



Recreation MASTER PLAN

GREATER VERNON



Public & Stakeholder Review

Open House Companion Document

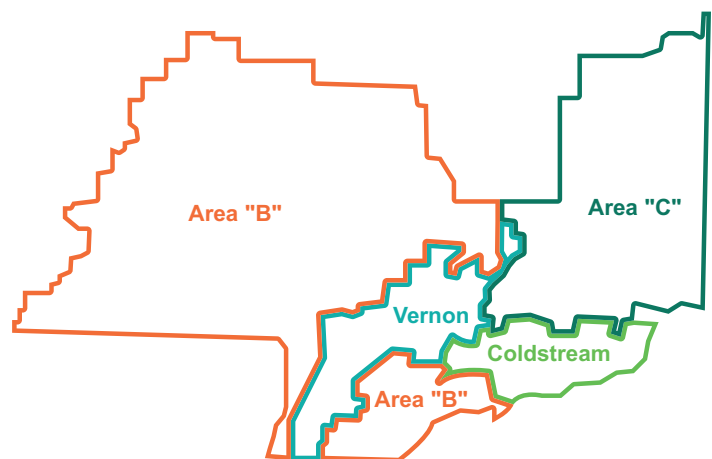




Introduction

What is a Recreation Master Plan?

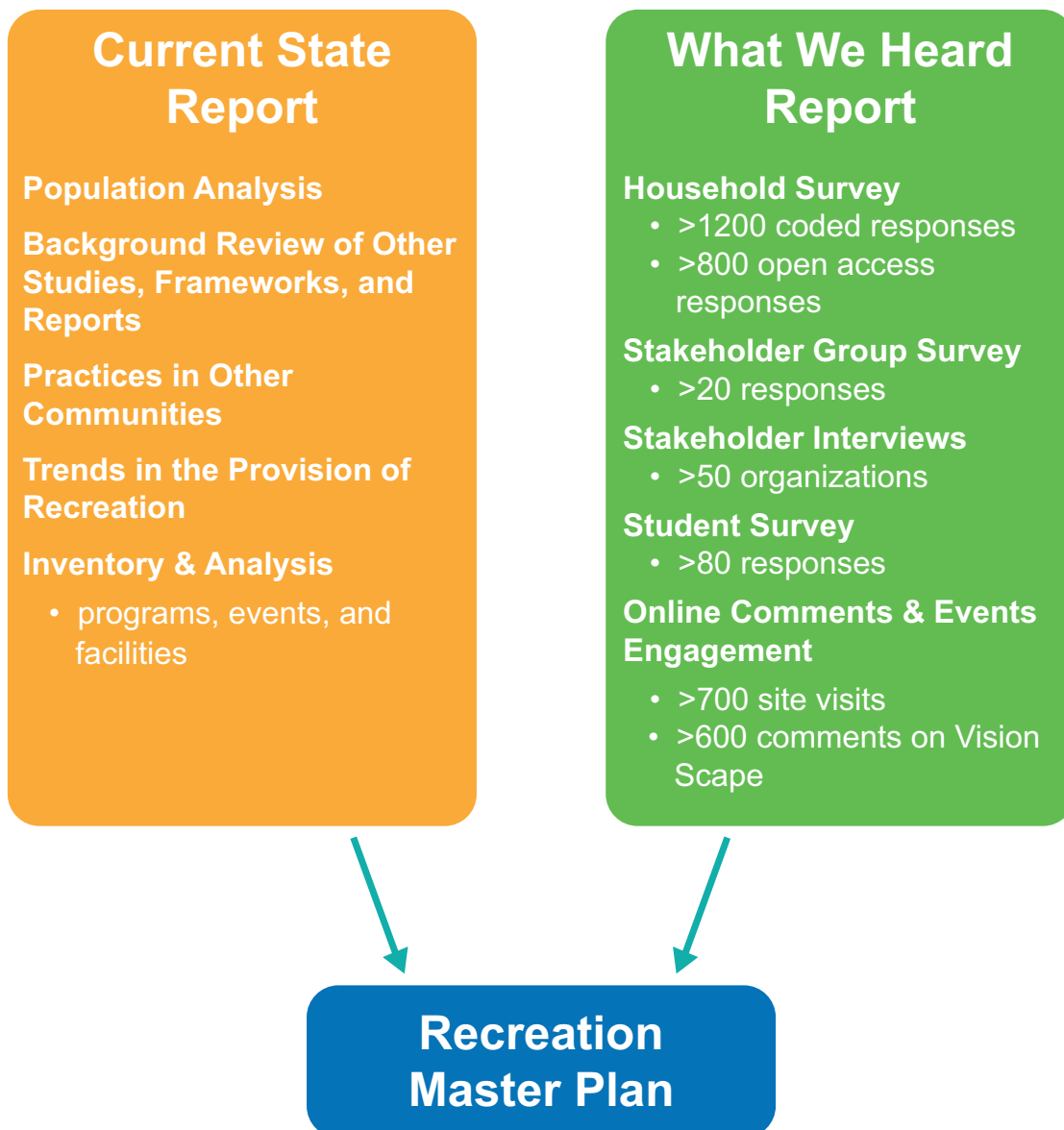
- The Recreation Master Plan will help Greater Vernon Recreation Services make decisions about recreation facilities, active lifestyle opportunities, and the overall delivery of publicly supported recreation services over the next 15 years.
 - » Specifically the Master Plan includes recommendations for four separate areas:
 - Service Delivery – relating to how Greater Vernon Recreation Services operates. (12 recommendations)
 - Programming – relating to the types of programs and opportunities provided by Greater Vernon Recreation Services at its own facilities or elsewhere. (4 recommendations)
 - General Infrastructure and Asset Management – relating to processes and protocols focused on sustaining existing and developing new recreation facilities and spaces (7 recommendations)
 - Recreation Facilities – relating to the future of specific types of recreation facilities (7 recommendations)
- Greater Vernon includes the City of Vernon, District of Coldstream, and Electoral Areas B (BX / Swan Lake / Commonage) and C (BX / Silverstar) of the Regional District of North Okanagan.





Research Conducted

The research that was completed as part of this project (and which was used to develop the recommendations) is presented in 2 separate documents:



What We Heard Report

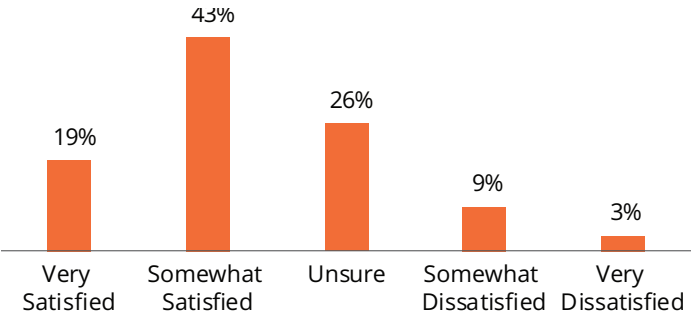
Engagement Technique	Brief Description and Purpose	Level of Participation
Household Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Controlled access version: Letters were sent to a random sample of households in the Greater Vernon area with instructions to access an online survey. Open access version: The same survey was then available on the project webpage for all residents. To gain a better understanding of the behaviors, opinions, and preferences of the general public. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,250 responses to the controlled access version of the survey. 831 responses to the open access version of the survey.
Student Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A link to an online survey was circulated to school administrators and responses were completed in class. To gain a better understanding of the behaviors, opinions, and preferences of young people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 84 survey responses.
Stakeholder Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A link to an online survey was emailed to a broad range of community organizations. To better understand the needs of community organizations that are involved in providing recreation opportunities to area residents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 21 survey responses.
Stakeholder Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-person discussion sessions (semi-structured interviews) were facilitated with selected community organizations. Some discussions hosted multiple groups in a single session while some discussions were one-on-one sessions. To gain a deeper understanding of the specific needs and opinions expressed by recreation stakeholders such as community organizations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 96 total individuals representing 56 organizations.
Online Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage Vernon, the City's online engagement platform, hosted a Greater Vernon Recreation Master Plan webpage. To educate the general public about the planning process and to capture brief comments relating to recreation preferences and needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 719 site visits. 45 comments provided.
Community Event Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A kickoff event was hosted at the Vernon Recreation Centre as well as attendance at other community events and pop-up locations. To educate the general public about the planning process, to capture comments relating to recreation preferences and needs, and to answer any questions relating to the planning process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately 600 comments provided on VisionScape materials. 38 intercept survey responses.

Engagement Technique	Key Findings
Household Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Half of households have used the Aquatic Centre in the past year. • Being unaware of opportunities is perceived to be a barrier to recreation participation. • Leisure swimming pool is the most desired indoor facility space, followed by walking/running track. • The most desired outdoor spaces facilitate spontaneous, unstructured activities. • Satisfaction with community events is very high. • Area residents agree that recreation is a must have service for individuals and communities in the Greater Vernon area. • Local newspapers, the Greater Vernon Recreation website, and the Active Living Guide (both print and online versions) are preferred communication tools.
Student Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spontaneous, unstructured activities are highly participated in by area students. • Cost is a participation barrier to young people. • Leisure swimming pool is the most desired indoor facility space among responding students. • Natural outdoor swimming spaces are among the top outdoor spaces desired.
Stakeholder Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All responding groups expect participation numbers to either grow or remain stable over the next few years. • Many groups are not satisfied with the facilities and spaces they use because of lack of quality and/or availability. • Groups are looking to Greater Vernon Recreation Services to provide adequate facilities and spaces as well as help with advertising.
Stakeholder Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a strong sense of community pride. • The lack of quality and availability of facilities and spaces were consistently brought forth as barriers to programming. • There are many successful partnerships currently in place that enhance the number and quality of recreation opportunities. • Some groups feel that they are nicked and dined when paying user rental fees, especially for events and tournaments. • There are a variety of activities available and participation levels are strong and continue to grow.
Online Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreation is important for staying active and socializing.
Community Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion and access are important considerations when planning for recreation. • While organized sports remain popular, arts and cultural activities should not be overlooked.

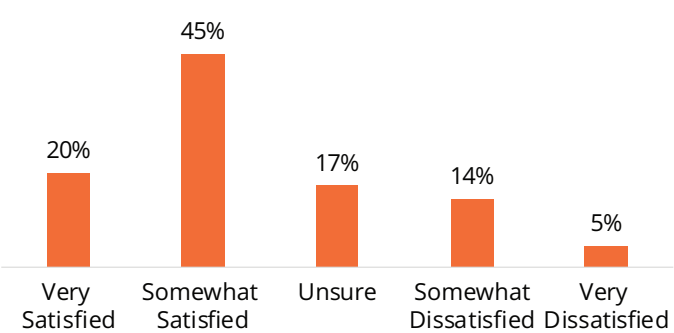
Household Survey Findings

Refer to the website for all survey findings (www.gvrec.ca/recmasterplan)

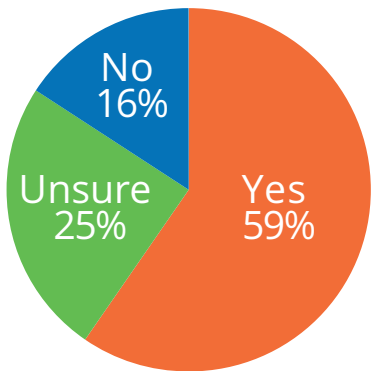
Satisfaction with Programs and Services



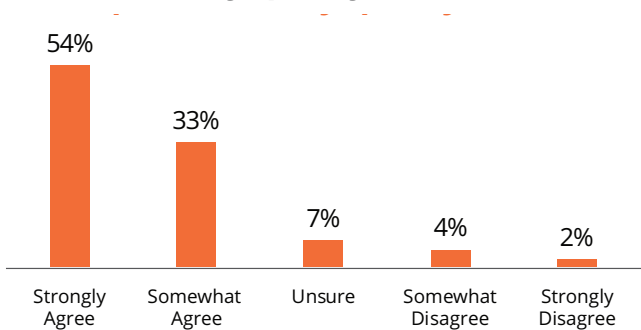
Satisfaction with Facilities and Spaces



Need for New/Upgraded Spaces



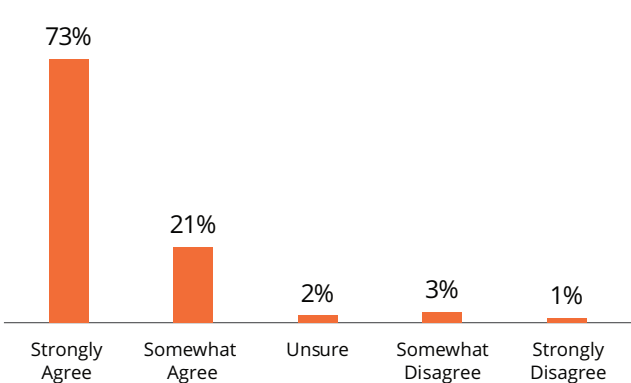
The recreation programs and services in the Greater Vernon area are important to my quality of life



Top Indoor Recreation Spaces That Should Be More Readily Available or Enhanced

1. Leisure swimming pools (51%)
2. 50-metre swimming pools (30%)
3. Indoor child playgrounds (28%)
4. Indoor walking/running track (23%)

Recreation is a "must have" service



Current State Report

Research Topic	Key Findings
Greater Vernon Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to its abundance and variety of beautiful natural areas, the Greater Vernon area is a popular destination for outdoor recreation activities year round, for both residents and visitors.
Population Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The population of the Greater Vernon area may approach 70,000 residents by 2033.
Background Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Okanagan is a unique region that will continue to be recognized for its diverse natural habitats, robust economies, outstanding recreational opportunities and the high quality of urban and rural lifestyles provided in established communities (North Okanagan Growth Strategy 2011). The vision for recreation in Canada: Everyone is engaged in meaningful, accessible recreation experiences that foster individual wellbeing, community wellbeing, and the wellbeing of our natural and built environments.
Service Delivery Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A cost sharing agreement is in place between the City of Vernon, District of Coldstream, and the Regional District of North Okanagan (Areas B and C) to provide recreation services to Greater Vernon area residents. Parks are not within the scope of Greater Vernon Recreation Services. The Boys and Girls Club is a community organization that has a similar mandate to Greater Vernon Recreation Services and is funded by the Regional District of North Okanagan.
Asset Inventory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indoor Aquatics and gymnasiums are at full capacity. Excess demand exists for swim lessons at both the Aquatic Centre and Lavington Outdoor Pool. Ice arenas are nearing capacity during Prime Time hours.
Programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over 1,700 programs offered annually. There is a lack of adequate programming and fitness space. Organizational structure related to programming does not enable specialization or focus.
Special Events & Sport Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special events and sport tourism are valued and are priorities in the Greater Vernon area. Greater Vernon Recreation Services supplies its facilities for events, especially Kal Tire Place and the Auditorium. The identity and philosophy regarding special events and sport tourism for Greater Vernon Recreation Services is unclear. Additional expertise and resources may be warranted.
Policy Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide additional community centre and recreational facilities and services to meet the needs of the community's growing population, in cooperation with community organizations, where appropriate (City of Vernon OCP). The Regional District will consider park, recreation and cultural servicing arrangements that provide opportunities for regional and sub-regional collaboration that benefits the residents of Electoral Areas "B" and "C" (Area B and C OCP). Allocation policy in place for ice, but not for other amenities. Joint-use agreement with schools not formalized. Fees and charges based on tradition and benchmarking.
Financial Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately \$2.4M required annually to provide the current level of service. Overall recovery rates are approximately 50-60% each year.
Trends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical activity levels in Canada are low, especially among children and youth. There is an increasing demand for more flexibility in timing and activity for leisure pursuits. Volunteerism is changing; people are looking for more defined roles and timeframes. In comparison to other municipal infrastructure assessed Canadian infrastructure, sport and recreation facilities across the country are in the worst state and require immediate attention.
Leading Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing participation with free opportunities, impromptu conversion of public space, social media campaigns, prescriptions to get active, try-it day, and youth nights. Conducting thorough due diligence for infrastructure planning. Providing a variety of recreation opportunities by maximizing partnerships. Supporting volunteerism by hosting recognition events, posting opportunities, providing benefits to volunteers, and communicating the benefits of volunteering.



Draft Master Plan

Draft Master Plan Foundations



Draft Master Plan Recommendations

To further the vision and intended outcomes outlined, thirty (30) recommendations have been crafted and are organized under four (4) categories:

1. **Service Delivery:** Relating to how Greater Vernon Recreation Services operates.
2. **Programming:** Relating to the types of programs and opportunities provided by Greater Vernon Recreation Services at its own facilities or elsewhere.
3. **General Infrastructure and Asset Management:** Relating to processes and protocols focused on sustaining existing and developing new recreation facilities and spaces.
4. **Recreation Facilities:** Relating to the future of specific types of recreation facilities.

The following legends display the increments used for timing, priority, and financial impact.

Timing		Anticipated time horizon of implementation
ST	Short Term	• The recommendation should be implemented in the next 0 to 4 years.
MT	Medium Term	• The recommendation should be implemented in 5 to 9 years from now.
LT	Long Term	• The recommendation should be implemented in 10 to 15+ years from now.
O	Ongoing	• The recommendation will be implemented on a continuous basis.

Priority		Explanation
H	High	• The recommendation is very important and should always be top-of-mind.
M	Medium	• The recommendation is important and should be implemented as soon as high priorities are achieved or initiated.
L	Low	• The recommendation is important but not as urgent as the others.

Financial Impact	Description of estimated incremental financial impact (one time or ongoing)
N/A	• The recommendation will have no incremental financial impact/cost.
\$	• The recommendation will require incremental funding of up to \$10,000.
\$\$	• The recommendation will require incremental funding of between \$10,000 to \$100,000.
\$\$\$	• The recommendation will require incremental funding of between \$100,000 to \$1,000,000.
\$\$\$\$	• The recommendation will require incremental funding of between \$1,000,000 to \$15M.
\$\$\$\$\$	• The recommendation will require incremental funding of \$15M or more.

Recommendation	Purpose	Potential Actions	Timing	Priority	Financial Impact
Service delivery recommendations					
1. Develop and execute a marketing plan.	...To increase awareness of recreation opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review current advertising efforts. Identify underserved markets. 	ST (O)	H	\$
2. Conduct needs assessments on a regular basis.	...To identify needs and preferences of area residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct ongoing facility user feedback forms. Attend conferences and network with other services providers to identify broader trends. 	ST(O)	M	\$
3. Formalize a Joint Use Agreement with the school district.	...To ensure that community spaces are being utilized.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review existing practices. Convene discussions with School District #22. 	MT	M	n/a
4. Develop an allocation policy that can be applied to all facilities and spaces.	...To have a justified and consistent approach to scheduling the use of recreation spaces.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand the Ice Allocation Policy so that it can be applied to other facilities and spaces. Engage user groups to gather input and feedback. 	ST	M	\$\$
5. Review policy for fees and charges.	...To review current policy and ensure a practical, transparent, and fair approach to setting fees and charges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review safety net initiatives such as the Affordable Access Pass program to ensure that those most in need are accessing the program. Review the non-profit youth rental subsidy requirements to ensure that all qualified groups have access to the discounted rate. 	MT (O)	M	\$\$
6. Collect utilization data in a consistent and organized manner on an ongoing basis.	...To better understand current spaces to be able to make informed infrastructure decisions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review current data collection methods. Determine what types of data would be useful. 	ST (O)	H	n/a
7. Invest in professional development opportunities for administration and staff.	...To enhance internal capacity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage staff to attend conferences and training workshops. Sponsor staff to enroll in and complete professional development courses. 	ST (O)	H	\$
8. Introduce an event coordinator position.	...To provide an appropriate level of service for special events and sport tourism within recreation facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the current workload required to plan, organize, promote, and execute events. Develop a job description. 	ST (O)	H	\$\$

Recommendation	Purpose	Potential Actions	Timing	Priority	Financial Impact
9. Pursue sponsorships to generate revenue.	...To supplement taxes and user fees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a sponsorship policy or guideline. Develop a sponsor package and distribute to businesses. 	MT	M	\$ \$
10. Facilitate the enhancement of community organizations that provide recreation opportunities to area residents.	...To increase the capacity of local community organizations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help minor sport and recreation groups with advertising. Facilitate communication and partnerships between organizations. 	ST (O)	M	\$
11. Support and encourage volunteerism.	...To increase the capacity of the volunteer community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a volunteer program. Publicly recognize key volunteers. 	MT (O)	M	\$
12. Record, share, and celebrate the ways in which recreation positively impacts the community.	...To demonstrate that recreation is a justified and essential public service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record successes and achievements. Present successes and achievements to the community and elected officials. 	ST (O)	H	n/a
Programming recommendations					
13. Continually evaluate programming for participation barriers and address issues.	...To ensure accessibility and inclusiveness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively identify and address participation barriers where able. Set appropriate cost recovery targets for direct programming (revenue should not be a motivation to provide a program). 	MT	H	n/a
14. Offer time for unstructured drop-in activities.	...To facilitate spontaneous play.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor the popularity of gymnasium activities such as basketball and pickleball, ice activities such as shinny and family skate, and aquatic activities such as lane swim and teen swim. Make unstructured drop-in activities a priority and schedule time appropriately. 	ST (O)	M	\$
15. Expand offering recreation programs in the District of Coldstream, Area B, or Area C if demand exists.	...To further the mandate of providing recreation services to all Greater Vernon area residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further identify the needs of rural residents. Monitor the residency of program participants. 	ST (O)	H	\$
16. Review the organizational structure of the programming department and consider having focus areas.	...To ensure that relevant, high-quality programs continue to be provided.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate current program offerings and categorize into focus areas (i.e. fitness, preschool, youth, seniors, etc.). Organize department staff into more structured roles. 	MT	M	n/a

Recommendation	Purpose	Potential Actions	Timing	Priority	Financial Impact
General Infrastructure and Asset Management recommendations					
17. Conduct structural, mechanical, electrical, and functional assessments on a regular basis.	...To identify infrastructure issues and plan for sustaining existing facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct engineering assessments every five to ten years for facilities newer than 20 years old. Conduct engineering assessments every two to three years for facilities older than 20 years old. 	ST (O)	H	\$ \$
18. Conduct accessibility assessments on existing facilities and ensure that new facilities are designed to modern standards.	...To mitigate and limit physical accessibility barriers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct assessments of existing facilities. Address issues where possible. 	ST	H	\$ \$
19. Annually fund the major maintenance reserve.	...To address major repairs and functional effectiveness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allocate 1.7% to 2.5% of replacement cost towards the major maintenance reserve annually. Place a high priority on budgeting for preventative maintenance items. 	ST (O)	M	\$ \$ \$
20. Foster community gathering and social opportunities within recreation facilities.	...To enhance the benefit and meaning of recreation facilities in the area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that existing facilities are welcoming and accommodating for casual social gatherings. Place a high priority on common lobby and viewing spaces for new facility development. 	MT	M	n/a
21. Follow the Recreation Facility Planning Process when investing in facilities.	...To ensure that new facility development is justified, operationally sustainable, and set up for success.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow the planning process below when contemplating investment in recreation facilities. 	ST	H	n/a
22. Use the prioritization considerations described herein when determining which recreation spaces should be developed or upgraded.	...To help focus investment and effort identify and rank potential recreation facility projects in a fair and transparent manner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the considerations to facilitate meaningful discussions. Use the considerations to help determine which spaces to include in the next major facility development. 	ST (O)	H	n/a
23. Use the partnership considerations described herein when determining whether to partner in the development of a recreation facility.	...To ensure that partnership opportunities with organizations are suitable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the considerations to help determine whether the partnerships are suitable or not. Use the considerations to show the interested party why their partnership proposal was accepted or denied. 	MT (O)	M	n/a

Recommendation	Purpose	Potential Actions	Timing	Priority	Financial Impact
Recreation Facilities recommendations					
24. Enhance the quality and quantity of indoor aquatics facilities.	...To provide adequate year-round swimming opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow the planning process and conduct a feasibility analysis for the enhanced provision of indoor aquatics. Enhance the current Aquatic Centre. 	ST	H	\$\$\$\$
25. Sustain and enhance the quality of outdoor pools.	...To maintain and enhance existing outdoor pool opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include outdoor pools in the scope of aquatic feasibility analyses. Modernize the Lakeview Wading Pool and ensure it is adequate for recreation, swimming lessons, and other aquatic safety courses. 	ST	H	\$\$\$\$
26. Increase the quantity of community (non-school) gymnasiums.	...To provide adequate access to multipurpose gymnasium spaces.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include gymnasiums in the scope of feasibility analysis when considering the development of a new recreation facility. Include gymnasiums in new facility development. 	MT	M	\$\$\$\$
27. Enhance the quality and quantity of dedicated programming space.	...To appropriately accommodate the direct programming efforts of Greater Vernon Recreation Services and others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include program spaces in the scope of feasibility analysis when considering the development of a new recreation facility. Include dedicated program spaces in new facility development. 	MT	H	\$\$\$\$
28. Enhance the quality and quantity of fitness and walking spaces.	...To provide adequate structured and unstructured fitness opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include fitness centres and walking tracks in the scope of feasibility analysis when considering the development of a new recreation facility. Convert an existing space into an appropriate fitness centre. 	MT	M	\$\$\$\$
29. Use the thresholds described herein to determine when the addition of more indoor ice sheets are warranted.	...To determine when additional indoor ice sheets are warranted.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor ice arena data and discuss criteria annually. Start planning an additional ice sheet once a majority of the criteria are met (or close to being met). 	LT	L	n/a
30. Consider enhancing or developing recreation spaces when needs arise, development synergies exist, or partnerships opportunities are available.	...To be able to respond to the ever-changing demands of the Greater Vernon area recreation market.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review all partnership inquiries and analyze using the prioritization and partnership considerations. Review the needs assessment findings to identify desired spaces. 	ST (O)	L	n/a

