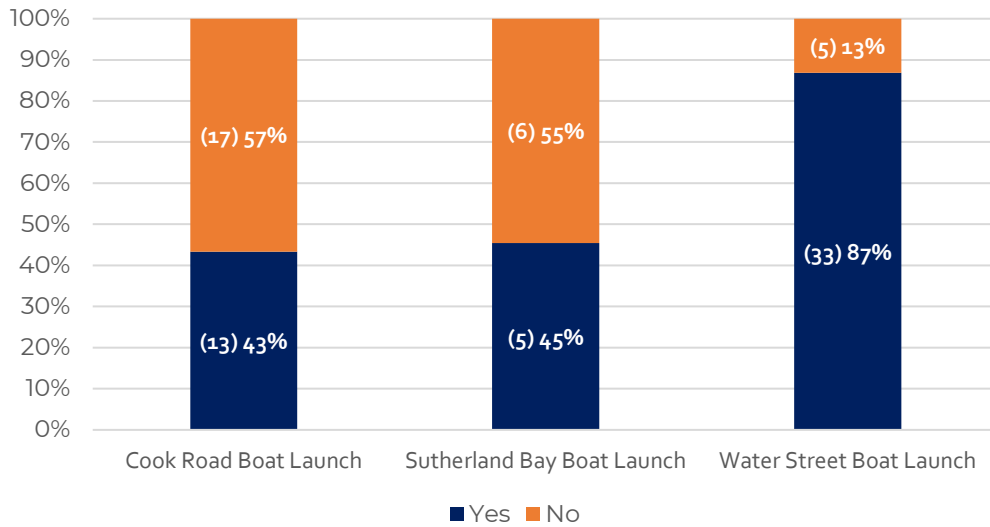
The Cook Road boat launch is the only location with on-site parking, with 78% of the respondents parking their vehicles and trailers on-site.

6. What percentage of time do you use the launch location at which you were surveyed? (n=93)



Most respondents primarily use the location at which they were surveyed. Some of the users at Cook Road typically use launches outside this study, but due to fires at the other launches they were using Cook Road.

7. **Would you be willing to pay a user fee that would go directly towards facility enhancement?**
(n=79)



Overall, 65% of users responded that they would be willing to pay a fee that would directly contribute to launch upgrades. Water Street, which has a significant presence of commercial boat use, had the highest willingness to pay a fee (87%). At Cook Road there was a lower willingness to pay a fee (43%). Feedback on the resistance to pay a user fee at Cook Road included mention of the recent parking cost increase.

SURVEY OVERVIEW



441 total respondents



Open on the City of Kelowna's Get Involved platform from **March 9 to April 3, 2022**



96% of respondents felt they had enough information to participate in a meaningful way



98% of respondents felt the information was easy to understand



71% of respondents are recreational boat launch users



91% of respondents live in Kelowna for most of the year



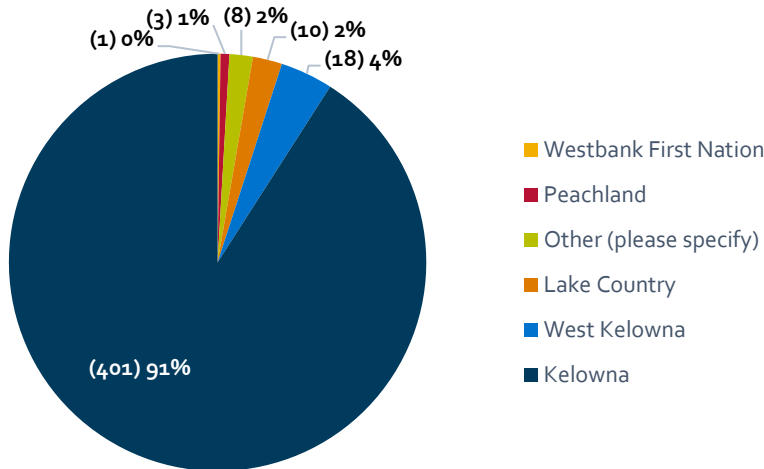
74% of respondents believe that parking for boat trailers is most important in a boat launch



41% of respondents do not believe the City's three existing boat launches meet current demand

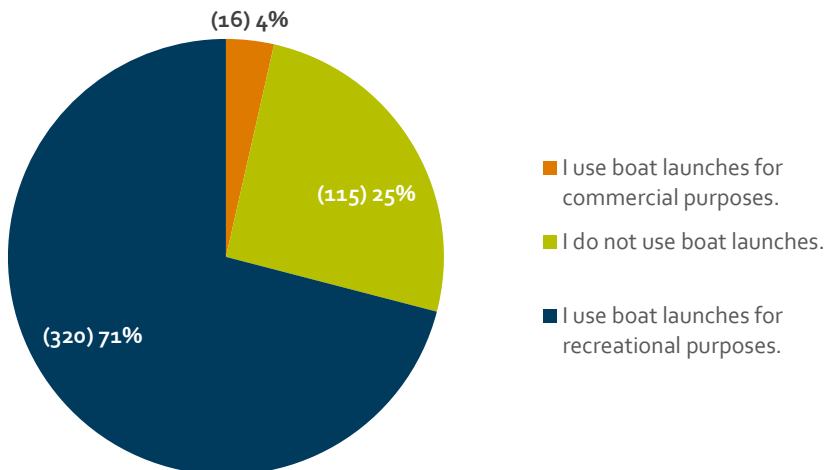
COMMUNITY SURVEY - WHAT WE HEARD

1. Where do you live for most of the year? (n = 441)



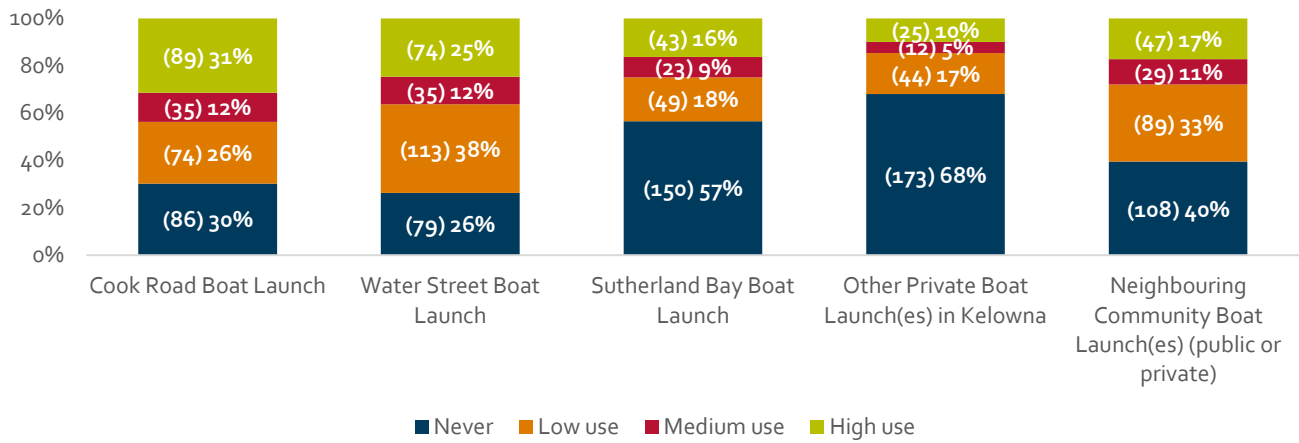
Most survey respondents primarily reside in Kelowna (91%). Few indicated that they live in West Kelowna (4%) and Lake Country (2%). "Other" responses include Alberta, Vancouver, Nakusp and Hong Kong.

2. What best describes you? Please select all that apply. (n = 441)



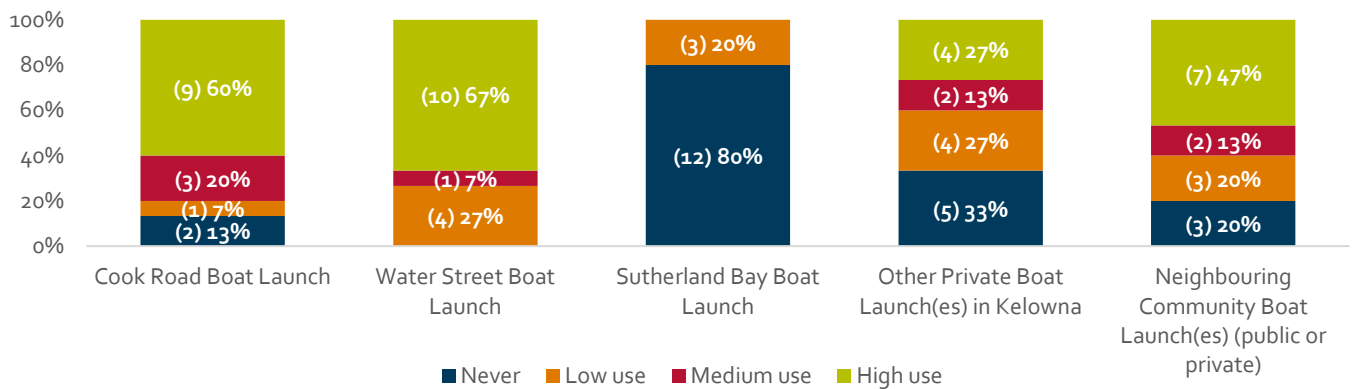
Nearly three-quarters of survey respondents indicated that they use boat launches for recreational purposes (71%), while a quarter of respondents do not use boat launches (25%) and 4% use boat launches for commercial purposes.

3. How frequently do you use the following for recreational purposes?¹ (n = 320)



Respondents indicated that of the City-owned boat launches, they most frequently use the Cook Road and Water Street boat launches for recreational purposes, followed by the Sutherland Bay boat launch. Respondents least frequently use the private boat launches in Kelowna.

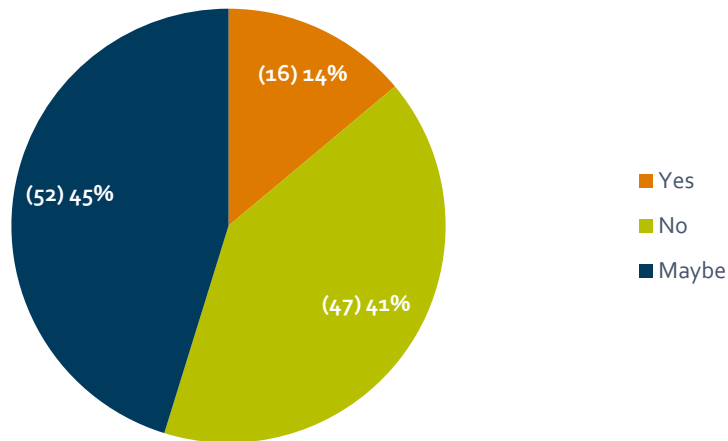
4. How frequently do you use the following for commercial purposes?¹ (n = 16)



Respondents indicated that they use the Water Street and Cook Road boat launch the most frequently for commercial purposes, followed by neighbouring community boat launches (public or private). Results reveal that the Sutherland Bay boat launch is rarely used by respondents for commercial purposes.

¹ Low use frequency was determined by grouping the proportion of responses that was the sum of categories defined as "once a year" and "twice a year." Medium use frequency was determined by responses defined as "once per month." High use frequency was determined by grouping the proportion of responses that was the sum of categories defined as "once every two weeks" and "at least once a week."

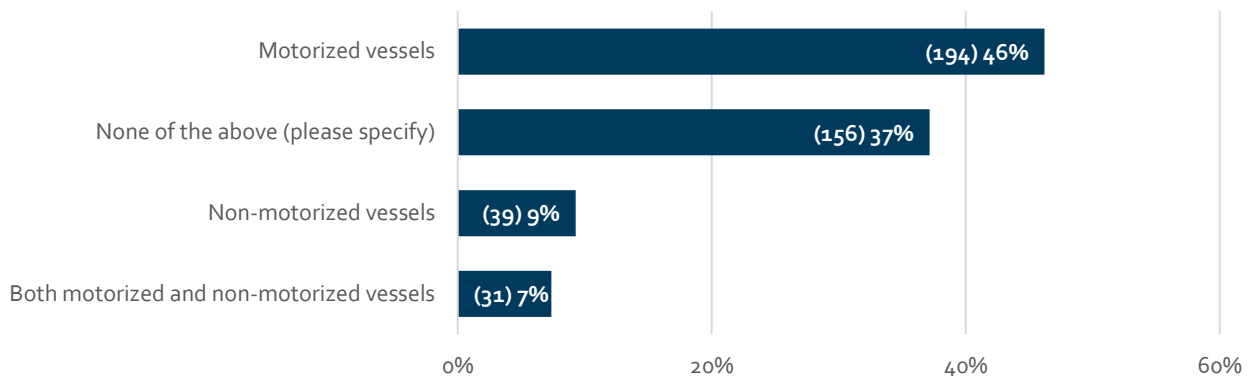
5. Do you plan to use boat launches in the future? (n = 115)



Nearly half of respondents indicated that they may use boat launches in the future (45%), while 41% indicated they do not plan on using boat launches in the future and 14% indicated that they do plan on using boat launches in the future.

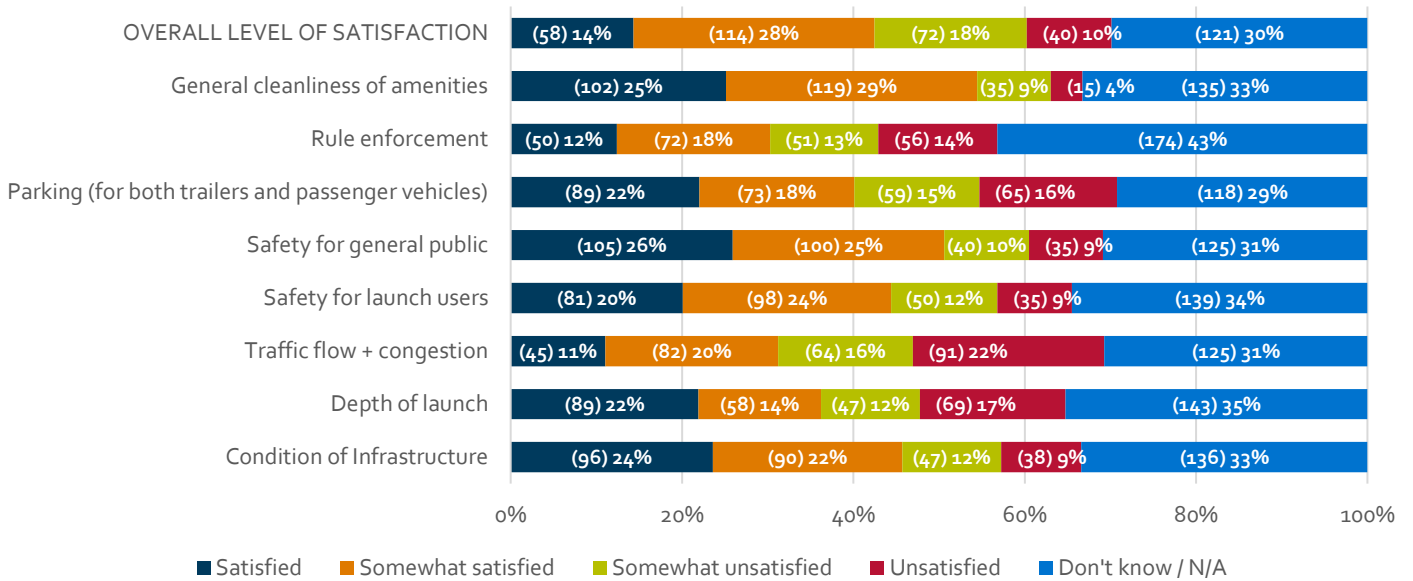
Cook Street Boat Launch

6. At the Cook Road Boat Launch I launch: (n = 420)



At the Cook Street boat launch, nearly half of respondents indicated that they use motorized vessels (46%). Those who selected 'none of the above' (37%) commonly indicated that they do not use this boat launch.

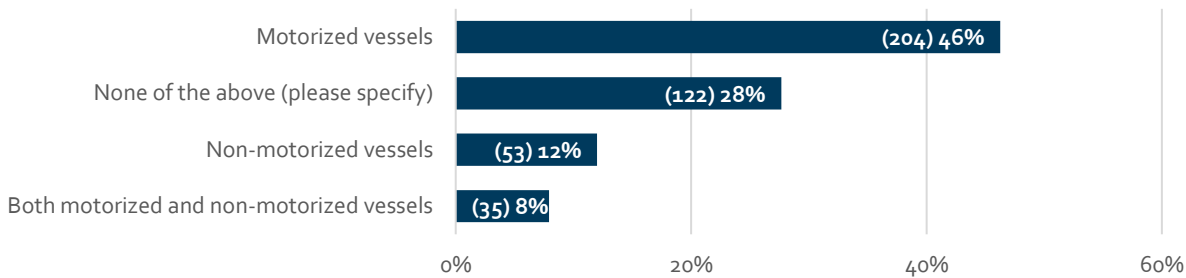
7. How satisfied are you with each of the following at the Cook Road Boat Launch? (n = 409)



Nearly half (42%) of Cook Road boat launch users expressed a level of satisfaction, overall. The categories that ranked the highest include the **general cleanliness of amenities** (54% satisfied and somewhat satisfied) and **safety for general public** (51% satisfied and somewhat satisfied). Users are least satisfied with the **traffic flow and congestion** (38% unsatisfied and somewhat unsatisfied) and **parking** (31% unsatisfied and somewhat unsatisfied).

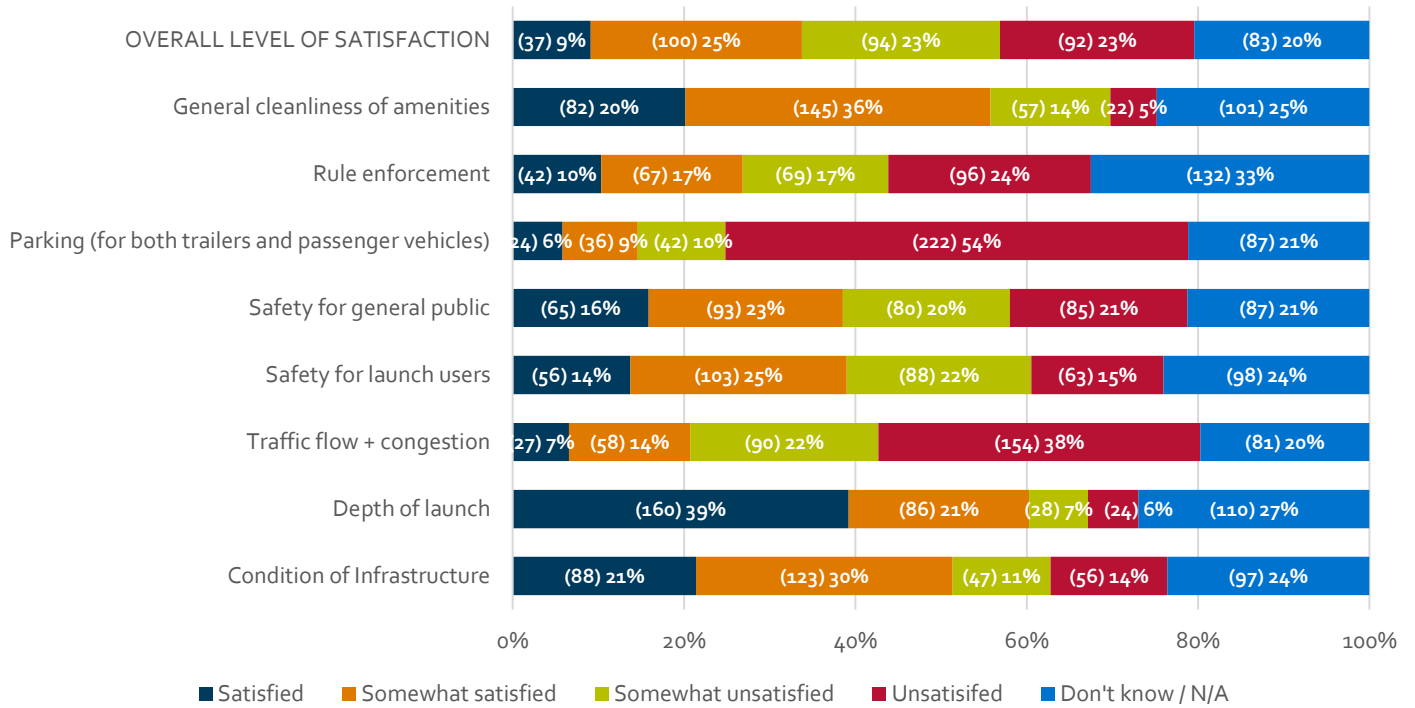
Water Street Boat Launch

8. At the Water Street boat launch, I launch: (n = 414)



At the Water Street boat launch, nearly half of respondents indicated that they typically use motorized vessels (46%). Those who indicated 'none of the above' (28%) commonly noted that they do not use this boat launch.

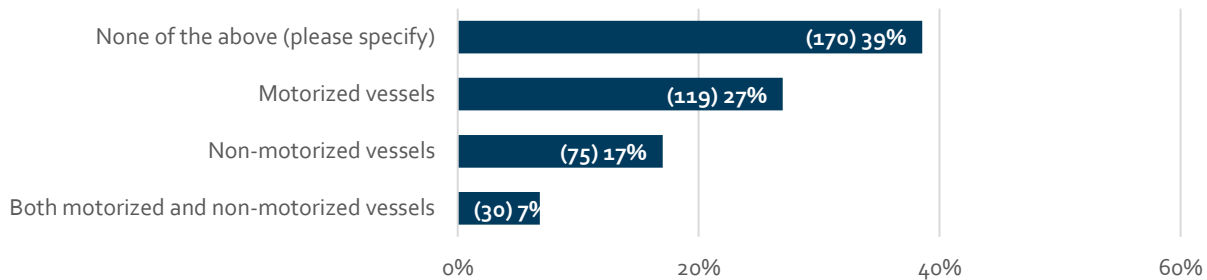
9. How satisfied are you with each of the following at the Water Street Boat launch? (n = 414)



Roughly half (46%) of the Water Street boat launch users have expressed some level of dissatisfaction, overall. The categories that ranked highest include: **depth of launch** (60% satisfied and somewhat satisfied) and **condition of infrastructure** (51% satisfied or somewhat satisfied). Users feel the least satisfied with the **parking** (64% unsatisfied and somewhat unsatisfied) and **traffic flow and congestion** (60% unsatisfied and somewhat unsatisfied)

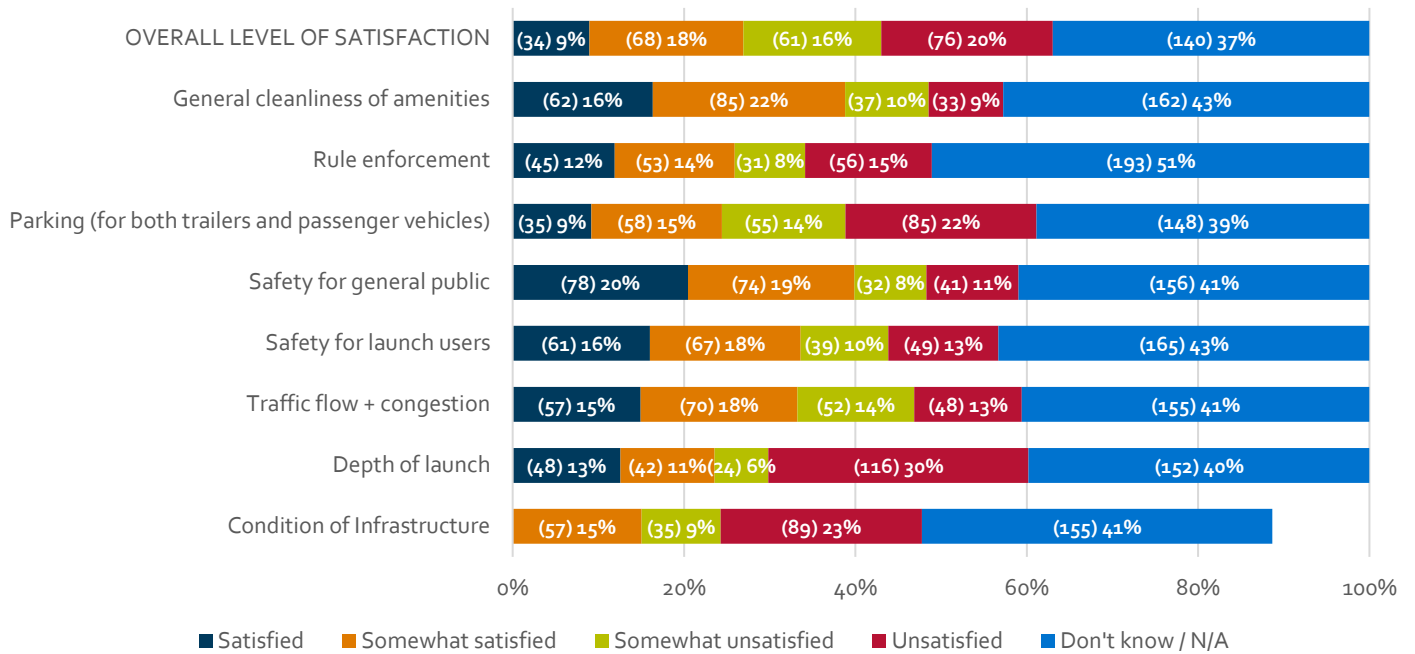
Sutherland Bay Boat Launch

10. At the Sutherland Bay Boat Launch, I launch: (n = 394)



Thirty-nine (39%) of respondents selected 'none of the above' when asked what they launch at Sutherland Bay. It was commonly noted that this is because they do not use the Sutherland Bay boat launch. Twenty-nine (29%) indicated that they use motorized vessels at Sutherland Bay, while 17% use non-motorized vessels.

11. How satisfied are you with each of the following at the Sutherland Bay boat launch? (n = 394)

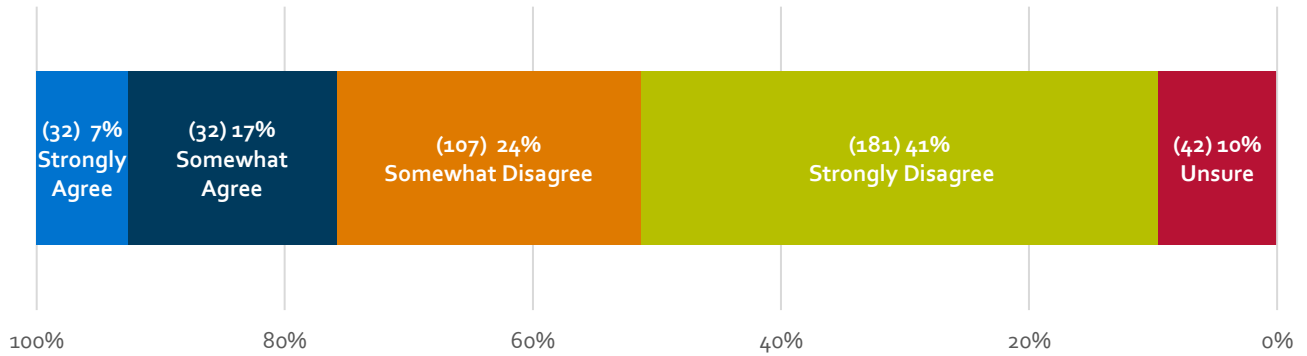


Thirty-six percent (36%) of respondents expressed some level of dissatisfaction towards the Sutherland Bay boat launch, overall. The categories ranked highest include: **safety for general public** (39% satisfied and somewhat satisfied) and **general cleanliness of amenities** (38% satisfied and somewhat satisfied). Users indicated that they are least satisfied with the **parking** (36% unsatisfied and somewhat unsatisfied) and **depth of the launch** (36% unsatisfied and somewhat unsatisfied).

12. If you do not use boat launches for boating purposes but use the public space around them, what is the biggest challenge you experience? Please indicate what boat launch you experience your challenges at. (n = 199)

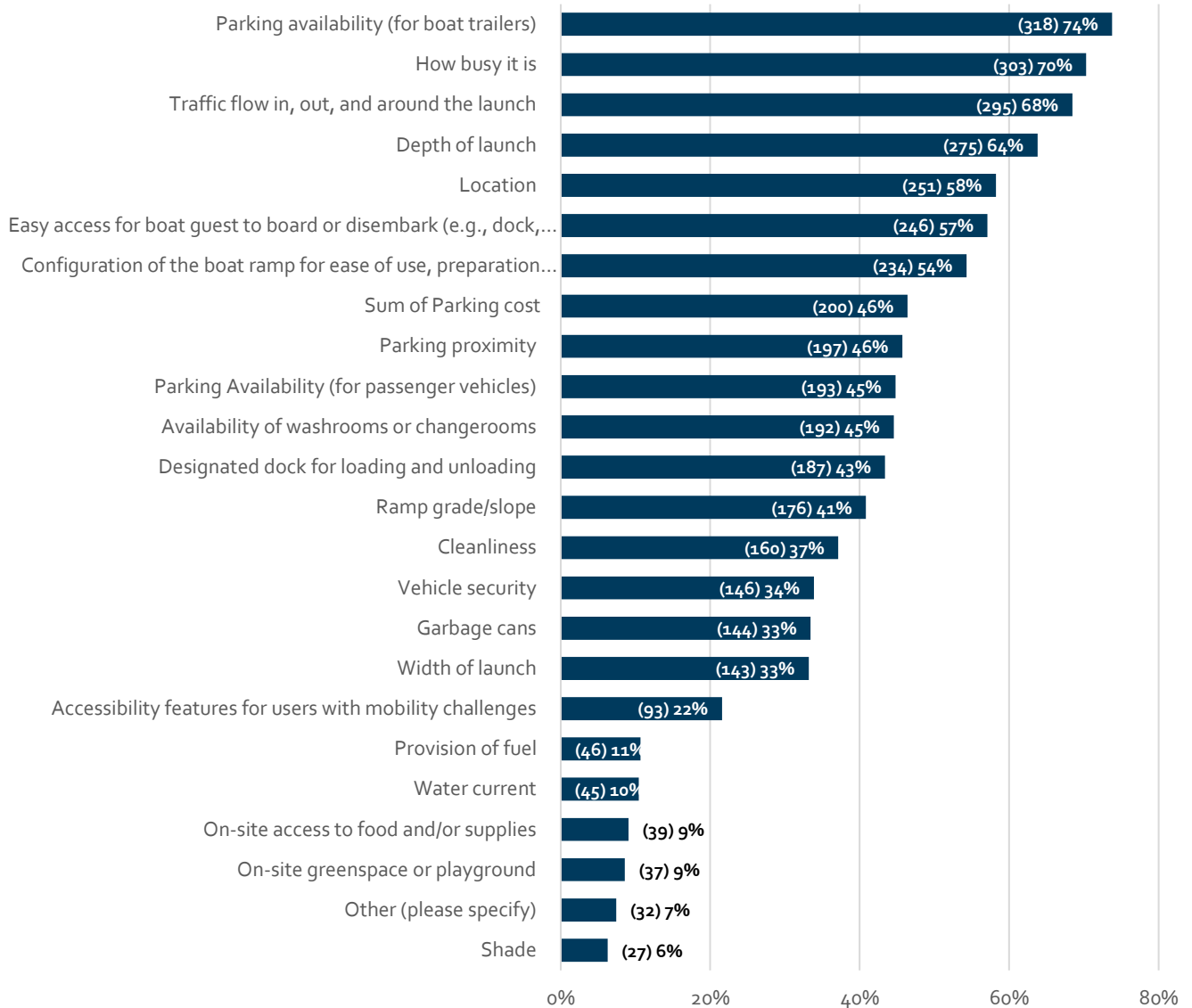
Overall, many respondents expressed challenges with the congestion at boat launches due to a high volume of users, particularly at Water Street boat launch. A high level of concern was raised regarding the safety of pedestrians at this launch, as many feel it is unsafe to walk in the area because it is extremely busy with traffic and trailers. Additionally, parking was noted as a key challenge at all three boat launches. Other concerns noted by respondents included pollution and environmental concerns, negligence of commercial operators, safety of non-motorized users and access to the lake.

13. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: The three public boat launches in the City of Kelowna meet current boat launch demand. (n = 435)



The majority respondents believe that the three public boat launches in the City of Kelowna do not meet the current boat launch demand (65%), while 24% of respondents 'somewhat' or 'strongly' agree that the City's boat launches meet current demand.

14. As a past, present, or future boat launch user, what elements are important in a boat launch? Please select all that apply. (n = 431)



Results reveal that respondents believe that parking availability (for boat trailers) (74%) and how busy it is (70%) are most important in a boat launch, followed by traffic flow (68%) and depth of the launch (64%).

'Other (please specify)' comments included:

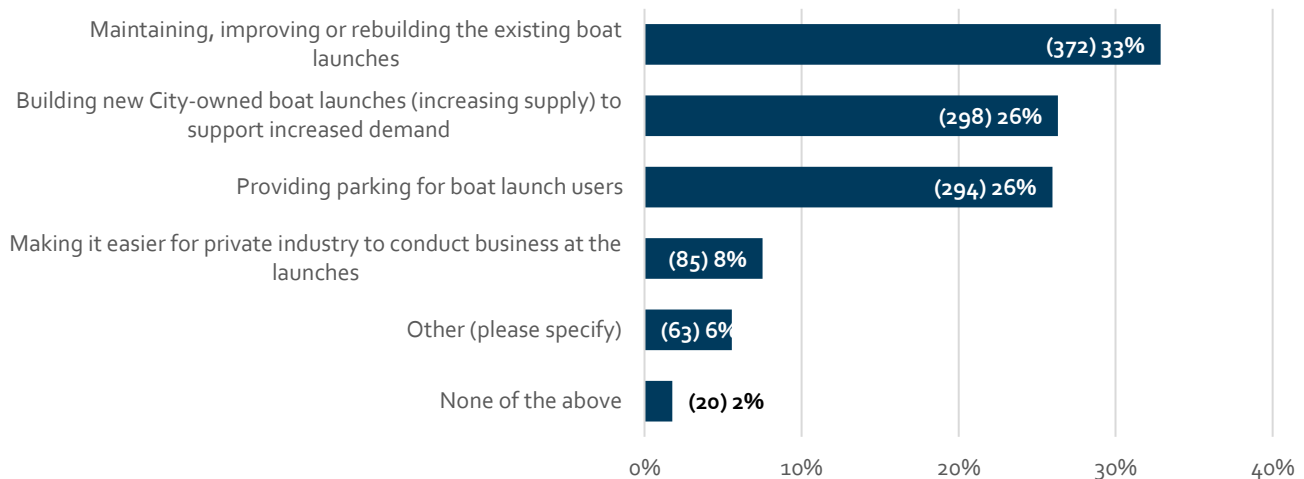
- Access and safety for non-motorized watercrafts
- Enforcement of rules and regulations
- Maintenance and conditions of the launches

15. The City of Kelowna currently spends \$250,000 annually (~\$2.00 per resident) on maintaining its three municipal boat launches. Private companies account for ~25% of the boat launch use, while the public accounts for ~75% of the boat launch use. What proportion of the ongoing operations and maintenance costs should be allocated to each category? Please ensure that your selections add up to 100%. (n = 431)

Category	Proportion of Costs
Taxation	28%
User Fees for Private Companies	44%
User Fees for the General Public	23%
Other	5%

Respondents would like to see the greatest proportion of ongoing operations and maintenance costs allocated towards user fees for private companies (44%), followed by taxation (28%) and user fees for the general public (23%).

16. What should the City's role be in operating and maintaining City-owned boat launches? Please select all that apply. (n = 435)



Thirty-three (33%) of respondents indicated that the City's role in operating and maintaining City-owned boat launches should be maintaining, improving or rebuilding the existing boat launches, followed by building new City-owned boat launches to support increased demand (26%) and providing parking for boat launch users (26%).

Other (please specify) comments included:

- Monitoring and controlling commercial users to reduce congestion
- Improving safety for all users, including non-motorized users
- Enforcement/supervision at launches to regulate traffic flow and safety

17. **Are there any final thoughts you'd like to share regarding City-owned boat launches?** (*n* = 298)

In this final, open-ended question, the following themes emerged:

- **User Paid Fees (*n* = 48):** Overall, there was a high level of support for user paid fees at boat launches. However, several respondents noted that they would like to see the launches be free to locals, while out-of-town and commercial operators should be required to pay.
- **Commercial operators (*n* = 42):** Frustrations with commercial operators were commonly expressed by respondents, who noted that these users often cause congestion and delays at the boat launches while conducting business. Several respondents commented that commercial operators should be required to pay fees due to their high use of the public amenities.
- **Capacity (*n* = 41):** Numerous respondents stated that the City's launches are over capacity and feel that additional boat launches need to be established to accommodate the high level of users, which would help to improve congestion and user safety.
- **Depth (*n* = 29):** It was commonly noted that the shallow water depth of boat launches, particularly at Sutherland Bay, make it challenging to launch. Boat launch users would like to see the water depth at Sutherland Bay increased, as well as additional boat launches with greater water depth.
- **Parking (*n* = 25):** Several respondents experience challenges due to the lack of parking available at boat launches. Overall, there is a need for greater parking availability at the launches.
- **Non-motorized users (*n* = 23):** Many respondents would like to see boat launches better accommodate non-motorized users, as it was noted that non-motorized users commonly experience conflict and safety concerns launching with motorized users. People would like to see non-motorized launches established to promote non-motorized water sports and to enhance safety and access for these users.
- **Enforcement (*n* = 21):** Respondents expressed they would like to see greater regulation and enforcement at boat launches to better monitor safety, efficiency, flow of traffic, noise and to inspect for invasive species.
- **Environment (*n* = 18):** Respondents raised concern regarding the pollution and poor environmental impact caused by motorized watercrafts to Okanagan Lake. It was noted that people would like to see the protection and preservation of the lake made a higher priority, and for non-motorized activities to be encouraged.

Industry Workshop / March 29, 2022

For: Industry representatives

What: On March 29th, 2022, the City of Kelowna and Urban Systems, Ltd. hosted an Industry Workshop for the City's Municipal Boat Launch Operational Review and Management Plan

Workshop Purpose: To inform the development of a 15-year plan for City of Kelowna boat launches that reflects industry perspectives

Workshop Format: Virtual session held over 2 hours that consisted of a presentation and several breakout sessions to discuss the project, existing conditions and operations, maintenance, and cost recovery

In general, workshop attendees have a similar vision for City-owned boat launches, which relies on the core principles of **safety, efficiency, and fair cost recovery**. However, there are **differences in opinions on how to achieve these objectives** and whether there should be a focus on enhancing existing facilities, redistributing the demand along the lakeshore by increased boat launch supply, or both.

Workshop participants generally agreed that the City's role should continue to own, operate, and maintain the existing boat launches and to ensure that they meet the user's expectations for the level of service. Additional **areas for improvement** include **improved parking, signage, education, and enforcement**. There may be a role for the provision of land for private operation, which provides an opportunity for redistribution of demand.

Workshop attendees expressed interest in being engaged further to discuss the draft plan and on the detailed design of improvements in future phases.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Q: What is your connection to the City's boat launches?

There are many different types of commercial users of City-owned boat launches, which fit primarily into the following categories:

- Seasonal use, with occasional use for repairs
- Daily use
- Other: tourism promotion

In general, participants agreed with the usage data presented and were in alignment with the commercial user experience.

Overall Primary Concerns

- Poor condition of facilities
- Access to launches
- Boat launches can't support current demand
- High tensions during busy times can lead to conflict
- Lack of on-site rules or best practices enforcement
- High water traffic between motorized and non-motorized users and airplanes in the vicinity of the aviation bay
- Some boats taking a long time to launch, which impacts overall flow

Cook Road²

- Installation of a groyne may reduce the need for dredging

Sutherland Bay

- Difficult to use due to water depth, need for dredging
- Requires a dock for loading / unloading

Water Street

- Availability of on-site or proximity parking
- Only location to launch a large boat
- High pedestrian area, safety challenges
- Busy with boat and pedestrian traffic
- Not optimal for high commercial use as there are multiple user conflicts
- Heavy use from boat rental companies
- Could benefit to be remodeled like Cook Road
- Personal watercraft left unattended on non-motorized side all day, which impacts non-motorized use
- Houseboats often tied up for >30 min., which impact use for others

Q: What trends have you seen in demand for boat launches over time?

In general, participants agreed that boat launch use is at an **all-time high** and increased density with residents and tourists in the downtown core presents challenges, in particular, for the Water Street boat launch. There is interest in decentralizing lake access with improvements being made to Sutherland Bay or the creation of additional launches at the north end of the city.

² It should be noted that there were limited challenges shared by workshop participants with regards to the Cook Road boat launch. In general, people like some of the changes that have been implemented here and could serve as a model for other launches.

OPERATIONS, MAINTENANCE & COST RECOVERY

Q: How should the costs to maintain and upgrade boat launches be allocated?

- Strong support for user pay concept; frequency and time spent are important considerations
- Everyone should pay for the use of the docks as they are a City asset used by all
- Consider priority use for commercial operators if they are paying more

Q: Where else could additional revenue come from?

- Annual launch pass for locals
- Idea of charging non-locals higher rates might be difficult to manage

Q: What should be the City's role in the provision and operation of boat launches?

- Infrastructure improvements and providing additional launches
- On-site attendant to collect launch fees and direct use
- Enforcement, education, and signage
- Overall control of boating facilities (private control may limit lake access for many)
- Provision of parking
- Provision of land in a new location for a private operator, which may disperse the overall use

Q: What should be the private sector's role in the provision and operation of boat launches?

- Commercial operator collective / 3rd party manager to help manage the asset

Intergovernmental Workshop / April 26, 2022

For: Intergovernmental Partners

What: On April 26th, 2022, the City of Kelowna and Urban Systems, Ltd. hosted an Intergovernmental Workshop for the City's Municipal Boat Launch Operational Review and Management Plan

Workshop Purpose: To connect with inter-governmental partners and seek their perspectives on Central Okanagan boat launches and to inform about the development of a 15-year plan for City of Kelowna's boat launches.

Workshop Format: Virtual session held over 1.5 hours that consisted of a presentation and open discussion.

Observationally, the **demand for boat launches has increased significantly**; workshop attendees indicated concerns over the potential for boating spillover into neighboring jurisdictions with the implementation of the 15-year plan. Participants also highlighted the need to discuss overall lake capacity and use by boats as improvements to boat launches take place.

Several key topics emerged through discussion including options for on-water moorage to address the commercialization of boat launches. However, issues were also raised with this approach such as potential risk to sensitive habitats and challenges with creating access to mooring locations. There are also concerns that increasing capacity could induce further demand and exacerbate existing environmental issues. As the City of Kelowna and other jurisdictions consider boat launch redevelopment, there should be a mechanism in place to address **environmental issues** such as invasive species.

Overall, attendees were in agreement that a **regional approach** would create the most value to align jurisdictional objectives and ensure that gaps are not created with a lack of coordination. A high level of engagement was desired from other jurisdictional partners in the preparation and development of the plan.

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

Q: What trends have you seen in demand for boat launches in your location?

Workshop attendees noted:

- High commercial traffic
- Facilities being at capacity and experiencing parking challenges
- Environmental concerns with increased boating activities on Wood / Kalamalka Lake could add to the demand at alternative boat launches in the area (Kelowna and West Kelowna)

- Closures of on-water moorage for commercial operators at the Eldorado Boat Launch Marina will add to the demand at boat launches or alternative moorage options

Q: How are you funding your boat launch operations, maintenance and capital improvements in your region?

- Not directly funding boat launch operations other than through parks services fees; no dedicated funding for capital improvements and operations
 - However, looking at the exploring a fee structure
- Purchasing private lakefront property to add to the boat launch supply would be expensive and difficult; lots of areas along the lakeshore are residential, which poses problems with disruption

Q: As the City of Kelowna develops their 15-year plan, what approaches would you support? Do you have any questions or concerns about the 15-year plan?

Several themes arose from this conversation. They have been summarized below.

Kelowna Fee Structures Impacting Neighbouring Jurisdictions

- Concerns regarding commercial operators moving outside of the Kelowna area to avoid paying boat launch fees, which impacts neighbouring jurisdictions
- Call for a coordinated approach to combat unintended shifts in use

Exploring Moorage as an Option to Alleviate Use at Existing Boat Launches

- On-water moorage might be a way to reduce the demand at boat launches, but there are environmental, access, parking and traffic-related challenges in rural neighbourhoods associated with this option
- Challenging experiences with moorage several years ago were discussed
- Difficult to regulate

Environmental Considerations

- With any construction or development of launches, protecting the environment should be at the forefront
- Spawning beds for Kokanee populations need to be protected
- Need to consider zebra mussel inspections and decontamination facilities at boat launches

Weighing Lake Access (or Demand) Against Environmental Impacts

- Consider truly understanding the environmental impacts as we improve boat access to regional lakes

- Consider whether our decisions around operations and maintenance aren't solely financially driven; ask, "What is the capacity of our lake?" and how do we weight our environmental responsibilities with enhancing public access through launch improvement
- Existing fee structures can temper demand
- Boat launches are vulnerable to zebra mussels, which may be a mechanism to control launch demand

Other Ideas

- High-rise boat storage facilities: this might be interesting to explore to alleviate parking challenges associated with launches
- Using 2021 depth data to help plan water infrastructure.

Q: Is there a benefit or desire for a coordinated approach?

- Overall, there was strong support for a coordinated, regional approach
- Coordination will help control zebra mussel infestation and help to support other environmental considerations such as fish and fish habitats
- Coordination will also help to control lake access behaviour of commercial boat operators

Q: What level of involvement would you like with this plan going forward?

- Workshop attendees would like to be informed throughout this process
- There is interest in formulating a model for communities that aligns with the CoK model
- Keeping intergovernmental partners informed will be an opportunity to bridge the gap between what is happening on land and water