

TOWN OF RIMBEY

PARKS, TRAILS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

FINAL July 17, 2013



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July 17, 2013

RE: Parks, Trails and Recreation Master Plan

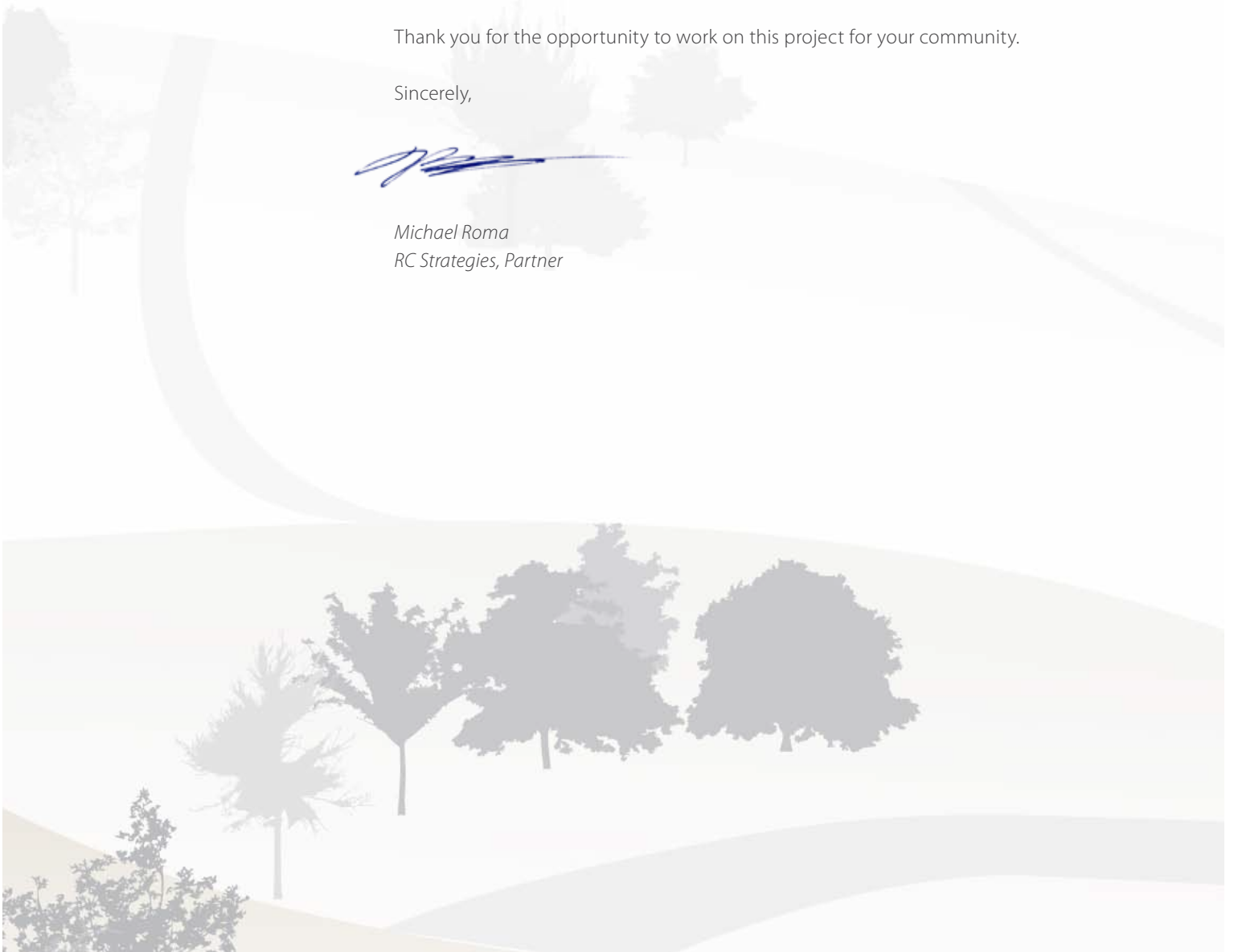
Please accept this document as the final version of the Town of Rimbey's Parks, Trails and Recreation Master Plan. We believe that the material and strategies contained herein will provide council and administration with the strategic guidance necessary to successfully plan for the future of parks, trails and recreation in your community.

Thank you for the opportunity to work on this project for your community.

Sincerely,



Michael Roma
RC Strategies, Partner



Executive Summary



This Parks, Trails and Recreation Master Plan has been developed based on sound research and community input under the guidance of the Recreation Board. The Master Plan outlines a number of strategies to meet identified needs and provides management tools that the Recreation Board, Council and Town administration can use to make key decisions in the future.

The **service delivery** recommendations provided in the Master Plan can assist the Town with enhancing the capacity of community groups and volunteers, strengthen partnerships, develop promotions and marketing strategies and enhance data tracking and quality control. By executing on the key initiatives and recommendations outlined in the Master Plan, the Town will be able to increase participation and ensure that recreation and leisure opportunities can continued to be delivered in an efficient manner.

The **infrastructure** tools and initiatives outlined in the Master Plan will be important for the Town to utilize when making future decisions on both current and new infrastructure projects. The classification system for infrastructure resources will help staff manage and maintain existing and new facilities and parks and open spaces throughout the Town. Also outlined in the Master Plan is a recommended planning process that should be utilized by the Town when internally contemplating or being approached with a major infrastructure project. By using this model the Town will be able to measure the need and feasibility of the project before making major investments.

The discussion on land reserve dedication, roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders in the development process, and the minimum development standards for parks and open space will help local planning authorities, private and public sector land developers, Town engineering and parks staff and recreation personnel collaborate on solutions that best meet the needs of the Town's residents. The Master Plan ultimately provides a number of structures and recommendations for how the Town can manage current and future land assets to accommodate recreation, parks and trails infrastructure needs.



Specific infrastructure projects are also outlined in the Master Plan. Thirteen projects were identified based on the research conducted and feedback from key stakeholders through the planning process. These projects were then ranked using a prioritization framework. This tool considers a number of criteria and can be used in the future by the Town to prioritize projects. It should be noted that while a number of new projects were identified, it will be important for the Town to invest in sustaining current infrastructure.

Programming recommendations and initiatives have also been identified in the Master Plan. While the Town has a relatively strong compliment of structured recreation and leisure opportunities, there exists an opportunity to expand spontaneous use offerings. Ensuring access to recreation and leisure opportunities for residents with physical or financial limitations is another factor that the Town will need to consider in the future delivery of services.

The Town now has a strategic plan for delivering parks, trails and recreation services in the future. Should the recommendations and tools be accepted and implemented, existing and future recreation service investment will see further reaching benefit and will ultimately be more efficient and focused. However it is important to note that the strategies and management tools presented in this document will only have value if they are utilized and implemented by the Town on an ongoing basis. The plan vision and objectives form an integral foundation for the delivery of recreation facilities, trails, parks and open spaces in the Town. This foundation should be revisited any time a decision regarding service provision or future development or operation is made.

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1.0

Introduction

The Town of Rimbey and the Rimbey Recreation Board and other community partners understand the benefits that parks, trails and recreation provide to residents, and how these services can significantly enhance the quality of life that is offered in the community. The Town has demonstrated its commitment to these services by providing a variety of program offerings, supporting the efforts of community groups, and its ongoing investment in recreation infrastructure such as the Community Centre and the new Aquatics Centre facilities.

Understanding the important role that quality recreation and leisure opportunities can play in ensuring healthy, sustainable, and vibrant communities, the Town initiated a Parks, Trails and Recreation Master Plan. To oversee the project, the Town engaged the Recreation Board to act as a steering committee for the Master Plan.

The initial stages of the planning process involved investigating and defining the current state of parks, trails, and recreation provision in the community. This was undertaken through a variety of methods which included significant public consultation and the assessment of current service offerings and resources. Numerous community organizations and stakeholders were also engaged to ensure that a number of perspectives and community interests were considered.

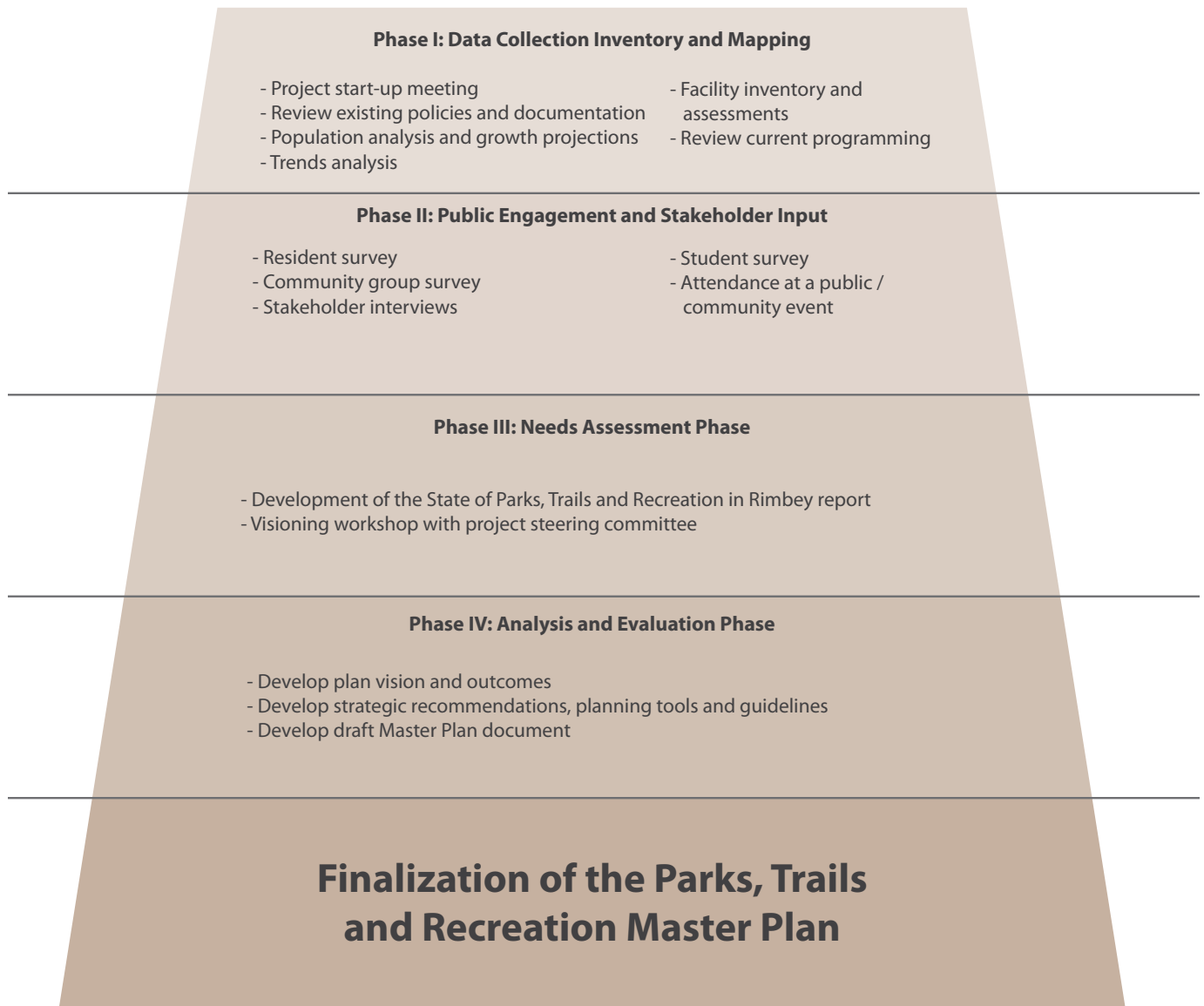
Resulting from the research is a Parks, Trail and Recreation Master Plan which outlines future strategies, priorities, and decision making criteria for these services in the community. The Plan furthermore identifies specific gaps and potential opportunities related to programs and infrastructure enhancement. Ultimately, the Master Plan provides decision makers such as Town Council and administration with a comprehensive and strategic tool that can provide direction when contemplating the future needs for recreation services and outdoor spaces in Rimbey. These future considerations will include infrastructure maintenance and replacement, facility and amenity enhancement, new development, support provided to community organizations, and partnerships in the delivery of recreation and leisure.

In addition to the research and public consultation undertaken, the Plan has been developed considering the strategic expertise of industry professionals, Town Administration, Town Council, and the Recreation Board.

2.0

Methodology

The following graphic illustrates the methodology that was used to develop the Parks, Trails and Recreation Master Plan.



3.0

The Benefits of Parks, Trails and Recreation

At one time recreation was seen as the purview of the community; it was not considered to be something that warranted the attention — and resources — of municipal government.

Today, recreation and parks services are recognized as an essential services in communities and thus warrant the direct and indirect involvement of regional governments; both rural and urban.

The public provision of recreation and parks services is a collaborative effort involving municipal staff and administration, volunteers and non-profit organizations, and the private sector. This collaboration has the promise to not only provide active and creative outlets and enhanced quality of life for residents and visitors to a community, but to also build overall community connectedness, improve community health and well-being and create a community that is prosperous, healthy and diverse and culturally vibrant. Furthermore, municipal provision of recreation and parks facilities and services is a significant medium for municipal administration and staff to earn the trust, respect and confidence of the community.

Recreation and parks services contribute to community cohesiveness and overall quality of life in many different ways. Recreation and parks pursuits afford residents the ability to be physically and mentally active, become socially woven into society, and enjoy work life balance. Residents who participate

in these leisure activities are less likely to have health problems, more likely to have improved mental and physical wellbeing, and are less likely to partake in self-destructive and anti-social behavior.

Recreation and parks can also play a significant role in the economic prosperity of a municipality and region. Through recreation and parks services, facilities, and programs a region can be more inviting to visitors and can attract and retain residents along with the businesses with which they are affiliated. Recreation events and programs draw visitors and provide a positive economic impact to a region. Use of leisure facilities generate revenues which offset operating budgets and bring tourist spending at hotels and restaurants as well as other shopping activities in local economies.

Additionally, quality recreation and parks amenities in an area can help improve the overall community / regional image. For the Rimbey and its community partners, this positions each municipality as an ideal place to live, work, play, and visit. Many of the recreation services and events offered in the region accommodate both local and non-local users and undoubtedly drive local tourism.

Perhaps most importantly, recreation and parks pursuits are fun. When residents are having fun, they are more connected with and proud of the region in which they live. When visitors are having fun, they are developing a positive image of the region which can further enhance visitation to the area.



4.0

The State of Parks, Trails and Recreation in Rimbey

The following section is a summary of the research collected and published in *The State of Parks, Trails and Recreation in Rimbey Report* (found under a separate cover). This broad based research included an extensive public and stakeholder consultation program along with a number of primary and secondary research elements.

4.1. Community Context & Population

The Town of Rimbey has a population of 2,378 and a trading area estimated at 15,000. With three schools, a hospital, and a number of other health and support facilities, Rimbey remains a key service hub in the western Ponoka County region. With a median age of 45.4, the population in Rimbey is older as compared to the overall provincial average (36.5). The median family income in Rimbey is also lower than the provincial average. The older population and lower median incomes are likely a result of Rimbey attracting a large number of retirees to the community. Growth projections for Rimbey estimate that by 2027 the population could be between 2,745 and 3,085 residents. Combined with Ponoka County (Division 4) the population of the “immediate service area” could range from 4,447 to 5,017.



4.2. Resource Inventory

The Town of Rimbey offers residents a number of facilities and spaces in which to enjoy recreation and leisure opportunities as well as many programs. Facilities in the community are provided by both the Town and a number of community partners. Of the 24 recreation and leisure facilities / amenities in Rimbey, 11 are provided by the Town, while 11 are provided by community partners (e.g. schools, not-for-profit groups). Two facility / amenity types (outdoor playgrounds and outdoor basketball courts) are provided by both the Town and community partners. The replacement value for facilities operated by the Town is estimated at \$23.74 million dollars, while the replacement value of community partner operated facilities is estimated at \$9.18 million dollars. An annual investment in upkeep and maintenance will be required to ensure the future sustainability of these facilities.

The major indoor recreation and leisure facility in Rimbey, the Community Centre will require some investment to be sustainable. A number of well utilized outdoor facilities and spaces such as Pas-Ka-Poo Park, the Nesting Place RV Park, Soccer Fields, and the new Rimbey Aquatics Centre were also assessed and suggested improvements are provided herein. Improvements and additional investment may be required to enhance trails and a number of playground spaces / equipment in Rimbey.

The majority of drop-in recreation and leisure programming in Rimbey is offered by the Town, utilizing both Town operated facilities as well as facilities maintained by community partners (e.g. school gymnasium for walking). Conversely, registered programming in Rimbey is predominantly offered by community partners, often with some level of support from the Town. There exists the potential to further develop spontaneous use recreation and leisure opportunities in Rimbey, which are currently limited.

4.3. Comparative Analysis

The provision of recreation and parks services in Rimbey was compared to four similar sized communities (Athabasca, Fox Creek, Millet, Sundre). The comparison looked at both the provision of facilities and spaces using a resident per unit of provision ratio, along with overall municipal spending on recreation and parks¹.

With regards to facilities, Rimbey offers the majority of facilities and spaces at similar levels of provision compared to the other communities. Facilities offered in Rimbey at more favourable levels include:

- Dance / martial arts / program rooms;
- Curling rinks (# of sheets);
- Gymnasium type spaces;
- Indoor performing arts / show spaces;
- Racquetball / squash courts;
- Picnic areas;
- Outdoor basketball courts;
- Hectares of open space;
- Community gardens; and
- BMX bicycle parks.

Four facility types were provided at more favourable levels in the comparable communities:

- Track and field spaces / facilities;
- Outdoor fitness equipment;
- Outdoor amphitheatres / event spaces / band shelters; and
- Walking trail systems (# of km).

In terms of recreation and parks spending, Rimbey (\$202.04 per resident) spends less per capita than the average of comparable communities (\$343.27 per resident) and the average of all Towns in Alberta with a population of 2,000–3,000 residents (\$316.30 per resident).

4.4. Consultation Findings

Input and feedback on parks, trails and recreation in Rimbey was gathered through a number of consultation mechanisms. These included a resident survey, community group survey, interviews with stakeholders, student survey and attendance at a public event. Presented below are key findings from the consultation process.

Key findings from the resident survey included:

- Recreation and leisure are important to the quality of life of residents in the Rimbey region (as indicated by 94% of household survey respondents).
- The auditorium (77%) and arena (73%) were the indoor facilities most often utilized by respondents.
- Pas-Ka-Poo Park (83%) and walking / running trails (59%) were the outdoor facilities most often utilized by respondents.
- Fifty-nine percent (59%) of respondents were satisfied with the current availability of recreation opportunities in Rimbey, while 33% were unsatisfied.
- Fifty-three percent (53%) of respondents believe that new or upgraded facilities are needed in Rimbey.
- Walking / running tracks (49%) were indicated by nearly half of respondents as needing to be more readily available in Rimbey.
- Over half of respondents (58%) indicated that walking trails should be more readily available.
- Sixty-six (66%) of respondents were willing to support some level of tax increase to ensure community needs for recreation could be better met.

¹ Municipal Recreation and Parks spending data obtained from Alberta Municipal Affairs

4.5. Facility Priorities

Key findings from the community group survey and stakeholder Interviews included:

- The majority of groups indicated that they expect their organizations to either grow or remain stable in participant and client numbers.
- The Community Centre was utilized by over three quarters of the groups.
- Walking / running tracks, community gathering spaces, performing arts / show spaces / and community hall / banquet facilities were the top indoor facilities that groups wanted to see developed.
- Over-two thirds of groups indicated that walking trails should be the highest outdoor facility priority in Rimbey.

Key findings from the student survey included:

- Ninety-one (91%) of students thought that new or upgraded facilities should be developed in Rimbey.
- The top three indoor facility priorities among students were gymnasium type spaces (55%) climbing walls (44%), and walking / running tracks (39%).
- The top three outdoor facility priorities among students were BMX bicycle parks (40%), basketball courts (32%), and swimming pools (31%).

Residents of Rimbey have access to a broad array of parks, trails and recreation facilities and amenities. The following tables outline specific indoor and outdoor priorities for future consideration in the community. It should be noted that these priorities were developed by using the public consultation findings and other research conducted through the needs assessment phase (State of Parks, Trails and Recreation in Rimbey Report), and do not consider such factors as capital or operating cost.

The accompanying table includes the facility types noted in the household, student and group surveys. The columns in the table represent the research elements undertaken (and presented in this report). Checkmarks are put in the columns for each facility type if that research element indicated support for new or enhanced provision. To represent the importance of the household survey the top ten facility elements received two checks. Once the analysis was completed and the checkmarks assigned, the facility types are ordered from most checkmarks to least.



The top ten indoor facility priorities in Rimbey are:

1. Indoor field facilities
1. Walking / running track
1. Indoor climbing wall
1. Indoor child playground
2. Leisure ice surfaces
2. Library
2. Gymnasium type space
2. Fitness / wellness facilities
2. Performing arts / show spaces
2. Community halls

INDOOR FACILITY PRIORITY	Household Survey	Community Group / Stakeholder Consultation	Student Survey	Facility Utilization / Population Growth	Comparable Communities	Industry trends
Indoor field facilities	✓ ✓	✓	✓			✓
Walking / running track	✓ ✓	✓	✓			✓
Indoor climbing wall	✓ ✓	✓	✓			✓
Indoor child playground	✓ ✓	✓	✓			✓
Leisure ice surfaces	✓ ✓	✓				✓
Library	✓ ✓	✓		✓		
Gymnasium type spaces	✓ ✓		✓	✓		
Fitness / wellness facilities	✓ ✓		✓			✓
Performing arts / show spaces	✓ ✓	✓	✓			
Community halls	✓ ✓	✓		✓		
Ice Arenas			✓	✓		✓
Community gathering spaces		✓		✓		
Museum / interpretive spaces			✓			✓
Community meeting rooms				✓		
Program rooms (dance / martial arts)			✓			
Art display spaces						✓
Curling rinks						
Court sports (squash / racquetball)						

The top ten outdoor facility priorities in Rimbey are:

1. Walking trails
2. Amphitheatre / event spaces / band shelter
2. Child playgrounds
2. Water spray parks
3. Outdoor fitness equipment
3. Rodeo / agricultural facilities
3. Dog off leash areas
3. Outdoor swimming pools
4. Open spaces
4. Picnic areas

OUTDOOR FACILITY PRIORITY	Household Survey	Community Group / Stakeholder Consultation	Student Survey	Facility Utilization / Population Growth	Comparable Communities	Industry trends
Walking trails	✓ ✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Amphitheatre / event spaces / band shelter	✓ ✓	✓			✓	✓
Child playgrounds	✓ ✓	✓		✓		✓
Water spray parks	✓ ✓		✓	✓		✓
Outdoor fitness equipment	✓ ✓				✓	✓
Rodeo / Agricultural Facilities	✓ ✓	✓		✓		
Dog off leash areas	✓ ✓		✓			✓
Outdoor swimming pools	✓ ✓		✓	✓		
Open spaces	✓ ✓					✓
Picnic areas	✓ ✓	✓				
Community gardens	✓ ✓					✓
Track and field spaces		✓	✓		✓	
Mountain bike park			✓			✓
BMX Bicycle Parks			✓			✓
Campgrounds			✓			✓
Basketball courts			✓			
Beach volleyball courts			✓			
Sports fields						
Baseball diamonds						
Outdoor highboard skating rinks						
Tennis courts						
Skateboard Parks						

4.6. Key Master Plan Considerations

Through the research undertaken a number of key themes and questions have emerged which are important to consider.

- Rimbey has a relatively strong compliment of recreation and leisure infrastructure.
 - How can the Town ensure that these assets are protected and best utilized in the future?
 - What does the Town need to consider when contemplating the development or enhancement of new or upgraded facilities?
- Volunteer organizations and community partners play an important role in helping provide recreation programs and facilities.
 - What mechanisms and strategies can the Town put in place to ensure that these groups remain strong and vibrant?
 - What role should the Town play in supporting the efforts of these community organizations?
- The enhancement of parks, trails and outdoor spaces has been identified as a key priority in the community.
 - How can the Town best prioritize these projects?
 - What planning and development policies, standards, and frameworks need to be put in place to ensure that the future enhancement or development of these spaces can best meet the needs of the community?
- While Rimbey offers a variety of recreation and leisure programs to residents, some programming gaps do exist.
 - Are there any 'easy win' solutions that can address current programming gaps?
 - What additional investment in recreation and parks services is required to address more significant gaps that may exist?



5.0

Plan Foundations

The plan foundations outlined in this section have been developed to reflect the Town of Rimbey's desired vision and resulting outcomes of the Parks, Trails and Recreation Master Plan and the future provision of these services in the community. These foundations are based upon existing community values, previous strategic planning and public input that has been gathered through consultation with local residents, community groups and stakeholders.

5.1. Plan Vision

The following vision statement has been developed for the Town of Rimbey's Parks, Trails and Recreation Master Plan to guide the strategic recommendations and future decision making.

To ensure the future provision of high quality parks, trails and recreation opportunities that can be enjoyed and accessed by all residents, resulting in a vibrant and healthy community with a high quality of life.

5.2. Plan Outcomes

In order for the Town to achieve the Plan vision the following outcomes must be realized.

1. **Current infrastructure in the community is sustained and new infrastructure is proposed where necessary** to ensure that it can continue servicing community recreation and leisure needs.
2. **Community groups and partner organizations are sustainable, energized and supported** to ensure that they can continue providing a variety of important and valuable recreation and leisure programs to residents.
3. **Municipal investment in recreation and parks services is efficient and focused** on key areas that will improve the overall quality of life for residents of the community.
4. **Future recreation programming reflects community needs and engages citizens.**



6.0 Service Delivery

Recreational and leisure opportunities in Rimbey are provided to residents and visitors primarily by the Town and not-for-profit organizations. Private sector or 'for profit' providers also deliver programs and services, often through affiliations with the Town or community organizations. The Recreation Department is responsible for animating Town operated facilities, as well as liaising with community partners and private sector providers when necessary. The Recreation Board, which includes members of the public, Town administration, user group representatives and elected officials acts in an advisory capacity to the Recreation Department. The Board ultimately provides strategic direction and helps set medium to long term priorities.

As identified and outlined in the State of Parks, Trails and Recreation in Rimbey Report, the Town invests an average of approximately \$204 per resident in parks and recreation services. Although this investment level was less on average than the majority of similar sized communities, research conducted indicates that the Town generally provides facilities and spaces at a similar provision ratio when compared to these similar sized communities.

In order to continue providing parks and recreation services at a highly efficient level while addressing gaps that may exist, the Town will need to continue working closely with community partners and volunteer organizations. This section provides a number of structures and suggested approaches that can ensure the sustainability of the groups, as well as enhance the overall provision of services.

6.1. Partnership Framework

The following section provides guidance and tools that can be used by the Town to optimize current and future partnerships.

6.1.1. Collaboration in Service Provision

The Town of Rimbey relies on a collaborative approach to providing parks, trails and recreation services. This approach involves community partners, volunteers and the private sector. Optimal service provision consists of both internal and external collaboration.

It is vital for internal collaboration to extend beyond the Town's Recreation Department into other municipal areas. The benefits and future needs for recreation and outdoor leisure spaces must be heard during land development and other broad strategic planning initiatives undertaken by the Town. Doing this will result in increased efficiency, synergy between the Town's various planning responsibilities and ultimately enhance the Town's ability to identify and meet future needs for parks, trails and recreation services.

In order to fully optimize the recreation and outdoor leisure opportunities available for residents, it is important for the Town to engage in successful external collaboration with a variety of organizations and groups. These organizations and group could include public service providers (e.g. health, crime prevention, schools) as well as volunteer community groups and the private sector. Collaboration in the provision of recreation and outdoor leisure opportunities is founded in the concept of partnering. The benefits of developing positive relationships and partnerships are many which include:

- Financial efficiencies in program delivery;
- The ability to lever public funds;
- The ability to identify new opportunities and address existing needs;
- Increased community connectedness; and
- Increased advocacy in the community for recreation and leisure.

6.1.2. Engaging and Sustaining Community Partner Groups

The Town of Rimbey understands and values the important role that its community partner groups play in offering programs and facilities to Town and area residents. Through these partnerships, the Town is able to optimize the use of public funds and ensure that residents have a wide spectrum of recreation and leisure opportunities.

Currently the Town provides support in a number of ways which include:

- Formal partnership agreements;
- Subsidized rental rates for community groups at Town facilities;
- Assistance with maintenance and upkeep of community partner facilities; and
- Direct financial support.

Critical to establishing successful partnerships with volunteer community groups involves ensuring equitable and consistent treatment of both existing and potential partner groups. Understanding that history and other factors (e.g. resources, capacity) have dictated variances in the level of support provided to different groups and formal agreements that may exist, it will be important for the Town to develop transparent protocols that clearly outline roles, responsibilities

and expectations. A formal protocol should clearly outline what services the Town and the community partner are each responsible for providing. It is important to note that equitable treatment is not the same as equal treatment. In developing the protocol with its community partners, the Town must understand the needs and capacities of groups, and ultimately develop partnerships that are sustainable and designed to address community needs. An example of support already offered to groups by the town is the taking of registrations for minor sports. Support for groups must go beyond financial assistance as group access to facilities is already heavily subsidized and further subsidization is not warranted.

The overall strength and capacity of volunteer community groups plays a key role in their ability to directly provide, or assist in the provision of, recreation and leisure programs and facilities. It is important when structuring community partnerships for the Town to understand the evolutionary process of volunteer groups. By analyzing the current state of groups, the Town can best make decisions on potential partnerships. The group evolution model presented below illustrates the characteristics of groups at varying stages of maturity.



Using the characteristics identified in the group evolution model, the chart below provides a tool that could be used by the Town when analyzing the needs of groups and potential support levels required.

Group	Current State of Evolution (emerging, mature, or declining)	Potential Support Required				
		Financial	Strategic / Business Planning	Facility Maintenance / Upgrades	Volunteer Recruitment / Retention	Administration

Support provided to volunteer groups through community partnerships can take a variety of forms. **Financial support** and **subsidy** could include direct funding of the organization

or indirect assistance such as subsidized facility rental rates. Financial support may also be provided on an ongoing basis to assist with operations, or 'one-time' contributions to assist with a major project or initiative. The Town may also provide **strategic planning assistance** to groups in order to help them develop goals, business plans and ultimately ensure sustainability. Town resources may also be required by community volunteer groups to **assist with infrastructure** they operate. This assistance could involve the Town providing or assisting with regular maintenance and repairs, or could involve more significant upgrades or enhancements in order to help the group meet current and future needs. Considering the importance of volunteers to community groups and the services they provide, it may be prudent for the Town to consider mechanisms for **assisting community groups with volunteer recruitment and retention**. Potential assistance could include board development, matching up volunteers with specific organizations, working with multiple groups to encourage collaboration and shared volunteer resources and helping groups with the planning of volunteer recognition or recruitment initiatives. Support provided by the Town could also take form in the shape of administrative assistance. Examples could include assistance with program registrations, grant writing, record keeping and budgeting.



6.2. Broader Volunteer Support

Volunteers are vital to the sustainability and success of community groups and the delivery of numerous programs, events and the overall delivery of recreation and leisure services. As the **nature of volunteerism is changing**, soliciting volunteer involvement also must change and adapt. The Town already plays a role by providing a point of contact for potential and current volunteers through the Recreation Department. The Town of Rimbey works with the Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) and the Rimbey Volunteers Centre to further enhance the community's volunteer capacity by providing a variety of opportunities for residents to get involved in a volunteer capacity with services that they provide.

Engaged volunteers are more connected in a community and exhibit community pride and cohesiveness. The Town can be a catalyst in connecting volunteers with volunteer opportunities associated with both indoor and outdoor recreation services.

It is recommended that the Town, in partnership with the Rimbey Volunteer Centre, develop and maintain a roster of local residents willing to volunteer for indoor and outdoor recreation opportunities (indicating their availability and interest) accompanied by a recreation volunteer opportunity roster (indicating groups seeking volunteers and the nature of the opportunity) which provides groups access to the existing volunteer community.

Broad based volunteer engagement, through group affiliation or not, is best conducted through a volunteer information sharing, recognition and capacity building event. Such an event could be coordinated by the Town with content and participation provided by a combination of all volunteer-related stakeholders. A volunteer conference or symposium could be a great forum to connect volunteers to organizations (e.g. trade show of groups seeking volunteers), for groups to share information and best practices, for the Town to share opportunities for support and for the collecting of information related to key messages for recreation promotions (e.g. participation data, etc.).

6.3. Usage Tracking and Quality Control

Justifying a continued or enhanced investment in recreation and outdoor leisure services requires an understanding of how often and at what times facilities, amenities and programs are being used. Given that recreation and leisure trends and community needs are continually evolving, regular tracking will assist the Town with future planning for these services. In addition to making a case for municipal investment in recreation and leisure, having reliable statistical data has the potential to be useful (and in some case required) when procuring grants and funding from other levels of government and approaching the private sector for sponsorships and donations.

The Town currently does have usage data for a number of community facilities and amenities. Rentals of spaces at the Community Centre such as the ice arena, auditorium / gymnasium, upper auditorium and meeting rooms are recorded by the Recreation Department. The Department has also implemented detailed tracking of usage at the Aquatics Centre, which demonstrated a significant increase in visitation as compared to the previous facility (e.g. 154% increase in youth admissions in 2012 compared to 2009). This provides a tangible example of how **accurate statistics keeping can help justify investment in new facilities and programs, and help staff purpose facilities to meet community needs.**

It is recommended that the Town further develop its tracking of usage data to include registered and drop-in programs as well as spontaneous use areas. Although this may seem cumbersome, there are a number of methods that can be implemented to track this data in an efficient and resource conscious manner. The chart on the following page identifies a number of potential mechanisms for tracking various recreation and leisure related activities in the community.

Type of Use	Examples of Facilities / Amenities Utilized	Tracking Mechanisms
Rentals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ice arenas • Gymnasium / auditorium • Meeting and program rooms • Pool tank 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present annually on an “percentage of capacity use” by establishing a “prime time” use capacity (e.g. ice arenas have a 27 week prime time of 4 p.m.–11 p.m. during the week and 9 a.m.–11 p.m. on weekends)
Programs (drop-in or registered)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gymnasiums • Program rooms • Ice arenas • Pool tank 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head counts by facility staff • Instructors / program leaders provide participant numbers for every class / program • Registration numbers provided annually by community partner organizations
Spontaneous use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trails • Parks and playgrounds • Splash park • Gymnasium spaces • Ice arena (indoor and outdoor) • Outdoor sports courts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief intercept surveys • Strategically timed head counts

Other Usage Tracking Mechanisms

Another option for measuring usage and public perspectives on the quality of services is to conduct annual or bi-annual resident surveys. Similar to the survey developed to gather data for the State of Parks, Trails and Recreation in Rimbey Report, a questionnaire could be used to measure satisfaction, demand and identify priorities. This survey could also be expanded to gather feedback on other municipal services, a process which is often referred to as a “resident satisfaction survey”.



6.4. Promotions and Marketing

Ninety-four percent of residents in Rimbey and surrounding areas agree that recreation and leisure services are important to their quality of life. A number of facilities and spaces in the community are also well utilized by over 50% of residents which include the Auditorium / Gymnasium, Arena, Municipal Library, Pas-Ka-Poo Park, Aquatics Centre, trails and pathways and playground spaces. However research conducted and outlined in the State of Parks, Trails and Recreation Report also indicates that demand does not exceed capacity at the majority of facilities in the community. Increased usage of Town and community partner operated facilities has the potential to result in a number of direct and indirect benefits which could include:

- Increased overall participation (and associated benefits) in recreation activities;
- Lower social and health care costs as a result of increased physical activity and wellness;
- Increased revenue from facility rentals and user fees;
- Increased sponsorship revenue potential; and
- A more engaged and vibrant community.

The Town currently promotes recreation and leisure opportunities through their website, social media feeds, community newsletter and a community guide publication. Keeping these mediums fresh and updated is important to promoting current opportunities for recreation and leisure. Enhanced use of social media may provide an opportunity for the Recreation Department to further engage residents and groups in programs and events, as well as receive feedback and activities that may be desired in the community.

Key information that will build the case for both participation and support could be both local and provincial / national (depending on availability) and could include:

- **Overall public support** and participation demonstrated through statistically reliable public engagement activities such as telephone or mail out surveys (as has been compiled in this Master Plan process).
- **Participation numbers** from local programs, facility memberships and usage statistics, etc. which could equate to annually measured indices (% of population participating) or special community participation challenges.
- Recreation focused **research** from within the province and beyond from sources such as the Alberta Recreation and Parks Association, Alberta Centre for Active Living, and the Leisure Information Network.
- Estimates of the positive **economic impact of recreation and parks** in the community including non-local spending and estimated reduction of health and crime prevention costs (reduction of anti-social and self-destructive behaviours).

Support information / messaging from external, but related, sectors such as health services, crime prevention, education and social services.

Collecting this information will require collaboration from local users groups (annual reporting of participation numbers); stakeholders from other sectors such as health care, education, crime prevention and social services; and investment in generating, and collecting public sentiment on recreation in the community. Once the key messages are developed, delivering them to pertinent stakeholders (residents, potential funding agencies, etc.) should be outlined in a detailed recreation and parks marketing and communications plan. The plan would provide an overview of message delivery media, key message development and reassessment, annual budget allotments, and an assessment tool to measure the effectiveness of promotional efforts. A successful promotions and marketing strategy also requires clear and concise messaging, as well as a defined purpose and objective.

An effective promotions and marketing strategy can also lead to residents having a more positive opinion on the recreation and leisure opportunities available in their community. While over half (59%) of residents are satisfied with the current level of recreation and leisure services, 33% indicated some level of dissatisfaction. In many cases, this may be the result of residents not being fully aware of opportunities that exist.

It is recommended that the Town develop a potential promotions and marketing strategy that focuses on increasing awareness of existing recreation and leisure opportunities, with the objective of increasing overall participation and usage levels at community facilities.

6.5. Regional Considerations

While the provisions of parks, trails and recreation services by the Town has a natural focus on the needs and priorities of residents residing within the town boundaries, Rimbey is widely considered a service hub for regional residents. As such, it is practical that Town planning for recreation and leisure services consider future growth and needs of regional residents and communities.

Future planning for recreation and leisure services, including infrastructure and the programming, will require a continued high level of cooperation between the Town and Ponoka County. Considering such factors as usage of Town facilities and programs by County residents and opportunities for future growth and development, it is recommended that the Town continue to work with the County to develop fair and equitable agreements in the provision of recreation and leisure services.

As a regional service hub, the potential for **recreation and sport tourism** should also be considered. Recreation and sport tourism can contribute significantly to the overall provision of recreation and leisure services in a community by showcasing local facilities and assets, increasing overall usage of facilities, engaging citizens in volunteerism and by providing additional opportunities for local residents to participate directly in events and other activities.

Sport and recreation tourism also provides a number of economic benefits to a community which have the potential to funnel back into recreation and leisure services. Businesses that see a benefit from sport and recreation related visitors and events are generally more willing to invest in sponsorships of facilities, programs or events. In addition, special events often provide community groups with an opportunity to generate revenue, which is in turn re-invested back into their programs and facilities.

The Town has the opportunity to encourage sport and recreation tourism in a number of ways. Providing support to community partners and other groups in areas such as volunteer recruitment, facility booking, and promotions can help position groups to secure and host successful events. Encouraging collaboration between groups is another way in which the Town can increase the community's capacity to host events and attract visitors. One such example is the annual Rimbey Rodeo. In addition to events taking place at the rodeo grounds, a number of other activities such as the Farmers Market at Pas-Ka-Poo Park are concurrently taking place across the community.

Rimbey is also relatively well positioned with regards to accommodations and other visitor amenities to attract regional events. Creating partnerships between the private sector and community partners can further enhance a community's ability to attract and host successful events. The Town can play a role in facilitating these partnerships, and by working directly with the private sector to create packages that might include food and accommodations, rental facilities and other complimentary activities in the community.



6.6 Key initiatives for Service Delivery

Identified below are recommended key initiatives for service provision:

- Provide ongoing input into other municipal functions such as land development discussions related to future municipal reserve allocation, transportation planning and other broad strategic planning initiatives.
 - Develop transparent and equitable protocols for community partnerships with volunteer groups that clearly outline roles, responsibilities and expectations.
 - Increase the support provided to volunteer community groups by enhancing current partnerships and identifying new partner groups that can provide exciting and publicly accessible recreation and leisure opportunities.
 - Adopt a standard tool (such as the one proposed on page 13) that can be used to identify the current state of groups and the types / levels of support required to optimize the group's ability to deliver on its mandate.
 - Develop and implement an annual reporting mechanism for agreements with community partner organizations.
- Encourage increased volunteerism by:
 - Maintaining a roster of local residents looking for volunteer opportunities and organizations with volunteer positions available.
 - Hosting a regular volunteer sharing, recognition and capacity building event (potentially to be incorporated into existing volunteer appreciation event efforts)
 - Further develop tracking of usage statistics to include registered and drop-in programs as well as spontaneous use areas.
 - Develop a promotions and marketing strategy that focuses on increasing awareness of existing recreation and leisure opportunities, with the objective of increasing overall participation and usage levels at community facilities.
 - Continue to work with the County on an ongoing basis to develop fair and equitable agreements in the provision of recreation and leisure services to regional residents.



7.0

The Future of Parks, Trails and Recreation Infrastructure

The following section outlines a number of considerations and structures for maintaining and enhancing current infrastructure, and making future decisions on the new development of recreation and leisure facilities and spaces.

7.1. Resource Classification Guidelines

The following resource classification system presented on the next page has been developed to help differentiate facility types and their purpose within the community. This simple and concise system can be used when managing current resources, and when planning for future development of facilities and their adjoining or support amenities.

Type 1: Town-wide Recreation and Leisure Infrastructure

- Facility components are considered a ‘destination’
- Serve a Town wide and regional market
- Host major recreational and leisure activities
- Encompasses a cluster of facilities or amenities
- Requires large parcels of land for future planning (e.g. 60–80 acres)

Type 2: Neighbourhood Recreation and Leisure Infrastructure

- Typically stand-alone in nature
- Often serve a neighborhood or specific age-range of residents
- May support primary (type 1) facilities
- Requires small to medium parcels of land for future planning (e.g. 1–5 acres)

Type 1: Town-wide Recreation and Leisure Infrastructure	Type 2: Neighbourhood Recreation & Leisure Infrastructure
Examples in Rimbey	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Centre (all components) • Aquatics Centre • Pas-Ka-Poo Park • Nesting Place RV Park • Ball diamond and soccer field groupings • Rimbey Seniors Centre • Rodeo Grounds • BMX park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighborhood playgrounds and parks • Tennis and basketball courts • Outdoor rinks

7.2. Sustaining Current Infrastructure

The Town currently operates a variety of facilities which provides recreation and leisure opportunities to both local and regional residents. Many of these facilities continue to be utilized on a significant level. As reflected in the State of Parks, Trails and Recreation Report, amenities and spaces at the Community Centre such as the Auditorium / Gymnasium and Arena were used or visited by over two-thirds of area residents. A number of outdoor spaces managed by the Town were also heavily utilized. Trails and pathways, the Rimbey Aquatics Centre and playgrounds were used by over half of residents. The Town additionally provides support to a number of community partners in the maintenance and / or operation of popular facilities in Rimbey. Pas-Ka-Poo Park is one example of a space which had been used or visited by the majority of local residents (83%). **Existing facilities, parks and trails will require continued investment to sustain existing service levels.**



Considering the importance and utilization of many community facilities, such as the examples provided in the previous paragraph, **it will be important moving forward for the Town to consider and implement a number of strategies for sustaining current infrastructure.**

7.2.1. Expansion and Enhancement Versus Building New

Although new development may be required in the future to meet community needs and increase quality of life opportunities, the Town currently offers a variety of indoor and outdoor recreation and leisure facilities and spaces. Key research findings outlined in the State of Parks, Trails and Recreation Report further indicates the following with regards to current infrastructure:

- Major community facilities or 'hubs' such as the Community Centre, Aquatics Centre and Pas-Ka-Poo Park will require ongoing capital investment as identified in the facility assessments.
- In comparison to similar sized communities, Rimbey offers the majority of facilities and spaces at a similar provision.
- Although many facilities are well utilized, it does not appear that demand exceeds capacity.

Considering the above factors, it is suggested that the Town focus on maintaining its current infrastructure. Furthermore, **if new amenities are required to meet community needs, it is suggested that consideration first be given to encompassing these spaces within or adjacent to existing facilities.** This could involve the re-purposing of currently underutilized spaces, or expansion onto the existing facility. Benefits of this approach often include significant cost savings in site acquisition and the servicing and administration of common areas. Community familiarization and traffic through the existing facilities can also help with promotions and recruiting users for the new space or amenity.

7.2.2. Life Cycle Budgeting

Life cycle planning for recreation and leisure facilities and outdoor spaces is a significant commitment for municipalities as the concept requires major capital to be allocated to annual operating budgets. Proper life cycle management suggests that facilities suggests that facilities could be offered in perpetuity as ongoing investment and upgrades would be planned for and completed, avoiding overall facility deterioration.

In some cases, a percentage of overall capital value is applied on an annual basis and held in reserve for future upgrades and / or enhancements. As recreation facilities and outdoor spaces are becoming more dynamic, it is suggested that necessary repairs should be incorporated, but so too should potential reprogramming of spaces and amenity refresh. For example, the replacement of a pool mechanism system should be planned for and budgeted annually so that replacement can occur when required and in a timely fashion without impacting or impeding other budget priorities or programming. At the same time, due to the nature of leisure amenities in Alberta pools, an amount should also be saved annually for the “refresh” of leisure amenities to ensure that the facility remains unique and exciting, thus achieving high levels of use.

The Town is encouraged to implement the practice of **allocating a percentage of current capital replacement value of major parks, trail networks and recreation facilities** to its annual operating budgets to ensure sustainability of these spaces and overall service provision levels.

Life cycle planning also includes appropriate maintenance and managements of facilities. The town may be required to invest additional resources (financial and human) should a more diligent approach to life cycle management occur.

7.3. Infrastructure Planning and Development

When considering the new development of infrastructure, municipalities must carefully consider a variety of factors to ensure that public funds and other resources are used beneficial and efficient manner. The structures and mechanisms outlined in the forthcoming sections are intended to provide the Town with the necessary guidance to make future decisions on major infrastructure development.

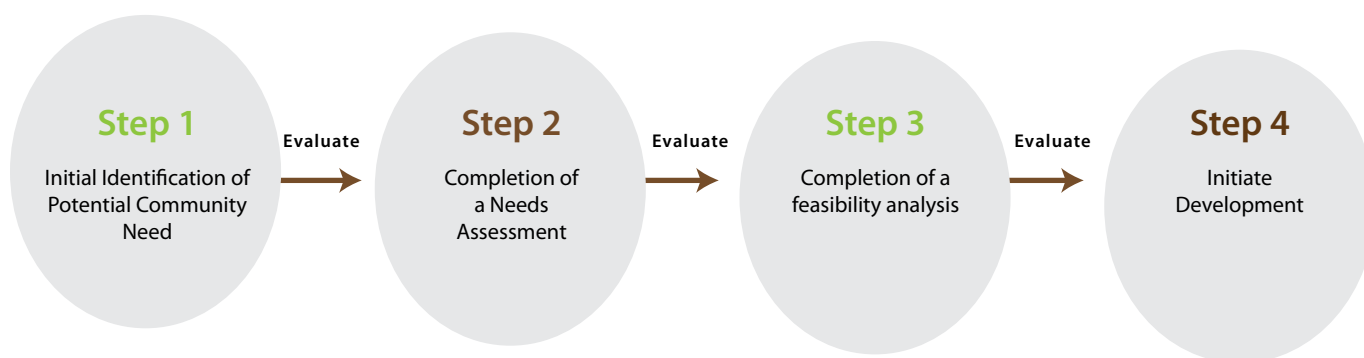
7.3.1. Planning Process

If the major development of a recreation facility or outdoor leisure space is undertaken by the Town, it is recommended that a standard planning process be adopted. This will ensure that any future development involves sufficient public consultation, research and planning. The end result will ultimately be a more sustainable and successful facility with higher levels of public ‘buy-in’.

The graphic and description on the next page provides a four-step planning process that could be undertaken when determining whether development should move forward.



Recommended Planning Process for Future Development



The **identification of a community need (step 1)** is the initiator of the planning process. Understanding that community partners, other groups and residents may have a variety of perspectives on development needs, it is important that the following criteria needs to be considered before any additional planning is undertaken:

- Does the potential project align with the key initiatives outlined by the Parks, Trails and Recreation Master Plan?
- Can the activity / need be accommodated at an existing facility or space?
- Does the project serve residents in the Rimbey area?
- Have the planning criteria / triggers been met? (see page 21)

If the identified community need appears to sufficiently align with the criteria listed above, the next step involves conducting a **needs assessment (step 2)**. A sufficient needs assessment should include and consider the following components:

- Current provision of the facility type in the market area;
- Demographics and population growth;
- Trends in recreation and leisure; and
- Public and stakeholder consultation.

If the projects need is determined to exist, a **feasibility analysis (step 3)** should be proceeded with. While the needs assessment will generally measure if the project type is required, the feasibility analysis will look to further capture more specific impacts of the project. Listed below are a number of components that should be analyzed:

- Capital and operating budget implications of developing the project;
- Impacts on existing resources;
- Potential to expand or retrofit existing facilities or spaces;
- Potential sites;
- Potential to include secondary components or amenities to meet other community needs;
- Potential project partners; and
- A recommended course of action.

If the project is deemed feasible, the final stage of planning process model is to **initiate development (step 4)**. This stage should involve:

- Detailed design;
- Development of a detailed business plan;
- Fundraising campaign (if required); and
- Construction.

Planning Criteria and Triggers for Initiating the Planning Process

When determining and prioritizing future community needs for major recreation and leisure infrastructure development, a number of planning criteria and triggers are recommended to be implemented by the Town. The chart below identifies four categories of criteria / triggers that should be considered when contemplating new development. **It is suggested that for new development to move forward through the planning process that at least one or more criteria / trigger in each category be met.**

Population and Market Conditions	Facility Utilization & Condition	Partnerships	Provision
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall community growth is sufficient to sustain the facility • Age group(s) benefited by the project indicate sufficient current or future population growth • Demand and market growth can be proven through sound research (e.g. public consultation, municipal planning initiatives) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing facility spaces currently being offered approach 90–100% utilization on a sustained basis (as reflected by Town usage tracking data) • Facility or spaces currently being used have less than 25% remaining life expectancy (as determined by regular assessments or ongoing life cycle planning) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External community partner organizations (volunteer not-for-profit) have demonstrated sufficient capital and operating resources • Community partner organizations have demonstrated sufficient membership and participation numbers to sustain use of the facility for its projected life expectancy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed facility project will provide equal access to all residents as a public service • The proposed facility is not currently offered in a sufficient provision by the private sector or other agencies in the market area • Improved access to the facility or amenity is required

7.4. Current Indoor Facilities and Spaces

The following sub-section outline the current indoor facilities in Rimbey. When applicable the following discussion suggests potential enhancements using the community priorities identified through the research, and how these needs may be accommodated at existing facilities.

7.4.1. Ice Arenas

The Town currently owns and operates the arena facility which is located at the Community Centre. While the one sheet of ice is well utilized, demand does not appear to currently exceed supply. As such, it is expected that with continued maintenance and suggested upgrades (e.g. roof, lighting, washrooms) that the facility will be able to meet community needs for at least the next 10–15 years and likely beyond.

Although some potential might exist to accommodate indoor field activities (e.g. indoor soccer, lacrosse) in the arena during summer months, this option is not currently recommended due to overlapping seasons and the high cost of installing a temporary field surface. However this option may be revisited if future demand and usage can be demonstrated.

7.4.2. Curling Rinks

The Curling Rink is located at the Community Centre, but is operated by the Rimbey Curling Club with support from the Town. Investment is suggested in this facility as per the facility assessments. However given that curling participation in general is on the decline, the Town should **continue to work with the Curling Club to monitor participation numbers.**

7.4.3. Fitness Facilities

A fitness room currently exists at the Community Centre, which incorporates a mix of cardio equipment and weights. Considering that fitness / wellness facilities were identified as a top 10 indoor facility priority and that trends in recreation and leisure suggest increasing usage, **expansion and enhancement to the fitness room may be warranted. It is also suggested that the Town look at refreshing the equipment on a regular basis to keep the amenity exciting and well utilized.** Additional spaces at the Community Centre could also be looked at to house fitness equipment. Common areas (e.g. lobby spaces and corridors) might be suitable for the placement of stretching areas or equipment.



7.4.4. Gymnasiums

The gymnasium / auditorium at the Community Centre is used for a variety of sport, recreation, cultural and community event functions. In recent years the Town has provided a number of drop-in recreational sport opportunities and classes in the gymnasium / auditorium. **To increase usage, the Town may consider adding some additional amenities to the space.** Examples could include an indoor climbing wall (identified as the third highest community priority in the research), portable programming equipment, encourage multipurpose use and other equipment that could accommodate new activities (e.g. pickle ball). Some limited public use of the gymnasium at the Rimbey Junior / Senior High School is also available.

7.4.5. Other Facilities & Amenities

A number of other spaces and amenities exist at facilities across the community. Located at the Community Centre is an upper auditorium, which is utilized as a program space for a number of activities such as dance and fitness programs. The

space is also used during events at the Curling Rink for social functions. Other spaces at the Community Centre include two meeting rooms, squash / racquetball courts and a number of common areas. Although currently these spaces appear to be appropriately purposed, it is suggested that the Town track usage on an ongoing basis, and continue to consider secondary uses for the space.

A number of other indoor facilities are operated by community partners in Rimbey. The Seniors Drop-In Centre offers a modern multi-purpose space which is well utilized for a variety of programs and events. The Rimbey Junior and Senior High School is also available to the public through a partnership between the Town and school board. Regular walking drop-in programs are offered at the school. When considering future development and community needs, the Town should consider the provision of these spaces and potential partnerships.



7.5. Parks, Trails and Outdoor Recreation Facilities

The following section presents considerations and recommendations for the future of outdoor facilities spaces in Rimbey. The section is presented according to types of facilities. Guidance is also provided concerning future trails connections and considerations

7.5.1. Trails and sidewalks

The research conducted reinforced that trails and sidewalks are an important recreation and leisure amenity for residents of Rimbey. Sixty-nine percent (69%) of residents had used trails and pathways in the previous year. With regards to outdoor recreation spaces and facilities that should be more readily available in Rimbey, an expanded and enhanced walking trail system was indicated as the highest priority by 58% of residents. While trails are most often associated with outdoor recreation and leisure, considerations for improving sidewalks in Rimbey are also included in this section due to the limited existence of trails and the need for improved connectivity between both transportation systems.

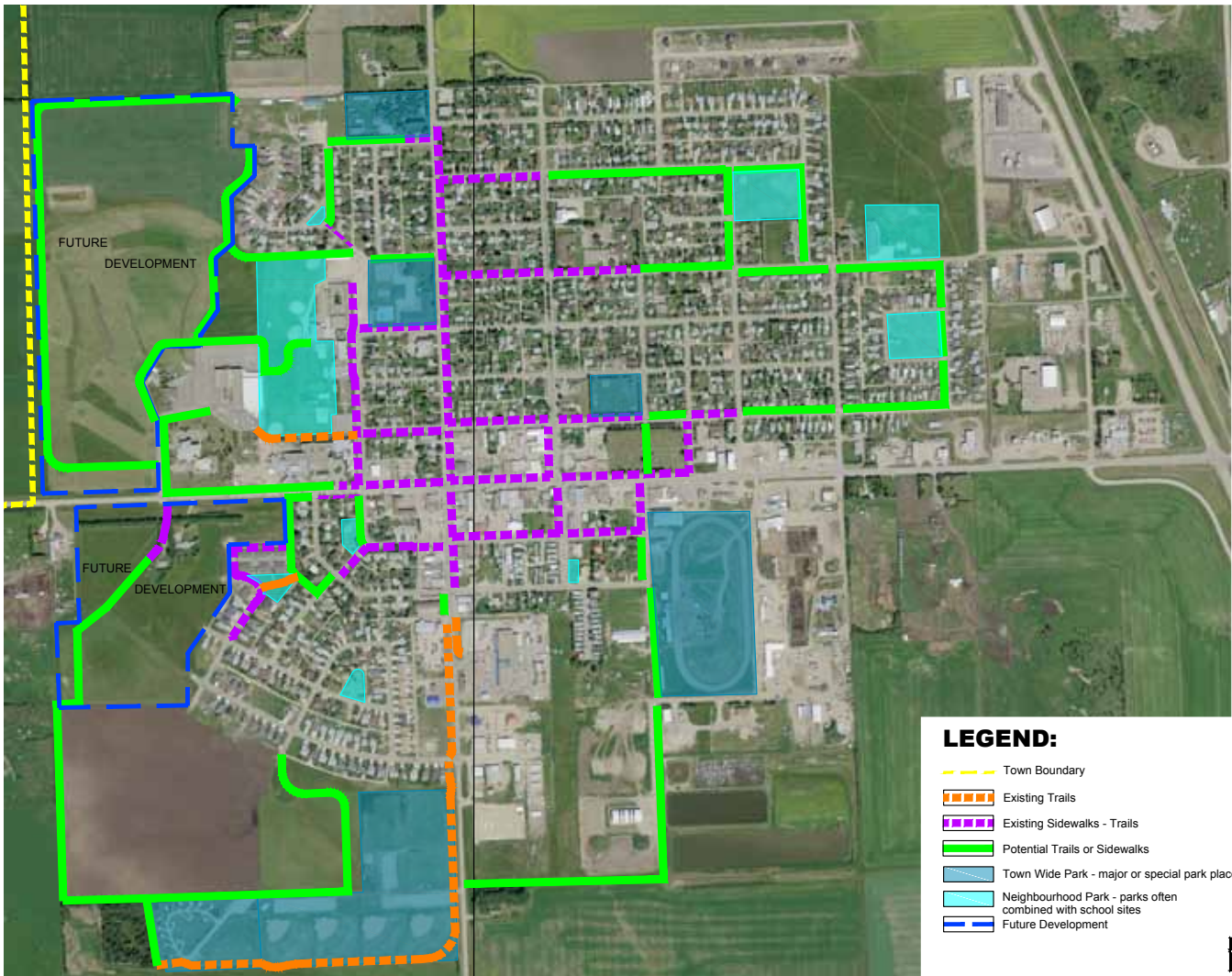
While the Town currently provides a number of trails and sidewalks, the potential exists to further develop the trail network and improve functionality and connectivity. Expanded and enhanced trails and sidewalks, along with improved connectivity, will provide residents with additional opportunities for physical activity and wellness. Trails and sidewalks are furthermore an important means of transportation for many

residents. Developing a connected system of trails and sidewalks will provide increased accessibility to both community and private sector facilities and services.

It is recommended that the Town make the enhancement and development of trails and sidewalks a continued priority. To help guide any future trails development within the Town that is undertaken, a Trails Master Plan is provided. A broader strategic Trail Concept Plan is also provided outlining how internal connections should ultimately connect to a future perimeter trail as well as regional trails and features. These two plans will help guide future investment in trails and sidewalks. This plan reflects the importance of connecting existing trails to park spaces and other important community destinations. To ensure that the Town's current provision and any future investment in trails are protected, **it is recommended that the Town develop and implement a minimum standards policy for trail development and maintenance.**

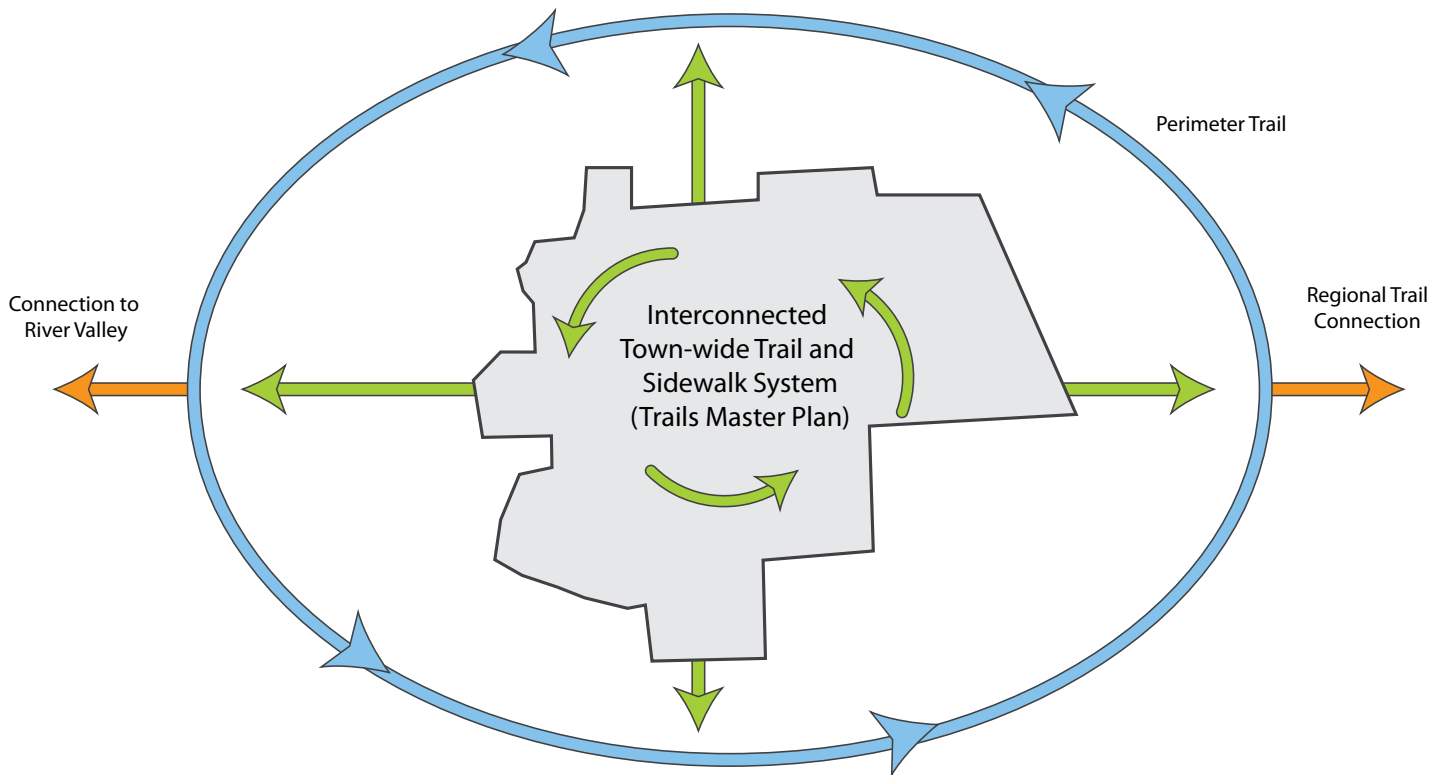
Considerations for trail development and maintenance standards should include:

- Standard width allowances (minimum 2.5 meters to a maximum of 3.0 metres is recommended);
- Surface standards (hard surfaced asphalt is recommended);
- Installation of curbs ramps and crosswalk stripping at intersections;
- Trail signage;
- Asphalt overlay programs;
- Allowances between roadways and trails; and
- Snow and debris clearing standards.



Illustrated above is a proposed trails connection map for the Town of Rimbey. The map outlines current trails and pathways, with proposed linkages that could improve connectivity and overall functionality of the trails system.

TRAILS CONCEPT PLAN



7.5.2. Parks & Playgrounds

Rimbey offers a variety of park and playground spaces, ranging in size from major multi-use spaces such as Pas-Ka-Poo Park, to smaller neighborhood park and playground spaces. Pas-Ka-Poo Park remains a major attraction for both local residents and visitors to the community. The Park contains buildings and other structures for the popular Farmers Market, is home to the Smithsonian International Truck Museum and encompasses a number of play areas and playground equipment pieces. As one of the signature attractions in the community, the Town is encouraged to work with its community partners to ensure this space remains attractive and exciting.

The Town oversees the centrally located Lions playground and four smaller neighborhood playgrounds. Consideration should be given to **investing in the replacement and refreshment of outdated and unsafe parks amenities and equipment pieces**. Although this investment may not be feasible to occur all at once, a plan should be developed to complete these refreshments over a set number of years. The Nesting Place RV Park also remains a popular destination for visitors and local residents. The site includes a small compliment of playground equipment and located adjacent to the ball diamonds and soccer fields. As a major community destination, the Town should continue to **maintain and keep this facility in an aesthetically pleasing and highly functional state**.

7.5.3. Dog Off-Leash Areas

The Town of Rimbey does not currently have a designated off-leash area. A number of parks and open spaces in and adjacent to the town are used by dog owners, often with pets unleashed. Identified as a top priority, **it is recommended that the Town explore developing a designated site**. Consideration should be given to support amenities (e.g. clean-up bags and dispensers, garbage cans, etc). The area should also be accessible but separate from the trail system.

7.5.4. Outdoor Aquatics Facilities

The Rimbey Aquatics Centre is a new facility which opened in the summer of 2012, replacing the previous outdoor pool. The Aquatics Centre features an outdoor pool which can accommodate a variety of function which includes lap swimming, lessons and leisure swimming. The pool features a number of other amenities such as a water slide and sauna. Adjacent to the pool is a splash pad. Although the community priorities research identified outdoor swimming pools and splash parks as a priority, this is likely a result of the research occurring before the opening of the new facility. **With regular maintenance and upkeep, the Aquatics Centre should be able to meet community needs for a number of years.**

7.5.5. Ball Diamonds

Eight ball diamonds are available in Rimbey, with four located at the south end of the community and four located adjacent to the Junior and Senior High School. Operation of the diamonds on south end of the community is the responsibility of the men's softball club, with assistance provided by the Town. These fields are ideally located adjacent to the soccer fields and campground facility. Parking and other support amenities are also in close proximity.

The four diamonds on the school site are maintained by the school division. The diamonds are generally considered to be well maintained and in good shape for recreational softball and baseball. The community however does not currently have a performance or baseball specific diamond. **If the Town and its community partners wish to explore the development of a performance or baseball specific diamond in the future, it is recommended that the planning processes and prioritization models outlined in the Master Plan be used.**

7.5.6. Sports Fields

There are five major sports fields in Rimbey. Four soccer fields are located adjacent to the ball diamonds on the south end of town, with a football field located at the Junior and Senior High School. The soccer fields are located adjacent to the ball diamonds and campground, with sufficient parking available on-site. These fields should continue meeting community needs for a number of years. In addition there are four other field spaces located at the elementary school and in parks throughout the community which are suitable for children's soccer and other activities. **It is recommended that the Town continue to work with its community partners to maintain (and enhance when necessary) sports fields as they are a valuable regional asset.**

7.5.7. Basketball and Tennis Courts

In total there are three outdoor basketball courts in Rimbey. Two are provided at school sites, while the Town is responsible for one court which is located adjacent to the Rimbey Aquatics Centre. Facility assessments suggested that **repairs to the courts surfaces are required.** Similarly, the **surface repairs to the Town's two tennis courts are also required.** When considering repairs and enhancements to the basketball and tennis courts, the Town is encouraged to consider secondary activities and multi-purpose usage of both spaces. This is not to suggest that either surface should be re-purposed as both basketball and tennis are likely to remain popular. Rather flat surface courts have the opportunity to be used for a variety of other events and activities, especially given their close proximity to a major community facility (Aquatics Centre).

7.5.8. Other Outdoor Facilities and Spaces

A number of other outdoor amenities and spaces exist in Rimbey. The Town provides community garden plots and numerous open spaces throughout Rimbey. In recent years, the Town has also provided a basic BMX park in one of the local neighborhood parks. A number of amenities and spaces are also provided by community partners and schools. Outdoor shinny and volleyball sites are available at local schools. **A local service organization (Lions) maintains the skateboard park facility, which remains popular among youth and which will require enhancement or relocation in the near future.** The Rimbey Agricultural Society operates the rodeo grounds located on the southeast corner of the community. The Town is encouraged to continue monitoring usage of these outdoor spaces, and consider future needs for provision in the community.

7.5.9. Land Reserve Dedication

Section 666 of the Municipal Government Act limits the amount of municipal reserve (MR) land that can be taken to 10% of the titled area after environmental reserve allocations are deducted from the overall parcel size. It is common practice for municipalities to treat this maximum as a minimum as well.

In many cases, the area required for municipal reserve purposes exceeds available reserve dedication (10% of the owner's land). Assembling sufficient land in the appropriate location therefore requires a mechanism to transfer municipal reserve dedication from one owner's land to that of another. To facilitate this process, the legislation provides for the taking of cash in lieu of land for municipal reserve purposes. The same 10% maximum applies. The value of the land is typically determined as of a date within 35 days of the date of the relevant subdivision application. This means that, normally, the value will be that of land that is subject to immediate development. In Rimbey, cash in lieu can apply to industrial and commercial subdivisions and should not be applied in residential areas.

Cash received in lieu of MR land from commercial subdivisions / industrial development may then be used to purchase additional land in cases where the appropriate location for a school or park site will occupy more than 10% of one owner's land. As a general principle, it is in the municipality's interest to take cash-in-lieu of land as late as possible in the development process to get highest value as development progresses. The Municipal Government Act allows the Subdivision Authority to do this by deferring the taking of reserves in time through the use of deferred reserve caveats. If subdivision occurs in stages, then, the Subdivision Authority may take its cash in lieu of reserve dedication when the last stage is subdivided.

On the other hand, purchases of land for municipal reserve purposes should be made as early in the process as possible to ensure minimum cost. This requires that open space and sites for schools and parks be identified early in the planning and development process.

In acquiring new municipal reserves the following guidelines have been developed in order to set goals for municipal reserve parcels set aside for recreation, parks and open space use. For municipal reserves lands earmarked for recreation, parks and open space uses :

- 50% typically allocated as part of Town-wide facilities, parks and open space resource;
- 30% typically allocated to Neighborhood facilities, parks and playgrounds, passive open space and connecting corridors; and
- 20% typically allocated as flex-use for community-wide resources, neighborhood parks and playgrounds, passive open space and connecting corridors or for land swap / sale purposes.

These allocation guidelines, if utilized properly, will help ensure that local needs for linkages, parks and open spaces are met while connectivity between residents and community-wide and neighborhood parks are maintained in the future. It is important that the aforementioned guidelines are considered during Area Structure Planning (ASP) as appropriate implementation of this concept is not achievable at the subdivision planning stage.

It is important to note that although these ratios have been targeted for municipal reserve lands earmarked for trails, parks and open space uses, there are a number of other demands on municipal reserve lands. These other demands include school development and public facilities (public works maintenance and storage, civic administration areas, etc.). Although the Town is proactive in planning for all future uses of municipal reserve, as is in most municipalities, the reserve lands dedicated for parks and open space uses do not comprise the full 10% dedication in each new subdivision. For this reason, other forms of land acquisition (purchase) by municipalities has become a reality, especially when planning for community-wide resources.



Municipal Reserve Credit

Although municipal reserve dedication is a provincially legislated requirement during the land development process, there are discrepancies on what independent municipalities will, or will not, consider municipal reserve. That being said, the following discussion outlines what is recommended in terms of granting credit for lands that could be considered municipal reserve.

Stormwater management facilities may have amenity value (lakes or ponds visible and accessible to the general public) and may even have recreation value (“dry ponds” that can be used as play fields under normal circumstances) no municipal reserve credit shall be granted for such lands as the primary intent and function is that of a utility lot.

The degree to which open space for trails and pathways is granted municipal reserve credit should depend on the degree to which the facility serves a circulation as opposed to a recreation/amenity function. Most trails should not receive reserve credit.

A trail or walkway serves a circulation function if it is necessary as an internal or external connection within or between neighborhoods, and is not only a continuation or link in an overall trail system. It should be treated as part of the circulation dedication. Since most walkway right of ways (circulation) are approximately 6 meters wide (with a 2.5 metre asphalt pathway), any requirement for walkway or trail width beyond 6 metre could be regarded as having a recreation function and could receive municipal reserve credit.



Providing Planning Future Park Sites

In many municipalities, the timing of the provision and development of new park sites is a concern. If development proceeds slowly, many residents must wait years before their new area is served by a park site. In most cases, early provision of such facilities is a concern of the developer as well as the municipality. Early provision of a site benefits the developer by supporting his marketing efforts and most likely minimizing costs for developing the site.

This problem is best addressed early in the planning process (the area structure plan stage) by locating neighborhood park sites in the early stages of development. Early dedication of a site can be of some benefit to developers in that dedication of the site reduces their responsibility for taxes, maintenance, and legal liability for the land. It can also allow for prudent planning of trail connections to the site.

Proper planning, the shared interest on the part of the Town and the developer in the early provision of park sites, and the use of consistent cash contributions from all developers should reduce the need for any requirement that a site and facilities be provided once a certain number of lots have been developed. Such requirements can lead to difficulties arising from fragmented ownership, where development occurs on one owner's land while the park site is planned to be located on another piece of land where development is not occurring. In such cases, it may be impossible for a developer to satisfy the park site requirement immediately (prior to full sub-division build out).

It should be noted that early development of a park site requires that adjacent grading/drainage be designed prior to development of the site to avoid the need for costly adjustments later on. The site will also require developed road access, although the ultimate extent of road access/exposure may not be needed for the site to be developed.

In some cases, temporary sites and facilities may be provided. However, this approach can lead to problems in terms of additional cost and objections to the removal of the temporary site or facilities from residents who become accustomed to their being available in a particular location. Consequently, as a general rule the provision of temporary sites and facilities is to be avoided.



Voluntary Recreation and Parks Contributions

Many Alberta municipalities are adopting a practice of asking for voluntary contributions from developers for off-site recreation and parks purposes. Allotments for such contributions vary among municipalities depending on size and level of development in each but typical amount vary between \$800 and \$1,500 per developed lot. Although the Town of Rimbey does not currently ask for these contributions, it is recommended that the Town consider requesting lot based voluntary recreation and parks contributions when development occurs. The funds collected will prove valuable in future development of new recreation facilities and parks and will be equally important to sustaining existing recreation facilities and parks.

Acquiring Land for Future Recreation Infrastructure

In addition to land obtained through the municipal reserve process, it may be necessary to acquire (either through purchase or other means) other parcels of land to accommodate the future development of recreation infrastructure (indoor and outdoor). In many cases, it is ideal for the future development of recreation infrastructure to occur adjacent to existing facilities in order to capitalize on potential efficiencies, existing support amenities and to enhance the capacity of current sites. As such, it may be prudent for the Town to consider acquiring land adjacent to existing facilities as opportunities to do so arise. Although development on this land may not be required immediately, having an inventory of land adjacent to existing facilities allows for future cost savings and flexibility when contemplating future projects. It is also important to note that acquiring lands outside the land development process may be required for Town-wide resources so as not to compromise the allocation of neighborhood parks and lineal corridors.



7.6. The Future of Parks, Trails and Recreation Infrastructure in Rimbey

The following section outlines the methodology used to determine future projects for parks, trails and recreation infrastructure in Rimbey.

7.6.1. Infrastructure Projects

A number of factors require consideration when determining future parks, trails and recreation projects in Rimbey. This includes community priorities identified through the research as well as overarching Master Plan recommendations. Additional information on the research conducted refer can be found in Section 4.0. or in the State of Parks, Trails and Recreation in Rimbey Report. An overall ranking of the community priorities for parks, trails and recreation can also be found in Appendix A.

Using the research and overarching Master Plan recommendations, the following thirteen infrastructure projects have been identified as warranting consideration:

- Enhancement to the trail system
- Indoor walking / running track
- Enhancements to playgrounds
- Indoor field facility
- Outdoor amphitheatre / event spaces / band shelter
- Dog off-leash area
- Indoor child playground
- Enhancement / expansion to the fitness room
- Enhancement of amenities available in the gymnasium / auditorium
- Baseball specific diamond
- Outdoor basketball court repair
- Outdoor tennis court repair
- Enhancement/relocation of skateboard park

It is important to note that investment in sustaining existing facilities should be a priority for the Town.

7.6.2. Prioritizing Infrastructure Projects

While ideally all of the projects identified in the previous section would be completed, it is most likely that the Town will need to prioritize these projects considering a number of factors. In order to help rank future infrastructure projects a prioritization framework has been developed which considers the following factors (see Appendix B for the scoring criteria associated with prioritization framework):

- Community demand (Community Priorities)
- Conformance with Council priorities / plans / policies
- Current provision in the community
- Life span of existing facilities
- Project location
- Public accessibility
- Economic impacts
- Cost savings available through partnerships or grants
- Overall capital and operating costs

7.6.3. Ranking of Infrastructure Projects

Using the prioritization framework, the thirteen infrastructure projects identified in section 7.6.1. have been scored and ranked as identified below. The complete scoring chart for the infrastructure projects can be found in Appendix D.

1. Enhancements to the trail and pathway system
2. Enhancements to playgrounds
- T3. Outdoor amphitheatre / event spaces / band shelter
- T3. Dog off-leash area
4. Indoor child playground
5. Outdoor tennis courts
- T6. Enhancements/relocation of skateboard park
- T6. Outdoor basketball court
- T6. Enhancement / expansion to the fitness room
7. Indoor walking / running track
8. Enhancement of amenities available in gymnasium / auditorium
9. Baseball specific diamond
10. Indoor field facility

7.7 Key initiatives for Parks, Trails and Recreation Infrastructure

Identified below are recommended key initiatives related to parks trails and recreation infrastructure:

- Sustaining existing facilities should be a top priority of the Town.
- When contemplating the development of new spaces and amenities, consideration should first be given to encompassing these spaces within or adjacent to existing facilities.
- Implement a life cycle budgeting strategy by allocating a percentage of the current capital replacement value of major parks, trail networks and recreation facilities to the annual operating budget to ensure sustainability of these spaces and overall service provision levels. This approach requires investment of both time and funding.
- Monitor the current utilization of indoor facilities and amenities, considering the potential secondary uses of these spaces for new programs and activities.
- Utilize the planning process and infrastructure prioritization framework provided when contemplating and allocating resources for major facility development or expansion.
- Consider expansion and enhancement to the fitness room, and the refresh of equipment to keep amenity exciting and well utilized.
- Consider the enhancement or relocation of the skateboard park.
- To increase usage of the gymnasium / auditorium, consider adding additional amenities to the space (e.g. climbing wall, fitness equipment)
- Make the enhancement and development of trails a continued priority (a Trails Concept Plan and Trails Master Plan are provided herein).
- Implement a minimum standards policy for development and maintenance.
- Invest in the replacement and refreshment of outdated and unsafe playground equipment pieces.
- Develop a designated dog off-leash area.
- If the Town and its community partners wish to explore the development of a performance or baseball specific diamond in the future, it is recommended that the planning processes and prioritization models outlined in the Master Plan be used.
- It is recommended that the Town continue to work with its community partners to maintain (and enhance when necessary) sports fields as they are a valuable regional asset.
- Consider playing surface repairs to the outdoor basketball and tennis courts located adjacent to the Rimby Aquatics Centre.



8.0

The Future of Recreation Programming

The following section provides recommendations and suggested approaches for the future delivery of programs to local residents. The recommendations have been developed based on the research collected and analyzed in the State of Parks, Trails and Recreation Report, as well as broader trends and best practices observed in recreation and leisure programming.

8.1. Registered Programs

Registered programming in Rimbey is offered predominantly by community organizations, often with some level of support from the Town. Examples of organizations working in partnership with the Town to deliver registered programming include minor hockey, Can Skate and minor soccer. Private operators also offer programs, or are utilized by the Town to help operate specific programs (e.g. contract fitness instructors). Considering the importance of community organizations in delivering programs to residents, **it is suggested that the Town continue to support the efforts of these groups, and find resource conscious ways to enhance support.** A number of potential mechanisms are suggested in earlier sections of this document, which include expanding community partnerships, developing protocols and implementing tools to identify needs and areas of opportunities.



8.2. Drop-In Programs

Drop-in programming in Rimbey is primarily provided by the Town, utilizing both Town and community partner facilities (e.g. school gymnasium for walking). The expanded use of the gymnasium / auditorium in recent years has provided the Recreation Department with the opportunity to offer expanded drop-in programming. Trends in recreation and leisure further appear to indicate that drop-in types of programs will remain popular, as they provide sport and recreational opportunities to residents without having to commit to a full season.

It is suggested that the Town continue offering a variety of drop-in programming, and to explore other facilities (both Town operated and community partner operated) that can provide additional drop-in opportunities to residents.

Areas of focus may include drop-in programs for seniors and young adults. The previously suggested tracking of usage statistics will further enhance the Town's ability to analyze and evaluate the popularity of various drop-in programs and any gaps that may exist, ensuring that offerings remain fresh and well utilized.

8.3. Spontaneous Use Opportunities

Research indicates that there exists limited spontaneous use recreation opportunities in Rimbey. These types of program offerings are geared to provide residents with the flexibility of participating in physical activity or leisure with minimal restrictions or structure. **A number of opportunities to expand spontaneous use opportunities exist but may require an additional investment in staffing or infrastructure.** A couple of opportunities identified include:

- Additional "open gym time" at the Community Centre;
- Expansion of trails and the installation of support amenities (e.g. outdoor fitness equipment); and
- Increased access to sports fields and ball diamonds for spontaneous use.

8.4. Ensuring Accessibility to Recreation

Recreation and leisure activities have well documented social and health benefits, and can facilitate overall community well-being and connectedness. When providing recreation and leisure services, it is important for the Town to consider barriers that may be preventing some residents from participating in these services.

Physical accessibility should be strongly considered in both infrastructure and programming given Rimbey's high proportion of seniors. Specifically with regards to programming, **it is suggested that the Town focus on developing programs that can provide physical activity and social opportunities for seniors and other residents facing physical barriers to participation in recreation and leisure.** These programs could be existing forms of sport or recreation that are designed for specific populations (e.g. pickle ball for seniors), or adaptations to existing sport and recreation programs offered broadly to all members of the community (e.g. lower basketball nets).

Financial accessibility is another area that should be considered in the future provision of recreation and leisure programming. The Town currently provides a number of low or no cost opportunities, and should continue to find ways to expand these offerings. Potential mechanisms could include:

- Increasing drop-in and spontaneous use opportunities;
- Working with community partners to provide additional low or no cost programs; and
- Implementing a "leisure access" type program to subsidize program or fitness membership costs for low income residents.



8.5 Key initiatives for Recreation Programming

Identified below are recommended key initiatives for recreation programming:

- Continue and when possible expand the support provided to community organizations in the provision of registered programming.
- Continue to directly provide a variety of drop-in programming, and through ongoing collection and analysis of usage data and enhanced community partnerships, determine offerings that can be expanded in a resource conscious manner.
- Expand spontaneous use opportunities by considering opportunities that may exist at current facilities and in the future development of recreation and leisure facilities and amenities.
- Consider physical and financial accessibility when designing and implementing recreation and leisure programs, and in partnerships with community groups.



9.0

Plan Implementation

The objective of the Master Plan is to provide an accurate assessment and analysis of the current and future needs for parks, trails and recreation services. Provided in the Plan are a number of tools and mechanisms for identifying future needs, and managing key relationships with stakeholders and partners.

The Plan has been developed based on broad public engagement and sound research, with cooperation from both internal and external stakeholders. Provided in this summary section are an overview of the key initiatives outlined in the document, financial implications relating to projects, and initiatives that have been identified as priorities and a funding strategy. A Master Plan reporting template is also provided to ensure the implementation of key initiatives can be measured.



9.1. Key Initiatives

Outlined below are the key initiatives outlined in the document for service delivery, infrastructure and programming.

Key initiatives for service provision:

- **Provide ongoing input into other municipal functions such as land development discussions related to future municipal reserve allocation, transportation planning and other broad strategic planning initiatives.**
- **Develop transparent and equitable protocols for community partnerships with volunteer groups that clearly outline roles, responsibilities and expectations.**
- **Increase the support provided to volunteer community groups by enhancing current partnerships and identifying new partner groups that can provide exciting and publicly accessible recreation and leisure opportunities.**
- **Adopt a standard tool (such as the one proposed on page 13) that can be used to identify the current state of groups and the types / levels of support required to optimize the group's ability to deliver on its mandate.**
- **Develop and implement an annual reporting mechanism for agreements with community partner organizations.**
- **Encourage increased volunteerism by:**
 - **Maintaining a roster of local residents looking for volunteer opportunities and organizations with volunteer positions available.**
 - **Hosting a regular volunteer sharing, recognition and capacity building event (potentially to be incorporated into existing volunteer appreciation event efforts)**
- **Further develop tracking of usage statistics to include registered and drop-in programs as well as spontaneous use areas.**

- Develop a promotions and marketing strategy that focuses on increasing awareness of existing recreation and leisure opportunities, with the objective of increasing overall participation and usage levels at community facilities.
- Continue to work with the County on an ongoing basis to develop fair and equitable agreements in the provision of recreation and leisure services to regional residents.

Key initiatives for Parks, Trails and Recreation Infrastructure:

- Sustaining existing facilities should be a top priority of the Town.
- When contemplating the development of new spaces and amenities, consideration should first be given to encompassing these spaces within or adjacent to existing facilities.
- Implement a life cycle budgeting strategy by allocating a percentage of the current capital replacement value of major parks, trail networks and recreation facilities to the annual operating budget to ensure sustainability of these spaces and overall service provision levels. This approach requires investment of both time and funding.
- Monitor the current utilization of indoor facilities and amenities, considering the potential secondary uses of these spaces for new programs and activities.
- Utilize the planning process and infrastructure prioritization framework provided when contemplating and allocating resources for major facility development or expansion.
- Consider expansion and enhancement to the fitness room, and the refresh of equipment to keep amenity exciting and well utilized.
- Consider the enhancement or relocation of the skateboard park.
- To increase usage of the gymnasium / auditorium, consider adding additional amenities to the space (e.g. climbing wall, fitness equipment)

- Make the enhancement and development of trails a continued priority (a Trails Concept Plan and Trails Master Plan are provided herein).
- Implement a minimum standards policy for development and maintenance.
- Invest in the replacement and refreshment of outdated and unsafe playground equipment pieces.
- Develop a designated dog off-leash area.
- If the Town and its community partners wish to explore the development of a performance or baseball specific diamond in the future, it is recommended that the planning processes and prioritization models outlined in the Master Plan be used.
- It is recommended that the Town continue to work with its community partners to maintain (and enhance when necessary) sports fields as they are a valuable regional asset.
- Consider playing surface repairs to the outdoor basketball and tennis courts located adjacent to the Rimbey Aquatics Centre.

Key initiatives for Recreation Programming:

- Continue and when possible expand the support provided to community organizations in the provision of registered programming.
- Continue to directly provide a variety of drop-in programming, and through ongoing collection and analysis of usage data and enhanced community partnerships, determine offerings that can be expanded in a resource conscious manner.
- Expand spontaneous use opportunities by considering opportunities that may exist at current facilities and in the future development of recreation and leisure facilities and amenities.
- Consider physical and financial accessibility when designing and implementing recreation and leisure programs, and in partnerships with community groups.

g.2. Financial Implications of Study Implementation

The following financial implications have been developed to help guide the Town with future budgeting for the priorities identified in the Master Plan. Capital costs for major parks, trails and recreation infrastructure projects are estimates only and may require further exploration and analysis. It is important to note that the projects and initiatives outlines are not binding for the Town nor is future development of the infrastructure projects identified guaranteed to occur. It is important to note that the capital costs estimates for new and/or upgraded facility development are based upon 2013 dollars.

g.2.1 Capital Impacts

The estimated capital commitment required to meet the Master Plan's strategic direction is summarized in the table below.

CAPITAL IMPACTS			
Project / Initiative	Short (0-5 years)	Medium (6-10 years)	Long Term (>10)
Service Delivery			
Volunteer and community group support	n/a	n/a	n/a
Promotion and marketing	n/a	n/a	n/a
Sub Total	\$0	\$0	\$0
Infrastructure			
Community Centre suggested investment	\$625,000	\$160,000	\$55,000
Pas-Ka-Poo Park Buildings suggested investment			\$25,000
RV Park Buildings suggested investment		\$20,000	\$10,000
Outdoor Pool suggested investment	\$30,000		\$35,000
Enhancements to the trail and pathway system	\$125,000	\$125,000	n/a
Enhancements to playgrounds	\$75,000	\$75,000	n/a
Outdoor amphitheatre / event spaces / band shelter	\$125,000	n/a	n/a
Dog off-leash area	\$250,000	n/a	n/a
Indoor child playground	n/a	\$250,000	n/a
Enhancement / relocation of the skateboard park	n/a	\$200,000	n/a
Outdoor tennis courts	n/a	\$100,000	n/a
Outdoor basketball court	n/a	\$100,000	n/a
Enhancement / expansion to the fitness room	n/a	n/a	\$500,000
Indoor walking / running track	n/a	n/a	\$1,500,000
Enhancement of amenities available in gymnasium / auditorium	n/a	n/a	\$500,000
Baseball specific diamond	n/a	n/a	\$200,000
Indoor field facility	n/a	n/a	\$8,000,000
Sub Total	\$1,230,000	\$1,030,000	\$10,825,000
Programming			
Expand spontaneous use opportunities	n/a	n/a	n/a
Sub Total	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Capital Investment	\$1,230,000	\$1,030,000	\$10,825,000

9.2.2 Operating Impacts

The estimated operating impact to meet the Master Plan's strategic direction is summarized in the table below.

OPERATING			
Project / Initiative	Short (0-5 years)	Medium (6-10 years)	Long Term (>10)
Service Delivery			
Volunteer and community group support	\$5,000	n/a	n/a
Promotion and marketing	\$5,000	n/a	n/a
Sub Total	\$10,000	\$0	\$0
Infrastructure			
Enhancements to the trail and pathway system	\$5,000	\$5,000	n/a
Enhancements to playgrounds	\$5,000	\$5,000	n/a
Outdoor amphitheatre / event spaces / band shelter	\$10,000	n/a	n/a
Dog off-leash area	\$15,000	n/a	n/a
Indoor child playground	n/a	\$20,000	n/a
Enhancement / relocation of the skateboard park	n/a	\$10,000	n/a
Outdoor tennis courts	n/a	n/a	n/a
Outdoor basketball court	n/a	n/a	n/a
Enhancement / expansion to the fitness room	n/a	n/a	n/a
Indoor walking / running track	n/a	n/a	\$15,000
Enhancement of amenities available in gymnasium / auditorium	n/a	n/a	n/a
Baseball specific diamond	n/a	n/a	\$10,000
Indoor field facility	n/a	n/a	\$150,000
Sub Total	\$35,000	\$40,000	\$175,000
Programming			
Expand spontaneous use opportunities	\$5,000	n/a	n/a
Sub Total	\$5,000	\$0	\$0
Total Incremental Annual Net Operating Expenses	\$50,000	\$40,000	\$175,000

9.3. Funding Strategy

Municipalities bear the majority of costs related to community recreation provision. Although Provincial and Federal government grants contribute to capital upgrades and new recreation and parks development in some cases the primary responsibility for both capital and operating recreation infrastructure and programming is born by users and local taxpayers. The leveraging of this public investment into external sources of funds is key in both sustaining and expanding recreation service provision in the future. The Town already leverages public spending on recreation and parks resources through the collection of user fees, through partnerships with non-profit groups in providing recreation opportunities and through private sector sponsorship of recreation assets.

The funding opportunity spectrum (presented on the following page) is meant to guide future municipal expenditure on recreation and parks infrastructure development. The spectrum explains that facilities accessible by the entire community and that are within the Town's base level of service (such as walking trails, park furniture, etc) should be funded solely through public taxes. As recreation and parks infrastructure becomes more specialized and less accessible by the general public (i.e.

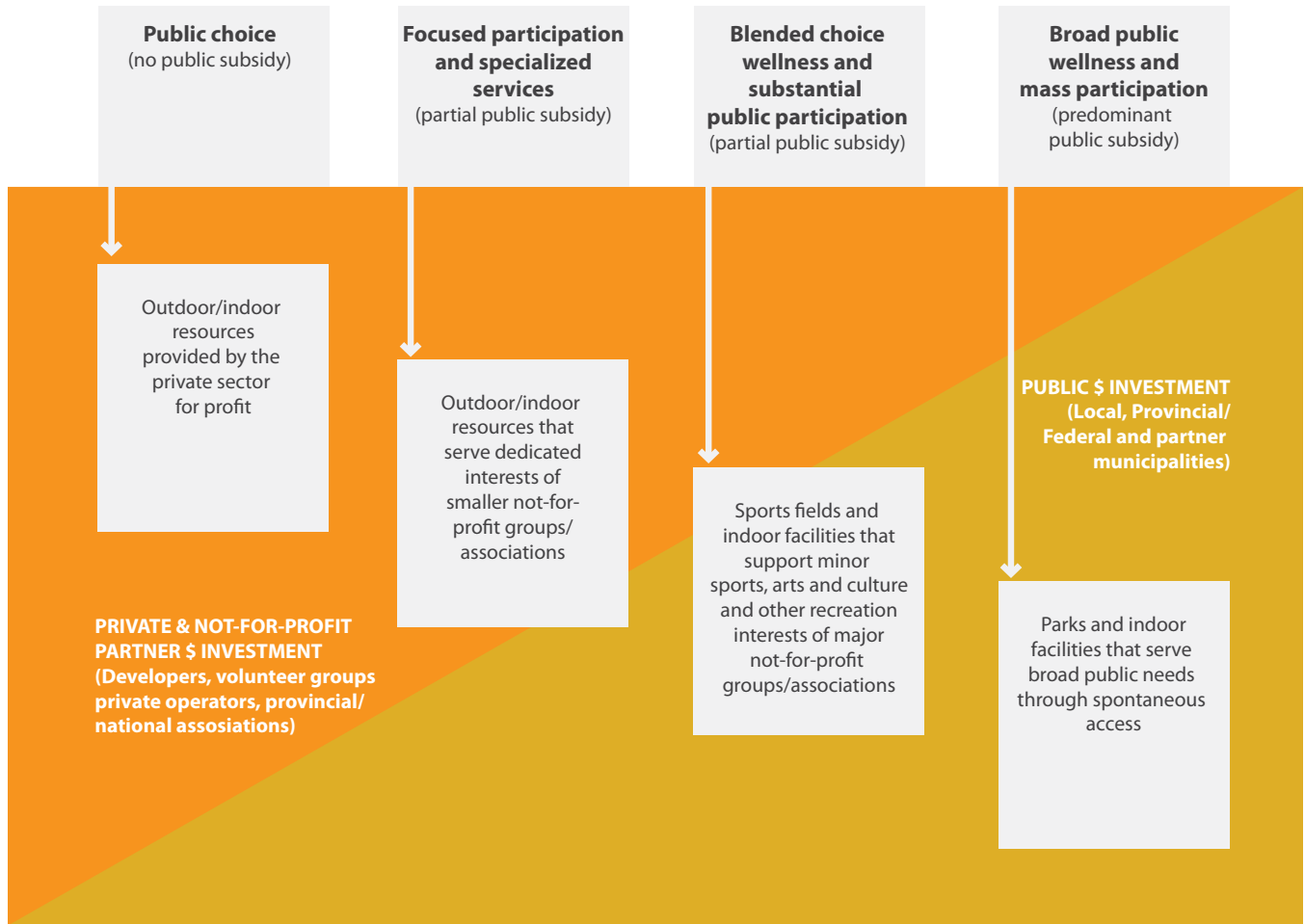
major sports field facilities, splash parks, etc) funding should come from a combination of public taxes, user fees, fundraising and private / non-profit investment.

Further leveraging public resources in the provision of recreation services is important in order to optimize the impact of public funds in the provision of recreation facilities and services. An examination of existing revenue streams (e.g. user fees) is necessary to ensure that the fees provide an appropriate balance between revenue generation, affordability, access, and other performance indicators. Other, less traditional sources of revenue need to be considered as well.

The following funding opportunity spectrum is presented to guide future municipal expenditure (capital and operating) on parks trails and recreation development. In a nutshell, the spectrum explains that facilities accessible by the entire community and that are within the Town's base level of service (such as walking trails, playgrounds, etc.) should be funded solely through public taxes. As parks and facilities become more specialized and less accessible by the general public (i.e. agri-rec facilities, major sports field facilities, ice arenas, etc.) funding should come from a combination of public taxes, user fees and private / non-profit investment.



Funding Opportunities Spectrum



9.3.1. Sponsorships

Sponsorship opportunities provide private sector access to asset branding with existing or new recreation facility spaces or programs. The success of sponsorship programs is dependent upon the level of private sector interest / availability in the community and the perceived tangible (impressions) and intangible (image) return on investment an opportunity may offer. Recreation and parks should be designed, where feasible, with consideration given to maximize exposure of potential sponsors. This would entail the involvement of sponsorship expertise within the Town being involved in the detailed design process should facility upgrades or new recreation and parks development occur.

Sponsorships for recreation and parks amenities can be applied to either capital expenses, operating expenses or a combination of both. Regardless of the type of sponsorship, there are three key considerations that need to be made.

- **Mutual benefit** is a major success factor in a successful and long term partnership. There must be a benefit to all parties involved, either tangible or intangible, so that there is motivation to maintain and strengthen the relationship as it matures. This is important in capitalizing on the successes of a partnership arrangement but also to mitigate issues that could arise during the term of an agreement.
- **Communication** between all partners is very important in ensuring that all parties are “on the same page” and in dealing with issues / conflicts that might surface throughout the term of an agreement.
- All parties must have **trust** in each other to ensure that proper communication channels are utilized and to ensure that broader facility program goals can be met. This trust must exist in the individuals involved in “face to face communication” as well as in broader organization-wide ideals.

When contemplating corporate / non-profit sponsorship and recreation and parks fundraising it important to understand the nature of the sponsorship market. Fundraising campaigns must provide access for all budgets however prominence must be given to those groups that contribute the most. Sponsorship occurs to accomplish greater good in a community and to

promote / affiliate an organization with the intentions and image of a certain resource. In the case of a public recreation and parks, the case for contribution to quality of life and health lifestyles is straight forward and the affiliation is easy to make.

For any given resource, typically one-third of corporate fundraising comes from the top two or three sponsors, the next third comes from the next 10 – 15 contributors and the remaining third comes from a variety of sources including smaller corporate donations, non-profit contributions and individual donations. Using this framework, and assessing appropriate value for recreation and/or parks resources, **the Town is encouraged to formulate and administer a sponsorship prospectus for recreation and parks resources outlining private sponsorship opportunities.**

9.3.2. Fee Based Amenities and Services

The charging of user fees for facilities that are currently free, such as trails and playgrounds, is not achievable due to traditional and market reality. However adding complimentary fee-based amenities and/or services, such as wireless internet access in parks or retail vending in parks, could allow for revenue generation in areas where use cannot be charged. **It is recommended that the Town explore non-traditional fee-based services and amenities that are complimentary to existing recreation facilities and park space on a break even or profit basis.**

9.3.3. Funding Partnerships

The potential for **partnerships** in building and operating recreation and parks infrastructure is significant. Through partnerships the Town can lever public funds while still providing quality, diverse infrastructure.

The Town can participate in operating and/or capital partnership arrangements as the primary stakeholder developing or operating the resource and seeking assistance. Alternatively, the Town could provide assistance as a secondary stakeholder to non-profit or private sector partners leader a project.

9.4. Master Plan Implementation and Reporting

The successful implementation of a Master Plan involves “buy-in” from all stakeholders and parties involved in the execution of the suggested initiatives and strategic goals. Internal measurement and reporting should be conducted on a regular basis by the Recreation Department and Town Administration. Successes in achieving the Plan objectives should also be reported to Council in conjunction with their annual budgeting processes. Provided below is a tool which can be used internally within the department and when reporting to Town Administration and Council.

Strategic Outcomes	The goal has been completely implemented	The goal has been partially implemented	The goal has not been implemented to a satisfactory level	Comments	Financial Commitments			
					Estimated capital budget over the time period	Actual capital committed over the time period	Estimated operating budget over the time period	Actual operating budget over the time period

The strategies presented to meet identified needs and the planning guidelines and management tools contained in this Parks Trails and Recreation Master Plan will only have value if they are utilized and implemented by the Town on an ongoing basis. The application of the information contained in this Plan is explained on the next page.

The plan vision and objectives form an integral foundation for the delivery of recreation facilities, trails, parks and open spaces in the Town. This foundation should be revisited any time a decision regarding service provision or future development or operation is made.

The classification system for infrastructure resources will help staff manage and maintain existing and new facilities and parks and open spaces throughout the Town.

The discussion on land reserve dedication, roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders in the development process, and the minimum development standards for parks and open space will help local planning authorities, private and public sector land developers and Town engineering and parks and recreation personnel collaborate on solutions that best meet the needs of the Town's residents.

The resource planning framework, partnering framework and funding opportunity spectrum outline a transparent process for quality of life infrastructure development to occur on an equitable and fair basis. These management tools will promote maintain a balance between public service provision and the unique needs of special interest groups. The environmental stewardship and social inclusion components of the plan will aid in optimizing the built and social environments in the community and broader region.

Finally, the recommendations regarding future indoor facilities, trails, parks and open space and programs are included to provide the Town with valuable capital and operational budget estimates for the future. Proactively identifying resource requirements now for the future ensures that where possible, the impacts of future development on the local tax base can be minimized.

These recommendations are also valuable in presenting various community needs from the Town's perspective and relating to various stakeholders that future development of any kind will have to be a collaborative effort from the broader community.

10.0

Summary

This Parks, Trails and Recreation Master Plan has been developed based on sound research and community input under the guidance of the Recreation Board. The Master Plan outlines a number of strategies to meet identified needs and provides management tools that the Recreation Board, Council and Town administration can use to make key decisions in the future.

The **service delivery** recommendations provided in the Master Plan can assist the Town with enhancing the capacity of community groups and volunteers, strengthen partnerships, develop promotions and marketing strategies and enhance data tracking and quality control. By executing on the key initiatives and recommendations outlined in the Master Plan, the Town will be able to increase participation and ensure that recreation and leisure opportunities can continued to be delivered in an efficient manner.

The **infrastructure** tools and initiatives outlined in the Master Plan will be important for the Town to utilize when making future decisions on both current and new infrastructure projects. The classification system for infrastructure resources will help staff manage and maintain existing and new facilities and parks and open spaces throughout the Town. Also outlined in the Master Plan is a recommended planning process that should be utilized by the Town when internally contemplating or being approached with a major infrastructure project. By using this model the Town will be able to measure the need and feasibility of the project before making major investments.

The discussion on land reserve dedication, roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders in the development process, and the minimum development standards for parks and open space will help local planning authorities, private and public sector land developers, Town engineering and parks staff and recreation personnel collaborate on solutions that best meet the needs of the Town's residents. The Master Plan ultimately provides a number of structures and recommendations for how the Town can manage current and future land assets to accommodate recreation, parks and trails infrastructure needs.



Specific infrastructure projects are also outlined in the Master Plan. Thirteen projects were identified based on the research conducted and feedback from key stakeholders through the planning process. These projects were then ranked using a prioritization framework. This tool considers a number of criteria and can be used in the future by the Town to prioritize projects. It should be noted that while a number of new projects were identified, it will be important for the Town to invest in sustaining current infrastructure.

Programming recommendations and initiatives have also been identified in the Master Plan. While the Town has a relatively strong compliment of structured recreation and leisure opportunities, there exists an opportunity to expand spontaneous use offerings. Ensuring access to recreation and leisure opportunities for residents with physical or financial limitations is another factor that the Town will need to consider in the future delivery of services.

The Town now has a strategic plan for delivering parks, trails and recreation services in the future. Should the recommendations and tools be accepted and implemented, existing and future recreation service investment will see further reaching benefit and will ultimately be more efficient and focused. However it is important to note that the strategies and management tools presented in this document will only have value if they are utilized and implemented by the Town on an ongoing basis. The plan vision and objectives form an integral foundation for the delivery of recreation facilities, trails, parks and open spaces in the Town. This foundation should be revisited any time a decision regarding service provision or future development or operation is made.



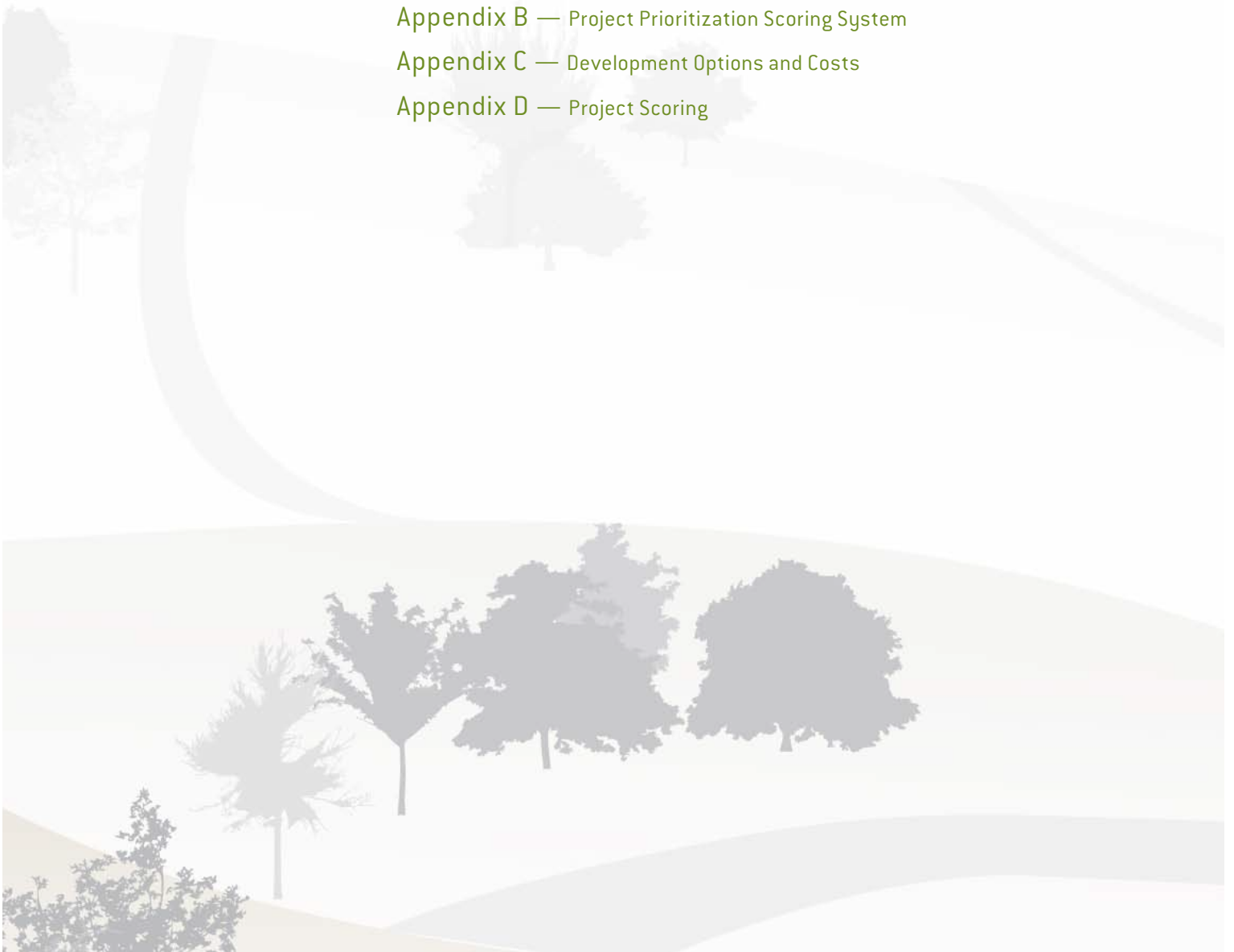
Appendices

Appendix A — Community Infrastructure Priorities

Appendix B — Project Prioritization Scoring System

Appendix C — Development Options and Costs

Appendix D — Project Scoring



Appendix A

Community Infrastructure Priorities

Rank	INDOOR AND OUTDOOR FACILITY PRIORITY	Household Survey	Community Group / Stakeholder Consultation	Student Survey	Facility Utilization / Population Growth	Comparable Communities	Industry trends
1	Walking trails	✓ ✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	Amphitheatre / event spaces / band shelter	✓ ✓	✓			✓	✓
2	Outdoor child playgrounds	✓ ✓	✓		✓		✓
2	Indoor field facilities	✓ ✓	✓	✓			✓
2	Indoor walking / running track	✓ ✓	✓	✓			✓
2	Indoor climbing wall	✓ ✓	✓	✓			✓
2	Indoor child playground	✓ ✓	✓	✓			✓
2	Water spray parks	✓ ✓		✓	✓		✓
3	Outdoor fitness equipment	✓ ✓				✓	✓
3	Rodeo / Agricultural Facilities	✓ ✓	✓		✓		
3	Dog off leash areas	✓ ✓		✓			✓
3	Outdoor swimming pools	✓ ✓		✓	✓		
3	Leisure ice surfaces	✓ ✓	✓				✓
3	Library	✓ ✓	✓		✓		
3	Gymnasium type spaces	✓ ✓		✓	✓		
3	Fitness / wellness facilities	✓ ✓		✓			✓
3	Performing arts / show spaces	✓ ✓	✓	✓			
3	Community halls	✓ ✓	✓		✓		
4	Open spaces	✓ ✓					✓

Community Infrastructure Priorities (Continued)

Rank	INDOOR AND OUTDOOR FACILITY PRIORITY	Household Survey	Community Group / Stakeholder Consultation	Student Survey	Facility Utilization / Population Growth	Comparable Communities	Industry trends
4	Picnic areas	✓✓	✓				
4	Community gardens	✓✓					✓
4	Track and field spaces		✓	✓		✓	
4	Ice Arenas			✓	✓		✓
5	Community gathering spaces		✓		✓		
5	Mountain bike park			✓			✓
5	BMX Bicycle Parks			✓			✓
5	Campgrounds			✓			✓
5	Museum / interpretive spaces			✓			✓
6	Community meeting rooms				✓		
6	Program rooms (dance / martial arts)			✓			
6	Basketball courts			✓			
6	Beach volleyball courts			✓			
6	Art display spaces						✓
7	Curling rinks						
7	Sports fields						
7	Baseball diamonds						
7	Outdoor highboard skating rinks						
7	Tennis courts						
7	Skateboard Parks						
7	Court sports (squash / racquetball)						

Appendix B

Project Prioritization Scoring System

Criteria	Rating Criteria				Weight	Rate	Weight x Rate
Community demand	3 points — for identified priority "1" projects	2 points — for identified priority "2" projects	1 point — for identified priority "3" projects	0 points — for identified priority "4" or higher projects	5		
Conformance with Council priorities, plans / policies	3 — project implements and/or conforms with Council adopted written policy / plan (inc. Recreation Master Plan)	2 — project conforms with an established departmental or Recreation Board policy / plan (inc. internal business / strategic plans)	n / a	0 — project does not conform to established policy / plan	3		
Current provision in the community	3 — project would add completely new activity to recreation in the Town	2 — project would significantly improve provision of existing recreation activity in the Town	n / a	0 — activity is already adequately provided in the Town	4		
Life span of existing facilities	3 — the existing facility will be decommissioned within 2 years or is not currently offered in the Town	2 — the existing facility will be decommissioned within 3–5 years	1 — the existing facility will be decommissioned within 5–10 years	0 — the existing facility is not near the end of its useful life	4		
Project location	3 — site is owned by the Town	n / a	1 — site is secured on long term lease lands (20+years)	0 — project is not on public owned or long term leased lands	2		
Public accessibility	3 — unlimited access to the general public	2 — limited access to the general public	n / a	0 — not accessible to the general public	4		

Project Prioritization Scoring System (Continued)

Criteria	Rating Criteria				Weight	Rate	Weight x Rate
Economic impact	3 — the activity or space will draw significant non-local investment into the community and will give the community provincial, national and/or international exposure	2 — the activity or space will draw significant non-local investment into the community	1 — the activity or space will draw moderate non-local investment into the community	0 — the activity or space will not draw non-local investment into the community	2		
Cost savings through partnerships or grants	3 — partnerships exist in capital and/or operating that equate to 50% or more of the overall project cost	2 — partnerships exist in capital and/or operating that equate to 25%–49% or more of the overall project cost	1 — partnerships exist in capital and/or operating that equate to 10%–24% or more of the overall project cost	0 — no potential partnerships exist	4		
Overall capital cost	3 — the project is less than \$0.5M	2 — the project is between \$0.5M and \$1M	1 — the project is between \$1M and \$5M	0 — the project is more than \$5M	3		
Overall operating cost *including life cycle budgeting	3 — the project estimated operating costs are better than break even on an annual basis	2 — the project operating costs are between \$0 and (\$50,000) annually	1 — the project operating cost are between (\$50,000) and (\$100,000) annually	0 — the project operating costs are greater than (\$100,000) annually	3		



Appendix C

Development Options and Costs

Project	Development Options	Overall capital cost	Overall operating cost
Enhancements to the trail and pathway system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See trails connection plan 	0.25	(10,000)
Indoor walking / running track	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addition to existing space at the Community Centre (arena or gymnasium) 	1.50	(15,000)
Enhancements to playgrounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Installation of new equipment at community playgrounds 	0.125	(10,000)
Indoor field facility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addition to the Community Centre 	8.00	(150,000)
Outdoor amphitheatre / event spaces / band shelter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addition to existing park or open space 	0.25	(10,000)
Dog off-leash area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommended that the Town identify potential spaces and develop a dog off-leash area. 	0.25	(15,000)
Indoor child playground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addition to existing space at the Community Centre 	0.75	(20,000)
Enhancement / expansion to the fitness room	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand current or identify new space at the Community Centre 	0.50	0
Enhancement of amenities available in gymnasium / auditorium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider installation of indoor climbing wall (overall community priority number 2) and increase multi-purpose uses 	0.50	0
Baseball specific diamond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retrofit existing softball diamond(s) or explore location for new development 	0.20	(10,000)
Outdoor basketball court	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repair existing surface 	0.10	0
Enhancement/relocation of skateboard park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investment in improving and likely relocating existing skateboard park facility 	0.75	(10,000)
Outdoor tennis courts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repair existing surface 	0.10	0

*Capital and operating cost estimates are based on current costs



Appendix D

Project Scoring

Project	Criteria										
	Community demand	Conformance with Council priorities, plans / policies	Current provision in the community	Life span of existing facilities	Project location	Public accessibility	Economic impact	Cost savings through partnerships or grants	Overall capital cost	Overall operating cost *including life cycle budgeting	Score
Enhancements to the trail and pathway system	3	3.0	2.0	0.0	0.0	3.0	0.3	0.0	3.0	2.0	59.66666667
Indoor walking / running track	2	0.7	2.3	0.0	0.0	2.0	1.0	0.0	1.0	2.0	40.33333333
Enhancements to playgrounds	2	2.3	2.0	0.0	0.0	3.0	0.7	0.0	3.0	2.0	53.33333333
Indoor field facility	2	0.0	3.0	0.0	0.0	2.0	2.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	34
Outdoor amphitheatre / event spaces / band shelter	2	1.3	2.0	0.0	0.0	3.0	1.3	0.0	3.0	2.0	51.66666667
Dog off-leash area	1	2.3	3.0	0.0	0.0	3.0	0.3	0.0	3.0	2.0	51.66666667
Indoor child playground	2	0.0	3.0	0.0	0.0	2.0	1.0	0.0	2.0	2.0	44
Enhancement / expansion to the fitness room	1	2.0	2.0	0.0	0.0	2.0	1.0	0.0	2.0	2.0	41
Enhancement of amenities available in gymnasium / auditorium	1	0.0	1.7	0.0	0.0	3.0	1.0	0.0	2.0	2.0	37.66666667
Baseball specific diamond	0	0.7	1.3	0.0	0.0	2.7	1.3	0.0	3.0	2.0	35.66666667
Outdoor basketball court	0	2.3	2.0	0.0	0.0	2.7	0.3	0.0	3.0	2.0	41.33333333
Enhancement/relocation of skateboard park	0	2.0	2.0	0.0	0.0	3.0	0.0	0.0	3.0	2.0	41
Outdoor tennis courts	0	2.3	2.0	0.0	0.0	3.0	0.3	0.0	3.0	2.0	42.66666667

