

Sylvan Lake Provincial Park

Proposed Boundary Amendment



Background

Sylvan Lake Provincial Park is in central Alberta, approximately 25 km west of Red Deer along Highway 11. The provincial park is entirely within the town limits of Sylvan Lake. Its key feature is a 1.6 km stretch of sand and grass beach along the southwest shore of Sylvan Lake. The provincial park is 85.291 hectares, the majority of which is underwater lake bed and shore (79 hectares) adjacent to the beach.

The current provincial park was established in 1980 consisting of a quiet beach and lake-front along the southwest shore of Sylvan Lake. A park was initially established in this location in the early 1930's by Alberta Land and Forests, but was transferred to the Town of Sylvan Lake, at its request, in the early 1960's. The provincial park was re-established by the province in its current location in 1980, again at the request of the town, with minor amendments to park boundaries in 1991 and 1992.

The intent of provincial parks is to protect the natural environment and provide outdoor recreation, tourism and education opportunities that depend upon and are compatible with the environmental values of the park. Sylvan Lake Provincial Park was initially established by the province to provide lake-based recreation and it has always been an extremely popular beach and lakeshore recreation site. Although Sylvan Lake is currently designated as a provincial park, it has no unique or provincially significant natural values and serves primarily as a highly developed urban park and tourism amenity.

Recreational Values

Sylvan Lake Provincial Park is a recreation-focused day-use park for visitors seeking an urban beach or waterfront experience. The Town of Sylvan Lake hosts over 1 million visitors a year, many of whom use the park and commercial lakeshore area as their primary destination. The provincial park also functions as an all-season urban park for the more than 11,000 permanent residents of Sylvan Lake.



Popular activities at the provincial park include picnicking, sunbathing, swimming and water-skiing. Beach volleyball tournaments, dragon boat racing, a triathlon and other community events are also hosted at the jetty within the park boundaries. Popular winter recreation includes a community skating rink on the lake and a number of special events that are hosted by the town.

Background for proposed boundary amendments to Sylvan Lake Provincial Park

Urban development and population growth have gradually transformed the beach and lake front at Sylvan Lake Provincial Park into a facility that functions both as a highly developed summer resort and an all-season urban park.

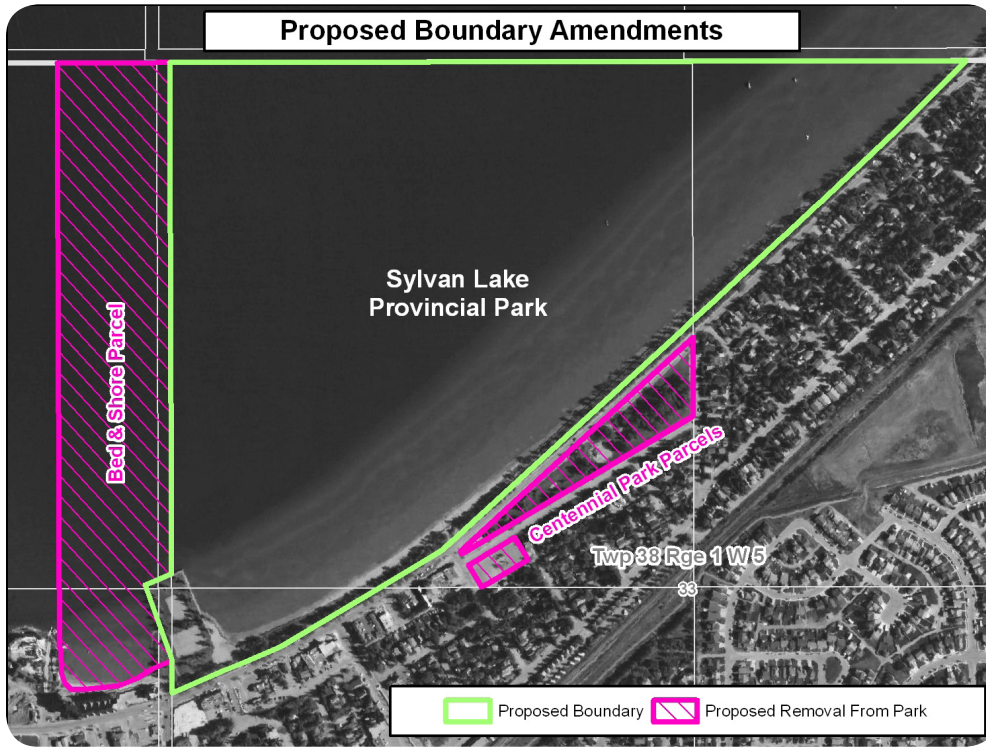
In response to that growth, the Town of Sylvan Lake has proposed a major redevelopment of Lakeshore Drive to create an urban public waterfront that could affect several parcels of land currently contained within the provincial park. The Lakeshore Drive development proposal marks a clear departure from the intended purpose of Sylvan Lake Provincial Park and the mandate of the Parks Division of Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation with its vision that "Alberta's parks inspire people to discover, value and enjoy the natural world and the benefits it provides for current and future generations". As a result, the province is considering removing two parcels of land within current Sylvan



Lake Provincial Park boundaries: a portion of the lake bed and shore in front of Chateau Suites and the parcel of land known as "Centennial Park". The proposed park boundary changes would allow the Town of Sylvan Lake the flexibility to pursue its lakeshore redevelopment plans.

The removal of these two parcels of land will not affect the management, administration, access or permitted activities in the rest of Sylvan Lake Provincial Park. Access and use within the boundaries of the park would continue to be managed under the authority of the Parks Act by Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation.

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Parcel 1: Bed and Shore

The first parcel consists of the lake bed and shore in front of Chateau Suites at the western most edge of the park, to the west of the jetty. It includes the area covered by water (lake bed) as well as the portions of the lake bed which are exposed when water levels are low (shore). In this case, the underwater parcel is not needed for provincial park purposes and is already surrounded by commercial development on two sides. If removed from the park, the bed

and shore parcel would be considered public land, and would be subject to the Public Lands Act, and be managed by the province accordingly.

Although park-specific restrictions would be removed, approvals would be required from the provincial government (Alberta Sustainable Resource Development, Alberta Environment) and the federal Department of Fisheries & Oceans for any activity that may disturb the bed and shore of the lake, or impact the aquatic environment. This parcel

also falls within municipal limits, and would be subject to municipal development guidelines and bylaws.

Parcel 2: Centennial Park

The second parcel of land is “Centennial Park”. In 2007, the Town of Sylvan Lake expressed its interest in acquiring jurisdictional authority for this parcel of land from the province. The Town of Sylvan Lake identified this parcel as a key piece of land needed to implement its redevelopment plan. Removing this parcel from the provincial park system is necessary in order for the Town to proceed with its plans.

If removed from the park, the Centennial Park lands would be available for transfer from the province to the Town of Sylvan Lake. Activities and development would be managed according to the town’s bylaws and development plans, as long as the lands remain available to the public for recreation purposes.

Your Input / What do you think?

We want to hear your thoughts about these proposed changes. Send in your comments, suggestions and concerns by clicking on the online comment button below, or you can mail in your feedback to the address below.

Comments on the proposed boundary amendments will be collected until April 18th, 2009.

By Mail:

Sylvan Lake
Boundary Amendment Proposal
2nd floor, Oxbridge Place
9820-106 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2J6

What happens after this consultation?

A decision regarding the proposal to remove these two parcels of land from Sylvan Lake Provincial Park will be made after the 60 day consultation period ends on April 18, 2009, and once all comments have been considered.

A summary of public comments and the resulting proposed action(s) will be posted on www.albertaparks.ca once a decision has been reached.

***Disclaimer:** We thank you for providing your input. Those who submit feedback will not be contacted individually regarding their submission.