What We Heard

Landmark Sign
October 2026

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Photo credit: Alick Tsui

Disclaimer

- This document provides a summary of what was heard from participants during this engagement process. It is not meant to reflect the specific details of each submission word-for-word.
- What We Heard documents are not intended to include recommendations. Staff will use the information gathered through public engagement, and other sources as required, to prepare recommendations for senior staff and/or Council to consider.
- The City produces a What We Heard document for every City-led public engagement project. This collected commentary is shared with the community to ensure we heard you correctly.
- The City protects the privacy of those who provide feedback as per Access to Information and Privacy legislation.
- The full scope of commentary is used by city staff and Council to help inform recommendations and decisions.
- If individuals provided specific examples or information that could potentially be identifiable, it is not included here but is shared with project staff.

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Additional Information

- A brief summary of What We Heard is available on the project page.
- To request an alternate accessible format, please contact engage@stjohns.ca

Context

- The City of St. John's procured a landmark sign in 2025 as a legacy item for the 2025 Canada Games, which brought thousands of visitors to the province.
- The sign was originally proposed for Bannerman Park; however, following public feedback, the City committed to undertaking public engagement before determining a permanent location.
- During the engagement period (Aug-Sept 2026), the sign was temporarily displayed near the Mary Brown's Centre to allow residents and visitors to experience it and provide feedback on its future location.

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Background

- Landmark signs are common attractions in cities across Canada and around the world and are often located in highly visible areas that attract residents and visitors.
- Participants were invited to share ideas and suggestions for the sign's permanent location, while recognizing that the location must be accessible, visible and located on City-owned land.
- Feedback collected through this process will help inform a future recommendation regarding the sign’s permanent location.

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Engagement and Communications

- Media release for public engagement issued on August 12, 2026, with coverage by all major outlets including streeters.
- Project page on EngageStJohns.ca
- Three newsletters from EngageStJohns.ca to an average of 4,849 registered users and followers throughout the engagement period.
- Three posts were shared on the City's social media channels. The highest-viewed post reached 125,065 unique viewers on Facebook and received 22,052 views on Instagram. Community members also shared numerous posts of their own.
- Twelve pop-up events on site promoting the methods of providing feedback and answering questions.

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Who Engaged

On EngageStJohns.ca

Total Visits: 2,435

Max. Visits per Day: 400

Aware Visitors (Unique visitors): 2,060

573 **Contributors** and 728 **Contributions**

82% of respondents online were from St. John's

Email/phone submissions: 55

Online Form tool:

536 Contributors

569 Contributions

Social Map tool:

63 Contributors

150 Contributions

Question and Answer tool:

6 Contributors

9 Contributions

What We Heard Highlights

- Accessibility, visibility, and tourism value were the most important factors participants identified when considering a permanent location for the landmark sign.
- The current location near City Hall/Mary Brown's Centre was the most frequently preferred location, with participants highlighting its central location, visibility, accessibility and popularity with residents and visitors.
- Many respondents supported alternative locations with scenic views and photo opportunities, including the waterfront, Signal Hill, Harbourside Park, Southside Hills, Quidi Vidi and other downtown locations.
- Respondents emphasized the importance of protecting parks, heritage areas, natural spaces, and neighbourhood character when selecting a permanent location for the sign.

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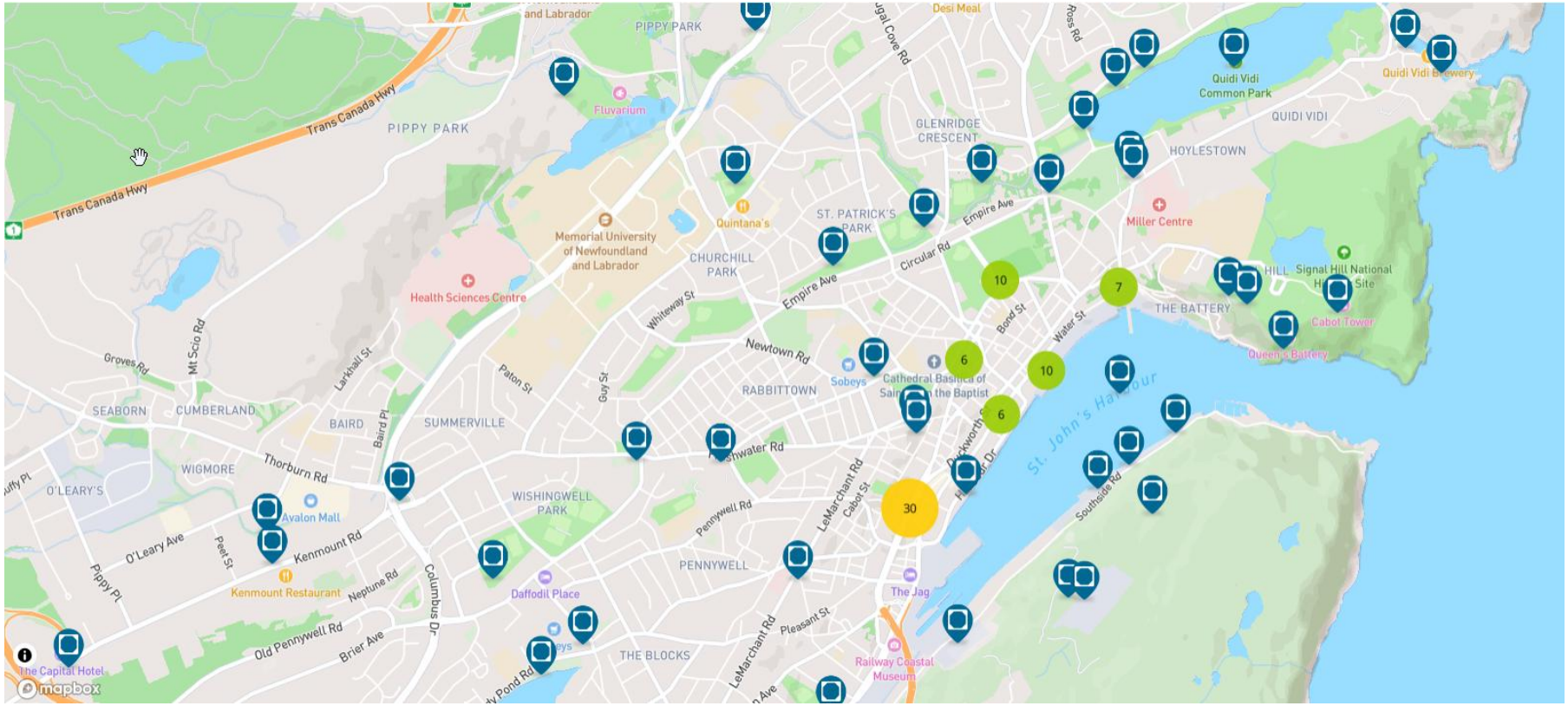
What We Heard Highlights

- Feedback also highlighted opportunities to improve the sign's appearance through landscaping, lighting and enhanced artwork, while addressing concerns related to vandalism, maintenance and long-term stewardship.
- While some participants raised concerns about project costs and priorities, many expressed enthusiasm about having a landmark sign in St. John's and its potential to support tourism and community pride.
- The majority of online respondents (74%) had previously visited and interacted with landmark signs in other cities.

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What We Heard on Map Tool

Participants were invited to place a pin on a map on EngageStJohns.ca to identify their preferred location for the landmark sign and explain the key reasons for their choice.



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What We Heard about Preferred Locations for the Landmark Sign

- The current location near City Hall/Mary Brown's Centre was the preferred location, with respondents citing its accessibility, visibility, central location and popularity with both residents and visitors.

- Other frequently suggested locations included Signal Hill, Harbourside Park, the waterfront, Southside Hills, Quidi Vidi, and various downtown locations, including the courthouse area, convention centre, George Street and the Pedestrian Mall.

- Respondents emphasized the importance of choosing a location that offers attractive photo opportunities, allows both sides of the sign to be viewed, and complements the surrounding area.

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What We Heard about Other Locations for the Landmark Sign

There were other locations identified by smaller numbers of people, these included the following:

- Sugar Loaf Road
- Major's Path
- Kenmount Road
- Portugal Cove Road
- Airport-area locations
- Trans-Canada Highway corridor
- Southlands Boulevard
- Confederation Building area
- Bowring Park
- Mundy Pond
- Military Road / Bannerman park area
- Rennies Mill Road
- Goulds
- Freshwater Road
- Crosbie Road
- Nagle's Place
- East White Hills Road
- Poplar Avenue
- Forest Road
- The Boulevard (Quidi Vidi area)

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Some suggestions were well outside the scope of St. John's and have not been included here.

What We Heard About Other Locations for the Landmark Sign

Participants could upvote or downvote locations suggested through the map tool. Some of the most frequently discussed scenic locations received more downvotes than upvotes overall.

- Waterfront locations received the highest level of opposition, with 134 downvotes and 70 upvotes.
- Bannerman Park / Military Road locations received 122 downvotes and 59 upvotes.
- Signal Hill / Battery locations received 36 downvotes and 14 upvotes.

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What We Heard About What Matters Most in Choosing a Location

- Accessibility and visibility were the most frequently identified priorities. Respondents wanted the sign to be easy to access on foot, by transit, and by vehicle, while also being highly visible and easy to photograph.

- Tourism and visitor experiences were important considerations, with many respondents supporting locations near the downtown core, cruise ship areas, and other destinations tourists frequent.

- Respondents emphasized that the sign should complement its surroundings and avoid negatively impacting parks, heritage sites, natural landscapes, wildlife areas, or residential neighbourhoods.

- Additional considerations included public safety, vandalism prevention, project costs, local history, community identity, scenic backdrops and photo opportunities.

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Additional Feedback and Suggestions

- Many respondents indicated they would like the sign to remain in its current location and suggested enhancing the existing setting through landscaping, public art, or improvements to the backdrop.
- Respondents expressed concerns about locating the sign in Bannerman Park, near historic landmarks, or within green spaces, emphasizing the importance of preserving the character of these areas.
- Safety, maintenance, and vandalism prevention were recurring themes, particularly if the sign remains in a highly visible or heavily visited location.
- Participants provided a variety of suggestions related to the sign's design and appearance, including improved lighting, enhanced colours, displaying more artwork, and improving the area surrounding the sign.
- Additional comments focused on accessibility, project costs, and potential alternative locations.

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Next Steps

- Release What We Heard
- Staff to make recommendations to Council
- Council to make decisions regarding the sign placement

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Stay Informed

Register for EngageStJohns.ca to receive notifications.

Updates will also be posted on the project page.

What We Heard is available in an alternate format if requested.



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