



Lowell and South Pool Visioning Survey

Summary and Analysis

Overview

The concurrent and identical Lowell and South visioning surveys were online and open to the public from February 27 through March 28, 2022. The South Pool survey received 2,167 responses and the Lowell Pool survey received 1,869 responses. These surveys were designed to collect input regarding the public's desired future for each of these two community assets. The survey was distributed online at the City of Boise webpage and as a paper copy upon request.

Whenever possible this analysis groups the results from the two surveys into one set of key findings.

Key Themes

Analysis of survey responses from both surveys resulted in the following key themes.

1. The Lowell and South Pools are beloved community assets that serve both a functional community need and celebrate a part of Boise's rich history.
2. Renovating and re-opening the pools was by far the most supported scenario amongst all survey respondents. The degree to which respondents would like to see additional amenities and improvements made during renovations was less clear-cut and highlights an opportunity for continued community conversations around this topic.
3. Ensuring that the Lowell and South Pools are accessible to everyone regardless of their demographics and/or ability was important to a wide range of survey respondents.
4. The community is eager for these pools to re-open. Many respondents indicated that the pool closure in 2020 was a major loss for their families and neighbors.
5. The unique architecture and history of these pools is an important part of Boise's character and should be preserved and celebrated if at all possible.



Respondent Information

Both the Lowell and South surveys received a diverse range of respondent participation. The following section highlights some important demographic information for each survey.

Lowell

- **Age** – all age groups are represented in the survey responses, however there was an over representation of individuals between the ages of 30-50 (52%) and an underrepresentation of youth 20 years of age or younger (2%).
- **Race** – Lowell survey respondents reflect a racial distribution similar to that of Boise's racial composition with a majority of respondents (86%) identifying as white.
- **Household income** – Lowell survey respondents have household incomes that skew slightly higher than Boise's median household income (\$63,778). 44% of Lowell respondents indicated a household income over \$100,000 annually, while only 6% of respondents indicated a household income under \$30,000 annually.
- **Homeownership** – a majority of respondents (82%) indicated that they own their home, compared to the citywide homeownership rate of 61%.
- **Respondents with no children at home** – 45% of respondents indicated that they did not have children living at home.
- **Geographic location** – responses to the Lowell survey came in from all around Boise and the Treasure Valley. 47% of respondents lived in 83702 (North End, Highlands) and 27% lived in 83703 (Sunset, Collister, Quail Ridge).
- **Annual pool use** – when the pools were open 25% of respondents indicated that they did not use the pool, 15% used the pool 1-2 times annually, and the remaining 60% indicated that they used the pool 3 or more times each year.

South

- **Age** – all age groups are represented in the survey responses, however there was an over representation of individuals between the ages of 30-50 (50%) and an underrepresentation of youth 20 years of age or younger (3%).
- **Race** – South survey respondents reflect a racial distribution similar to that of Boise's racial composition with a majority of respondents (84%) identifying as white.
- **Household income** – Survey respondents indicated a fairly even distribution of household incomes with 41% of respondent indicating an annual household income of under \$75,000 and 46% over \$75,000, with 13% of respondents choosing to not answer this question.
- **Homeownership** – a majority of respondents (73%) indicated that they own their home, compared to the citywide homeownership rate of 61%.
- **Respondents with no children at home** – 47% of respondents indicated that they did not have children living at home.

- **Geographic location** – The largest group of respondents (42%) lived in 83705 (Vista, Hillcrest, Depot Bench) with the remaining respondents distributed in small amounts throughout the Treasure Valley.
- **Annual Pool Use** - when the pools were open 33% of respondents indicated that they did not use the pool, 15% used the pool 1-2 times annually and the remaining 52% indicated that they used the pool 3 or more times each year.

Guiding Values

Respondents were asked to identify which value-based statements they believed should be considered when Boise Parks and Recreation makes decisions. The top identified guiding values between the two surveys were:

1. **Accessibility** – Boise's neighborhood pools should be accessible to all members of the community regardless of their race, age, income, physical ability, or geographic location
2. **Equity and Inclusion:** Boise's neighborhood pools should be programmed and designed so that any resident can easily participate.
3. **Maintenance and Upkeep:** Investments into ongoing maintenance of Boise's neighborhood pools are critical to their long-term value to our community.
4. **Health and Safety:** Public health and safety are of highest importance when making investments in public spaces and infrastructure.

Barriers to Pool Use

Respondents who indicated that they used the pools two or fewer times per year identified the following primary reasons and barriers to access.

Lowell Pool

1. Did not want to visit the pool (22%)
2. Did not live in Boise when the pool was open (21%)
3. Little or no shade at the pool (18%)
4. Pool was too small (14%)
5. Pool was not friendly to young children (14%)

South Pool

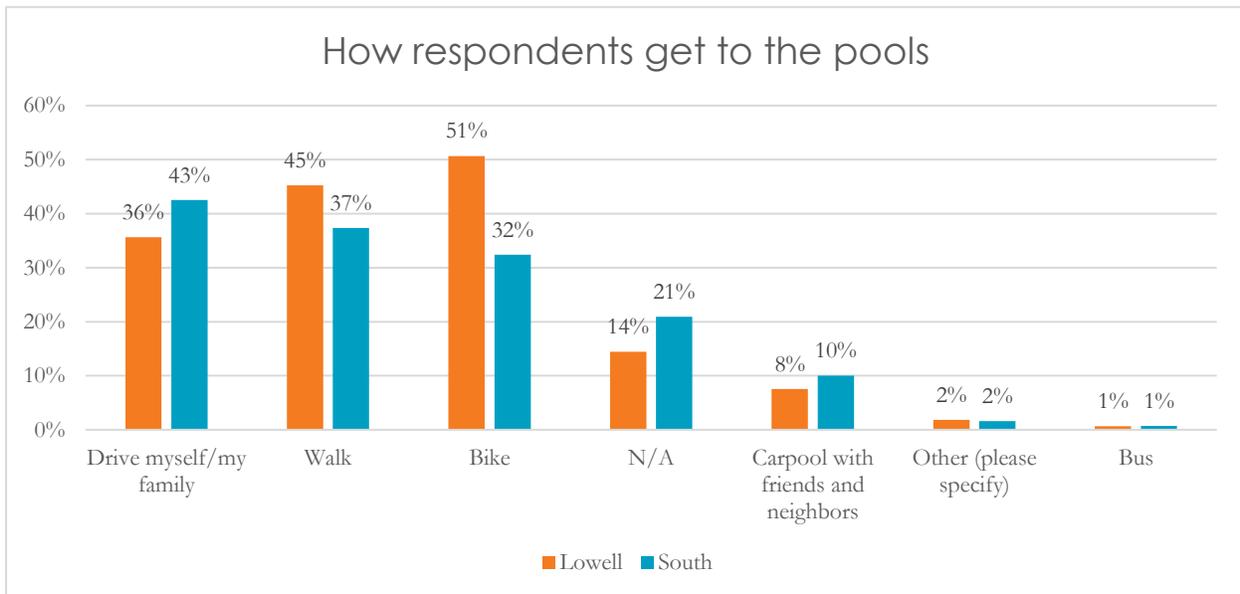
1. There were other pools closer to my home (34%)
2. Did not want to visit the pool (24%)
3. Did not live in Boise when the pool was open (17%)
4. Little or no shade at the pool (15%)
5. Pool was too small (14%)

A number of respondents did not actively want to utilize the pool but recognized the value of these important neighborhood assets. Respondents at South indicated a

greater likelihood to utilize other pool resources outside of the neighborhood including larger regional destination pools including Ivywild and the Boise Aquatic Center. Additionally, some respondents chose not to utilize the pools because of safety concerns, particularly for young children.

Transportation to Pools

The table below highlights the transportation methods respondents were using to access the pools. Both pools were often accessed by individuals biking and walking, however South had a larger percentage of respondents who were driving to the pools compared to other means.



What do respondents love most about the Lowell and South Pool?

Survey respondents loved numerous attributes and qualities of the Lowell and South Pools. The following list represents commonly heard themes from amongst open-ended survey responses related to things that respondents loved most.

- **Location** – These pools are conveniently located for neighborhood resident use. Kids were able to walk and bike safely to these pools and they serve as important community gather locations.
- **Unique history and architectural style** – Respondents from both surveys indicated that these pools contributed to the character of the neighborhood and that the history and architectural style made the neighborhood feel more unique and identifiable. Additionally, many respondents highlighted how these pools were important to the history of the neighborhood and many respondents requested that the City preserve these as historical sites if at all possible. The Art Deco

entrance and the 2-story above ground pool design were generally well liked by survey participants.

- **Neighborhood stories and memories** – These pools were foundational for many in creating positive summertime memories for themselves and their families. Dozens of respondents shared fond memories and stories of these pools, which was often accompanied by a hope that future generations would be able to have this same kind experience at the pool.
- **Community gathering space** – These pools offer an important place for the community to get to know each other and for neighbors to build personal connections.
- **Simplicity in form and function** – Many respondents indicated that they loved these pools for their simplicity. These pools do not have many of the flashy amenities of more modern pool facilities, but that the simple function provides an important and unique experience for kids and families.
- **Skill development** – Many respondents indicated that these pools serve a vital educational role to neighborhood children who would possibly not have other opportunities to learn to swim and practice water safety.

Opportunities for Improvement

While these pools were widely considered by survey respondents to be highly regarded community assets, they also identified a number of improvements that would enhance the form and function of these pools. The most commonly cited areas for improvement included:

- Structural updates to meet ADA requirements and code
- Improved accessibility for all users regardless of age and ability
- Safety improvements including ways to make the pool more accessible to very young children (zero depth pool entry)
- Expanded deck and shade structures that would make it easier and more comfortable for parents to be at the pool while their kids were swimming
- A pool heater that would allow the pool to be more functional outside of the warmest months
- Improvements to the restroom and locker room facilities
- Additional programming for kids and adults – including designated adult swim times and expanded operational hours
- Additional parking for cars and bicycles
- Landscaping improvements to make the area feel more welcoming
- More affordable swimming passes

Priority Scenarios

Survey respondents were presented with 8 possible site scenarios and were asked to select their top preference for the future of the pool. The final preferred site scenarios were nearly identical in ranking between the two pools and are reflected in the list below (shown in descending order with the highest priority at the top of the list).

Proposed Site Scenario	Percent Lowell	Percent South
Renovate the pool to address deficiencies and add additional amenities like a larger back deck, zero depth entry and more accessible entrances, potentially at the rear of the structure. This scenario would require substantial alterations to the facility, but the historic front of the pool could possibly be retained.	34.92%	32.53%
Renovate the pool to address deficiencies and reopen the pool with minimal structural changes – this scenario would retain as much of the historic structure as possible while still allowing for the pool to reopen. ADA (access for people with disabilities) updates would still be required which could alter the structure.	29.03%	29.74%
Take down the existing pool and build a new neighborhood pool at the current location. This scenario would create an updated pool at the existing site, which would be constrained by the size of the property.	10.77%	10.73%
Renovate and re-open the pool by any means within the city's budget. This option indicates a preference for opening the pool regardless of what changes need to happen to the existing structure.	10.17%	8.89%
Take down the existing pool and build a new neighborhood pool at a new location that would potentially allow for a larger pool with more amenities.	7.32%	6.71%
Take down the existing pool and completely reimagine the space. The reimagined site could be anything from a park, a community garden or other public place.	2.32%	4.75%
I need more information to decide.	4.22%	4.42%
Retain the pool exactly as it is today as a historic structure and make no changes – the pool could not reopen in this scenario.	1.25%	2.24%

Funding Priorities

Recognizing that the City of Boise does not have an unlimited budget to spend on these pool projects, the survey asked respondents to weigh the importance of various expenditures that could be related to the renovation or redevelopment of these pool sites. The following list shows the top 6 funding priorities as identified by the survey respondents from both the Lowell and South Pool Survey.

1. Updates that make the pool easily accessible for all residents
2. Preservation of the Art Deco facility entrance and lettering
3. Family friendly improvements for all ages and swimming abilities

4. Preservation of the historic structure and exterior
5. Improvements to the locker rooms and restrooms
6. Expansion of the pool deck to allow for additional uses/users

Next Steps

This survey played a vital role in connecting with the broader community about their hopes and desires for these unique pools. The City of Boise team will continue to engage the public throughout this development process, with the next opportunity coming in the form of two community workshops (1 for each pool site) that will focus on narrowing in on priorities and aspirations.