

Executive Summary

THE DISTRICT OF LAKE COUNTRY Parks and Recreation Master Plan was initiated in the fall of 1998. The purpose of the planning process was to provide the District with recommendations for the continued delivery of leisure opportunities over the next ten years (1999 to 2008). It is anticipated that the report will be used on an annual basis to determine priorities and to allocate resources.

BACKGROUND RESEARCH

A key component of the study involved the completion of extensive background research to establish a foundation and framework for the Plan. This work included a review of previous reports related to parks and recreation services in the community; a review of the Official Community Plan; updating the current inventory of open space and facilities; and a general review of existing literature with regard to societal trends, parks and recreation benefits and levels of service.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The involvement of Lake Country residents was critical to the success of the planning process. Specific ways in which the community participated included a mail out / mail return survey which resulted in a return of over 450 completed questionnaires, a review of information submitted by a variety of community organizations, and discussions with District Council, the Parks and Recreation Commission and staff.

As a final step, a draft overview of the plan was published and an open house was conducted, during which comments and suggestions were invited from the public.

PARTNERSHIPS

The report makes frequent reference to partnerships and cooperative relationships. It is the feeling of the consultants that Lake Country should continue to work closely with other levels of government, as well as with representatives of School District #23, Okanagan College, local

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organizations and the private sector, in order to optimize the use of facilities and services, and to ensure the appropriate allocation of limited resources.

Recommendations included in the report, therefore, are intended to ensure the active involvement of related organizations in the decision-making process and in the delivery of services. In particular, the current principles of 1/3 Municipal to 2/3 User Group as the cost for new active recreation facilities is to be continued, as is the current philosophy of providing a base level of required recreation facilities to the community (without user fees).

PLAN ORGANIZATION

The report is divided into several sections which initially provide an overview of existing services, and ultimately identify a number of issues and recommendations for the District to consider. Recommendations focus on parks and open space, recreation facilities, recreation program services and finally, on administration and policy concerns.

The final section of the Plan provides an outline of recommended priorities, and a number of “action steps” intended to guide the implementation of the report.

It should be noted that recommendations have been presented on a priority basis. In this regard, the following “definitions” have been applied.

- ◆ Ongoing Recommendations should be implemented throughout the 10 year timeframe of the plan
- ◆ Immediate Recommendations should be implemented within the first year of the Plan’s approval.
- ◆ Short Term Recommendations should be implemented within 2 to 4 years of the Plan’s approval.
- ◆ Mid Term Recommendations should be implemented within 5 to 7 years of the Plan’s approval.
- ◆ Long Term Recommendations should be implemented within 8 to 10 years of the Plan’s approval.

CONCLUSIONS

While the report identifies a number of issues, it is important to note that the public is generally satisfied with current parks and recreation services, and makes extensive use of available recreation opportunities and facilities.

In the public survey, for instance, most respondents expressed satisfaction with the quality and maintenance of parks and indoor facilities, as well as with the quality of program personnel, and the availability of information necessary to publicize various recreation programs in the community.

With this in mind, the consultants have identified a number of conclusions related to potential gaps in the current delivery of leisure services.

- ◆ There is no significant need, at the present time, for additional indoor facilities in Lake Country. The consultants feel that it will not be necessary to build an indoor swimming pool or a second ice sheet for at least 10 years.
- ◆ The most immediate needs, in terms of indoor facilities, are related to the potential expansion of the existing seniors centre, and for relatively minor renovations to the arena.
- ◆ There is considerable interest in the development of a comprehensive trail system in the community, that can be used for hiking, cycling and horseback riding.
- ◆ There is also a significant amount of interest in greater public access to the Okanagan Lake and Wood Lake, and an interest in additional public boat launching facilities.
- ◆ There is also a feeling that the District should work closely with local organizations to develop a formal system in which volunteers can participate in park maintenance initiatives. “Adopt-a-Park” and “Adopt-a-Trail” initiatives have become increasingly popular in many North American communities.

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- ◆ Playground facilities in Lake Country parks are generally in poor condition, and do not meet guidelines established by the Canadian Standards Association.
- ◆ There is considerable interest in the establishment of off-leash locations for dogs.
- ◆ Washroom facilities were identified by the public as a requirement in many District Parks and beach areas.
- ◆ There is significant interest in the community in the provision of additional services and facilities for youth. The District should play a leadership role in this regard, and work with related agencies to ensure that effective and consistent communication occurs, and that programs and services are delivered in an efficient manner.
- ◆ The District should continue to work with local organizations to publicize the availability of recreation programs and services. In addition, the seasonal brochure, and other techniques such as the Internet, should be used.
- ◆ Residents recognize the need for new services and facilities. At the same time, there is a reluctance to pay additional taxes. Other revenue generating options, including commercial advertising, corporate sponsorships and donations should be considered in order to reduce tax subsidies.
- ◆ Public / Private partnerships are increasingly common in the delivery of recreation opportunities. The District should gather information from other communities, and give consideration to providing new programs and facilities in this manner.
- ◆ As Lake Country's population continues to grow, the Department will want to ensure that consideration is given to gender equity and to ethnic diversity in terms of program opportunities.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The following information highlights each of the recommendations included in the report.

ONGOING ACTIVITIES

(Throughout 10 year timeframe)

- ◆ **Continue to work closely with the public and community organizations in order to ensure the most efficient use of facilities.**
- ◆ **Continue to acquire land through the provisions of Section 992 of the Municipal Act.**
- ◆ **Conduct periodic surveys with patrons and program participants, and administer a community-wide public survey every five years.**
- ◆ **Continue to work with community organizations to ensure the availability of a broad range of recreation and cultural opportunities and high levels of participation.**
- ◆ **Confirm the plans of the Lake Country Tennis Club to construct a new tennis court in Jack Seaton Park.**
- ◆ **Continue to work with SK8 Country toward the construction of a skateboard facility at Swalwell Park.**
- ◆ **Initiate discussions toward the enhancement of communications between the Parks and Recreation Department, Central Okanagan Regional District Community Schools Program and School District #23.**
- ◆ **Continue to maintain recreation facilities to current standards.**

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- ◆ **Continue to attend workshops and conferences that discuss programming topics generally, as well as trends in the delivery of programs.**
- ◆ **Enhance the quality and variety of program opportunities by working with other agencies (local and outside of the community) to initiate new and diverse services.**
- ◆ **Continue to strive for high levels of quality in planning and delivering recreation and cultural programs.**
- ◆ **Continue to provide program opportunities that offer variety to all ages and interest groups, and respond to current trends in program delivery.**
- ◆ **Continue to employ high quality instructional staff.**
- ◆ **Offer quality orientation and training opportunities for instructional staff.**
- ◆ **Retain the current departmental structure as a minimal benchmark for the delivery of parks and recreation services.**
- ◆ **Build and maintain effective relationships and communication with program participants, community organizations and the general public.**
- ◆ **Insure a Risk Management Program is in place for Parks, Playgrounds, Swim Areas and facilities.**

MULTI-PURPOSE TRAILS

- ◆ **Establish a Trails Advisory Committee, inclusive of a District Councillor, a member of PARC, local residents and staff, to consolidate various trails ideas and prepare an outline and priorities related to the development of a multi-use trail system in the District. (2000)**

- ◆ **Initiate construction of Beasley Park perimeter trail (2000 – 2001)**
- ◆ **Acquire land through purchase or development processes for the development of a multi-purpose trail system. (2000 – 2009)**
- ◆ **Initiate the construction of the District’s trail network in cooperation with the Trails Advisory Committee, local residents, and where feasible, the Regional District. (2001 – 2009)**

FORESHORE

- ◆ **Negotiate a lease agreement with the Sailing Club for the use of the park for a 5 year period. (2000)**
- ◆ **Revisit foreshore studies concerning LC waterfront use, in cooperation with the Central Okanagan Regional District and a committee of local residents in order to identify the following District of Lake Country needs: (2000)**
 - ◆ **beach/protected swimming areas**
 - ◆ **boat launch/parking facilities**
 - ◆ **general access to lakes**
- ◆ **Establish Safe Swim areas (2000 – 2002)**
- ◆ **Apply for a Head Lease on Okanagan Lake (2000)**

POLICY DEVELOPMENT – Staff / PARC / Council

- ◆ **Develop policy and procedures in the following areas:**
 - ◆ **General fees, charges and subsidy formulas (2000)**
 - ◆ **User fees for the use of sport fields (2000)**
 - ◆ **Partners in Parks / Trails (2000)**
 - ◆ **Head Lease on Okanagan Lake (2000)**
 - ◆ **Use of specified parks by dogs (2000)**
 - ◆ **Liquor policy (2000)**

- ◆ Revisit Vendors in Parks (2001)
- ◆ Use of road ends (2001)
- ◆ Neighborhood parks (2001)

PARKS

- ◆ Initiate a program to assess restrooms in local parks and investigate where new facilities are required. (2000)
- ◆ Build / Repair Washroom Facilities as Planned (2000 -- 2009)
- ◆ In cooperation with users prepare a site plan for the overall development of Beasley Park, and seek Regional District input to ensure there is no duplication of service. (2000)
- ◆ Beasley Park Improvement projects (2001 -- 2003)
- ◆ Design and install consistent front gate name signs in each of the District's parks. (2000 -- 2001)

DOGS IN PARKS

- ◆ Encourage the organization of a Dog Owners Group to propose suitable sites/procedures for a "Dogs Off Leash Park". (2000)
- ◆ Install 'Dogs Prohibited' signs in all other DLC parks. (2001)

PLAYGROUNDS

- ◆ Conduct a review of all playground structures in the District and ensure they are all up to standards and initiate a program of repair and installation to ensure that all play areas meet Canadian Standard Association requirements (2001)
- ◆ Install new playgrounds (2002, 2004, 2006)

LAND ACQUISITION

- ◆ **Review and update priorities for land acquisition included in each of the following documents: the Official Community Plan, the Parks and Recreation Commission list of priorities and the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. (2001)**

CAPITAL RESERVE

- ◆ **Establish a capital reserve specific to parks and Recreation, to ensure the availability of funds for the replacement of major equipment and facility components. (2000)**
- ◆ **Arena / Curling Rink
Replace mechanical equipment such as boilers and refrigeration equipment, renovations to the building such as new siding and sewer hookup. (2000 – 2009)**
- ◆ **Senior's Centre renovations and future expansion (2002 – 2007)**
- ◆ **Lake Country Theatre
Future equipment required such lighting, sound and projection equipment. (2000 – 2009)**
- ◆ **Lake Country Gym / Kitchen
Future renovations to unfinished rooms and kitchen and gym equipment. (2000 – 2009)**

YOUTH PARK

- ◆ **Investigate the need to design and construct, in cooperation with School District 23, the District's first youth park. (2000)**
- ◆ **Build Youth Park in cooperation with service club(s) (2002 – 2004)**

McCARTHY PARK

- ◆ **Work with the Seniors Association to plan for the long term expansion of the Seniors Centre. (2003)**

ARENA/CURLING RINK

- ◆ **Assess needs for building improvements (2001)**
- ◆ **Consider the need for the addition of dressing rooms at the arena, in consultation with user groups. (2002)**

REVENUE/ACCESS

- ◆ **Establish a gift program for the receipt of donations. (2002)**
- ◆ **Research and develop procedures related to the participation of individuals and families on low incomes. (2002)**
- ◆ **Explore the benefits of commercial advertising in recreation and facilities. (2001)**
- ◆ **Investigate the feasibility of corporate sponsorships to support Parks and Recreation Department initiatives. (2001)**
- ◆ **Develop a web page on the Internet to assist in the promotion of leisure services. (2003)**

SWALWELL PARK

- ◆ **Prepare a site plan and reconfigure Swalwell Park. (2001)**

RECREATION PROGRAMS

- ◆ **Establish a working relationship with agencies providing services to youth with the objective of improving the coordination of services for youth, and increasing the number and quality of services available to all youth in the community. (2001)**

ACCESSIBILITY FOR DISABLED

- ◆ **Ensure that the future design of recreation facilities, including the Seniors Centre, considers access for individuals with a disability. (2002)**

SWALWELL/McCARTHY PARK CONNECTION

- ◆ **Develop a “connection” between Swalwell and McCarthy Park and the new Town Centre. (2003)**

JACK SEATON PARK

- ◆ **Continue research into the need for lighting on the sport fields / diamonds at Jack Seaton Park. (2003)**

OYAMA/PIONEER PARKS

- ◆ **In cooperation with the Oyama Community Association, work toward the long term improvement of Oyama and Pioneer Parks. (2006)**

LAKE COUNTRY MUSEUM

- ◆ **Work with the Museum Society to discuss the long term location of the facility, and to plan for the building’s future expansion. (2009)**

PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN CONTINUATION

- ◆ **Conduct Public Survey to update current Master Plan (2004)**
- ◆ **Master Plan for years 2010-2019 (2009)**

RECREATION CENTRE

- ◆ **Investigate the need for a new arena and aquatic centre. (2009)**
- ◆ **Investigate the pros and cons of building a lounge facility in long term plans for arena improvements. (2009)**

- ◆ **Consider the need for expansion of curling rink.
(2009)**

SUMMARY

In closing, PERC has developed a Plan that achieves the purpose of the District by:

- ◆ Addressing the need for further acquisition and development of parks and open space
- ◆ Outlining proposals for recreation facility development
- ◆ Developing recommendations related to the successful delivery of recreation programs

Although a great deal of support and input was received from the general public, interest groups, staff and elected officials, the consultants take full responsibility for the contents of the report.

1. Introduction

THE DISTRICT OF LAKE COUNTY RETAINED the services of Professional Environmental Recreation Consultants Ltd. (PERC) in the fall of 1998 to prepare a Master Plan for Parks and Recreation services.

1.1 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The overall purpose of the study was to “**provide the District with recommendations that include a decision-making framework for the planning and delivery of parks and recreation opportunities over the next ten years (1999 to 2009)**”.

The study involved an interactive process of citizen participation and understanding which has allowed residents to act as true stakeholders in their parks, recreation and cultural delivery system.

This process has resulted in a number of recommendations that demonstrate a clear understanding of the community’s needs by:

- ◆ Clarifying and defining the pertinent issues confronting the continued development of the parks, recreation and cultural delivery system.
- ◆ Establishing goals and objectives which reflect the desires of the community and provide direction for action.
- ◆ Presenting realistic, affordable and justifiable recommendations for the continued development and improvement of the parks and recreation system.

1.2 PREPARATION OF THE PLAN

In completing the report, the consultants set out to achieve the following three objectives:

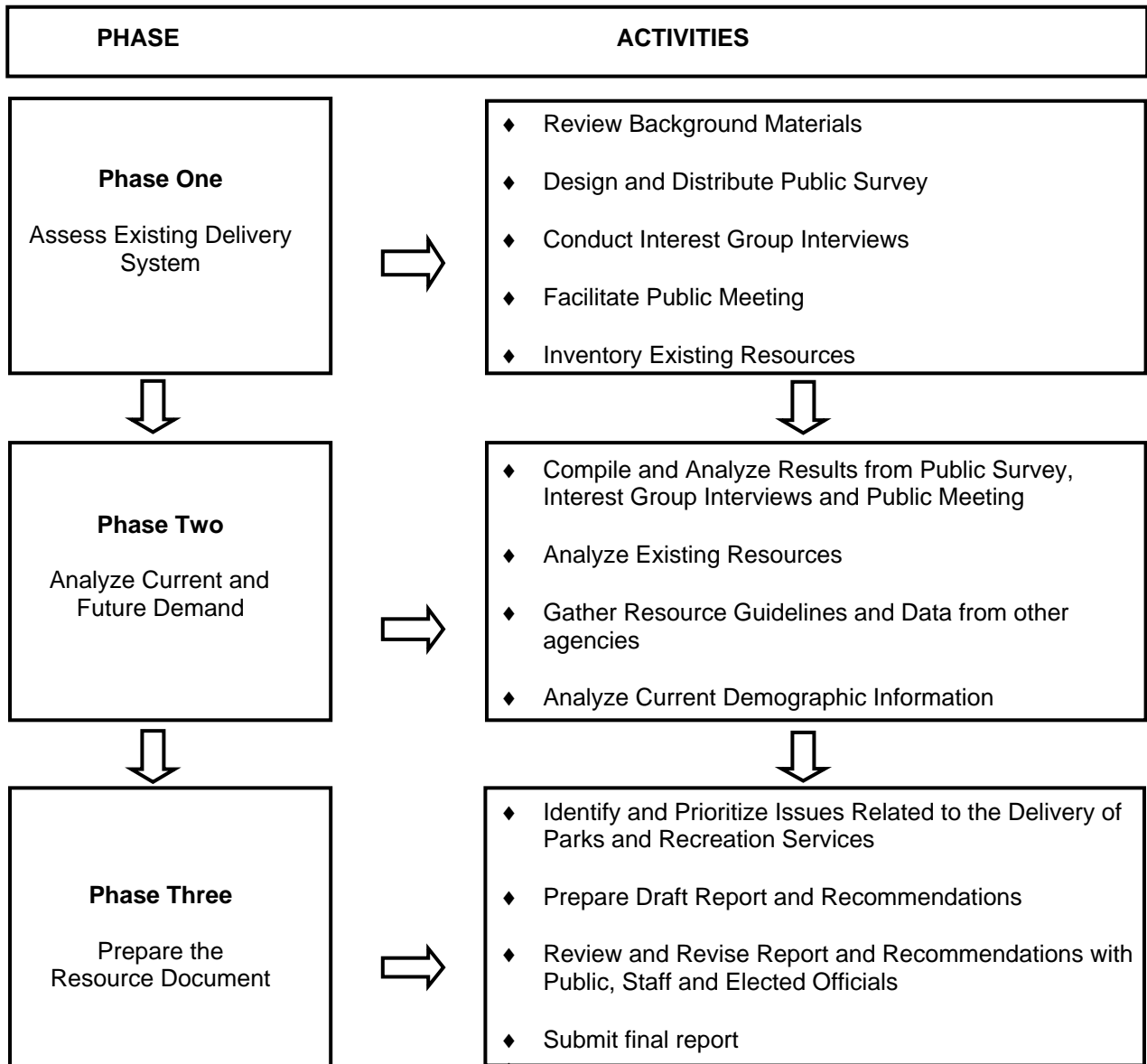
- ◆ To **assess** existing parks, recreation and cultural services and the resources allocated to the delivery of those services.
- ◆ To **analyze** existing and future demand and need for services.

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- ◆ To **synthesize** the results of the data collection into **practical recommendations** that reflect the financial resources of the community.

As summarized in **FIGURE ONE** on page 3, these objectives were formulated into a number of phases and activities.

**FIGURE ONE
PROJECT METHODOLOGY**



1.3 SOCIETAL FORCES AFFECTING LEISURE SERVICES

During the past decade, numerous forces have developed that have had a profound impact on the delivery of parks, recreation and cultural services. These include:

- ◆ **Municipal Budgets:** Budget pressures on local government have resulted in the reduced availability of funds for programs, services, facilities and maintenance.
- ◆ **Demand:** There has been an increasing demand for leisure services at the same time that there has been decreasing fiscal resources.
- ◆ **Accountability:** The public has demanded greater accountability from elected officials and administrative staff to justify expenditures and demonstrate fiscal responsibility.
- ◆ **Cost of Land:** The cost of acquiring land has placed a significant strain on local government to expand the amount of parks and open space.
- ◆ **Preservation of Green Space:** There has been an increase in interest and action by residents related to the need for preserving existing green space. In many communities, there has been recognition that there may be more citizen interest in green space preservation and nature based recreation than in the more traditional menu of services.
- ◆ **Maintenance of the Natural Environment:** There has been a move in recent years toward that use of natural plant material in the improvement of parks, and toward leaving green space in a more natural state.
- ◆ **Traditions:** There has been increased interest in preserving the history, culture and natural heritage of most communities.

- ◆ **Partnerships:** There has been considerable growth in the development of public / private partnerships to provide parks, recreation and cultural services and facilities; and at the same time far greater cooperation between municipal government and local community organizations.
- ◆ **Equity:** There are increasing demands from all sectors of the community for equity in the provision of parks, recreation and cultural resources and facilities.
- ◆ **Planning:** A shift to a different planning process has occurred which provides a wider range of opportunities for citizens to become active stakeholders in their community and more involved in the decision making process.
- ◆ **Ethnic Diversity:** In many communities, an increasingly multi-cultural population with different values and leisure interests has had a great impact on the planning and delivery of leisure services.
- ◆ **Multiple Services:** Various municipalities have incorporated an array of local government and non-government services into community centre operations, in order to provide convenient, one-stop shopping for local residents. Examples include the ability to pay property taxes, to access social services, to talk to someone in the community policing office and to inquire about the availability of a playfield.
- ◆ **Automation:** Most parks and recreation jurisdictions have become highly automated to enhance customer service, improve management decisions and reduce costs. Recent advances include computerized registration and scheduling, maintenance management, information kiosks, energy management, project management and websites.
- ◆ **User Pay / Provision for All:** During the 90's, the trend was toward greater emphasis on user pay rather than subsidies. There has emerged, however,

a strong concern that those who are unable to pay may be left out. This has resulted in policy development which focuses on facilitating participation while being respectful of one's ability to pay.

- ◆ **Rationale for Fees and Charges:** With the shift in attitude toward a “user pay” philosophy, municipalities have begun to examine the need for a rational, consistent approach to fees and charges.
- ◆ **Quality Services:** Government has placed a greater emphasis on dealing with citizens' expressed needs for quality recreation, resources and facilities, and on the provision of quality customer services.

These forces have been considered throughout the planning process, and have been of assistance in developing the recommendations contained in Chapters Four through Seven.

1.4 BENEFITS OF PARKS AND RECREATION

Traditionally, the benefits of providing parks and recreation services in a community were given superficial consideration and were often characterized by phrases such as “recreation helps keep kids off the street” or “exercise is good for you”.

In recent years, careful consideration and research has been focused on identifying meaningful benefits to the community as a result of providing parks and recreation opportunities, facilities and services. When addressing the full range of municipal services required to provide those services, it is important that elected officials consider the value of investing appropriate resources toward the provision of leisure opportunities.

This value is reflected in the following statements developed by the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association to best describe the benefits of parks, recreation and cultural services to the community.

- ◆ Recreation and active living are **essential to personal health** - a key determinant of health status

- ◆ Recreation is a key to balanced **human development** and to helping local residents reach their potential
- ◆ Parks, recreation and culture are essential to the overall **quality of life**
- ◆ Recreation reduces **self-destructive and anti-social behaviour**
- ◆ Parks, recreation and culture helps build **strong families and healthy communities**
- ◆ **Pay now or pay later!** Recreation reduces healthcare, social service and police / justice costs
- ◆ Parks, recreation and culture are significant **economic generators** to the community
- ◆ Parks, open space and rural areas are essential to **ecological survival**

Many Canadian communities have embraced these statements, and utilize benefits based research in promoting parks, recreation and cultural services.

1.5 ASSUMPTIONS

In addition to the overall methodology, the final report is based on the following assumptions.

- ◆ The District of Lake Country subscribes to the basic principles of the “Benefits of Parks and Recreation”.
- ◆ Acquisition of future parkland should be strategic and combined with the liquidation of some current property which may not be held in the highest and best interest of the community as a whole.
- ◆ The population of Lake Country could reach 15,000 by 2010 (with 4% growth per year).

- ◆ The Regional District population surrounding Lake Country will also grow and put increasing pressure on Lake Country parks and recreation facilities.
- ◆ Our population is aging.
- ◆ Recreation needs are changing (i.e. trail systems and passive park areas are more in demand than in the past).
- ◆ It is unlikely that there will be much increase in Regional District services or facilities for Lake Country.
- ◆ No major new indoor facilities will be needed before 2010.
- ◆ The ethnic makeup of Lake Country is likely to remain similar to what it is today, at least for the immediate future.
- ◆ There is an increasing concern regarding water quality, environmental impacts and safety on our lakes.
- ◆ The public will want more access to lake foreshore and trails. Strategies to acquire property and gain public access to lakes will be required (the cost of property acquisition is a concern).
- ◆ The District of Lake Country Parks and Recreation Master Plan is manageable given financial constraints.

2. *Study Methodology*

AS MENTIONED EARLIER, THE DEVELOPMENT of the Master Plan involved a considerable amount of data collection, the administration of a public survey and input from a large number of Lake Country organizations. The following specific steps were undertaken in the completion of the study.

2.1 CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT

The active participation of Lake Country residents was critical to the success of the planning process. Specific ways in which the community participated included:

- ◆ **Public Survey:** A survey of 800 Lake Country residents was conducted, in order to determine attitudes about parks and recreation services, as well as to gather information related to facilities and participation in recreation programs.
- ◆ **Input from Community Organizations:** A survey document was prepared by the Parks and Recreation Commission, and distributed to numerous organizations in Lake Country, requesting information related to parks and recreation needs. Later in the study, groups were invited to a meeting with PERC to discuss their immediate and long term requirements.
- ◆ **Meetings with District Council and the Parks and Recreation Commission:** The consultant met on several occasions with District Council and the Parks and Recreation Commission. The first of these meetings was scheduled at the beginning of project, primarily to review the proposed methodology, and to discuss the administration of the public survey.

The second meeting was designed to discuss the major issues that had been identified during the data collection process, and to identify any other issues and concerns.

During the third meeting, the consultants presented a draft version of the report and invited comment and additional input regarding the issues and recommendations, prior to preparing for a meeting with the general public.

- ◆ **Public Information and Open House:** In late-April, a draft version of the Plan was presented at a Public Open House, and an Executive Summary was made available, along with a feedback form. In addition, general information regarding the study was included in a variety of outlets, informing the public of the status of the project, and opportunities for input.

2.1.1 PUBLIC SURVEY

In the late spring of 1998, a community needs assessment and preference survey was administered as part of the planning process. The methodology involved a mail out / mail return technique utilizing the following format:

- ◆ To obtain the most comprehensive list of residents and addresses, the consultants used mailing lists provided by Dominion Directory.
- ◆ To ensure that a statistical sample was obtained, 800 names were randomly selected from the database.
- ◆ A questionnaire was prepared, in consultation with staff, to determine behaviour patterns, attitudes about parks, recreation and culture, and a demographic profile of the respondents.
- ◆ The survey package was mailed, along with a personal letter, to each of the households in the sample.
- ◆ Seven days following the initial distribution, a postcard was mailed to all of the households in the original sample, other than those returned by the post office as undeliverable. The postcard thanked those who had already completed and returned the survey, and urged others to do so as soon as possible.

As indicated below, a total of 456 completed returns (58% of the revised sample) were received.

Original Sample	800
Non-Deliverable / Incomplete	9
Revised Sample	791
Completed Returns	456
Response Rate	58%

The margin of error for the survey is +/- 4.6%. In other words, if all of the residents in the community were contacted, the results of the survey would be within 4.6% of this one, 19 times out of 20.

A copy of the survey, along with the complete survey results, is included in **APPENDIX ONE**.

It should be noted that Lake Country residents are very active in their use of local parks and recreation facilities. Eighty-six percent of the respondents to the survey indicated that they had made use of one or more of the District's facilities in the past year. Of this total, 16% described themselves as frequent users (a few times a week), 26% as regular users (a few times a month), and 47% as occasional users (a few times a year).

2.1.2 INPUT FROM COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Input from representatives of local organizations was requested in order to determine:

- ◆ Services the groups currently offer, membership and participation levels, and facilities served.
- ◆ What the group would like to attain in terms of the above variables.
- ◆ Problems the group perceives that prevent it from achieving its objectives.

Several of the representatives interviewed commented about the positive aspects of leisure services in Lake Country, but many others responded with specific concerns and problems. These have been synthesized below into a number of “themes”. Major requirements include the need for:

- ◆ Public access to Okanagan and Wood Lakes, including the provision of additional public boat launching facilities
- ◆ An emphasis on natural areas and the environment
- ◆ Long term planning and improvements to the arena and seniors centre
- ◆ Policy development related to fees and charges
- ◆ Continued development and improvements to local parks, emphasizing quiet areas, as well as additional sport facilities
- ◆ Improved park amenities, including restrooms and playgrounds
- ◆ Adequate parking facilities for new developments

A listing of all of the groups providing information to the consultants is included in **APPENDIX TWO**.

2.1.3 PUBLIC INFORMATION AND OPEN HOUSE

A draft summary of the Master Plan was produced and made available to anyone wishing a copy. The summary was also circulated to the community groups and organizations that provided input to the Commission and the consultant. Accompanying the overview was a feedback form which invited comments and suggestions on the draft report.

An Open House was held to present the draft plan, and to invite further comments and suggestions from the public. Those attending the Open House were also encouraged to complete the feedback form. These

comments and suggestions were taken into consideration during the preparation of the final report.

A complete listing of comments arising from the Open House is included in **APPENDIX THREE**.

2.2 EXPENDITURES ON LEISURE SERVICES

There is a concern today in many communities regarding the level of expenditures for municipal services. This is common to all municipal departments, and certainly to parks, recreation and culture. In order to address this question, the consultants compared District expenditures with other communities in BC providing similar services.

2.3 PLANNING FOR PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURE

As with other services, the evolution of parks and recreation in Lake Country has been based on the preparation of several planning documents. A number of these studies were reviewed, including the District's Official Community Plan, the Southwest Winfield - Tyndall Road Parks Pre-Plan and the Greenspace Plan for Okanagan Centre and Pixton Road areas.

2.4 LEVEL OF SERVICE FOR LAKE COUNTRY

The public survey, interviews and other research techniques were designed, in part, to measure Lake Country residents' satisfaction with current parks, recreation and cultural services. This was done in relation to parks and open space, park amenities, recreation facilities, recreation and programs, maintenance and administrative services.

Results indicated that there are numerous concerns among Lake Country residents regarding current levels of service. Some people are concerned, for instance, with the number and quality of sportsfields, while others expressed the need for additional indoor facilities.

While there were numerous concerns regarding high levels of taxation, most comments involved requests for increased, rather than reduced, services. PERC, therefore, has determined that existing levels of service

should be used as the basis for setting guidelines for the future provision of park and recreation opportunities.

In summary, the Master Plan recommendations are based on the needs and requests of residents and community organizations, the experience of the consultants in preparing numerous reports of this type, and practical considerations related to capital and operating costs.

2.5 PREPARATION OF THE REPORT

As noted throughout this chapter, the research component of the study resulted in the **identification of a number of issues and concerns** related to the provision of parks, recreation and cultural services. While the identification of these issues does not automatically guarantee that change will be recommended, it does nonetheless provide a framework for the organization of the Plan. In subsequent sections of the report, the various issues are discussed from the perspective of parks and open space, recreation facilities, recreation program services and administrative concerns.

3. Guidelines for Service Delivery

GENERALLY SPEAKING, THE MOST IMPORTANT practical limitation related to the delivery of leisure services will be financial resources. Obviously, local taxpayers can only provide a level of service that is consistent with their ability to fund those services. Because funds are typically limited, certain priorities have to be established.

The following sub-sections are intended to (1) address the importance of establishing a clear philosophical statement related to the delivery of parks and recreation opportunities, and (2) to provide guidelines to direct the activities of the District and the Parks and Recreation Commission.

3.1 MANDATE

During the data collection phase of the study, it became apparent that a number of user groups, as well as members of the general public, were unclear as to the role of the Parks and Recreation Commission. As a result, PERC has prepared a number of statements related to goals, strategies and guidelines that might be considered by District Council and the Parks and Recreation Commission.

In developing these statements, it was recognized that they would be in draft form, and that a process should be developed in which they would be refined, and ultimately approved. At that point, they should be publicized in a variety of sources including the seasonal brochure and the District newsletter.

The following statements represent the first step in that process.

◆ **Mission**

To provide quality leisure opportunities that meet the needs of Lake Country residents by offering cost efficient, innovative and accessible services and facilities.

◆ **Goal**

To make a significant improvement in the community through the delivery of worthwhile experiences.

◆ **Strategies**

To provide services in an efficient and effective manner.

To deliver services that ensure that each resident has the confidence that he / she will be treated fairly and with respect.

To provide quality services and facilities which recognize the varied interests and needs of the community.

To provide leisure opportunities that place an emphasis on enjoyment, social interaction and physical activity.

◆ **Guidelines**

Improvements to the delivery of services will be ongoing, with an emphasis on economical and innovative methods and procedures.

People will find staff to be pleasant and helpful, and will feel that staff have shown genuine interest and regard for their requests and concerns.

Community needs will receive priority, by emphasizing services to people, in addition to emphasizing maintenance and management.

In planning, programming and scheduling, emphasis will be given to the convenience of the public.

Communication between staff and the public will receive primary consideration.

Participants are an important and valuable information resource; efforts will be directed towards utilizing this resource wherever possible.

Emphasis will be placed on planning and organizing, rather than reacting to crisis.

As mentioned above, while statements similar to these may ultimately be approved, their development should be inclusive of Council, the Commission and staff.

3.2 RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR

There are occasions when the goals of the private sector are similar to those of the public sector. In those instances, even though the underlying incentives may be different, the two jurisdictions may overlap.

This gives rise to the potential for cooperation and competition. As a result, it is suggested that criteria be defined for the provision of leisure services that maximize the potential of those services to meet socially worthwhile goals and objectives. Those criteria may include:

- ◆ **Quality:** Services of a certain quality are required in order for the service to be useful in achieving established goals.
- ◆ **Quantity:** A certain amount of service is required before it is useful in meeting established goals.
- ◆ **Consistency:** In order to be developmental, a service should be offered consistently rather than intermittently.
- ◆ **Cost:** Consideration should be given to offering services in a manner that maximizes the ability of all residents to participate.

If other jurisdictions can offer the service within the criteria established by the District, then the two should not compete; rather, the District should monitor the services to ensure its objectives are being achieved. If, however, other agencies are unable or unwilling to offer the services in a manner required to meet public objectives, the District should consider becoming involved in sponsoring the service.

Once it has been determined that public sector involvement is necessary to meet the socially worthwhile goals and objectives, the District should work with and help other agencies to provide services in a manner which will achieve its objectives, or directly sponsor the service when it is more cost effective to do so.

3.3 SERVICES TO PARTICIPANTS AT ALL LEVELS OF ABILITY

Leisure opportunities supported by the District should be developmental. As far as is reasonably possible, public leisure services should allow a person to initiate his / her involvement in the system at a level appropriate to his / her ability.

When the cost of accommodating individuals at advanced levels of participation (i.e. elite artists or athletes) becomes onerous, the following policy guidelines are suggested:

- ◆ The public sector should encourage the delivery of services to all citizens at all skill and ability levels.
- ◆ The public agency must make decisions, however, on a cost / benefit basis; therefore, if the cost of serving advance participants is significantly higher than meeting the needs of “beginners”, the agency should allocate fewer resources to serving the “advanced” participant.

3.4 VARIETY AND QUANTITY OF OPPORTUNITIES

Residents of Lake Country have a wide variety of leisure interests. If the District is to use leisure services as a vehicle to meet public goals, it must ensure that varied opportunities are available to the public.

In providing these services, there is often a trade-off between quantity of services and variety of services. As additional resources become available, choices must be made between providing more of what is already available and providing something entirely new.

Typically, larger interest groups are served first. Groups not yet accommodated are, therefore, usually smaller and less vocal. Consequently, pressure often exists to sacrifice variety (i.e. the smaller interest groups not yet serviced) in favour of quantity.

When a choice must be made between providing services to those already receiving some service, and providing services to those not yet receiving any, higher priority should be given to the latter.

3.5 DIRECT AND INDIRECT PROGRAMMING

Although local authorities should assume responsibility for ensuring that leisure opportunities exist which meet stated objectives, this by no means requires that the District must organize and sponsor the delivery of all such services. Rather, it means that the District should:

- ◆ Evaluate which leisure opportunities are available.
- ◆ Monitor the provision of leisure services by other service providers.
- ◆ Contribute to the quality of service provided by other groups or agencies.
- ◆ Deliver services to fill in the gaps left by other service providers.

The preceding guidelines do not determine how much money taxpayers should allocate to the delivery of public parks and recreation services. Instead, they provide a framework within which decisions may be made, no matter what level of service is supported by local taxpayers. **The ultimate objective is to make the most effective use of resources by providing services in a rational, consistent and equitable manner.**

4. Parks and Open Space

IN NOVEMBER OF 1996, THE DISTRICT adopted an Official Community Plan, which is generally designed to ensure the long-range planning objectives of the Lake Country area.

One section of the Plan addresses objectives and policies specifically related to parkland and conservation matters.

The following objectives have been approved by District Council:

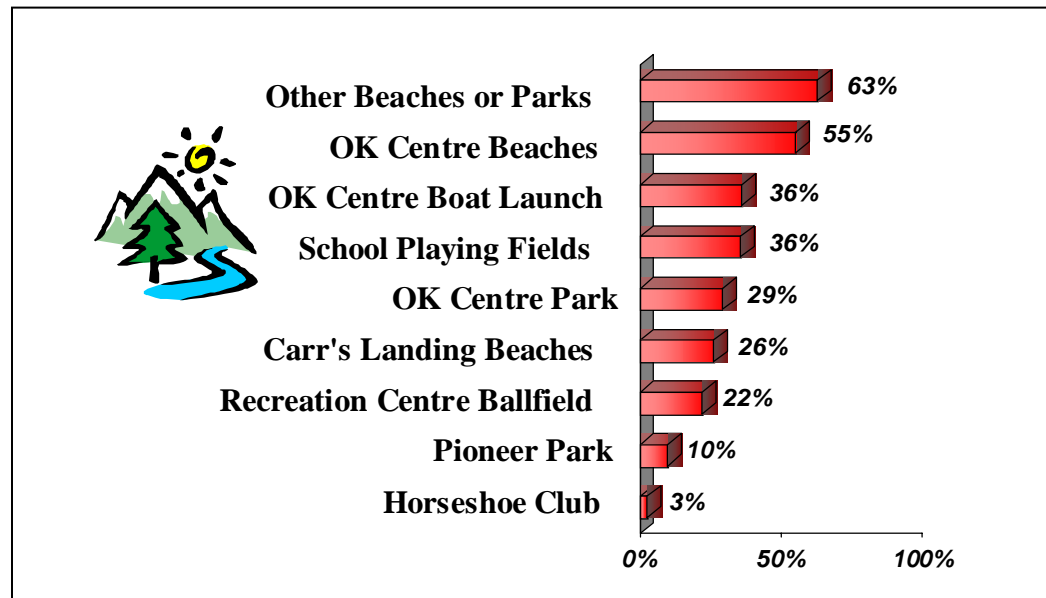
- ◆ To promote multi-functional design of parkland and conservation areas, recognizing that such areas not only provide recreational amenities, aesthetic value and wildlife habitat, but also perform many ecological functions that are critical to the community's health and well-being.
- ◆ To maintain and enhance parkland in the District.
- ◆ To protect natural open spaces and linear corridors for non-motorized public use.
- ◆ To encourage development of neighbourhood parks as appropriate through such means as density bonusing.
- ◆ To consider greater public involvement in the design, financing and management of parks and recreation facilities.
- ◆ To resolve existing and potential user conflicts in or adjacent to parks and open spaces through creative planning and design.
- ◆ To encourage protection of the District's representative ecosystems and wildlife habitats or movement corridors as either public parkland, Development Permit Areas or designations through private stewardship agreements.

In PERC's opinion, the information contained in the objectives and policies (summarized in **APPENDIX FOUR**) are thorough and comprehensive. As a result, rather than commenting on each of the

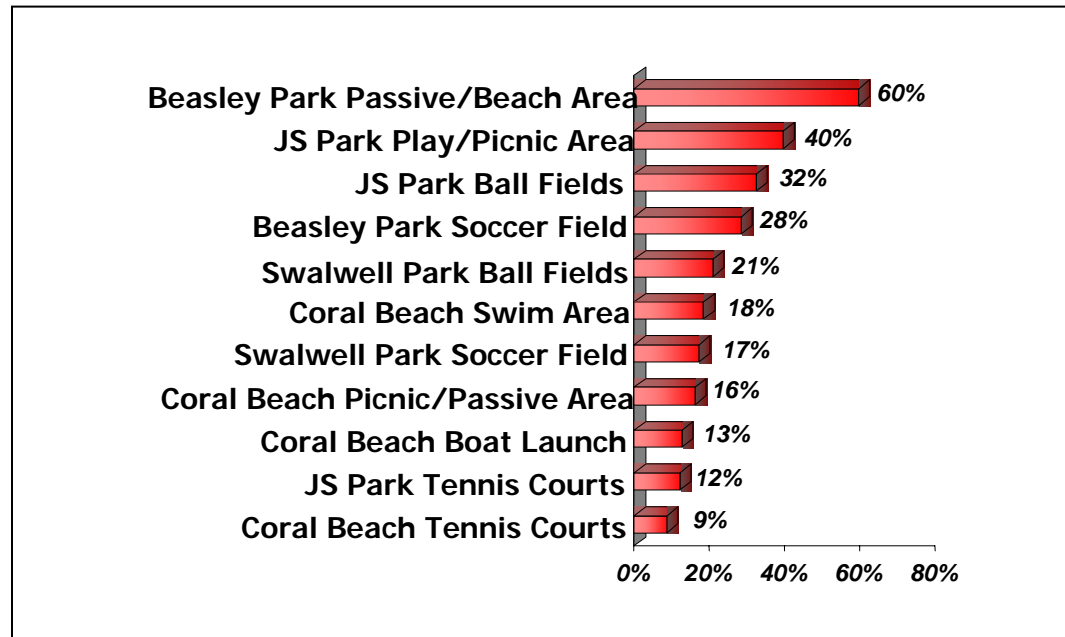
statements, suggestions have been made that are related to specific issues regarding the parks system that were raised at the outset of the study.

Earlier in the report, mention was made of the extensive use that District residents make of their parks and recreation facilities. **FIGURE TWO** and **FIGURE THREE** provide a summary of the facilities percentage of public survey respondents making use of the major park facilities in the community.

**FIGURE TWO
PARK USE IN PREVIOUS TWELVE MONTHS**



**FIGURE THREE
PARK FACILITY USE IN PREVIOUS TWELVE MONTHS**



4.1 ISSUES

4.1.1 PARKLAND SUPPLY AND ACQUISITION

- ◆ Is there adequate parkland in Lake Country for present and future generations?
- ◆ Are there specific areas or types of parks that should be pursued in future acquisition efforts?

4.1.2 PARK MAINTENANCE AND AMENITIES

- ◆ Are residents currently satisfied with the level of maintenance in the park system?
- ◆ Are there any recommendations specifically related to park maintenance or site improvements?

- ◆ Is there a need to upgrade, renovate or replace any existing park amenities?

4.1.3 TRAIL SYSTEM

- ◆ Is there a desire for a more comprehensive trail system the District?

4.2 KEY FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

4.2.1 PARKLAND SUPPLY AND ACQUISITION

Much of PERC's research suggests that there is a need for continued development of new and existing park sites, as well as improvements to the quality of a number of park areas. It is the consultant's opinion, therefore, that there should be as much emphasis on park improvements during the 10 year timeframe of the Master Plan, as there is on acquisition.

Policies included in the Official Community Plan provide Council and the Parks and Recreation Commission with guidance in terms of park acquisition, and also suggest a number of specific areas that should be given priority. These include:

- ◆ All segments of Anderson Creek, Oyama Creek, Ribbleworth Creek, Vernon Creek, and other stream corridor areas, wetlands, ravines and springs as may be identified
- ◆ Waterfront areas along Wood Lake, Kalamalka Lake and Okanagan Lake
- ◆ Segments of the Regional Trail Network Plan
- ◆ Wildlife movement corridors such as at the south end of Cougar Canyon and the Ellison Ridge area
- ◆ Other environmentally sensitive or culturally important areas that have been identified as such in the Environmentally Sensitive Areas Inventory and Management

Plan

Official Community Plan policies also require that current park pre-plans be amended to reflect current and new development plans and the District's environmental management objectives. In this regard, PERC suggests that the District endeavour to acquire or consolidate neighbourhood park properties in a manner that they are a minimum of 2 to 5 acres. (In the Southwest Winfield - Tyndall Road Pre Parks Plan, the consultants noted a very large number of small park areas. While some of these would be quite appropriate beside walkways and trails, it is not uncommon to find that these sites end up being poorly developed and maintained, primarily because of their small size.)

Other areas that should be considered in terms of acquisition include:

- ◆ The property between McCarthy Park and Swalwell Park. At the very least, there should be a "connector" between the two sites. If possible, a larger portion of the property could be acquired in order to enhance existing facilities between the Secondary School and the arena.
- ◆ The property between the Oyama Community Hall and Pioneer Park. This property has recently been sold to private interests. While the land is very marshy and environmentally sensitive, it would still create an attractive feature in the District's overall park system.
- ◆ Properties adjacent to Wood, Kalamalka and Okanagan Lakes that will allow public access to the waterfront. There are a number of road ends at the present time, some of which have been developed, and some of which have been taken over by local residents. Initially, an inventory of all of the sites should be completed, followed by discussions involving Council, the Commission and local residents to determine the best use of each location.
- ◆ Canadian National Railroad property at the north end of Wood Lake. Acquisition and improvement of this site could result in the construction of a much-needed boat launch facility, complete with parking, at this location.

It is worth noting that 61% of the public survey respondents feel that higher priority should be given to upgrading and improving existing parks. This compares to 27%, who would place a higher priority on the acquisition of new park space.

It should also be noted that over the last 30 years, it has been an accepted practice within the field of parks and recreation to adopt uniform standards for the provision of parks and open space.

These standards (i.e. 10 acres of parks and open space per 1,000 residents) were the product of research and experience by the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association (CPRA) and the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). They provided benchmarks or acceptable measures that were agreed to by the profession, and were established as legitimate goals for every community.

Recently, it has become apparent that the standards “approach” was based on assumptions created by the conditions of the 1950’s and 1960’s, and reflected “judgment” rather than a true assessment of community needs.

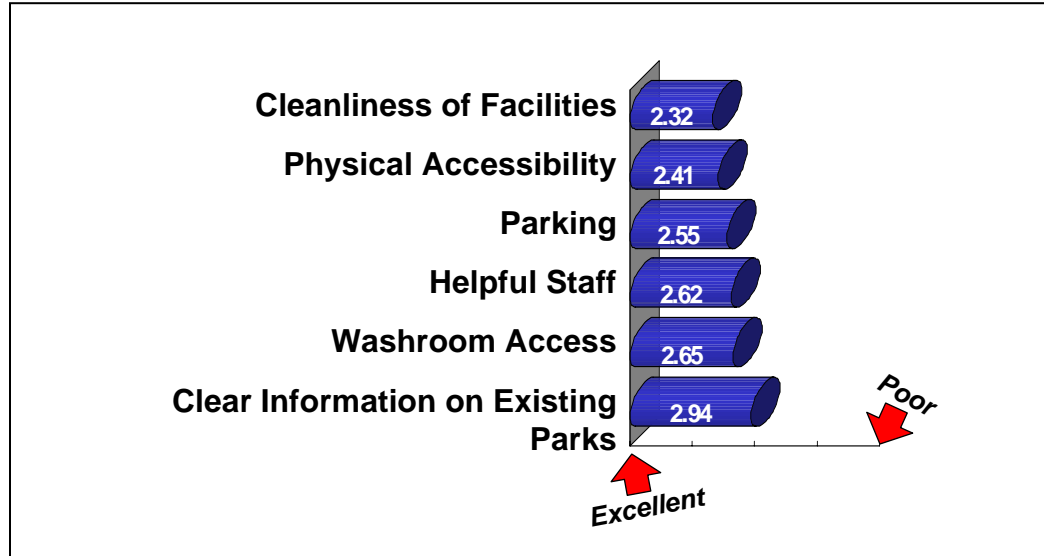
It is now accepted that due to differing geographical, cultural, economic and environmental characteristics, no two communities are exactly alike, and that standards cannot be universal. As a result, the NRPA has adjusted its approach to focus on the unique needs of each community, and has adopted a “levels of service” approach that is an expression of acceptable parks, facilities and leisure opportunities as determined by local residents rather than outside agencies. Nevertheless, 10 acres per 1,000 residents is a useful overall guideline for Lake Country to strive for.

4.2.2 PARK MAINTENANCE AND AMENITIES

Throughout the planning process, PERC heard and read numerous comments related to the need for improved maintenance and amenities in the District’s parks. These comments were confirmed, to a large extent by site visitations and photography, and can be applied to sportsfields and diamonds, playgrounds, picnic sites and other facilities in Lake Country’s open space system.

As indicated in **FIGURE FOUR**, however, most respondents to the public survey suggested that they were satisfied with the maintenance and amount of parks and green space in the community. (Please note: Ratings are based on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being very satisfied.)

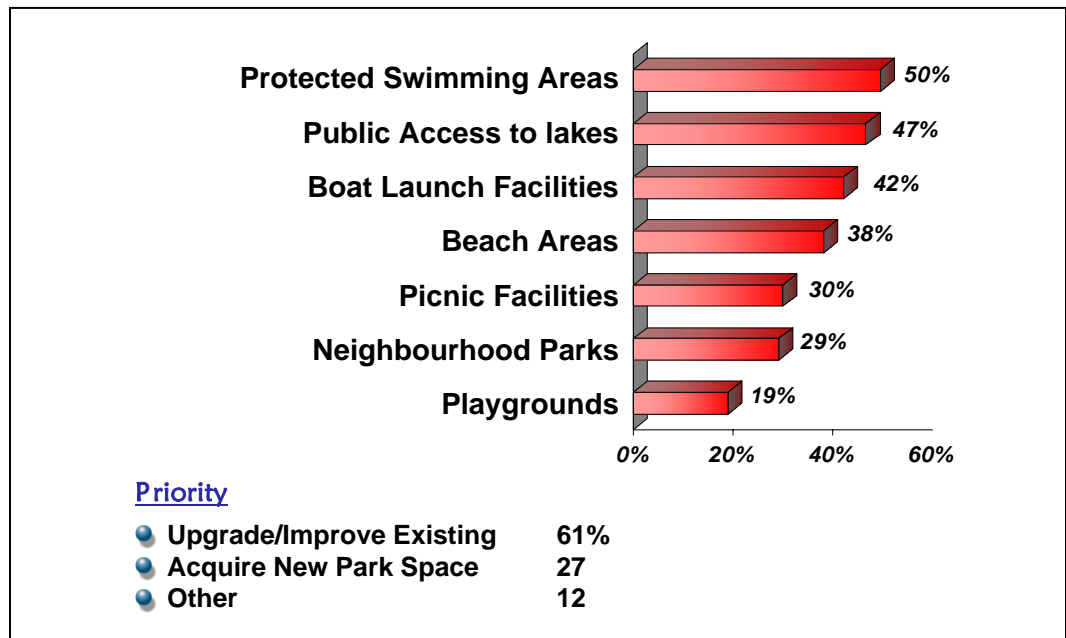
**FIGURE FOUR
SATISFACTION WITH PARK MAINTENANCE & AMOUNT
OF PARKS AND GREEN SPACE**



With reference to the need for **new outdoor facilities**, walking and cycling trails were mentioned most frequently (56%), followed by waterfront walkways (47%), dog parks or beaches (35%), a skateboard / rollerblade park (33%), and an additional baseball / softball facility (7%). Only 14% of the respondents feel there is no need for additional facilities.

As indicated in **FIGURE FIVE**, most of the suggestions for **improvements to parks and open space** were related to beaches, waterfront access and swimming areas.

**FIGURE FIVE
SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENTS TO PARKS & OPEN SPACE**



In an effort to be as practical as possible, and with the realization that it would be impossible to make improvements to every site and amenity within the 10 year timeframe of the Plan, PERC has focused on a number of specific areas.

- ◆ **Waterfront Access:** There is considerable interest and concern among Lake Country residents, related to public access to the lakes, as well as to the need for additional boat launching facilities, and the need for additional beach areas.

While numerous problems have been identified, it is PERC’s opinion that a separate study of waterfront facilities is required. It is suggested that the Central Okanagan Regional District, the District of Lake Country and a committee of local residents should play an active role in developing the terms of reference for such a study, and in overseeing the completion of the project.

It is PERC's opinion that the study should address:

- ◆ Environmental concerns related to the lake system
- ◆ The need for additional beach areas and boat launching facilities
- ◆ Public and private sector involvement and cooperation in providing additional facilities and services
- ◆ Road access (including the re-alignment of Highway 97)
- ◆ The need for amenities such as restroom facilities and parking
- ◆ The role of various levels of government in providing additional facilities

While this study is underway, it is also the consultant's opinion that there are two issues that should be addressed at the earliest possible date. These include the need for a sailing facility on Okanagan Lake, and concerns related to dogs in the District's park system.

- ◆ **Sailing Facility:** The District has received a proposal from the Lake Country Sailing Club to establish a compound for non-motorized boats at R.S. Marshall Park in Okanagan Centre.

The proposal has been given support from the Parks and Recreation Commission, as long as concerns regarding access, parking, Ministry of Environment issues, sewer, drainage and water are addressed. Support from local residents appears to be positive.

- ◆ **Dog Owner Parks:** In recent years, many communities have been requested to consider the establishment of areas where people can exercise their dogs either on-or-off leash. There appears to be considerable interest in this topic, both pro and con, among Lake Country residents.

In establishing sites for this purpose, it has been common practice to consider one or more sites on a “trial” basis, with well established regulations, and appropriate facilities to ensure that sites remain as healthy as possible.

Other communities have established a number of criteria for these locations, including the need for some form of containment, nearby parking, a separation or buffer from local residents, good visibility; not used for local sports activities; and not attached to a school site.

PERC suggests that at least two locations be established as early as the spring/summer of 1999. It is suggested that a dog owners’ group be formed to work with PARC to pursue specific options in terms of location.

In the fall of this year, when fewer residents make use of the parks, one or more additional sites should also be considered.

There are numerous examples of well-defined policies and regulations related to this topic. The City of Kelowna, for example, has a “Parks for Paws” program, as does Vancouver, Richmond.

- ◆ **Playgrounds:** It is worthwhile to comment on the general condition of the District’s playgrounds. In recent years, the Canadian Standards Association has adopted new guidelines and requirements for the construction of children’s play areas.

A review of the District’s playgrounds suggests that in some instances, there could be a risk management problem, and that it would be worthwhile to consider the upgrading and installation of “age specific” playgrounds in Lake Country parks.

While a site-by-site inspection would reveal specific shortcomings, the following problem areas have been identified in many communities:

- ◆ Inadequate space around the play area where children may fall
- ◆ Hazards related to equipment spacing
- ◆ Lack of regular maintenance and inspections
- ◆ Platforms with no guardrails
- ◆ Equipment not recommended for public playgrounds
- ◆ Lack of age-specific equipment
- ◆ Lack of access for individuals with a disability

The CPRA has developed a workshop that is designed to provide park planners and maintenance personnel with detailed information related to the design, construction and maintenance of playgrounds, and PERC would encourage Lake Country officials to participate in this type of session, and to initiate any modifications that may be necessary to existing facilities.

- ◆ **Restrooms:** Access to restroom facilities, or a lack of facilities, is a problem at a number of the District's parks and beach areas. Consideration should be given to locating basic facilities at any park where young families will gather. Permanent structures are considered preferable to portable units and can be constructed at relatively low cost.
- ◆ **Signage:** It was suggested on several occasions during the planning process that there is a need in Lake Country for a consistent park signage system. PERC supports this concern, and suggests that a common design be developed for all parks. Further, signs that are internal to a specific site should be consistent with those located at the perimeter of the park.

- ◆ **Youth Parks / Tennis Courts:** An increasing number of municipalities have installed “youth parks” in recent years. These facilities typically include one or more of the following features: a skateboard park, a basketball court, sand volleyball courts, and a hard surface area for roller hockey.

It also appears that there is a need for a number of additional tennis courts in the District. Since no courts are currently located at the Secondary School, this would be an ideal location, particularly if the School Board and the District were to approve an agreement for joint development and use.

- ◆ **McCarthy Park:** During the ten year timeframe of the Plan, there will likely be a request related to the expansion of the Senior Citizens centre. While additional facilities are not needed at the present time, future expansion will certainly affect the existing outdoor facilities. It would be wise, therefore, to initiate the preparation of a new site plan for this area of the park, in cooperation with the Seniors Association, the Horseshoe Club and other interested parties.

Several proposals have already been developed, or are under consideration. These include adjustments to the horseshoe pitching area, elimination of the lawn bowling facility, and consideration of tennis courts, bocci courts, a putting green and areas for more passive activities.

- ◆ **Swalwell Park:** Mention has already been made regarding the possibility of acquiring additional property at this location to expand the park, and connect it in some manner to McCarthy Park. Whether or not the acquisition occurs, PERC suggests that a design for the park should be prepared in order that future improvements can occur in an appropriate manner.

It has already been determined that if SK8 Country can raise sufficient funds, that a skateboard facility will be constructed at this location. (This may be a good location for additional youth oriented activities, and for the construction of the District’s first youth park.)

In addition, there appears to be a need to re-design the parking lot, and PERC suggests that in the long term future, an additional ball diamond could be constructed in the park.

- ◆ **Cenotaph Park:** PERC has noted that the Lions Club is committed to completing the work at this park, including landscaping and finishing the construction of a Gazebo. This work will be completed at no expense to the District.
- ◆ **Beasley Park:** PERC agrees with the Parks and Recreation Commission that a site plan should be completed at Beasley Park before any additional improvements are undertaken.

In recent months, several proposals have been presented to the Commission. These include a request from the Soccer Association for permission to build a multi-purpose clubhouse in the park, with one-third of the funding coming from the District.

The Rotary Club has also expressed an interest in the construction of 1 or 2 sand volleyball courts, as well as a children's playground and a bandshell, in the park. Funding for these facilities would be the Club's responsibility.

The Regional District is also considering further improvements to Reiswig Park, and should be included in plans for future development. At the present time, CORD's plans include an age specific playground and a gazebo.

- ◆ **Jack Seaton:** This is a particularly attractive park, with a variety of active and passive spaces.

Suggested improvements that were raised during the research phase of the study included the lighting of one or more of the existing diamonds, and the addition of one tennis court. This is an ideal location for lighting (of the diamonds and even the courts), because there are no residential properties in the immediate area, and

because there is a resident caretaker on site. Proposals for lighting should be considered, however, in terms of future use and growth in the leagues that currently use the park.

It is also suggested that future consideration be given to paving the parking lot.

- ◆ **Oyama / Pioneer Park:** The consultants understand that Oyama Park is not a District facility, and that it is controlled exclusively by the Oyama Community Association; and that Pioneer Park is under lease to District from Crown Lands.

Nevertheless, in the long term, the District should work with the Community Association to develop a long range plan for the park, and to make improvements to the sites in terms of safety and additional amenities.

4.2.3 TRAIL SYSTEM

The most desired enhancement requested by those surveyed and interviewed was related to the continued improvement and development of a comprehensive trail system in the District. (This is also consistent with objectives and policies included in the Official Community Plan.)

There is considerable interest, in particular, in a more formalized network of trails that would include access to the lakes, as well as less rigorous walkways in the Winfield area. PERC would suggest that a connection between Beasley Park and McCarthy Park and the proposed Town Centre would be a welcome addition to the system.

It is suggested that the District establish a Trails Advisory Committee, which would report to PARC, and be given responsibility for identifying specific priorities in terms of trail development.

4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.3.1 PARKLAND SUPPLY AND ACQUISITION

- ◆ Review and update priorities for land acquisition included in each of the following documents: the Official Community Plan, the Parks and Recreation Commission list of priorities and the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. *(Immediate)*
- ◆ Continue to acquire land through the provisions of Section 992 of the Municipal Act. *(Ongoing)*
- ◆ Continue to acquire land through purchase or development processes for the development of a comprehensive trail system. *(Immediate / Ongoing)*

4.3.2 PARK MAINTENANCE AND AMENITIES

- ◆ Initiate the completion of a waterfront study in cooperation with the Central Okanagan Regional District and a committee of local residents. *(Immediate)*
- ◆ Continue discussions with the Lake Country Sailing Club regarding the establishment of a compound on Okanagan Lake. *(Immediate)*
- ◆ Depending on the success of these discussions, enter into a lease agreement with the Sailing Club for the use of the park for a 5 year period. *(Immediate)*
- ◆ Develop and approve regulations for dog-owner parks, and establish a number of parks on a 12 month trial basis. *(Immediate)*
- ◆ Conduct a review of all playground structures in the District. *(Immediate)*

- ◆ **Initiate an annual program of repair and installation to ensure that all play areas meet Canadian Standard Association requirements, and ensure that all playgrounds are accessible to individuals with a disability. (*Immediate / Ongoing*)**
- ◆ **Initiate a program to review restrooms in local parks, replacing those in need of major repairs, and constructing new facilities as required. (*Immediate / Ongoing*)**
- ◆ **Design and install consistent signage in each of the District's parks. (*Immediate / Ongoing*)**
- ◆ **Design and construct, in cooperation with School District 23, the District's first youth park, as well as an additional 2 or 3 tennis courts, in the area between the golf course and the secondary school. (*Mid term*)**
- ◆ **Initiate preparation of a new site plan for McCarthy Park, including the addition of new amenities at the Seniors Centre, and the expansion of the centre. (*Mid Term*)**
- ◆ **Develop a "connection" between Swalwell and McCarthy Park and the new Town Centre. (*Mid Term*)**
- ◆ **Continue to work with SK8 Country toward the construction of a skateboard facility at Swalwell Park. (*Immediate*)**
- ◆ **Prepare a site plan for the overall development of Swalwell Park. (*Immediate*)**
- ◆ **Prepare a site plan for the overall development of Beasley Park, and seek Regional District input to ensure there is no duplication of service. (*Immediate*)**

- ◆ **Construct a new tennis court in Jack Seaton Park in partnership with the Lake Country Tennis Club. (Mid Term)**
- ◆ **Continue research into the need for lighting on the sport fields / diamonds at Jack Seaton Park. (Mid to Long Term)**
- ◆ **Prepare a site plan, in cooperation with the Oyama Community Association, for the long term improvement of Oyama and Pioneer Park. (Long Term)**

4.3.3 TRAIL SYSTEM

- ◆ **Establish a Trails Advisory Committee, inclusive of a District Councillor, a member of PARC, local residents and staff, to prepare an outline and priorities related to the development of a multi-use trail system in the District. (Immediate)**
- ◆ **Initiate the construction and improvement of the District's trail network in cooperation with local residents, and where feasible, the Regional District. (Immediate / Ongoing)**

5. *Recreation Facilities*

LAKE COUNTRY HAS A VARIETY OF MAJOR recreation and cultural facilities. While there are a number of privately operated facilities in the community, most are in public ownership or are owned and operated by local community associations.

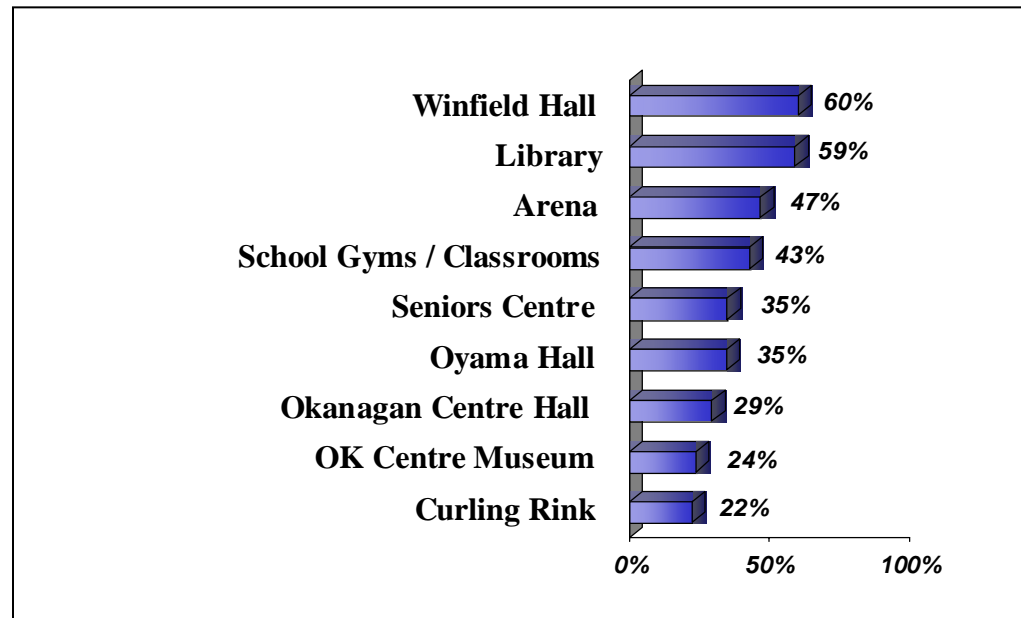
The primary facilities with which the District and the Parks and Recreation Department are involved include:

- ◆ The **Arena and Curling Rink**, located at McCarthy Park. These facilities have been well maintained over the years, and with a continued maintenance management program, will continue to serve the community well past the timeframe of the Master Plan.
- ◆ The **Senior Citizens Centre**, also located at McCarthy Park. This building currently accommodates close to 300 members, and is operated 5 or 6 days per week, primarily for the District's retired citizens.
- ◆ Recreation facilities at the new **Secondary / Community School**. This facility was completed in the spring of 1999, and includes a full-sized gymnasium and a theatre for the performing arts. Staff employed through the community school will develop and host a variety of recreation programs and other services from this location.
- ◆ Other **school gymnasiums and classrooms** are also available to the public, generally on a rental basis. These facilities are used by a large number of local organizations for activities including boy scouts and girl guides, fitness classes, meetings and the like.
- ◆ The **Winfield, Oyama and Okanagan Centre Halls** are generally older buildings, and as mentioned above, are managed by local community associations. They have been extremely well used over the years, and provide space for a wide variety of community activities.

As noted in **FIGURE SIX**, the facilities are well used by Lake Country residents. In the previous twelve month period, the facilities used by the greatest percentage of survey respondents were the Winfield Hall, the

library, the arena, and school gyms and classrooms. Facilities receiving the least amount of use were the Okanagan Centre Museum and the curling rink.

**FIGURE SIX
USE OF INDOOR FACILITIES**



As mentioned earlier, 86% of Lake Country residents visited at least one of the community’s public indoor facilities in the twelve months previous to the public survey.

5.1 RECREATION FACILITIES IN OTHER COMMUNITIES

The consultants compared the availability of major indoor recreation facilities in Lake Country with several other communities with similar populations across the province. This information is summarized in **FIGURE SEVEN**.

**FIGURE SEVEN
PUBLIC INDOOR FACILITY COMPARISONS**

MUNICIPALITY	INDOOR POOLS	ICE SHEETS	PERF'G ARTS CTR	COMMTY CENTRE
Castlegar	1	2	0	1
Hope	1	1	0	1
Summerland	1	1	1	1
Oliver	0	1	1	1
Osoyoos	0	1	1	1
Salmon Arm	1	2	1	1
Smithers	1	1	1	0
Lake Country	0	1	1	1

Please Note: In most instances, performing arts centres are located in school facilities, and have been constructed in cooperation with School Districts.

5.2 ISSUES

The following questions summarize many of the outstanding issues regarding recreation facilities that were raised at the outset of the planning process. Similar to those related to parks and open space, many have identified in the past through various public processes, while others were brought to light through the public surveys and interviews with local organizations.

5.2.1 FACILITY SUPPLY

- ◆ Are present recreation facilities adequate for current and future demand?
- ◆ What new facilities should be added?
- ◆ Does the public support cooperative involvement or partnerships in the construction and operation of future facilities?

5.2.2 LOCATION

- ◆ Do residents find present facilities to be conveniently located?
- ◆ Where would residents prefer to have new facilities located?

5.2.3 MAINTENANCE

- ◆ Do residents and participants find that facilities are adequately maintained?
- ◆ Are there facilities or specific areas where maintenance needs to be improved?

5.2.4 IMPROVEMENTS / ADDITIONS

- ◆ Which existing facilities need to be upgraded or renovated?
- ◆ Are there facilities or parts of facilities that should be expanded?

5.2.5 OPERATIONS

- ◆ Are participants and the public well served by staff?
- ◆ Do participants and the public find the hours of operation and the activity schedule adequate and convenient?

5.3 KEY FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

5.3.1 FACILITY SUPPLY

Data collected by PERC generally suggests that there is little need for additional indoor recreation facilities in Lake Country at the present time. Most are approximately 20 twenty years old, and will require renovations within the next 5 to 10 years, but certainly not replacement. In addition, the District is currently making payments related to the construction of the new theatre and gymnasium. These payments will continue until 2019, and total \$140,000 per year.

It is likely, however, that a number of special interest groups will propose new facilities, along with partnership agreements to share in the cost of construction and / or operation. It is possible, too, that within the timeframe of the plan, private interests may suggest the construction of an additional ice arena in the community. Suggestions like these are addressed in Chapter 7, which focuses on matters related to administration and policy.

Areas of specific interest are outlined below.

- ◆ **Arena:** At the present time, the arena is adequate to meet the needs of Lake Country residents, and should continue to serve the community well for at least the next 5 to 10 years.

It should be noted that at the present time, the District is not under the pressure for ice time that is being experienced in Kelowna, Westbank and Vernon.

It may be worthwhile, however, to consider the construction of an outdoor ice sheet, similar to Vernon. This popular facility is located adjacent to the Vernon

Community Centre, and includes the equipment necessary to maintain artificial ice. This suggestion might be a viable solution as ice time becomes increasingly more difficult to attain.

A second indoor arena is not required for at least 10 years, and could be constructed in cooperation with private interests.

- ◆ **Aquatic Centre:** Many of the comments raised by community organizations and by respondents to the public survey were related to the need for an indoor swimming pool in Lake Country. At the present time, people can use the lakes during the summer months, or travel to Vernon or Kelowna to swim throughout the year.

PERC suggests that the timing for the construction of a pool would be better when the District's population is somewhat larger - perhaps as high as 15,000 people.

While many smaller communities have built indoor aquatic facilities, most of them are in more isolated locations with far fewer options available than Lake Country.

When a facility is built, the consultant would encourage a multi-use facility, which would include six 25-meter lanes, and a number of leisure components, such as a water slide, whirl pools, saunas and other recreational features.

- ◆ **Clubhouse in Beasley Park:** The Soccer Association has recently requested permission to build an indoor facility at Beasley Park. This proposal would include meeting and activity space, as well as restrooms, a concession, dressing rooms and storage. It is PERC's feeling that the District should formally establish policies for this type of amenity, particularly related to size, use and cost sharing.

In addition, consideration should also be given to Regional District plans for this immediate area.

5.3.2 LOCATION

Within the ten year time frame of the Plan, the location of new recreation facilities should not be an issue. The present location of the arena, curling rink and seniors centre is convenient to the vast majority of residents, and providing space is available, future construction should occur in this same general area. (It is PERC's understanding that the original plan for the arena included an indoor swimming pool, to be located on the site of the existing ball diamond.)

This "centralization" of facilities allows the public to participate much more conveniently than would be the case if the buildings were located on several different sites, and ensures a much more efficient and economical operation.

5.3.3 MAINTENANCE

Neither the public survey nor discussions with community organizations raised concerns regarding the maintenance of the District's indoor facilities.

It should be noted, however, that as these facilities age, and as the amount of use they receive increases, care will have to be taken to ensure that effective preventive maintenance occurs, and that a capital reserve program is established in order to ensure that funds are available for the replacement of boilers, roofs, refrigeration equipment and the like.

5.3.4 IMPROVEMENTS / ADDITIONS

In terms of facility improvements, there are a number of suggestions that could be considered by Council and PARC. These are outlined below.

Arena: Suggested improvements related to the arena include (1) the establishment, in cooperation with private interests, of a pro shop, which could potentially be an additional revenue source for the facility; (2) the construction of a lounge and viewing area over the arena, which could then potentially be used as a licensed facility / restaurant; and (3) the addition of dressing rooms to accommodate mixed gender leagues.

- ◆ **Curling Rink:** During the data collection phase of the study, there was some mention of a long term need to add 2 sheets of ice to the existing curling centre. It is PERC's opinion that, if this potential need becomes a reality, that it is likely to be some years into the future. At the present time, participation in curling is stable (not growing) in most communities. It is also suggested that funding for any expansion should be shared in some way between the District and the Curling Club.

- ◆ **Seniors Centre:** Representatives of the Seniors Centre suggested that in the near future, it will likely be necessary to consider expansion to the facility, in order to accommodate greater number of members. It is PERC's opinion that additional space will indeed be necessary, but that the District should have some assurances that the majority of members are Lake Country residents.

Also, it should be noted that this type of facility is increasingly being used by other age groups in many communities, primarily to optimize the use of existing buildings, and to enhance the potential for increased revenue.

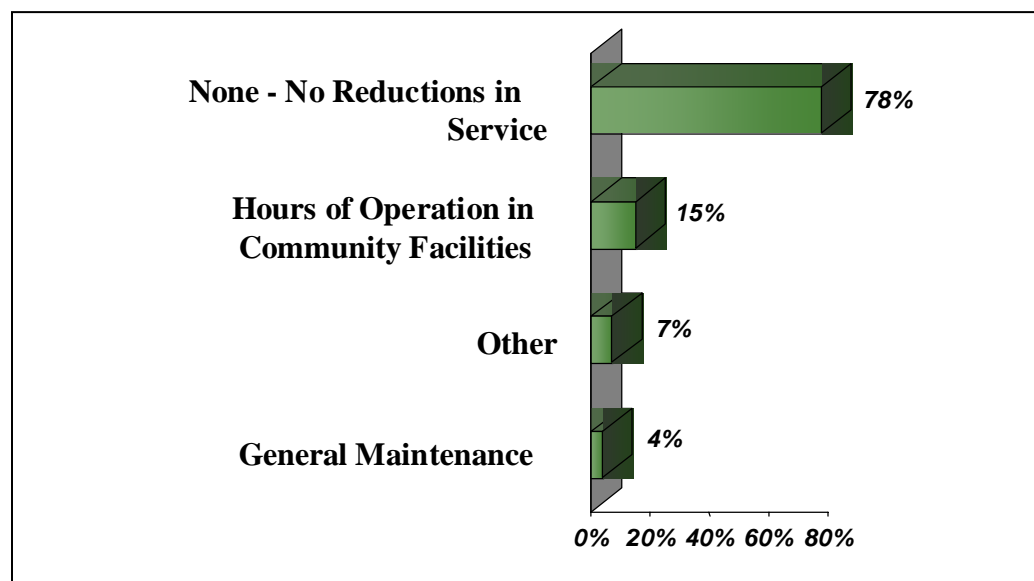
- ◆ **Museum:** There was some mention during the study of the need for expansion to the existing museum located at Okanagan Centre. The consultants do not see the need for expansion of this facility during the timeframe of the study, and would suggest that its expansion may require re-location to a site on which it can be better accommodated.

5.3.5 OPERATIONS

Most of the public survey respondents are comfortable with services provided by Parks and Recreation Department staff. As noted earlier, customer service, for example, was rated very high by the majority of respondents, as were participants' level of enjoyment with programs and services.

Interestingly, when survey respondents were asked to indicate whether or not they would support reductions in programs and services, 78% advised that there should be no service reductions. This information is summarized in **FIGURE EIGHT**.

FIGURE EIGHT
INTEREST IN PROGRAM & SERVICE REDUCTIONS



5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.4.1 FACILITY SUPPLY

- ◆ Initiate planning for a new arena and aquatic centre. (*Long Term*)

- ◆ Work with local organizations and the Regional District to determine specific needs for a clubhouse facility in Beasley Park.
(Planning - Immediate; Construction - Mid Term)

5.4.2 LOCATION

- ◆ Locate new recreation facilities (i.e. a new arena and aquatic centre) in McCarthy Park
(Long Term)

5.4.3 MAINTENANCE

- ◆ Continue to maintain recreation facilities to current standards. *(Ongoing)*
- ◆ Establish a capital reserve to ensure the availability of funds for the replacement of major equipment and facility components.
(Immediate)

5.4.4 IMPROVEMENTS/ ADDITIONS

- ◆ Determine the viability of establishing a pro shop at the arena, in cooperation with private interests. *(Short Term)*
- ◆ Include the construction of a lounge facility in long term plans for arena improvements.
(Long Term)
- ◆ Consider the need for the addition of dressing rooms at the arena, in consultation with user groups.
(Immediate)
- ◆ Consider the need for the construction of two additional sheets of curling ice. *(Long Term)*

- ◆ **Work with the Seniors Association to plan for the long term expansion of the Seniors Centre. *(Mid Term)***
- ◆ **Work with the Museum Society to discuss the long term location of the facility, and to plan for the building's future expansion. *(Long Term)***

5.4.5 OPERATIONS

- ◆ **Continue to work closely with the public and community organizations in order to ensure the most efficient use of facilities. *(Ongoing)***

6. Recreation Programming

MOST RECREATION SERVICES AND PROGRAMS in Lake Country are provided through the Parks and Recreation Department, through the efforts of full and part-time staff. These opportunities are generally available on a seasonal basis, and include courses, workshops, drop-in programs and special events.

The following information provides an overview of the programs offered.

- ◆ **Arena Programs:** A variety of public skating programs, skating lessons and special events are available at the arena, in addition to various rentals related to men's' hockey and other activities.
- ◆ **Aquatic Programs:** Swim lessons are offered on a seasonal basis at Pioneer Park and boating lessons are offered through the Community School and High School.
- ◆ **General Recreation Programs:** A variety of recreation programs, arts and cultural activities, sport activities, fitness and other programs are available throughout the year at numerous locations.
- ◆ **Seniors Programs:** The Department does not offer a large number of programs for the District's retired citizens. It does, however, work cooperatively with the executive of the Seniors Centre.

In addition to the program opportunities available to the public, the Department works in cooperation with other agencies and community organizations in order to minimize the amount of duplication that occurs in the delivery of services, and assists in the promotion of activities offered through the efforts of volunteer groups.

While many organizations in the District provide program opportunities, the largest number of leisure oriented activities are sponsored by the new Community School, non-profit organizations, and to some extent, Okanagan College.

6.1 ISSUES

The following statements and questions summarize the major issues regarding recreation programming that were raised at the outset of the planning process. Similar to those in other sections of the report, many have identified in the past through various public processes, while others were brought to light through the public survey and other research techniques.

6.1.1 PARTICIPATION

- ◆ Are programs and activities well attended and supported by residents?
- ◆ What programs presently receive the highest degree of participation?

6.1.2 QUALITY AND VARIETY

- ◆ Do residents have a broad choice of program opportunities?
- ◆ Are programs perceived as being high quality?
- ◆ What programs do residents enjoy the most?

6.1.3 INSTRUCTORS

- ◆ What do participants feel about the knowledge and abilities of instructors?

6.1.4 ACCESS

- ◆ Do participants and the public find program fees and charges to be acceptable?
- ◆ Is the program registration system convenient?

- ◆ Do residents find that programs are readily available and scheduled conveniently?

6.1.5 IMPROVEMENTS OR ADDITIONS

- ◆ Are there existing programs that need to be improved or expanded?
- ◆ Are there specific types of programs that are currently deficient?
- ◆ Does the Department keep up with current trends in programming?

6.2 KEY FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

6.2.1 PARTICIPATION

While there are always some cancellations due to a lack of registrations, most of the programs that are offered through the District are successfully conducted.

Activities that are most popular appear to be those related to fitness, however, the “Nights Alive” program, designed for youth between the ages of 13 and 17, has proven to be very popular as well.

Opportunities provided by community organizations (generally with the help of volunteers) are also well received. These include all types of arts and sport programs, as well as cubs and brownies, martial arts, and seniors activities.

6.2.2 QUALITY AND VARIETY

The provision of quality program opportunities is a major objective of the District, and is a guiding principle in all aspects of program development and delivery. While resources limit the number of programs that are offered, particularly in areas some distance from Winfield, the effectiveness of this approach is supported by the results of the public survey.

The Department makes efforts to attend workshops and conferences related to recreation programming and development, and is in regular contact with other Parks and Recreation Departments in the Okanagan and in other parts of the province.

It should be noted that there are numerous programs and initiatives available throughout the province that the Department may be able to “import” to Lake Country. An example includes the “Kids in Action” program, sponsored by Sunny Hill Hospital. This is a province-wide initiative designed to promote the healthy development of children with disabilities through their involvement in recreation, fitness and sports. Sunny Hill is currently looking for “partners” at the municipal level who are willing to work together to ensure equal access, fitness and skill development.

Surrey has recently initiated a new “Active Living” campaign, designed to encourage Surrey residents to avail themselves more frequently of programs, parks and facilities in the community.

In addition, many Provincial Sport Governing Bodies have developed programs that can be offered in local parks and recreation facilities. These include summer camps, and skill-related activities specific to certain sports. An increasing number of private companies offer similar programs.

6.2.3 INSTRUCTORS

The Department has set informal standards for the performance of instructional and supervisory staff, and provides ongoing “training” to ensure customer satisfaction. In many instances, part-time staff have worked in District for a number of years, and have developed a rapport with program participants and facility patrons. This relatively low turnover of staff tends to enhance customer services.

6.2.4 ACCESS

While a very small percentage of the survey respondents indicated that access was limited by a disability, the District is still encouraged to conduct an audit of existing facilities, and to design any new facilities with the equal access as a guiding principle.

In addition, the Department is encouraged to offer training and orientation initiatives to permanent and part-time staff in order to ensure an awareness of problems and barriers related to access.

The Department reviews fees and charges on an annual basis, and makes recommendations for adjustments to PARC and District Council in the fall of each year. This approach has resulted in small incremental increases on a regular basis, and allows staff to notify patrons and program participants of any anticipated changes.

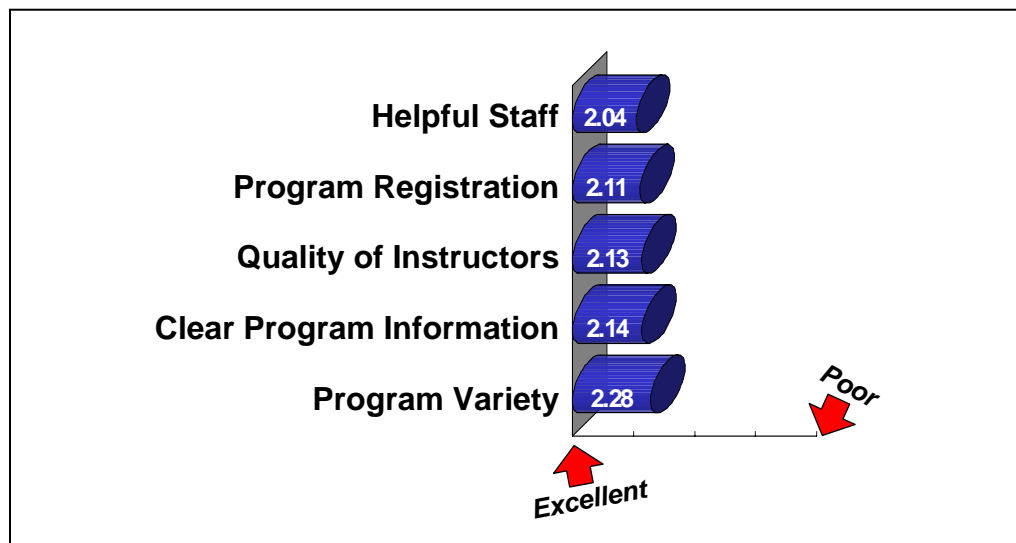
Concern was expressed on several occasions regarding families on lower incomes who may be unable to participate in recreational programs because of the cost. Typically, these families are reluctant to seek subsidy through existing assistance programs. In this regard, the District is encouraged to investigate similar initiatives in other communities, and to implement an “option” at the earliest possible date.

6.2.5 IMPROVEMENTS / ADDITIONS

There were a variety of suggestions raised related to improved and additional programs. The most frequent of these was related to opportunities for youth. These suggestions were common to the public survey, as well as discussions with numerous local organizations.

Overall, however, there is a high level of satisfaction with programs offered in the community. This information is summarized in **FIGURE NINE**.

**FIGURE NINE
LEVEL OF SATISFACTION WITH RECREATION PROGRAMMING**



It is PERC’s experience that an ideal way to gather information regarding the need for new or additional program services is to conduct occasional focus group workshops with specific segments of the community. This type of session can be very valuable in gaining insight into the interests of local residents, and can also provide the opportunity for the Department to address specific trends in the area of recreation.

It should also be noted that the Department should not be considered the major supplier of programs in the District. Rather, its role should shift, to the extent possible, toward a community development model, in order that more staff time can be devoted to assisting community organizations with the development of their own program services and opportunities.

More extensive use of computerized registration programs and other technology would serve to enhance the Department’s promotional efforts. In this regard, it is PERC’s experience that the public is willing to make use of the Internet to a far greater extent than in the recent past, to learn about parks and recreation facilities and programs.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

6.3.1 PARTICIPATION

- ◆ Continue to work with community organizations to ensure the availability of a broad range of recreation and cultural opportunities and high levels of participation. *(Short Term)*
- ◆ Establish a working relationship with agencies providing services to youth with the objective of improving the coordination of services for youth, and increasing the number and quality of services available to all youth in the community. *(Immediate)*

6.3.2 QUALITY AND VARIETY

- ◆ Continue to attend workshops and conferences that discuss programming topics generally, as well as trends in the delivery of programs. *(Ongoing)*
- ◆ Enhance the quality and variety of program opportunities by working with other agencies (local and outside of the community) to initiate new and diverse services. *(Ongoing)*
- ◆ Continue to strive for high levels of quality in planning and delivering recreation and cultural programs. *(Ongoing)*
- ◆ Continue to provide program opportunities that offer variety to all ages and interest groups, and respond to current trends in program delivery. *(Ongoing)*

6.3.3 INSTRUCTORS

- ◆ Continue to employ high quality instructional staff. *(Ongoing)*

- ◆ Offer quality orientation and training opportunities for instructional staff. (*Ongoing*)

6.3.4 ACCESS

- ◆ Research and develop procedures related to the participation of individuals and families on low incomes. (*Short Term*)
- ◆ Initiate an audit of existing recreation facilities related to access for individuals with a disability. (*Short Term*)
- ◆ Ensure that the future design of recreation facilities, including the Seniors Centre, considers access for individuals with a disability. (*Short Term*)

6.3.5 IMPROVEMENTS OR ADDITIONS

- ◆ Initiate discussions toward the enhancement of communications between the Parks and Recreation Department, Okanagan College and the Community School. (*Short Term*)
- ◆ Develop a web page on the Internet to assist in the promotion of leisure services. (*Short Term*)

7. Administration / Policy

THE ADMINISTRATION OF PARKS AND RECREATION Departments varies, to some degree, from community to community. Generally speaking, however, the function of the Department will involve the following tasks:

- ◆ The management and maintenance of a variety of recreation facilities.
- ◆ The development and maintenance of parks and open space.
- ◆ The coordination and delivery of recreation and cultural programs and services.

Each of these items involves the management of full and part time personnel, the preparation and management of budgets, long and short term planning, and the marketing of various services to the general public.

In the most successful departments, managers and supervisory personnel recognize and acknowledge the value of every employee, and understand that they are the key to the agency's success. In these instances, the philosophy of "giving people the opportunity to do the job" filters down to front line staff who provide services directly to the public. These staff members, in turn, are given the opportunity for input, are encouraged to make decisions, listen to users, and understand customer needs. As a result, employees perform at a high level, make decisions on their own, take initiative, adapt to change and perform quality work.

This type of system further allows staff to act quickly in response to suggestions, requests and concerns, and to react to trends and changes taking place in the parks and recreation industry.

In the end, this approach and organizational style results in a delivery system whereby all employees are working together towards a quality customer focused operation.

7.1 ISSUES

The following statements and questions summarize the major issues regarding Parks and Recreation administration and policy that were raised at the outset of the planning process. Similar to those in other sections of the report, many have been identified in the past through various public processes, while others were brought to attention through the public survey, interest group interviews and other research processes.

7.1.1 ORGANIZATION

- ◆ Is the present organizational structure effective?
- ◆ Will the present structure be effective and suitable in the future?

7.1.2 ATTITUDES OF RESIDENTS

- ◆ Do Parks and recreation services currently meet the needs of Lake Country residents?
- ◆ Do residents support current services?
- ◆ What do residents like or dislike about present services?

7.1.3 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- ◆ What amount of tax increase, if any, would be supported to maintain or increase services?
- ◆ Are residents in favour of corporate sponsorships and partnerships in the provision of parks and recreation services?
- ◆ Does the public support reductions in service in order to meet the District's financial objectives?

- ◆ If service reductions are necessary, where and how should they take place?

7.1.4 POLICY DEVELOPMENT

- ◆ Are there any policies that the District should adopt that are not currently in place?

7.2 KEY FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

7.2.1 ORGANIZATION

The current structure for the delivery of leisure services in Lake Country appears to meet the needs of local residents and of Council quite effectively.

PERC does not see the need for additional personnel at the present time, and it is not anticipated that an increase in staff will be necessary until such time that the number of facilities or parks increases.

In the short term future, as the community's population grows, there will undoubtedly be a need for additional program personnel. These people will likely be part-time or contract employees, and most will work with Community School personnel.

7.2.2 ATTITUDES OF RESIDENTS

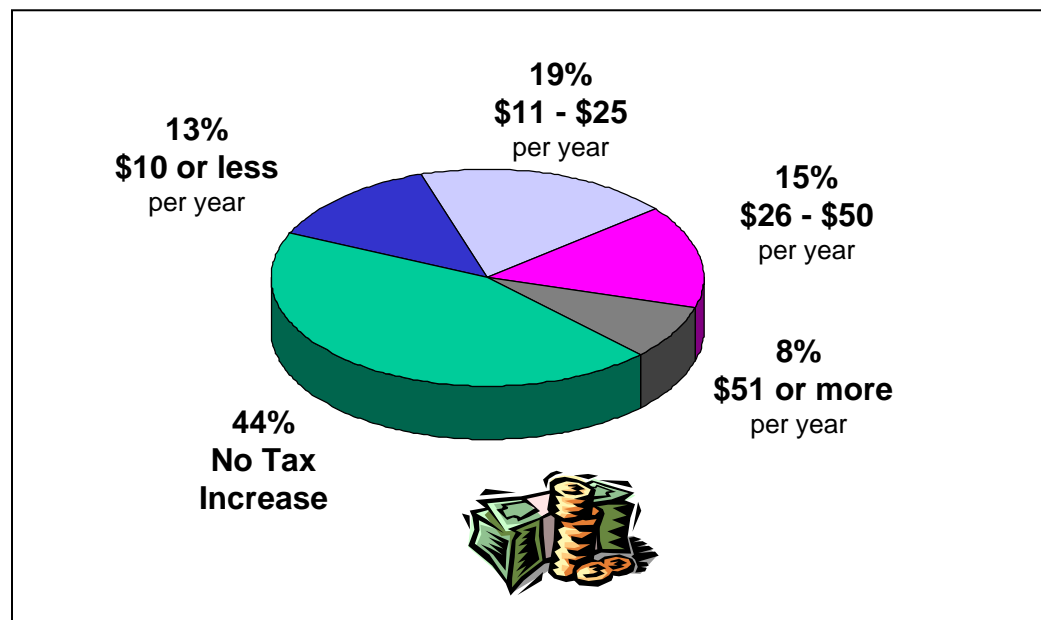
As reported earlier, levels of satisfaction with parks and recreation services in Lake Country appear to be quite high. This is not to suggest that everything is perfect. As reported throughout this document, the research revealed numerous suggestions related to improvements that could be undertaken in the future.

Nevertheless, 56% of the survey respondents feel that they receive good value for their tax dollars spent on parks and recreation, and there are high ratings related to parks and open space, existing facilities and program opportunities.

7.2.3 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

In the public survey, a question was asked regarding the maximum amount respondents were willing to pay to provide new or improved parks, recreation or cultural facilities. The results of this question are reported in **FIGURE TEN**.

FIGURE TEN
SUPPORT FOR TAX INCREASES TO PROVIDE NEW FACILITIES



It is instructive to note the low level of support for tax increases to support the development of new facilities. In fact, as outlined in **FIGURE ELEVEN**, it appears that the public is considerably more supportive of non-traditional means of generating revenue.

**FIGURE ELEVEN
PREFERRED FUNDING METHODS**

METHOD OF FUNDING	PERCENTAGE SUPPORTING
Receive Private Donations	61
Seek Corporate Sponsorships	52
Encourage Commercial Advertising	37
Increase User Fees	31
Require Cost Sharing with User Groups	30
Increase Rental Charges	22
Sell Some Undeveloped Parkland	19

As indicated above, the greatest amount of support is related to “new” money - corporate sponsorships, private donations and commercial advertising, and that there is considerably less support for increasing rental charges and, in particular, for selling undeveloped parkland.

7.2.4 POLICY DEVELOPMENT

During the study, it became evident that the District is lacking policies in a number of important areas. This statement is not meant to be critical, however, it would be in the best interest of staff and PARC to develop policy for Council’s approval in the following areas:

- ◆ A general fees and charges policy
- ◆ Policy related to user fees for the use of sportsfields
- ◆ Policy related to “Partners in Parks” and “Partners in Trails”
- ◆ Policy related to “Vendors in Parks”
- ◆ Policy related to the use of parks by dogs

- ◆ Policy related to beer gardens in the parks
- ◆ Policy related to a Head Lease on Okanagan Lake

It is relatively easy to identify where policies are required. It is never quite as simple to outline the policy. PERC has suggested an outline, however, related to fees and charges, and suggests that a similar format be utilized for other areas in which policy is required by the District. In this regard, a background paper is included in **APPENDIX FIVE**.

7.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

7.3.1 ORGANIZATION

- ◆ **Retain the current departmental structure for the delivery of parks and recreation services.**
(Ongoing)

7.3.2 ATTITUDES OF RESIDENTS

- ◆ **Build and maintain effective relationships and communication with program participants, community organizations and the general public.**
(Ongoing)
- ◆ **Conduct periodic surveys with patrons and program participants, and administer a community-wide public survey every five years.**
(Ongoing)

7.3.3 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- ◆ **Investigate the feasibility of corporate sponsorships to support Parks and Recreation Department initiatives.** *(Short Term)*
- ◆ **Establish a gift program for the receipt of donations.** *(Short Term)*

- ◆ **Explore the benefits of additional commercial advertising in parks, recreation and cultural facilities. (Short Term)**
- ◆ **Review fees and subsidy formulas for all organizations using facilities and fields, and develop a plan to introduce a system of user fees for the use of athletic fields. (Short Term)**

7.3.4 POLICY DEVELOPMENT

- ◆ **Develop policy and procedures in the following areas: general fees and charges; user fees for the use of sportsfields; Partners in Parks / Trails; Vendors in Parks; use of specified parks by dogs; and a Head Lease on Okanagan Lake. (Short Term)**

8. *Implementation and Action*

THE MASTER PLAN SHOULD BE USED AS the basis for determining direction and projects to be undertaken annually by Council and the Parks and Recreation and Commission. Strategies and suggestions contained in the Plan should be referred to on a regular basis, and will provide guidance on a wide range of issues related to the effective delivery of leisure services in the District.

Some recommendations and strategies will have little or no impact on staff or financial resources, while others will require extensive planning and the commitment of additional funding.

The numerous recommendations, suggestions and strategies outlined in the report have been organized into an Action Program that covers the seven year timeframe of the document.

8.1 EVALUATION

Each year, staff should prepare a report outlining those recommendations that have been implemented in the previous twelve months, and provide details regarding revisions that may be necessary for the continued implementation of the Plan. This “report card” should be published in local newspapers, as well as in the seasonal brochure, and included in correspondence sent to community organizations. (It is also important to note that any amendments should be documented and appended to the Plan.)

8.2 ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES

While excellence in customer service should be an underlying goal of the Plan, it is important that the District establish a system of setting resource priorities. The following criteria should be used:

- ◆ **First Priority** Items involving the safety and security of patrons and staff

- ◆ **Second Priority** Work required to sustain the quality of buildings and physical amenities

- ◆ **Third Priority** Improvements that will result in greater efficiencies, resource savings, or revenue generation

- ◆ **Fourth Priority** Acquisition / development of new areas, facilities and amenities

8.3 ACTION PROGRAM

The following information highlights each of the recommendations included in the report.

8.3.1 PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

- ◆ **Review and update priorities for land acquisition included in each of the following documents: the Official Community Plan, the Parks and Recreation Commission list of priorities and the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. (*Immediate*)**

- ◆ **Continue to acquire land through the provisions of Section 992 of the Municipal Act. (*Ongoing*)**

- ◆ **Continue to acquire land through purchase or development processes for the development of a comprehensive trail system. (*Immediate / Ongoing*)**

- ◆ **Initiate the completion of a waterfront study in cooperation with the Central Okanagan Regional District and a committee of local residents. (*Immediate*)**

- ◆ **Continue discussions with the Lake Country Sailing Club regarding the establishment of a Compound on Okanagan Lake. (*Immediate*)**

- ◆ **Depending on the success of these discussions, enter into a lease agreement with the Sailing Club for the use of the park for a 5 year period. (*Immediate*)**

IMPLEMENTATION AND ACTION

- ◆ **Develop and approve regulations for dog-owner parks, and establish a number of parks on a 12 month trial basis. (*Immediate*)**
- ◆ **Conduct a review of all playground structures in the District. (*Immediate*)**
- ◆ **Initiate an annual program of repair and installation to ensure that all play areas meet Canadian Standard Association requirements, and ensure that all playgrounds are accessible to individuals with a disability. (*Immediate / Ongoing*)**
- ◆ **Initiate a program to review restrooms in local parks, replacing those in need of major repairs, and constructing new facilities as required. (*Immediate / Ongoing*)**
- ◆ **Design and install consistent signage in each of the District's parks. (*Immediate / Ongoing*)**
- ◆ **Design and construct, in cooperation with School District 23, the District's first youth park, as well as an additional 2 or 3 tennis courts, in the area between the golf course and the secondary school. (*Mid term*)**
- ◆ **Initiate preparation of a new site plan for McCarthy Park, including the addition of new amenities at the Seniors Centre, and the expansion of the centre. (*Mid Term*)**
- ◆ **Develop a "connection" between Swalwell and McCarthy Park and the new Town Centre. (*Mid Term*)**
- ◆ **Continue to work with SK8 Country toward the construction of a skateboard facility at Swalwell Park. (*Immediate*)**
- ◆ **Prepare a site plan for the overall development of Swalwell Park. (*Immediate*)**

- ◆ Prepare a site plan for the overall development of Beasley Park, and seek Regional District input to ensure there is no duplication of service.
(Immediate)
- ◆ Construct a new tennis court in Jack Seaton Park in partnership with the Lake Country Tennis Club.
(Mid Term)
- ◆ Continue research into the need for lighting on the sport fields / diamonds at Jack Seaton Park.
(Mid to Long Term)
- ◆ Prepare a site plan, in cooperation with the Oyama Community Association, for the long term improvement of Oyama and Pioneer Park.
(Long Term)
- ◆ Establish a Trails Advisory Committee, inclusive of a District Councillor, a member of PARC, local residents and staff, to prepare an outline and priorities related to the development of a multi-use trail system in the District. *(Immediate)*
- ◆ Initiate the construction and improvement of the District's trail network in cooperation with local residents, and where feasible, the Regional District.
(Immediate / Ongoing)

8.3.2 RECREATION FACILITIES

- ◆ Initiate planning for a new arena and aquatic centre. *(Long Term)*
- ◆ Work with local organizations and the Regional District to determine specific needs for a clubhouse facility in Beasley Park.
(Planning - Immediate; Construction - Mid Term)

IMPLEMENTATION AND ACTION

- ◆ **Locate new recreation facilities (i.e. a new arena and aquatic centre) in McCarthy Park
(Long Term)**
- ◆ **Continue to maintain recreation facilities to current standards. (Ongoing)**
- ◆ **Establish a capital reserve to ensure the availability of funds for the replacement of major equipment and facility components.
(Immediate)**
- ◆ **Determine the viability of establishing a pro shop at the arena, in cooperation with private interests.
(Short Term)**
- ◆ **Include the construction of a lounge facility in long term plans for arena improvements.
(Long Term)**
- ◆ **Consider the need for the addition of dressing Rooms at the arena, in consultation with user groups.
(Immediate)**
- ◆ **Consider the need for the construction of two additional sheets of curling ice. (Long Term)**
- ◆ **Work with the Seniors Association to plan for the long term expansion of the Seniors Centre.
(Mid Term)**
- ◆ **Work with the Museum Society to discuss the long term location of the facility, and to plan for the building's future expansion. (Long Term)**
- ◆ **Continue to work closely with the public and community organizations in order to ensure the most efficient use of facilities. (Ongoing)**

8.3.3 RECREATION PROGRAMS

- ◆ Continue to work with community organizations to ensure the availability of a broad range of recreation and cultural opportunities and high levels of participation. *(Short Term)*
- ◆ Establish a working relationship with agencies providing services to youth with the objective of improving the coordination of services for youth, and increasing the number and quality of services available to all youth in the community. *(Immediate)*
- ◆ Continue to attend workshops and conferences that discuss programming topics generally, as well as trends in the delivery of programs. *(Ongoing)*
- ◆ Enhance the quality and variety of program opportunities by working with other agencies (local and outside of the community) to initiate new and diverse services. *(Ongoing)*
- ◆ Continue to strive for high levels of quality in planning and delivering recreation and cultural programs. *(Ongoing)*
- ◆ Continue to provide program opportunities that offer variety to all ages and interest groups, and respond to current trends in program delivery. *(Ongoing)*
- ◆ Continue to employ high quality instructional staff. *(Ongoing)*
- ◆ Offer quality orientation and training opportunities for instructional staff. *(Ongoing)*
- ◆ Research and develop procedures related to the participation of individuals and families on low incomes. *(Short Term)*
- ◆ Initiate an audit of existing recreation facilities related to access for individuals with a disability. *(Short Term)*

- ◆ **Ensure that the future design of recreation facilities, including the Seniors Centre, considers access for individuals with a disability. (Short Term)**
- ◆ **Initiate discussions toward the enhancement of communications between the Parks and Recreation Department, Okanagan College and the Community School. (Short Term)**
- ◆ **Develop a web page on the Internet to assist in the promotion of Parks and Recreation Department services. (Short Term)**

8.3.4 ADMINISTRATION AND POLICY

- ◆ **Retain the current departmental structure for the delivery of parks and recreation services. (Ongoing)**
- ◆ **Build and maintain effective relationships and communication with program participants, community organizations and the general public. (Ongoing)**
- ◆ **Conduct periodic surveys with patrons and program participants, and administer a community-wide public survey every five years. (Ongoing)**
- ◆ **Investigate the feasibility of corporate sponsorships to support Parks and Recreation Department initiatives. (Short Term)**
- ◆ **Establish a gift program for the receipt of donations. (Short Term)**
- ◆ **Explore the benefits of additional commercial advertising in parks, recreation and cultural facilities. (Short Term)**

- ◆ **Review fees and subsidy formulas for all organizations using facilities and fields, and develop a plan to introduce a system of user fees for the use of athletic fields. (*Short Term*)**

- ◆ **Develop policy and procedures in the following areas: general fees and charges; user fees for the use of sportsfields; Partners in Parks / Trails; Vendors in Parks; use of specified parks by dogs; and a Head Lease on Okanagan Lake. (*Short Term*)**