

DISTRICT of SQUAMISH

Park & Recreation Master Plan

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URBAN SYSTEMS

YATES, THORN & ASSOCIATES

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- C. Community Survey
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- E. Park and Open Space Inventory and Assessment
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Executive Summary

Introduction A.

In August 1999, in accordance with the *Official Community Plan*, the District of Squamish retained Urban Systems Ltd. and Yates Thorne & Associates to prepare a comprehensive master plan for the park and recreation services of the community. The *Master Plan* is intended to identify current and future needs, provide direction and establish priorities for the community's park and recreation facilities over the next ten to twenty years.

In order to do this a solid understanding of the existing situation and reliable projections of future needs was required. This was achieved by:

- Establishing a good working relationship between the consultants and District staff and the Steering Committee.
- Understanding the community's needs (interest and user groups were interviewed; a community-wide survey was mailed out and the results analyzed).
- Assessing the park sites, open spaces and recreation facilities of the community to determine how they relate to the future needs and desires of the community.
- Preparing recommendations, the draft reports and the final report in close consultation with District staff and the Steering Committee. Giving the public opportunity to respond to the draft recommendations.

The District of Squamish received the final *Master Plan* in January, 2000.

B. The Context

1. Economics

Forestry, transportation and service industries are the major employment generators in the Squamish economy. However, the local economy is rapidly diversifying away from reliance on traditional employment sectors. Employment opportunities in the service sector will outpace opportunities in traditional industry in the future. Much of this employment will be created in response to Squamish's emergence as a local, national and international destination for adventure recreation and eco-tourism.

2. Demographic Trends

The current population of Squamish is approximately 14,000. Location has been a major factor in ensuring the growth of Squamish over the last few years. The Howe Sound Region has been growing very rapidly over the last 20 years, and this growth is projected to continue. The *Official Community Plan* projects that the District of Squamish will reach a population of 20,000 by 2010, and a population of 30,000 by 2025.

Squamish will show many of the same demographic trends as are noted in other communities. Increases will be greatest in the population over age 45, with eventual growth of the 65+ population. It is noted that with strong overall growth, all age groups will increase in absolute terms - placing pressure on all kinds of facilities and services.

Demographic trends and characteristics of Squamish include:

- More families, often as single parent families.
- A strong child-oriented community.
- Participation in the workforce and unemployment levels which are close to the provincial average.
- One in four Squamish residents in the workforce will commute to the Vancouver or Whistler for work.
- More and more people working from home.
- Income levels slightly above the provincial average, although with some pockets of low income (e.g., single parent families).

Recreation Trends 3.

Recreation is changing both in terms of its customers, the services they are demanding, and how the overall business of recreation is conducted. Some of these key factors include:

- An aging population
- High priority on youth issues
- Family income and recreation affordability
- Changing family structure
- Less active recreation and more passive recreation
- Organized sports as a minor component of the recreation picture
- Increased demand for and use of trails
- Recreation as a relief from stress
- Increased participation in eco-tourism and adventure recreation, particularly in Squamish.

4. Parks and the Environment

The park and open space system has a number of key strengths that are essential building blocks for the future park and open space system, including:

- Brennan Park
- The rivers, streams and dyke system
- The Squamish Estuary
- The recreation opportunities of the community's natural resources
- The significant amount of public land (e.g., District and Crown)
- A partnership attitude in the community

Similarly, there are a number of negative attributes which could limit the ability to provide park and recreation services, including:

- Lack of public waterfront access
- Shortage of neighbourhood parks
- Limited pedestrian facilities
- Diverse and significant financial obligations

5. Benefits of Parks and Recreation

The benefits of parks and recreation include:

- Facilitating active living
- Helping citizens reach their potential
- Their role in 'quality of life'
- Strong families, neighbourhoods and communities
- Community economic generators
- Ecological survival

Community Survey

6.

A key component of the consultation process was the Household Survey - a four page survey delivered to all 5,140 residences in Squamish. The survey asked a wide range of questions about parks and recreation in Squamish. A total of 722 returns were received, for a response rate of 14% . **The Survey was not a random survey, and it may not accurately reflect the wishes of the total community.**

Respondents were asked whether current levels of various types of service should be increased, remain the same, or be decreased. Respondents indicated:

- Highest demand for access to the water and provision of trails and pathways
- In general, adequate levels of service was reported for aquatic programs, competitive sports programs and ice programs
- Park and facility maintenance levels are adequate

Recreation facilities and buildings identified by most respondents as being required immediately or in the next five years included:

- Youth Centre
- A general upgrading of Brennan Park Recreation Centre, to include a fitness facility, and improvements to the aquatic centre
- Access to and enhancements of school facilities for public use
- Seniors' centre
- Composting facility
- Second ice surface

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Respondents were asked to comment on when certain park and open space amenities would be required in Squamish. Park and open space identified by most respondents as being required immediately or in the next five years included:

- Waterfront parks and an expanded trail system
- Picnic areas
- Upgrade school fields, develop all-weather field(s) and provide additional slow-pitch diamonds
- Off-leash dog-walking
- Community gardens
- Water park
- Outdoor sports box

In addition to the above initiatives the following items received strong support from the majority of respondents:

- Outdoor recreation and tourism
- Partnerships
- Increased taxation for park and recreation services
- Alternative financing for park and recreation facilities

Short, Medium & Long Term Recommendations C.

The *Master Plan* makes over 180 recommendations. As required by the *Terms of Reference*, these recommendations cover a wide range of park and recreation issues that are specific to Squamish, including:

- Parks and open spaces
- Recreation facilities
- Recreation programs
- Partnerships
- Joint-use agreements
- Revenue generation and revenue opportunities
- Special focus areas (e.g., Smoke Bluffs, Rose Park, Mamquam Blind Channel, dykes, Downtown, Brennan Park & Centennial Fields, Recreation Centre, additional ice surface(s), waterfront access, public marina, seniors' centre, Squamish River crossing).

In addition to the requirement to identify issues and make recommendations on them, an important part of the mandate of the *Master Plan* was to strategically group these recommendations. The intent here was to provide Council and staff with objective information that would help them make appropriate and timely decisions. In order to do this the *Master Plan* recommendations are grouped into short, medium, and long term categories. These recommendations are not in priority order within each grouping. Priority order will be determined by Council as required.

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A. Projects Completed or Undertaken:

	Page#:
i. Youth Centre Facility	86/91
ii. Trail Planning and Development (South of Finch – Squamish Trails Society)	44
iii. Brennan Park Site Plan	33
iv. All-Weather Playing Field (2)	28
v. Slo-Pitch Diamond at Brennan Park - #1 of 4	27
vi. Rose Park – Phase I	52
vii. Environmentally Sensitive Areas Report	42
viii. Financial Reporting – Cost/Recovery Policy	130/132

B. Short Range Projects:

i. Senior’s Centre	79
ii. University Project – Trails, Bike Routes, Park Development and Maintenance.	117
iii. Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Strategy	93
iv. Parks Pre-Plan – Parks Future Planning Document	61
v. Upgrades to Brennan Park Recreation Centre	63/88
vi. Rose Park – Phase II	52

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vii.	Garibaldi at Squamish – Planning Input on Parks and Recreation Issues	116
viii.	Trail Development and Construction Standards	58
ix.	Smoke Bluffs Acquisition and Park Development	55/103
x.	Campground Development	30/105
xi.	Establish a Parks Department	143

C. Medium Range Projects:

		Page#:
i.	Second Sheet of Ice at Brennan Park	65
ii.	Slo-Pitch Diamond at Brennan Park #2 of 4	27
iii.	Sportfield Development and Construction Standards	72
iv.	Waterfront Walkway	50
v.	Parks Development Cost Charge Bylaw	134
vi.	Improved School Access for District Specialty Programs	77/91
vii.	Develop Multi-Sport Courts at Brennan Park	76
viii.	Co-ordination with B.C Parks and B.C. Forest Service	113/114

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ix.	Running Track Facility (Synthetic Surface)	28/73
x.	Develop Downtown Plazas and Open Spaces	50
xi.	Oceanfront Park Acquisition and Development	51
xii.	Additional Tennis Courts	30/76
xiii.	Partnership Agreement with School District	112
xiv.	Partnership Agreement with Squamish Nation	115

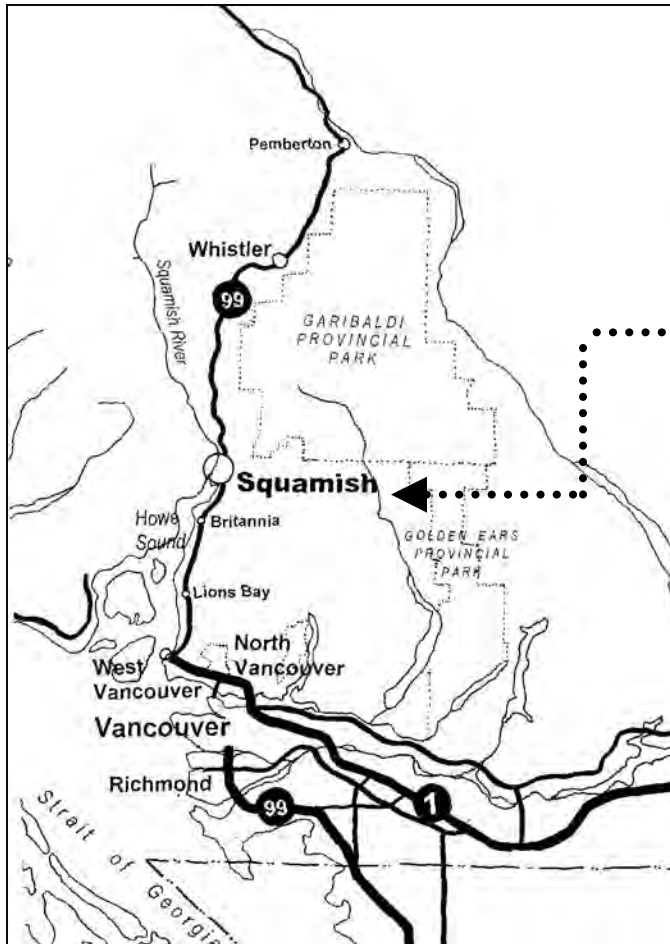
D. Additional Short and Medium Range Projects (As External Funding or Resources Become Available):

i.	Water Park	31
ii.	Trail Planning and Development Projects	56
iii.	BMX Facility	77
iv.	Ocean, Dyke, and River Public Access	53/139
v.	Neighborhood Park Development	25/33
vi.	Par 3 Golf Course	74/85
vii.	Lawn Bowling Facility	74
viii.	Wind Surfing Facilities	103
ix.	Sand Volleyball Courts	31

E. Long Range Projects:		Page#:
i.	Private/Public Partnership Policy (As and when required)	120
ii.	Squamish River Crossing Project	82
iii.	School Sport Fields – Public Use Agreement	69
iv.	Additional Field Development at Brennan Park	25/26
v.	Public Marina	78/105
vi.	Slo-Pitch Diamond at Brennan Park #3 of 4	27
vii.	Neighborhood Sport Field Development	71

The main body of the *Master Plan* provides a discussion of issues and more detailed recommendations than those summarized above. In addition, there is an appendix under a separately bound cover that provides more detailed background data and findings than may be found in the *Master Plan* document.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The District of Squamish has provided park and recreation services to the citizens of the community on an ad-hoc basis since incorporation. In June 1999, in accordance with the *Official Community Plan*, the District of Squamish issued a *Request for Proposals* to consultants for the preparation of a comprehensive master plan for park and recreation services in the community. The assignment was awarded to Urban Systems, and their teammate, Yates, Thorn & Associates.

The District of Squamish is uniquely situated in a valley setting surrounded by mountains, at the confluence of several rivers that flow into Howe Sound. Its location along Highway 99, between the metropolitan Vancouver area and the Resort Municipality of Whistler, is an important aspect of the life and economy of the community. The District of Squamish has a diversity of parks, open spaces and schools that support a strong history of traditional recreation activities (e.g., soccer, baseball, softball, tennis, swimming, skating, hockey, etc.). In addition, Squamish is blessed with beautiful natural surroundings and a diversity of open spaces. These open spaces support a range of outdoor recreation activities (e.g., mountain biking, hiking, rock climbing, kayaking, wind surfing, fishing, sailing, off-road vehicles, etc.). The District of Squamish has experienced considerable growth in recent years and is projected to continue growing at a steady rate. This trend, in combination with a diversifying local economy and an emphasis on sustainability, will affect and be affected by the park and recreation issues of the community.

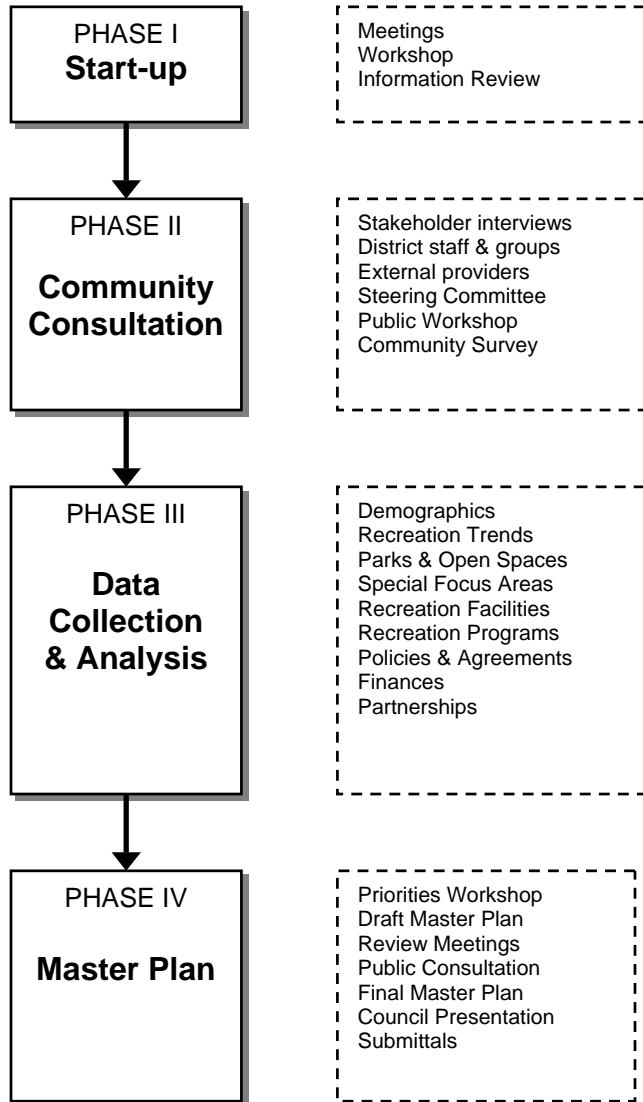
1.2 Purpose

The District of Squamish undertook a comprehensive master planning process to identify current and future needs, provide direction and establish priorities for the community's park and recreation facilities over the next ten to twenty years.

1.3 Scope

As required by the *Terms of Reference*, the *Park and Recreation Master Plan* is intended to guide Council, and the public in making strategic decisions. It sets the direction the community should go in with regard to parks and recreation, and establishes priorities to achieve this. The specific park and recreation issues to be addressed included:

- Demographic & recreation trends;
- Parks and open spaces;
- Recreation facilities;
- Recreation programs;
- Partnerships;
- Joint-use agreements;
- Revenue generation and revenue opportunities; and
- Special focus areas (e.g., Smoke Bluffs, Rose Park, Mamquam Blind Channel, dykes, Downtown, Brennan Park & Centennial Fields, Recreation Centre, additional ice surface(s), waterfront access, public marina, seniors' centre, Squamish River crossing).



In order to develop recommendations and priorities for the future, a solid understanding of the existing situation and reliable projections of future needs were required. A four-phase planning process for the *Master Plan* was developed to achieve these requirements:

- START-UP
The intent of this phase was to establish a firm basis for further action - to establish a working relationship between the District and the consultants and to develop a clear direction for the planning process and its final product - the *Master Plan*.
- COMMUNITY CONSULTATION
The intent of this phase was to ensure that there is a clear understanding of how the community perceives the needs, opportunities and issues of parks and recreation in Squamish, both now and in the future.
- DATA COLLECTION & ANALYSIS
The intent of this phase was to catalog and assess the park sites, open spaces and recreation facilities of the community and to determine how they relate to the needs and desires of the community for the future.
- MASTER PLAN
The intent of this phase was to prepare draft recommendations for the park and recreation system for review, comment and direction by District staff, the public, and Council. Finally, these were compiled into the final draft of the *Master Plan*.

This planning process began in August 1999 and was completed in December 1999. The appendices, under separate cover, provide a record of information used in preparation of the *Master Plan*.

SECTION 1

Local Economy 2.1

Forestry, transportation and service industries are major employment generators in the Squamish economy. However, Statistics Canada census data illustrates that the local economy is rapidly diversifying away from reliance on traditional employment sectors. Employment in the forestry and transportation sectors are declining in relative importance. Growth continues to occur in the service sector. In 1996, the four industries employing the most people in Squamish were:

- Accommodation, Food and Beverage Services
- Transportation and Communications
- Retail Trade
- Construction

The table provides an overview of employment growth in Squamish between 1991 and 1996. Generally, it highlights the growth in the relative importance of the service sector to the local economy while also demonstrating the relative decline of the employment importance of primary industry and the manufacturing sector.

It is expected that employment opportunities in the service sector will continue to outpace opportunities in traditional industry in the future. Much of this employment will be created in response to Squamish's emergence as a local, national and international destination for adventure recreation and eco-tourism. However, growth in service sector industry employment has also emerged in response to Squamish's development as a "bedroom" community to

Industry Sector	Persons Employed (1991)	Employ't Distrib'n (1991)	Persons Employed (1996)	Employ'nt Distrib'n (1996)
Total Employment	6,375	100.0%	7,690	100.0%
Primary Industries	385	6.0%	470	6.1%
Agriculture & Related	75	1.2%	40	0.5%
Fishing & Trapping	0	0.0%	10	0.1%
Logging & Forestry	295	4.6%	400	5.2%
Mining, Quarry & Oil	15	0.2%	20	0.3%
Manufacturing Industry	855	13.4%	670	8.7%
Construction Industry	530	8.3%	695	9.0%
Transpo. & Comm.	845	13.3%	890	11.6%
Wholesale Trade	135	2.1%	235	3.1%
Retail Trade	620	9.7%	845	11.0%
Fin., Ins. & Real Est.	185	2.9%	310	4.0%
Business Service	225	3.5%	335	4.4%
Government Service	385	6.0%	410	5.3%
Education Service	470	7.4%	380	4.9%
Health & Soc. Service	365	5.7%	670	8.7%
Accomm., Food & Bev.	940	14.7%	1,020	13.3%

Squamish's Experienced Labour Force by Industry
 Source: 1991, 1996 Statistics Canada census data
 Note: Data not in bold represents employment in industry sector sub-categories.

Vancouver. Service sector and construction sector employment will continue to be fueled by projected steady population growth and related residential and commercial construction as well as by opportunities associated with the development of Garibaldi at Squamish and a Private University of the Howe Sound Educational Society.

On a worldwide basis tourism is recognized to be one of the primary economic generators. Outdoor recreation is a major part of that. Presently, Squamish is attracting adventure recreation tourism (e.g., rock climbing, mountain biking, boardsailing, etc.). The opportunity for enhancing the economic contribution of adventure recreation to the community is considerable. This enhancement will require the community to invest in marketing and supporting infrastructure. In addition, the natural setting, physical characteristics and proximity of Squamish to the Vancouver and Whistler market areas provide broader tourism appeal. These opportunities are discussed further in the *Master Plan* (SECTION 6).

2.2 Demographic Trends

Location has been a major factor in ensuring the growth of Squamish over the last few years:

- Its location as a residential outpost of Vancouver
- Its location relative to Whistler

CONTEXT

The Howe Sound Region has been growing very rapidly over the last 20 years, and this growth will likely continue. Projections made by the Provincial Government for the region show a steady growth over the next 20 years.

With a current population of approximately 14,000 people, it is likely that the District will reach 20,000 by 2010, and 30,000 by 2025. Squamish will show many of the same demographic trends as are noted in other communities as the baby boom generation ages. Increases will be greatest in the population over age 45, with eventual growth of the 65+ population. However it should be also noted that with strong overall growth, all age groups will increase in absolute terms - placing pressure on all kinds of facilities and services.

The *Official Community Plan* indicates that 2,000 new residences will be required for a population of 20,000, and another 3,500 to deal with the growth from 20,000 to 30,000. It also indicates where this growth will occur:

- In the Garibaldi Estates/Mamquam area
- Both Valleycliffe/Loggers Lane, and Garibaldi Highlands will continue to supply land to deal with long term growth
- The Downtown will grow throughout the next decades, becoming an area with a major residential population
- Brackendale will continue to grow slowly
- Dentville and North Yards will grow through minor subdivision, but will not be major sources of residential growth.

The appendix to the Master Plan, provided under separate cover, provides more information on the demographics of the community.

Demographic trends and characteristics of Squamish include:

- More families, often as single parent families, which experience lower family and household incomes.
- A strong child-oriented community - fewer than average families have no children living at home; most children are of school age.
- Little ethnic diversity, except for a well established First Nations and Punjabi community.
- Participation in the workforce and unemployment levels which are close to the provincial average.
- One in four Squamish residents in the workforce will go to Vancouver or Whistler for work.
- More and more workers are working from home, or have no fixed office.
- Income levels slightly above the provincial average, although with some pockets of low income.

2.3 The Changing Nature of Recreation

1. Changing Customers

Recreation is changing both in terms of its customers, the services they are demanding, and how the overall business of recreation is conducted. Some of these key factors include:

- AGING POPULATION
The aging population is a major concern for recreation professionals in most communities as they consider who their clients will be in 10 or 20 years time.
- YOUTH ISSUES
Everywhere, youth issues are a high priority for recreation departments, with an increasing realization that recreation has not adequately addressed the needs of youth, and that it is one of the few social services which can address their needs.

CONTEXT

- INCOME and AFFORDABILITY
A key recreation issue includes the need to re-evaluate the concept of 'ability to pay' and resultant subsidy levels, and the needs for recreation for two working family households.
- CHANGING FAMILIES
In most communities families are changing, with more families having all their adults working, and other blended families with shared child-rearing strategies.

Changing Patterns of Recreation

2.

Who the client is determines what the services should be. Several key trends are visible in Squamish, as in most communities:

- FROM ACTIVE TOWARD PASSIVE
Partially a result of an aging population, partially those not previously active getting going, and partially a concern for the health impacts of some activities - all these factors have led to increases in recreation activity. Of particular importance is the significant increase in less vigorous activities - more walking, more gardening, more nature watching, more concerts. Are more vigorous activities declining as well? - in some places this is certainly the case, although increases in overall population in Squamish will keep demand for most active recreations on a positive growth trend.

SECTION 2

- SPORT as a MINORITY INTEREST

We often think that everyone plays in organized sports - and there is no doubt that this is close to being true for most people for some time in their lives. But the number of people who remain active in any particular sport over a long period of their lives is very low. Even youth participation in sport is relatively low, although this is not to undermine its value as an important developmental experience and as a great way of keeping young people active and engaged.

- LINEAR RECREATION

Trails for walking, hiking and skiing, for roller-blading and biking, are the trend, rather than more active parks and recreational facilities.

- DIGITAL WORLD

The electronic revolution is changing everything, and recreation is no exception. And changes in the other dimensions of life - work and the office, and family and the home - in turn change recreation.

- TIME and STRESS

Modern life is fast paced and busy - and stressful. We all try to get more into our days - more work, more variety of recreation activities. The demand for recreation services will increase both from this demand for more, and from the recognition that recreation provides a release from that stress.

3. How is Recreation Responding?

While at every turn, recreation is responding to these trends by adjusting service levels to meet demand and creating new programs and services where it is perceived that change has occurred, there are also some more fundamental directions that underpin change in the recreation field.

Economics of Public Life 4.

Everywhere there is a concern for the future and whether we can pay for a continuation of the current level of services, never mind a higher level. Tax levels are not rising significantly and we keep being urged to 'do more with less'. Recreation departments are responding in many different ways:

- Higher user fees, and a shift of the cost of recreation from the general taxpayer to the service user.
- Lower service levels, such as less maintenance, fewer staff on duty.
- Alternative funding mechanisms, from corporate advertising to increased sale of goods.
- Increased partnerships, with other public agencies such as school boards, with non-profit groups such as sport groups, and with the private sector in terms of major and minor capital developments.
- A greater focus on results and the benefits of recreation, so that services are both promoted and justified come budget time.

Serving the Community Holistically 5.

Recreation professionals are becoming increasingly aware that their service can be linked to the other social services to provide both increased revenues and a more saleable product. Examples of these linkages include:

- The health linkage is working with active living, cardio and back health programs to provide an alternative to expensive drug or hospital treatments.
- Recreation is a preventive service when linked with police services to keep young, idle hands out of mischief.
- Recreation in lifelong sports is an educational outcome for schools.
- Recreation builds self-esteem in those searching for jobs or out-of-the-workforce for whatever reason.

6. Recreation as Community Development

Recreation has always focused on personal development, but increasingly it is being seen as the best medicine for improved community development.

2.4 The Benefits of Parks and Recreation

Over the last several years, the recreation profession has been working to reposition itself as an essential community social service. During the 1980's, as fiscal restraint and government cutbacks bit into public expenditure plans, all government services were forced to ask the question "What do we do and why do we do it? What good are we anyway?". For some in recreation, the answers were very threatening. It was clear that some recreation managers had slipped to being just facility operators, offering programs to the converted, and worrying mainly about the bottom line of the budget. For some, it was clear that they were a frill.

1. Recognizing the Benefits

Asking the question though is the first step to change. Gradually the profession has clarified why they were there by describing the benefits of recreation, with an extensive research base to back their claims. These benefits are as follows:

- FACILITATE ACTIVE LIVING
 - Physical activity and fitness reduces risk of serious illness.
 - Parks and open space contribute to mental health - reducing stress, depression, and contributing to emotional/psychological well-being.
 - Physical activity and fitness help Canadians to live longer and extends independent living.

CONTEXT

- HELPING CITIZENS REACH THEIR POTENTIAL
 - Play is essential to the development of our children and youth.
 - Play and recreation provide opportunities for adults to develop their full and holistic potential.

- ESSENTIAL to QUALITY of LIFE
 - Sport and outdoor experiences build self-esteem and self-image.
 - Parks and open space provide opportunities to enhance life satisfaction levels.
 - Parks and recreation enhance perceived quality of life for individuals, families and communities.
 - Parks provide breathing space for residents living in higher density developments.

- BUILD STRONG FAMILIES, NEIGHBOURHOODS & COMMUNITIES
 - Families that play together stay together.
 - Recreation and sport produces leaders that serve their communities in many ways.
 - Recreation and sport builds social skills and stimulates participation in community life.
 - Recreation and sport are catalysts that build strong communities.
 - Parks and recreation provide venues for social interaction.
 - Parks, recreation and beautification initiatives build pride in a community.

- COMMUNITY ECONOMIC GENERATORS
 - Employee fitness improves work performance.
 - Parks and recreation attract businesses to the community.
 - Parks and recreation increase property values on adjacent land.
 - Sport events attract people, generating tourism revenues for local businesses.

- ESSENTIAL to ECOLOGICAL SURVIVAL
 - Green spaces protect habitat, biodiversity and ecological integrity.
 - Green spaces improve air quality.
 - Protecting land from development as open space mitigates against potential environmental disasters such as flooding.
 - Trail systems encourage walking and cycling.

2.5 Parks and Open Spaces

Two recent trends have focussed people's attention on issues of parks and open spaces:

- Rising environmental consciousness; and
- Increasing urbanization.

There is a realization that parks and open spaces provide essential ecological and human needs. There is also the recognition that urban development is encroaching on the open spaces within and on the edges of our communities, impacting our perceptions of our community. This is an important issue to address. With Squamish on the cusp of significant growth and the fact that natural areas and flat land for sportfields are both a limited resource, the leaders of the community have recognized the need to plan ahead for Squamish's parks and open spaces. Traditionally the park and open space emphasis in Squamish has been placed on formal parks because they provided the venue for important recreation amenities, such as soccer pitches, ball diamonds and playgrounds. While these needs still exist and will remain with an increasing population, they have been superseded in the past decade by an emphasis on natural open spaces and the desire to enjoy them. This situation was clearly seen in the Community Survey conducted as part of this *Master Plan* (SECTION 2.7).

The park and open space system of each community is unique to itself, a combination of natural and cultural factors. In Squamish these factors have produced conditions that determine the direction and content of the *Master Plan*.



Centennial Fields

Strengths 1.

The park and open space system has a number of key attributes that are essential to build on in order to maximize the park and recreation potential of the community:

- BRENNAN PARK
The large size, central location and concentration of facilities here make Brennan Park the major asset in Squamish’s park and recreation inventory.
- RIVERS and STREAMS
The three major rivers and many creeks and streams of the community provide ecological values, multiple recreation opportunities and a logical framework for an open space and trail system.
- DYKE SYSTEM
Like the rivers and streams, the dyke system provides an excellent framework for an open space and trail system.
- SQUAMISH ESTUARY
This is a critical natural environment that also provides opportunities for nature appreciation, passive recreation and education.
- PUBLIC LAND
Compared to other communities in the province, the District owns a considerable amount of undeveloped land, some of which could be utilized for park and open space uses. The same applies to the extensive amount of Crown land on the edges and in the north and of the municipality.

The Master Plan will use these positive characteristics as the building blocks for the future park and open space system.

SECTION 2

2. Weaknesses

Likewise, there are a number of key attributes which do or could have a negative impact on the ability to provide the most appropriate park and recreation service to the community:

- WATERFRONT ACCESS
While the community is located on Howe Sound and is transected by a variety of rivers and streams, the public has limited access to the water.
- NEIGHBOURHOOD PARKS
The District is under-serviced by neighbourhood parks. These neighbourhood parks are not evenly distributed throughout the community and are generally under-sized.
- PEDESTRIAN NETWORK & ACCESSIBILITY
At this time the ability of pedestrians to safely navigate the community without sharing roadways with automobiles is limited. It is noted the District has been making improvements to the pedestrian network and accessibility of the community in recent years and will continue to do so.
- FINANCIAL RESOURCES & OBLIGATIONS
Limited financial resources and multiple financial obligations (e.g., infrastructure needs) will affect the ability of the District to meet all of the public's needs and desires in a timely manner. On a positive note, the community partnership potential is high and the public is not unduly opposed to tax increases to pay for essential improvements to the park and recreation system. The results of the recent referendum support this.

It is important to understand that what is a negative characteristic today need not be one tomorrow. The *Master Plan* provides the opportunity to minimize negative impacts and, in some cases, turn them into positive ones.

Environment 2.6

There are a number of key environmental issues that have a role to play in the *Park and Recreation Master Plan*:

Issues 1.

- SQUAMISH ESTUARY
The estuary is a critical ecological resource that has regional and provincial significance. It is perhaps the most biologically diverse landscape in the municipality.
- FISHERIES RESOURCES
The rivers, creeks and streams of Squamish provide critical spawning and over-wintering habitat for salmon. These resources are protected by federal and provincial legislation. These resources also provide habitat value for vegetation, waterfowl, small mammals and other fish.
- RECREATION RESOURCE
While the diverse natural landscapes of the community provide ideal amenities for a wide range of outdoor recreation activities, they do not have an unlimited capacity to support these uses.
- QUALITY of LIFE
The state of the environment and the visibility of natural open spaces relates to our perception of quality of life. These attributes attract and keep residents here and also attract visitors.
- ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION and MANAGEMENT
The economic development and livability of the community depends in large part on the state of the environment. This is particularly true for the park and recreation system and outdoor recreation opportunities. Protection and management of the remaining resources, including restoration of disturbed environments, is essential.

2.7 Community Priorities

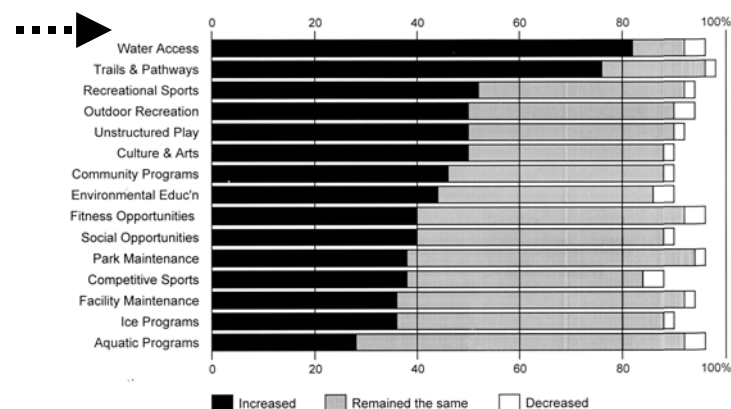
A key component of the consultation process was the Household Survey. A four page survey was delivered to all 5,140 residences in Squamish – 722 returns were received, for a response rate of 14%. The survey accuracy is 63.5%, 19 times out of 20. The survey asked a wide range of questions about parks and recreation in Squamish. Details of the survey results are provided under separate cover in the appendix. A summary of the results is provided here.

Respondents were asked whether current levels of various types of service should be increased, remain the same, or be decreased. Respondents indicated:

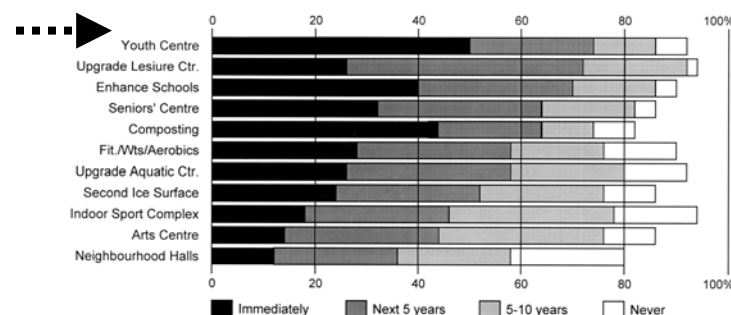
- Highest demand for more service in water access and trails and pathways.
- Service areas generally felt to be adequate included aquatic programs, competitive sports and ice programs.
- Maintenance levels are perceived to be adequate.

Respondents were asked to comment on when certain facilities (i.e., mainly buildings) would be required in Squamish. Those facilities which were noted by most respondents as being required either immediately or in the next five years were as follows:

- Youth Centre.
- A general upgrading of Brennan Park Recreation Centre, to include a fitness facility, and improvements to the aquatic centre.
- Access to and enhancements of school facilities for public use.
- Seniors’ Centre.
- Composting facility.
- Second ice surface.

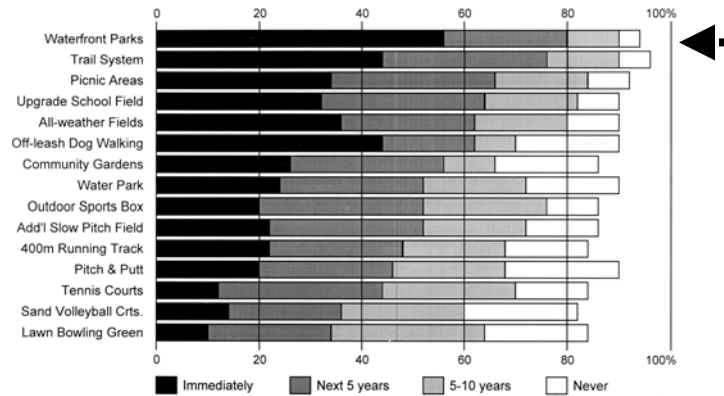


Community Survey: Satisfaction with Service Levels



Community Survey: Public Priorities for Facilities

CONTEXT

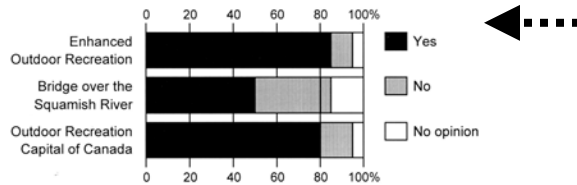


Community Survey: Public Priorities for Parks & Open Spaces

Respondents were asked to comment on when certain park and open space amenities would be required in Squamish. Those facilities which were noted by most respondents as being required either immediately or in the next five years were as follows:

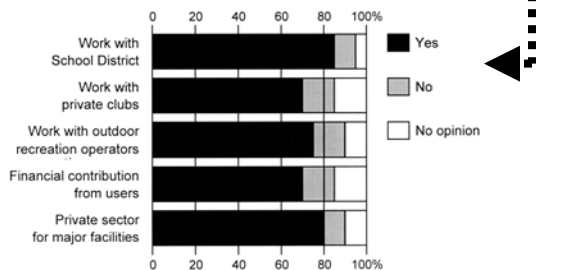
- Waterfront parks and an expanded trail system.
- Picnic areas.
- Upgrade school fields, develop all-weather field(s) and provide additional slow-pitch diamonds.
- Off-leash dog-walking.
- Community gardens.
- Water park.
- Outdoor sports box.

In addition to these initiatives the following items were noted by respondents to the Community Survey:



Community Survey: Outdoor Recreation & Tourism

- OUTDOOR RECREATION and TOURISM
There was broad support voiced for expanding outdoor recreation as a community tourism enterprise. The support was for both enhancing the recreation infrastructure itself, and for marketing outdoor recreation. There was also support for building a bridge over the Squamish River - but a strong opposition to this based on environmental concerns.



Community Survey: New Partnerships

- PARTNERSHIPS
There was strong support for all kinds of expanded partnerships. There was also strong support for the concept of increased user pay for adult groups likely to benefit from capital construction.

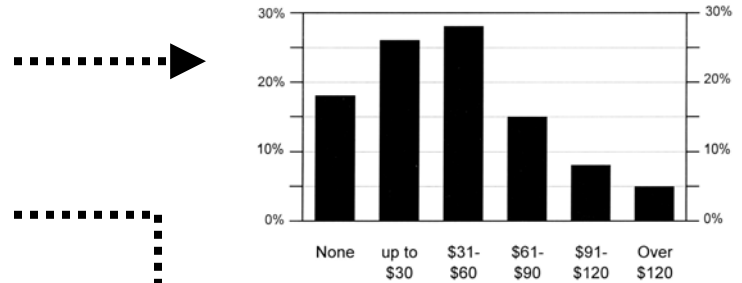
SECTION 2

- INCREASED TAXATION

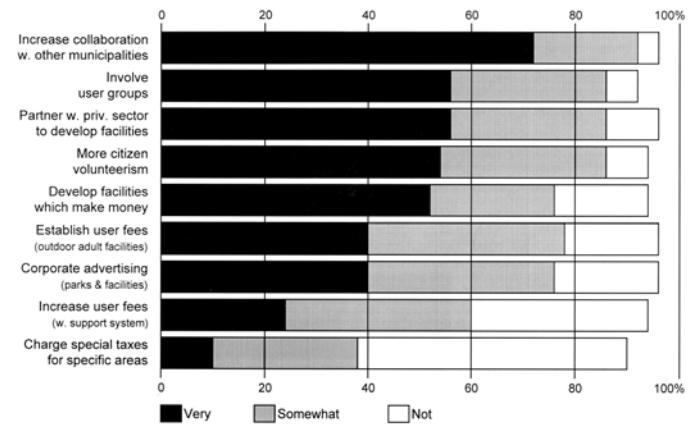
Respondents were prepared to pay more for increased recreation services. The average was in the region of \$42, with only 17% indicating that there should be no increase.

- ALTERNATIVE FINANCING

There was general support for alternative financial mechanisms to fund system enhancement. Increased partnering was strongly supported, as was developing facilities that make money. Stronger roles for volunteers and user groups was also supported. Most additional fees and taxes were not supported, as was corporate signage, especially in parks.



Community Survey: Support for Increased Taxation to Fund the System



Community Survey: Support for New Financing Alternatives

Economic Development 2.8

Adventure recreation, eco-tourism and local economic development all have a strong inter-relationship that needs to be better explained and understood if they are all to be developed effectively in Squamish.

- INFRASTRUCTURE
Physical infrastructure development to support the adventure recreation and eco-tourism potential in the community needs to be developed. This infrastructure development will provide Squamish with an opportunity to attract a much larger segment of the adventure recreation and eco-tourism markets than is presently being obtained. This is not to say that all infrastructure needs to be developed by the District of Squamish, rather, infrastructure should be developed in partnership between the District, and both private and non-profit sector partners. Partnerships should seek to exploit the relative strengths of all parties involved.
- QUALITY of LIFE
Adventure recreation and eco-tourism opportunities in the community increase its relative attractiveness as a place to live and work for people exploring opportunities for housing in the Lower Mainland. Increased residential development broadens the municipal tax base and can result in increased employment opportunities in Squamish (construction sector, service sector, etc).

SECTION 2

- KNOWLEDGE-BASED ECONOMY

The global economy is shifting from resource production into a knowledge-based economy. Knowledge based employment typically pays employees more and they are as a result, more mobile than employees of traditional industries. Among other location criteria, knowledge based employers (high tech firms) seek locations that provide a great deal of "lifestyle" and quality of life benefits for employees.

This enables these companies to recruit and retain more of these increasingly mobile professionals. Enhanced adventure recreation opportunities in the community would improve Squamish's relative attractiveness as a location for new knowledge based industries when compared with other locations in the province.

- BROADER TAX BASE

A broader tax base that is more balanced between residential, commercial and industrial uses will provide great benefit to the community in the attraction of new residents and employment. Attraction of new residential and commercial development as discussed previously may enable the District to continue to diversify the municipal tax base. In turn, this will enable greater expansion of local economic development opportunities.

- TOURISM

Tourism is a growing industry - it is second in the province only to forestry. Squamish's natural setting and location midway between Vancouver and Whistler help make it a prime tourism destination. The opportunity to expand the tourism component of Squamish's economy is significant, particularly for eco-tourism and adventure tourism.

For the purposes of analysis and planning five types of parks and open spaces have been defined for Squamish, as follows:

- PASSIVE COMMUNITY PARK
The function of this type of park is to meet community-wide needs for non-recreation activities. Passive community parks may include special natural features, waterfront areas, cultural facilities, cemeteries, urban plazas, tourism attractions, community beautification initiatives and picnic sites.
- ACTIVE COMMUNITY PARK
These provide sport and athletic facilities to the entire community. These facilities typically include playfields, ball diamonds and other capital and land intensive recreation facilities. Recreation and community centres may also be located here. In some cases the sportfields of secondary schools are counted as active community park.
- NEIGHBOURHOOD PARK
A neighbourhood park is a publicly accessible park that provides informal open space, playgrounds, sportfields, passive recreation amenities, and sometimes neighbourhood halls, for a geographically distinct neighbourhood or sub-area.
- NATURAL OPEN SPACE
Natural open spaces may have a variety of functions, including environmental protection and stewardship, trail systems and linkages, eco-tourism or outdoor recreation pursuits.

SECTION 3

- OUTDOOR RECREATION RESOURCE

These resources refer to those natural landscapes and features of the community that provide the setting or venue for eco-tourism and outdoor recreation activities (SECTION 6.0). An outdoor recreation resource is a type of natural open space, but one that has attributes that make it uniquely capable of functioning as an amenity for outdoor recreation activities. Care and management of these areas must address both the natural environment and recreation issues.

The standards used to guide acquisition and provision of parks and open spaces are different for each specific type. The District currently has very few standards for parks and open spaces, with the exception of a provision standard for neighbourhood parks (i.e., 1.4ha/1,000 people). While the standards for parks and open spaces vary significantly from community to community, it is necessary to establish some for Squamish to assist in the planning and provision of these essential community spaces.

1. Passive Community Parks

- ❑ *Passive community park space will be provided at a ratio of 1.0 hectare for every 1,000 population. The service area may vary from a sub-area level (e.g., 1 kilometre radius) to the entire community, including out of town visitors if appropriate. Passive community parks may vary in size, from 0.5 hectares to 10 hectares.*

2. Active Community Parks

- ❑ *Active community park space will be provided at a ratio of 1.2 hectares for every 1,000 population. The service area extends to include the entire community. The size of active community parks may range from 10 to 30 hectares.*

Neighbourhood Parks 3.

- ❑ *As per the Official Community Plan, neighbourhood park space will be provided at a ratio of 1.4 hectares for every 1,000 population. Ideally neighbourhood residents should be able to reach a neighbourhood park within a 5-minute walk from their front door (i.e., 400 metres). The maximum distance should be a 10-minute walk (i.e., 800 metres). Pedestrian impediments (e.g., highways, steep hills, rivers, etc.) should be considered in the distribution of neighbourhood parks. Neighbourhood parks may range in size from 0.5 to 1.0 hectare in area. Neighbourhood parks may be associated with the playgrounds and sportfields of elementary schools and, if so, may have an open space area of as much as 2 or 3 hectares.*

Natural Open Space 4.

- ❑ *The natural environment is recognized as one of the special features of Squamish. No quantifiable standards are provided for natural open spaces. Rather, the provision of these spaces will be directly related to the need to protect unique features, manage sensitive natural environments and provide open space linkages and trails.*

Outdoor Recreation Resource 5.

- ❑ *It is recognized that some of the natural landscapes and features of the community provide unique opportunities for outdoor recreation and eco-tourism. Outdoor recreation resources are intended to meet specific recreation and tourism needs in a manner that does not degrade the natural environment. Outdoor recreation resources should be provided, managed and used on a site specific basis.*

The above standards are intended for use as basic guidelines, specifically for use by the District in guiding the acquisition and designation of parks and open spaces.

3.2 Brennan Park

Brennan Park is a centrally located 32.5 hectare community park. It provides a variety of functions and hosts a variety of activities:

- Athletic park (e.g., soccer pitches and ball diamonds)
- Recreation Centre (e.g., pool, ice arena, auditorium, **mtg. rooms**)
- Loggers Sports Grounds and Equestrian Centre
- Campground
- Skateboard park

1. Vision Statement

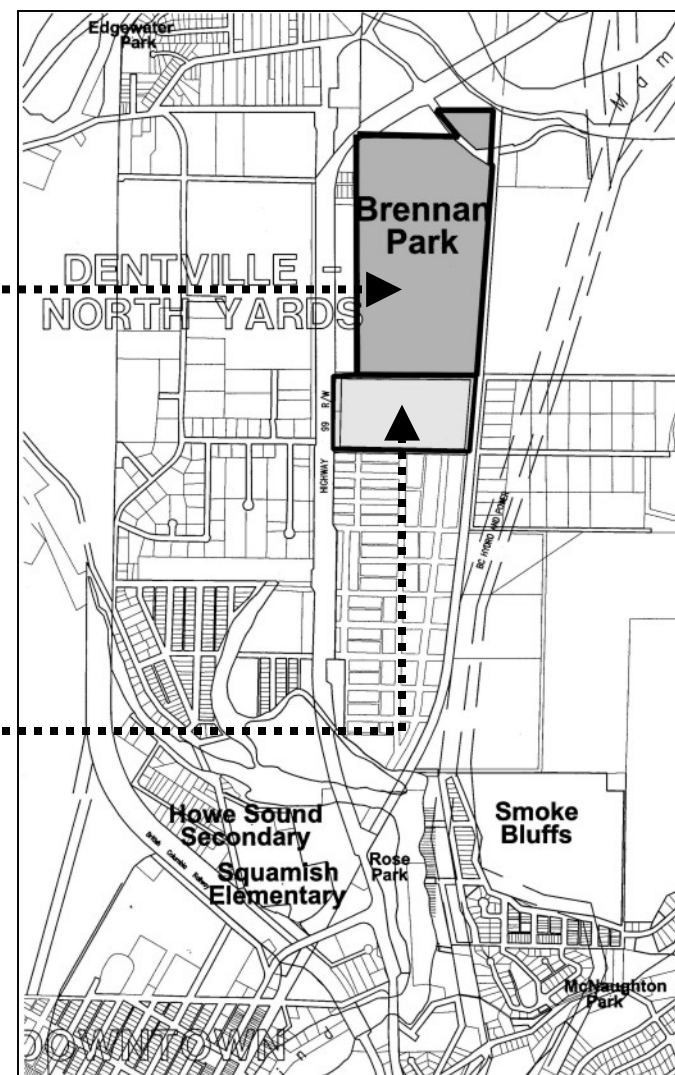
The large size, central location and diversity of activities and opportunities at Brennan Park make it one of the most important assets of the community. It is the main focal point in the community where people come together to recreate and interact. This role and legacy should continue.

- ❑ *Develop and maintain Brennan Park as the premiere recreation park for Squamish, with an emphasis on providing one central location for a variety of high-usage recreation activities.*

2. Park Expansion

Part of the Crown lease for the South of Finch lands (SECTION 3.7) includes 11.2 hectares of undeveloped open space adjacent to the south edge of Brennan Park. It is separated from the larger 36.8 hectares of natural open space by Finch Drive.

- ❑ *Designate the parcel of Crown lease land north of Finch Drive as active community park. Expand the boundaries of Brennan Park to include this land.*



Brennan Park

NOTE:

Additional slow pitch diamonds are the public's #8 priority (SECTION 2.7).



PUBLIC SURVEY RESULT

There are 100 ball teams in Squamish. They need their own place to play in; not shared with soccer.



Ball Diamonds

3.

Based on standards established for baseball and softball the analysis of sportfields facilities conducted as part of this planning process (SECTION 4.3) reveals that the need for more ball diamonds, and especially softball, will increase significantly as the population grows. This need will likely exceed that for playing fields. User groups, and parks and recreation staff, report that the need for these facilities today already exceeds the supply. While some of the need for ball diamonds will be met on school grounds (SECTION 4.3.2) and in neighbourhood parks (SECTIONS 4.3.3 and 4.3.4), developing additional ball diamonds in Brennan Park is key to fulfilling the vision for this park.

- Work with user groups to develop a quad softball diamond complex in the southeast corner of Brennan Park. The facility should accommodate a variety of activities (e.g., softball, baseball, mini-soccer).
- Work with user groups to develop two additional ball diamonds, overlapping the development of new playing fields in Brennan Park (SECTION 3.2.4).

Playing Fields

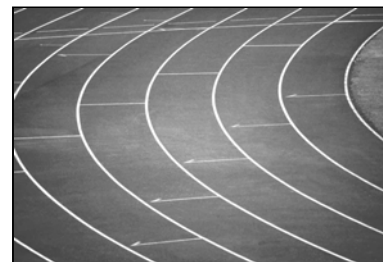
4.

There are six playing fields in Brennan Park. Of these, only four have a standard size suitable for all users. Based on standards established for playing fields (SECTION 4.3.5) the analysis of sportfields facilities conducted as part of this planning process suggests that the current need for usable playing fields is just met by the supply. However, the poor drainage and sub-surface conditions of these fields means that the season of use is limited and the fields require downtime and high levels of maintenance to remain usable. This has a significant impact on the availability of the playing fields for community and tournament use.

- ❑ *Work with user groups to develop two new full-size playing fields in Brennan Park. At least one of the fields should provide an all-season surface (SECTION 3.2.6) . **[This project has been completed.]***

5. Track

During the planning process the desire for development of a running track was identified (SECTION 4.4.1). There was a cinder track at Howe Sound Secondary until it was partially buried to make way for school expansion. There is an overgrown track at Brackendale Secondary, but its distance from the centre of town and the inability to provide sufficient support infrastructure means that it has a limited servicability.



- ❑ *Work with user groups and others to develop a track facility in the community (SECTION 4.4.1). There are two alternative approaches to accomplishing this: by reserving space in Brennan Park or entering into a joint-use agreement with the proposed university (SECTION 8.8.1) to develop it on their site.*
- ❑ ***Consideration of a joint use track with School District #48 at one of their school sites (ie. Howe Sound Secondary, Brackendale Secondary).***

6. All-season Playing Field

During the planning process the need for an all-season playing field was identified (SECTION 4.3.1). Sand-based turf fields and lighting will ensure that they can support longer and more intensive use than existing fields. A grass surface will enhance the community's ability to attract tournament use to town for local teams. The playing fields should accommodate a variety of activities (e.g., baseball, softball, field hockey, football, rugby, etc.).



NOTE:

Respondents indicated a preference for grass fields over aggregate (e.g., sand, gravel, rock dust, crushed rock, etc.) fields.

- *Work with user groups and others to develop one all-season playing field in the community. The site should be developed in conjunction with or to accommodate a track facility in the future (SECTION 4.4.1), at Brennan Park or the proposed university. [An all-season playing field has been completed.]*

Loggers Sports Grounds

7.

The Loggers Sports Grounds is located in Brennan Park. The Loggers Sports Show is one of the most important events in the community's calendar. **The land is leased from the District of Squamish, and has been developed by the Squamish Days Loggers Sports Association.** While the site is used occasionally by other uses (e.g., trade show) there is a need to make it more available to broader community needs.



- **The land was developed by the Squamish Days Loggers Sports Association, and is under lease to Squamish Days Loggers Sports Association, and potential users should be encouraged to contact Squamish Days for use of this unique venue.**

Equestrian Centre

8.

The Squamish Valley Equestrian Association has an equestrian centre in Brennan Park. The land is leased from the District of Squamish. It provides association members with year-round riding facilities. Some equestrians use the site as a staging area for trail-riding elsewhere in the community. As the community grows there will be increasing conflicts between these trail users and the automobiles, pedestrians and cyclists in this central area of the community.



- ❑ *Enter into discussion with the Equestrian Club to find another site for their equestrian centre. A preferred site would be similar in size to the existing site, located on the edge of the community and have access to undeveloped lands and riding trails.*
- ❑ *Encourage the Squamish Valley Equestrian Association and the Backcountry Horsemen to consider joint development and use of a facility that will serve both groups' needs.*

9. Campground

The campground in Brennan Park, Kinsmen Park, provides in-town camping opportunities for visiting tourists, outdoor recreationists and sporting tournaments. It provides basic facilities (e.g., communal water source, and portable outhouses) for recreational vehicles and tent camping. Campers use the Recreation Centre for enhanced personal services (e.g., shower, flush toilet) and recreation (e.g., aquatic centre).

- ❑ *Maintain operation of the existing campground in Brennan Park and enhance the facilities there (e.g., washroom/shower building, water and electrical service, sani-dump, tree planting, etc.) to attract camper, trailer and RV use. Market and promote it to attract more use and help pay for site improvements. **Staff should develop a Business Plan and examine partnering opportunities, to develop the campground to it's full potential.***



10. Tennis Courts

At the north end of Brennan Park there is a 1.3 hectare parcel of land on the other side of Centennial Way and adjacent to the Mamquam River dyke. The site is developed with 4 public tennis courts and a parking area.



- Maintain the existing tennis facilities and expand when appropriate.**



NOTE:

A water park is the public's # 6 priority (SECTION 2.7).



Sand Volleyball Court 11.

There has been interest in the community expressed for the development of sand volleyball courts.

- Explore a location by the Brennan Park tennis court site for the development of a sand volleyball court. Partner with user groups to develop this facility.**

Skateboard Park 12.

The skateboard park is a recently-built community project that provides a unique form of youth recreation in the community.

- Maintain the existing skateboard park.**

Water Park 13.

As the community's premiere community and recreation park, Brennan Park can offer more facilities specifically targeted to meet the needs of the entire community. An excellent example of this is a water park. In addition to its association with the leisure pool a water park expands the services available to users and families who make use of Brennan Park, Centennial Fields and the Recreation Centre.

- ❑ **Explore a location in Brennan Park for the development of a water park.** *Develop a water park to provide water play experiences for children and families. The water park should be open air, located south or west of the recreation pool and accessible from other areas of the park.*

Parking 14.

Future development and enhancement of Brennan Park and the Recreation Centre will increase the demand for parking. This demand will be particularly noticeable on weekends and during the high use soccer and ball seasons. In addition to quantity of parking stalls, there are a number of other issues that must be addressed.

- ❑ *Develop more hard surface parking in Brennan Park to meet user needs. Consider the following guidelines for the existing parking areas and in developing new parking areas:*
 - LOCATION
Locate parking areas close to recreation facilities. Avoid locating parking areas that may conflict with opportunities to expand or develop new recreation facilities.
 - ACCESS
Provide more than one vehicle access point to/from a parking area. Use gates or other controls to temporarily restrict access to a parking lot.
 - CIRCULATION
Provide parking areas with internal circular routes. Avoid dead-ends.
 - MULTIPLE USE
Design and develop parking areas that can provide multiple benefits. Examples include RV parking/camping, as well as space, linework and facilities for basketball, street hockey, child bicycle training, etc.

15. Site Plan

A public planning process was undertaken in 1995-96 to develop a long-term plan for the park, and specifically for its sportfields and open spaces. Two concepts were prepared as part of the process. The two concept plans have not been adopted or endorsed as the desired vision for the site. The concept plans do not reflect all of the above recommendations.

- ❑ *Prepare a site plan for Brennan Park. Preparation of the plan should involve user groups and the public. The plan should reflect the efforts of the previous concept plans, meet the Vision Statement (SECTION 3.2.1) and satisfy the recommendations provided for the park in the Master Plan, above.*

RECOMMENDATION	REF.
Upgrade Leisure Centre	4.1
Show park expansion	3.2.2
Develop softball complex (4)	3.2.3
Develop baseball diamonds (2)	3.2.3
Develop playing fields (2)	3.2.4
Develop track	3.2.5
Develop all-season field (1)	3.2.6
Retain Loggers Sports grounds	3.2.7
Phase-out equestrian centre	3.2.8
Upgrade existing campground	3.2.9
Retain tennis courts	3.2.10
Develop sand volleyball court (1)	3.2.11
Retain skateboard park	3.2.12
Develop children's water park	3.2.13
Develop parking to accommodate above	3.2.14
Develop multi-court	4.4.5
Designate space for arena expansion	4.2.2

Neighbourhood Parks 3.3



Pat Goode Park

Neighbourhood parks are defined as parks and open spaces that provide informal play areas, a playground and passive recreation facilities for a geographically distinct neighbourhood or sub-area. Elementary schools also provide this function. For the purposes of the *Master Plan*, and in order to reflect the open space role that schools play in neighbourhoods, half of the site area of elementary schools has been included in the park and open space calculations. There are 6 geographically distinct neighbourhoods or sub-areas in Squamish. Additional neighbourhood park space will be required in the future to accommodate population growth. **Although**

Squamish has adequate park space it is not always spread proportionally in the local areas.

Downtown

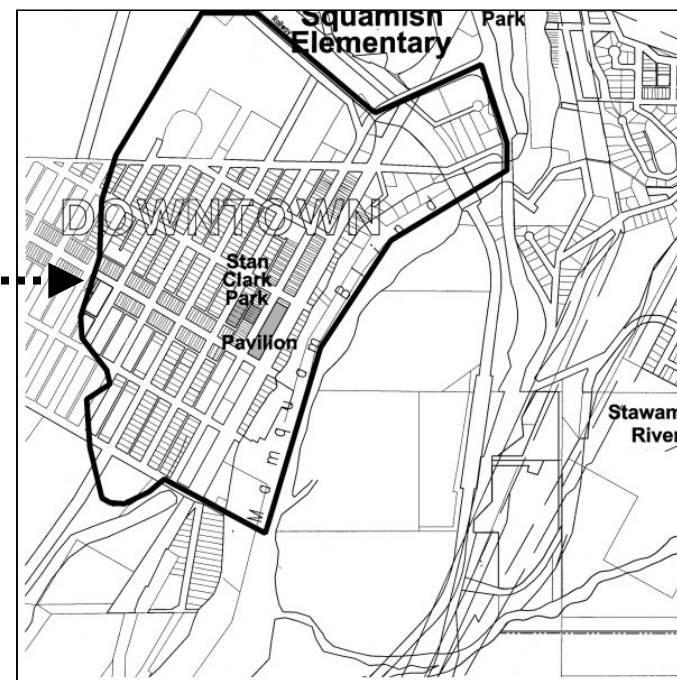
The Downtown sub-area is characterized by a mix of commercial, residential, industrial and institutional uses. The only two park spaces in the downtown sub-area (i.e., Stan Clark Park and Pavilion Park) are located in the midst of the commercial core, too far removed to serve the residential community on the west side of Downtown.

- ❑ ***As opportunities present themselves, Council should consider acquiring and designating land to make up the deficiency of neighbourhood park space in the downtown area.***

The *Official Community Plan* projects that the growth rate in Downtown will be higher than in any other sub-area of the community. The majority of residential growth will arise from redevelopment of existing underdeveloped sites, and will likely include townhouses, low-rise apartments and the upper floors of mixed-use developments.

- ❑ *As the residential population of Downtown increases acquire land in the downtown to maintain a supply compatible with the neighbourhood standard (SECTION 3.1.3).*
- ❑ *Develop guidelines for multi-family development to ensure that these developments provide open space to meet the needs of their residents.*

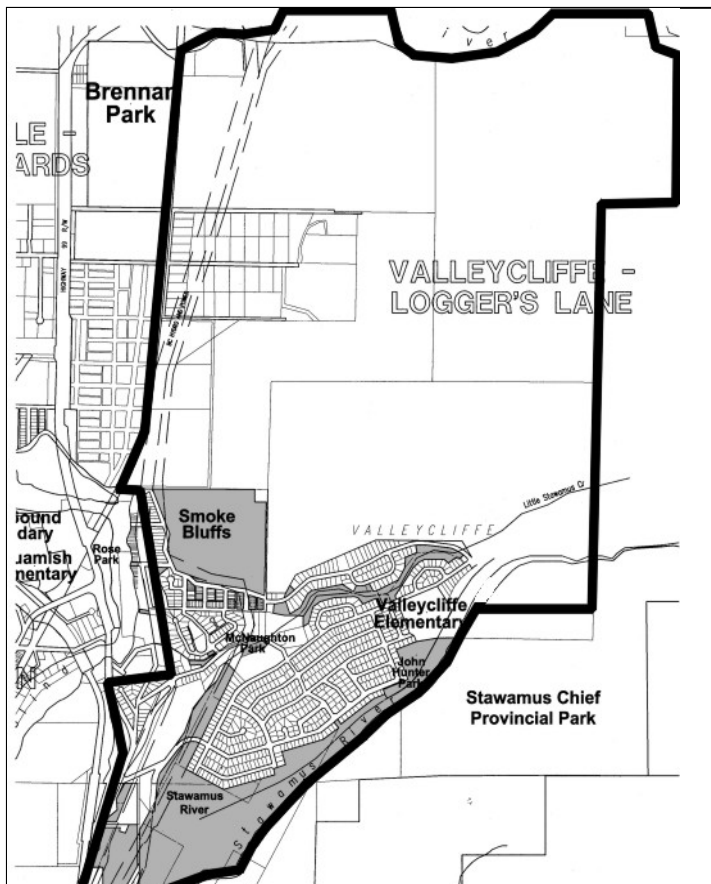
1.



2. Valleycliffe and Hospital Hill

The Valleycliffe and Logger's Lane areas have a modest surplus of neighbourhood park space (i.e., 1.2 ha). However, this is a surplus of land only. Because John Hunter Park is undeveloped, there is a deficiency of neighbourhood park facilities and opportunities for **residents in Valleycliffe**. The option to develop these facilities at John Hunter Park is not preferred because access to it is inadequate and there are existing facilities next door at Valleycliffe Elementary.

- ❑ **As opportunities present themselves, Council may consider a joint-use agreement with School District No. 48 for the development, use and maintenance of neighbourhood park facilities at Valleycliffe Elementary, including repair and/or upgrading of existing school sportfields. These facilities should be developed along the school frontage on Westway Avenue or at the end of Hemlock Avenue. A portion of John Hunter Park adjacent to the school grounds could be used for expanded sportfields if necessary.**



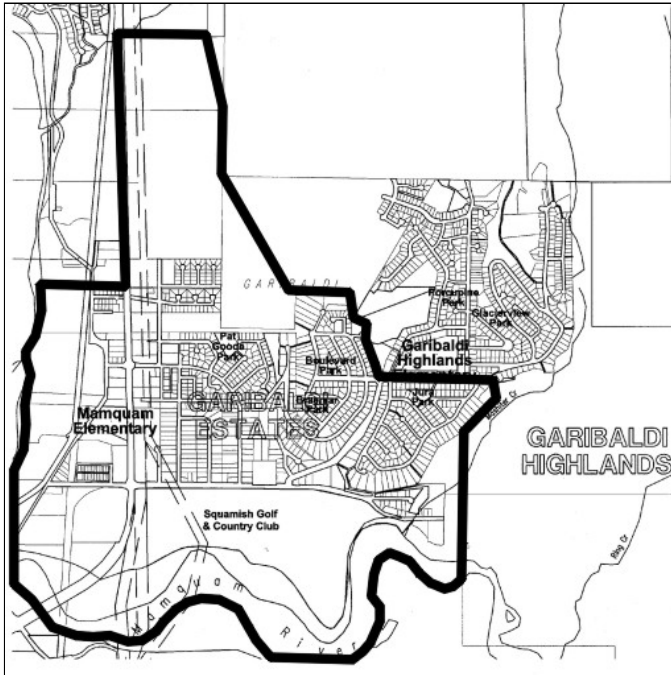
Valleycliffe – Loggers Lane Sub-area

The **south west** of Valleycliffe, above the Stawamus River, is particularly well-served by neighbourhood park space. Due to topographic and access constraints, the effective service radius of these parks does not extend to the Hospital Hill area, which does not have a neighbourhood park. There are several parcels of undeveloped District-owned land in the Hospital Hill area. **This area is adjacent to the Smoke Bluffs climbing and hiking area, and is accessible to Hospital Hill residents.**

- ❑ **As opportunities present themselves, Council should consider acquiring** land, or use existing municipal-owned land, and develop a small neighbourhood park (e.g., playground, picnic table) in the Hospital Hill area to serve residents there

There are large tracts of undeveloped land north and east of the existing Valleycliffe sub-area. The *Official Community Plan* proposes that these areas will accommodate significant residential development, adding approximately 4,350 people (per the projected OCP population threshold of 30,000) to the population of the sub-area. This corresponds to a total neighbourhood park requirement of almost approximately 10 hectares; 4.9 hectares more than the current inventory.

- ❑ As the area is subdivided and developed, acquire land for neighbourhood park use to maintain a supply compatible with the neighbourhood park standard (SECTION 3.1.3). In the absence of higher priorities make acquisitions using the 5 per cent parkland dedication policy (SECTION 3.13). **The District and the developer(s) must work together to determine who pays for what. For example, the developer could pay for capital costs and the District could pay for maintenance and operating costs.**



Garibaldi Estates Sub-area

Garibaldi Estates 3.

The upper and eastern areas of the Garibaldi Estates are well-serviced by neighbourhood parks. The southwest quadrant of the sub-area is not serviced by an existing neighbourhood park. **Potential opportunities may occur depending on the future of the adjacent Golf Course.**

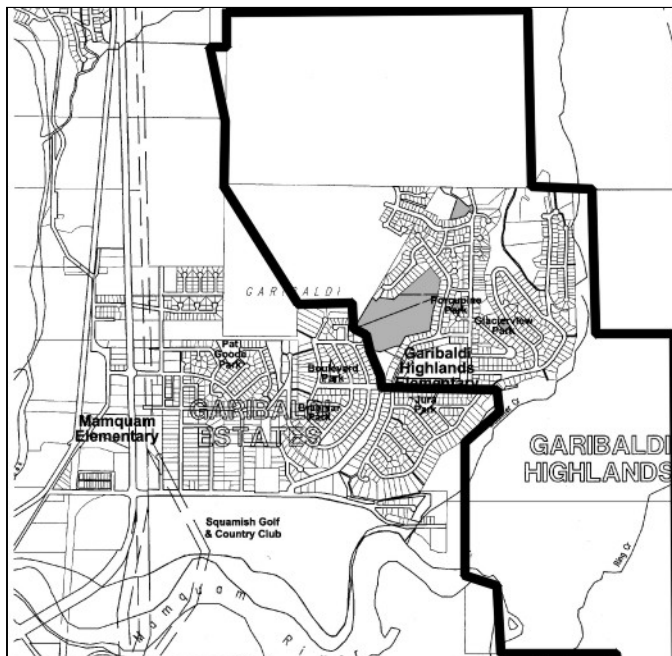
The *Official Community Plan* identifies Garibaldi Estates as one of the largest residential areas of the community. It will eventually have a population of 5,075 (per the projected OCP population threshold of 30,000) and a neighbourhood park need of 7.1 hectares, 4.7 hectares more than the current inventory.

- ❑ *As the area is subdivided and developed acquire land for neighbourhood park use to maintain a supply compatible with the neighbourhood park standard (SECTION 3.1.3). In the absence of higher priorities make acquisitions using the 5 per cent parkland dedication policy (SECTION 3.13).*

Garibaldi Highlands 4.

The Garibaldi Highlands has a modest surplus of neighbourhood park space (0.35 ha). However, on a service radius basis the north end of the existing residential neighbourhood is not well served with neighbourhood park space.

The *Official Community Plan* foresees significant residential development in the Garibaldi Highlands. With a projected population of approximately 7,830 (per the projected OCP population threshold of 30,000), it will ultimately be the largest sub-area of the community.



- ❑ *As undeveloped land in the Garibaldi Highlands is subdivided and developed for residential use, acquire land for neighbourhood park use to maintain a supply compatible with the neighbourhood park standard (SECTION 3.1.3). In the absence of higher priorities make acquisitions using the 5 per cent parkland dedication policy (SECTION 3.13).*

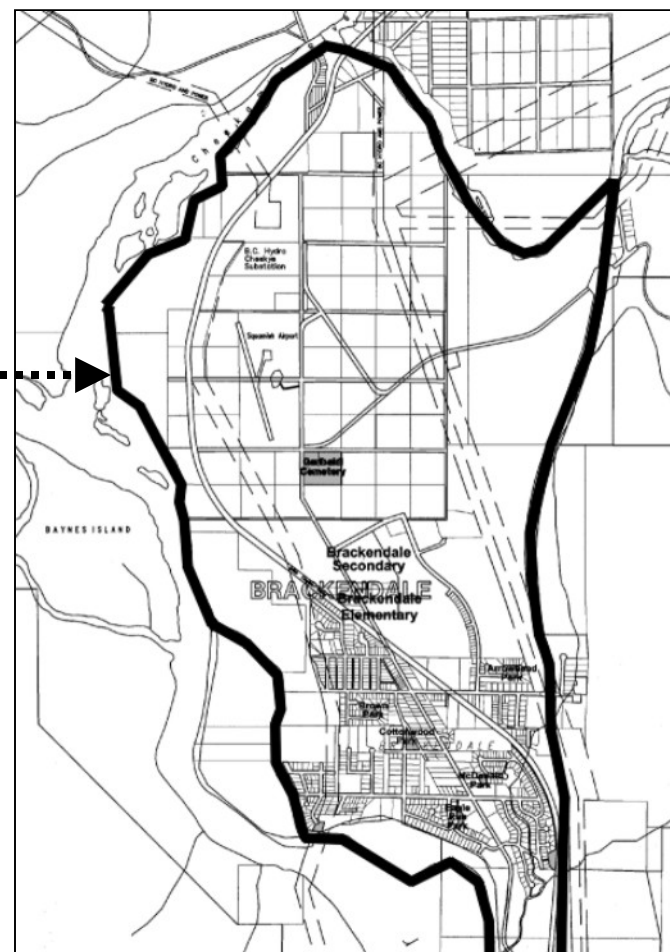
5. Brackendale

Brackendale has a deficiency of neighbourhood park space in the community (1.4 ha). This deficiency is principally a deficiency of land and recreational facilities. The existing residential area has four neighbourhood parks, with overlapping services areas, that are developed with children’s playgrounds. However, these parks are significantly under-sized (average area = 0.21 ha) and without passive grass open spaces or sportfields.

- ❑ ***As opportunities present themselves, Council should consider acquiring one large neighbourhood park in the central portion of the existing residential neighbourhood or near the river. Develop the park with a playground, sportfield facilities and passive open space.***

Though the Brackendale sub-area is large, the area designated for residential development is modest. The majority of growth projected in the *Official Community Plan* is proposed to occur on the vacant and under-developed lands of the existing residential lands of the sub-area .

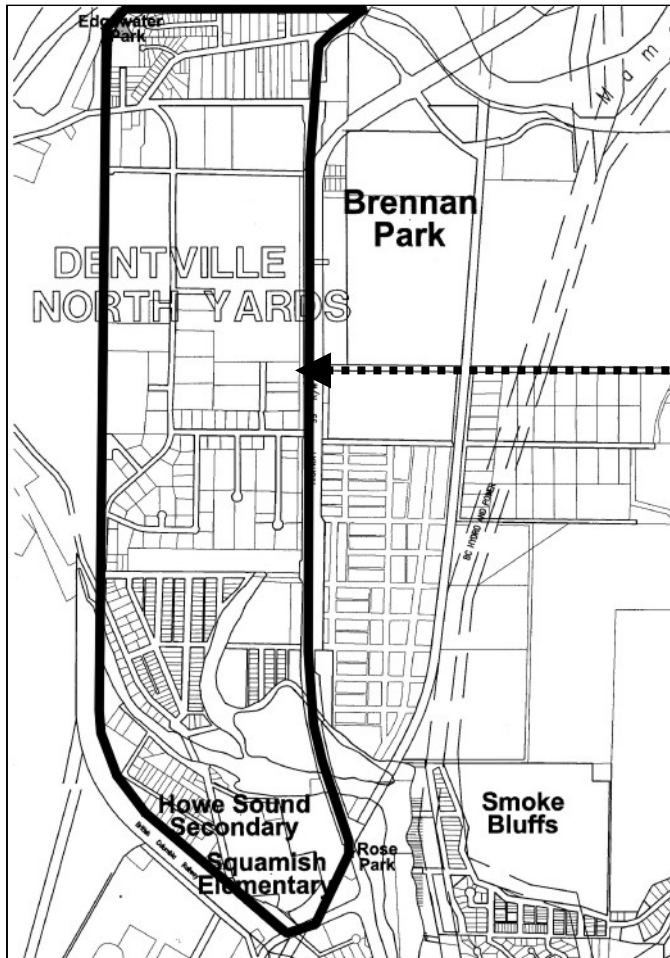
- ❑ *As undeveloped land in the Brackendale is developed for residential use, acquire land for neighbourhood park use to maintain a supply compatible with the neighbourhood park standard (SECTION 3.1.3).*



Brackendale Sub-area

North Yards and Dentville

6.



Dentville – North Yards Sub-area

The estimated 1,885 residents of this sub-area are under-served by neighbourhood park space (0.48 ha) and facilities. The existing park spaces of this sub-area are comprised of a small and modestly developed neighbourhood park (i.e., Edgewater Park) in the north and the grounds of **Howe Sound Secondary/Squamish Elementary** in the south. The residential lands of this sub-area, located in the south and north ends of the sub-area, are separated by lands designated for industrial use.

- ❑ ***As opportunities present themselves, Council should consider acquiring, or designating, and developing a neighbourhood park in this sub-area according to the standards (SECTION 3.1.3).***

3.4 Neighbourhood Park Acquisition

1. Acquisition Guidelines

Neighbourhood parks have typically been acquired by the District as a result of purchase or as a dedication by developers upon subdivision (SECTION 3.1.3). Historically, though past acquisitions may have met the expectations or conditions of their day, they are inadequate to meet present and future needs.

□ *For the acquisition of neighbourhood park land - whether by purchase, dedication, gifting or joint use with the School District – the park standards (SECTION 3.1.3) and the following guidelines should be followed:*

- LOCATION
The park should be located in a central or park deficient area of a neighbourhood. The service radius for neighbourhood parks should be a 5 to 10 minute walk. Locating the park adjacent to a natural open space, especially one that has trail connections, is desirable.
- TOPOGRAPHY
The majority of the park should have a minimal slope. Flatter sites are less expensive to develop and maintain and they provide more opportunities for neighbourhood activities.
- VISIBILITY
The main use areas of the park should be easily visible from the frontage street.
- SIZE
A size range of 0.5 to 1.0 hectare is acceptable for neighbourhood parks. Small parks generally have limited future use potential and have a higher maintenance cost on a per unit area basis.



NOTE:

A common comment of survey respondents was that neighbourhoods need more and better park amenities.

- ACCESS
The park must be easily accessible by residents, including pedestrians, cyclists, strollers, walkers and wheelchairs. Linking the park with existing and future neighbourhood sidewalks, bike routes and trails is important. At least one side of the park should front on a through road. Parks bounded by developed land and accessible by only narrow corridors are not appropriate.
- FEATURE/ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
Where appropriate use neighbourhood parks to acquire and help protect significant features and environmentally sensitive areas (e.g., rock outcrops, forested areas, unique vegetation, creeks, wetlands, shorelines, etc.).

Acquisition Methods 2.

When it comes to acquiring neighbourhood park land it is important to recognize that there are a wide variety of financial, legislative and planning methods to achieve this.

- *In acquiring park land and protecting environmentally sensitive sites employ methods that achieve the goal of the acquisition (e.g., public access, recreation facility development, environmental protection, etc.) in a cost-effective and practical manner and protect or enhance the long-term park and recreation opportunities of the community. Potential acquisition and protection tools include:*

- OWNERSHIP
Acquisition/purchase; Statutory right-of-way, easement, option to purchase, bare land strata, conservation covenants, profits a prendre.
- CO-OPERATION
Gifting, land swap, joint-use agreement, public-private or public-public partnership, long-term lease, land trust, private land stewardship and memorandum of understanding.
- PLANNING
OCP designation, development permit designation, 5% dedication upon subdivision, development cost charge (DCC), school sites acquisition, public route of access dedication, comprehensive development zones, density bonusing and bylaws (e.g., tree protection, soil removal, steep slope and environmentally sensitive area bylaws)

3.5 Natural Environment

The *Official Community Plan* identifies environmentally sensitive land within the municipality as a Development Permit (DP) area for protection of the natural environment. Development Permit guidelines are intended to protect these areas from the impacts of land development. In summary, these areas include:

- Squamish River (including the Squamish Estuary, Brackendale Eagle Reserve and Baynes Island Ecological Reserve)
- Cheakamus River (mouth at Squamish River)
- Stawamus River (mouth at Mamquam Blind Channel)
- Mamquam Blind Channel (upper reaches, above Highway 99 crossing)
- Logger's Lane Creek (south of Finch Drive)

There are more environmentally important sites in Squamish than those covered by the above DP areas. The *Important Natural Areas and Streams of Squamish* document, prepared in 1998, identifies 27 important natural areas in the community. Some of these areas are located within the above-mentioned DP areas while others are not. Many of these 27 sites are fish bearing streams or tributaries and thus protected under provincial and federal legislation. Two sites (i.e., Baynes Island Eagle Reserve) are protected under provincial legislation. *Sensitive Fish Habitat Atlas* by Fisheries and Oceans Canada, identifies a number of sensitive sites.

1. Environmentally Sensitive Areas

The District of Squamish is unique among many BC communities in that despite its historic development patterns and a recent period of rapid growth, many of its most sensitive natural areas remain reasonably intact and functioning. This valuable heritage can



contribute significantly to a long-term sustainable community. However, it is important to note that, despite the work of the *Official Community Plan* and the *Important Natural Areas and Streams of Squamish*, not all of the important natural areas and features in the community have been identified.



- ❑ *The District should, under the mandate of the Planning Department, undertake a comprehensive Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA) study to identify all of the sensitive natural areas and features in the community. The study should:*

- *Consult with relevant regulatory agencies;*
- *Confirm the sensitivity of the Development Permit areas and the Important Natural Areas and Streams;*
- *Identify other sensitive natural areas and features; and*
- *Make recommendations for protection, enhancement, recreation, management, urban development guidelines and landowner mitigation for the sites.*

Accommodate Use 2.

The natural areas and features of Squamish, while they are important ecological resources, are used as or have potential as a recreation resource for the citizens of the community. Whether or not these areas are developed for recreation use, people will be attracted to these areas for recreation purposes because of the amenity and experience values they provide. Therefore, an essential part of protecting or managing a natural area must include how people's access and use of it is planned and managed.

- ❑ *Based on the findings and recommendations of the ESA study develop and manage passive recreation activities (e.g., walking, hiking, running, on-trail cycling, wildlife viewing, nature appreciation, environmental education, etc.) that respect the natural environment and are integrated with the trails and activities in other areas of the community.*

3.6 Squamish Estuary

The Squamish Estuary is a 950-hectare area at the south end of Squamish, from the confluence of the Squamish and Stawamus Rivers to the north end of Howe Sound, and including the Downtown area and the Mamquam Blind Channel. The estuary contains areas of significant ecosystem value and important economic opportunities. A most recent version of the *Squamish Estuary Management Plan* was released in October 1999. The plan identifies areas of conservation (i.e., 579 hectares; generally the west portion of the management area), areas of industrial and commercial development (i.e., 350 hectares; the east portion of the management area) and areas requiring further planning (i.e., 8 ha).



Squamish Estuary

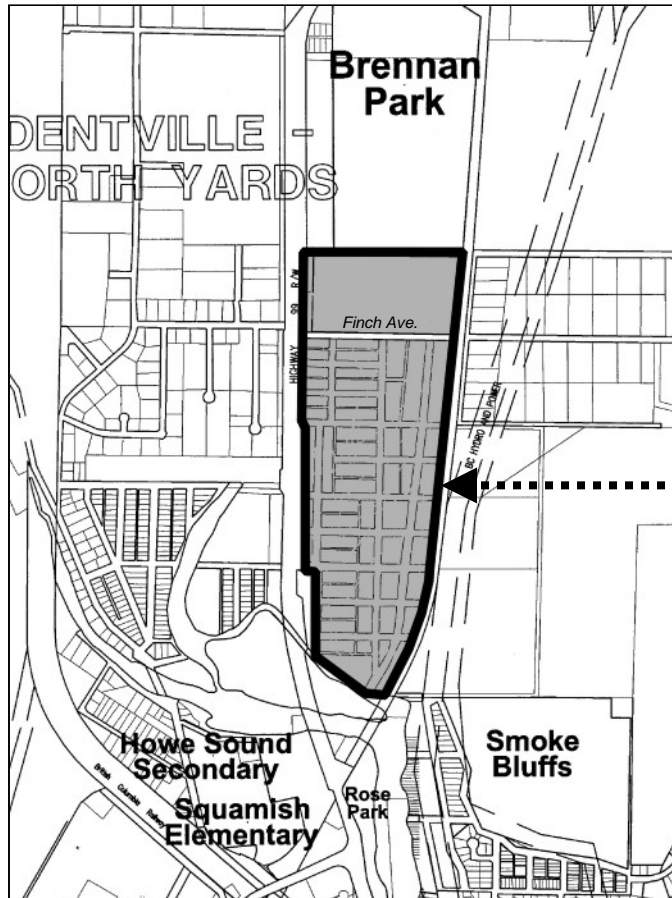
1. Trails and Education

□ *Work with the Squamish Estuary Management Committee and the Trails Steering Committee to assist with the development of a sustainable trail network. In particular, specific initiatives that can be undertaken by the District of Squamish include the following:*

- *Staging/parking areas and trailheads*
- *Access across BC Rail lands*
- *Integration with District trail system and maps*

3.7 South of Finch

There are approximately 37 hectares of natural open space located south of Brennan Park and north of the Mamquam Blind Channel, between Highway 99 and Loggers Lane. The District and Crown are entering into a land exchange involving this parcel of land.



South of Finch

1. Use and Development

The land consists of early succession second growth forest with poorly drained soils, a high water table and numerous skidder trails. There is an extensive network of old skidder trails, channels and depressions, some of which may be accessed by fish during periods of high water. The property is identified in the *Official Community Plan* as Environmentally Sensitive Lands and as a Development Permit Area for protection of the natural environment. As a condition of the land exchange there is a requirement to leave no less than 50 per cent of the parcel in a natural state. While the site offers potential for development of urban community uses (e.g., RCMP detachment, arena, etc.) or more sportfields, the type of landscape alteration caused by development of these uses is not compatible with the intent for the site. In addition, the need for urban community uses can be met elsewhere in the community, as can the need for additional sportfields (SECTION 4.3). At this time the most appropriate use for the site is as natural open space, for protection of the natural environment and for the recreation and education of the community.

- ❑ *Use and development of the site should respect its potential environmental sensitivity (subject to ESA assessment). The principal expectations of the site should be for:*
 - *Sportfields (north of Finch Avenue only)*
 - *Environmental protection and enhancement*
 - *Passive recreation (e.g., walking, on-trail cycling)*
 - *Education and interpretation*

- ❑ *Over time, as the community grows and changes, it may be appropriate to re-examine and re-define these expectations.*

2. Naming

The site has no formal name but is referred to by a variety of descriptions (e.g., Brennan Park South, upper reaches of the Mamquam Blind Channel, Mamquam Wetlands and South of Finch). While these names provide a geographic description of the site they do not communicate the essential quality of the site.

- ❑ *When the District acquires the land, commission a name for the site that reflects its natural character and the uses proposed for it. The name could be developed by a group assigned with that task or by a public competition. The new name of the area could be announced in conjunction with an opening ceremony for the trail being built through the site.*

3. Trail

The District has obtained FRBC funding to develop interpretive trails and a trail that will provide an off-road pedestrian connection between Brennan Park and downtown.

- ❑ *Support and encourage development of the proposed trails.*

4. Management Plan

The site has a variety of important values; to residents as an accessible natural green space in the centre of the community and for fish as spawning and over-wintering habitat. It also has significant potential as part of the eco-tourism infrastructure of the community. Efforts to enhance one of these values can enhance the others as well. On the other hand, a biased emphasis on one of these values could deleteriously impact one of the others. It is necessary to develop a reliable understanding of the existing conditions of the site and the proposed uses for the site – in this way the District can be assured that there will be a balance between environment protection and community benefit.

- ❑ *Prepare a management plan for this site. The plan should be based on a reliable understanding of existing conditions of the site and the community uses proposed for it. As a minimum the management plan should address the following issues:*
 - EXISTING CONDITIONS
Topography, drainage, waterbodies, vegetation, fish habitat, animal habitat, and others;
 - PLANNING POLICIES
Goals and objectives, management units (e.g., preservation, conservation, passive, recreation, site development, etc.), public involvement, and others;
 - MANAGEMENT MEASURES
Environmental protection policies and tools, forest succession, spawning channel enhancement, site remediation, site and trail development guidelines, inter-agency relationships (e.g., federal and provincial), pitch and putt golf course feasibility (SECTION 4.4.3), and others; and
 - SITE IMPROVEMENTS
Access points, staging areas, trails, interpretive features, signage and maps, and others.

- ❑ *There are a variety of approaches to preparing a management plan. It could be done by District staff, by hired consultants or, like the Squamish Estuary Management Plan, by a committee comprised of the District, local residents, interest groups, governing agencies and the District.*

3.8 Downtown

1. Downtown Sub-Area

The Downtown sub-area is characterized by a mix of commercial, residential, industrial and institutional uses. The only two park spaces in the downtown sub-area (ie., Stan Clark Park and Pavilion Park) are located in the midst of the commercial core, too far removed to serve the residential community on the west side of Downtown.

- **As opportunities present themselves, Council should consider acquiring and designating land to make up the deficiency of neighbourhood park space in the Downtown area.**

The *Official Community Plan* projects that the growth rate in Downtown will be higher than in any other sub-area of the community. The majority of residential growth will arise from redevelopment of existing underdeveloped sites, and will likely include townhouses, low-rise apartments and the upper floors of mixed-use developments.

- ***As the residential population of Downtown increases acquire land in the downtown to maintain a supply compatible with the neighbourhood standard (SECTION 3.1.3).***
- ***Develop guidelines for mult-family development to ensure that these developments provide open space to meet the needs of their residents.***



Junction Park

Squamish Junction Park 2.

Central Park including Junction Park is an important open space for the Downtown and it is the front door to the community for travelers on BC Rail. From its design and amenities, it is evident that it has been developed to express the history of the community and its people.

- ❑ *Retain the area as park. Prepare a site plan of the park to guide its development and use over the next ten years. Issues to address include:*
 - ***Provide more hard surface pedestrian access to open space and amenities consistent in the 2000 plan or other uses;***
 - *Provide features and interpretive amenities that enhance the expression and understanding of the community's history and people.*
 - ***Develop a pedestrian connection across the park to Cleveland Avenue and Stan Clarke Park;***
 - ***Encourage BC Rail to develop passenger-related facilities on their right-of-way that add to the character of the Downtown and the park.***

Stan Clark Park 3.

Stan Clark Park is a 0.4 hectare parcel of park land in the Downtown core. It has a children's playground, a cenotaph and a mosaic arch.

- ❑ *Retain Stan Clark Park as a community park and green open space in the Downtown core. Prepare a site plan of the park to guide its development and use over the next ten years. Issues to address include:*
 - *Continue to provide play amenities for children, from toddlers to pre-teens;*
 - *Provide amenities for passive enjoyment of the park (e.g., benches, picnic tables, play equipment; civic art, plaza space, etc.);*
 - *Increase the visibility of the park and enhance its appearance from the street.*

SECTION 3

- *Require future developments and re-developments adjacent to the park to provide accessible pedestrian access along their frontages with the park;*
- *Encourage building uses (e.g., offices, restaurants, shops, etc.) to face the park and have public access to and from it;*
- *Connect the park to Junction Park; and*
- *Possible expansion of the park.*

4. Plazas and Open Spaces

The urban form of a downtown is comprised of buildings and open spaces. The open spaces include streets and sidewalks (SECTION 3.8.1) and plazas. Plazas, squares and other urban open spaces are an essential component of a quality downtown.

- ❑ *As a condition of development, encourage the provision of plazas, squares, lanes and other urban open spaces that improve pedestrian access, enhance the pedestrian experience and contribute to the built form of Downtown.*

5. Waterfront Walkway

The *Official Community Plan* requires that new urban development along Mamquam Blind Channel dedicate waterfront land to the District and develop public pathways here. The one existing portion of walkway, just south of Pemberton Avenue, provides an example of how the pathway can function at a basic level. The waterfront location of the pathway system requires that, for the benefit of the community, more than a basic level of function be met. Waterfront pathways are an excellent opportunity to reinforce the waterfront character and cultural heritage of the community.

- ❑ *As per the Official Community Plan, require the dedication of land and development of a public pathway along the Mamquam Channel waterfront in downtown Squamish. The design and development of the walkway should address the following issues:*



Waterfront Walkway

NOTE:

People noted the need for a boardwalk along the water.



PUBLIC SURVEY RESULT

My number one concern is that Squamish is a coastal town but we have no access to the waterfront.

NOTE:

Waterfront access is the public's # 1 priority (SECTION 2.7).

- UNIFORMITY
One theme and development standard should be applied to the entire waterfront walkway. Differing themes and standards may hinder optimal use of the walkway and may weaken the aesthetic and experiential opportunities of the site.
- SQUAMISH THEME
The waterfront setting, landscape context (e.g., the Chief) and the industrial heritage of the site should be clearly expressed. A modest treatment of asphalt walkway, concrete curb or retaining wall and generic fixtures and furniture will not reflect this.
- DOWNTOWN 2000 PLAN
Must be consistent with Downtown 2000 Plan.

Oceanfront Park 6.

The results of the community survey conducted as part of this Master Plan indicate that respondents place the provision of waterfront access as one of the most important park issues in the community.

- ❑ *In conjunction with the re-development of downtown, acquire and develop an oceanfront park for community park use. Consider innovative ways to fund and implement this recommendation. Possible locations for an oceanfront park in the Downtown area include:*
 - *Along the Mamquam Blind Channel*
 - *At or near the government wharf*
 - *At the end or along Catermole Slough*
 - *On Howe Sound.*

The issue of a public marina is addressed elsewhere in the *Master Plan* (SECTION 4.6.1). **It is recognized the land is privately owned.**

3.9 Rose Park

1. Park Function

Rose Park is a 2.7-hectare area of land located in a highly visible location between Mamquam Blind Channel and Highway 99, opposite the Cleveland Avenue entrance to Downtown. It lies within the planning and assessment area of the *Squamish Estuary Management Plan*. Rose Park is Squamish's only significant waterfront park.

- ❑ *Rose Park will provide waterfront access and passive recreation opportunities for the entire community and its visitors. The high visibility location of the park will be used to enhance the image, identity and entrance of the community.*

2. Park Development

A concept plan for this community park, completed in 1999, describes the proposed function and appearance of the park. In summary, it calls for:

- Habitat/vegetation retention
 - Passive walking trails
 - Connections along Mamquam Blind Channel
 - Pedestrian bridge across Mamquam Blind Channel
 - Seating and viewpoints
 - Erosion protection
 - Information and mapping kiosk
- ❑ *Undertake detailed design and construction of the park in the near future (**in progress**).*



Rose Park

Dykes and Riverfront Access 3.10



Squamish River dyke at eagle viewing area

There are approximately 21 kilometres of dykes in Squamish, principally along the east side of the Squamish River and the north and south sides of the Stawamus and Mamquam Rivers. These dykes, maintained by the province and the District, provide essential flood protection to the low-lying areas of Squamish (e.g., Downtown, Dentville, industrial lands, etc.).

Open Space System 1.

The dykes are also an excellent opportunity to provide uninterrupted open space access through much of the low-lying lands of the community and alongside some of the key amenities of the community (i.e., the rivers). Such an open space asset would be comparable to the Stanley Park Seawall in Vancouver or the Bow River Trail System in Calgary. **Vehicle access should be limited and appropriate signage used.**

- *Use the publicly accessible portions of the dyke system as the major framework for the open space system in the low-lying areas of Squamish. Link other pedestrian and bicycle trails to it. **The public portions of the dyke system are considered linear parks, and the District of Squamish should make every effort to gain ownership of privately owned portions of the dyke system.***

Site Improvements 2.

The dykes, constructed of earthen fill and rip-rap, are designed to contain the rivers and permit access along the tops of the dykes by maintenance vehicles. In order to be more useful and enjoyable to

PUBLIC SURVEY RESULT

The dyke system is an opportunity lost - it would make an ideal linear park.

SECTION 3

the public it will be necessary to undertake some improvements of the dykes.

❑ *There are certain improvements that should be made to the dykes to make them more accessible and friendly to use by the public, including:*

- WALKING SURFACES

Over the short to intermediate term, install and maintain a smooth and compact surface of crushed rock or limestone. Over the long term convert the surface to asphalt to provide accommodate heavier use and improve accessibility. Include the provision of paths, ramps or steps in some areas to enable people to gain easy access to the top of the dykes.

- SITE FURNITURE

Install and maintain benches, picnic tables, trash receptacles and signage at key locations along the top of the dykes, but sufficiently removed from the travel surface of the dykes, to permit uninterrupted access for maintenance vehicles.

- SIGNAGE and MAPS

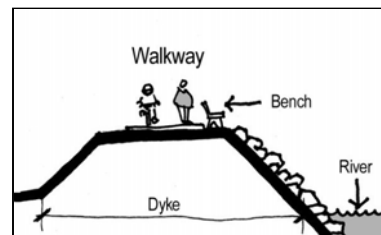
As a spine for much of the community's open space system the accessible dyke system should have sufficient and appropriate signs, maps and interpretive information to help users find their way and enhance their experience.

- USER EDUCATION

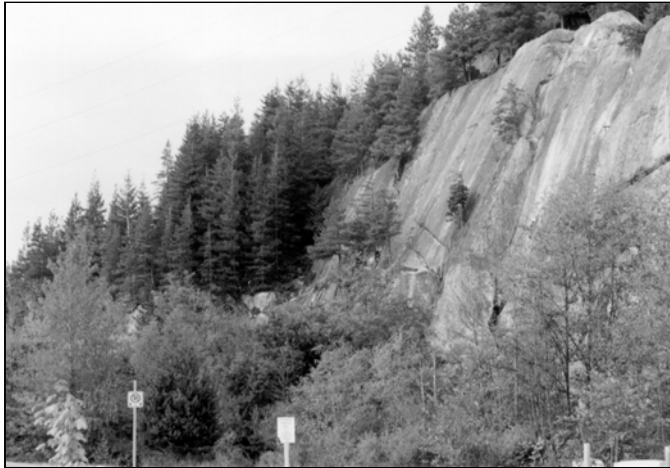
Implement a trail code of ethics to respect the environment, reduce conflicts between users and minimize impacts on adjacent landowners and residents.

- WATERCRAFT LAUNCHING/PULL-OUT

Identify and develop strategic locations along the dykes where non-motorized watercraft (e.g., rafts, canoes, kayaks and rowboats) can be launched and retrieved (SECTION 6.5.4).



Smoke Bluffs 3.11



Smoke Bluffs

The Smoke Bluffs are a series of exposed granite formations located north of the Valleycliffe neighbourhood and east of Mamquam Blind Channel. They offer over 600 high quality routes for beginner to intermediate rock climbers. The site is very popular with local and visiting rock climbers, including local guides and instructors. The terms of reference for the *Park and Recreation Master Plan* identified the Smoke Bluffs as a special focus area

Site Improvements 1.

There are a number of site development initiatives that would enhance the long-term function of the site.

□ *Work with the local rock climbing association and local residents to design and construct improvements to the area that will enhance the usability of it. Issues to address include, including:*

- *Parking*
- *Maps*
- *Signage*
- *Attendant building*
- *Shelter*
- *Drinking water*
- *Public/emergency telephone*
- **Campgrounds**

3.12 Trails

The presence and use of trails in Squamish has a long history, starting with the informal use of wildlife paths in the forested valley. Today the trails are more formalized and heavily used. The need and desire for a comprehensive and effective trail network is expressed in District policies (e.g., the *OCP*) and by the citizens of the community (e.g., the community survey conducted as part of the *Master Plan*). The circumstances of the community reinforce this need and desire:

- A scenic setting and repletion of natural open spaces and amenities;
- Extensive network of linear features (e.g., rivers and streams, roads, utility rights-of-way, rail rights-of-way, dykes, waterfront);
- Physically active citizenry; and
- Distant and spread out destinations in the community (e.g., downtown, neighbourhoods, schools, etc.).

The trails of the community may be distinguished by their setting and function. Based on this, and for the purposes of this *Master Plan*, there are three types of trails:

- PRIMARY
These are located in the developed areas of the community and consist of the major pedestrian and bicycle routes designated in the *Official Community Plan*. Primary trails may include sidewalks, bicycle lanes, commuter trails, paths, the river dykes and major linear parks. They are used for both transportation (e.g., to work, shopping, or school) and recreation (for sport and leisure). They are the framework for the community's trail system and provide access between the neighbourhoods and major destinations of the community.



NOTE:

Trails are the public's # 2 priority (SECTION 2.7).

- SECONDARY
These are also located in the developed areas of the community. Secondary trails provide connections to the primary trails from dispersed areas **and minor destinations.**
- BACKCOUNTRY
These refer to the earthen footpaths, bike trails and old roads that pervade the undeveloped areas of the community (e.g., the forests, open spaces, creek corridors, etc.). They extend from the developed areas of the community to the forested Crown land outside the municipality.



District Role 1.

Currently, primary and secondary trails are developed and maintained by the District.

- The District should, with the **assistance of users and community groups, be responsible for planning and designing the primary and secondary trail network.***
- The District's role in developing and maintaining trails should be focused on primary and secondary trails. It will be **necessary to determine** which specific routes will be paved for universal access and which won't be.*

Community Role 2.

In Squamish the backcountry trails are not formally managed by the District or any other governing agency. Construction and maintenance of backcountry trails in Squamish has traditionally been led by local interest groups and user groups.

- The **interest groups and user groups of the community should be encouraged to take responsibility for the development and maintenance of backcountry trails.***

3. Trail Networks

The *Official Community Plan* recognizes the need for the establishment of a community-wide system of primary and secondary trails. A safe and comprehensive system of trails is essential for non-automobile movement throughout the community.

- ❑ *The priority for trail system development should focus on the primary trails – the major trail linkages in the community (e.g., commuter trails, the dykes, major roads and accessible linkages between the neighbourhoods and important destinations of the community).*
- ❑ *As portions of the primary network are constructed and put into use further develop the secondary trail routes and tie them into **each other and the primary trail network**.*

4. Trail Standards

The existing inventory of trails, walkways, sidewalks and paths in the urban areas of the community represent a broad cross-section of planning, design and construction principles. That is, the condition of the trail may or may not relate well to its intended function and may differ considerably from other trails intended to have the same function. There is a need for one set of standards, purposefully and consistently applied, in order to wisely provide the most appropriate trail system for the community.

- ❑ *Prepare standards for the primary and secondary trail systems to direct the planning, design, construction and maintenance. The standards should address the following issues:*



- PUBLIC ACCESS
Trails should be located on property where public access is possible and permitted. Public access on land may be obtained by a variety of legal tools, including acquisition, park dedication, right-of-way designation, etc.
- TRAIL HIERARCHY
Different trails will serve different users and provide access to different parts of the community. Develop a classification system of the different types of trails that there will be in the community. This will include concrete sidewalks along the landscaped boulevards of major roads, the single-track dirt mountain bike trail through the forests and everything in between. For each existing and proposed trail in the community determine which classification they fall into.
- TRAIL TREATMENT
For each trail type (above), develop a design and construction standard that describes, among other things, its intended function, proposed users, width, maximum grades, drainage, surface treatment (e.g., unit paver, asphalt, concrete, gravel, compacted earth, boardwalk, etc.), site furniture/structures and unique features. Trails in or near ESA's require the approval of regulatory agencies.
- ACCESSIBILITY
Trail users have a broad range of abilities. The success of a community trail system depends in part, on how it serves the citizens of the community. While it is not intended that every trail in the community should be universally accessible to all, it is a requirement that the primary trails meet this goal. Where there is a need or where it is possible and appropriate, secondary should aim for this as well.
- SAFETY
It is not necessary or appropriate to design and construct trails for every remote contingency that could affect a user's safety. It is necessary to identify probable hazards or threats to safety and address them. In conjunction with this, because users bear responsibility for their own actions, it is necessary to provide them with trail education (e.g., trail etiquette, environmental stewardship, hazard risks, etc.) to assist them in using the trail system in an enjoyable and safe manner.

SECTION 3

- MAINTENANCE
Develop and implement a program that prescribes what, how, when and by whom (ie. by the District, Adopt a Trail, Developer, Trails Steering Society, etc.) trail maintenance will occur. Priority for trail maintenance should be given to the most heavily used routes, potential hazard areas and environmentally sensitive areas. Appropriate budgets need to be developed and allocated to build and maintain trails to the District's standards.
- MAPS and SIGNAGE
Provide maps and signage of the trail system to help users find where they are and where they're going, educate them about the environment and the community, and define appropriate and inappropriate use of the trail.

Implement and adhere to the standards.

3.13 Park Land/Cash Dedication

1. Maintain 5% Dedication

The District is empowered by the *Municipal Act* to require the dedication of parkland to the municipality upon subdivision of land. The dedication of this parkland may be for up to 5 per cent of the land in question or, at the discretion of the District, the equivalent value of cash instead of land. If cash is collected it may only be applied to the purchase of land for park purposes.

Continue to require the five per cent dedication of land or cash as a requirement of subdivision.

The District's policy is to require the 5 per cent dedication of land and/or cash from developers at the time of subdivision. The determination of whether to accept land (and how much and where) or cash (and how much) is generally made on a case by case basis.

Parks Pre-Plan

2.

The District needs to identify general areas of the community desired for future park land. These areas must be identified in a Parks Pre-Plan that becomes part of the planning process for the District. This will ensure that the District's desires with respect to the 5 per cent parkland dedication override the ability of the subdivision applicant to determine how and where parkland is dedicated. The Parks Pre-Plan can be a useful planning tool to set out ahead of time what lands are to be acquired as future parks and how they are to be acquired (e.g., 5 per cent land or cash, trails as road or utility easements, etc.).

- Undertake a planning process for the undeveloped areas of the community that identifies the type and size of future parks, and open spaces that will be required.***
- Adopt the policies, maps and guidelines of the parks pre-plan into the Official Community Plan.*

The advantage of implementing such a recommendation is that it clearly specifies what, how and when the District's park and open space acquisitions in undeveloped areas are to be achieved. It also notifies potential subdivision applicants of the District's intentions, and streamlines the approval and decision making process.

SECTION 3

Brennan Park Recreation Centre 4.1



North entrance to Brennan Park **Recreation** Centre

Brennan Park **Recreation** Centre is the heart and soul of the recreation system in Squamish. Unlike many other communities, Squamish elected to concentrate all its facilities in one location, rather than building free-standing facilities throughout the community. The Centre is surrounded by extensive fields and outdoor facilities, and provides a strong sense of unity to the community. This aspect was also commented on by the public - parents noted the ability of families to attend all their children's activities throughout since everything was in the one location. The Leisure Centre was built in two different stages - one in 1975 and one in 1991. That part of the Centre that was built in 1975 is showing its age. A number of major issues have been identified.

Auditorium 1.

The auditorium experiences several problems from a programming viewpoint - tile on concrete floor is not suitable for athletic activities; the kitchen is inadequate for most banquets and functions; the ceiling is too low and a problem for most activities. In addition to some of these physical issues, the auditorium and other parts of the Centre have become obsolete due to the provision of other facilities in the community.

- o **An evaluation should be undertaken by staff, and a business plan developed to address the changes to the auditorium, kitchen and stage. The evaluation will include potential users, marketing strategies and address insurance issues.**

2. **Mezzanine**

The lounge area overlooking the arena is run down and outdated, and in need of significant upgrading.

- o **The mezzanine use should be evaluated by staff, and staff will also examine the opportunities for private enterprise to develop the space.**

3. **Multi-Purpose Meeting Space**

This meeting space includes the Junior and Senior Lounge. The present lounge areas (Junior and Senior) should be evaluated by staff and a renovation plan developed to provide a variety of activity, classroom and meeting space uses. Staff will recommend a name change for these spaces that will reflect their 'multi-use' designation.

- The present lounge areas should be **evaluated and renovated** to provide a variety of activity, classroom and meeting space.*

3. 4. **Main Foyer - Arena**

There is considerable space in the concourse area, which is not optimally used.

- Consider renovations to the concourse area to provide space for staff needs (e.g., office, storage, meeting room, staff room), user amenities, private commercial offices and retail outlets. There is considerable potential to provide spaces for services that relate to the needs of Recreation Centre users (e.g., physio/chiro/wellness clinics, sports equipment outlet, improved concession/lounge, etc.).*



NOTE:

A general upgrading of Brennan Park Recreation centre is the public's #9 priority (SECTION 2.7).

5. Fitness Facility

The Aquatic Centre and its components were constructed eight years ago and are in excellent condition. The Centre lacks some refinements and supporting facilities which would make it easier to market and ensure higher usage, but generally it will remain in good shape and adequate for the time horizon of the Master Plan.

- ❑ *A fitness and weights facility is a common component of a multi-purpose **recreation** centre, **consideration to devote an area for this purpose within the Recreation Centre, preferably adjacent to the pool and accessible to its change rooms. A renovated auditorium with a sprung or flex floor could provide both a fitness training floor and a weight training space as part of the renovation. The opportunity for public/private partnership may be considered for this service.***

The Recreation Centre's principle strength lies in the space that is available for renovation. When the auditorium, lounges and concourse are all considered as candidates for renovation, the space in them is collectively over 1,000 square metres (10,000 sq. ft.), offering potential for several new and updated facilities to be developed through renovation, as well as to give the whole Centre a major new look.

Ice Sheets 4.2

The costs of a second sheet of ice can be significant. In view of this, and considering other financial obligations the District will have over the next ten years, a partnership opportunity should be explored to achieve a second sheet of ice. Three alternatives have been identified.



Option A

1.

The existing arena, located at Brennan Park, is at capacity with regard to ice time. Another sheet of ice will be required in the near future.

- ❑ *Public-private partnership. The development of a new arena facility should be pursued as a partnership with a private partner and/or other public partners (SECTION 8.0). To enhance the viability of such a partnership and ensure long-term savings in operating costs, the new arena facility will likely require two sheets of ice. The facility may be located at Brennan Park or at another location in the community.*

If an off-site arena partnership is successful the existing arena facility will become redundant and will provide unacceptable competition to a new public-private ice facility. Without the need to be under ice for most of the year this large and covered facility provides other recreation opportunities.

- ❑ *If a new twinned arena is developed at a site other than Brennan Park, convert the existing arena into an indoor sports hall to serve a wide variety of functions (e.g., indoor soccer, basketball, volleyball, badminton, indoor tennis, trade shows, exhibitions, community events, etc.).*

2. Option B

The second challenge of the existing arena facility relates to the outdated or worn nature of most of its facilities (e.g., slab, roof, ice plant, dressing rooms). The 25-year-old facility has provided excellent service to the community. This facility is in need of a major refit. While the preferred scenario for a new arena is a new two-sheet facility, there is a possibility that this may not be feasible or a suitable partnership cannot be made. In this case, it will be

PUBLIC SURVEY RESULT

*We need a new rink
and we need it now.*

RECREATION FACILITIES

necessary to renovate or replace the existing arena facility and construct a second sheet of ice.

- ❑ *A District of Squamish undertaking if no major partnership involvement is possible. Renovate and upgrade the existing arena (e.g., slab, ice plant, roof, changerooms, etc.) to provide another 25 years of service.*
- ❑ *In coordination with a possible renovation or replacement of the existing sheet of ice, it would still be necessary to develop a second sheet of ice. The undeveloped open space immediately west and north of the existing arena should be reserved for the possible development of a second sheet of ice at Brennan Park Arena. To minimize costs a new ice surface here should share building walls and the ice plant with the existing ice surface.*

Option C 3.

There is an alternative to Option B that should also be explored.

- ❑ *Enter a public-public partnership with the Squamish Nation to develop one or two new sheets of ice. Potential sites include Brennan Park or Squamish Nation land.*

Sportfields 4.3

Sportfields refer to open grass areas used for soccer, football, baseball, softball and other team sports that require large areas of level space. Sportfields are provided in active community parks, neighbourhood parks and on school grounds. The District-owned sportfields are all located in Brennan Park.

Based on the total number of playing field and ball diamond facilities, there should be a sufficient supply of each for the

SECTION 4

community's current needs; with no significant need for new facilities until the population reaches the projected *Official Community Plan* population threshold of 30,000. However, this standards-based approach overlooks the fact that the majority of sportfields in the community (i.e., school fields) are too small and/or too poorly maintained. The result is that the majority of the community's demands for sportfields is placed on Centennial Fields, the ball diamonds and playing fields located in Brennan Park. These fields are an important community asset because all of the District-controlled ball diamonds and playing fields are located here; there are no District-owned sportfields in the neighbourhood parks of the community. There are many other sportfields in the community, but these are located on school sites and under control of the School District.

1. Centennial Fields

Due to the participation rate of the community, overlapping schedules and wet field conditions from fall to spring, the Centennial Fields are used to capacity. New users groups (e.g., football) and more teams are not able to gain access to the facilities without affecting other users. Increasing use has had detrimental impacts on the playing surfaces. Due to the high level of need for these facilities there is no ability to minimize these impacts by decreasing use of the fields or increasing maintenance.

- o *Maintain and expand the playing fields (SECTION 3.2.3) and ball diamonds (SECTION 3.2.4) of Centennial Park to enhance the community-wide recreation function of Brennan Park. Council has developed two new all-season playing fields in 200/01 (SECTION 3.2.5).*

The citizens of the community have needs for sportfields and these needs will continue to increase as the population grows.



Centennial Fields

NOTE:

All-season playing fields are the public's # 3 priority (SECTION 2.7).

PUBLIC SURVEY RESULT

We need the elementary school fields fixed up - to benefit schools and other users.

2. School Sportfields

The School District's 6 elementary and 2 secondary schools in Squamish provide two thirds of the playing fields and half of the ball diamonds in the community. In addition to school student activities these fields are used informally by residents and on a scheduled basis by some sport teams and leagues. User reports, site investigations and the community survey reveal that, generally, these facilities are substandard for community use. Conditions include under-sized facilities for teen and adult users, field surfaces that range from durable to unsafe and poor drainage when there is repeated use at wet times of year.

School District #48 should be encourage to maintain their school fields.

ρ Where schools will be developed in new neighbourhoods it may be appropriate for the District of Squamish to acquire park land adjacent to a proposed school site. Together the two properties would be developed to provide adequate park and recreation facilities. The responsibilities and financial obligations of the District of Squamish and the School District will be negotiated.

3. Neighbourhood Sportfields - Existing

Neighbourhood parks, schools and sportfields are a source of identity and an important site of activity for neighbourhoods. The ability to provide these services at a neighbourhood level will reduce vehicle trips and allow children and families to participate in recreation activities closer to home. In addition, this will reduce the impacts on Centennial Fields.

SECTION 4

- ❑ *Provide playing field and ball diamond facilities in each of the developed neighbourhoods or sub-areas of the community:*
 - DENTVILLE
Work with the School District (SECTION 4.3.2) to enable public use of the sportfields at Squamish Elementary and Howe Sound Secondary. Alternatively, to meet the future needs of Dentville (SECTION 3.3.13) and Downtown (SECTION 3.3.1) residents acquire land, or dedicate municipal-owned land, and develop it as a neighbourhood park (SECTION 3.1.3). Ensure adequate and safe pedestrian and bicycle access to these sites.
 - VALLEYCLIFFE
Work with the School District (SECTION 4.3.2) to enable public use of Valleycliffe Elementary. Use John Hunter Park as necessary to accommodate sportfield upgrading or future development (SECTION 3.3.3).
 - GARIBALDI ESTATES
Work with the School District (SECTION 4.3.2) to enable public use of the sportfields at Mamquam Elementary. If Squamish Golf and Country Club is redeveloped for residential use provide pedestrian and bicycle access from the existing developed areas of Garibaldi Estates to neighbourhood park space in the new residential neighbourhood.

RECREATION FACILITIES

- GARIBALDI HIGHLANDS
Work with the School District (SECTION 4.3.2) to enable public use of the sportfields at Garibaldi Highlands Elementary.
- BRACKENDALE
Work with the School District (SECTION 4.3.2) to enable public use of the sportfields at Brackendale Secondary and Brackendale Elementary.
- DOWNTOWN
The existing and projected populations of Downtown will have a modest need for sportfield facilities in the future. Given the higher value of land in Downtown and the difficulty of assembling enough contiguous small parcels of land together, Downtown residents should be encouraged to use Brennan Park or neighbourhood sportfield facilities in Dentville. Ensure adequate pedestrian, bicycle and transit access to these sites from Downtown.

Neighbourhood Sportfields - Future

4.

The enhancement of Centennial Fields will correct existing deficiencies and the sportfields of school fields in individual neighbourhoods and accommodate growth in the population. However, it is important to note that these measures alone will not be sufficient to meet future sportfield needs. As the population doubles and the urban limits expand it will be necessary to add more sportfield facilities to supplement those at Centennial Fields and to serve the residents of those future neighbourhoods.

- ❑ *As urban development expands and new neighbourhoods are developed, acquire neighbourhood parks (SECTION 3.4.1) to meet the needs of residents there. Work with developers to develop these parks to minimum park standards, including playgrounds, sportfields, open space and landscaping. Where appropriate, these facilities may be developed and used in conjunction with new schools (SECTION 4.3.2).*

5. Sportfield Standards

In order to make the most effective and economic use of sportfields it is important that they be developed and maintained to a desired minimum standard.

- Consult with user groups and sport associations to develop these standards.**

- To guide the planning, acquisition and development of sportfields implement and follow guidelines that define service population, service area, minimum dimensions and basic facility requirements.*

6. Field Drainage

During times of heavy use the rainfall and soil conditions of the area, particularly for the existing fields at Centennial Fields and some of the school sites, have negative impacts (e.g., shorter season, higher maintenance costs, poor playing surface and unsafe conditions).

- New and upgraded sportfields should provide a longer season of use and be able to support heavy and repeated use during wet seasons. Provide adequate drainage of sportfields. To do this sportfields should:*
 - *Be sloped to shed surface water away from the play area;*
 - *Be located on a naturally well-drained sub-grade; or*
 - *Be designed and built with a well-drained sub-grade (e.g., tile or pipe drainage system, sand); and*
 - *Have a trafficable well-drained surface (e.g., graded topsoil, sand and/or crushed rock).*

SPORTFIELD PROVISION:

Soccer pitch:	1 per 4,000 people
Baseball diamond:	1 per 8,000 people
Softball diamond:	1 per 4,000 people

Other Recreation Facilities 4.4

Track Facility 1.



There are very few usable running tracks in the region between Horseshoe Bay and Pemberton. There is a track at Brackendale Secondary School. There was a track at Howe Sound Secondary but it was built over to accommodate a building expansion. Good quality tracks have a synthetic surface and are costly to install. Tracks have a variety of uses, including:

- Recreational runners;
- Serious runners (e.g., training for sprints, marathons or triathlons)
- Recreational walkers interested in personal fitness, who enjoy walking on a safe, lighted, quality surface (e.g., women, seniors, less-able pedestrians);
- Special sport events (e.g., BC Games, Special Olympics, Seniors' Games, high school sports days); and
- Weekend tournaments hosted by local user groups (e.g., soccer, rugby, etc.) if a sportfield is provided in the middle of the oval.

For many larger communities, the measurable need for a track facility does not kick in until a population of over 30,000. Due to the cost of such a facility, a partnership offers the best opportunity to develop one. The traditional municipality/school district partnership may not be sufficient to ensure provision of a track and field facility.

- Support the development of a **synthetic** track facility (SECTION 3.2.5).*
- Encourage School District to re-establish the track at Howe Sound Secondary School and continue improving the track at Brackendale Secondary.***

2. Lawn Bowling

Both Brennan Park concept plans propose the development of a lawn bowling facility in Brennan Park. Alternatively, the *Master Plan* has also recommended the development of a senior's centre and related facilities downtown (SECTION 4.7.1) rather than in Brennan Park. Associating a lawn bowling facility with the seniors' centre will ensure higher levels of use and care than if the facility was developed as a stand-alone facility elsewhere in the community.

- ❑ *In partnership with user groups, develop a lawn bowling facility. Operation and maintenance of the facility should be by the user groups.*



3. Par 3 Golf Course

Both Brennan Park concept plans propose the development of a nine-hole par 3 golf course in the southwest corner of the park. This locates the course in forested land in a manner that respects the many sensitive creeks and waterbodies in this area of the park. The par 3 course has potential to operate as a commercial or green fee operation, generating money to cover costs and possibly generating profit to put into parks and recreation. However, the proposed location of the course makes it invisible to travelers on Highway 99, Finch Avenue and Loggers Lane, impeding the ability of the facility to attract users and generate revenue. In addition, locating a golf course, which has significant land area requirements, that offers no opportunity for multiple uses, in Brennan Park is contrary to the desired function of the park.



PUBLIC SURVEY RESULT

*Pitch n' putt should
be a private enterprise*

- ❑ *Do not locate a pitch and putt golf course in Brennan Park. Instead, identify a suitable site that has greater market potential and develop the facility there. Possible alternative locations include:*
 - *In association with the development of a new full-size golf course elsewhere in the community (SECTION 4.9.1);*
 - *As part of a re-development of the existing golf course (SECTION 4.9.3);*
 - *As part of the proposed Garibaldi at Squamish development;*
 - *Adjacent to the existing Squamish Golf and Country Club, on the north side of the Mamquam River between Highway 99 and the future second crossing of the river;*
 - *On the Cheekeye fan or floodplain lands;*
 - *On provincial Crown land in Brackendale, adjacent to Highway 99;*
 - *In another location that provides high visibility, easy access and minimal environmental impact;*

- ❑ *If a suitable alternative site is identified the course should be developed and operated in partnership with user groups or a society or as a private venture.*

4. Multi-courts

Multi-courts refer to hard surface spaces that provide diverse recreation opportunities at the neighbourhood and community levels. They are commonly equipped with basketball posts and nets, hockey goals, line painting and perimeter chain link fencing or walls. There has been recent interest in the community for the formation of a lacrosse league. In addition to this use a multi-court facility can provide a venue for a diversity of other activities, including street hockey, roller hockey, broom-ball, box soccer and special events (e.g., market, day care play space, etc.).

- ❑ *Work with user groups to develop a lacrosse-sized multi-court in Brennan Park. Develop a multi-court in the area behind the new Youth Centre off of Carson Place. In addition, if there is sufficient desire or need at the neighbourhood level, provide smaller-sized multi-courts in neighbourhood parks.*

5. Tennis Courts

There are **seven** tennis courts in Squamish. Of these, the four located at the north end of Brennan Park are the most usable. The facilities in Brennan Park meet the community's current demand for tennis courts. At the *Official Community Plan's* projected population threshold of 30,000, it is estimated that up to **fourteen** tennis courts will be required for the entire community.

- ❑ *Maintain existing tennis courts. **Extra priority should be given to maintaining the Brennan Park Courts.** If appropriate, enhance the tennis courts in neighbourhood parks to accommodate additional uses, like multi-courts (SECTION 4.4.5).*





PUBLIC SURVEY RESULT
We have
'neighbourhood halls'.
They are called
schools, but they need
to be opened to the
community.

NOTE:

Enhancements to schools are the public's #10 priority (SECTION 2.7).

BMX Facility 6.

There have been expressions of interest from the community for the development of a BMX facility.

- Work with user groups to acquire use of a site for a BMX facility. Preferred locations include undeveloped municipal land, Crown land or rights-of-way (e.g., hydro or rail). The user groups should be responsible for development and management of the facility.*

Secondary Schools 4.5

Improved Access 1.

The addition of space at Brennan Park Recreation Centre (SECTION 5.4.1) for activities and meetings will go part way to meeting the demands for space needs for community programming (SECTION 5.4.2). However, there is a range of specialist programming which people in many BC communities are able to access, but which are not available in Squamish. This includes programs which focus on non-sport skill development. The best place to provide these programs is in the secondary schools, through access to the specialist facilities available there (e.g., computer lab, woodshop, stage, art studio, etc.). A more wide-ranging joint-use facility would facilitate the use of such rooms for community programming.

- Develop a joint-use agreement with the School District to allow a wider range of non-sport skill development courses and activities to be offered at the schools.*

4.6 Public Marina

1. Marina Facility

While much of the waterfront in Squamish is alienated from the public in a variety of uses and tenures, access is provided to the fine sailing and boating waters of Howe Sound. A government dock and small private marina exist, but there is little in the way of generally accessible docking space, related amenities, or boat launch facilities that are available. Other planning processes are underway, either within this *Master Plan* or in other plans, that will see the downtown waterfront transformed over the next 20 years as some of the existing land uses give way to new uses and services.

- ❑ *A public marina should be developed on the waterfront **along Logger's Lane (between Winnipeg and Vancouver Streets)** in downtown Squamish as a **centrepiece** of the re-development of downtown. It would provide for launching, retrieval and storage of watercraft. As part of tourism development it would accommodate visiting sailors and boaters. Consideration should be given to developing a public marina in conjunction with other related amenities on the waterfront (e.g., walkway, public market, restaurants, hotel, fishing pier, boat building & repairs, watercraft rentals, retail space, etc.).*



Moorage on in Mamquam Channel



Marina Development 2.

The traditional marina, though it be public, is much like other public facilities that are used by a limited proportion of the population. There is a considerable capital cost to develop it and most residents will not make use of it.

□ *The public marina should be developed by the private sector or as a partnership between the District and others. There are several different potential partners that could be considered:*

- *A partnership and re-development of the federal dock site;*
- *A partnership with a private developer for a new site downtown;*
- *A partnership with an existing marina or user groups for a new or existing site downtown; or*
- *A partnership with the Squamish Nation using land on the District side of the Mamquam Channel or on the Squamish Nation side in conjunction with some form of pedestrian connection between it and downtown.*

Seniors' Centre 4.7



Tantalus Seniors' Centre

There are several community groups in the municipality that provide services for and represent the interests of senior citizens. Members run programs and are active in a range of activities (e.g., walks, trips to local attractions, carpet bowling, cards, fitness classes, finance and tax classes, etc.). The Tantalus Seniors Centres Society leases space in a building located downtown and owned by BC Hydro. The interior layout of the building and its parking and access are cited by users as limitations on their potential use of it. In the past there have been discussions about eventually locating and operating a seniors' centre in another location. Three possibilities have been discussed in the community:

SECTION 4

- RECREATION CENTRE

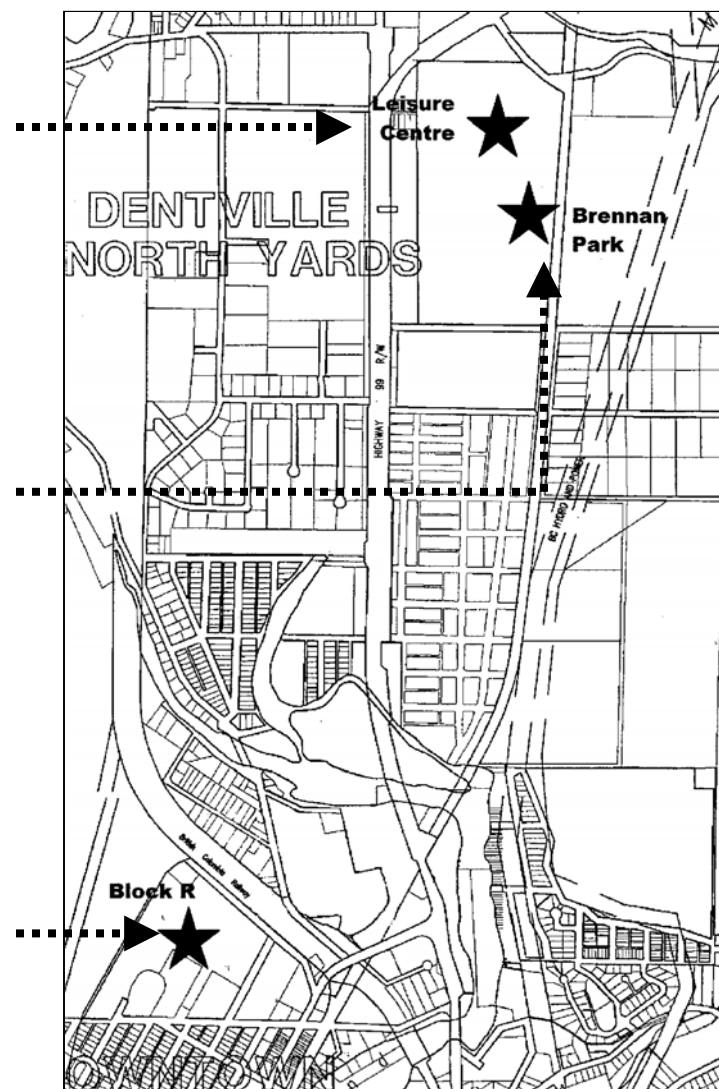
The proposal for this site involved dedicating and re-developing an accessible area of the **Recreation** Centre (e.g., auditorium, daycare space, etc.) for seniors' groups. An advantage of this proposal is that it locates the centre close to other recreation activities that seniors are active in (e.g., walking, swimming) and allows the group to access other spaces in the **Recreation** Centre for activities (e.g., carpet bowling, billiards, classes, etc.). In addition, the proposed seniors' centre would be on a largely recreational model, rather than a seniors' health model, which would require more space and independence from the District than would be possible in the **Recreation** Centre.

- BRENNAN PARK

The proposal for this site involved dedicating and developing a stand-alone building for seniors in Brennan Park. An advantage of this proposal is that it would provide seniors with a facility free of encumbrances and allow seniors to make use of complimentary amenities in the **Recreation** Centre. Seniors who drive would not be inconvenienced by this location. In addition, with no partnership opportunities or the ability to make use of existing facilities, the financial responsibilities would fall entirely to the District and seniors' groups.

- BLOCK R

This site refers to a 10-hectare parcel of District-owned land at the north edge of the Downtown core. The proposal for a **portion of** for this site involved developing a seniors' centre in conjunction with a larger seniors' **housing** and commercial/residential development. An advantage of this proposal is that it locates the facility in a central and accessible area of town (i.e., especially for less-able seniors) and has the opportunity to provide more services in a cost-effective manner by partnering with a prime developer of the site.



Possible Seniors' Centre Locations

Location 1.

The location of a seniors' centre must be central and accessible to its users. In addition, in order to improve its affordability, it must provide opportunity for partnerships with the private sector (SECTION 8.10).

- Locate a seniors' centre at Brennan Park Recreation Centre or designate a portion of Block R for use as a seniors' centre.*

Facilities 2.

The seniors' centre is intended to provide one central location for many of the needs of Squamish's seniors.

- The Seniors' Centre should serve all seniors in the community. It should be in a building with indoor facilities that include a lounge area, meeting spaces, classroom space, library, physical activity room, kitchen facilities, crafts facilities, washrooms, an office and storage. Outdoor facilities **could** include a patio, garden area and lawn bowling green. The lawn bowling green should be operated by a society as an amenity open to seniors and the Squamish public.*

Partnership 3.

The community survey determined that respondents are more concerned with providing facilities and amenities that have broad community benefits rather than those that serve a smaller segment of the population. In order to ensure development of a seniors' centre it may be necessary to consider a public-private partnership.

- Explore the opportunity of developing a public-private (e.g., residential/commercial developer, multi-level residential care developer/provider) or public-public partnership (e.g., provincial or federal government, Squamish Nation, service group) for the Block R property.*

PUBLIC SURVEY RESULT

Seniors need a bigger centre but should help fund raise for it.

4.8 Squamish River Crossing

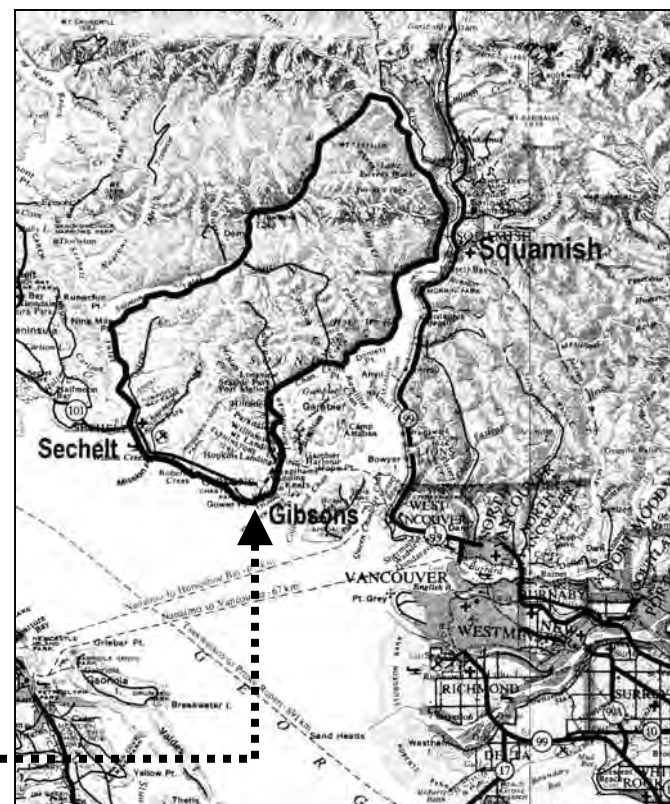
1. Regional Approach

The Squamish River is a significant natural feature that runs through the community on a north-south path, draining the Coast Mountains into Howe Sound. The developed lands of the community are on the east side of the river and the west side of the river is composed of undeveloped private and Crown land. These lands are pre-dominantly forested mountains and valleys, bounded on the west by the Sechelt and Jervis Inlets. They provide excellent opportunities for walking, hiking and mountain biking, including the potential for access to Gibson's Landing and Sechelt as well as a shorter local circle route to the Darrell Bay ferry. Streams and lakes provide hike-in fly-fishing opportunities. In addition, there are significant rock formations suitable for rock climbing. The ability to develop and use this area for recreation activities is limited by the absence of an accessible route across the river from the developed areas of Squamish. There are a variety of different possible methods for crossing the river (e.g., pedestrian bridge, river ferry, cable car).

- ❑ *Meet with the communities of Gibsons Landing and Sechelt to explore the recreation and tourism opportunities associated with access to this area.*

2. Provincial Involvement

The actual recreation potential and environmental sensitivity of the area is not clearly understood at this time. If the area were to be opened up for access, the potential outdoor recreation tourism benefits to Squamish and the region would be significant. There is a considerable amount of upfront work that needs to be done



Potential regional recreation resource west of Squamish River

RECREATION FACILITIES

before knowing if a crossing of the river should be made. The ability of the District to adequately undertake this work is limited.

- Approach the provincial government (e.g., Ministry of Forests; Ministry of Environment; Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture) and lobby them to undertake or fund studies of the recreation potential, environmental condition and economic development opportunities of the area. This should be a necessary pre-cursor to opening-up access to the area.*

District Role 3.

Until the above work is done it is not possible to know specifically what role the District should play in developing and managing a crossing of the Squamish River. Until then it is appropriate for the District to take a supportive position of the initiative.

- Support and promote initiatives to develop a crossing of the Squamish River for recreation purposes. Be open to partnerships with the province and/or private interests to develop the Squamish River crossing.*
- If the area is opened-up and developed for outdoor recreation use, the District of Squamish should provide marketing (e.g., advertising, inclusion in economic development initiatives), infrastructure (e.g., land, roads, parking, signage, etc.) and management (e.g., facility maintenance, cost recovery, etc.) support to the initiative.*

Timing 4.

The outdoor recreation potential of lands within the municipal boundary is finite. While it may have sufficient capacity to accommodate more growth in outdoor recreation it is important to understand that there is an upper limit to this. If the existing recreation resource is degraded by over-use there will be impacts

on outdoor recreation and on the local economy. The land base west of the Squamish River provides an excellent opportunity to expand outdoor recreation opportunities, bolster the local economy and relieve pressure on the local resource base.

- ❑ *The regional approach and provincial involvement in the Squamish River Crossing scheme should be pursued as soon as possible. Actual development of a second crossing should be done after the necessary planning has been done and before the outdoor recreation resources within the municipal boundary reach their carrying capacity.*

5. Cost Recovery

The costs to develop a crossing of the Squamish could be significant. In addition, in providing the only crossing to an otherwise inaccessible area it is reasonable to consider charging a fee to recover costs associated with development and management of the area.

- ❑ *If and when there is a crossing of the river developed, implement a fee for use of it and/or the facilities and amenities on the other side of the river.*

4.9 Golf Course

1. Potential Re-location

The Squamish Golf and Country Club, located north of the Mamquam River and east of Highway 99, operates an 18-hole golf course on land that it leases from the District of Squamish. The District leases the land from the Crown on the provision that it be used for recreation use. Based on the projected growth in the population of Squamish and on the growth of the Squamish-

Whistler area as a prime recreation corridor, there have been suggestions that another 18 holes of golf should be developed in the valley. One proposal put forth was to develop 2 new 18 hole courses on undeveloped land to the north and in the area of the Cheekeye fan. The *Cheekeye Fan Terrain Hazard and Land Use Study* identifies numerous development constraints in this area, which is on land owned by the Crown. The existing course could then be redeveloped for other uses, primarily residential uses.

- ❑ *If it arises, consider supporting in principle a proposal to close the existing golf course and develop two new golf courses in the Cheekeye Fan area.*



Public Golf

2.

The demand for golf will increase markedly as the population ages: the average number of rounds played per adult increases exponentially as adults pass the age of 40 years - as many 'baby-boomers' are now doing. In addition, golf is an essential part of any community's outdoor recreation market, even when the focus might be on 'harder' rather than 'softer' outdoor recreation pursuits.

- ❑ *As part of the development of new golfing amenities or the re-development of existing ones, encourage use and programming of a facility that meets the needs of beginner and senior golfers. Examples include providing affordable public access, a short hole course (e.g., par 3 pitch and putt or executive 9 hole) and/or practice facilities.*

4.10 Youth Centre

1. Implementation

The community survey identified a strong need for a youth centre. The provision of a youth centre in Squamish is already underway. The old RCMP detachment on Carson Place, behind Howe Sound Secondary, will be converted into a youth centre.

- ❑ *Follow through with the commitment to develop a new youth centre. Identify and implement programs and activities for the youth (SECTION 5.3.3). **This project has now been completed.***

PUBLIC SURVEY RESULT

We support the idea of a youth centre, but thought this was already taken care of.

NOTE:

A youth Centre is the public's # 5 priority (SECTION 2.7).

The District plays two roles concerning recreation programming:

- DIRECT PROVIDER
Delivering programs with District staff; these include general community programs as well as drop in programs at the pool, arena and other locations.
- FACILITATOR
Providing space for community-based groups to deliver programs; this includes groups such as the summer swim club, minor hockey and figure skating, all of which rent the facilities that they need but handle all programming and instruction.

Pricing for programs is set in terms of cost recovery guidelines and market conditions. Rental rates for groups is set in the Fees and Charges policy, and reflects the same factors.

The main location for programs is Brennan Park Recreation Centre, with its pool, arena, and meeting rooms. Other program venues include the Youth Centre, library and Senior's Centre. The schools also provide an opportunity for special programming (SECTION 5.4.2). Capilano College also delivers related programs, although it offers only academic courses at its Squamish campus.

5.1 Aquatic Programming

The District runs a variety of drop in aquatic programs including:

- Early Bird and lane swimming from 6:00 – 8:00am on weekdays;
- Hydrotherapy, aquafit, parent and tot, masters swimming, and seniors swim, mostly during the day and adult, teen and family swim in the evenings; and
- Everyone Welcome in the after school period and during the weekends.

1. Cross Marketing

The numbers involved in each of these programs varies, although between 50 and 70% of users are for Everyone Welcome swimming. In total, drop-in use averages 1,455 per week (1998), with peak usage in the January to March period. Other peaks occur in the summer and are related primarily to tournament use and major events at Brennan Park. Pool usage has generally increased over the last few years, from 56,800 in 1993 to 72,961 in 1998 - this is a 5.7% per annum increase. There are also community recreation programs delivered at the pool (e.g., swimming lessons, first aid, leadership, etc.). There is a summer swim club operating out of the Brennan Park Pool. The pool is attractive to a variety of users, but there is capacity to accommodate more.

- ❑ *Add to the services and features of the pool facility to enhance the marketability and programming of the aquatic operation. A prime example would be the addition of a weights and fitness area (SECTION 4.1.4). Staff and Council need to be sensitive to existing businesses in the community and consider partnering with local businesses where and when appropriate. Other opportunities include linking pool*



Aquatic Centre

use to other activities at the Recreation Centre and to special events in the community.

Arena Programming 5.2

Like the pool, a similar situation prevails with the arena, where ice time is allocated to both district programs and to programs run by sport groups. The arena is open from 6:00am to midnight or 1:00am, seven days a week. Programming is divided into periods of about 75 minutes, allowing 10 minutes for ice maintenance between sessions. Other longer periods are allocated for general maintenance. In addition, time is generally divided into prime and non-prime, with weekday hours between 3:00pm and 1:00a.m. being classified as prime, and all hours after 9:00am on weekends being prime time. Other hours (i.e., early mornings, daytime during the weekdays, and late evening) are classified as non-prime. The allocation of time to groups is a highly charged process, with the current allocation of key slots summarized here:

PUBLIC SURVEY RESULT

Improve programming, hours of operation and provide more public skating.

- Most of the prime time goes to the youth sports groups (e.g., minor hockey, ringette and figure skating, etc.);
- The District takes Friday nights for community programming, while adult groups get an hour or two here and there, generally at 9:00pm;
- Daytime use is non-prime and the District uses it to run various programs (e.g., parent and tots, family skate, etc.);
- Early morning non-prime times are allocated to the youth groups (i.e., minor hockey starts at 5:45am or 6:00am six days a week, and figure skating starts at 6:30am on Wednesdays); and
- Adult groups, get the after 10:00pm slots, during the week.

1. Second Ice Sheet

It is apparent that the arena is at capacity. Short of moving into the early morning hours of 1:00am to 6:00am, there is no down time. Even maintenance time is very limited. There is no opportunity for growth in use due to limited times. Comments from stakeholders reinforce this assessment. With regard to District programming, the family skate programs on Sundays have the highest admission rates. The availability of ice times clearly limits the ability to provide more ice time for groups and to expand District programs.

- ❑ *The District should begin working to provide a second sheet of ice in the community (SECTION 4.2).*

5.3 Community Recreation Programming

Many families use the District's community recreation programs to recreate with their youngsters and to provide them with social and physical skill-building experiences. Generally, these programs serve youth through to about age 12 years, although some are offered for the early teens. This dimension of programming has recently increased with the establishment of a youth programming component. A variety of adult programs are offered, with the greatest enrolment being in drop-in basketball and volleyball for the younger set, and carpet bowling for seniors. Direct comparisons of recreation programming with other locations is always a process of comparing apples and oranges - programming arises to serve the community's needs. However, it would be true to say that community programs in Squamish are somewhat limited (**for example gymnasium type programs**), and this is probably a result of a lack of appropriate facilities.

FACILITY UTILIZATION & PROGRAMMING

Brennan Park Recreation Centre 1.

Expanded facilities at Brennan Park Recreation Centre would allow new programming options to be developed. The need for a renovation of Brennan Park **Recreation** Centre has been established (SECTION 4.1). Part of the renovation will provide a variety of multi-purpose spaces for community **recreation** use.

- ❑ *Identify programming options and community needs and use them as guides in planning and designing the renovation of the **Recreation** Centre (SECTION 4.1).*

Secondary Schools 2.

The secondary schools in the municipality have specialist facilities for which the non-student population of the community has a need. Community access to these facilities has decreased over the years. Access to wood shops, teaching kitchens and home economics labs, computer rooms, drama and art rooms can offer opportunities for wider community program options.

- ❑ *The Master Plan makes a recommendation (SECTION 4.5.1) for developing a joint-use agreement with the School District for access to specialist facilities in secondary schools.*

Youth Centre 3.

Note: This Youth Centre has now been developed and the recommendation below has been addressed.

The District is in the process of developing a youth centre on Carson Place, across from Howe Sound Secondary School. While there are plans in place for the physical aspect of the facility there is little in place in the way of programming for the youth who will use the facility.

PUBLIC SURVEY RESULT

More use of schools for art and music classes and after hours class times for adults and kids.

- Work with the youth of the community to identify their needs and desires, then work with them to implement and run programs to meet these.*

5.4 Recreation Promotion

1. Promote Recreation Benefits

Recreation has wide benefits to personal and community development, economic growth, and environmental survival. As the new recreation system in Squamish takes shape, we must ensure that it can help the community realize these benefits.

- Continue to promote the benefits of recreation to the residents of Squamish.*

Scope of Recreation 6.1

Outdoor recreation includes those activities that are not recreation services traditionally provided by local government (e.g., soccer, softball, tennis, etc.) but which, because of the unique opportunities in Squamish, are popular and important components of the recreation picture here. Specifically, in Squamish these activities include:

- Mountain Biking
- Hiking
- Camping
- Rock Climbing
- Windsurfing
- Kayaking
- Fishing
- Golf
- Sailing/boating
- Equestrian
- Triathlon
- Nature appreciation
- Snowshoeing and snowmobiling
- Backcountry skiing and snowboarding

Expand the District's Scope 1.

These outdoor recreation activities are highly valued because of their proximity to town and the exceptionally high quality of natural resources that support them (e.g., rivers, mountains, forests, riparian lands, rock, wind, ocean, etc.). Other communities in British Columbia are also popular for their proximity to a couple or a few outdoor recreation activities. However, Squamish is unique because it provides a wide variety of opportunities, all of them within municipal boundaries.

- *The District acknowledges the diversity of recreation opportunities that exist in Squamish and that the definition of "recreation" should include both traditional recreation activities as well as outdoor recreation pursuits.*

6.2 Citizen Recreation

1. Service to Residents

The economic opportunities, physical setting and recreation opportunities are what draw many residents to Squamish and enhance the quality of life here.

- *The District recognizes that outdoor recreation activities by residents are an essential component of the fabric of Squamish and that, like other recreation activities in the community, these require the support of the District and the involvement of the community to realize their full potential.*

6.3 Visitor Recreation

The high quality of its natural resources and its accessible location make Squamish popular for outdoor recreation pursuits, not only for residents but for visitors as well. Among the communities of outdoor recreation participants, Squamish has an acclaimed reputation that is provincial, national and international in scope. It is important to understand that visiting outdoor recreationists:

- Are a significant user group population;
- Have transient or temporal use patterns;
- Make use of community open spaces and facilities;
- Do not pay District taxes;
- Are a source of income to the accommodation, restaurant and recreation businesses of Squamish; and
- Are a potential revenue source for the development and operation of recreation amenities, including outdoor recreation sites.

Service to Visitors 2.

Because of the popularity of outdoor recreation opportunities in Squamish the community will always attract these visitors, as well as the impacts and benefits they bring. The challenge for the District will be to take a pro-active position that manages these impacts and benefits in a way that is beneficial to the citizens and community of Squamish.

- ❑ *The District recognizes that outdoor recreation activity by visitors helps to diversify the local economy and generates recreation and economic benefits for the community. Like other economic opportunities, outdoor recreation requires the support and leadership of the District in order to maximize its potential.*

Roles and Responsibilities 6.4

The park and recreation mandate of most communities, including Squamish, does not usually include outdoor recreation (e.g., mountain biking, hiking, camping, rock climbing, windsurfing, kayaking, fishing, sailing and nature appreciation). The availability and proximity of resources that support outdoor recreation in Squamish are unequalled. These resources are used by both Squamish residents and visitors.

Traditionally, the primary recreation role of municipalities is to provide services and facilities that will be used by and benefit their citizens. The needs of visitors are secondary. Given that local people are active in outdoor recreation activities and that these recreation opportunities attract visitors and tourists who spend money in the community, diversifying and adding to the local

SECTION 6

economy, it is essential that the District play a role. There are three traditional roles that the District has played in the provision of park and recreation services:

- ENABLER
The District takes the lead and provides essential land, basic facilities or leadership to get the initiative started. The community or user group provides everything else. Examples of this model include Loggers' Sports grounds, Squamish Golf and Country Club, Equestrian Centre and the lighted fastball diamond at Brennan Park.
- PROVIDER
The District provides a full-service function to the community, from inception to development and operation. This role is common for facilities that are capital intensive and/or activities with broad community need or desire. Examples of this model include the arena and the pool.
- SUPPORTER
The District provides support, often in response to the initiatives of others, to help an event or activity occur. The form of support is typically financial or administrative. Examples of this model include grants to community and user groups and cost-sharing in marketing or studying an issue.

In this age there is a fourth role that municipalities often play:

- PARTNER
The District teams up with one or more partners. Each partner having a specific role to play and receiving specific benefits in return for their involvement in the partnership.

District Role 1.

The opportunities and responsibilities associated with outdoor recreation are substantial. It is necessary to define the role the District of Squamish will play in the development and delivery of outdoor recreation in the community. The challenge here is to strike a balance whereby the strategic involvement of the District is more than off-set by the benefits that accrue to the community. Of the four roles described above, the roles of ENABLER and PARTNER provide the best opportunity for the District to strike this balance.

- ❑ *Recognizing the importance of the municipality's natural resources to recreation and the local economy, the District of Squamish should take a leadership role to plan and market the outdoor recreation resources. In addition, they should **facilitate a** partnership role in the development, operation and maintenance of these resources, relying on the involvement of user groups.*

User Group Role 2.

Like traditional recreation groups (e.g., softball, soccer, etc.), outdoor recreation user groups have a role to play in developing and managing their activities and the resources and facilities on which they depend. Due to their specific knowledge and expertise, outdoor recreation user groups are expected to be more involved in the decision-making, development, operation and maintenance of their recreation resources and facilities than traditional recreation groups are in theirs.

- ❑ *User groups should take a leadership in the development, operation and maintenance of these resources. In addition, they should take a partnership role in the planning and marketing of the outdoor recreation resources and activities.*

3. Land and Access

Given that the majority of the outdoor recreation activity occurs on Crown Land and undeveloped private land, assistance in gaining and controlling legal access to land is the first physical step that needs to be taken to provide outdoor recreation service. Municipalities are generally better able to interact with provincial authorities and to respond to opportunities to acquire land and ensure access (e.g., money, timing, legislative authority) than user and community groups. Land ownership and access control allows the District to play a significant role in determining how outdoor recreation is developed and how management of it is controlled.

In general, the District should be responsible for acquiring and/or protecting strategic pieces of land that provide or enhance outdoor recreation opportunities. Examples of strategic acquisitions include:

- *Access routes (pedestrian and vehicle);*
- *Parking lots;*
- *High-use sites (e.g., interpretive centre, staging area, picnic area, campground);*
- *Sites with the opportunity to lease for commercial use that serves outdoor recreation; and*
- *Unique or environmentally sensitive natural features that are essential to the recreation resource and that cannot otherwise be protected.*

Sole responsibility for securing land and access should not lie entirely with the District of Squamish. Recreation and nature groups, corporations, utilities and provincial and national government agencies should also be involved in acquiring land and access.

The District should take a role within the Crown Land Permit process in order to play a significant role in developing and controlling how outdoor recreation is developed and managed.

Leadership and Coordination

4.

In order to ensure the sustainability of the limited and sensitive nature of outdoor recreation resources it will be necessary to manage these resources and the use of them. The management role of the District is limited and is in partnership with the outdoor recreation community (SECTION 6.4.2).

☐ *The District should take the lead to ensure that the outdoor recreation resources of the community are developed, used and managed in an ecologically sustainable manner and that the recreation and economic benefits to the community are optimized. This leadership may include:*

- *Coordinating the efforts of the different user groups;*
- *Setting up and facilitating teams of user groups and governing agencies to plan and manage the outdoor recreation resources;*
- *Preparing and assisting in applications for grants;*
- **Contribute** *to the preparation of management plans for outdoor recreation resources and facilities;*
- *Marketing the community and its outdoor recreation amenities; and*
- *Ensuring the recreation and economic interest of Squamish's citizens are protected and amplified.*

Planning

5.

The natural resources that support outdoor recreation in the Squamish area have a limited capacity to support human use. In order to accommodate outdoor recreation in a sustainable manner it will be necessary to understand the natural resources and the use patterns associated with each of the different forms of outdoor recreation.

☐ *In partnership with user groups, and with the assistance of the provincial and federal governments (e.g., economic diversification, tourism development, FRBC, etc.), prepare a management plan for each of the outdoor recreation activities:*

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- RESOURCE INVENTORY
Identify, describe and rate the natural resources and built infrastructure that support the recreation use, as well as the incidental ones that influence or are impacted by recreation. Estimate the sensitivity of these resources and infrastructure to change and use.
- USE PATTERNS & USER PREFERENCES
Survey users of all levels (e.g., beginner to expert) and origins (e.g., local or tourist) to determine their geographic, seasonal and daily patterns of use. Understand the needs and desires of users, as well as the constraints and opportunities that influence their activity.
- CARRYING CAPACITY
Estimate the level of use at which the ability of the resource to support the activity has negative impacts on the environment and the experience of the user. Establish limits for use (e.g., thresholds, frequencies, locations and timing) that ensure a sustainable environment and a tolerable level of conflict between users.
- ACQUISITION and DEVELOPMENT
Set targets for providing and enhancing recreation opportunities. Determine and detail the acquisition and development initiatives needed to realize the opportunities.
- MANAGEMENT
Determine operation, maintenance, safety and restoration measures that will be required. Describe how recreation uses will occur. Establish procedures for how conflicts will be dealt with as growth brings more users and operators into the area. Develop business standards and codes of ethics for implementation and enforcement. Enforce business licensing and develop commercial user fees.
- FINANCES and MARKETING
Estimate the costs of acquiring, developing and managing the recreation resources and activities. Determine if and how cost recovery and revenue generation will occur. Market outdoor recreation resources as described in SECTION 6.4.1.
- IMPLEMENTATION
Identify partnership relationships and affirm responsibilities. Develop a phasing plan and fulfill the acquisition, development, management and marketing goals.

Development

6.

The recommendations for outdoor recreation have proposed a significant commitment by the District to acquiring and protecting land and the access to it, as well as significant leadership and planning responsibilities.

- ❑ *The District's involvement in the development of outdoor recreation opportunities should be limited to work they are experienced in and capable of (e.g., roads, parking, services and utilities, site restoration, basic structures, etc.). The District's contribution may take several different forms including start-up seed money, matching funds or the allocation of equipment, materials and labour towards a specific construction project. Assist user and community groups with provincial/federal communications and with fund-raising (e.g., HRDC, FRBC, et. al.).*
- ❑ *In general, user groups should take the lead in other development initiatives and especially in those that are technically more suited to their knowledge and abilities (e.g., kayak courses, climbing routes and rock anchors, fish habitat restoration, windsurfing float, etc.).*

Operation and Maintenance

7.

The operation and maintenance of outdoor recreation facilities can be a diverse and costly responsibility. For example, each of the many different outdoor recreation activities has different needs, infrastructure and facility requirements. The users themselves are likely more knowledgeable and capable of providing these services than the District.

- ❑ *Operating and maintaining outdoor recreation sites and facilities in general would not be feasible within the District's resources and is generally not compatible with the District's role (SECTION 6.4.1). These activities should be conducted by user groups or societies who, in partnership with the District and others (e.g., Ministry of Forests, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, etc.), will be responsible for providing this service as their part of the partnership. The operation and maintenance work should be done according to the policies and prescriptions of the management plan prepared for each specific outdoor recreation resource.*

8. Marketing

- 9.
- o Staff should attempt to register the phrase "Squamish – The Outdoor Recreation Capital of Canada".

6.5 Outdoor Recreation Initiatives

In addition to the recommendation in the *Master Plan* for the preparation of a management plan for each outdoor recreation activity and resource (SECTION 6.4.5), there are some initiatives which should be considered in the near future or when the management plans are prepared.

1. Mountain Biking

Mountain biking is a very popular activity to the residents of and visitors to Squamish. Cyclists make use of the many old logging roads and ad-hoc trails that have been developed through the forests of the community. District involvement in the development and use of these trails has been limited and will continue to be so (SECTION 3.12.1). The mountain biking community of Squamish



(e.g., SORCA) has been instrumental in the development and maintenance of mountain bike trails.

- ❑ **Encourage the Mountain Biking Community to consult with the Trails Steering Society** to develop a management plan for this activity and the landscapes it occupies (SECTION 3.12.1).

2. Rock Climbing

Rock climbing is a very popular activity in Squamish. Not only do residents participate in it, but the climbing resources here (e.g., Smoke Bluffs and the Stawamus Chief) attract climbers from the Lower Mainland and beyond. The *Master Plan* has made recommendations for District initiatives at the Smoke Bluffs (SECTION 3.11.1). As visitor climbing becomes more popular it will be necessary to manage use more proactively and to look for opportunities to develop new rock climbing resources.



- ❑ *Work with BC Parks and the Federation of Mountain Clubs to develop a joint strategy for managing rock climbing in the Squamish area. Issues to address may include providing parking, recovering costs (e.g., parking fees, climbing pass) or establishing a reservation system (e.g., like the West Coast Trail and major BC Parks campsites across the province).*



3. Windsurfing

Windsurfing occurs where the Squamish River meets Howe Sound. Windsurfers gain access to this area via the spit - the southerly extent of the Squamish River dyke. It separates the river from the inter-tidal estuary area and extends south to the mouth of the Squamish River, where it meets Howe Sound. The end of the spit is used by local and visiting windsurfers as a staging area for sailing the high quality windsurfing waters of this area.

Windsurfers gain access to the dyke at an un-signed point on a local road and drive south along it to the spit. The site includes informal parking, a storage facility and portable restrooms. Access to the water is gained by traversing the coarse rip-rap of the dyke's sides.

- ❑ *Work with the local windsurfing community to design and gain necessary approvals for improvements to the area that will enhance the functionality and safety of it. Issues to address include:*
 - *A floating dock or wharf in the water, with a walkway or ramp to it from the spit, to improve access to the water;*
 - *Secure public access and improve signage to the spit; and*
 - *Provide parking and circulation at the end of the spit (e.g., widen the spit along its eastern side to permit a vehicle turn-around area and more generous vehicle parking).*

The involvement of the District in the above improvement initiatives may include providing planning and design services and gaining necessary approvals.

4. Kayaking

The rivers of Squamish provide excellent kayaking opportunities for both local residents and visiting kayakers.

- ❑ *Work with kayaking groups and landowners to obtain public access to launching/retrieval sites along the principal kayaking routes of Squamish.*
- ❑ *Work with kayaking groups to design and develop minimal site improvements (e.g., access gates, vehicle barriers, signage and maps) at the most popular kayaking areas.*



Fishing 5.

The rivers of Squamish are popular fishing venues for local residents and visitors.



- Work with fishing groups and landowners to obtain public access to and along the rivers and creeks of Squamish.*
- On maps and signs direct visitors to the most visible and easily accessible fishing areas only. Less prominent access points and fishing holes should remain unadvertised to provide fishing opportunities for local people.*
- Work with fishing groups to design and develop minimal site improvements (e.g., access gates, vehicle barriers, signage and maps) at the most accessible fishing areas.*

6. Sailing and Boating

The issue of sailing and boating in the Squamish region is tied to the eventual development of a public marina (SECTION 4.6.2).



- Once a public marina facility is developed work to market the facility and the other amenities of the community to sailors and boaters to the south, with the intention of drawing them up here to expand tourism development.*

7. Camping

The District currently operates an un-serviced campground in Brennan Park (SECTION 3.2.9). The site provides basic service for visitors, especially rock climbers and those who participate in sport events at Brennan Park. The campground is in need of upgrading.



- Continue operating the Brennan Park campground. Advertise the campground at outdoor recreation sites (e.g., Smoke Bluffs parking lot, windsurfing spit) and in association with local sport*

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tournaments (e.g., soccer, softball) to increase occupancy rates and revenues.

Under special circumstances the District may partner with a user group to provide camping facilities. Such a venture must:

- Be tied to a specific sport or outdoor recreation site.*
- Generate positive revenue for the District.*
- Not have a significant detrimental impact on the environment.*
- **Camping must be restricted to designated camping areas.***

Access Issues 7.1

Access to recreation for everyone is not a specifically stated right - recreation was not mentioned in the *British North America Act*, nor is it in the *Canadian Constitution*. But ensuring that everyone has access to recreation makes good sense. This was evident to Victorian social reformers, and is just as true today. The benefits of recreation are outlined in an earlier part of this *Master Plan*, and making these benefits universally accessible is good public policy. Indeed those groups in society who are most likely not to have access to recreation are those who could benefit most.

Accessibility Audit 1.

Physical accessibility to buildings is mandated through the *National Building Code* and ensures persons with disabilities equal access to facilities. This is true of the Brennan Park Recreation Centre which was renovated in 1992 to provide such amenities as accessible washrooms and changerooms. The pool was designed with a 'beach' which provides access for those in wheelchairs directly into the water. It also shows the multi-dimensional nature of accessibility upgrading, since this feature also provides better access for toddlers and the very young and very old.

- ❑ *Conduct an accessibility audit of the Brennan Park Recreation Centre and other District recreation facilities to ensure that all aspects of accessibility are addressed in the facility upgrade planning.*

2. Persons with Disabilities

Access to recreation for persons with disabilities also means offering recreation programs that meet their own needs and interests, as well as ensuring them access to programs designed for others. For example, the arena is accessible and people in wheelchairs or walkers can join in the public skating sessions. But persons with disabilities also have adapted games such as sledge hockey, and time needs to be created for these activities alongside hockey for the able-bodied where a need exists.

- ❑ *Work with the local users and advocacy groups to offer programs integrating the activities of persons with disabilities with those of able-bodied people.*

3. Transit

Access also means ensuring that people can easily get to the places where recreation occurs, especially Brennan Park Recreation Centre. Many people have commented on the lack of transit bus access. Equally, putting in place a trail system will make it easier for those without cars to get to the Centre.

- ❑ *Restore public bus service to Brennan Park Recreation Centre. Put procedures in place to maintain a liaison so that future transit planning considers recreation and community issues. In addition, ensure that bus timing provides for young people, especially on weekend evenings.*

PUBLIC SURVEY RESULT
I don't use the facilities as often as I'd like because there is no bus service that coincides with major swim times.

Financial Access 4.

Financial accessibility is also important. Many families and individuals in Squamish live on low and limited incomes. Ensuring that they can also access recreation opportunities, especially those for children who live in or very close to poverty, is a critical investment in everyone's future. A policy is in place to address this.

- Maintain and further develop the existing recreation access policy to ensure that those with low incomes are not denied access to recreation.*

Seniors' Access 5.

Squamish has generally not taken a broad look at accessibility issues. However, where issues have arisen, facilities built, or plans for specific groups developed, the District has addressed accessibility issues. The proposed seniors' centre (SECTION 4.7.2) is a prime example of a facility where access is important.

- Ensure that any seniors centre development is fully accessible.*

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Partnerships are the past, present, and future of recreation. Historically, most recreational opportunities were provided by groups other than the municipality, although often in partnership with the municipality. Generally, recreation facilities have been publicly provided - since they could better access the capital funds required - while recreation programming was delivered by non-profit groups. For instance, the park with its ball diamond or soccer pitch was purchased and constructed by the municipality, although the games that occurred on there were either organized by a non-profit group or league, or were simply pick-up games. It was a partnership.

There are many Memorial Arenas across the country that date from the 1950s. Increases in government provision during the post war years saw first expansions in recreation facilities and later, expansion into the programming role. The reasons for this development were in part a response to internal policy and human resource issues, and partly a concern for quality control - all issues that are still with us as we consider the value of partnerships.

The last 10 years have seen a rise of private sector involvement in facility provision through public-private partnerships (i.e., P3's). This has often been a reversal of the historic relationship, with the capital asset provided by the private entrepreneur, since they can better access the capital funds required, and the programming being undertaken by government and/or non-profit groups. But many other partnerships exist in recreation, each with its own merits and guidelines for planning:

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- PUBLIC/PUBLIC PARTNERSHIPS
Between the municipality and the School District, with a Joint-use Agreement as the partnership tool.
- PUBLIC/NON-PROFIT PARTNERSHIPS
These still work well to deliver recreation opportunities in most minor sports.
- PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS
The private sector is involved in aspects of recreational programming, such as golf, bowling or rock climbing, and the public role is to ensure smooth workings between the various agencies involved.

Finding the right partnership or set of partnerships is essential to strategic planning for recreation and parks.

8.1 School District

The partnership with School District 48 has suffered considerably over recent years as the School District has been forced to cut deep into its budget - and what has disappeared are those allocations for all items non-educational. Clearly community recreation collaboration has been an early and sustained casualty of this cutting, and this is unlikely to be reversed in the next decade.

1. Renew the Vision

A new, renewed vision of the future is essential if the public's expressed desires for closer working relationships and better access to publicly funded facilities are to be realized.

- ❑ *In recognizing that both the District of Squamish and the School District are under serious financial constraints, we should therefore develop a shared and mutually beneficial vision for open space, recreation facilities and programs.*

Provincial Parks 8.2

Coordination with BC Parks 1.

There are four provincial parks in the District (i.e., Stawamus Chief, Alice Lake, Shannon Falls and Murrin). They serve a hierarchy of needs - from provincial and even international visitors all the way to local residents who use some of the parks picnicking and beach activities. The District of Squamish is unique among BC communities in that it has provincial parks within its municipal boundaries. At times, having the provincial parks ministry operating as an autonomous agency within municipal boundaries can impact municipal residents or conflict with municipal objectives.

- ❑ *Establish a working relationship with BC Parks to ensure that conflicts between the municipality and the provincial parks are minimized and that mutually beneficial opportunities are maximized.*



Provincial Park

8.3 Ministry of Forests

1. Coordination with Forest Service

With some exceptions the District of Squamish occupies the valley bottoms and lower hillsides of the Squamish River valley. The open spaces and outdoor recreation activities in Squamish extend beyond the municipal boundaries to the Crown land beyond. The Ministry of Forests is responsible for managing these lands. For this reason it is essential that the District and the Ministry work together.

- ❑ *Establish a working relationship with the Ministry of Forests to ensure that the District's outdoor recreation activities and initiatives are addressed in the Ministry's planning and management of the Crown land around Squamish.*

2. Recreation Sites

The Ministry of Forests has some recreation sites within the municipal boundaries. In the past, and in response to financial challenges, the Ministry has offered the District the opportunity to manage and operate these sites. However, the constraints imposed on this proposal by the Ministry made it more of a liability and a burden for the District than an opportunity. However, this is not to say that the District should never consider the possibility of acquiring some form of use or title to these sites.

- ❑ *If it fits with the District's strategic objectives in regards to parks and outdoor recreation, give reasoned consideration to proposals by the Ministry of Forests that would have the District be responsible for and reap the benefits of using and managing these recreation sites.*



Totem Hall

Squamish Nation 8.4

Identify Shared Opportunities 1.

The Squamish Nation is a distinct but important ingredient in the community of Squamish. Squamish Nation citizens make use of recreation facilities in the District. In addition, they have provided their own recreation facilities in the past (e.g., lacrosse box) and developed an important new one (i.e., Totem Hall) that serves Squamish Nation people and other citizens of Squamish. The Squamish Nation is open to establishing partnership relationships with the District. In addition, they have land and access capital and human resources for facility development.

□ *Work with the Squamish Nation to:*

- *Explore and confirm the feasibility of establishing a mutually beneficial partnership relationship; and*
- *Identify potential **financial** partnership initiatives (e.g., arena, lacrosse box or multi-court, sportfields, public marina, etc.).*

Non-profit Groups 8.5

Community Involvement 1.

The non-profit groups that deliver the majority of recreational opportunities in Squamish (e.g., minor hockey, scouts and guides, the weaving guild, theatre clubs, and many, many more) are a vital component, not only of recreation delivery, but also of community development. Finding ways of strengthening these groups will also provide ways to strengthen the community itself.

- ❑ *Consult with user groups and the public as part of any plan to build or renovate a facility (e.g., seniors' centre, youth centre, etc.) or open space (e.g., waterfront walkway, Brennan Park, etc.). Involve them in the planning and implementation of park and recreation initiatives.*

2. Recreation Centre

One strategy pursued in other communities has been to assist with the organizational aspects of these groups by providing office space and equipment for them to use, together with meeting space for board meetings, coaching clinics, etc.

- ❑ *Consult with groups as part of the renovation of the Brennan Park **Recreation** Centre, with a view to providing them with access to meeting rooms.*

8.6 Garibaldi at Squamish

This proposed ski resort and residential development is currently moving through both financing and approval stages. If the project proceeds the District is interested in extending its boundary to include the proposed development, both to allow it to deliver services and to gain the tax base that the resort will represent. It is difficult to offer concrete suggestions as to how partnering might proceed, since the final scope and content of the development is still conceptual. However, if the development goes ahead it will have park and recreation needs that other parts of the community have. These needs will be identified and met through the planning and approval process. In addition, the proposed development will provide park spaces and recreation facilities that serve tourists, its own residents and the residents of the rest of the entire community.



Identify Opportunities 1.

The best opportunity for a partnership relationship between the District and Garibaldi at Squamish lies in the provisions of **all season** activities and joint-use school facilities.

- ❑ *Work with the Garibaldi at Squamish proponents, as the proposal is refined and through the planning and approval process, to identify mutually beneficial opportunities for recreation partnerships. Potential partnership initiatives include an arena, outdoor skating rink, pitch and putt course, recreation instruction (e.g., skiing, golf, hiking, snowshoeing, nature appreciation, etc.) and public use of school facilities.*
- ❑ *The District and the developer(s) must work together to determine who pays for what. For example, the developer could pay for capital costs and then District could pay for maintenance and operating costs **on a cost recovery basis**.*

University 8.7

The proposed establishment of a private university in Squamish could be one of the most significant changes to the community since the forestry industry or BC Rail came to town. Universities are the agencies with the biggest community growth factor - in terms of income generation, spin-off jobs, employment growth and community vitality. Much of this growth will occur on the university site itself, and will involve linkages all across the world in addition to those within the community.

1. Identify Opportunities

The university may be interested in being a partner with the District to provide/use limited recreation amenities on and/or off campus. A current example of this model of university development is TechBC University in Surrey, to be built adjacent to the Whalley Recreation Centre and to jointly share facilities on both sites. The university has identified that they require a 400-seat theatre and 40,000 sq. ft. of recreation facilities, the details of which have not been determined.

□ *Work with the university proponent to identify the needs and facilities of both the community and the proposed university and how they might be jointly accommodated. Some examples of partnered facilities include:*

- IN SQUAMISH
For example: arena, pool, sportfields.
- AT UNIVERSITY
For example: track, all-weather field, theatre.

8.8 Private Sector

1. Identify Opportunities

The private sector is very active in recreation, primarily in three ways:

- PRIVATELY-PROVIDED RECREATION FACILITIES
Examples include bowling alleys, martial arts and dance schools. These are critical parts of the community's recreation system, and should be **facilitated** whenever the need arises. However there are issues arising that could change the parameters re this sector; these programs have historically been outside the public municipal system, both of facility provision and the subsidization involved.

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- PRIVATE RECREATION PROVIDERS
Private companies offering recreation opportunities - in Squamish, most of the outdoor recreation opportunities are either naturally occurring, or are facilitated by individuals or small businesses. There are strong partnership opportunities in this area, mostly related to marketing and infrastructure development (SECTION 10.5.2).
 - PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT of RECREATION FACILITY
Due to the financial constraints facing many provincial and local governments today there has been a significant rise in public-private partnerships (P3) across the country. Such a partnership is made when a municipality **contracts** with a private sector partner to develop and operate a community facility. Examples include arenas, community and recreation centres, convention centres, piers and commercial activities associates with these.
- Be open to and encourage partnerships with the private sector for the public acquisition of land, the development of facilities and the delivery of services.*

8.9 Public-Private Partnerships (P3)

This section is a discussion of what public-private partnerships (P3) are, how they work, and the issues to be considered in pursuing such a partnership. A public-private partnership can be defined as:

- A cooperative venture between the public and private sectors, built on the expertise of each partner, that best meets clearly defined public needs through appropriate allocation of resources, risks and rewards.

The underlying logic behind P3 is that both public and private sectors have unique characteristics that provide them with competitive advantages in the delivery of specific aspects of a service or project. The most successful partnerships incorporate the strengths of both public and private partners to establish beneficial relationships where advantages are maximized.

Public private partnerships in recreation are not a new phenomenon. They have existed in Canada, albeit in a limited way, over the past 50 years. However, full scale partnerships that involve municipalities in British Columbia and the private sector have been constrained by provisions in the *Municipal Act*. In the past, these constraints rendered some innovative P3 arrangements expensive and time consuming to develop and administratively cumbersome to manage.

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The constraints on P3 were removed through changes to the *Municipal Act* enacted through the adoption of *Bill 31, the Local Government Statutes Amendment Act* in 1998. Since that time, a number of BC municipalities have entered into or are contemplating P3 arrangements for recreational facilities such as arenas, theatres, and pools. P3 arrangements have been broad, some examples include:

- USE AGREEMENTS
Agreements between the municipality and a private partner where the municipality provides land and a dedicated annual revenue stream to purchase "public ice or public swim time" and the private sector partner builds, owns and operates an arena or pool for a specific period of time (e.g., 30 years) after which time it reverts to the municipality. Usually the time frame is established to reflect the private partner's need to recover investment and to generate a reasonable rate of return.
- OPERATING AGREEMENTS
Operating agreements between a municipality and a private partner for the long term operation and maintenance of swimming pools. The municipality and the private partner agree to an annual contract for private operation and maintenance of a pool. The private sector partner then expands and improves the facility to increase user demand and revenues. Revenues over and above the cost of operation are then either shared with the municipality or accrue solely to the private partner..
- DESIGN/BUILD/TRANSFER AGREEMENTS
These agreements require an architect, engineer and contractor to work together to design, build and then transfer a facility such as an arena, pool or theatre to the municipality. The municipality benefits from reduced construction timeframe as initial construction may occur before design is completed. There may also be a sharing of reduced construction costs with the private sector proponent, as the private sector consortia typically agrees to a guaranteed maximum price for the facility. If economies of scale occur, the savings are awarded to the private company in their guaranteed maximum price.

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Despite their growing popularity, P3s, especially for large facilities and infrastructure are not always the best alternative for municipalities contemplating recreation facility development. A number of critical elements need to be understood before the municipality considers a P3 arrangement.

1. Is the Project Suitable for P3?

There are several questions to consider before pursuing a P3 approach to developing and operating community facilities.

- Does the project allow the District to achieve its core mission in service delivery?
- Is the project of sufficient size and complexity that its various components will be attractive to the private sector and allow it to add value to the project?
- Does a competitive private sector market exist for the delivery of the service or project?
- Can value for money be demonstrated? If the municipality were to complete the project on its own, does the District know the relative benefits and costs when compared to P3 delivery?
- Does the project provide an economic advantage for the District of Squamish?
- Does the project result in lower costs for users?
- If the project does not result in lower costs for users, does it result in increased or enhanced services for users?

2. When Should You Not Consider Entering into a P3?

The District should not consider using a P3 when:

- SERVICES have PUBLIC GOOD CHARACTERISTICS
Generally speaking, services have public good characteristics when access to the service cannot be restricted. Access to parks, police or fire protection would be examples of these characteristics.

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- SERVICES are CONSIDERED ESSENTIAL
Essential services would include police, fire protection and other emergency services. Essential services may also include services the municipality deems necessary to achieve its core mission.
- SERVICE QUALITY will DECLINE as a RESULT of PARTNERSHIP
If service quality will decline even remotely following a P3 arrangement, users or residents perception of P3 as a service delivery mechanism will be negative. This may reduce the municipality's ability to use P3 as a service delivery mechanism in the future.
- DISTRICT CONTROL over the SERVICE NEEDS to be RETAINED
Often a municipality must retain control of service delivery for economic development, achievement of municipal goals or other reasons. In cases where a municipality needs to retain control of a service, the service may be a less likely candidate for delivery through a P3.
- COSTS to the USER will INCREASE
Generally speaking, costs to the user should not increase following a P3 arrangement. In cases where cost to the user are projected to increase following a P3 agreement, the municipality should consider whether P3 is a viable service delivery option relative to municipal service delivery.
- COSTS to the DISTRICT will INCREASE
The District should not consider a public private partnership to deliver a project or service if it will result in a cost increase for the District over traditional delivery methods. The only time a P3 arrangement that would include a cost increase for the District should be considered is in a situation where a major innovation would result in significant improvements to present service or project delivery methods.
- NO or FEW SUITABLE PARTNERS EXIST
Public private partnerships can provide significant cost savings to municipalities. These cost savings are generated partly through efficiencies created by the private sector, but more importantly by the innovation and competition fostered in the private sector. When no or few suitable partners exist, the ability to enter into a valuable partnership declines as competition and the need to continually innovate is reduced.

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- THE SERVICE has no OPPORTUNITIES to GENERATE REVENUES
Generally speaking, if a service presents no opportunities to generate revenues, a private sector partner would not be interested in a P3 arrangement to provide the service.
- EXISTING USERS will be EXCLUDED
This is especially true of situations where parks or recreation services or other services with public good characteristics are to be provided through a P3. The P3 arrangement should not result in the exclusion of these users through significantly increased user fees or other mechanisms.

3. Can the District Accommodate P3?

In order to even contemplate using P3 as a project and service delivery mechanism, the District of Squamish must first ensure that it is organizationally prepared to accommodate this unique form of service delivery. A number of basic issues need to be addressed:

- A P3 champion within the organization needs to be established. This person ensures that a central source of expertise and support exists within the District of Squamish.
- A Central Procurement Team needs to be built around the champion. This team ensures that a consistent message is provided to the private sector and to the public in relation to Squamish's P3 policies and procedures. It also can help establish clear responsibility which rests with one team. This reduces ambiguity and focuses responsibility and accountability for results.

Does the District have P3 Policies?

4.

P3 is a unique form of service delivery that requires a tremendous amount of transparent process to ensure fairness for the District, private sector proponents and the community's residents. For this reason, the District needs to be able to communicate clear P3 policy guidelines and procedures that will inform the public and the private sector as to how P3s will be considered, developed and implemented in the District.

A Checklist for Proceeding with the Investigation of P3 Opportunities for Parks and Recreation

5.

The *Parks and Recreation Master Plan* identifies a number of opportunities for the District to partner with the public, private and non-profit sector to enhance existing park and recreation facilities or to develop new facilities and services (SECTION 8.0). Two of the most apparent opportunities exist in terms of partnerships for the development of a new arena and for the development of infrastructure and facilities to support the emerging adventure recreation tourism market.

Public private partnerships can provide tremendous benefits for the community. These benefits range from improved services and facilities to reduced costs for taxpayers. However, these agreements are difficult, time consuming and expensive to develop. It is therefore important for the District to understand whether a public private partnership is the best service delivery alternative for providing needed park and recreation facilities. There are a number of preliminary steps the District can follow in the determination of whether a public private partnership is the best method of providing services and facilities for District residents.

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- ❑ *Implement a checklist to assess opportunities for establishing a public-private partnership. The following is an overview of the preliminary steps that should be taken when considering any service for delivery through a public private partnership.*
 - RECOGNIZE MUNICIPAL LIMITATIONS
No matter how large and sophisticated a municipality may be, there are inherent skill limitations that will necessitate the use of trusted outside advisors. P3 advisors in the areas of process, public consultation, finance, law, engineering, facilities design, etc. may be required to assist the municipality in the establishment of a P3 arrangement. These arrangements take time to complete. There is a need to set a realistic time frame and to be patient.
 - ESTABLISH CHAMPIONS for P3
P3 projects generally require two clear champions – a driving force on Council and a staff champion who will coordinate the P3 process. If either champion does not exist, the likelihood of project success can be diminished.
 - ESTABLISH a CENTRAL PROCUREMENT TEAM
P3s are complex, time consuming projects that cannot be undertaken by the champion alone. A Central Procurement Team consisting of skilled municipal staff members is required to assist and provide project support and guidance. This team will also be responsible to help Council develop clear P3 policies and guidelines.
 - DEVELOP MUNICIPAL P3 POLICY GUIDELINES & PROCEDURES
P3 policy guidelines and procedures are required to provide direction for both staff and Council in the assessment of opportunities for public private partnerships. These guidelines also demonstrate transparency in process and fairness to the private sector. These characteristics can reaffirm the private sector's confidence in the municipality's commitment to P3.
 - UNDERSTAND the SERVICE to be PROVIDED
It is important to understand that P3s for park and recreation generally are not required to develop an asset such as an arena. Rather, they are required to provide recreation opportunities to the community. The District and its trusted advisors will need to gain a clear understanding of the service to be provided to the community through a P3 project. This understanding can help the municipality to clearly develop the priorities it needs to achieve through the completion of the project.

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- PROJECT SCOPE

Working with the community needs priorities established in the previous step, a project scope needs to be completed. The project scope exercise can be used to develop a clearer perspective on the size and complexity of the potential project. If P3 is the most viable service delivery alternative, the project scope can serve as a basis for the development of the Request for Expressions of Interest (RFEI) process.

- ASSESSING SERVICE DELIVERY ALTERNATIVES

The project scope should be reviewed to determine if there are other opportunities for delivering the service efficiently and cost effectively to the community. For example, if an arena was the project being considered, alternatives such as exclusive municipal delivery or joint use arrangements between the District and the New University or the District and the Squamish First Nation would need to be examined to determine the most beneficial arrangement. In this step, shadow bids or the cost to deliver the service under each arrangement should be included along with an assessment of relative benefits and costs (both quantitative and qualitative) should be provided at this stage.

- DETERMINATION of APPROPRIATE SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL

Based on the assessment of alternative service delivery mechanisms, a determination will need to be made on the most appropriate means of service delivery for the District of Squamish.

- *If a P3 is selected as the best means of delivering a service, the District will need to proceed to the next steps in conjunction with its trusted advisors.*

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Parks and Recreation in Squamish is a multi-million dollar activity. The departmental expenditures are approximately \$2.7 million, of which \$668,800 is collected in revenues for programs, rentals and for drop-in activities. The major cost centres are:

1999 BUDGET	Expend.	Revenue
Administration	\$249,000	
Capital Works	\$519,700	
Civic Centre	\$210,000	\$37,200
Arena	\$547,800	\$139,000
Pool	\$958,200	\$293,200
Parks Maintenance	\$453,800	
Other Recreation	\$269,000	
Recreation Programs		\$147,000
Other Items	\$27,900	\$12,400
SUB-TOTALS:	\$3,235,400	\$628,800

- THE POOL
Which costs almost \$1m to operate and returns about \$300,000 in self-generated revenue.
- THE ARENA
Which has \$547,800 in expenditures and \$139,000 in revenues.
- PARKS MAINTENANCE
Which has \$453,800 in expenditures but has limited revenue streams.

Other revenue flows from recreation programs, rental of various rooms at the Recreation Centre, including the ongoing rental from the daycare space, and the concession.

The pool budget notes revenues of almost \$300,000, partly offsetting expenditures of \$950,000. The notional loss on the pool is a regional District **loss covered** by a transfer from the Regional District as its contribution to the pool operating expenses.

The District allocates part of its capital budget to recreation and parks. In 1999, \$519,000 was identified to a variety of expenditures of a one time or capital nature.

9.1 Fees and Charges Policies

The District sets the fees and charges for the use of the arena, the pool, and many of its programs on the basis of what it thinks is an acceptable rate of return on its facility and operating investment. Another way of saying this, is to note that the recreation service is paid for in part by the consumers of each service and in part by the general taxpayers. This approach itself reflects the 'public good' nature of recreation and parks, while also accepting that many aspects of the service are virtually impossible to collect a fee for.

1. User Pay

The bottom line is that well over 60% of the funding for the recreation and park systems are funded out of general revenue. The acceptability of this has changed over the last 10 years and is continuing to swing toward a more user pay system. This was clearly shown in the Community Survey where a desire to see adult users contribute to the capital cost of new facilities from which they will directly benefit was noted. This change in opinion also reflects a public which is regarding parks and recreation, or particular parts of it, as less of a public good than was previously the case. Arena users for example have always been both among the highest paying users and among the most heavily subsidized. This reflected the national focus on hockey in particular and ice sports generally as part of our national culture. This is changing. The public today is less willing to subsidize specific or narrow interest groups. They are more willing to pay for assets that have a broad community benefit.

PUBLIC SURVEY RESULT

*Increase in costs will
deter people rather
than bring in more
revenue.*

- Formulate a policy regarding cost recovery of Recreation programs and services.***

Public Awareness 2.

Any revisions to the user pay system needs to be clearly understood by everyone in the District .

- Promote and market the user pay systems.*

Financial Reporting 3.

The current reporting system does not give a very clear picture of what is paid for what service, and by what user. **A clearer financial system would allow Council a better opportunity to monitor the fees and charges policy.**

- Revise the current financial reporting system so that these data can be monitored.*

Movie & TV Locations 4.

Southwest British Columbia is a popular location for filming movies and taping television shows. Recent production work in and around Squamish is evidence of this.

- Develop a policy for the use of parks and recreation facilities for movie and television production, as well as other events or productions, including a schedule of fees and charges.*

9.2 Profit Centres & Entrepreneurship

1. Financial Reporting

The issue of profit centres and entrepreneurship is comparable to fees and charges systems. That is, it is sometimes assumed that because something is a 'profit centre' that it is making money. This is not always the case.

- ❑ *Implement a financial reporting and review process so that the performance of revenue generators can be assessed.*

Any discussion of profit centres and entrepreneurial opportunities must start from a number of premises:

- Public recreation departments are generally not in business to make a profit. They do however make revenues on some of the services they provide.
- The public recreation system, especially its facilities, their regular flow of clients, and the marketing opportunities that flow from this, offer locations that would be sought after by certain private sector entrepreneurs.
- Most recreation consumers are prepared to pay for goods and services that they consume at the recreation centre, especially if it is a higher quality or comes with a seal of approval.
- Increasingly consumers are very supportive of working in partnership with the private sector to enhance the overall recreation product.

Revenue Generation 2.

Given all this, there are a range of potential profit centres in the park and recreation system.

❑ *Give consideration to enhancing opportunities for the District to generate revenue from the park and recreation system. Examples of such opportunities include:*

- *Wellness operators such as chiropractors, physiotherapists, who would like to locate in a newly renovated Recreation Centre.*
- *Expanded coffee bar/lounge/restaurant for the Recreation Centre or other building such as a seniors' centre or a downtown public marina building.*
- *Public recreation facilities that generally make a profit, such as a golf course, or fitness centre.*
- *Modest passes or fees for outdoor recreation sites (e.g., access windsurfing spit, rock climbing parking lots, etc.).*
- *Differential rates for residents and visitors, with visitors paying more.*

PUBLIC SURVEY RESULT

Need to focus on facilities that would generate revenue . . .

Economic Development 9.3

There are several areas in this report that refer to Economic Development Plans (Phase 3), and the Tourism Marketing Strategy, where applicable recommendations must be consistent with these plans.

- Developing a terms of reference to establish a mandate for an economic development society.
- Developing the means to establish an independent board to direct the economic development society.

It is anticipated that the Board will work in conjunction with the District to undertake strategic planning, marketing and promotion functions.

2. Recommendations

- ❑ ***The community survey identified strong respondent support for promoting Squamish as the Outdoor Recreation Capital of Canada. Address this possibility in the marketing of outdoor and adventure recreation.***

Development Cost Charges (DCC's) 9.4

Implement DCC Policy 1.

The municipality is empowered by the *Municipal Act* to enact and set Development Cost Charges (DCC's) to recover the costs of providing municipal services, including parks, in order to meet the demands of new development in the community. The District of Squamish currently charges DCC's for roads, water, sewer and drainage. The District does not charge DCC's for parks.

- ❑ ***The District of Squamish should implement DCC's on a community-wide basis for parks. Implementation will require that the District prepare and adopt a DCC bylaw.***

When establishing a DCC bylaw it is necessary to set a rate to charge each new residential unit to be developed in a prescribed area of the community. The range of park DCC rates that municipalities in British Columbia is large.

PARK DCC RATE	\$/unit
Salmon Arm	\$590
Courtenay	\$640
Mission	\$710
Port Moody	\$1,120
Oliver	\$1,450
Osoyoos	\$1,850
Penticton	\$1,880
Qualicum Beach	\$2,220
Pitt Meadows	\$2,230
Ladysmith	\$3,830
Maple Ridge	\$3,870
Whistler	\$4,090
West Vancouver	\$7,240

PER UNIT DCC RATE	TOTAL EST'D REVENUE
\$500	\$2,500,000
\$1,000	\$5,000,000
\$1,500	\$7,500,000
\$2,000	\$10,000,000
\$2,500	\$12,500,000
\$3,000	\$15,000,000

based on 30,000 pop'n threshold
(or 5,000 new dwelling units)

Based on the *Official Community Plan* population projections it is possible to make estimates of DCC revenues that the District could raise at different unit rates.

NOTE: Squamish does not currently have a parks DCC in place.

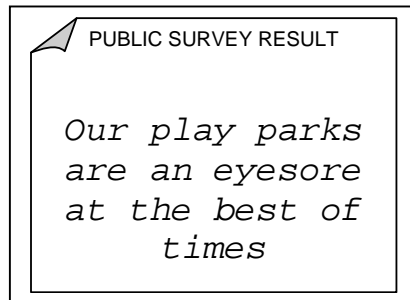
Use of DCC Funds 2

Collected DCC's may be used to purchase land for a community's park and recreation use. It may also be applied to the development of basic infrastructure that supports park and recreation use.

□ *Funds collected for park DCC's should be allocated to the following initiatives:*

- *Acquisition of land for neighbourhood and community parks, including joint-use sportfields owned by the municipality and used by the School District.*
- *Development of fencing, landscaping, drainage and irrigation, trails, restrooms, playgrounds and playing field equipment.*
- ***To pay the principal and interest on debt incurred as a result of spending D.C.C. money on park land acquisition or infrastructure capital costs.***
- *Planning, engineering and legal costs associated with the above.*

It is important to be aware that the DCC money collected may only be spent on land and facilities, or that proportion thereof, that are made necessary by the additional residential units that are being developed in an area. Applying these funds to correct deficiencies that existed prior to a proposed development is not permitted.



9.5 Maintenance and Operations

1. Budgeting

When developing and upgrading park and recreation facilities it is common to concentrate on the capital costs of undertaking such work and overlook the fact that there will be on-going downstream

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costs that must be covered. Without budgeting funds for maintenance and operations for these new and upgraded facilities it is necessary to reallocate funds from the maintenance and operation of other facilities.

- ❑ *When budgeting money for capital projects, include an additional budget item to cover on-going costs associated with maintenance and operation of the project.*

There are maintenance functions performed by the Parks and Recreation Department that have insufficient or no budget amounts assigned to **them (especially at the Brennan Park Recreation Centre)**.

- ❑ *Provide budgets for the following key maintenance functions:*
 - *Trails (e.g., development and maintenance); **and***
 - *Community beautification (e.g., flower beds, banners, baskets, entrance features, etc.).*

9.7 Alternative Financing

1. Maximize Alternative Financing Opportunities

Respondents to the Community Survey conducted as part of the *Master Plan* expressed a strong preference for diverse methods of financing improvements to the park and recreation system. This is mirrored by trends province-wide and nation-wide where more innovative strategies are being developed and employed to limit the tax burden on municipal citizens.

□ *In implementing the recommendations of the Master Plan examine, assess and implement financing strategies that minimize the direct burden on tax payers and meets community park and recreation needs. The following financing alternatives should be considered:*

- *Collaboration with adjacent municipalities.*
- *Collaboration with agencies and other park/recreation providers (e.g., Ministries of Forests and Parks, Squamish Nation, proposed university, etc.).*
- *Regionalization of some services to collect funds from the Regional District.*
- *Develop and run facilities that generate income.*
- *Enter into partnerships with the private sector.*
- *Work with user groups to develop facilities. Rely on them to provide leadership and deliver some services.*
- *Charge and or increase user fees, especially for adult users.*
- *Charge visitors and/or charging them more than locals for the use of park and recreation facilities.*
- *Encourage more volunteerism.*
- *Utilize grants where possible.*
- *5% dedication of land/cash on subdivision.*
- *Development Cost Charges (DCC's).*