

Story Mill Online Survey

Overview and Key Findings

February 2013

For four weeks over the holiday season, we invited people interested in our Story Mill project to give us their views on the potential uses of the site through an online survey. 690 surveys were completed, and although the methodology does not lead to results that are statistically significant for the residents of Bozeman – and cannot be guaranteed to reflect the views of everyone in the community – it is an excellent response and a great basis for the planning process for the future of Story Mill.

All the data tables from the survey are included in the appendix to this brief overview.

Who responded?

97% of respondents come from Gallatin County, with 72% living within Bozeman. Within the city, 40% live in the north part of town, and 63% do not have any children at home.

Park and trail usage is mixed – 60% use them very frequently, with nearly 5% visiting less than once a year. For the Story Mill Spur Trail specifically, 30% use it at least once a month, while 15% have never used the trail at all.

Key Findings

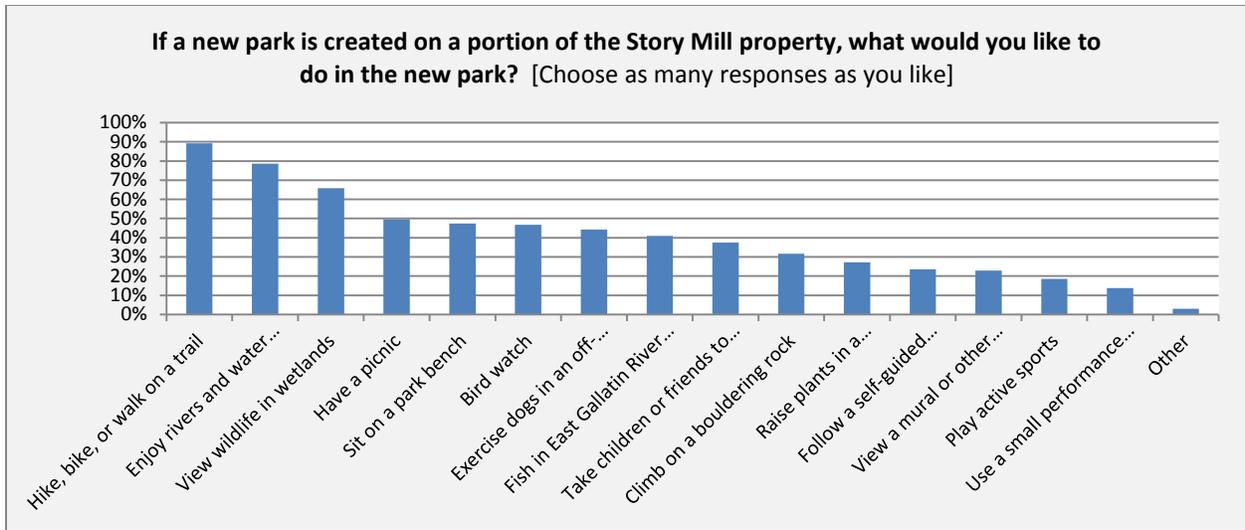
There is enthusiastic support for creating a nature sanctuary park at the Story Mill site, and the respondents supported an equally diverse number of activities they would like to enjoy there. Only 20 of the responders voiced significant concerns about the project, with a handful saying the site should be developed rather than turned into a park.

For both future use and activities, responders were given a list of options to rank (any and all of which could be ranked highest or lowest priority) and the opportunity to add their own ideas.

The top usage options were: **enhance trail connections** along the Story Mill spur; restore wetlands to **benefit water quality**; create a **new, natural area park** for the city and create a **nature sanctuary**.

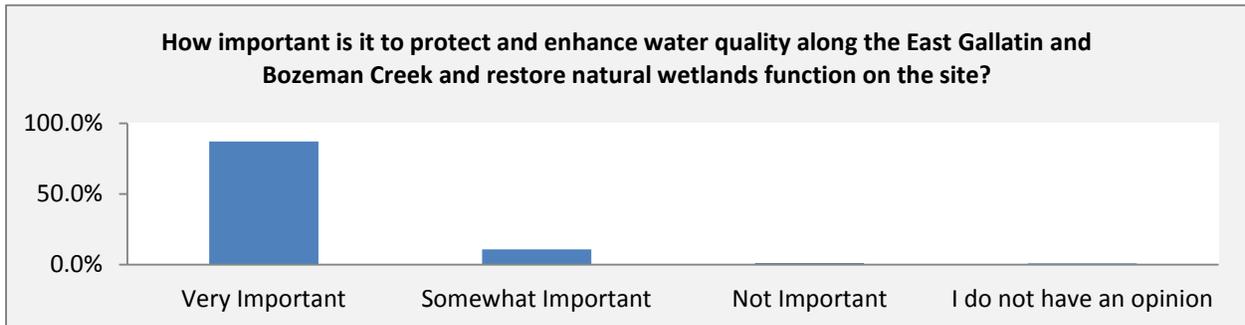
The most suggested additional facility was rest rooms, added by 34 responders, followed by signage and equestrian amenities.

The top activities looked for in a new park were: to hike, bike or walk on a trail; enjoy rivers and water features; or view wildlife in wetlands.



The most popular ‘write-in’ activity was soccer, suggested by 57 people, with widespread support for a multi-purpose playing field suitable for everything from lacrosse to ultimate frisbee.

In response to questions about specific uses, 90% agreed that it is very important to protect and enhance water quality and restore wetlands.



60%, when asked what kind of community gardening would be appropriate, voted in favor of an educational farm linked to local schools, and 56% answered yes to a proposal to redevelop a 24 acre site with affordable, energy-efficient housing – although nearly 20% indicated they need more information.

Conclusion and Next Steps

The results of this survey are very positive, and it is clear that there is real enthusiasm for making the Story Mill property into a multi-purpose outdoor park that is open to everyone.

The Trust for Public Land will present these results at a public workshop in Bozeman on February 7th and will incorporate the community’s ideas into a master plan for the Story Mill site that includes a proposal for a new city park.

For further information please contact our project manager, Maddy Pope, at maddy.pope@tpl.org