



# Liquor in Parks

Stakeholder Report Back: What we Heard

June 24, 2019

## Project overview

In response to public desire expressed in the Parks and Pathways Bylaw Engagement, Calgary Parks wanted to explore allowing liquor consumption at picnic sites in Calgary Parks. Allowed liquor use in parks would be strictly for picnic sites only, as per AGLC regulations which indicate liquor can only be consumed at assigned, designated picnic site, and can only be consumed with food.

## Engagement overview

Engagement questionnaire was available online at [engage.calgary.ca](http://engage.calgary.ca) between January 17<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019. Between the above noted time, the project page saw 28,443 visits of which 24,754 were unique visitors. Out of those who visited 12,376 individuals contributed some type of feedback through the participation tools. The total number of responses of feedback collected through the participation tool was 15,157. The number of visitors that visited the site for the first time within the date range above was 90.06%. or 22,293 individual visitors.

## What we asked

Here is the list of questions that participants were asked to provide input on as part of the engagement.

1. Which picnic sites in Calgary parks should allow liquor?
  - Only picnic sites in major parks should allow liquor
  - Only small number of picnic sites within a portion of a major park should allow liquor
  - All picnic sites/tables within our parks should allow liquor
  - Liquor should not be allowed at any picnic site
  - Other (please specify)
  
2. What are your biggest concerns about having liquor at park picnic sites? (check all that apply)
  - Increase in disorderly behavior may occur
  - Children are exposed to seeing liquor use
  - There may be safety concerns and an increase in The City's liability
  - Drinking and driving
  - Drinking before floating down the rivers
  - Damage to the park/environment
  - Not reflective of my religion or culture
  - No concerns
  - Other (please specify)



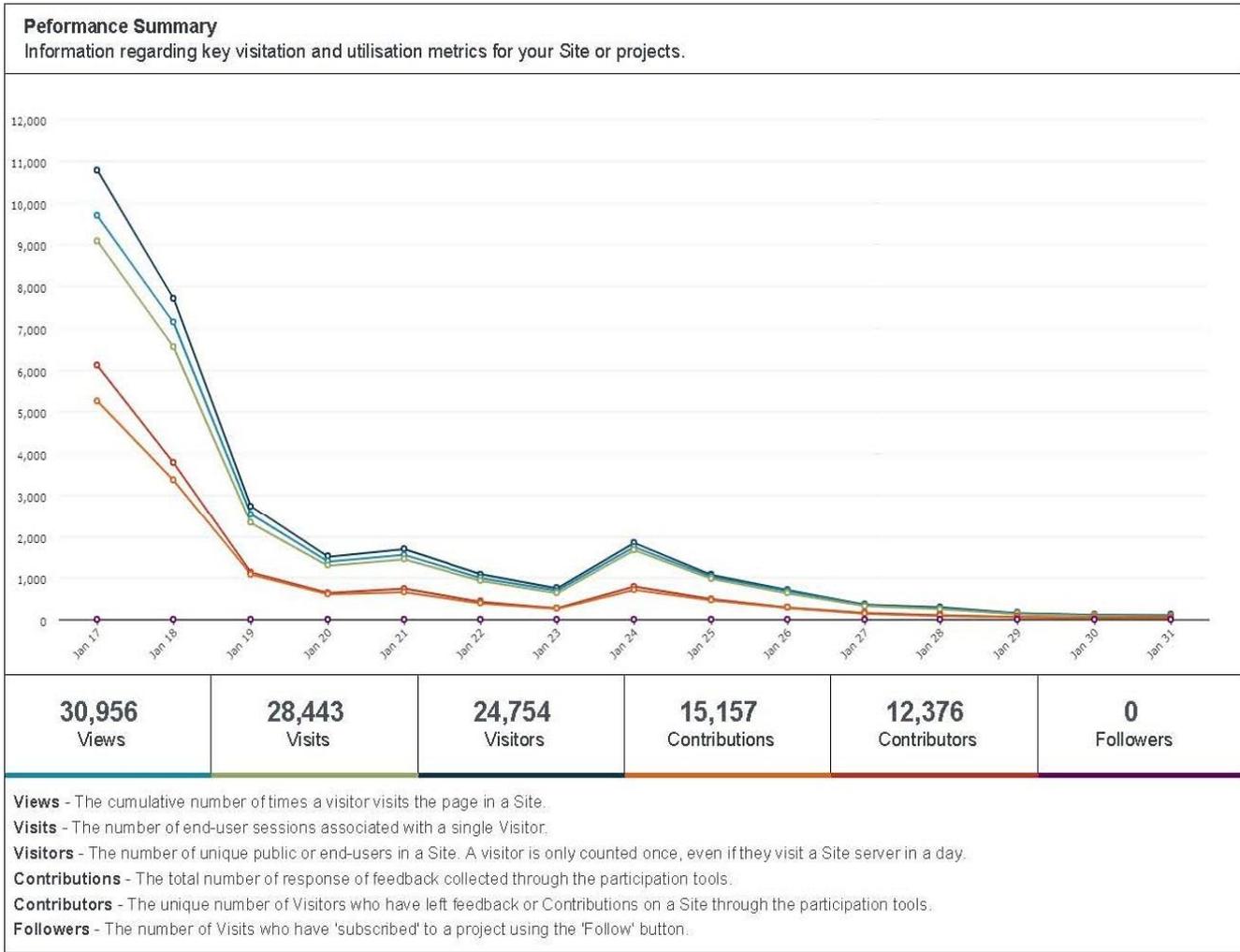
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3. What are the potential benefits you see to being able to consume liquor at park picnic sites? Please tell us why?
4. When booking a picnic site, would you choose one that allows Liquor consumption? Why yes, or why not?
5. When booking a picnic site, would you be willing to pay more to book one that allows liquor consumption? If yes, how much more would you be willing to pay?
6. Do you have any comments or concerns regarding consumption of liquor at designated picnic sites in parks?
7. What is your Postcode?

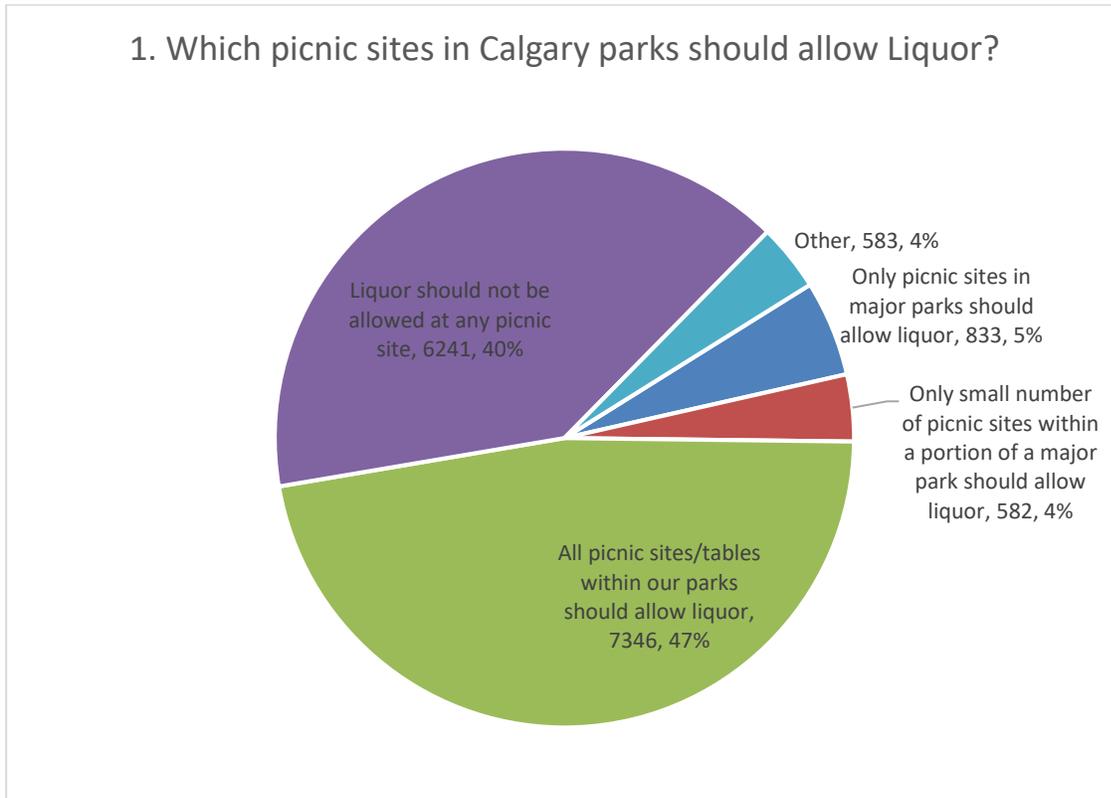
## Participation Numbers



## What we heard

The following is a summary of responses to the engagement questionnaire and is reflective of only those participants who self-selected to take part in this engagement between January 17<sup>th</sup> and January 31, 2019. These responses are not representative of all Calgarians and are not indicative of the opinions of all Calgarians.

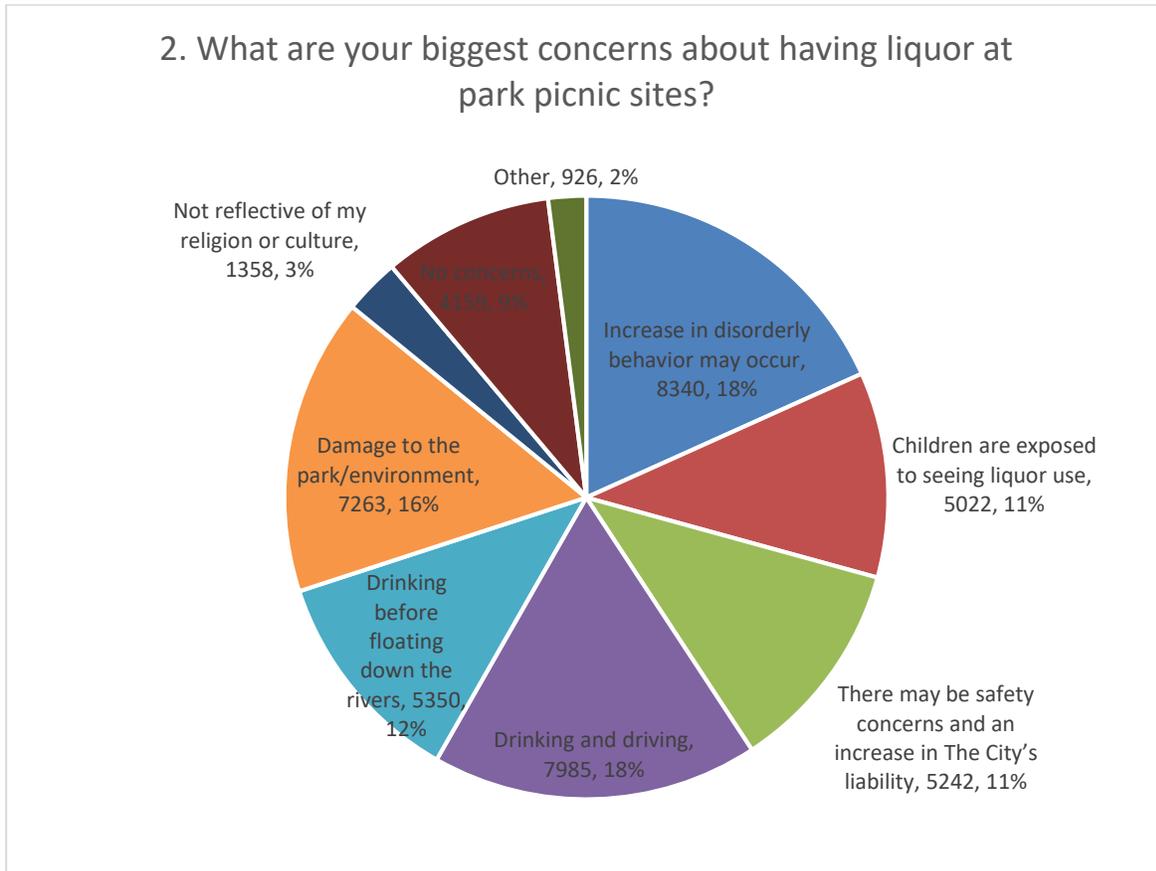
**Question One:**



In the category of “other” above; stakeholder comments were themed and they represent themes below:

- All Parks in City
- All areas in Parks
- All public areas
- Liquor should not be allowed
- Only parks near Public Transit
- Athletic parks (allow for use)

## Question Two



In the category of “other” above; stakeholder comments were themed and coded; their response was themed into the following themes below:

- Littering Concerns (Additional Recycling bins and Washrooms needed)
- Disruptive Behaviour and Disorderly Behaviour (i.e. public intoxication, noise, smoking)
- Increase in extra Policing and EMS (monitoring, policing the parks both need and a concern)
- Public Safety Issues (drinking and driving, danger to other park users, kid’s exposure to unruly behaviour)
- Would lead to cannabis legalization
- Normalizing the use isn’t the right direction for The City (poor example setting, impact on businesses)
- Addiction/Mental Health Problem (supporting the issue)



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- Underage drinking (concern)

### **Question Three**

The following are themes that represent top majority of responses that were captured, as benefits of liquor use in parks as seen by those who participated in the engagement questionnaire.

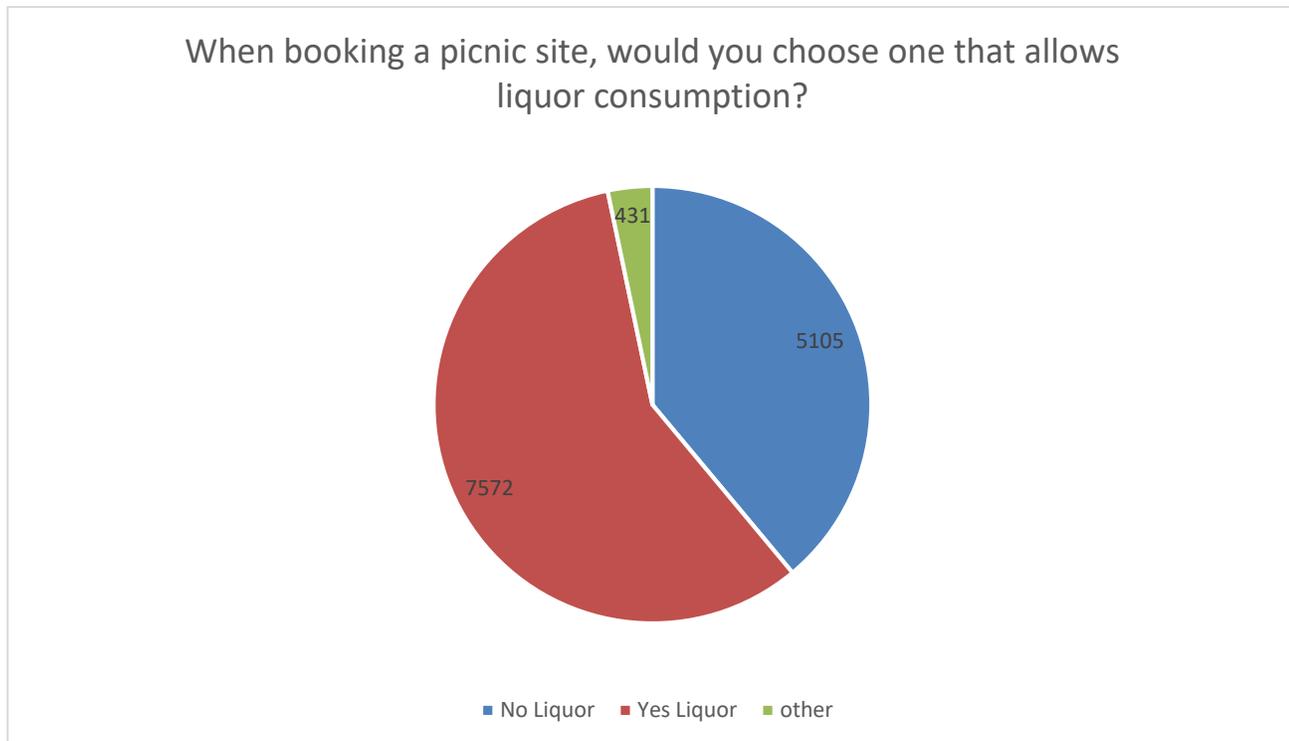
*What are the potential benefits you see to being able to consume liquor at park picnic sites? Please tell us why?*

- No benefit\*
- Normalize and regulate the public use of liquor (time to allow)
- Increase use of Park space (i.e. social outing)
- Increase in Social Interaction (re. individual quality of life)
- Complete and enjoyable experience (food and drink)

\*comments that supported the “no benefit” were collected (4319). Some participants used this opportunity/question to show disapproval.

## Question Four

When booking a picnic site, would you choose one that allows Liquor consumption? Why yes, or why not?



For those who have **answered “yes” to booking** a site that allows Liquor consumption, majority of their reasons were sorted in following themes.

- Nice to have (the option, flexibility, type of event)
- More enjoyable socialization/enhance experience
- Enjoyment/enhances food experience

For those who have **answered “no” to booking** a site that allows Liquor consumption, majority of their reasons were sorted in following themes.

- Unspecified reasons (“No” as a response)
- Overconsumption concern
- Bad example/exposure risk for children
- Inappropriate/Unnecessary for park setting
- Less family-friendly (parks and parks spaces)



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- Safety Concern

\*comments that supported the “no” and were collected and themes as unspecified reasons (879)

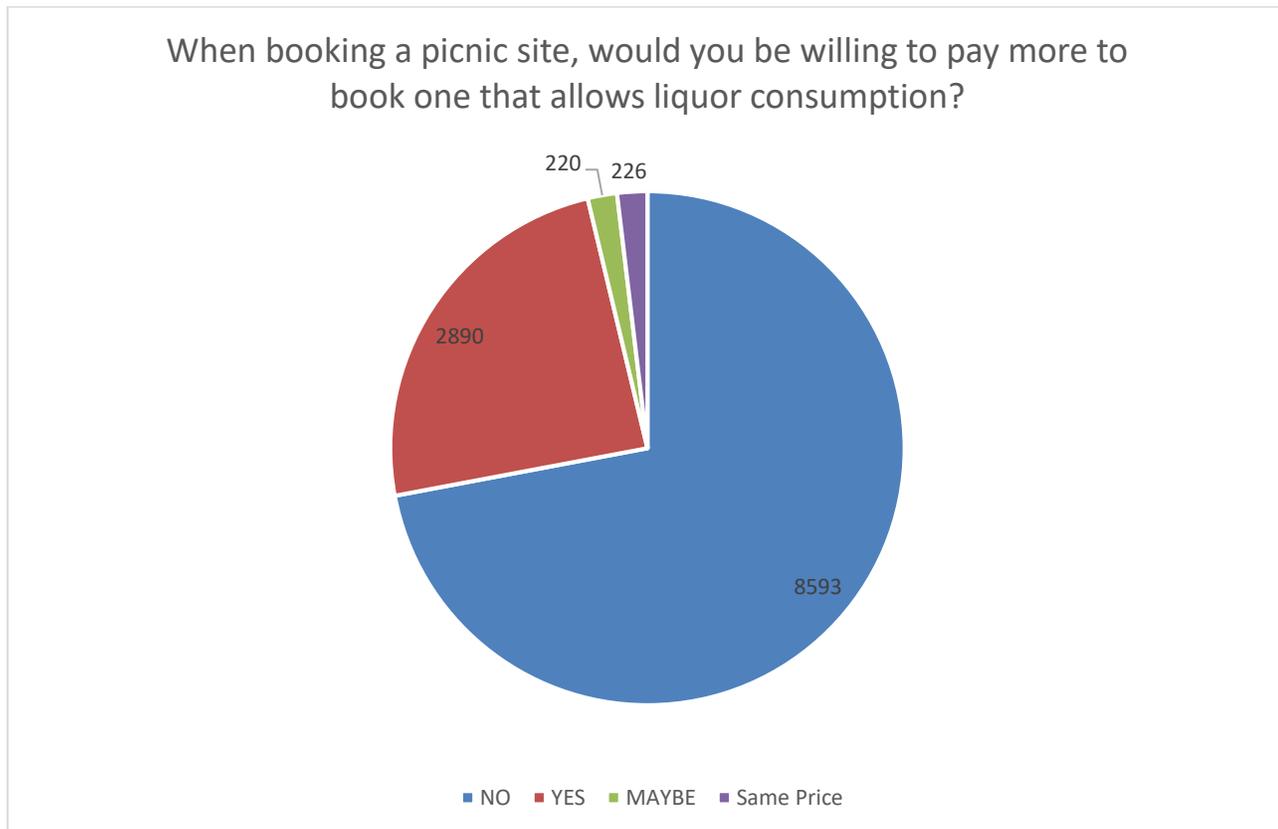


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## Question Five

When booking a picnic site, would you be willing to pay more to book one that allows liquor consumption? If yes, how much more would you be willing to pay?



A significant proportion (8,593) of those who participated in our engagement questionnaire have expressed disapproval with having to pay more to book a site that would allow liquor use. Around 226 participants have expressed that costs should stay the same (current booking cost of a picnic table in park) and around 2,890 participants have indicated that they would be willing to pay more (more than current booking) to book a site that allows for liquor use. When asked about how much they would be willing to pay, participants indicated ranges with a range between \$2-\$50 per site being the most common one. Around 592 comments were collected that could not be attributed to the question asked and were out of scope.



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## Question Six

We asked the following question as a catch all question. **Question 6:** Do you have any comments or concerns regarding consumption of liquor at designated picnic sites in parks?

Stakeholder input was themed in the following areas: Support and Positive Consequences, Opposed and Negative Comments, Enforcement, Vulnerable Populations, Consistency and Suggestions.

### Support and Positive Consequences

- No concerns/overdue/people will be responsible/choice
- Business Opportunity
- Educate/model appropriate alcohol consumption
- Already happening
- Could have urban vitality/tourism benefits
- Need to make sure enough amenities are available (e.g. washrooms, recycling/garbage bins)
- Works well elsewhere

### Opposed and Negative Comments

- Concerned about people getting out of control/irresponsible alcohol use/ Danger to others
- Increase underage drinking
- Concerns about drinking and driving/floating/swimming
- Don't like the idea
- No benefits/unnecessary
- Parks as family spaces, alcohol doesn't fit (?)

### Enforcement

- Enforcement would be difficult/expensive
- Enforce unwanted behaviours rather than disallowing drinking altogether
- Entrapment

### Vulnerable Populations

- Homeless/vagrancy/bottle pickers
- Inclusion considerations (by including the use, you are excluding certain populations and segments of population from parks)
- Contributing to/perpetuating addictions



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### Consistency

- Slippery slope
- Should also allow cannabis use
- Should expand to other places beyond picnic sites
- Unsafe for use/risky/health concerns (including broken glass)

### Suggestions

- Restrictions: food, type of liquor, time availability, container
- Cost comment: objection or support



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### Next steps

- **Who will see the input and what will they do with it?**  
Valuable input was obtained from the public, other City units including Calgary Police Services and Bylaw Services, and from external agencies such as Alberta Health Services and MADD Canada. A project team, and Senior Leadership, carefully reviewed the input and determined that more work is needed to ensure that a pilot project would be successful and would address concerns cited throughout the engagement.
- **Will more input be solicited?**  
A future pilot project might include another Engagement component, to help determine the impacts of the pilot.
- **Was a decision made?**  
The pilot project is postponed to allow for more time to identify authorities given to officers, provide appropriate training, and to allow a better understanding of the legal landscape surrounding this initiative.
- **When will you communicate with stakeholders next?**  
No further communication is expected in the immediate future.