

Recreation MASTER PLAN

GREATER VERNON

Current State Report

August 2018







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Section One Introduction

Recreation provides multiple pathways to wellbeing for individuals and communities. In order to maximize the benefits of recreation in the Greater Vernon area, and to effectively plan for the future, a Recreation Master Plan was developed. The Recreation Master Plan will be used by Greater Vernon Recreation Services as decisions are made about recreation facilities, active lifestyle opportunities, and the overall delivery of publicly-supported recreation services over the next fifteen (15) years.

The mandate of Greater Vernon Recreation Services is to provide and operate recreation facilities, programs, and services for residents of 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.

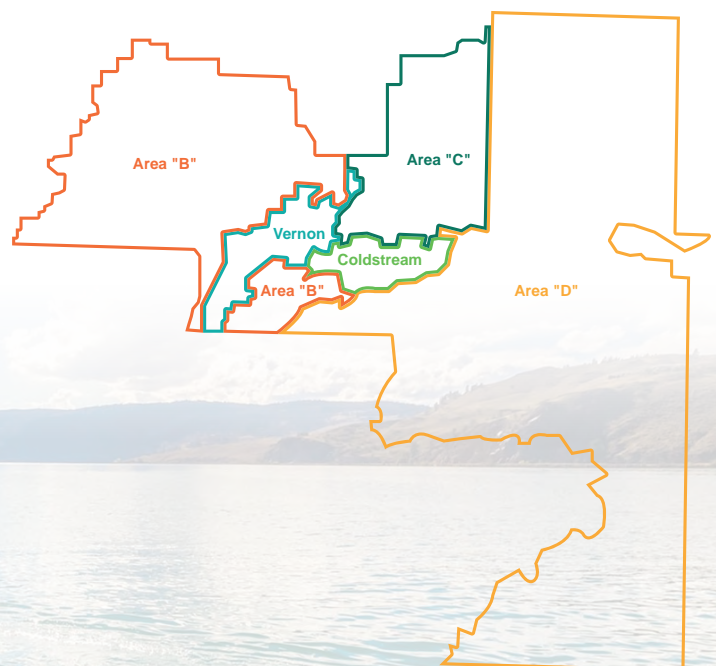
The Recreation Master Plan will focus on philosophic principles, strategic directions, and decision-making tools. Its focus is on recreation facilities, programming, and the overall delivery of services. While the Recreation Master Plan does provide some direction for outdoor recreation, it is important to note that the City of Vernon and the District of Coldstream have active Parks Master Plans; therefore, the Recreation Master Plan has a slightly reduced scope regarding outdoor recreation and only provides direction where necessary. Direction for culture is provided in the Greater Vernon Cultural Plan.

The intent is to understand the current state of existing recreation services, to identify the needs of residents and community organizations, and to execute a plan that, when combined with the Parks Master Plans and Cultural Master Plan, address these topics in a fiscally responsible manner.

A Renewed Definition of Recreation

"Recreation is the experience that results from freely chosen participation in physical, social, intellectual, creative and spiritual pursuits that enhance individual and community wellbeing."

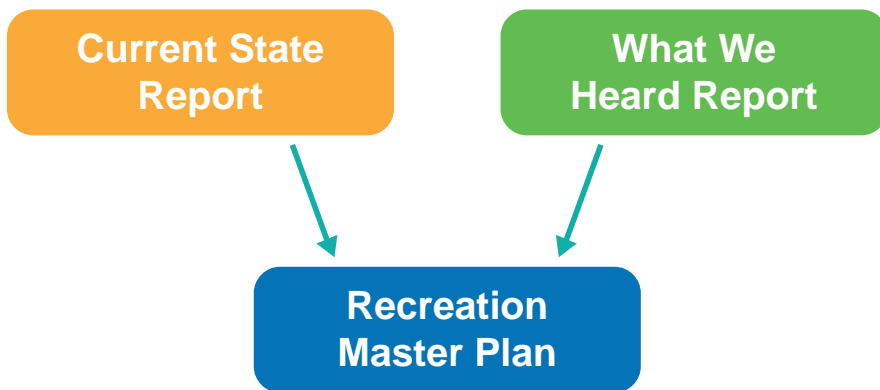
– A Framework for Recreation in Canada 2015: Pathways to Wellbeing



Planning Process

Three documents were produced during the planning process.

1. The **Current State Report** contains a series of research conducted in 2018 regarding existing infrastructure, programs, partnerships, policies, population, trends, and other service delivery aspects.
2. The **What We Heard Report** presents public consultation findings from a series of engagement techniques that were conducted in 2018 specifically for this planning process.
3. The **Recreation Master Plan** considers the information presented in the first two documents and presents a strategic plan for the next 15 years. It is a guiding document that provides philosophic principles, strategic directions, and decision-making tools.



The research and engagement conducted for the first two documents took place simultaneously from the beginning of 2018 to the end of May. After the research and engagement was complete, a draft version of the Recreation Master Plan was developed and presented to the public and stakeholders in 2018. The draft master plan review phase provided an opportunity for the public and stakeholders to review the draft Recreation Master Plan. Based on the feedback that was gathered during the draft review, the Recreation Master Plan was adjusted accordingly and finalized.



Current State & Analysis Report Overview

Overview of Section Headings

Section Heading	Brief Description and Purpose
Greater Vernon Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A general and geographic description of the four in-scope jurisdictions. • To provide an understanding of the study area.
Population Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A presentation of population statistics such as current number of residents, 15-year growth scenarios, demographic statistics, and planning considerations. • To understand how local population and demographic statistics could potentially impact the planning and delivery of recreation services.
Background Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A summary of pertinent local planning documents, provincial-level strategic plans, and national frameworks. • To recognize existing planning content relating to recreation services and to ensure alignment with broader principles and goals.
Service Delivery Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An overview of the existing organizational structure and cost-sharing agreement, examples of direct and indirect service delivery, and current methods of promotion and communication. • To understand the current context of public recreation delivery in the Greater Vernon area.
Asset Inventory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An inventory of recreation facilities and spaces owned and/or operated by Greater Vernon Recreation Services. • To understand the current context of facilities and spaces.
Programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An overview of directly provided programs. • To identify potential gaps or issues with program delivery.
Sport Tourism & Special Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A review of sport tourism and special events in the Greater Vernon area. • To identify and recognize Greater Vernon Recreation Services' role in hosting sport tourism and special events.
Policy Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A review of existing policies relating to recreation services within the study area. • To build upon, confirm, or potentially recommend edits to existing policies.
Financial Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An overview of existing operating and capital budget allocations to recreation services as well as a review of the regional cost sharing arrangement. • To understand the financial requirements to provide existing services.
Trends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A presentation of participation and infrastructure trends in the recreation sector. • To raise awareness of the ever-changing preferences and user expectations in the recreation sector.
Leading Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A presentation of leading practices conducted by other communities, municipalities, and regions. • To learn how other communities approach certain issues and to potentially apply aspects of these practices to the Greater Vernon area.



Section Two

Greater Vernon Area

The Recreation Master Plan will provide guidance for Greater Vernon Recreation Services. For the scope of this plan, the Greater Vernon area includes four jurisdictions: Vernon, Coldstream, and Electoral Areas B and C of the Regional District of North Okanagan. This section provides a general and geographic description of the four jurisdictions to provide an understanding of the study area.

Being located in the Okanagan Valley, the Greater Vernon area is no exception when it comes to the region's reputation of beautiful lakes, landscapes, and outdoor recreation opportunities. Overall, the Greater Vernon area spans nearly 1,000 square kilometres and has a population of 57,837. Highway 97 connects the area to Kamloops (115 KM east of Vernon) and Kelowna (40 KM south of Vernon) while Highway 97A continues north to Armstrong (20 KM from Vernon). Area residents and visitors are serviced by the Kelowna International Airport which is located within a 30-minute drive from Vernon. There is also a regional airport in Vernon designed to service industry. Its network of transportation routes combined with its natural beauty and recreation opportunities makes the Greater Vernon area a popular destination for visitors all year round.

Jurisdiction

Since the four in-scope areas are inconsistent in regard to government type (e.g. city, district municipality, regional district electoral area), the term jurisdiction is used to refer to them in a consistent manner.



City of Vernon

The City of Vernon is the major urban centre within the Regional District of North Okanagan and the second largest municipality in the Okanagan Valley with over 40,000 residents. Vernon is bordered by Coldstream to the southeast, Lake Country to the south, and Electoral Areas B and C to the east, north and northeast. Near the northern tip of Okanagan Lake, Vernon residents and visitors have access to the lake via Kin Beach, a popular summer destination.

Vernon has a diverse economic base with employment being generated from the tourism, administrative, manufacturing service sectors as well as from the traditional resource sectors of forestry and agriculture.

Since the majority of area residents live within the city, Vernon is home to most of the indoor recreation facilities in the Greater Vernon area. The Recreation Centre contains a number of spaces including an aquatics facilities, fitness centre, gymnasium, auditorium, and seniors centre. On the same site as the Recreation Centre, there is a curling rink, performing arts theatre, arena, and another gymnasium. There is spectator arena, Kal Tire Place, located a few blocks north of the recreation hub site. Vernon's historic Civic Arena, located downtown, wrapped up its final year of functional operation in 2018; a new arena was developed adjoining Kal Tire Place to replace it.

District of Coldstream

Coldstream is a district municipality located at the northern end of Kalamalka Lake. The municipality is directly southeast of Vernon and its boundaries stretch nearly as far east as Lumby. Coldstream is a member municipality of the Regional District of North Okanagan. In fact, the Regional District's offices are located within the District of Coldstream. With a population of 10,648 residents, Coldstream is home to approximately 18% of Greater Vernon area residents. Coldstream is home to Kal Beach, which is located on the shore of Kalamalka Lake. Coldstream borders on Kalamalka Provincial Park, which features numerous groomed hiking trails, scenic views, and natural areas. Coldstream's mission statement includes their branding "rural living at its best".

Regional District of North Okanagan: Electoral Area B

Electoral Area B of the Regional District of North Okanagan consists of areas commonly referred to as BX, Swan Lake, and Commonage. Its boundary nearly encompasses all of Vernon, with the main exception being to the east. Area B has the smallest population compared to the other jurisdictions (3,203 residents) as well as the largest land mass (489 KM²). The majority of the Electoral Area's land mass is located west of Vernon although a large portion does lay to the south as well. Within these recreation planning documents this jurisdiction will often be referred to as Area B, for short.

Regional District of North Okanagan: Electoral Area C

Electoral Area C is located northeast of Vernon and is also home to the BX community. Silver Star is another community within the Electoral Area. This is a popular jurisdiction for winter recreation activities because Silver Star is a premier ski resort. Area C is home to 3,870 residents and covers a land mass of 300 square kilometres. Likewise to the previous jurisdiction, for ease of reading, this jurisdiction will usually be referred to simply as Area C.

Key Finding

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.



Section Three

Population Analysis

The purpose of this section is to understand how local population and demographic statistics could potentially impact the planning and delivery of recreation services over the next fifteen (15) years. As follows is a review of population statistics such as the current number of residents in each jurisdiction, 15-year growth scenarios for the Greater Vernon area, demographic statistics, and planning considerations.

Population Overview

The Greater Vernon area has a 2016 population of 57,837. This is a 4.5% increase from the 2011 Census.

Jurisdiction	2006 Census	2011 Census	2016 Census
City of Vernon	35,979	38,150	40,116
District of Coldstream	9,471	10,314	10,648
Area B	3,211	3,041	3,203
Area C	3,912	3,847	3,870
Greater Vernon Area	52,573	55,352	57,837



Growth Scenarios

According to the City of Vernon’s Official Community Plan, by the year 2036, the City’s population could increase by 9,850 people which would bring the population up to a total of 48,000 residents. This projection assumed a 1% annual increase and was based on the 2011 population.

For the purposes of this Recreation Master Plan only, two rudimentary growth scenarios were developed. The sole purpose of these scenarios is to show the potential market size in which Greater Vernon Recreation Services may have to serve in 2033 (the Recreation Master Plan is to span over a 15-year timeframe).

The high growth scenario has an annual increase of 1.04% which represents the annual growth experienced by the area from 2006 to 2011. This scenario results in a 15-year projection of 68,907 residents. The low growth scenario leads to a 2033 population of 67,151; this annual growth rate (0.88%) was experienced from 2011 to 2016. In short, the population of the Greater Vernon area may approach 70,000 residents by 2033.

Scenario	Annual Growth	Based on	2033 Population
High	1.04%	2006 to 2011	68,907
Low	0.88%	2011 to 2016	67,151

Key Finding

The population of the Greater Vernon area may approach 70,000 residents by 2033.



Demographic Statistics

A series of population and demographic data from the four jurisdictions are presented below. Based on the population of each jurisdiction, a weighted average was calculated in order to compare the Greater Vernon area to the province as a whole. Content on the following page interprets the data and explains how it could potentially impact the planning and delivery of recreation services.

Key Findings

- Higher rates of growth have been experienced in Vernon and Area B as compared to Coldstream and Area C.
- The proportion of Aboriginal people in the Greater Vernon area is comparable to the province; however, the proportion is much higher in Vernon specifically.
- Vernon has a much lower median household income as compared to the other jurisdictions.

Statistic	City of Vernon	District of Coldstream	Area B	Area C	Greater Vernon Area ¹	British Columbia
Population (2016)	40,116	10,648	3,203	3,870	n/a	4,648,055
Growth Since 2011	5.1%	3.2%	5.3%	0.6%	4.5%	5.6%
Percentage 0 to 14 Years (2016)	14.1%	15.8%	14.8%	14.9%	14.5%	14.9%
Percentage 65 Years and Over (2016)	25.5%	19.2%	23.0%	20.0%	23.8%	18.3%
Aboriginal Identity (2016)	7.2%	4.0%	4.2%	3.5%	6.2%	5.9%
Recent Immigrant (2011-2016)	1.2%	1.1%	0.3%	0.0%	1.1%	3.8%
Knowledge of Official Language: English (2016)	99.4%	99.7%	99.5%	99.9%	99.5%	96.6%
Commuters that Walk or Bicycle to Work (2016)	9.1%	4.3%	4.7%	1.5%	7.5%	9.3%
Median After-Tax Income of Households (2015)	\$52,718	\$82,389	\$62,336	\$71,424	\$59,965	\$61,280
Postsecondary Certificate, Diploma or Degree (2016) ²	49.8%	59.0%	52.1%	57.5%	52.1%	55.0%

¹ The Greater Vernon area column presents the weighted average of the four jurisdictions; it is weighted by the percent of total population.

² Percentages in this row are calculated based on the population of people 15 years and older.

Planning Considerations

The previously displayed demographic statistics can be taken into consideration when planning for recreation services. Each factor, such as proportion of seniors, can inform decision making depending on its relative comparison to the province as a whole. For example, since the Greater Vernon area has a higher proportion of seniors as compared to British Columbia, it is logical that Greater Vernon Recreation Services should place a relatively higher focus on the needs of seniors.

Key Findings

- Extra focus on seniors' opportunities is warranted.
- Focused engagement with the Aboriginal community warrants consideration.
- Developing written communication materials (e.g. Active Living Guide) in a language other than English is not warranted.
- Many households may not be able to afford significantly increased taxes or user fees.

Factor	Recreation Planning Considerations	Greater Vernon Area Compared to British Columbia	Potential Impacts on Recreation Services
Population	Provision levels and residential tax base	n/a	The area's population is relative to a medium-sized city. Cost to each household may increase modestly if additional services were to be developed.
Growth	Anticipate future demand	Slightly lower growth since 2011	Modest growth expected over the next 15 years. Enhanced services likely to be expected by City of Vernon residents as the majority of new area residents will reside in the City.
Children and Youth	Types of services available for children and youth	Similar proportion of children and youth	Equitable focus to be placed on children and youth opportunities.
Seniors	Types of services available for seniors	Higher proportion of seniors	Extra focus to be placed on seniors' opportunities.
Aboriginal Identity	Community engagement	Slightly higher proportion of people who identify as Aboriginal	Additional efforts to be made to engage the Aboriginal community while conducting recreation needs assessments.
Recent Immigrants	Communication methods and cultural barriers	Lower proportion of recent immigrants	While focus should be placed on accommodating the needs of recent immigrants, significant focus is not required.
Knowledge of the English Language	Communication methods	Higher proportion of residents have knowledge of the English Language	Developing written communication materials (e.g. Active Living Guide) in a language other than English is not warranted.
Active Commuters	Pathways and connectivity	Lower proportion of commuters walk or bicycle to work	Many commutes may be too long to walk or bike; however, pathways and connectivity may warrant extra consideration due to the lower proportion of active commuters.
Income	Affordability of services and subsidy levels	Similar, yet slighter lower, median after-tax household income	Many households may not be able to afford significantly increased taxes or user fees.
Education	Promotion of services (likeliness of understanding the benefits of recreation participation)	Similar, yet slighter lower, proportion of residents with postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	Some residents may not fully understand the benefits of physical activity and connection with nature. Including "benefits messaging" in promotional materials could be a focus.



Section Four

Background Review

A series of local planning documents have been reviewed to ensure that the Recreation Master Plan achieves alignment with local principles and goals. Furthermore, references to recreation services in these planning documents are identified to help align and justify investment in recreation. After the review of local planning, there is a summary of pertinent provincial and national level strategic plans and frameworks that illustrate the broader benefits and philosophy of the recreation sector.

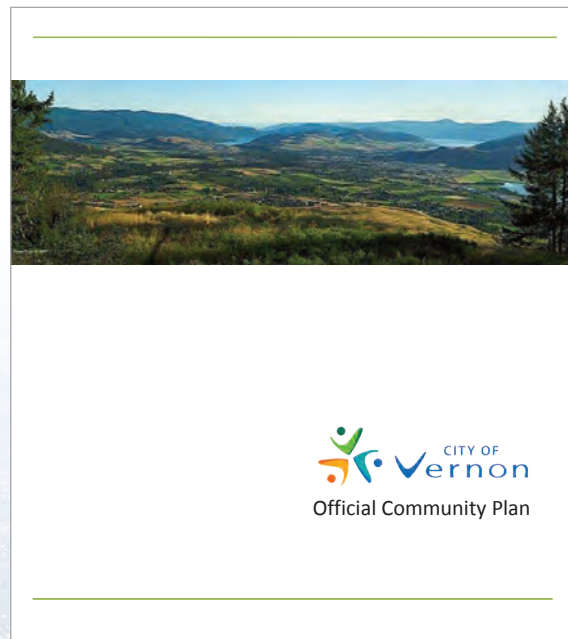
Local Planning

City of Vernon Official Community Plan (2015)

Vernon's Official Community Plan (OCP) defines a vision for the community and provides the structure and direction necessary for growth and development. As the City's overarching planning document, all bylaws and policies must be consistent with the OCP. The community's vision is encapsulated in the following Guiding Principles.

Guiding Principles:

- Foster prosperity for people, business and government
- Protect and preserve green spaces and sensitive areas
- Ensure housing meets the needs of the whole community
- Create a culture of sustainability
- Protect agricultural land
- Create strong, compact and complete neighbourhoods
- Provide alternative transportation
- Revitalize the Downtown
- Create a youth friendly city



 CITY OF
Vernon
Official Community Plan

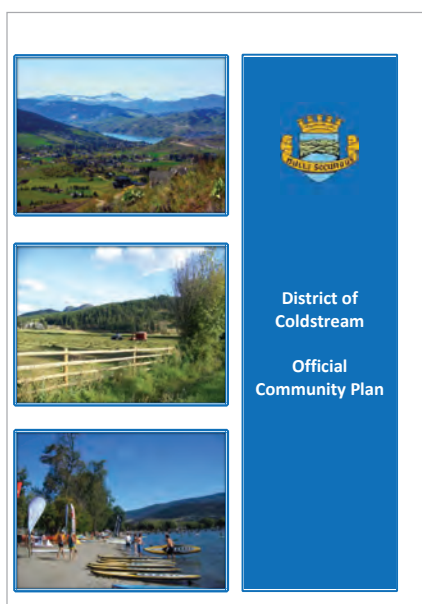
Key Finding

The Guiding Principles in Vernon's OCP calls for local planning to create strong, compact and complete neighbourhoods as well as to create a youth friendly city.

Within the OCP there are nearly 40 supporting policy statements and goals that relate to recreation, including a series of policies dedicated to community amenities (e.g. recreation facilities). These policy statements are reviewed later in this Current State & Analysis Report in the Policy Review section.

District of Coldstream Official Community Plan (2015)

This Official Community Plan provides objectives and policies for the community of Coldstream. As a policy document, it sets out a land use management strategy for the next 5 to 10-year period. The plan outlines an extensive 7-theme vision for Coldstream; one of the themes is titled "Active." Much of the focus around the "active" vision revolves around outdoor activities such as trails and parks being available for recreation. Specific policies somewhat related to recreation are mainly focused on outdoor spaces outside the scope of this Recreation Master Plan.



RDNO Official Community Plan: Electoral Areas B & C (2014)

In 2014, the Regional District of North Okanagan developed an Official Community Plan for Electoral Areas B and C. The plan is intended to provide direction for matters concerning the future development and use of land within the two Electoral Areas. It looks to the future but also contains procedures and policies for day-to-day administration.

Residents value the rural heritage of Areas B and C as well as their natural environments. These sentiments are engrained in the OCP's vision and goals. The plan's eight goals are as follows:

1. Maintain and enhance the agricultural and rural character of the Plan area and ensure that future development types and densities are compatible with

existing conditions.

2. Support the development of agricultural, commercial, home-based business and industrial opportunities for the benefit of the economy of the region.
3. Ensure that future development is compatible with the physical nature, resources and limitations of the land base, and that growth is planned in a manner that ensures a high level of protection for the environment, unique rural characteristics and heritage values.
4. Support and encourage agriculture in the community through preservation of the land base and restrictions on uses which are not compatible with current or future agricultural activities.
5. Provide services in a manner that reflects the rural character of the community.
6. Provide a system of protected areas with the primary purpose of preserving natural features, including ecosystems, fish and wildlife habitats and movement corridors.
7. Promote economic development that supports the unique character of the Plan area.
8. To develop a land use strategy for the expansion of parks and trails in the Electoral Areas for the benefit of residents in the region.

The plan contains a number of specific policies. Of note, Policy 12.1.1 encourages the Regional District to consider park, recreation and cultural servicing arrangements that provide opportunities for regional and sub-regional collaboration that benefit the residents of Electoral Areas B and C. Other policies relating to recreation are highlighted in the Policy Review section later in this document.



North Okanagan Regional Growth Strategy (2011)

In 2011, the Regional District of North Okanagan, and all the municipalities within its boundaries, developed a Regional Growth Strategy. The document provides a common framework for regional and local planning in the North Okanagan, including an integrated strategic policy framework for addressing growth management, economic development, transportation, other infrastructure, and environmental concerns.

Vision Statement:

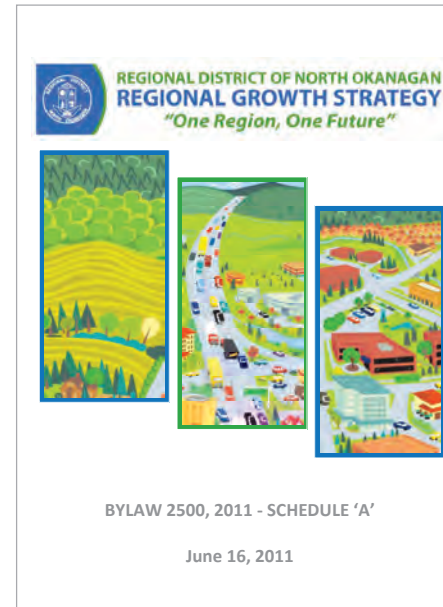
The Regional District of North Okanagan is a unique region that will continue to be recognized for its diverse natural habitats, robust economies, outstanding recreational opportunities and the high quality of urban and rural lifestyles provided in established communities. As such, the Regional Board will strive to conserve and enhance the very reasons that make the North Okanagan so attractive by ensuring:

- Growth is managed to reflect our social, environmental and economic values
- The Region's natural constraints to growth are water availability, agricultural lands, and environmentally-sensitive areas
- Rural and urban lifestyle choices are maintained through designated growth areas and urban boundary management
- Agricultural lands are protected and a sustainable regional food system is supported and encouraged
- A strong, sustainable, and diverse economy that reflects our values and the identities of our communities
- Our natural systems, including air, land and water, are respected and protected
- Inclusive, accountable and effective governance based upon a foundation of regional cooperation

City of Vernon Parks Master Plan (2016)

The City of Vernon developed a Parks Master Plan in 2016. The purpose of the plan is to outline a 10-year strategy that provides a framework for decisions relating to park development and management, ensuring that the community's vision for its park system is being achieved. The City of Vernon envisions a park system where parks are well distributed throughout the city, have a wide variety of functions, are physically accessible and promote healthy active living.

The plan provides an inventory of existing parks, proposed improvements to existing parks over the next 10 years, and proposed new parks. The plan also proposes an expansion to the trail network, presents standards for park facilities and maintenance, and provides a detailed implementation and funding plan.



Key Finding

The Regional District of 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.



Pertinent points for recreation planning include:

- Recreation Services is responsible for the development, delivery and monitoring of public recreation facilities and programs for Greater Vernon that meet the needs of the community in a cost effective manner. To ensure this, new trends and best practices in recreation are researched and new programs are explored, proposed, delivered (depending on demand), monitored and evaluated.
- Vernon is generally well supplied with outdoor recreation facilities based on the current population.
- While the city has a healthy supply of outdoor sports facilities, the overall quality could be improved.
- At peak season in any sport, the demand for facilities is high, especially peak soccer times, the spring softball season and the fall football and lacrosse seasons.
- When designing new parks, a public consultation process will be established and followed to receive public input on the future park site.

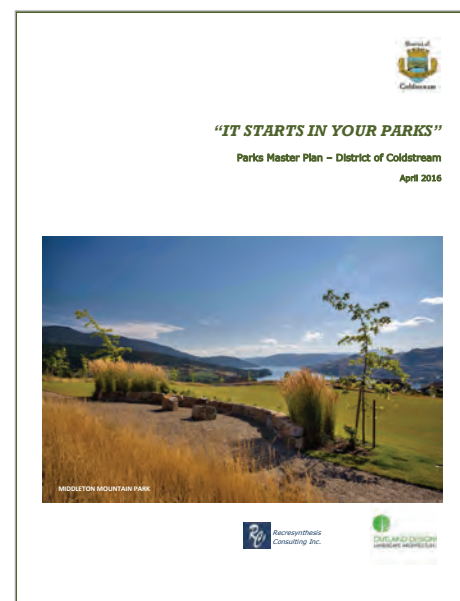
The Parks Master Plan provides direction for athletic parks and other active outdoor recreation amenities. A recurring theme is that parkland acquisition for new athletic parks is likely not required over the next 10 years. Rather, it is recommended that resources be directed to improving existing facilities.

It Starts in Your Parks: District of Coldstream Parks Master Plan (2016)

It Starts in Your Parks is the District of Coldstream's first parks plan. Parallel to Vernon's Parks Master Plan, Coldstream's plan was also completed in 2016 and is designed to cover a 10-year period. Included in the plan is a framework that guides decision making for future parks and open service delivery and resource allocation.

The District's goal was to develop a community-supported plan that provides guidance for future development and redevelopment of the District's parks, waterfront, open space, trails and associated facilities. The Parks Master Plan is intended to guide policy development, prioritize demands and opportunities, and generate a strategic action plan to assist in the various master plan proposals. Another goal is to strengthen a coordinated approach with other providers of parks and open space service.

The plan urges Coldstream to continue to develop collaborative partnerships with the City of Vernon, Regional District of North Okanagan, School District #22, B.C. Parks, and other organizations with similar missions to pool their resources and work together to deliver mutually beneficial services which could help enrich and expand park and open space services for Coldstream residents.



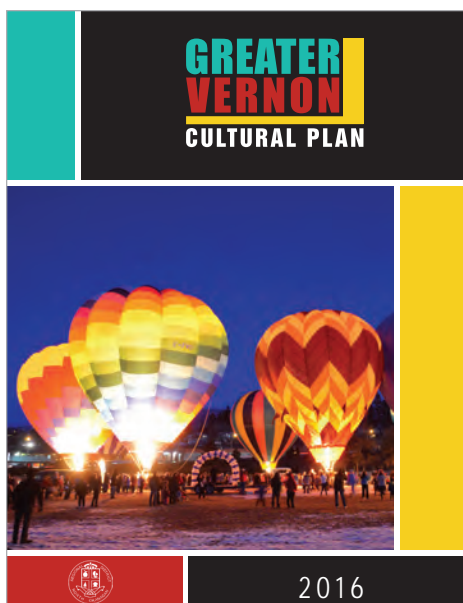
Greater Vernon Cultural Plan (2016)

The Regional District of the North Okanagan assembled a committee of area stakeholders, the Greater Vernon Cultural Plan Steering Team, to guide the development of the area's first regional cultural plan. The plan provides strategies to support the numerous community partners working together towards a common vision of a culturally vital and inspired community.

Culture in the Greater Vernon area is defined as the interaction between the community's values, atmosphere or feel, education, creativity, and the cultural resources of its places and the people who live or have lived there. The plan outlines seven guiding principles that could very well be applicable to recreation services in the area as well. A number of strategies are recommended in the plan; ones that may be pertinent to recreation planning are displayed herein.

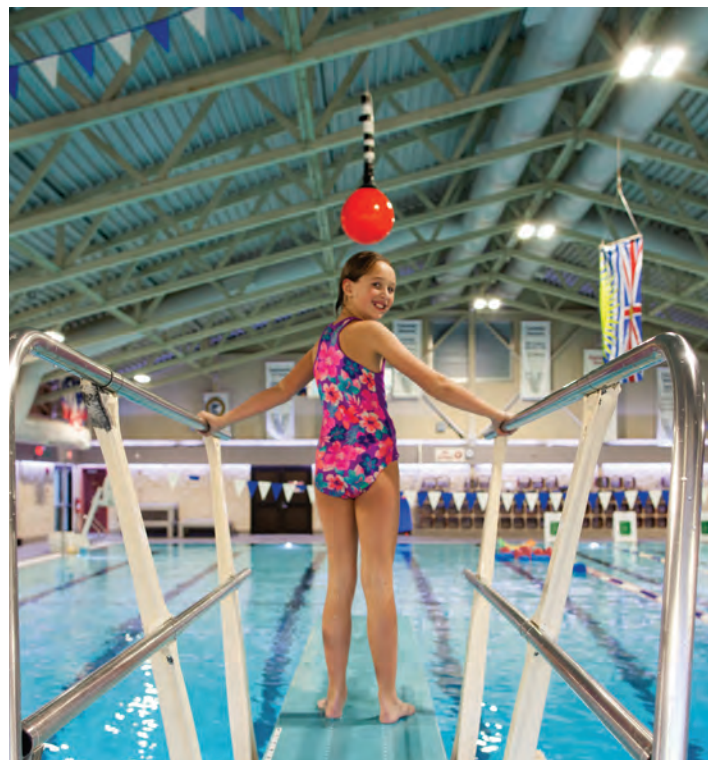
Guiding Principles:

- Embrace accessibility, inclusivity and diversity
- Promote innovation and creativity
- Encourage collaboration and communication
- Build on strengths and support new initiatives
- Recognize culture's role in promoting economic vitality
- Celebrate history of yesterday, today and tomorrow
- Be accountable and fiscally responsible



Strategies that may be pertinent to recreation planning:

- Create linkages between the cultural plan implementation actions and existing and future local government planning documents' actions.
- Ensure local policies encourage and support special events.
- Encourage infrastructure to support special events.
- Improve access to and participation rates of cultural programming.
- Promote and support existing local programs that recognize local cultural icons and success stories (e.g. Okanagan Sports Hall of Fame).
- Target youth for participation in volunteer and work opportunities with local cultural organizations.
- Support grassroots neighbourhood culture initiatives.
- Incorporate cultural considerations in local neighbourhood projects and planning.
- Remove barriers to cultural use of publicly-owned facilities.
- Support the development, maintenance and sharing of a detailed cultural facility inventory.
- Support the development of new/improved cultural facilities and spaces.
- Support infrastructure that encourages a culturally vibrant community.
- Encourage and support projects and policy that support activating public areas.



Youthful Vernon Strategy (2018)

The City of Vernon facilitated the development of a youth strategy in 2018. The initiative stemmed from the City's Official Community Plan as one of its guiding principles is to be a "youth friendly city." The purpose of the Youthful Vernon Strategy is to kick start that guiding principle into action. While many stakeholders were engaged throughout the process, it is important to note that the strategy was largely influenced and created by local youth.

In regard to recreation, the strategy advocates for appropriate places to play in the built environment. Such actions are mostly focused on outdoor play areas such as park spaces, play features, and support amenities. An emphasis on more free and "risky" opportunities in parks is highlighted as well as the importance of community gardens and healthy food options. The need for a public space in the City Centre was expressed; a space in which youth can feel a sense of ownership by being encouraged to loiter and hang out. Furthermore, financial barriers was noted as an issue, particularly for arts and culture opportunities.

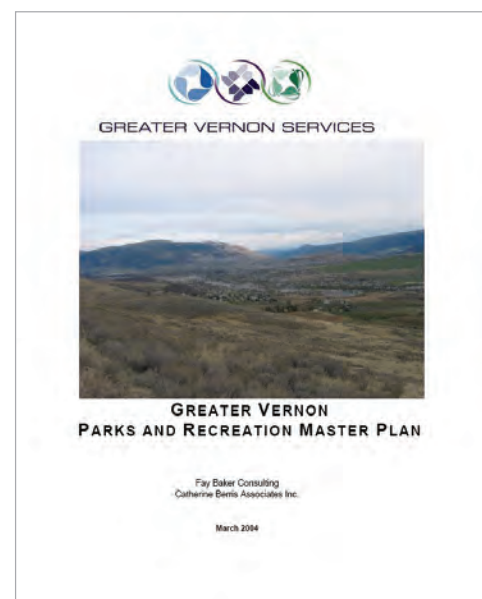


Greater Vernon Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2004)

The previous recreation master plan was developed in 2004. The partnerships and funding arrangements were slightly different back then which is why parks and trails are within the scope of the 2004 edition (note that parks and trails are not within the scope of this 2018 plan). This 2018 Recreation Master Plan process is intended to update and renew the plan developed in 2004.

The purpose of the 2004 Greater Vernon Parks and Recreation Master Plan was to identify a vision, goals and objectives for parks and recreation as well as to provide recommendations for park acquisition, indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, trails, beaches, culture, recreation programs, human resources, and fees and charges related to delivery of parks and recreation services within the subsequent ten years. The following recommendations were developed for recreation specifically.

- Aquatics
 - » Introduce play toys and large inflatables.
 - » Allocate an equipment replacement fund.
 - » Add a climbing wall at the aquatic centre.
 - » Provide “play leader” training for staff.
 - » Add retail services to the lobby.
 - » Add health, wellness, rehab services.
 - » Upgrade Lakeview outdoor pool.
 - » Consider alternative management for delivery of aquatic services (private operator or community society).
- Arenas
 - » Develop an Ice Allocation Policy.
 - » Review the management contract for arenas.
 - » Develop a leisure ice surface.
- Fitness/wellness facilities
 - » Provide space for fitness, wellness and rehabilitation services by renovating the Auditorium.
 - » Provide accessible weight room equipment for seniors and people with disabilities in new facility.
 - » Consider partnerships with developers to include fitness, weight room and community spaces.
- Indoor sports facilities
 - » Develop a clear policy on community use of school gyms.
 - » Provide capital funds to the School District to enlarge the size of elementary school gymnasiums.
 - » Provide capital funds to the School District to twin secondary school gyms.
 - » Develop a new multi-purpose community recreation facility.
 - » Partner with sport organizations to build permanent indoor facilities (groups to fund building construction costs).
- » Renovate the auditorium to a fitness, health and wellness centre.
- » Develop a partnership to build a gymnastics facility.
- Recreation programs
 - » Adopt a “community development” approach to recreation programming.
 - » Form an “Association of Community Planners” representing all community groups providing recreational programs.
 - » Provide satellite recreation programming in public schools.
 - » Develop a Community Diversity Action Plan which addresses diversity issues.
 - » Coordinate a workshop on cultural diversity for community groups.
 - » Maximize usage of Halina Senior’s Centre by offering intergenerational programs.
 - » Liaise with youth organizations and support the Teen Junction with their plans to build a new teen centre.
 - » Encourage social services agencies to provide recreation programs for people with disabilities.
 - » Investigate and consider a financial assistance program.
- Future Recommendations (beyond 10 years)
 - » Upgrade the aquatic centre.
 - » Provide a new community centre, including an aquatic and fitness/wellness facility.
 - » Provide additional ice surfaces to replace the Civic arena in 20 years.
 - » Plan to provide additional programs for seniors in the next ten to twenty years.



Provincial and National Planning

A Framework for Recreation in Canada 2015: Pathways to Wellbeing

A Framework for Recreation in Canada is a guiding document for publicly supported recreation providers in Canada. The Framework was developed by the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association and the Interprovincial Sport and Recreation Council with input from various stakeholders across Canada. In 2015, it was endorsed by Federal and Provincial/Territorial Ministers. The Framework provides a philosophic foundation for the recreation sector and confirms recreation as an essential public service.

The Framework provides a vision and five goals for the delivery of recreation in Canada. While it is understood that recreation is a broad term and that local interests, priorities, and needs differ in each community, the Framework is great starting point for recreation planning. In addition, aligning the recreation sector across the country can help build a stronger case for investment from the provincial and federal levels.

A Renewed Definition of Recreation: Recreation is the experience that results from freely chosen participation in physical, social, intellectual, creative, and spiritual pursuits that enhance individual and community wellbeing.

Vision: We envision a Canada in which everyone is engaged in meaningful, accessible recreation experiences that foster individual wellbeing, community wellbeing, and the wellbeing of our natural and built environments.

Goals:



Goal 1: Active Living

Foster active living through physical recreation.



Goal 2: Inclusion and Access

Increase inclusion and access to recreation for populations that face constraints to participation.



Goal 3: Connecting People and Nature

Help people connect to nature through recreation.



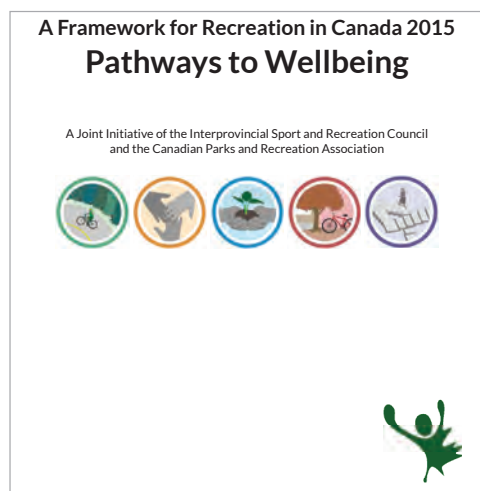
Goal 4: Supportive Environments

Ensure the provision of supportive physical and social environments that encourage participation in recreation and build strong, caring communities.



Goal 5: Recreation Capacity

Ensure the continued growth and sustainability of the recreation field.



Key Finding

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.

Let's Get Moving: A Common Vision for Increasing Physical Activity and Reducing Sedentary Living in Canada (2018)

The Common Vision is a national policy document to lead Canadians towards ways of increasing physical activity and reducing sedentary living. Input was gathered from a wide range of stakeholders including the public, professionals, non-profit and private sectors, academia and researchers, and all orders of government across the country.

Suggested actions and strategic imperatives are categorized into the following six areas of focus:

- Cultural Norms
- Spaces and Places
- Public Engagement
- Partnerships
- Leadership and Learning
- Progress

There are a number of ideas presented that call upon local-level government; some ideas are presented as follows:

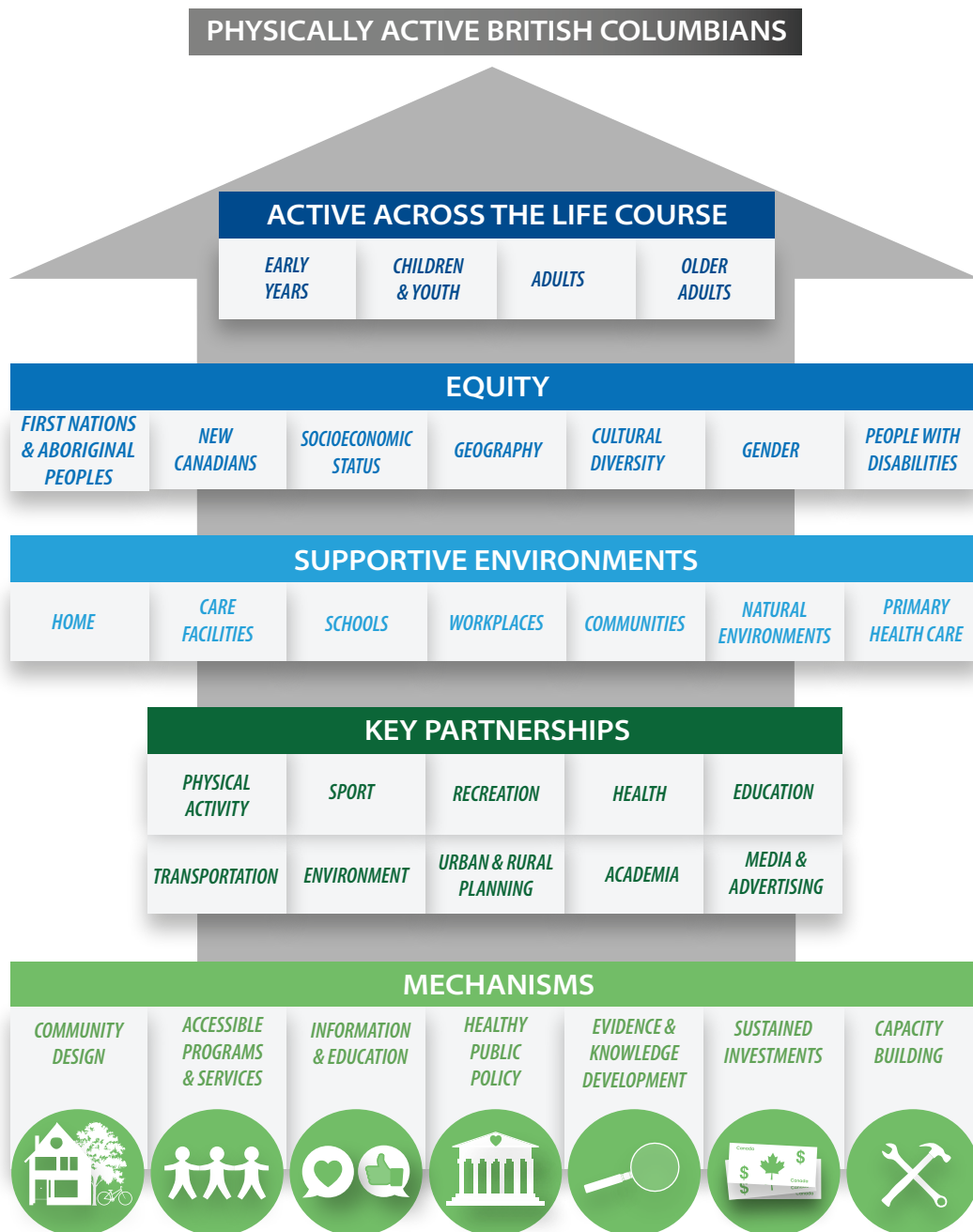
- Work with community planners to create accessible and inclusive spaces and places.
- Work in partnership with Indigenous leaders to realize the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Final Report (2015).
- Use Geographic Information System (GIS) tools to reveal trends and detect weaknesses in walkability and access to recreation facilities and the use of green spaces in communities.
- Monitor parks, fields and playgrounds to determine how best to activate these places and spaces.
- Use evidence-based checklists and self-assessment tools (e.g., Photovoice) to help assess physical activity opportunities and barriers in neighbourhoods.
- Audit accessibility and improve access to recreation facilities where appropriate.
- Help organizations that have volunteer capacity issues (or face high turnover of volunteers/coaches/programmers) find meaningful solutions support them so that quality programming is consistent and reliable.



Active People, Active Places—BC Physical Activity Strategy (2015)

The Government of British Columbia developed the B.C. Physical Activity Strategy to guide and stimulate coordinated policies, practices and programs in physical activity that will improve the health and well-being of British Columbians, and the communities in which they live, learn, work and play. It aims to foster active people and active places.

The Strategy includes two parts: a long term Framework and a 3-year Action Plan. The adjacent graphic provides an overview of the Framework.



BCRPA Strategic Plan (2017)

The British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA) a not-for-profit organization dedicated to enhancing quality of life in the province. The Association and its extensive network of members, including municipalities, support the development of healthy individuals, communities, sustainable environments, and economies. In 2017, BCRPA developed a one-page strategic plan to portray its vision, purpose, roles, values, and strategic priorities.



Canadian Sport for Life

Canadian Sport for Life (CS4L) is regarded as the national leader in physical literacy advocacy and resource support. CS4L is led by Sport for Life Society, a federal non-profit society that was incorporated in September 2014 and comprises experts from sport, health, recreation, and academia who are employed as independent contractors, yet work cooperatively to promote the movement's goals.

The movement introduces two important concepts that influence how recreation and sport activity should be planned, promoted, organized, and delivered.

1. The **Long-Term Athlete Development** (LTAD) framework is a seven-stage training, competition, and recovery pathway guiding an individual's experience in sport and physical activity from infancy through all phases of adulthood.
2. **Physical literacy** is the motivation, confidence, physical competence, knowledge, and understanding to value and take responsibility for engagement in physical activities for life.

Canadian Sport for Life, with Long-Term Athlete Development and physical literacy, represents a paradigm shift in the way Canadians lead and deliver sport and physical activity. The movement calls on municipalities to help further these two important concepts in a variety of ways as outlined below. As it relates to the provision of indoor recreation services and facilities, it is important to consider these roles and the fundamentals of the two concepts as they define a broader social good that is delivered through recreation, ensuring that these concepts are catalyzed through all publicly supported recreation services, will optimize the benefits and value for public investment in facilities and infrastructure.

Identified areas where municipalities, and organizations such as Greater Vernon Recreation Services, can help further the CS4L movement:

1. Physical Literacy Program Development
2. Municipal Planning and Sport Strategy Development
3. Sport Councils
4. Facility Planning
5. Access and Allocation



CANADIAN SPORT FOR LIFE

Physical Literacy

Physical literacy is defined as the motivation, confidence, physical competence, knowledge, and understanding to value and take responsibility for engagement in physical activities for life.

Canadian Sport for Life (CS4L) has also developed a series of best practices and principles that it recommends to be followed in the allocation of facility time to user groups:

- Allocation practices are based on “standards of play” principles in terms of the time and space required by each group.
- Allocation policies are transparent and reviewed with the groups.
- Allocation is not done by tradition, but rather on actual requirements of all groups, including the needs of emerging sports.
- Seasonal allocation meetings are held with common users groups to review their requests and try to achieve consensus on sharing available spaces and times.
- As seasons progress, groups are encouraged to be flexible in the reallocation of spaces with other groups when no longer needed, either temporarily or for longer periods.
- User fees and subsidies need to reflect community taxpayer support, and the rationale should be shared with sport organizations.

Truth and Reconciliation

Reconciliation Canada is an Indigenous-led organization that envisions a vibrant Canada where all peoples achieve their full potential and shared prosperity through meaningful relationships, values-based dialogue, leadership and action. Several “calls to action” were outlined in the Truth and Reconciliation report commissioned by Reconciliation Canada in 2016. Two of these are pertinent to the public delivery of recreation services.



Sports and Reconciliation

- Call to Action 87. We call upon all levels of government, in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, sports halls of fame, and other relevant organizations, to provide public education that tells the national story of Aboriginal athletes in history.
- Call to Action 88. We call upon all levels of government to take action to ensure long-term Aboriginal athlete development and growth, and continued support for the North American Indigenous Games, including funding to host the games and for provincial and territorial team preparation and travel.

National Benefits HUB

The National Benefits HUB is a research database providing access to numerous resources that identify the positive impacts of recreation, sport, fitness, arts/culture, heritage, parks and green spaces on a community. Identified below are the eight key benefit categories from the National Benefits HUB.





Section Five

Service Delivery Overview

To better understand the current context of public recreation delivery in the Greater Vernon area, this section reviews the existing organizational structure for Greater Vernon Recreation Services as well as its role in direct and indirect delivery. Furthermore, current promotions and marketing methods are mentioned.

Cost Sharing Agreement

Greater Vernon Recreation Services last updated its strategic planning documentation in 2004. Since then, major changes to the operating structure of recreation have taken place, seeing the City of Vernon directing the operation and service delivery of recreation on a fee for service agreement with its neighbouring communities; the District of Coldstream, Area B (BX/Swan Lake/Commonage), and C (BX/Silverstar).

Each of the four jurisdictions provide operational funding for Greater Vernon Recreation Services. The City of Vernon provides 70% of the funds, the District of Coldstream pitches in 15%, and Areas B and C each provide 7.5% of the total costs.

Jurisdiction	Funding Percentage
City of Vernon	68.3%
District of Coldstream	17.0%
Regional District of North Okanagan: Electoral Area B (BX/Swan Lake/Commonage)	7.4%
Regional District of North Okanagan: Electoral Area C (BX/Silverstar)	7.4%
Total	100.0%

Greater Vernon Recreation Services

A City of Vernon department that delivers recreation services for Vernon, Coldstream, Area B, and Area C residents.

Key Finding

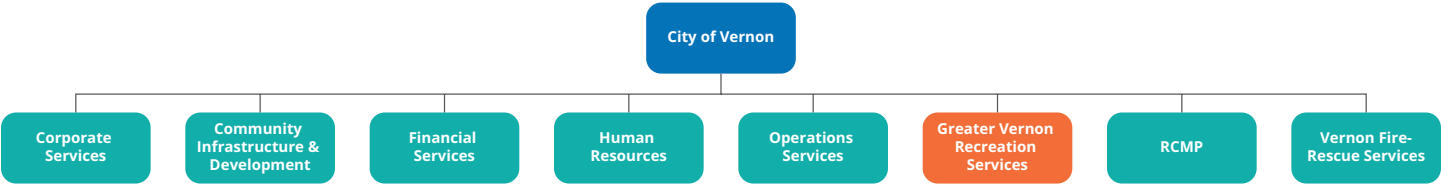
A cost sharing agreement is in place between the City of Vernon, District of Coldstream, and the Regional District of North Okanagan (Areas B and C) to provide recreation services to Greater Vernon area residents.

Organizational Structure

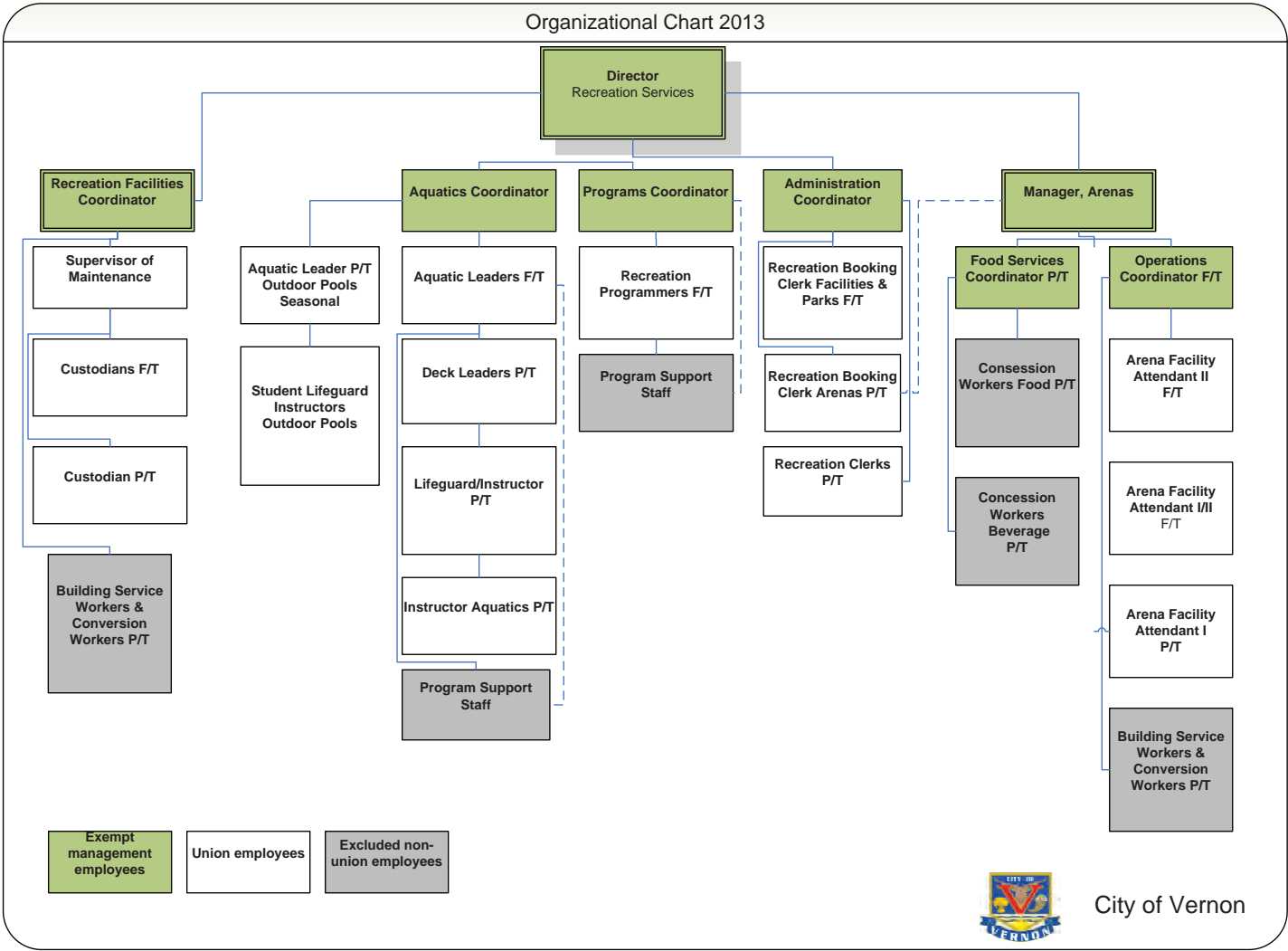
Greater Vernon Recreation Services is one of the eight departments within the City of Vernon's organizational structure. City of Vernon parks are not operated within the same department as recreation. Parks falls within the scope of Community Infrastructure and Development.

Key Finding

Parks is not within the scope of Greater Vernon Recreation Services.



Within Greater Vernon Recreation Service there are five components. As displayed in the organizational chart, the Director of Recreation Services oversees the five components which include facilities, aquatics, programs, administration, and arenas.



Direct Service Delivery

Greater Vernon Recreation Services directly delivers recreation opportunities by operating facilities, by offering programs, and by scheduling spaces for drop-in use. Vernon Recreation Centre, Kal Tire Place, and Lavington Outdoor Pool are directly operated by Greater Vernon Recreation Services.

There are numerous programs that are provided directly through City staff; some examples include swim lessons, weekly summer camps, and fitness classes.

Examples of drop-in opportunities include walking around the track in Kal Tire Place, drop-in use of the fitness centre, and public skating. Drop-in use will sometimes be referred to as spontaneous use.

Direct Service Delivery

When Greater Vernon Recreation Services operates facilities or offers opportunities with City staff, this can be referred to as *direct service delivery*.

Spontaneous Use

The term *spontaneous use* can be used to describe drop-in opportunities or activities participated in at unstructured spaces (e.g. public swim, walking around the track in Kal Tire Place).



Indirect Service Delivery

Greater Vernon Recreation Services alone does not have the capacity to directly deliver all the recreation opportunities available to area residents. Local community organizations are essential, and strongly relied upon, when it comes to the overall inventory of recreation opportunities in the area.

Local community organizations are supported by grants. For example, the Okanagan Boys & Girls Club receives a grant from the Regional District of North Okanagan to assist with operating their Vernon facility and for the Teen Junction facility. For an additional example, the O'Keefe Ranch receives an operating grant from the City of Vernon.

Subsidized access to facilities is another method of indirect service delivery. Many local community groups book timeslots in public facilities and the user fee is less than the cost to actually maintain and provide the space; the remaining cost is covered by tax revenues, hence subsidized access. When an ice user group such as minor hockey or ringette schedules a timeslot at an arena, this is an example of indirect service delivery. It is important to note that lots of resources are required to provide spaces to community groups. Operating these facilities require human and financial resources for tasks such as scheduling, supervision, maintenance, custodial services, sponsorships, food and beverage, and customer service.

Some organizations lease City-owned spaces on an annual or long-term basis. The Halina Centre is an example of this as a community organization leases space inside the Vernon Recreation Centre to provide a dedicated seniors centre.

Indirect Service Delivery

When Greater Vernon Recreation Services supports local community organizations to provide recreation opportunities, this can be referred to as indirect service delivery. The distribution of grants and providing subsidized access to facilities are examples of indirect service delivery.



Promotions and Communication

Recreation opportunities are currently promoted through a variety of communication channels.

Active Living Guide

Perhaps most notably is the Active Living Guide. With both online and print versions, the Active Living Guide is updated twice per year (Fall/Winter and Spring/Summer). While its primary purpose is to provide information about direct programs, the Active Living Guide also provides program and contact information for local community organizations in the Greater Vernon area. Printed copies are available at recreation facilities, the mall, City Hall, District of Coldstream municipal hall, and at the Regional District of North Okanagan offices.



Website

The online version of the Active Living Guide, as well as other information regarding recreation facilities and opportunities, can be found on the Greater Vernon Recreation Services webpage. The webpage (www.vernon.ca/parks-recreation) is hosted on the City of Vernon's website and can be accessed via a shorter, more user-friendly vanity link (www.gvrec.ca). A significant component of the website is that residents can view, register, and pay for programs online. Contact information and facility rental information can also be found on the website.

Twitter

Like most municipalities, the City of Vernon has embraced the use of social media. It is likely that Twitter and Facebook are currently the most common social media platforms for public recreation and Greater Vernon is no exception. The City of Vernon has a city-wide Twitter account (@CityofVernon) in which recreation related content is occasionally distributed. However, more pertinently, there is a Twitter account dedicated to recreation (@VernonRec). The recreation account is used mostly to promote events and to say what is open or closed each day in regard to facilities and drop-in scheduling.

Facebook

Similar to the use of Twitter, both city-wide and Greater Vernon Recreation Services Facebook pages are utilized (www.facebook.com/CityofVernon and www.facebook.com/VernonRecreation respectively). In regard to recreation, Facebook is used to promote programs and events in addition to some basic public engagement. Many local community organizations also use social media to promote their offerings.

Facility Displays

Posters and digital displays within recreation facilities provide information about current and upcoming opportunities.

Radio

Continuous radio advertisements play through both local stations (Sun FM and Kiss FM). Content for the advertisements is updated every six weeks.

Local Newspapers

Advertisements and media releases are utilized in local newspapers.

Email

Email distribution lists are developed from consenting program registrants. Email blasts are sent to these lists to inform clients of upcoming classes and opportunities.



Section Six **Asset Inventory**

To understand the current context of recreation spaces, an inventory is presented of facilities within the Greater Vernon area. Available information such as utilization statistics is included here as well.



Overview of Recreation Assets

The following facilities and spaces are within the scope of the cost-sharing agreement between the City of Vernon, District of Coldstream, and Areas B and C.

Facility	Space	Description
Vernon Recreation Centre	Aquatic Centre	25m 8-lane pool, leisure pool
	Creekside Conference Centre	Auditorium event space, 718-banquet seating, 1000-theatre seating
	Fitness Gym	Fitness centre with cardio/weight machines, free weights
	Dogwood Gym	Gymnasium
	Halina Senior Citizens Centre	Seniors centre
	Centennial Outdoor Rink	Outdoor refrigerated ice skating surface with boards
Kal Tire Place	Kal Tire Place	3003-seat spectator ice arena, community use, junior hockey, dry floor events
	Kal Tire Place North	Additional ice surface that replaced the Civic Arena in 2018, 400-seat arena
	Concourse (walking track)	The concourse is utilized as a walking track
Priest Valley	Priest Valley Gymnasium	Gymnasium, located on same site as Recreation Centre
	Priest Valley Arena	Community ice arena
Outdoor aquatics	Lavington Outdoor Pool	Outdoor pool
	Lakeview Wading Pool	Wading pool
	Polson Spray Park	Spray park

These facilities and spaces are available to area residents, however they are not funded within the scope of the cost-sharing agreement.

Facility	Space	Operator
Schools	14 schools with gymnasiums within the study area	Operated by School District #22
Toyota Indoor Sports Centre	Indoor artificial turf field	Operated by Vernon Soccer
Lakers Clubhouse	130-banquet seating hall space	Operated by the City of Vernon
Curling Rink	8-sheet curling rink	Operated by the Vernon Curling Club, land owned by City of Vernon
Teen Junction	Youth centre	Operated by the Okanagan Boys and Girls Club
Vernon Boys and Girls Club	Child activity space	Operated by the Okanagan Boys and Girls Club
Private facilities	Fitness centres, climbing centre, dance studios, martial arts, etc.	Variety privately provided opportunities

Additional Information

Utilization information was collected from the facilities within the scope of Greater Vernon Recreation Services including aquatics, gymnasiums, and arenas. The challenges and issues noted herein surfaced through conversations with staff and/or user groups.

Vernon Aquatic Centre

Located within the Recreation Centre, the Aquatic Centre contains an 8-lane, 25-metre lap pool as well as a separate leisure pool. The facility also provides a steam room, sauna, whirlpool, waterslide, 1-metre diving board, rope swing, and other leisure amenities.

In 2017, the Aquatic Centre accommodated 211,000 total user visits, including 128,707 drop-in visits and 6,381 program participants. The pool is programmed to capacity and there were 473 participants on the waitlist in 2017.

Challenges that are often brought forward by pool users and user groups include water temperature conflicts, lack of change room spaces, small viewing area, lack of modern leisure aquatics amenities, lack of deck space, and that the lap pool is insufficient for hosting large swim meets.

Outdoor Aquatics

The Lakeview Wading Pool, also known as The Peanut Pool, is free for the public to use. The Lavington Outdoor Pool, which is also free for public use, is located in the District of Coldstream and operated by Greater Vernon Recreation Services. In 2017, Lavington Pool had a total of 6,580 visitors. The outdoor pool also offers swimming lessons (140 participants in 2017) and has been unable to meet the demand over the last few seasons; similar to the Aquatic Centre, people on the waitlists were not accommodated. The outdoor pools are often in operation between the Canada Day and Labour Day long weekends.

Key Finding

Excess demand exists for swim lessons at both the Aquatic Centre and Lavington Outdoor Pool.



Gymnasiums

Greater Vernon Recreation Services operates two gymnasiums. The Dogwood Gym is located within the Recreation Centre and Priest Valley Gymnasium is nearby on the same site. From September to May both gymnasiums are programmed and rented to capacity, including being 100% full Monday through Fridays between 5:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. The Dogwood Gym is smaller of the two and commonly hosts activities such as fitness classes, child gymnastics/play structures, and floor hockey. Likewise, the larger Priest Valley Gymnasium accommodates pickleball, volleyball, badminton, basketball and futsal among others.

Ice Arenas

There are three arena ice sheets within the Greater Vernon area: Kal Tire Place, Kal Tire Place North, and Priest Valley Arena. In addition to ice activities, the arenas host dry floor activities in the summer such as lacrosse and ball hockey. Summer ice is often available in at least one of the arenas.

Kal Tire Place has spectator seating for just over 3,000 people and its main tenant is the Vernon Vipers Junior 'A' hockey team of the British Columbia Hockey League. While it is a spectator arena, it also serves as a community rink commonly rented by minor sport organizations and adult recreation groups. The facility also functions as an event and trade show space. Perhaps its most overlooked activity is walking as the concourse is utilized as a walking track. The concourse is free to access and is heavily utilized, especially by seniors.

Kal Tire Place North opened on September 4, 2018 to replace the Civic Arena which served the community for 80 years. The new 400-seat rink is attached to Kal Tire Place which

will enhance the experience of hosting tournaments due to it being the first multi-sheet venue in the area. The Priest Valley Arena is located on the Recreation Centre site. Many activities such as speed skating, adult and minor hockey, and ringette take place at the Priest Valley Arena; most notably, it is the home of Vernon Figure Skating.

Located on the Recreation Complex, the Curling Rink has 8 sheets of ice and a lounge. While the land is owned by the City of Vernon, the facility is owned and operated by the Vernon Curling Club. Also located on the same site, the Centennial Outdoor Rink provides programming and free public skating. It is not a regulation-sized hockey rink but it is refrigerated and is open to the public when weather permits.

Three scenarios are displayed below to project ice arena utilization for a typical week during the 2018-2019 season. Ice is completely booked (98%) during “High Demand” hours which represents afterschool on weekdays and 8 a.m. to

10 p.m. on weekends. User groups that want more ice time usually want additional time allocated to them within these hours. The “Prime Time” includes early morning and late-night time slot. While utilization during “Prime Time” is high (86%), there are still 40 hours per week available. Lastly, the “Non-Prime Time” denotes school and typical work hours; the utilization percentage here is 50%.

Key Finding

Indoor Aquatics and gymnasiums are at full capacity. Ice arenas are nearing capacity during Prime Time hours.

Scenario	Hours Booked	Hours Available	Utilization Percentage
High Demand Weekdays: 4 p.m. – 10 p.m. Weekends: 8 a.m. – 10 p.m.	171	174	98%
Prime Time Weekdays: 6 a.m. – 8 a.m.; 4 p.m. – midnight Weekends: 6 a.m. – midnight	248	288	86%
Non-Prime Time Weekdays: 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.	60	120	50%





Section Seven Programming

This section provides information about recreation programming provided by Greater Vernon Recreation Services. Since the Recreation Master Plan will provide direction for programming, the intent of this section is to identify potential gaps or issues with the current program delivery system.

Over 1,700 programs are offered annually by Greater Vernon Recreation Services. This includes aquatics, fitness, child and youth programs, and much more. All of the programs are listed in the Active Living Guide which is produced as a hardcopy and available online.

Key Finding

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.



The most pressing issue relating to direct programming is the lack of adequate space. Existing spaces also serve community groups and other rental types therefore it can be difficult to balance the schedule with programs.

There are not any dedicated dryland programming rooms. The Auditorium was originally built as a performing arts theatre and is now used as a programming and event space. If an event is scheduled, or if an opportunity becomes available to rent the space, regular programming gets bumped from the Auditorium because the space is better suited to serve larger rentals. The Dogwood and Priest Valley Gymnasiums provide dryland space for direct programs but they are also highly desired spaces for sport rentals. The fitness centre is small and does not contain enough space or adjacent studios for group fitness programs. Due to the lack of adequate spaces, combined with the fact that spaces are better suited for other purposes, allocating space for direct programming has been a challenge.

Similar challenges exist with aquatics programs. The Aquatic Centre operates at full capacity with a mixture of direct programs, spontaneous drop-in use, and community group rentals. There is demand to increase the amount of time allocated to all of these use types. Direct aquatic programming plays an important role in developing competent swimmers and drowning prevention, which is especially important in the Greater Vernon context as there are an abundance of outdoor natural swimming areas. Excess demand exists for swimming lessons at the Aquatic Centre and Lavington Outdoor Pool. Each year, swimming lesson programs fill up, wait lists are compiled, and not all wait list participants can be accommodated.

The programming staff are not assigned a specific programming area to focus on. A review of the organizational structure of the programming department may be warranted. Having assigned focus areas for each programmer could help prevent overlap or duplication of programs as well as enhance the quality of offerings as each programmer could become more specialized in their area. Greater Vernon Recreation Services programmers are also mandated to achieve full cost recovery and pay the full fee to rent their own facility space. Direct programmers having to pay for the rental space is not a common practice and could put participant affordability at risk. Many municipalities place a high priority on direct programs in their allocations policies to ensure equitable access and inclusion to all residents; this is not always the case in Greater Vernon as programs often get bumped for other rental types.





Section Eight

Special Events & Sports Tourism

Vernon attracts a variety of special events & sports tourism. These occasions contribute to civic pride and bring non-local spending into the community. While some events would be considered in the typical scope of a public recreation service provider (e.g. minor sport tournaments), many are not (e.g. tradeshow, concerts).

Events in Vernon often utilize spaces that are operated by Greater Vernon Recreation Services which puts the department in a unique situation. Kal Tire Place and the Auditorium are utilized to host events as they are the only large spaces in the Greater Vernon area designed to accommodate such gatherings. However, they are also recreation facilities that serve local residents. It can be tough to prioritize the types of uses. Without clear direction, an operator will likely lean towards the opportunity that brings in more revenue.

The identity and philosophy regarding special events & sports tourism for Greater Vernon Recreation Services is unclear. While a recreation department typically focuses on providing recreation opportunities, it is understandable that facilities like Kal Tire Place will continue to host events. If hosting events remains a role of the department, additional expertise and resources may be warranted.

Key Finding

Special events & sports tourism are valued and is a priority 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 & sports tourism for Greater Vernon Recreation Services is unclear.

If this remains a role of the department, additional expertise and resources may be warranted.

Sport tourism is often a driver of partnerships and infrastructure development. Available Statistics Canada data (2014) indicates that the sports tourism industry in British Columbia is valued at \$300 million annually, and is the fastest growing segment of the tourism industry.³

Many local governments (municipalities and regional districts) are reacting to the growth and opportunities associated with sport tourism by dedicating resources to the attraction and retention of events. The emergence of sport councils (or similar entities) is a trend that is continuing in many communities and regions. These organizations often receive public support and are tasked with building sport tourism capacity and working with community sport organizations and volunteers in the attraction and hosting of events. Some local governments have also decided to dedicate internal staff resources to sport tourism through the creation of new positions or re-allocation of roles.

Sport tourism generates non-local spending in a community and region (economic impact), can offset operating costs of facilities (through rentals), and can enhance community profile at the provincial, national, and international level. Sport tourism can also generate opportunities for local athlete development and can lead to varying forms of community legacy such as infrastructure development and endowment funds.

While sport tourism can be highly beneficial to a community, it is important to consider a number of factors when allocating resources in order to ensure that investment provides positive and long-lasting impacts. This is especially the case when considering the pursuit of larger scale events and competitions. Best practices that should be followed include:

- Infrastructure investment (enhancement or new development) needs to be sustainable and beneficial to a wide array of residents.
- Volunteer capacity needs to be accurately assessed and deemed appropriate.
- The pursuit of events needs to be strategically aligned with community values and goals.

3 Sport Tourism (Destination BC), Destination BC: Tourism Business Essentials: Sport Tourism Guide.





Section Nine

Policy Review

A review of existing policies relating to recreation services within the study area is presented in this section. The City of Vernon's Official Community Plan in particular contains a number of recreation policy statements. Such statements are listed herein so that the Recreation Master Plan (under separate cover) can build upon, confirm, or potentially recommend edits to them.

Recreation Policies

It is common for local governments to have recreation policies in place such as allocation policies to prioritize uses and schedule users in facilities and spaces, joint use agreements with the local school boards to maximize the use of public facilities, and fees and charges policies to assist in setting fees in a justified and transparent manner. While Greater Vernon Recreation Services does have an allocation policy in place for ice arena bookings, it does not have the other aforementioned policies in place.

- An allocation policy exists for ice arenas but not for other types of recreation spaces.
- While there is a good relationship between Greater Vernon Recreation Services and School District #22, there is not a formal joint use agreement in place.
- There is not a fees and charges policy in place to help set fees in an equitable, justified, and transparent manner.

Key Findings

An allocation policy is in place for ice, but not for other amenities.

A joint-use agreement with schools is not formalized.

Fees and charges are based on tradition and benchmarking.

City of Vernon Official Community Plan (2015)

The City of Vernon's Official Community Plan has a number of goals and policy statements specific to recreation. The Recreation Master Plan will recommend approaches to achieve the content put forth by the Official Community Plan. The goals and policies are listed as follows.

Infrastructure Goals

- Promote fiscally responsible asset management of existing and proposed new infrastructure.
- Require development to consider onsite and offsite life cycle costs so as to be financially self-supporting, as a minimum.

Economic Development Goal

- Continue to invest in amenities and facilities that support efforts to attract young families.

Community Amenities Goal

- 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.

Community Amenity Policies

- Develop a Recreation Master Plan, recognizing that additional and/or expanded services will be required to meet the needs of the growing population. (Policy 17.1)
- Support initiatives by GVAC, and other levels of government and community organizations, to increase access to recreation and cultural opportunities for all residents of the City. (Policy 17.2)
- Support new, expanded and/or enhanced recreation facilities according to the following criteria:
 - a. Meets an identified need in the community
 - b. Increases residents' access to recreation opportunities
 - c. Located within or adjacent to residential designated areas of the city
 - d. Facility flexibility for multi function community use (Policy 17.3)

- Support the continued enhancement and expansion of recreational programming offered in Greater Vernon. Further, support efforts towards providing recreational opportunities within five minutes walking time of residential development. (Policy 17.4)
- Continue to support recreational opportunities provided through community centres, societies, clubs and other organizations delivering recreation services to residents of all ages in the community. (Policy 17.5)
- Support and participate in sub-regional, regional, provincial and national initiatives that will result in enhanced community services for Vernon residents. (18.1)
- Continue to support the use of schools, gymnasiums, meeting rooms and school grounds between different user groups in the community. (18.11)

Accessibility Policies

- Foster appreciation and respect for all residents, regardless of income, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, ability. (Policy 20.6)
- Work towards universal physical accessibility in all civic buildings and facilities and support same in all new development. (Policy 20.13)
- Ensure that fees for civic facility use are set to maximize the accessibility of community facilities to the general public, with due consideration for generating revenues to address the costs of the facilities. (Policy 20.15)
- Work with stakeholders and non-profit groups to identify barriers to accessibility and prioritize investment in improvements. (Policy 20.16)



Regional District of North Okanagan Official Community Plan: Areas B and C

Area B and C also have an Official Community Plan that outlines policies relating to recreation. They are as follows.

- 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”. (12.1.1)
- Support opportunities for balanced, active and diverse lifestyles where housing, public services and amenities are affordable, accessible and inclusive. (14.1.1)
- Encourage land use patterns, community activities and events that generate intergenerational and inter-cultural interest, participation and social integration. (14.1.2)
- Encourage the use of community halls, spaces and venues for public participation, education and enjoyment of culture.
- Encourage the development and promotion of cultural activities and facilities which contribute to the social, emotional and physical well being of residents of all ages and income levels.

Key Findings

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).





Section Ten Financial Review

Before planning new services, it is critical to understand the financial requirements to provide existing services. This section contains an overview of existing budget allocations to recreation services including an overview of the regional cost sharing arrangement.

As seen in the accompanying chart, Greater Vernon Recreation Services requires approximately \$3.4M in subsidies to operate. Just under 32% is funded by the District of Coldstream, Area B and Area C and 68.4% is subsidized by the City of Vernon. The Aquatic Centre nearly requires \$850,000 subsidy annually.

Key Findings

Approximately \$3.4M is required annually to provide the current level of service.

Overall recovery rates are approximately 50-60% each year.

Budget	2018	2017*	2016	2015	2014
Expenses	7,058,336	7,753,319	7,931,199	8,340,426	7,585,958
Revenues	3,588,547	4,331,416	4,546,527	4,999,194	4,313,448
Recovery Rate	51%	56%	57%	60%	57%
District of Coldstream and RDNO Contributions	1,099,928	1,084,742	1,072,940	1,059,171	1,037,386
City of Vernon Net Subsidy Required	2,369,861	2,337,161	2,311,732	2,282,061	2,235,124

*Not shown: \$13M capital project in 2017 (Civic Arena replacement)



Section Eleven

Trends

Recreation preferences and user expectations are constantly changing. It is not realistic for local governments to offer every new trendy program or facility type that comes around but it is important to be aware of trends that are becoming mainstream and to keep an open mind when planning. A number of participation and infrastructure trends are exhibited herein. Furthermore, recent reports on physical activity levels are noted to show that Canadians might not be as active as they should be; such statistics can help justify the importance of providing public recreation.

Key Finding

Physical activity levels in Canada are low, especially among children and youth.

Physical Activity Levels

The **BC Physical Activity Strategy**, published in 2015, identified a number of participation indicators that reveal both encouraging and troubling physical activity trends. Summarized below are key findings outlined in the Strategy.

- British Columbia is the most active province in Canada. Almost 64% of British Columbians (age 12 and over) are active in their leisure time, highest among all provinces in Canada. However, about 1.5 million British Columbians are classified as inactive, and many of those who report being active do not do enough activity to achieve health benefits.
- Physical activity levels among children and youth are concerning. While 88% of students in Grades 3 and 4 report that they get physical activity at school, only 44% report doing at least 30 minutes of moderate or vigorous activity each day.

ParticipACTION is a national non-profit organization that strives to help Canadians sit less and move more. The Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth is a comprehensive assessment of child and youth physical activity, taking data from multiple sources, including the best available peer-reviewed research, to assign grades for indicators such as overall physical activity, active play, sleep, and others. The most recent report card (2018) states that “Canadian kids aren’t active enough” and an overall physical activity rating of D+ was assigned.

- 35% of 5- to-17-year-olds meet the physical activity recommendation within the Canadian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for Children and Youth (2014-15 CHMS, Statistics Canada).
- 62% of 3- to 4-year-olds meet the physical activity recommendation within the Canadian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for the Early Years (2009-11, 2012-13 and 2014-15 CHMS, Statistics Canada).⁴

A 2018 report from **Statistics Canada** examined how older Canadians spend their time. The results show a decline in activity levels among seniors. The participation rate of senior women in active pursuits declined from 77% to 69% between 1986 and 2015. Over the same period, the average time spent on active pursuits by senior men and women decreased by 35 minutes and 40 minutes a day respectively. Forty-four percent (44%) of men age 65 and older participate in physical activities and 39% of women participate in physical activities.⁵

Participation Barriers

Many Canadians face barriers that impact their ability to reap the numerous social, physical, and mental benefits that are accrued from participation in leisure pursuits. Understanding these barriers can help service providers identify strategies to mitigate issues and encourage participation.

The following graph adapted from the 2014 CIBC—KidSport Report reflects barriers to participation in sport for 3 to 17 year olds in Canada. As reflected in the graph, the cost of enrollment, the cost of equipment and a lack of interest were identified as the top three barriers.⁶

A **Heritage Canada** study published in 2009 identified barriers that youth organizations face while providing participation opportunities related to arts, heritage, and culture. A lack of funding for youth organizations is a main challenge when it

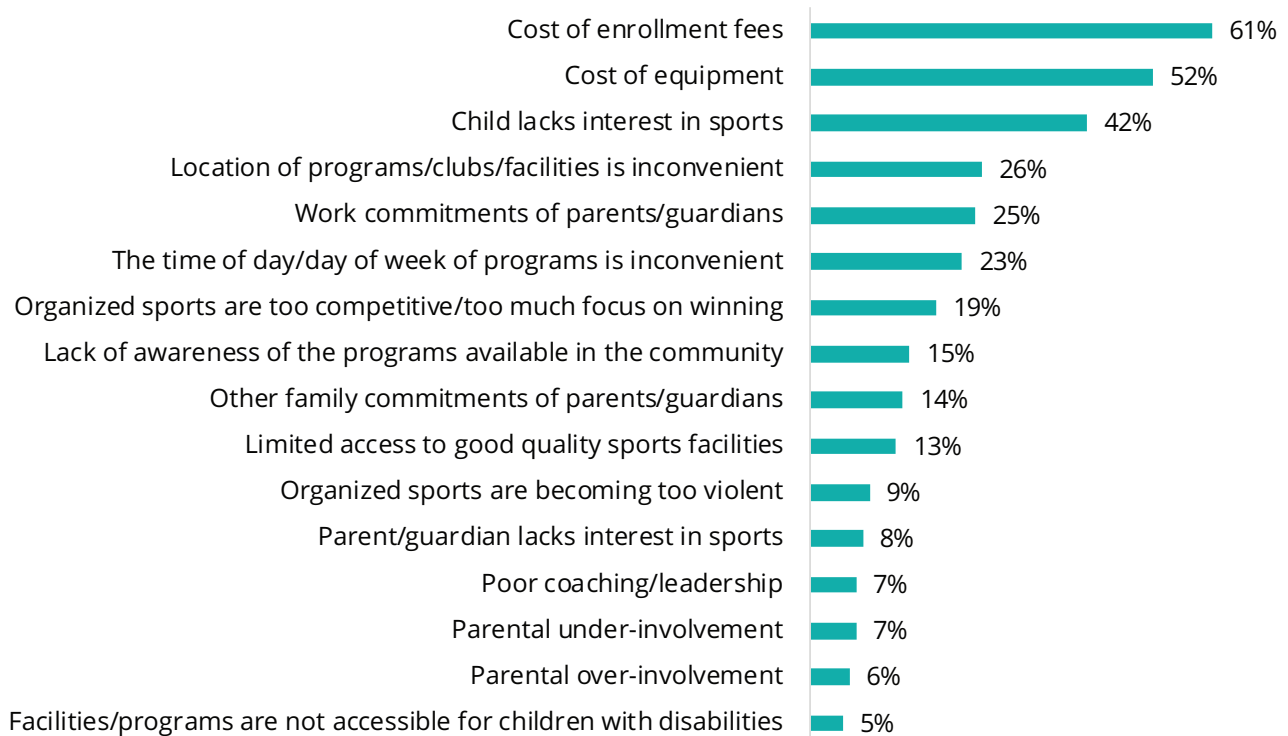


4 https://www.participaction.com/sites/default/files/downloads/2018_participation_report_card_-_highlight_report_0.pdf

5 <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/75-006-x/2018001/article/54947-eng.htm>

6 http://www.kidsportcanada.ca/site/assets/files/10418/cibc_kidsport_report_july_2014_final.pdf

KidSport 2014: Barriers to Participation



comes to participation. This resource scarcity creates barriers in the form of time, money, transportation, human resources and facilities. Promoting opportunities to young people in an effective manner is a common struggle. Other barriers for youth organization were recognized such as communication, evaluation, changing paradigms about the role of youth, and program inflexibility.⁷

As the senior population of Canada and British Columbia continues to grow, demand for recreation services will increase significantly for years to come. Therefore, a comprehensive understanding of senior behaviour and recreational preferences is essential to the effective delivery of recreational services and the prevention of sedentary behaviour. Although a lack of resources may be a contributing factor to inactivity in the senior population, other social and psychological factors are as much if not

greater of a contributor to senior inactivity. The most common barriers confronting recreation and physical activity participation in the older adult age group are:

- Physical accessibility, which can include a lack of transportation to recreation spaces
- Safety concerns, including fear of injury
- Lack of available or accessible information of current programs and services provided to older adults, especially those that have cognitive or language limitations
- Lack of physical and emotional support from family or friends
- Social isolation
- Lack of motivation
- Cost
- Migration Factors

7 http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2010/pc-ch/CH36-4-122009-eng.pdf

Physical Activity Preferences

The **2013 Canadian Community Health Survey** reveals data that provides some insight into the recreation and leisure preferences of Canadians. The top 5 most popular adult activities identified were walking, gardening, home exercise, swimming and bicycling. The top 5 most popular youth activities were walking, bicycling, swimming, running/jogging and basketball.⁸

Participation levels and preferences for sporting activities continue to garner much attention given the impact on infrastructure development and overall service delivery in most municipalities. The **Canadian Fitness & Lifestyle Research Institute's** 2011 – 2012 Sport Monitor Report identified a number of updated statistics and trends pertaining to sport participation in Canada.⁹

- The highest proportion of Canadians prefers non-competitive sports or activities. Nearly half (44%) of Canadians preferred non-competitive sports while 40% like both non-competitive and competitive sports. Only 8% of Canadians prefer competitive sports or activities and 8% prefer neither competitive nor non-competitive sports.
- Sport participation is directly related to age. Nearly three-quarters (70%) of Canadians aged 15 – 17 participate in sports, with participation rates decreasing in each subsequent age group. The largest fall-off in sport participation occurs between the age categories of 15 – 17 and 18 – 24 (~20%).
- In contrast to children and youth populations (in which gender participation rates are relatively equal), substantially more adult men (45%) than adult women (24%) participate in organized sport.
- Participation in sport is directly related to household income levels. Households with an annual income of greater than \$100,000 have the highest participation levels, nearly twice as high as households earning between \$20,000 and \$39,999 annually and over three times as high as households earning less than \$20,000 annually.
- The highest proportion of sport participants play in “structured environments.” Just under half (48%) of sport participants indicated that their participation occurs primarily in organized environments, while 20% participate in unstructured or casual environments; 32% do so in both structured and unstructured environments.

- Community sport programs and venues remain important. The vast majority (82%) of Canadians that participate in sport do so within the community. Approximately one-fifth (21%) participate at school while 17% participate in sports at work. A significant proportion (43%) also indicated that they participate in sporting activities at home.

Although many “traditional” activities such as bingo, bridge and shuffleboard remain popular among older adult populations, demands and preferences are evolving. Specifically, younger cohorts of older adults (notably the “baby boom” generation) have differing preferences than previous generations and are participating in more light to moderately vigorous forms of physical activity, such as:

- Pickleball
- Trekking
- Hiking
- Water aerobics
- Dancing
- Yoga

Participants and providers alike are also focusing on providing more opportunities for multi-generational activities and programming. This trend is driven both by participant demand (e.g. opportunities to engage in programming with younger family members and friends) as well as an increasing recognition of the social and community benefits that multigenerational interaction can provide.



8 <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/140612/dq140612b-eng.htm>

9 <http://www.cflri.ca/node/78>

Unstructured Leisure

There is an increasing demand for more flexibility in timing and activity for leisure pursuits. People are seeking individualized informal pursuits that can be done alone or in small groups, at flexible times, often near or at home. This does not eliminate the need for structured activities, but instead suggests that planning for the general population is as important as planning for traditional structured use environments.

Spontaneous recreation broadly categorizes physical activities in which the activities, the nature of participation, and the timing are freely chosen and do not require registering for a program or a league. This includes walking, running, children playing, skateboarding, shinny and other pick-up sports games, and countless other activities.

Recreation consumers have a greater choice of activity options than at any time in history. As a result, service providers are being required to ensure that their approach to delivery is fluid and can quickly adapt to meet community demand. Many municipalities have also had to make hard decisions on which activities they are able to directly offer or support, versus those which are more appropriate to leave to the private sector to provide.

Ensuring that programming staff and management are current on local trends is important in the identification and planning of programming. Regular interaction and data collection (e.g. customer surveys) from participants are other methods that service providers use to help identify programs that are popular and in demand. The development of multi-use spaces can also help ensure that municipalities have the flexibility to adapt to changing interests and activity preferences.

Key Finding

There is an increasing demand for more flexibility in timing and activity for leisure pursuits.

Providing Recreation and Leisure Opportunities for Older Adults

By 2031, almost one in four people in British Columbia (approximately 1.3 million people) will be over the age of 65.¹⁰ This trend will require all sectors of public health and wellness to ensure that adequate opportunities exist for older adults to be healthy and active.

The **World Health Organization's** (WHO) Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health identifies a number of benefits that can result due to the provision of quality and appropriate physical activity opportunities for older adults.

- Lower rates of all-cause mortality, coronary heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke, type 2 diabetes, colon cancer and breast cancer, a higher level of cardiorespiratory and muscular fitness, healthier body mass and composition.
- Biomarker profile that is more favourable for the prevention of cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and the enhancement of bone health.
- Exhibit higher levels of functional health, a lower risk of falling, and better cognitive function; have reduced risk of moderate and severe functional limitations and role limitations.

The WHO further outlines six specific guideline recommendations for older adult physical activity levels.

5. Older adults should do at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity aerobic physical activity throughout the week or do at least 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity throughout the week or an equivalent combination of moderate- and vigorous-intensity activity.
6. Aerobic activity should be performed in bouts of at least 10 minutes duration.
7. For additional health benefits, older adults should increase their moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity to 300 minutes per week, or engage in 150 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity per week, or an equivalent combination of moderate- and vigorous-intensity activity.
8. Older adults, with poor mobility, should perform physical activity to enhance balance and prevent falls on 3 or more days per week.
9. Muscle-strengthening activities, involving major muscle groups, should be done on 2 or more days a week.
10. When older adults cannot do the recommended amounts of physical activity due to health conditions, they should be as physically active as their abilities and conditions allow.

¹⁰ Seniors in British Columbia—A Healthy Living Framework.

Volunteerism

The **2010 Canadian Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating** helps reveal a number of current trends in individual volunteerism and the broader volunteer sector. Encouragingly, data from the Survey reflects that overall volunteerism is on the rise. Since 2007 (last available data) over 800,000 more Canadians have volunteered. In contrast to the commonly held perspective that youth aren't interested in volunteering, data from the Survey reflects that Canadians aged 15 – 24 volunteer more than any other age group.

Key Finding

Volunteerism is changing; people are looking for more defined roles and timeframes.

However data from the Survey supports that the nature of volunteerism is changing. Between 2007 and 2010, the average annual volunteer hours contributed by Canadians decreased by approximately 6% from 166 to 156. Hours contributed to volunteerism on an annual basis appear to be highly influenced by age. While a higher proportion of Canadians aged 45 – 54 volunteer on an annual basis as compared to individuals aged 55 – 64, the number of hours they contribute is less.

The British Columbia sub-segment findings of the Survey further reveal a number of trends specific to the province.¹¹

- British Columbians volunteer at a higher rate than the national average. Nearly half (49.8%) of BC residents aged 15 and over volunteered in 2010 as compared to the national average of 47.0%.
- Some interesting contrasts exist between provincial and national averages with regards to volunteerism by age segment. Residents aged 44 and younger as well those aged 55 and older volunteer at a higher proportion in British Columbia. However volunteerism is lower than national averages in the 45 – 54 age segment.
- Education and income levels appear to influence volunteer behaviour. British Columbians with a University degree had the highest rates of volunteerism. Rates of volunteerism also increase in lock-step with household income levels.

- The presence of school aged children in a household influence volunteerism. Nearly 60% of households with school aged children volunteer as compared to just 41% of households without children and 45% of households with children that are not school aged.

The following are nine trends in volunteerism as identified by Volunteer Canada.¹²

- Much comes from the few. While 47% of Canadians volunteer, over one-third (34%) of all volunteer hours were contributed by 5% of total volunteers.
- The new volunteer. Young people volunteer to gain work related skills (Canadians aged 15–24 volunteer more than any other age group). New Canadians also volunteer to develop work experience and to practice language skills. Persons with disabilities may volunteer to more fully participate in community life.
- Volunteer job design. Volunteer job design can be the best defense for changing demographics and fluctuations in funding.
- Mandatory volunteering. There are mandatory volunteer programs through Workfare, Community Service Order and school mandated community work.
- Volunteering by contract. The changing volunteer environment is redefining volunteer commitment as a negotiated and mutually beneficial arrangement rather than a one-way sacrifice of time by the volunteer.
- Risk management. Considered part of the process of job design for volunteers, risk management ensures the organization can place the right volunteer in the appropriate activity.
- Borrowing best practices. The volunteer sector has responded to the changing environment by adopting corporate and public sector management practices including standards, codes of conduct, accountability and transparency measures around program administration, demand for evaluation, and outcome measurement.
- Professional volunteer management. Managers of volunteer resources are working toward establishing an equal footing with other professionals in the voluntary sector.
- Board governance. Volunteer boards must respond to the challenge of acting as both supervisors and strategic planners.

11 Volunteer Canada: <http://volunteer.ca/content/canada-surveygivingvolunteering-and-participating>

12 Volunteer Canada: volunteer.ca

Aging Infrastructure

A report published in 2009 by the **British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association** titled “A Time for Renewal” identified a number of statistics related to the aging condition of recreation infrastructure in the province. Findings published in the report included:

- 68% of BC’s indoor recreation facilities are 25 years or older, and 42% of facilities are 35 years or older.
- Recreation infrastructure development is not keeping up with current or projected population growth.
- An estimated \$4 billion dollars is needed for the rehabilitation of existing indoor facilities based on lifecycle stage assumptions.
- An estimated \$1.2 billion dollars is needed to build new indoor facilities to proportionately accommodate BC’s ten-year population growth predictions.

Another more recent report, the **Canadian Infrastructure Report Card** included an assessment and analysis of the state of sport and recreation facilities across Canada.¹³ The report revealed a number of concerns and issues that will impact the delivery of sport and recreation infrastructure over the next number of years. Key findings from the report included the following.

- The Report Card demonstrates that Canada’s infrastructure, including sport and recreation facilities, is at risk of rapid deterioration unless there is immediate investment.
- The average annual reinvestment rate in sport and recreation facilities is currently 1.3% (of capital value) while the recommended target rate of reinvestment is 1.7% – 2.5%.
- Almost 1 in 2 sport and recreation facilities are in ‘very poor’, ‘poor’ or ‘fair’ condition and need repair or replacement.
- In comparison to other municipal infrastructure assessed in the Report Card, sport and recreation facilities were in the worst state and require immediate attention.

The Report Card indicated that the extrapolated replacement value of sport and recreation facilities in ‘poor’ or ‘very poor’ condition is \$9 billion while those in ‘fair’ condition require \$14 billion.

Key Finding

In comparison to other municipal infrastructure assessed Canadian Infrastructure, sport and recreation facilities across the country were in the worst state and require immediate attention.



13 http://www.canadainfrastructure.ca/downloads/Canadian_Infrastructure_Report_2016.pdf



Section Twelve

Leading Practices

Presented in this section is a variety of leading practices conducted by other communities, municipalities, and regions. The purpose of the information is to learn how other communities approach certain issues and to potentially apply aspects of these practices to the Greater Vernon area. Since each community is different, it cannot be assumed that these practices are right for the Greater Vernon; however, they are intended to help us think outside the box, spark ideas, and to understand that certain topics can be approached differently.



Encouraging Participation

To maximize the benefit of community infrastructure and programs, residents need to participate. The “built it and they will come” approach may work for some assets, but it should not be the only approach. It is important to promote opportunities to create awareness and reach under-served markets.

The following examples have been used in other communities to encourage participation:

- **Free Drop-in:** This refers to providing free drop-in opportunities such as public skate or public swim. Often these opportunities are sponsored by local businesses to generate revenue.
- **Impromptu Conversion of Public Space:** This involves setting up temporary (or permanent) equipment for activities in public spaces such as plazas, alleys, parks, and closed roads. Some activities and equipment have included table tennis, basketball, chess, pianos, skateboard parks, concerts and gallery spaces.
- **Social Media:** Most municipalities utilize social media as a method to promote leisure opportunities; however, the extent to which it is effective varies greatly among communities. Techniques to improve the use of social media include partnerships (i.e. retweeting promotional material from partner organizations), using all platforms together (i.e. synchronizing the use of Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram from a single dashboard), planning and pre-scheduling posts (i.e. weekly opportunities are automatically promoted the morning of), and by adding the municipality’s social media handles to everything possible (i.e. just as a logo would be added to the header or footer of a flyer, newsletter, webpage or poster).
- **Prescription to Get Active:** Some municipalities have partnered with local health organizations to honour “prescriptions” to recreation facilities and programs.
- **Try-it Day:** The Grande Prairie Sport Council, in partnership with the City and County of Grande Prairie, hosts an annual event in which children ages 6 to 12 can participate in a variety of sports at no cost. During the inaugural event in 2015, introductory experiences were offered for 30 different sports; participants register for two activities. The goals of the event are to increase sport participating, introduce families to new sports, increase the profile of regional sport organizations, and to establish relationships among sport stakeholders.
- **Youth Nights:** A youth centre in Swift Current, Saskatchewan hosts drop-in youth nights on Friday and Saturday evenings. The event regularly attracts around 250 youth to the alcohol and drug-free environment.

Key Finding

Increasing participation with free opportunities, impromptu conversion of public space, social media campaigns, prescriptions to get active, try-it day, and youth nights.



Infrastructure Planning

Spaces for recreation activity are important in facilitating participation and achieving community benefits. Most often, municipalities are looked upon to provide publicly accessible community infrastructure for activities to occur. The planning of such spaces is critical to ensure accessibility, to maximize usage, and to understand financial implications.

The following topics should be considered during the planning of community infrastructure:

- Capital costs
- Operating costs
- Funding models (capital and operating)
- Revenue sources
- Capital replacement and maintenance contributions
- Partnerships
- Primary and secondary uses of the space(s)
- Current provision in the municipality
- Current provision in the region
- Tournament hosting standards
- Accessibility standards
- Non-gender specific and flex spaces
- Site selection criteria

Key Finding

Conducting thorough due diligence for infrastructure planning.



Maximizing Partnerships

The combined factors of decreasing support from other levels of government, increasing demand for new and exciting leisure infrastructure and programs and the changing nature of the volunteer has led many municipalities to adopt a community development focus in service delivery. This, in addition to the direct delivery of recreation facilities and programs, includes the facilitation of empowering local non-profit groups to operate facilities and/or offer programs to residents thereby leveraging public resources and providing more value for public investment.

Examples of partnerships include lease agreements, the contracted operation of spaces, facility naming and sponsorship arrangements, cost sharing agreements, and core funding contributions. Partnerships can be used to leverage public funds towards providing updated, expanded or new infrastructure and programs.

Partnership frameworks are used to guide the development of partnerships as well as to keep them accountable. A number of criteria are considered to determine whether a potential partnership is worthwhile and ethical to pursue.

Partnership criteria could include:

- Alignment with municipal planning vision, values, goals, etc.
- Type of organization (non-profit, private company)
- Provides additional/diverse variety of opportunities
- Capital cost savings
- Operating cost savings
- Enhances health and wellness of individuals
- Provides social and wellness benefits to the community
- Safety and risk management
- Access and affordability
- Equity and fairness
- Sustainable approach
- Competency of the organization (clear demonstration of business/feasibility planning)

Key Finding

Providing a variety of recreation opportunities by maximizing partnerships.

Enhancing Volunteerism

Since most recreation opportunities are provided by volunteers, supporting volunteerism is critical. Communication initiatives are imperative to help link people with opportunities and vice versa as well as for recognizing volunteers. The recognition of volunteers is a nice touch to remind the individuals that their efforts make a difference. Communicating recognition to the public is also a strategy to spread the word about volunteer opportunities.

Methods to support volunteerism are varied and can include:

- Recognition events
- Recognition communiqués
- Opportunity postings
- Establishing and updating a database/list of potential volunteers to email opportunities
- Training and development opportunities
- Communicate the benefits of volunteering and explain how it makes a difference in the community
- Benefits for volunteers (e.g. discount to some programs/facilities)

Key Finding

Supporting volunteerism by hosting recognition events, posting opportunities, providing benefits to volunteers, and communicating the benefits of volunteering.





Section 13

Summary of Key Findings

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.
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.

Research Topic	Key Findings
Special Events & Sport Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport tourism and special events are valued and is a priority in the Greater Vernon area. • Greater Vernon Recreation Services rents its facilities for events, especially Kal Tire Place and the Auditorium. • The identity and philosophy regarding sport tourism and special events for Greater Vernon Recreation Services is unclear. • If this remains a role of the department, 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 were 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.

Glossary

Direct Service Delivery: When Greater Vernon Recreation Services operates facilities or offers opportunities with City staff, this can be referred to as direct service delivery.

Greater Vernon Recreation Services: A City of Vernon department that delivers recreation services for Vernon, Coldstream, Area B, and Area C residents.

Indirect Service Delivery: When Greater Vernon Recreation Services supports local community organizations to provide recreation opportunities, this can be referred to as indirect service delivery. The distribution of grants and providing subsidized access to facilities are examples of indirect service delivery.

Jurisdiction: Since the four in-scope areas are inconsistent in regard to government type (e.g. city, district municipality, regional district electoral area), the term jurisdiction is used to refer to them in a consistent manner.

Physical Literacy: Physical literacy is defined as the motivation, confidence, physical competence, knowledge, and understanding to value and take responsibility for engagement in physical activities for life.

Recreation: Recreation is the experience that results from freely chosen participation in physical, social, intellectual, creative and spiritual pursuits that enhance individual and community wellbeing.

Spontaneous Use: The term spontaneous use can be used to describe drop-in opportunities or activities participated in at unstructured spaces (e.g. public swim, walking around the track in Kal Tire Place).



