

District of Squamish

Parks and Recreation

Master Plan 2012

Draft #2

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Submitted by:



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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Squamish is known as one of the recreation meccas in Western Canada given its many natural attributes and an evolving culture of sport and recreation excellence. The need for a Parks and Recreation Master Plan emerged as the community and Council sought to leverage the “Outdoor Recreation Capital of Canada” moniker and optimize the natural values and amenities in the District and nearby landscapes. This Master Plan provides a strategic framework that will guide future recreation and parks decisions and at the same time give direction with respect to certain services and facilities that have been identified as priorities.

This Master Plan is not a commitment to spend. Those decisions are made by Council as part of the defined budget process and over the course of their ongoing deliberations. Although approximate cost estimates for the key recommendations are included in the report, they are provided for planning purposes only – giving Council, Staff and partners a guide as to orders of magnitude costing.

The Squamish Parks and Recreation Master Plan has involved the participation of hundreds of residents, multiple interviews, open houses and user group meetings and many hours of collaboration with Staff. The engagement process is summarized below. The Plan has resulted in significant initiatives arising from the overarching desire in the community to enhance the current and future recreation opportunities. Those high profile initiatives are summarized in this section of the report.

Telephone and Online Survey

This Master Plan is the result of one of the most rigorous survey, consultation and engagement processes for a plan of this type. The community was surveyed using established methodologies and executed by The Mustel Group, Market Research. As well, the same survey was made available on line. Key findings from that research include:

- Strong support for the Outdoor Recreation Capital of Canada vision
- Strong support for increased number and type of community events
- Relatively good satisfaction with indoor recreational opportunities
- Very high satisfaction with outdoor recreational opportunities
- A high level of volunteerism in the community
- Desire for a new ice arena and indoor multiplex facility
- Squamish is a young community where nearly half of households have children under 18.

Community Engagement

One of the direction setting sessions was the Council Workshop held in the spring (2012) at which time Councilors brought forward the issues they thought needed to be discussed in the parks and recreation planning process.

Specific user groups were canvassed twice. The first was an “issues identification” session and the second was to discuss the draft recommendations. These stakeholder sessions included interviews with 16 user groups. The consultant team also met extensively with parks and recreation Staff from Department heads to front line employees.

Three open houses were held to gather input, identify and confirm the issues and to roll out the draft recommendations. These were very well attended and resulted in high quality, passionate thoughts and feedback. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan webpage on the District's website was used throughout the process to keep the community informed. Social media discussion groups were monitored during the process but staff and consultants did not participate.

The Outdoor Recreation Capital: Key Recommendations

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan recommendations are grouped under the following headings:

- Vision and Delivery Model
- Recreation Hubs
- Recreation Programming
- Gathering and Celebrating
- Arts, Culture and Heritage
- Parks
- The Environment
- Trails

The following summarizes the key recommendations. A full summary of recommendations is included in Section 11 – Implementation (Table 11.1).

The Vision and Community Development Model are both inspiring and robust. The Outdoor Recreation Capital of Canada vision underpins the entire plan. All the recommendations have been tested against this ambitious (yet attainable) community future. One of the keys to success will be the manner in which recreation services are delivered. To that end, a Community Services Delivery model is proposed. This is distinct from a “direct service delivery model” that many communities use. The Community Services model hinges on partnerships and builds on the long standing, extensive level of volunteer and community effort in Squamish. A system of Advisory Groups is proposed that will form direct, effective linkages to Staff and ultimately Council as programs are refined, processes fine-tuned, new initiatives and conflicts discussed (Program Advisory, Facility User Advisory, and Outdoor Recreation Advisory). The Community Services Delivery Model is crucial if Squamish is to reach its potential, affordably. Volunteers, the private and not-for-profit sectors will be crucial in truly making Squamish the Outdoor Recreation Capital.

The enhancement of Recreation Hubs in Squamish will define the nature and quality of indoor and outdoor recreation and culture in the years to come. Brennan Park, Brennan Park Recreation Centre, the Seniors' Centre and the Youth Centre are envisioned as the primary community hubs for programmed and indoor recreation. The unique geography of the Chief, Howe Sound, Mamquam Channel, Squamish River and the surrounding forests and trails mean that informal outdoor recreation is dispersed, and so the recreation hub system will also strive to provide anchoring amenities. The hub system builds on the community development model: working with the existing facilities, institutions and the School District will be necessary in order that residents are able to access facilities conveniently and so that the overall tax base is not burdened with meeting all future facility needs.

With all the existing and anticipated pressure on **Brennan Park and the Recreation Centre** one of the challenges in the future will be to adopt a very deliberate, if not disciplined approach to the

level and extent of built elements that can be accommodated at that location. Ideally, Brennan Park should evolve based on a plan that has been embraced by the community through discussion specifically about the Park. This Park is, and should continue to be, the centre of outdoor organized sport and major events. As events such as the Squamish Valley Music Festival, Squamish Days/Loggers Sports and others grow in size and scope the pressure on Brennan Park will increase. In addition, each year community organizations are seeking space within the park to create or add on new amenities. Every available square meter should be carefully considered and designed so as to ensure the highest and best use of this area.

The **Brennan Park Recreation Centre** should continue as the indoor recreation hub. An overall evaluation of the building and a plan for phased expansion and enhancement is recommended. Among the key improvements is a much needed fitness centre, which is in the early consultation and design stages and this should proceed as soon as funds are available. Among the new programming spaces, a new gymnasium is required, given the under sized, low height, and poor floor in the existing gym. As well, planning should begin as a high priority for the replacement of the existing ice sheet, including a 1500 person spectator area. A new ice arena would provide an excellent opportunity to repurpose the existing arena to provide flexible dry-floor recreation space desired by a variety of organizations.

One of the draft ideas presented at the 3rd open house and discussed at length with the Squamish Valley Equestrian Association (SVEA) was to relocate that facility to a location outside Brennan Park. It was brought to the attention of the SVEA that the impact of future cultural events (size, scope, duration) and the expansion of the adjacent ball diamonds, as well as the geotechnical issues could likely curtail a future fixed structure and expansion of facilities at their current location. The recommendation for moving SVEA to a new location has been removed from this plan, as there are additional discussions and research on potential new locations required, beyond the scope of this plan. It is suggested that further discussions on this subject occur during the development of a site-specific Brennan Park Master Plan.

In discussion with the Seniors Society regarding the draft recommendations, the concerns about the Seniors Centre becoming more of a multipurpose hub – including a name change – were aired. The upshot of those meetings is that the draft Master Plan has been amended to ensure that the good will and hard effort of the Seniors Society be acknowledged and that the tenure and programming of the facility continue to focus on seniors during the day time, while allowing for the addition of new, compatible programs during evening hours. New name alternatives will be discussed with the seniors, and there will be representative(s) from the seniors on the proposed Programming Advisory Group.

Recreation Programming and some recreation services are provided by the private sector (advanced adult fitness, indoor rock climbing, etc.) and by not for profit organizations (curling, Rod and Gun, etc.) in Squamish. The Master Plan seeks to build upon and supplement those services and relationships and enhance opportunities for vulnerable populations, the “getting fit” population, youth and the elderly as well as for athletes that are pursuing excellence in single and multiple sports.

Gathering and Celebration is all about events. As the phone and online surveys indicated, Squamish residents are very supportive of increasing the number of events in the community. As well, both the Economic Development Officer and the consultant’s research indicate that events already are an economic driver and could further enhance community prosperity. The key is adequate facilities and ongoing support. The former needs a concerted effort to plan and manage Brennan Park and other District open spaces so that there is both sufficient infrastructure

and the appropriate level of event organization and resourcing. The latter can occur, partially at least, through the proposed Advisory Group structure. To this end, there is much to be learned from the very successful Squamish Loggers Sports and Squamish Live – now re branding as the Squamish Valley Music Festival.

With the 100th Anniversary of Squamish to occur in 2014, fast approaching planning for a Centennial initiative(s) should be considered a priority, and it may also be a catalyst for achieving some of the recommendations in this report.

Arts, Culture and Heritage are, and should be, intricately linked with parks and recreation. One of the themes of this Master Plan is to tie in the rich art and cultural history, talent and capacity into all Squamish parks and outdoor recreation facilities. There are ample opportunities to display and reveal Squamish Nation history and rich art as well as the natural resource roots of the community in parks, along trails and as part of the public realm “palette” in the coming years. In this way, the museum comes outdoors and the gallery is open air – as well of course the display of valued pieces in proper buildings. The key point here, since this is not a “cultural” plan, is to set the framework for the inclusion and incorporation of art and culture as an integrated part of facility and program development.

The idea of a Forestry Museum is likely to come before Council at or near Rose Park or adjacent to the Adventure Centre. This Plan suggests those are ideal locations for the Museum as compared to Brennan Park – a site as mentioned previously that cannot accommodate more in terms of buildings and related parking and circulation.

The provision of **Parks** for Squamish residents is generally good, although neighbourhood parks in the following areas are recommended in order to meet underserved geographic zones: North Yards, Garibaldi Estates, Valleycliffe, Hospital Hill and Garibaldi Highlands. A proposed set of parkland acquisition and park development guidelines are included in the Master Plan and should be applied as and when parkland acquisition and development decisions are made.

One of the demographic waves that has already hit Squamish and that will have an impact for at least the next generation is the number of families with small children. Those children need a range of play, recreation and exploration opportunities and most especially access to nature. This is why it is important that every neighbourhood have access to parkland within no more than a 10 minute, safe, walk. It is also why the Master Plan recommends inclusion of nature play elements in new and retrofit park developments.

A park-by-park set of recommendations is included in the Master Plan that addresses park infrastructure, safety, aesthetic improvements and playground improvements (Section 8.2).

Playing and ball field strategies are recommended, including:

- Creation of a 4 diamond cloverleaf shaped configuration at Hendrickson Field, including lighting and bleachers;
- Create a Joint Use Agreement with the School District to share the upgrading of natural surface fields;
- Create a second artificial turf surface at Brennan Park;

Given the advent of dog ownership and the potential related social and environmental risks associated with keeping dogs in the District, the Master Plan recommends:

- Creation of 3 off leash, fenced and 2 unfenced dog areas;

- Designate “dog friendly” trails;
- Adopt a dog friendly policy with supporting amendments to the Parks Bylaw to allow dogs in certain parks at certain times, seasons;
- Create a dog ownership, exercising etiquette program to support enforcement of the bylaw.

Water-based recreation opportunities in Squamish are second to none when it comes to windsurfing and kiteboarding. Squamish is one of the best places in North America for these sports and consequently water access, and specifically development of “the spit”, is important.

To this end, the Master Plan recommends that a coordinated physical and management plan for The Spit, the road leading out to it and associated environmental lands be prepared in order to maintain and enhance the shore based launch places for windsports. Environmental and safety impacts could occur if these lands are not managed comprehensively. New opportunities for windsports are recommended for inclusion as development of the Downtown peninsula occurs.

The existing “put-in” opportunities for kayaks and canoes, not to mention motorized craft, are few and far between in Squamish. The sedimentation of the Mamquam Blind Channel means that sailboats and larger craft cannot or will not come up the channel. This has resulted in significant economic loss over the years. The boat ramp should be improved, including adequate storage; and dredging of the channel to remove “the plug” should be considered during the next capital budget discussions. These facilities should be considered as and when the Oceanfront Development detailed design proceeds.

The Environment is crucial to the long term sustainability of the District’s recreation system and realization of the Outdoor Recreation Capital of Canada. To that end, this Plan recommends:

- Ongoing identification and mapping of Environmentally Sensitive Lands;
- Creation of guidelines for recreation in/near environmentally sensitive lands and habitats;
- Create an Outdoor Recreation Advisory Group to assist in the management of environment/recreation initiatives and conflict resolution;
- Continue to contribute to the stewardship of the estuary;

Trails have been and will continue to underpin some of the best (and most affordable!) recreation opportunities in Squamish and have been developed over the years largely by a strong, dedicated volunteer base. Many of the trails that Squamish is known for, and that make the Squamish system so good for so many, occur on Crown Land or are accessible at or over private property. This is a weakness in the system that could be further exacerbated when development occurs, as often access to lands beyond and access for walking, hiking and mountain biking becomes subordinate to subdivision criteria. Consequently, the Master Plan recommends adoption of the park design guidelines and vigilance at the time of development to ensure future access to recreation lands. The recommendations regarding trails include the following:

- The 2011 Trails Master Plan should continue to be implemented, with renewed emphasis on access to the dyke and ongoing work with CN Rail and BC Rail to ensure ongoing and safe access to trails and the dyke.
- A “blueway” vision should be adopted that identifies key water access put in points, emergency access points and routes that are both enjoyable and do not disturb habitat.

- One of the key linkages the Master Plan recommends is across the Mamquam Channel at Rose Park in order to better access Smoke Bluff climbing area and Valleycliffe neighbourhood.

Conclusion

This section of the report summarizes the main recommendations and approaches that are described in great detail in the Master Plan proper. It is important to emphasize that the Parks and Recreation Master Plan is a strategic document, intended to be used as a decision making and direction setting framework. Specific decisions to allot staff and funding resources, let tenders and embark on projects occur as part of the District's ongoing budget and priority setting work.

Squamish, the Outdoor Recreation Capital of Canada. Do-able? Absolutely!

2. INTRODUCTION

As the largest urban centre in the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD) the District of Squamish serves its 18,000 residents as well as the wider Sea to Sky Corridor. Squamish is strategically located on Highway 99 and is less than 1 hour drive from both Whistler and Vancouver. The District is surrounded by mountains, forests and lakes, an ideal setting for the "Outdoor Recreation Capital of Canada".

As a thriving rural Lower Mainland community, Squamish continually attracts new residents seeking a high quality of life and access to a wide variety of active outdoor recreational and cultural opportunities, while still within driving distance of big-city amenities. The region is also popular for summer and winter vacationers, particularly those who come to enjoy rock climbing or wilderness biking and hiking activities, and is becoming increasingly well known for special events such as the Logger's Sports Festival, the Test of Metal, and the Squamish Valley Music Festival.

The inventory of outdoor recreation amenities within the District boundaries is highlighted by natural jewels such as the Estuary at the mouth of the Squamish River, the Brackendale Eagles viewing area along the Squamish River dyke, the Mamquam Blind Channel and the Smoke Bluffs climbing area. These are augmented by several adjacent provincial parks, including the Stawamus Chief and Shannon Falls. An intricate and extensive network of trails wind through a matrix of provincial parks, private and crown lands, and District parkland providing growing opportunities for off-road biking, equestrian trail riding, hiking, and trail running.

In addition to the natural environment features, the District also manages over 250 hectares of lands zoned as Parks and Public Use, including the more traditional neighbourhood and community parks with sports facilities, playgrounds, and special event grounds. The hub of the District's community parks and recreation system is Brennan Park, which is the central active recreation park containing a complex of athletic fields, indoor recreation facilities, tennis, a BMX track, a skate park, the Logger's Sports grounds, an equestrian ring, and a small campground.

Other parks such as Rose Park and the Downtown Pavilion and Stan Clarke Parks anchor the park system by highlighting Squamish's civic pride and providing important venues for celebrations with family and friends, local festivals, farmers markets, and parades.

Indoor recreation facilities include an ice arena, an aquatic centre and recreation centre, a seniors' activity centre and a youth resources centre. Beyond the facilities owned and/or operated by the District, there are many other recreation clubs and organizations, such as the Squamish Valley Golf Club, the Squamish Squash Club, and the Curling Club, among others. Joint Use Agreements are in place between District and School District #48 (Howe Sound) for community use of a secondary school theatre and some school athletic fields.

In addition to the range of sport and recreation, Squamish also benefits from a diverse community of artists and arts organizations. Squamish Nation, the Squamish Arts Council, and the many local artists contribute to community pride and to celebrations of the natural and cultural heritage throughout the community and wider region.

2.1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

In 2002 the previous Parks and Recreation Master Plan was received (but not adopted) by the District Council of the day. Other current policy documentation includes the 2011 Trails Master Plan and the 2009 Official Community Plan. The 2002 Parks and Recreation Master Plan has

now reached its 10-year horizon and the District Council has determined that a new Master Plan should be created. The purpose of the new document is to provide a framework and common vision for the parks and recreation system that will meet the needs and aspirations of a growing community, and guide the management of and future investment in public recreation and leisure facilities and infrastructure over the next 30 years, with a strong focus on the shorter 10 year time frame.

The scope of this Master Plan includes: review of the existing inventory of recreation facilities, parkland and trails and natural features; assessment of current delivery of recreation programming services; and recommendations for future development and enhancement of existing facilities, parks, trails and community recreation programs. In addition, the plan provides direction for development of new infrastructure and a long-term asset management plan.

Specifically, the 2012 Parks and Recreation Master Plan:

- Provides a framework for consideration of how the District will address upcoming "big moves" to take advantage of options for improvement of parks and recreation opportunities;
- Assesses the current general condition of the indoor recreation facility physical plant and recommends plans for immediate refitting or replacement of specific venues;
- Assesses the current inventory of parks, open space and reserve land and determines need for acquisitions, disposals or re-purposing of lands;
- Defines strategies for acquiring new parks, maintaining and investing in existing sites, and developing activities and programs for the parks system;
- Designates park and open space areas to meet the long-term requirements of the community as it grows and changes;
- Addresses the current and future need for a variety of park functions, including active and passive uses;
- Outlines the financial and economic factors associated with the Plan.

The resulting recommendations for the District parks and recreation moving forward are accompanied by broad cost estimates to help in long-term strategic planning. This document does not provide specific site plans or specific budget recommendations. All recommendations and plans outlined within this report will be vetted by staff and Council in future planning processes, as well as evaluated relative to resource and budget requirements.

2.2. BACKGROUND REVIEW

The first phase of the Plan entailed the compilation and analysis of relevant reports and data. Reports such as the OCP and Trails Master Plan were reviewed through the lens of the District's Parks and Recreation system. Geographic data was used to assess the distribution and connectivity of the parks and greenways.

The major background references included:

- Official Community Plan 2009;
- Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2002;
- Trails Master Plan, 2011;
- Skwelwil'em Squamish Estuary Wildlife Area - Management Plan 2007;

- Squamish and School District #48 Theatre Operating Agreement;
- District of Squamish GIS Mapping and Data;
- Core Services Review information;
- Tangible Capital Assets Inventory, and
- Statistics Canada Data 2006 and 2011.

Additional research and guiding principles used to analyze recreation trends and to support the recommendations included:

- How are Canadians Really Doing? Highlights: Canadian Index of Wellbeing 1.0 (2011) <http://ciw.ca/reports/en/Reports%20and%20FAQs/CIWHowAreCanadians-ReallyDoing-FINAL.pdf>
- National Recreation Summit: First Steps Toward a United Agenda – Summit Synopsis (2011) http://lin.ca/Uploads/Summit%20Synopsis%20-%20Dec%202011_En.pdf
- Long-Term Athletic Development and Canadian Sport for Life
<http://www.canadiansportforlife.ca/>
- Canadian Recreation and Parks Association – National Benefits Hub
<http://benefitshub.ca/introduction/>

2.2.1. BENEFITS OF PARKS AND RECREATION

The contribution of parks and recreation amenities to a community in terms of health, quality of life, and environmental benefits are generally well known, but the linkages between these and a host of broader-reaching benefits are stronger than previously recognized. The Canadian Parks and Recreation Association has compiled research and evidence that points to eight key benefits of parks and recreation.

Recreation, sports, arts, culture and parks:

- Are essential to personal health;
- Are key to balanced human development;
- Are essential to quality of life an place;
- Can reduce self-destructive and anti-social behaviour;
- Help build strong families and healthy communities;
- Help reduce health care, social service, and police/justice costs;
- Are significant economic generators, and
- Are essential to well-being and our environmental and psychological survival.

Well-managed and comprehensive parks and recreation services also provide local economic benefits, providing employment opportunities, helping to retain existing residents in the area, and attracting new residents and visitors.

2.2.2. NATIONAL TRENDS IN PARKS AND RECREATION

These are times of challenge for parks and recreation services everywhere. Public money is scarce and the cost of service delivery continues to rise. This issue has both capital and operating cost dimensions, which Parks and Recreation administrations have to address or risk diminished public support for the services they provide.

Province-wide, capital reinvestment in recreation facilities has steadily declined over the past few decades with the result that there is now an infrastructure renewal deficit of some billions of dollars. Many recreation facilities are reaching the end of their useful lifespan, needing either major upgrading or complete replacement, not only to repair the cumulative wear and tear of years of use, but also to address functional obsolescence resulting from changing demands from users.

Similarly, recreation programming has to stay current with changing populations and activity choices. As the boomer generation enters retirement it will profoundly alter the nature of seniors programming, demanding a wider selection and more control over individual leisure pursuits. At the other end of the age spectrum, access to recreation and park facilities is broadly recognized as an effective counter to trends towards obesity and sedentary lifestyles prevalent amongst children and youth.

Participation in outdoor recreation, and particularly in nature-based activities, has increased significantly overall. Interest in forests, wildlife and natural resources remains strong, with growth in both participation and total days dedicated to viewing or photographing natural scenery, visiting nature centres, sightseeing, camping, boating, going to the beach, and off-road driving.

The above observations are particularly pertinent to Squamish given that the District will have to address infrastructure renewal issues at the Brennan Park Recreation Centre within the timeframe of the Master Plan. Squamish is also more youthful than most comparable towns in BC, with almost half of those surveyed having children under the age of 18, and almost a quarter having children under the age of 5 years. The challenge will be to retain these children and youth in the District as young adults by providing both employment and leisure opportunities. Finally, macro trends with respect to outdoor recreation suggest that visitors and new residents will continue to be drawn to Squamish for the active living lifestyle it offers.

Social trends reflect a combination of demographics, economics, environmental conditions, and personal choices made by individuals. The following outlines current social trends that are applicable to park and recreation planning in Squamish, followed by some discussion of the implications of these trends on Squamish (in italics).

Seeking a work-life balance

There is a growing need for people to fit recreation into convenient time slots. Increased commuting, a move to “two career families,” growing pressures to perform in the workplace and children having multiple extracurricular commitments have all contributed to this trend.

Many Squamish residents have long commutes to Whistler/Pemberton or to Vancouver (38% commute >25km), putting limits on available hours for health and recreation (Vital Signs Report 2011, Squamish Community Foundation).

Environmental awareness

Growing awareness and concern about climate change, water quality, species declines, and other environmental issues are having an effect on peoples' perceptions and behavior. In

Squamish, the natural ecosystems are a vital part of the community culture and the adverse effects of development are sources of concern.

Squamish parks offer the opportunity for the District to support a variety of environmental initiatives, including increased environmental protection, environmental education and low-impact operational practices. Implementation of additional ecologically-sensitive procedures and programs in parks and trails will reinforce the District's commitment to environmental objectives.

Concerns for personal safety in public places

The public is well-informed and sensitive to reports of crime and wildlife incidents in outdoor environments. In many cases, this is based largely on perception rather than fact, but a person's sense of safety is as important as the actual safety risk of using parks and trails.

It is important that parks and open space in Squamish be designed and managed to maintain their reputation and functionality as safe, attractive amenities for all residents. Considering the potential for human / wildlife conflicts in public parks and on trails, as well as in public education campaigns and signage, is also a major component of public safety in Squamish. Concern for Health and Wellness

Lack of physical activity is a major public health concern throughout BC, with the most recent data indicating that 38% of British Columbians are not active enough to achieve the health benefits associated with an active lifestyle.

Squamish has the opportunity to provide walking and cycling opportunities to schools, along selected roadways, and within and between parklands. The District also has the opportunity to strengthen activities and programming within parks and to collaborate with a variety of community partners.

Meeting the Needs of Children

Children need adequate play opportunities to develop their social, cognitive and physical abilities. There is also increasing evidence that children need access to natural areas and direct contact with the soil, plants and the non-built environment for enriching development and learning opportunities.

Squamish has a large proportion of children and youth. As the community develops and there is increasing pressure on natural areas, it is timely for Squamish to secure natural areas and to create opportunities for children to interact meaningfully with nature.

Increases in Informal and Individual Activities

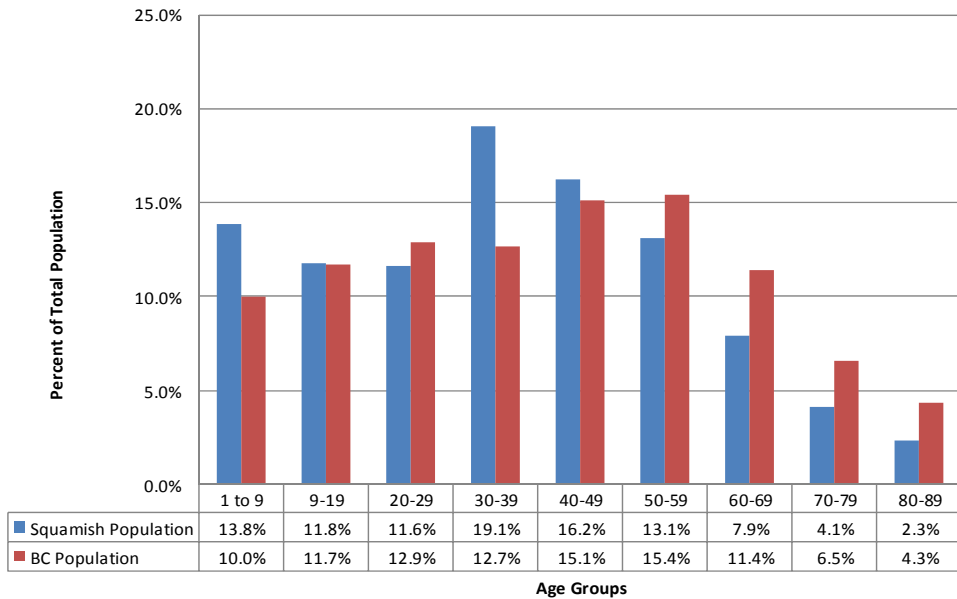
As people's schedules get increasingly busy, there is greater demand for informal and individual leisure activities such as walking or cycling, rather than organized team sports with programmed schedules.

In order to accommodate those with less time and energy for organized recreation, Squamish should develop opportunities for people to be active on an individual, informal basis. These needs can be met by increasing "drop-in" programs and securing trails, greenways, and walking paths.

2.3. DEMOGRAPHICS

Between the years 2006 and 2011, the population of Squamish grew from 14,949 to 17,158 people (2011 Stats Canada Census). The population increase of approximately 3% annually was significantly higher than the national average of just over 1% for the same 5-year period (Statistics Canada Census 2006 and 2011). The rate of population growth is the highest in B.C. and has risen sharply compared to the previous 5 year period. The future population of Squamish in 2032 will be somewhere between 25,000 and 31,000 residents, based on a 2-3% annual growth rate. Estimates in the recent OCP put the 2032 population even higher, at approximately 35,000.

Figure 1: Squamish Population Demographics (2011 Stats Canada Census)



The median age of the population in 2011 was 36.8, compared with the average age of 41.9 years nationwide. The demographics graph below reflects the relative youth of the community. Over 25% of the population was under 20 years of age, while only 14% of the population was over 60 (2011 Census). Results from the public phone survey completed for this report further emphasized how Squamish stands out from most other B.C. municipalities. Nearly 50% of survey respondents had children, and 25% of residents having at least one child under the age of 5.

Further data from the 2011 Census showed the average household size is 2.6 people and the average family income is approximately \$70,000 per year. Female led single-parent families had the lowest average family income at approximately \$38,000 per year. Over half of the population resides in single-detached houses.

The Aboriginal population is approximately 4% of the community. Immigrant populations comprise 21% of the community. The largest visible minority population is South Asian (11.3%). Other visible minority populations are all less than 2% of the population, including Filipino, Chinese, Latin American, Korean, Southeast Asian, Black, Japanese, and West Asian.

2.4. PROCESS

The Plan was completed in three overlapping phases: information gathering, issues identification, and development of recommendations. The information gathering stage included reviews of background reports and data, analysis of GIS data, and an inventory of existing parks and recreation facilities, programs, and systems. Foundational information and guidance was also provided through discussions with the District Steering Committee, public consultations and stakeholder interviews.

From the information gathering phase, a set of overarching parks and recreation related themes emerged that addressed the specific issues, opportunities and constraints present within the District's Parks and Recreation system. These themes and recommendations were tested through presentations to the District Steering Committee, public open houses and further stakeholder interviews.

2.4.1. RECREATION INVENTORY AND ASSESSMENT

The recreation facility and programming inventory began with tours of the major facilities led by District Staff. Additional research included interviews with managers and staff at each facility, a review of budgets, an analysis of facilities provided relative to the population, and review of the scope of the recreation programming.

2.4.2. PARKLAND INVENTORY AND ASSESSMENT

The Squamish park land was assessed using several different methods including comparison with industry metrics, comparison with similar-size communities, and analysis of spatial distribution by neighbourhood/park service areas based on walking distances. The existing classification system was also reviewed to evaluate whether it accurately describes the range of park types in the District.

2.4.3. CONSULTATION

A compilation of the public consultation methods and feedback are summarized in Appendices B-D, including the results of the public survey and questionnaires and summaries of the feedback received at open houses.

Presentations to Council

A presentation to Council was made at the start of the project to gather information on community priorities, the goals and objectives of the project, and measures of success from Council's point of view. Additional consultation with Council was done through District Staff reports and presentations throughout the project. Councilors attended the open house events.

Internal District Staff Consultation

Face-to-face interviews were conducted with District management and front-line staff. Opportunities were provided for written as well as verbal feedback. Staff were encouraged to advance their personal views on current operations as well as the needs of the community in the future.

Phone Survey

A public phone survey was conducted by the Mustel Group from March 5-11, 2012. The questions focused on the activities and programs that are the most important to residents and their families, satisfaction levels and gaps in parks and recreation services, and issues of cost and access. A total of 300 interviews were conducted with a random selection of adults that reflect the overall demographics of the District. The phone survey provides a statistically defensible sample of the community with a margin of error of +/- 5.8% at the 95% confidence level.

The complete survey report, detailed computer tabulations, and the questionnaire are provided in Appendix B.

User Group Consultation

User group consultations included interviews and submittals of written comments. User groups were provided with a questionnaire to focus and to identify their short and long-term priorities for their organization. Representatives from 16 different groups were also interviewed in person. The feedback from user groups has been incorporated throughout the findings and recommendations in this report. Beyond the initial information gathering interviews, additional follow-up meetings were held with several groups following the presentation of the draft recommendations, including the Squamish seniors community where 80 residents attended.

Paper and Online Questionnaires

In addition to the phone survey, additional feedback was gathered from the community through two questionnaires that were made available in paper and online form in conjunction with Public Open House #1 and #3. Both questionnaires were posted online, for several weeks each, through the web service "Survey Monkey" (www.surveymonkey.com) and were also available at Municipal Hall and the Recreation Centre. In contrast to the phone survey, the respondents to these questionnaires were not random. Respondents were self-selected, and therefore this method of public consultation does not provide a representative sample of the community as a whole. However, it was a very useful way to get feedback from those residents who are regular users of the parks and recreation amenities, as well as those who are engaged in the planning process.

The first questionnaire mirrored the phone survey, but also included additional questions about arts, culture, and heritage and fewer questions on demographics. There were 81 questionnaires submitted on paper and 117 online participants (198 total responses).

The second questionnaire was designed to gather feedback on the Draft 1 recommendations and was made available in conjunction with Open House #3, where the recommendations were presented. A total of 34 were collected at the open house, 4 paper copies during the following comment period, and 90 residents completed the questionnaire online (total of 128 responses).

The results of the questionnaires have been incorporated into the recommendations of this report, and the complete results and questionnaire are provided in Appendix C.

Public Open Houses

Three open houses were included in the public consultation process. The first took place on March 28th, 2012 with a focus on engaging the community and gathering information. The "world café" style approach was used, which included a short introduction to the evening's agenda followed by a series of sessions where participants could join an informal, but facilitated,

discussion on one of five topics: Outdoor Recreation + Trails; Outdoor Sports + Athletics; Arts, Culture + Tourism; Indoor Recreation; and Parks. Approximately 150 people attended the open house.

Open House #2 was held on June 11, 2012 with a focus on gathering feedback on emerging themes and issues. The Open House included a presentation on key findings from the work to date and the public consultation process (phone survey, questionnaire, and open house #1) followed by table discussions on four themes: Events + Economic Development; Sport, Health + Wellness; Parks, Trails + Environment; and Arts, Culture + Heritage. Approximately 50 people attended.

Summaries of the Feedback from Open Houses #1 and 2 are provided in Appendix D.

Open House #3 was held on October 24th, 2012 to present the Draft #1 recommendations and to gather feedback from the public. A presentation was made, along with display boards arranged by themes. Discussions followed the presentation, and a paper questionnaire was also made available to provide written comments. Roughly 125 people attended Open House #3.

The paper and online questionnaire results from Open House #3 are provided in Appendix C.

An additional meeting was held with Squamish seniors to discuss recommendations around the changes proposed for the Seniors Centre. Approximately 80 seniors were in attendance. The discussion points have been incorporated into Section 4.5 on the Seniors Centre.

3. VISION, PRINCIPLES + DELIVERY MODEL

Text in this section provides draft wording that will be useful in clarifying the parks and recreation vision, principles that will drive its implementation and roles for the two main service providers: Parks (within the Engineering Department) and Recreation (under Development and Community Services). The principles were derived from key sources such as the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association and the National Recreation Agenda and principles put forth at the 2011 National Recreation Summit. These are stated as “draft” wording because they are being put forth as a recommendation, rather than a final set of Vision, Mission and Principles. It is recommended that they be further developed through an internal workshop led by Park and Recreation Management and Staff, followed by adoption.

DISTRICT BRAND

Squamish - Outdoor Recreation Capital of Canada

VISION

Squamish - An Active Community Celebrating the Great Outdoors

MISSION

We support and promote active lifestyles by building programs, partnerships and places for all that inspire skill development, creativity, leadership and fun.

PRINCIPLES

The following principles and actions guide our efforts and decisions:

- We believe recreation is a vital public good, and is essential to mental and physical wellbeing. We ensure programs and places meet both the recreational and social needs of our residents.
- We believe volunteering is the cornerstone for community-driven recreation and will strive to provide opportunities for citizens to participate and lead. We want the passion and energy of volunteers to support our programs, provide advice on service and help shape policy.
- We strive to ensure that all citizens have access to affordable, quality recreation and parks services and work hard to reach those that have the greatest need. We are committed to serving all, and understand that those with the greatest need are where we deliver the greatest social good.
- We are accountable, transparent and prudent in our use of public funds. We hold the public trust and manage our resources accordingly.
- We seek out partners to leverage resources, improve service and achieve efficiencies. We know where our strengths lie and look to collaborate with others to help serve the community.
- We act as stewards for our environment and provide leadership to protect our cherished spaces. We live in a very special place and act as leaders to ensure our amazing outdoor playground remains for generations to come.
- We believe that recreation and parks services play an important part in the development of a diversified economy. We anchor the District's brand and will ensure the events, programs and places we build make Squamish an attractive place to live and play.
- We strive to exercise excellent communication and facilitation skills to seek out and fulfill the recreation and parks needs and wants of our citizens. We will use all the tools available to reach our community, ensure we hear their voice and implement actions to meet their needs.

3.1. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT MODEL

In the professional field of Parks, Recreation and Culture, a community development model is an effective mechanism for delivering services and grassroots involvement creates a healthier, sustainable and more resilient community. The community development model operates on a continuum and can range from informing, consulting, collaborating or empowering the community in recreation and parks services.

In a community development model, the role of Recreation Services can vary, but in its truest form, government is responsible for planning and operating buildings and providing funding, and finds community partners to deliver some or all of the programs and services. The department plays a leadership role in developing the capacity of the community associations and individuals to contribute their specialized skills, and is a perfect fit for volunteerism at the heart of mandate.

The Squamish community is highly engaged in recreation and has many dedicated volunteers who operate a wide variety of activity clubs, community organizations, and events. As such, the Recreation and Parks department should integrate community development principles into all functional areas. The benefits of this model of service delivery include:

- Resources can be optimized and shared between the District and Associations
- More services can be delivered in partnership than by departments
- Better understanding of community needs, issues and assets
- Better decision-making as a result of diversity of perspectives
- Sense of community pride and ownership is created

Squamish Recreation Services would be well served by adopting a stronger mandate for community engagement, leadership and development, and build the skills and capacity to effectively support community associations and partners. This shift from the current mandate of primarily direct delivery to a blended direct and community development model will enable Squamish to better access local talent, leverage resources and optimize opportunities. There are a number of departments across BC that operate with this approach but some in close proximity include District of Chilliwack, City of Richmond and the City of Vancouver.

Recommendations:

- Appoint staff members to spearhead and liase with advisory committees.
- Train staff in the community development model and partnership development;
- Evaluate and vet departmental plans based on the community development model (vision, principles and priorities); and
- Develop partnerships with community organizations to provide advanced skills and specialty skills development (see Section 5. Recreation Programming).

3.1.1. VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT

Squamish benefits from an exceptionally high level of volunteer engagement in the recreation and parks realm. Recreation Services would be well served to build around this strength to bolster support and service in the future. Volunteer leadership and service support is not a radical or new idea. There are many examples of this occurring across the system, from individual volunteer commitments to large volunteer societies or clubs. Our recommendations are intended to formally recognize the value and benefit that volunteerism delivers to the community, how volunteerism enables the community to strengthen their service delivery and provide direction on how the Recreation and Parks departments can collaborate with volunteer organizations to leverage and grow this resource.

Recommendations:

- Appoint staff members to spearhead Volunteer Coordination.
- Develop a Volunteer Policy and Strategy that celebrates the value and benefits that volunteerism delivers to the community.
- Develop a Volunteer Leadership Development program.
- Provide professional support to partners and community groups to build volunteer capacity within the community.

3.1.2. COMMUNITY ADVISORY GROUPS

A strong volunteer development program, will build leadership at the community level, enabling Recreation and Parks Services to empower community groups and associations. Opportunities

to provide input on policy development or department direction helps further develop community leaders and can take many forms. Short term and time sensitive issues might call for a “working group”. The group comes together to address a specific issue or problem, provides recommendations and then dissolves. Long-term involvement on broad complicated issues may call for an “advisory committee”. Working groups have been successful in Squamish in the past, but generally have not persisted on a long term basis.

Recommendations:

As a first step in community development and volunteer advisory engagement, we recommend that six advisory committees be established. These groups are advisory, and are not responsible for final decisions and budgets. All recommendations and plans that emerge from the advisory groups will be vetted by staff and Council, as well as evaluated relative to budget requirements. The advisory groups and their terms of reference would include:

The Program Advisory:

- Provide input on indoor and outdoor program policy and procedures;
- Create or review the program evaluation mechanisms;
- Undertake research on program gaps or inequalities; and
- Provide input on establishing and growing program partnerships with the existing organizations in Squamish.
- **Seniors Subcommittee** – It is important to have seniors represented within the overall Program Advisory group, but there should also be a subcommittee to specifically address seniors’ recreation programming needs in the community.
- **Youth Subcommittee** – It is important to have youth represented within the overall Program Advisory group, but there should also be a subcommittee to specifically address Youth recreation programming needs in the community.

The Facility User Advisory:

- Provide input on field, ice, pool, and recreation centre access, policy and procedures;
- Provide input on field, ice, pool, and recreation centre repairs, upgrades, and development;
- Provide information on field, ice, pool, and recreation centre users’ needs; and
- Provide input on establishing and growing program partnerships with the existing organizations in Squamish.
- Note: This Advisory Group may need to be divided into outdoor and indoor facility user groups.

An Outdoor Recreation Advisory:

- Provide input on issues related to trails and dykes, access, and maintenance;
- Provide input on watersport, dyke and other waterfront access and needs;
- Provide input on development and maintenance of climbing access, routes and approaches;

- Provide input on key backcountry access points and issues; and
- Provide input on establishing and growing program partnerships with the existing organizations in Squamish.

Arts, Culture and Heritage Strategy Committee:

- Arts, Culture and Heritage are an essential part of the Squamish Community. As such, an Arts, Culture and Heritage Committee should be created for the sole purpose of establishing terms of reference for a District Arts, Culture and Heritage Strategy (see Section 7. Arts Culture and Heritage.)

3.1.3. COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS

The District has existing collaborations and joint-use agreements that can serve as a starting point for developing more and better partnerships in support of a community development model for recreation and parks service delivery. These partnerships will be critical as a means to deal with a rapidly growing community and increased demand.

Recommendations:

- Develop a clear Partnership/Collaboration/Sponsorship policy to provide clarity in direction for the Community Development management model.
- Develop strong, clear partnerships with key organizations including:
 - Squamish Nation should be a key partner, and discussions should occur early and often to increase coordination, collaboration, and involvement. Some potential initiatives could include cultural programming, service partnerships for Squamish Nation community, recreation amenities (i.e. lacrosse box), and heritage interpretation on trails and within natural areas.
 - The School District should be a key partner in terms of indoor recreation and sports fields. Potential initiatives include creating a centralized booking system for sports fields and gymnasiums, coordination of sport field improvements, access to community schools for program service delivery and partnered programs, future joint-use facility planning and partnered advocacy for active, healthy communities.
 - Quest University and Capilano University offer potential partnership opportunities including sport development, facility partnerships, and partnered programming opportunities such as continuing education.
 - SLRD and the Province to address funding support for recreation, park and cultural assets, addressing the need for camping facilities, and formalizing trailheads and key trail linkages.
 - BC Forest Service for trail and parks planning, joint marketing, advocacy and stewardship opportunities and potential camping facilities.
- Engage in ongoing discussions and develop relationships with recreation clubs and organizations that offer additional programs and services beyond District capabilities, such as the Squash Club, Curling Club, Squamish Valley Golf Club and the Squamish Windsports Society, amongst many others.

3.2. CUSTOMER SERVICE AND MARKETING

3.2.1. EMBRACE TECHNOLOGY

Squamish Recreation Services and Park Operations have hard-working, engaged staff recognized by the community for their dedication and commitment to the community. To enable staff to improve and expand on this service commitment, the technology that supports effective and efficient registrations processes and communication needs improvement. A large percentage of the community is young and will enjoy the benefit of social media contacts and web-based enhancements to Recreation Services.

Recommendations:

- Create a technology working group with representation from Finance, Recreation Services, Parks Operations, Community Services and District IT department to identify opportunities and gaps in providing the best on-line service and point of sale improvements for Squamish residents. It's critical for the back-end financial systems to support the recreation program registration technology and provide seamless integration and reporting.
- CLASS (the recreation program management software currently used by the District) is nearing its end of life as a product. There is a need to upgrade technology and migrate CLASS to web-based hosted software (such as ActiveNet) or explore other competitor's offerings. This will not only improve online registration opportunities, but will also enhance communications with program participants. These system improvements will also allow the District to better assess participation, which in turn will allow them to add or subtract programs to best meet the needs of the community.
- Invest in front office, marketing and supervisor staff training to create thorough understanding of the efficiencies, service improvement and marketing opportunities available through the chosen technology.
- Incorporate the Seniors' Centre website into the overall District website.

3.2.2. MARKETING

The District needs to improve marketing for recreation services, outdoor recreation and active living in Squamish.

Recommendations:

- Leisure Guide (print and on-line) should consider the following enhancements:
- Rely on strong photographic visuals, showcase local participants and offer testimonials of programs and services. Consider embedding video to make the on-line experience more engaging;
- Provide translation services to help improve access for the multi-cultural community;
- Promote news about parks and trail development projects and successes;
- Profile new planning processes, program development or policies;
- Profile volunteers and volunteer advisories in action;
- Enhance financial access promotion and consider highlighting "low cost" and "no cost" programs;
- Promote clubs, associations and partners; and

- Increase marketing for the Seniors Centre and Seniors programming.
- Customer service staff needs encouragement to capture email addresses of participants and utilize e-newsletters to connect with community participants on a monthly basis. Developing specific memberships in the departments is one way to segment the market and ensure you target the right people with the right message.
- Actively utilize Facebook, twitter and you-tube to profile programs and the benefits of participation in recreation and parks services.
- Develop a partnership agreement with Community Organizations and Clubs such that the District:
 - Develops agreements with local organizations operating programs at District facilities or parks to offer a registration process to build the Recreation Services database and to ensure outreach to members of the community; and which also eliminates the financial burden on recreation organizations to deliver revenue prior to receiving registrations;
 - Promote and market community-run programs occurring within District facilities to enhance participation; and
 - Promote and market clubs, associations and partners providing recreation opportunities outside of the District facilities and parks (i.e. curling, Squamish golf course, rod and gun club, etc.).

4. RECREATION HUBS

Squamish has one main recreation hub, at Brennan Park, which includes the Brennan Recreation Centre, sports fields, skate park, BMX course, Logger Sports grounds, and the equestrian ring. Additional recreation facilities include the existing Seniors' Centre (Downtown) and the Youth Centre (at Carson Place Park). The following recommendations address these hubs, as well as the potential to incorporate the existing Ministry of Forests site, located across the street from the Brennan Recreation Centre.

4.1. BRENNAN PARK VISION

While this document outlines the general vision for the park, there is an urgent need for further development of a site-specific Master Plan. The benefits of such a plan include cost savings by coordination and planning facilities that can serve multiple purposes; avoidance of future conflicts and constraints due to poor or inefficient siting of amenities; and greater certainty to enable community organizations at the park to pursue long-term goals. A Master Plan would enhance the park's function as the central place in the District for field sports, indoor programming, outdoor recreation skills development, and event hosting.

Overall Recommendations

- Implement a long-term, site-specific Vision and Master Plan for Brennan Park as the community hub for Outdoor Recreation and Events.
- Enhance visibility of Brennan Park and the Recreation Centre from Highway 99.
- Create a central axis with an "Arts + Heritage" theme

Sport fields

- Establish a phased plan to eliminate ball diamond and soccer field overlaps. As soccer grows in popularity, the desired seasons of play will grow and may eventually be in demand year round. By separating ball diamonds and soccer fields, there will be better provision of quality regular season and tournament play both for diamond and rectangular field sports.
- To relieve the pressure on Brennan Park, create joint use agreements with the School District to phase upgrades to school fields and coordinate ongoing maintenance and use by the community.
- Develop a phased plan to upgrade the existing grass fields (i.e. address drainage and turf quality issues).
- In the long term, add a second synthetic turf field. Design the field for multiple sports including field lacrosse and consider a track and other amenities.
- In the medium term, two new diamonds should be constructed to complete a cloverleaf configuration at Hendrickson Fields.
- Install lighting systems for both the synthetic turf fields and ball diamonds.
- Develop a lacrosse box in partnership with Squamish Nation.

- Enhance relationships with Quest University and Capilano University and seek opportunities for joint development and/or use of sports facilities.

Event hosting

The main event space is the Logger Sports grounds (part of the annual “Squamish Days” festival and “Squamish Valley Music Festival”), which is District-owned property. The Logger Sports Society led the planning and development of the site through volunteer efforts and fundraising, and they continue to manage the property and mobilize their volunteer network to setup and tear down for the Logger Sports competitions that take place at the site every summer.

There is a need for the District to establish a clear partnership with the Logger Sports Society which accommodates the needs for the annual festival and recognizes the valuable volunteer legacy of the Society, while seeking ways to implement a phased expansion and potential reconfiguration of the site to allow for multiple functions outside of the Logger Sports events.

Any redesign will need to be coordinated with Logger Sports Society to ensure a flexible design, suited to the widest possible range of event types and with a spectator capacity of approximately 5,000, while still maintaining a priority for accommodating Squamish Days. The Logger Sports Festival would take place in this venue, and the heritage of the site would be recognized through thematic displays and interpretation. Additional areas of Brennan Park could be used to accommodate larger events such as the Squamish Valley Music Festival, which is seeking to expand to 15,000 attendees.

Campground

Within the context of a larger “Camping Strategy” (as outlined in Section 5.2 Outdoor Recreation Programming), discontinuation of camping within Brennan Park should be considered, with the exception of limited back-of-house provision for event logistics reasons (i.e., for performers, staff and volunteers). Major events would be required to organize a shuttle service to spectator camping and other accommodation located elsewhere. The District should explore a contractual arrangement with a private operator to provide event camping on a lease basis on the Forest Service Building property.

Riding Arena

The equestrian ring is currently tucked behind the Logger Sports Grounds and Hendrickson Fields (ball diamonds). The SVEA would like to add a covered ring and expand their facilities. However, the current location could result in conflicts between adjacent uses in the long term, a subpar location for equestrian events, as well as constraints on the potential to expand and improve the SVEA facilities.

Recommendations:

- In conjunction with the development of a Brennan Park Master Plan, evaluate how best to support the Squamish Valley Equestrian Association and riding ring now and in the long term either at the park or in a new location.

BMX/Skate park/Mountain Bike Skills Park

The existing BMX and Skate Park area could be enhanced into an integrated “outdoor recreation” hub, combined with the addition of a mountain bike skills park with pump track. Plans for a bike skills park are currently underway, and it would be desirable to reconfigure the area to accommodate a wider range of bike skills programming in a holistic, fluid manner. It has been

noted that previous plans for the area included additional parking to serve the new synthetic turf field, which again highlights the need for an overall Master Plan for the park.

Recommendations:

- Create an integrated "outdoor rec" hub with BMX, skate park, mountain bike skills park, pump track, climbing feature, etc. Shared amenities could include storage, lighting, signage, and other infrastructure. Potential elements should be reviewed as part of Brennan Park Master Plan process.
- Start the "outdoor rec" hub, above, with a mountain bike skills park and pump track.
- A roof over a portion of the bike skills and skate park should be considered to extend the usable season.

4.2. BRENNAN PARK RECREATION CENTRE

The Brennan Park Recreation Centre includes an ice arena, community recreation centre and indoor aquatic facility located within Brennan Park. The recreation centre and arena were built together 36 years ago to meet the needs of the day. Although well maintained, clean and in good repair (for their age), by today's standards, the buildings are quite basic and offer minimal amenities compared to many communities elsewhere in BC and Canada.

A 2012 engineering report highlights the fact that the arena's floor is 5 - 10 years beyond the usual expected lifespan. The under-floor heating system (which prevents the floor slab from heaving due to permafrost build up), and the plastic refrigerant piping could fail at any time. The report recommends the floor's replacement within 4 - 5 years.

General Recommendations

- In the short term, retain architectural and engineering professionals to assess the current condition of the entire building, the likely remaining lifespan of its major components and options to add a new arena, expand program space, enhance aesthetics and improve entrances and internal connections in the complex.
- Initiate public referendum initiatives to support phased borrowing in order to undertake an upgrading program. Plan ahead in order to meet upgrading schedules and to take advantage of grants when they become available.
- Initiate a transportation strategy to link the Youth Centre, Seniors Centre, and Brennan Park Recreation Centre.
- To supplement Brennan Park Recreation Centre and add program opportunities, create joint-use agreements with the School District for use of playing fields and facilities such as gymnasiums and other programming rooms (i.e. arts rooms, wood working rooms, etc.).
- Pursue opportunities for major sponsorships and/or "branding" of facilities to attract funding for additions or upgrading; i.e. Credit Union or other major corporate funding for an addition, in return for naming rights. Establish very specific and clear agreements, with time limits, for such rights.
- Immediately develop a plan for phased upgrading and expansion of the Recreation Centre. Some components will need to be addressed in the short-term, while others

may occur over the next 10-15 years. The following components should be considered for inclusion:

Overall Building Upgrades

- Within the architectural assessment and redevelopment options scenarios, consider ways to improve and enlarge staff office space to modern standards, providing adequate natural light and ventilation.
- Upgrade the exterior appearance and profile of the entire facility to clearly identify entrances and purpose of various components.
- Undertake a systematic evaluation of ways and means to implement energy efficiency improvements, energy and materials conservation, recycling and "Green" construction and operation.
- Determine what private/public partnerships could be incorporated by providing space within the facility for contracted or leased-space services related to public recreation i.e. physiotherapy, wellness clinic, sporting goods sales outlets, financial institutions, etc. An example of this model is the West Vancouver Community Centre, which leases space to partners and tenants including Vancouver Coastal Health, West Vancouver Youth Band, Complement Healthcare, West Vancouver Family Place Society, and Bean Around the World Café. Private/public partnerships can provide a source of funding to enable the continuation of public programs and facility development while reducing the need for increased taxation.
- Provide additional storage space for recreation staff, operations/maintenance, and community organizations within the building or in close proximity.

Arena

- Replace the ice arena with a new spectator arena immediately adjacent and connected to the existing facility, with permanent seating for approximately 1,500 persons, full size dressing rooms, storage capacity, concessions, a concourse level exercise track and other related amenities. When the new arena is functional, phase out and re-purpose the old arena for dry-floor uses such as roller derby, indoor lacrosse, concerts, etc.

Aquatic Centre

- In the medium to long term (i.e. within the 10 - 20 year horizon) consider options for upgrading the pool to include a full size leisure pool component, with related support amenities, including:
 - An integrated outdoor splash pad area; and
 - Ways to open up the walls and roof to bring in more natural light and views should be considered.

Fitness Centre

- Add a minimum 4,000 square foot public fitness centre, integrated with the existing reception lobby and aquatic components of the Recreation Centre.

A public fitness centre will provide an affordable and accessible opportunity for the community. While private fitness facilities are effective at serving those who are

experienced, who exercise regularly, and those who desire specialized / advanced training equipment or instruction, they are less adept at serving the population who cannot afford a monthly membership (such as seniors and youth), parents who have extremely limited time, new immigrants, and those who are not currently part of the “active” population of Squamish. A public facility has become the norm in recreation centres as an effective way to improve public health by increasing participation by providing a comfortable atmosphere for people of all fitness levels. A fitness facility at the recreation centre will provide an alternative that caters to beginners, youth and seniors, as well as providing an opportunity for busy parents to exercise while their children are participating in programs at the recreation centre.

Design and outfit the fitness centre to provide entry level fitness, preventative health/wellness programming and physical rehab. Consult with potential clientele regarding equipment preferences (e.g., free weights, strength machines, cardio) and plan the fitness centre layout accordingly.

Programming Space

- When the new arena is functional (described above), phase out the existing arena and re-purpose the space for dry-floor uses and potentially a climbing wall.
- Re-purpose the existing main auditorium. Potential uses include aerobics/dance studios, a gymnastics facility, or raising the roof to allow for gymnasium sports (basketball, volleyball, badminton, etc.).

4.3. MINISTRY OF FORESTS SITE

The Provincial Ministry of Forestry Building and Works Yard is located on an approximately four acre property directly across Loggers Lane from the Brennan Park Recreation Centre. The property was acquired by the District of Squamish in 2007. It is currently leased to multiple tenants including the Ministry of Forests, a Montessori school, and Squamish Emergency Program (SEP). Located near the centre of the District and readily accessible from all its neighbourhoods, the property will be ideal for any number of civic functions in future as the District grows.

In the shorter term, it is recommended that a plan be developed to use the site to support the vision for Brennan Park. The site should be included in the Master Plan for Brennan Park.

Recommendations

- When vacancy allows, implement a Family and Children’s Services Centre, phasing in programming such as a family drop-in and preschool/childcare along with expanded outside play spaces. This scenario would provide expanded service for preschoolers and their families (a significant demographic in Squamish) and free up space in the Brennan Park Recreation Centre for additional programming.
- Consider converting the remainder of the site to camping and enter into a contractual arrangement with a private operator, as a replacement camping ground for events and general visitor accommodation.

4.4. YOUTH CENTRE

The Squamish Youth Centre is located on Carson Place Park directly opposite from Howe Sound Secondary School, in a building that was previously the local RCMP station. To the rear of the Youth Centre is a concrete skate park. There are existing issues with visibility and security at the current location, as it does not have significant road frontage and is surrounded by an alder forest.

The Youth Centre provides an extensive and imaginative range of structured and drop-in programming for vulnerable youth, but is challenged by having to operate in a poorly retrofitted building that is in a state of disrepair. The immediate area is poorly lit and not well served by public transit.

Recommendations

- Initiate planning for renewal of Youth Centre with Sea to Sky Community Services, retained at Carson Place Park, including immediately addressing building repairs.
- Initiate discussions between Recreation Department staff and Sea to Sky Community Services staff and other key youth service agencies to explore partnership programming.
- Ensure that Recreation Department staff, Sea to Sky Community Services and other social agencies are aware of the financial assistance programs available to youth and families.
- Consider creating a “Youth Friendly Community” Plan, initiated by the DOS Planning Department and including Recreation Services, Sea to Sky Community Services and other youth service agencies.

4.5. SENIORS CENTRE

The Squamish Seniors Centre is located in Downtown, off Pemberton Avenue, on Eaglewind Boulevard. It is a new, attractive and highly functional activity centre, which is not yet performing to its full potential. Its effectiveness is challenged by low visibility, difficult to find parking and, above all, by a private feel to the facility. The Centre is in a context that “reads” like a gated community, with access restricted to immediate residents only. Existing programming and hours of operation are limited.

Recommendations

- Implement a marketing and publicity program to increase awareness and use of the facility. Consider programming community special events or open houses to broaden the awareness of the facility.
- Improve way-finding signage from the main intersections in town, to the minor roadways and in and around the facility to ensure that the facility is seen as public space and is open for use. This is critical to eliminate the “look and feel” of the facility as part of a private development.
- DOS to undertake parking plan for the facility to identify additional parking spaces.

- Institute a discount program for seniors at all District recreation facilities. This category would encourage seniors to participate in active recreation and general programming for all ages according to their individual preferences.
- Explore blanket insurance policies, with all community groups named, to eliminate the financial barriers for groups to access space. Staff to undertake a competitive analysis on all community rental space with the objective to ensure municipal space is competitive and aligned.
- Retain programming commitment to seniors from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and open centre up to full community programming from 4:00 p.m. to closing. Increase hours of operations to align with the hours of the community centre and pool.
- Public transit schedules that service the Centre's location need to increase for evening hours and Sundays. Other transportation support services such as Handi-dart and taxis would be well served with an orientation to the facility.
- DOS to renew an agreement with the Seniors Society to establish a renewed and sustainable commitment to raise funds for facility, equipment and specialized programs to meet seniors' needs in Squamish. Priority for funding identified is a transport bus.
- Revenues from sales of the membership to the Society to be directed back to the Society for the purposes of project fundraising. Society can continue to play a critical role in raising funds for the facility and the department by attracting "matching fund" grants and donations. Society and the Recreation Department to promote the fundraising goals to increase visibility of the partnership and Society's good works.
- Expand program offerings to attract participation at the centre, ensuring to eliminate direct conflicts with offerings at Brennan Park that would be drawing on the same senior or older adult market. Ensure programs are marketed at both facilities and maintain hard-copy or printed marketing materials for seniors in the community. Explore Adult Education as part of the program mix in the facility.
- Staff support and foster small groups, even if they are heavily subsidized at the start or facilitated by volunteers, to enable participation to grow.
- Staff to reach out to the multi-cultural residents, First Nations and hard-to-reach members of the community to explore and encourage participation at the facility.
- Expand the awareness and interest in the facility. Staff will work with community members to recommend a name change to one that encourages greater participation from adults (emerging seniors) while supporting and celebrating Seniors' participation. This transition would involve a gradual and cautious broadening of the scope of programming in a manner compatible with current uses and patronage. An arts and cultural programming focus would seem to be most appropriate as the facility lends itself well to visual arts programs and dance programs.
- Senior's representation in the Program Advisory is critical to ensure "Seniors are Planning for Seniors" and the wants and needs of all Seniors are identified for programs at the Seniors Centre and Brennan Parks, as well as Parks and Trails development. (See Section 3.1 Community Development Model.)
- Within the modification process, consider ways and means to implement energy efficiency, conservation, and recycling within the operation.

4.6. ADVENTURE CENTRE

The Adventure Centre is an established visitor information centre and indoor events hub that has potential for further integration with District-wide recreation initiatives from the “Outdoor Recreation” to enhanced Arts, Culture and Heritage.

- Seek out and identify mutually-beneficial opportunities for the Squamish Adventure Centre to be a hub for sharing information, and as a possible programming and events staging area due to its proximity to parking and location at the southern entrance to town.

5. RECREATION PROGRAMMING

Overall, there is a wide range of recreation programs offered at District facilities, as well as through community organizations, clubs, and the private sector. However, there is always room for improvement and recreation programming should be continuously adjusted to meet the changing needs of as many residents as possible. For example, currently there is a great need for programming for young children, but in 5-10 years that will turn into a need for high quality youth programming.

Squamish is rich with resources, knowledge, and skills to increase programming options and to develop unique and engaging programs through creativity and partnerships. The following are two key recreation program areas that can help focus the development of new and better programs.

5.1. SPORT, HEALTH + WELLNESS

The active living opportunities in Squamish attract both short term visitors and new residents, and contribute greatly to the community’s livability. A range of indoor and outdoor recreation is provided through the combined initiatives of the District, voluntary organizations and commercial enterprises. The District-managed component has the following attributes:

- Indoor recreational programming at the Recreation Centre, rink and pool in Brennan Park, and through other more specialized facilities such as the Seniors Centre and the Youth Centre. The Brennan Park Recreation Centre has the highest profile and is the most active site of program provision.
- Outdoor sport facilities, many of which are concentrated at or near Brennan Park: Grass and all-weather playing fields, ball diamonds, tennis courts, BMX and skate parks, and an equestrian centre.
- World-class outdoor recreation resources by virtue of its geographic setting and distinctive terrains, including climbing/bouldering at the Chief and Smoke Bluffs, water and wind sports at the mouth of the Squamish River and diverse mountain biking and hiking trails. There is strong community support for the Outdoor Recreation Capital identity.
- An exceptionally high level of participation by District residents, both as participants and volunteers, in active recreation, with cycling, swimming, hiking/walking and winter sports being most popular. Almost two-thirds of residents are members or regular

visitors to a community centre, club or organization providing physical or recreational activities or programs. In general, residents appreciate the recreational opportunities Squamish provides, with 71% either somewhat or very satisfied with the indoor recreation opportunities available and even more – 91% - satisfied with the outdoor recreation opportunities.

- Many high performance athletes live and train in the Squamish area.

The range of programming provided, and high levels of community approval, has been achieved despite some serious constraints, particularly at Brennan Park Recreation Centre:

- The number of programmable spaces is very limited.
- The quality of program space is generally poor – inadequate noise separation, awkward building layout and unsuitable room dimensions for many activity types. The lack of a regulation gymnasium is a notable deficit.

In addition to these constraints, there are a few key issues that need to be addressed:

- Squamish has an exceptionally active populace puts added stress on District facilities and programming, and requires a level of service beyond “normal” levels to meet local demand. A high level of volunteer programming has naturally evolved to supplement the efforts of the District. This situation often gives rise to conflicts over scheduling and scarce resources.
- There is a lack of connection between District recreation programming and its “Outdoor Recreation Capital” branding, which staff are already working to change. Furthermore, those voluntary sport organizations who are not engaged in outdoor recreation as traditionally defined tend either to be indifferent to this identity, or to see it as giving priority over tourism and visitor experience over locally focused programming.
- The connections between human health and wellbeing and access to nature and the outdoors are not a strong part of the conversation, though there is growing awareness within Recreation Services. Improving access and participation in recreation programs is important to the overall health of the community.

Recommendations

- Create a Programming Advisory (as described in Section 3.1.)
- Support and supplement the activities of the broad spectrum of voluntary organizations involved in sport, health and wellness through collaborative development of introductory and multi-sport programming.
- Adopt the approaches and principles outlined in Canadian Sport for Life (CS4L) http://www.canadiansportforlife.ca/in_planning_and_development_of_District_Recreation_Programming. CS4L provides helpful guidance with respect to developing physical literacy amongst children and youth, and supporting adults to be active for life. The CS4L approach also provides a solid foundation for athletes choosing to pursue excellence in sport.
- Increase noncompetitive and drop-in sports programs for youth and adults to attract new users.

- Add a fitness centre at Brennan Recreation Centre that provides affordable, drop-in space for cardio and weight training workouts and stretching areas (also see Section 4.2. Brennan Recreation Centre.)
- Expand recognition of the many high performance athletes who reside in Squamish, as individuals who could coach and inspire other participants, particularly children and youth. They should be invited to play a visible role in programming and special events.

5.2. OUTDOOR RECREATION

By creating a vision for Squamish as the “Outdoor Recreation Capital of Canada”, the District has taken on the challenge to meet the increasing demand for outdoor recreation from both residents and visitors. The overall approach to meeting this challenge in terms of the parks and recreation system is to seek to intertwine the outdoor recreation theme into as many areas as possible, from facilities to programs to events. There is also a need to address the widespread illegal camping that has been identified as a significant problem, and is partially attributable to visiting outdoor recreation enthusiasts.

Recommendations

- Create an Outdoor Recreation Advisory (as described in Section 3.1.)
- Recreation programming should be explicitly linked to the District’s “Outdoor Recreation Capital” identity, as part of a general promotion of active living for both residents and visitors.
- Create partnerships with outdoor recreation organizations to expand District programming opportunities focusing on beginner level, fundamental skills development in outdoor recreation and sports.
- Incorporate policies and programs to improve children’s access to and interaction with nature such as playgrounds focused on nature play, hiking activity programs, and environmental education.
- Consider creating a park-use permit system for commercial operators, particularly those benefiting from public outdoor recreation amenities (guides, fitness trainers, tour operators, or other private businesses operating in public parks and trails), to generate funds for Outdoor Recreation infrastructure maintenance (signage, trails upkeep, etc.).
- Develop a District-wide Camping Strategy to support outdoor recreation visitation. Although the District does not anticipate being a campground operator in the long term, there may be some short term solutions and interventions required while longer-term solutions are developed. A Camping Strategy might include:
 - An evaluation of the capacity required for year-round, seasonal/recreational, and event camping; recognizing that these each have different space, regulatory oversight, and infrastructure requirements;
 - An evaluation of District-owned parcels with potential to provide seasonal or temporary event camping in the short term;
 - Discussions with private campground operators to explore ways to increase capacity;

- A review of District policies to potentially increase the ability of land owners to provide seasonal camping; and
- Assessment of potential camping scenarios/ lands for potential zoning restrictions and other land-use suitability criteria.

6. GATHERING+CELEBRATING IN SQUAMISH

6.1. EVENTS COORDINATION

Events play a key role in Squamish in terms of volunteer leadership, community engagement and illustrate the diversification of a historic resource based economy to that of a tourism economy. Events also provide an important “testing-ground” for partnerships between groups with like interests. Recreation Services can play an important role in embracing events and fostering partnerships.

Recommendations

- Hire skilled event/partnership staff as an “Events Coordinator”.
- Develop events policy and procedures that outlines roles, responsibilities of the District and the Department, and that embraces events as an important economic generator for the District and invites the world to play in the “Outdoor Recreation Capital”.
- Enhance the internal Events Working Group with representatives from various District Departments (i.e. Protective Services (Fire, RCMP), Engineering, Economic Development, Planning, Parks, Health (VCH), Bear Aware, Conservation Officers, etc.) with the following terms of reference:
 - event policy and procedures;
 - event approval processes;
 - event marketing;
 - event partnerships;
 - event evaluation mechanisms
- Increase coordination and consultation between the District and local events organizers (Logger Sports, Test of Metal, Brand.Live, etc.) regarding ways to improve planning for and enhancing, growing, enriching, and building on events in our community.
- Integrate small scale events into Brennan Park Recreation Centre to increase participation and profile recreation programs and services.
- Provide suggestions and guidance for “greening” events through environmentally responsible practices and strategies.
- Seek incentives from business development to attract event operators;
- Create event contract language to identify the rights and roles of partners in events.
- Transportation: Develop a transportation strategy in coordination with event host organizations and the District Engineering Department. The District should enable

events and reduce impacts on residents by developing a transportation strategy, particularly for those occurring at Brennan Park or Downtown. The plan would include a variety of components that are incorporated as needed, based on specific event sizes and needs. Transportation planning could include parking (for event organizers, attendees, and the disabled), shuttles, bike parking, public transportation, and traffic detour planning. These components will enhance events and reduce the impacts on residents and visitors alike. Once the plans are in place for these two key locations, it can be modified for other locations around the District as needed.

- Consider ways to improve safe pedestrian, bike, and vehicle access to and from events sites, particularly in the vicinity of Stan Clarke and Pavilion Park Downtown.
- Growing support for large special events provides an opportunity to establish a new "events" site in the future, probably at a new location designed to accommodate large events (i.e.: more than 15,000 people).

6.2. EVENTS INFRASTRUCTURE

Existing events infrastructure in Squamish is limited and would benefit from improvements and tailoring to current and future needs. If the goal is to continue to host events and build a strong reputation, there may be cost savings and other benefits for the District and host organizations to collectively invest in permanent and modular components. Most of the primary infrastructure and amenities necessary to host community, athletic, sporting, music, and cultural events are consistent across activities.

The two main events locations are Brennan Park and Downtown along Cleveland Avenue at Stan Clarke Park and Pavilion Park. Brennan Park would benefit the most from immediate permanent park infrastructure, but Downtown should also be considered for enhancements to permanent events infrastructure and planning. Determining the exact infrastructure would require a more thorough analysis of the needs of each site and the events held there, as well as an assessment of the costs/benefits of permanent and modular components. Cost recovery for events infrastructure can be achieved through partnerships and event permit fees.

Recommendations

- There is a need for changes at Brennan Park and the Downtown core (Pavilion Park / Cleveland Avenue / Stan Clarke Park) to address immediate event needs. With some redesign, Brennan Park has potential to be a good event space (i.e. 15,000 or less). The Squamish Valley Music Festival wishes to grow to 15,000 a day, which is a serious challenge to the capacity limits of the park, as currently designed. Specific recommendations for Brennan Park are located under the Brennan Park recommendations.
- Consider including events infrastructure when developing or redeveloping parks, especially Brennan Park.
 - Electrical outlets – Permanent electrical boxes allow for sound systems and lighting while reducing the need for power generators which are loud, use fossil fuels, are detrimental to air quality, and can compromise safety.
 - Lighting – design lighting systems that can be used during events to light critical entrances, exits, and pathways.

- Potable water taps – design for water bottle filling to reduce bottled water consumption and waste and reduce dehydration.
- Toilet facilities that could be supplemented with port-a-potties for large events.
- Playing field design – consider adding structural components within the subbase of playing fields to accommodate stages and tents while limiting damage to the playing surface, and
- Plan for paved entrances and exits for equipment, trucks, and “behind the scenes” activities.

6.2.1. SQUAMISH CENTENNIAL

Squamish is turning 100 in 2014, which provides the opportunity to weave the culture and heritage through the existing annual events, as well as encouraging additional events and celebrations. There is also an opportunity to leverage funding for projects or events associated with this celebration.

Recommendations

- Initiate planning for Squamish’s 100th Birthday (2014) including consideration of the following:
 - Event tie-ins;
 - Marketing / Promotional strategy;
 - Commemorative legacy – pursue funding of a major capital project (Rose Park and pedestrian/cyclist bridge over Mamquam Blind Channel, for example, or further revitalization Downtown);
- Undertake a strategic planning process for the Adventure Centre / Rose Park precinct that considers the synergies and space requirements for an enhanced canoe/kayak put-in, pedestrian bridge link to the Smoke Bluffs and surrounding neighbourhood the recommended improvements to Rose Park and parking for these facilities.; and
- Undertake a strategic planning process for Pavilion Park and Stan Clarke Park to create a cohesive and connected Downtown location to hold special events.

7. ARTS, CULTURE + HERITAGE

Squamish is rich in Arts, Culture and Heritage assets such as the presence of the Squamish Nation, the Squamish Arts Council, local artists, the natural resources heritage, climbing pioneers, and the natural history (geology and ecology) of the region. However, there is a lack of integration between recreation/ parks programs and events with the Arts, Culture and Heritage assets available in the community. There is not a formal Arts, Culture and Heritage policy within the District, but these elements play a significant role in the identity of the community and plays an important part in attracting and enriching the experience of both residents and visitors. Embracing the strengths that arts, culture and heritage bring to the community can help to expand and bolster the “Outdoor Recreation Capital” brand.

There is a lack of Arts, Culture and Heritage influence in District facilities (both the interior and exterior of key Municipal buildings), parks and trails infrastructure that reflects the history and

culture of the community. Integrating these elements in new capital projects and revitalization projects will add another level of interest and appeal. The recreation facilities also are lacking in specialized art education or creative development spaces for pre-school, school age and youth in the District.

Recommendations

- Form a Committee of Council to draft the terms of reference for an Arts, Culture and Heritage Strategy that would be governed by procedural bylaw.
- The committee should include representation from the Squamish Arts Council, the School District, Squamish Nation and other arts, culture and heritage groups (i.e. Railway museum, historical society, school district, Brackendale Farmers Institute). The Arts, Culture and Heritage Strategy should lay out principles, strategic direction, goals, and roles and responsibilities of all parties in fostering a creative community.
- This Strategy should consider the following:
 - A service agreement with the Squamish Arts Council for the assumption of specific roles and responsibilities and a sustainable funding mechanism for the organization. Key to this service agreement would be the continued support with the community grants process with the added commitment to add mutually agreed upon measures of accountability to grant recipients.
 - A partnership with the Recreation Department, the Squamish Arts Council and Squamish Nation to create arts and cultural programs for children, youth and adults. Utilize local artists for introductory arts education and skill development through the Recreation Department and promote the Squamish Arts Council for intermediate and advanced arts skill development.
 - Integration and leverage of Tourism planning in the District.
- Pursue arts, culture and heritage grant opportunities.
- Establish municipal jury criteria for the awarding of successful arts, culture and heritage grants.
- Consider an artist-in-residence program for the Brennan Park Centre and Senior's Centre to launch introductory quality arts programming at the site.
- Encourage partnerships between event providers, SAC and Squamish Nation to add a cultural arts element and draw to sport or heritage events.
- Consider establishing an "Art in the Park" program that offers promotion for local artists and generates revenue.
- Consider arts/cultural programs that build on the natural environment such as Outdoor Photography, "Plein Air" or Outdoor Painting, "Found Materials" Sculpture or Earth Installations.
- Engage artists and integrate public art into municipal building projects, public works (i.e. man-hole covers, water culverts, bridges) and parks infrastructure.

Build a heritage trail signage program that shares the rich history of the community and adds an element of interest for locals and visitors. Topics could include Squamish Nation; rail, logging, + other resources; west coast pioneers and environmental interpretation.

- Consider the creation of an outdoor forestry museum park space and relocate some of the equipment currently sitting in the Logger Sports area for a full season exhibition opportunity.
- Utilize the Adventure Centre as a keystone venue to celebrate the history, arts and culture of Squamish. Space could be dedicated to tell the Squamish story in visual arts, historical panels and a running multi-media production (not unlike the Grouse Mountain's "Theatre in the Sky").
- Create opportunities for visual art displays in Brennan Park Recreation Centre and the Senior's Centre.
- Special consideration in future facility development should include space for visual arts, dance, music and multi-media. In the interim, focus arts programming in the Senior's Center spaces.
- The arts are recognized as an important "means" to reach and engage pre-teens and youth. Recreation Services should focus on this hard to reach market with creative programs that build skills and enable self-expression.

8. THE SQUAMISH PARK SYSTEM

The recommendations outlined below are the product of analysis and synthesis of background information, consultation with District managers and staff, and consultations with the general public through a phone survey, online questionnaire, and open house discussions. The resulting recommendations range from specific short-term parks and recreation initiatives and projects to system-wide organizational and operational principles. Overall, these recommendations seek to improve recreation and park services by highlighting Squamish's unique opportunities and resources and how those can be leveraged to help make the District a healthy, active, sustainable community with a high quality of life.

The quantity of Squamish parks has been assessed using several different methods including comparison with averages across British Columbia, comparison with similarly-sized communities in the province, and analysis of spatial distribution and service area based on walking distances. Inventory numbers do not reflect the quality or condition of the amenities.

No single or group of metrics can holistically capture the quality and quantity of Squamish parks. The community is unique in its geography, economy, values, and opportunities. However, these comparisons offer useful reference points against which the District can measure its amenities and identifying significant gaps. They can also help in decision making on future recreational development, to justify capital expenditures, and in leveraging the acquisition of parkland in new developments.

An overview map is located in Appendix A.

8.1. PARKLAND AND AMENITY SUPPLY

8.1.1. EXISTING DISTRICT STANDARDS

The inventory of park land was compared to the existing park provision standards, as outlined in the 2000/rev.2002 Parks + Recreation Master Plan. The District currently has a surplus of

passive and active community parks, but is currently deficient in neighbourhood parkland. In the past few years, the District has made headway in the neighbourhood park category by adding parks and upgrading playgrounds. It should also be noted that school grounds are not included in this analysis, though they often provide amenities similar to neighbourhood parks.

Passive Community Parks are those without formal programmed areas. They generally are natural areas that include minimal infrastructure such as Merrill Park or Smoke Bluffs Park. Active Community Parks are those that provide active recreation opportunities. The primary example in Squamish is Brennan Park.

Table 8.1 Parkland in 2012

	Standard (2002 Park+Rec Master Plan)	2012 Inventory (17,200 residents)	
		Total Area	Hectares per 1,000
Passive Community Parks	1 ha / 1,000	45.90	2.67
Active Community Parks	1.2 ha / 1,000	36.09	2.10
Neighbourhood Parks	1.4 ha / 1,000	11.76	0.68

An additional analysis was done to determine if the existing park land area will be adequate to meet the population in 2032, which is estimated to be between 25,000 and 31,000 residents (see Table 8.2).

Table 8.2 Parkland in 2032

	Standard (2002 Park+Rec Master Plan)	2012 Inventory (hectares)	Area per 1,000 in 2032	
			25,000 residents	31,000 residents
Passive Community Parks	1 ha / 1,000	45.90	1.84	1.48
Active Community Parks	1.2 ha / 1,000	36.09	1.44	1.16
Neighbourhood Parks	1.4 ha / 1,000	11.76	0.47	0.38

Key Findings:

- The neighbourhood park provision will be significantly lacking if there are no additions.
- As the population reaches 31,000, the active community parkland per 1,000 residents could drop below the District standard.

Recommendations:

- Add to the neighbourhood park supply in the short term, with the goal of reaching the District provision standard and maintaining it as the population grows.
- Seek new active community parkland over the medium to long term.

8.1.2. COMPARISON OF SQUAMISH TO PROVINCIAL AVERAGES

The Squamish parks system was also compared to other similar sized BC communities, based on data collected by Lees+Associates (Table 8.3). The data has not been verified in the field and represents information available on municipality websites, online resources, and interviews. The park categories differ from the OCP categories in order to facilitate the comparison. These

findings offer a second perspective indicating that there needs to be a greater emphasis on small, locally accessible park space.

Table 8.3 Comparison to Provincial Averages for similar-sized communities

Hectares of Park Space per 1,000 residents	Squamish	Average, 10-20k	How does Squamish Compare?
City Parks	3.40	2.27	1.13
Community Parks	1.38	2.34	-0.95
Neighbourhood / Small Parks	0.69	0.69	0.00
Total Parks (hectares)	5.46	5.30	0.17

Key Findings:

- Squamish is above average in the total amount of parkland, as well as in the amount of land within “City Parks”, or those over 12 hectares.
- The proportion of community and neighbourhood parks is at or below average.

Recommendations:

- This comparison further validates the recommendation that the District needs to increase the supply of neighbourhood parks and active community parks within the community.

8.1.3. COMPARISON OF SQUAMISH TO OTHER MUNICIPALITIES

The park and amenity supply was also compared to other similar sized BC communities based on 2012 data available through CivicInfo BC, which conducts annual municipal surveys (Table 8.4 on the following page). The data has not been verified in the field and only municipalities who respond to the survey have been included. Although useful in terms of a rough comparison, it should be noted that each community has different needs for parks and park amenities depending on participation rates and interest in various sports and activities.

Key Findings:

- Squamish is low in terms of overall parkland (though one must recognize the large amount of surrounding Provincial parkland and Crown land.)
- Squamish has a higher than average provision of multi-use and paved trails.
- Squamish is slightly below average in terms of ball diamonds, basketball courts, lacrosse boxes, tennis courts, and water parks. Some tennis courts have been converted to multisport courts due to lack of use.
- Squamish is above average in the number of soccer fields. However, there are only 5 full sized grass soccer fields and all but 1 overlap with ball diamonds.

Recommendations

- Address deficiencies in ball diamonds, basketball courts, lacrosse boxes, and water parks.
- Address the issues related to soccer field size and overlaps with ball diamonds.

Table 8.4 Civic Info BC Recreation Facilities Survey Data 2012

Name	Jurisdiction	Population Estimates	Number of Parks	Hectares of Parkland	Km of Multi Use Trails	Paved Bicycle Paths km	Ball Diamonds	Basketball Courts	Lacrosse Fields	Running Tracks 400m	Skateboard Parks	Soccer Fields	Tennis Courts	Water and Spray Parks
Oak Bay	District	18012	24	61	12	6	5	2	0	0	1	5	14	1
Pitt Meadows	City	18136	20	82	-	-	13	0	0	0	1	11	5	1
Central Saanich	District	16201	37	84	10	9	6	3	1	0	1	2	4	0
Squamish	District	17898	23	94	47	25	8 [^]	-	0	0 ⁺	2	13 [*]	4	0
Terrace	City	11931	22	100	40	-	7	1	0	0	1	8	7	0
Dawson Creek	City	11860	18	130	7	-	9	0	0	1	1	8	4	0
Port Alberni	City	17752	38	270	20	5	22	0	1	1	1	5	10	3
Salmon Arm	City	17128	33	278	58	-	8	3	0	0	1	8	6	1
Powell River	Regional District	N/A	7	296	-	-	2	1	0	0	-	2	1	0
Cranbrook	City	19123	22	366	30	-	11	2	0	0	1	6	2	2
White Rock	City	19278	15	-	5	10	4	0	1	0	-	2	5	0
Fort St. John	City	19873	21	-	-	-	15	1	1	4	1	2	4	1
Average			23.3	176.1	25.4	11.0	9.3	1.2	0.3	0.5	1.1	5.4	5.5	0.8

Source: CivicInfoBC Municipal Survey
http://www.civicinfo.bc.ca/81_ver2.asp

[^] 5 out of 8 fields overlap with soccer fields.

⁺No District-owned track, but there is one at Don Ross Secondary School.

^{*}7 full-sized fields (5 grass, 2 all-weather); 10 out of 13 fields overlap with ball diamonds.

8.1.4. SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION OF PARKS AND GAP IDENTIFICATION

The distribution of municipal park land within the developed areas is nearly as important as the quantity when it comes to providing equal access to open space, daily opportunities for outdoor activities, creating the character of the community, and contributing to quality of life. One of the primary metrics for assessing distribution is by determining the combined service area of all park land based on the ability for residents to walk from their residence to a park.

Refer to the park service area map provided in Appendix A, which shows walking distances to the primary neighbourhood and community parks, as well as potential locations for new parks.

The following findings and recommendations address the quantity and spatial distribution of parkland. Additional recommendations on park amenities are included in Section 8.2.

Table 8.5. Parkland Inventory by Neighbourhood

Park Name	SERVICES	Neighbourhood	Area (ha)	Total Area	
Arrow Head Park	Playground	Brackendale	0.24	1.40	
Bracken Park	Playground	Brackendale	0.10		
Cottonwood Park	Playground	Brackendale	0.13		
Eagle Run Park	Hiking, Washrooms, Biking	Brackendale	0.31		
Fisherman's Park	Squamish river and Judd Beach access	Brackendale	0.35		
Mcdonald Place Park	Playground	Brackendale	0.26		
Eaglewind Park	Tennis, Playground, Lawn Bowling, Dog Walk, Trails, Community Gardens	Downtown/Dentville	4.54	10.98	
Squamish Junction	Pavilion, historic train station, farmers market	Downtown/Dentville	0.62		
Squamish Skateboard Park/Carson	Skateboard Park	Downtown/Dentville	1.74		
Stan Clarke Park	Playground and public gathering space	Downtown/Dentville	0.44		
Rose Park	Hiking, Biking, Boat Access, Hostel	Downtown/Dentville	3.63		
Smoke Bluff Park	Hiking, Biking, Climbing	Hospital Hill	22.17		22.17
Coho Park	Hiking, Biking	Garibaldi Estates	1.14	2.45	
Pat Goode Park	Playground	Garibaldi Estates	1.08		
Willow Park	Playground, Informal Open Space	Garibaldi Estates	0.23		
Boulevard Park	Playground, Tennis	Garibaldi Highlands	0.27	16.91	
Braemar Park	Playground	Garibaldi Highlands	0.13		
Glacier View Park	Informal lawn	Garibaldi Highlands	0.23		
Jura Park	Playground	Garibaldi Highlands	0.45		
Merrill Park	Trails	Garibaldi Highlands	15.56		
Porcupine Park	Playground	Garibaldi Highlands	0.27		
Edgewater Park	Playground	North Yards	0.30		0.30
Brennan Park	Hiking, Playground, Tennis, Camping, Rec Centre, Soccer fields + ball diamonds, equestrian centre, BMX, skate park, Loggers Sports	Brennan Park / Loggers Lane	36.09		36.09
John Hunter Park	Undeveloped	Valleycliffe	2.11	3.45	
McNaughton Park	Playground	Valleycliffe	1.26		
Northridge Park	Undeveloped	Valleycliffe	0.08		

Brackendale (1.40 hectares)

Brackendale has 5 playgrounds and 7 park parcels, but each is 1 hectare or less and there is no community scale park. Don Ross Secondary School serves some of the functions of a community park, as does Alice Lake Provincial Park which is relatively close to this neighbourhood (though not within walking distance or the municipal boundaries). Judd Beach and trails on the Squamish River has been identified by the community as a potential location for waterfront access and a picnic/ barbeque area. This area is not protected by dykes, and so needs special management for safety and maintenance. The Brackendale Farmers Institute Walking Park is not currently dedicated parkland, though it contributes significantly to the community by providing open space and event hosting capacity.

Recommendations

- Secure permanent park status for the Brackendale Farmers Institute Walking Park.

Downtown + Dentville (10.98 hectares)

A majority of the residents in the Downtown neighbourhood have parks within walking distance, including Stan Clarke Park, Pavilion Park, and Eaglewind Park. Additional open space is provided within the Squamish River Estuary natural areas and trails to the east and south. Although across Highway 99, Rose Park is also part of the neighbourhood, as well as being a key community gathering area in the District.

As density increases in the Downtown area, there will be greater demand for neighbourhood parks that are designed for families and children. Improved waterfront access is also a priority for the community. The planned new Oceanfront peninsula development on the peninsula to the south will not only need to include parkland for the new residents, but provide a good opportunity to improve waterfront access for the whole community. Dentville is to the north of Downtown and the only park within walking distance is the Skate Park, which has a limited range of potential users. There is no neighbourhood park or playground in Dentville.

Recommendations

- Expand and improve the north end of Carson Place Park with neighbourhood park amenities.
- Expand and improve Carson Place Park as an Active Community Park.

Garibaldi Estates (2.45 hectares)

Garibaldi Estates is one of the neighbourhoods with the least amount of parkland. In particular, the southern edge has been identified as an area where residents are beyond a 10 minute walk to a park. In addition, some of the parks in Garibaldi Estates are located on the interior of a block of houses ("panhandled"), resulting in limited visibility for the community and potential safety/security issues or they are undevelopable parks that are only suitable for trails (i.e. Coho Park).

Recommendation:

- Add a new neighbourhood park east of Highway 99 (generally in the vicinity of Mamquam Road) if the opportunity arises.

Garibaldi Highlands (16.91 hectares)

Although Garibaldi Highlands has a large quantity of parkland, this is largely due to the presence of Merrill Park, a natural area with trails. The neighbourhood parks have similar design issues to

those in Garibaldi Estates, with visibility, accessibility, and safety/security issues. Walking access to parks in the northeast portion of the neighbourhood is largely provided by greenways rather than typical neighbourhood parks. Adjacent Crown lands provide additional open space and recreational opportunities not shown in the walkability map.

Development expansion of areas adjacent to Garibaldi Estates/ Highlands may put some of the community's trail system at risk in terms of access and quality. Trails from this neighbourhood to Alice Lake have been identified as important recreational assets, but they also need additional signage and maps to help people navigate. The trail from Thunderbird Ridge is an example of a linear park/trail that is important to the neighbourhood, as well as the District and the trail network.

Recommendation:

- As development occurs, add a new neighbourhood park to serve the northeastern portion of the neighbourhood.

North Yards (0.3 hectares)

North Yards is a small neighbourhood with a single neighbourhood park at the west end. Brennan Park, although not within the North Yards neighbourhood, is directly across Highway 99 and is accessible by a pedestrian path under the highway. If additional residential units are added to the North Yards, a second neighbourhood park should be considered.

Recommendations

- Add a second neighbourhood park in the North Yards neighbourhood.

Brennan Park / Loggers Lane (36.09 hectares)

The Brennan Park/Loggers Lane neighbourhood has the greatest area of park land, but it is all within Brennan Park which includes the recreation centre, ice arena, aquatic centre, sports fields, and other amenities. A majority of the residential areas within walking distance of Brennan Park are zoned rural residential or as comprehensive development zones. Centralization of so many recreational amenities at one location provides the benefit of potential synergies between activities and a "one-stop-shop" atmosphere, but also creates conflicts between users due to the limited available space.

Recommendations

- No new parkland acquisition is recommended given the current zoning and the presence of Brennan Park. If development significantly increases in the future, there could be a need for a new neighbourhood park in the southern portion of the neighbourhood.

Valleycliffe (3.45 hectares)

Valleycliffe neighbourhood is served by two main parks, John Hunter Park and McNaughton Park. There are also parklands associated with the Stawamus River and Little Stawamus Creek, but they are undeveloped due to environmental sensitivity. The Stawamus Chief Provincial Park is directly to the south of the neighbourhood, but it is inaccessible due to the Stawamus River.

Recommendations

- Improve John Hunter Park through increased maintenance (i.e. mowing, regrading, and top-dressing) and capitalize on the proximity of Valleycliffe Elementary and the Stawamus River for a nature play area or outdoor classroom.

- A new neighbourhood park should be considered in the southern part of the neighbourhood if the opportunity arises.

Hospital Hill (22.17 ha)

The Hospital Hill neighbourhood extends from the highway east and north, uphill toward Smoke Bluffs Park, which provides a community park, but there is no neighbourhood park or playground.

Recommendations

- Develop neighbourhood park amenities at the entrance to Smoke Bluffs Park on Smoke Bluffs Road.

8.2. PARKLAND + AMENITY UPGRADES

In addition to the recommendations above, related to parkland quantity and spatial distribution, the quality of park system was evaluated. The following recommendations identify system-wide opportunities for improvement, outline overarching themes and directions for park amenity development, and provide park-by-park quality improvement projects.

8.2.1. SYSTEM-WIDE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Create a nature play strategy that incorporates the unique character of Squamish heritage, culture and recreation into all park projects whenever possible. Ensure that meaningful public consultation is a key element in the development of a strategy;
- Although there are many children in Squamish who are under 5 years of age, continue to develop playgrounds for other age groups as well. As much as possible, provide play spaces for ages 2-12;
- Teenagers are often excluded from parks because of the dominance of play spaces for young children and family-oriented areas. Incorporate areas at Community Parks aimed to attract and engage teenagers such as mountain biking skills areas, basketball courts, informal lawn areas and areas to gather and socialize overlooking an activity area; and
- Establish **Park Acquisition Guidelines** to clarify the difference between parcels available for recreation and those that should be designated for environmental protection. These guidelines should be referred to during the development application process to minimize unusable park parcel dedications and to identify which park dedications will require operational budget increases. The following are suggested guidelines:
 1. *Topography and natural features suited to the intended uses*
 - Where feasible, a desirable park gradient will be in the range of 0-5% for the majority of the site. Lands up to a 10% slope may be considered only if they can be graded to 5% to accommodate park uses. Consideration must be made on a park by park basis of natural geographic features (such as small hills, knolls) which may act as features of a park, but the majority of a park should be capable of accommodating a range of recreational activities.
 - Parkland should be considered where it protects ecosystems not otherwise represented in the system.

- Parkland should be considered where significant natural features are located.
2. *Be convenient to the population it serves*
 - Every resident should not be farther than a ten minute walk from a park. The exception to this is in the Downtown core where all residents should be within a five minute walk of a park, and in the more rural areas, all residents should be within a fifteen minute walk of a park.
 3. *Be compatible with adjoining land uses*
 - Situate parks adjacent to larger natural features or linear green connectors. Examples of this are locating neighbourhood parks adjacent to linear greenways (e.g. Pedestrian friendly streets).
 - Create parks, where possible, adjacent to school sites.
 - The location of proposed athletic fields or events sites should take into consideration the effect of lighting, parking and circulation on adjacent land uses and circulation patterns.
 4. *Be safe and accessible*
 - Parks should be located close to public streets, transit, bicycle paths and pedestrian routes.
 - Parks should have as much frontage on streets as possible.
 - Universal accessibility should be provided to and in parks where reasonably feasible and where doing so will not damage cultural or environmental integrity.
 - City Parks, Community Parks and Neighbourhood Parks should be properly lit to discourage vandalism and where doing so will not adversely affect adjacent residences. (It is not expected that natural / environmental areas be lit.)
 5. *Provide varied programming*
 - Sites should be as flexible as possible in their programming, incorporating opportunities for a variety of activities such as active structured play, un-programmed lawn areas, pathways, trails, lookouts and quiet areas.
 - Sites should incorporate desired park facilities for the specific neighbourhood requirements and demographics. Since this will change over time, it is critical that the space be of a size, shape and contour that park elements can change over time.
 - In general, a park smaller than 0.3ha should not be accepted, and preferably not smaller than 0.5ha. [Note: 16 of 21 neighbourhood parks in Squamish are smaller than 0.5 ha].
 6. *Be sensitive to the environment*
 - Parks should conserve, enhance and restore the natural physical character of the site.

7. *Limited non-park infrastructure*

- Detention ponds typically preclude public use. These are not recommended as park space.
- Large constructed wetlands with multiple habitat and recreation benefits should be considered and should be designed through integration of both parks and engineering criteria.

8. *Consider opportunities for optimal parkland as they arise*

- Where school sites are closed, existing playfields and amenities such as playgrounds should be considered for acquisition as parkland.
- Initiate parkland identification and boundary determination at, or prior to, road layouts and preceding any lot layouts in new development areas. In some cases, due to the workload involved, this work will need to be carried out by consultants reporting directly to the Parks Manager.

9. *Create connections*

- Parkland is preferred where it contributes directly to the community-wide system of trails and greenways, but also where indirect benefits can be provided such as access points and trailheads with amenities.

8.2.2. PARK BY PARK RECOMMENDATIONS

- Pursue phased improvements to District Parks, as recommended in Table 8.6, on the following page.

Table 8.6. Recommendations for Parkland Improvements

Squamish Parks	Park Status / Amenity Notes	Recommendations
Arrowhead Park	Playground was built in 2009; park condition is mowed lawn under evergreens with picnic tables	Verify if a community garden is still desired; if so, establish a community garden zone.
Bill's Place Park	trail connects through; too steep for anything else;	Classify as "Environmental Area" as no development is possible
Boulevard Park	primary amenity is a tennis court in good condition; poor visibility	Create signage and entrance features (boulders, plantings); Establish a Neighbourhood Park Stewardship Group; Incorporate nature play features like boulders and logs to activate this park in the limited space available.
Braemar Park	Playground was identified for removal in 2009 report	Replace existing playground; Improve visibility of the park through signage and entrance feature; see if there is potential for a Neighbourhood Stewardship Group; Consider "nature play" features rather than just equipment
Carson Place Park / Skate Park	currently has poor sightlines and the only amenity is the skateboard park	Add neighbourhood park amenities (i.e. 2-12 year old playground, seating) at the north end to serve Dentville; Expand the recreational activities adjacent to the skate park to include mountain bike skills, BMX, basketball, and a sport court
Coho Park	trail crosses private property; no access agreement; eastern entrance has grade issue w/ trail	Establish access agreement for trail crossing private property or develop alternative access plan; consider adding interpretive signs geared toward elementary school age
Cottonwood Park	playground to be rebuilt 2012	No recommendations at this time
Eagle Run Park	playground recently replaced (2011)	No recommendations at this time
Eaglewind Park	Multiple uses; important community park in downtown; connect to natural estuary trails	Improve drainage while incorporating bioswales and native plants in wet areas; plan for park renewal in 5-10 years through a comprehensive design process to meet downtown community needs; potential location for a fenced off-leash dog area.
Edgewater Park	newly installed playground	No recommendations at this time
Fisherman's Park / Judd Beach	Entrance to Judd Beach trails	A site specific plan that considers environmental and flood issues should be completed. If space allows outside of high water mark, add benches, play area, picnic tables, signage and landscaping; potential unfenced off-leash dog area.
Glacier View Park	no amenities; currently used as a dog park	Consult with the neighbourhood for park improvements; the park could accommodate one of the following features: a playground, a "mini" bike skills area, or a fenced off-leash dog area.
Jack's Trail Park	unmaintained; trail access to Alice lake	Classify as "Environmental Area" as no development is possible
John Hunter Park	Potential off-leash dog area; could add a playground.	Increase maintenance (mowing, regrading, top dressing); partner with the school district to integrate the park with Valleycliffe Elementary school; add nature play area. Potential location for off-leash dog area along the dyke, outside of school hours.
Jura Park	Has recently been renovated; tennis removed and replaced with sport court; playground rebuilt	No recommendations at this time.
Kingswood Park	Drainage area	Classify as "Environmental Area" as no development is possible
MacDonald Place Park	Natural area and drainage zone; trail and pedestrian bridge runs through the park	Classify as "Environmental Area" as no development is possible
McNaughton Park	Playground constructed in 2009. Tennis has been remade into a sport court. Vandalism issues need to be addressed	Potential for mini mountain bike skills area as the Valleycliffe Trail and Crumpet Creek Trail pass through. Develop a trail and drainage improvement strategy (i.e. trail behind tennis court).
	No recommendations	
	Reclassify as "environmental area"	
	Undeveloped "park" parcels	

Table 8.6 Recommendations for Parkland Improvements (continued)

Squamish Parks	Park Status / Amenity Notes	Recommendations
Merrill Park	Park is currently unmaintained.	Clarify the entrance to the park and provide kiosks for trail maps; create a plan and signage for off-leash dog trails.
Northridge Park	Undeveloped	Determine if there is potential for development of play space or amenities.
Pat Goode Park	Playground 2-12 built in 2008. Large informal lawn area.	Develop drainage improvement strategy. Target specific areas for turf and drainage upgrades, while incorporating bioswales and native plants in wet areas.
Porcupine Park	Playground built in 2010; Visibility and vandalism issues	Install signage and improve visibility of entrances; create a neighbourhood park stewardship group; add informal play features like boulders and logs to activate this park in the limited space available.
Rose Park	Historic features, lillies garden, used for weddings; 100 car parking (overflow for adventure centre)	Add washrooms and a picnic/gathering shelter; Continue thematic enhancement of Rose Park as a garden park with possible addition of an arboretum; Pursue a pedestrian/bike crossing of Mamquam Blind Channel from Rose Park to the Smoke Bluffs, Hospital Hill, or Valleycliffe neighbourhood (avoid private property); Create infrastructure to enable canoe/kayak launching and non-motorized access to the water.
Smoke Bluffs Park	Currently maintained by Smoke Bluffs Committee of Council.	Develop a new neighbourhood park and entrance with nature play, bouldering feature for kids, park kiosk, small gathering area (Smoke Bluffs Road). Use the BC Parks model of climbing resource management at Murrin and Stawamus Park. Define clear roles for climbing community volunteers and District staff. Key issues: removal of trees needs to be reviewed by the District; District needs to implement an ongoing monitoring schedule for environmental impacts.
Pavilion Park / Squamish Junction	Recently upgraded pavillion (arts council)	Replace existing single benches with informal and grouped seats; Improve planting and horticultural components; Consider adding an interactive fountain/spray focal feature. Leverage funding based on the Squamish Centennial.
Stan Clarke Park	Renovation in progress.	Develop a site-specific maintenance management plan and annual maintenance budget for the renovated park. Determine life-cycle replacement costs and incorporate into the budget for January 2013. Improve pedestrian connection to Pavilion Park.
Willow Park	Playground 2-12 built in 2007, in good condition	Potential dog park as there is an existing fence, but there may not be enough room.
Tiampo Park	Nature Reserve	Classify as "Environmental Area" as no development is possible
New University Parklands (unnamed)	Need to meet the needs of the new population within the University neighbourhood; currently lack of public parks and playgrounds.	Review parcels acquired during the development process for potential for playgrounds and other amenity development.
	No recommendations	
	Reclassify as "environmental area"	
	Undeveloped "park" parcels	

8.2.3. PLAYGROUNDS + WATER PARKS

Squamish has a very large proportion of children, especially under the age of 5. At the same time, many of the District playgrounds are in need of upgrades. The following are the main recommendations related to playground additions and special features. Additional recommendations are found in the park-by-park projects (Table 8.6, previously).

- Continue ongoing funding and implementation of the playground improvement + upgrade program already underway;
- Implement nature play and outdoor recreation projects that reflects the unique character of Squamish heritage, culture, and environment;
- Consider adding a play fountain / water feature Downtown (i.e. Pavilion Park or Stan Clarke Park) to help the revitalization process; and
- When the Brennan aquatic centre is upgraded, consider adding an outdoor water play area.

8.2.4. OUTDOOR SPORTS AMENITIES

The following recommendations for outdoor sports amenities are based on the comparison to other similar sized communities in B.C., as well as public and user group feedback.

Recommendations

- Develop a Playing Fields Strategy and Allocation Policy (see description, below);
- Complete a 4-ball diamond “clover leaf” at Hendrickson Fields;
- Install lighting at the Hendrickson Fields (phased, if necessary);
- Create joint use agreements with the School District that includes phased upgrades to school fields and potentially a joint booking system (1 full rectangular field; 2 youth rectangular fields; 2 youth ball diamonds);
- In the long term, complete a second synthetic turf field at Brennan Park, including lighting;
- Implement a phased plan to upgrade existing grass fields at Brennan Park;
- Develop a lacrosse box in partnership with Squamish Nation (potentially at Brennan Park or on Squamish Nation lands with a joint use agreement); and
- Add affordable storage space for registered community nonprofit organizations whose activities are based in District parks.

Playing Fields Strategy

A playing fields strategy is a systematic way of establishing a baseline of field conditions, supply and demand in order to develop a systematic plan to maximize efficient use of fields and to plan for upgrades and future field additions. The strategy also provides the specific information necessary for fair and transparent field allocation. The playing fields strategy should include the following information:

- Supply:
 - Fields and Diamonds by sport (District and School fields);
 - Seasons of use for each facility; and

- Condition, capacity and life-cycle analysis for each facility. Determine a capacity for each field that allows fields to be well-maintained and also accounts for off-season upgrades.
- Current Demand
 - Current enrollment and requirements for each field user group; and
 - Practice needs and game needs – facilities required and number of hours
 - Joint Use Agreements
- A policy for joint-use agreements with the School District for field use and maintenance;
- Strategic planning with the School District to upgrade school fields to help meet demand; and
- Potential to develop a joint booking system to improve access and efficiency.

Field Allocation Policy

A field allocation policy should provide a fair and transparent method of maintaining and managing District fields and courts. It is also beneficial to build in flexibility so that field allocation can adjust to changes in facility availability, sport organization enrollment and demands from other field users (casual users, events). Above all, there should be clear criteria used in field allocation that is communicated to all user groups, as well as the broader community.

The following considerations are suggested for the field allocation process:

- Is the permit applicant an established provider of quality recreational programs, primarily for children and youth?
- How many Squamish residents and what demographics are participating?
- Have previous permit holders adhered to policies such as respecting field closures, full use of allocated field time, etc.?
- Is the permit applicant a historic user of fields and courts?

The following is a suggested priority program structure:

- Seasonal play with majority bookings given to youth sports
- Invitational, open and charity tournaments and events
- Occasional play, practices, and exhibition games
- Commercial groups

It should also be clearly laid out where recreation programs, tournaments, special events, and provincial, national, and international championships fall within the priority program structure.

Other components of a field allocation policy may include guidelines and code of conduct / criteria for loss of privileges, tournament guidelines, lighting policy, keys and storage, field closure criteria, field maintenance and regeneration standards, cancellation policy for permit holders, peak / non-peak fees or allocation policy, etc.

8.2.5.DOGS IN PARKS

Over the past few years growing interest has developed in many communities throughout the country for establishment of "dog parks" and/or off-leash areas for dogs in parks. The District of Squamish has no designated dog parks, although several "unofficial" areas are used by the public (Glacier View Park, Nexen Beach, etc.) According to some front line staff, this is becoming an issue and source of complaint for residents as well as visitors.

Recognizing that there are some who do not like dogs or other animals and become uncomfortable when dogs are allowed to run loose, who are concerned about their children's safety, or who may have had a previous bad experience with dogs, it is important that dog-friendly parks or off-leash areas be properly designed, constructed and maintained. It is obvious that there is strong and growing public support for specialized dog-friendly public venues, as long as suitable controls and safeguards are put in place. The District of Squamish would be well served by putting in place the necessary policies and bylaws to establish designated dog-friendly parks, off-leash areas, and regulations to clearly spell out acceptable conditions and expected behaviour.

Recommendations

- Adopt policies supportive of dog-friendly parks and areas within parks, with the necessary bylaw amendments to permit proper information programs and regulations. Changes to the dog policies should be widely publicized, including information on dog waste management requirements and dog-owner etiquette.
- Consider designating the following eight sites as dog-friendly and off-leash dog areas in the District, and phase in over the next four years (as shown in Figure X, Potential Dog Parks Map). Consult adjacent residents prior to finalizing the recommended locations below.
 - Eagle Wind Park (fenced off-leash area)
 - Glacier View Park (fenced off-leash area)
 - Willow Park (fenced off-leash area)
 - Nexen Beach (unfenced dog-friendly designated area)
 - John Hunter Park (unfenced dog-friendly designated area)
 - Squamish River and Mamquam River Dykes (specified dog-friendly trails)
 - Judd Beach (specified dog-friendly trails)
 - Merrill Park (specified dog-friendly trails)
- General guidelines for fenced dog parks:
 - Ideal size is 0.5 ha with 1.5m tall chain link fence
 - double gate entrance with a 2m x 3m leashing area
 - 0.5m wide gravel perimeter along fence line
 - 2 garbage cans and waste bag stations
 - Regulatory and etiquette signage
- Develop a website-based public information program be implemented within the next year to publicize and promote use of the dog parks (as well as to discourage use of undesignated areas).

- Add an annual budget line item be established for the dog park information and signage program.
- Create site-specific maintenance management plans and annual maintenance, and life-cycle replacement budgets be established for the completed dog-friendly parks, beaches and trails.
- Pursue opportunities for creation of new dog-friendly parks whenever deemed appropriate by managers or identified by the community.
- Pursue opportunities for corporate sponsorship of dog parks or related elements of the program.

8.2.6. WATERFRONT PARKS + ACCESS

Squamish enjoys a wealth of natural features embodied in the Oceanfront, the Estuary, the Spit and the Training Dyke, the Squamish and Mamquam Rivers, and the Mamquam Blind Channel, as well as the surrounding wilderness areas and mountainsides. Tremendous opportunities exist for outdoor recreation and enjoyment of the natural environment, virtually on residents' doorstep. Currently, a number of organizations have stepped forward to accept stewardship or management responsibilities, but they can benefit from official support and advocacy, particularly for improved access to Howe Sound.

Recommendations

- Develop a Marine Strategy which explores the following waterfront access components (the entire scope of the Marine Strategy would be much broader):
- Improved waterfront access and storage for kayaks, canoes, and other small, non-motorized watercraft by formalizing and improving existing put-in locations;
- Creation of "blueways" (or aquatic recreation and interpretive trails) in the Mamquam Blind Channel, Cattermole Slough and the Estuary;
- Secure waterfront access for kite-boarding and windsurfing (i.e. as part of the planned Oceanfront Windsport Beach Park);
- The need for a dredging plan to improve navigation capabilities, particularly within the Mamquam Blind Channel; and
- Add or improve parking at key water-based recreation access points.

The Training Dyke + The Spit

Recommendations

- If the opportunity arises, designate the Spit and Training Dyke as a District Park through bylaw;
- Coordinate with the Squamish Windsports Society to address ongoing management and waterfront access at the Spit, recreational trails and waterways, and other estuary features, whenever possible during discussions with the Squamish Estuary Management Committee (Ministry of Environment, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Squamish Nation, and other local conservation and commercial groups);
- Improve access and amenities to support recreation at the Spit, while also reducing impacts to fish and wildlife habitat. Examples: access road improvements, waste management, washrooms, and a parking/transportation planning;

- Develop a coordinated strategy to test whether camping can be accommodated at the Spit;
- Develop formal written agreements, including management plans, with organizations that are interested in assisting with management of public recreation areas such as The Spit; and
- Include the Squamish Windsports Society as a key stakeholder group in development of a new Oceanfront Park within the Oceanfront Development (as described below).

Oceanfront Development

The Oceanfront peninsula at the head of Howe Sound has a great deal of water frontage, both along the Upper Mamquam Blind Channel and Cattermole Slough. As the Downtown and Peninsula area redevelops there will be opportunities to acquire new parkland or engage in joint development ventures to create new parks, public open space and amenities. Not all new recreation resources need necessarily be funded by the public purse or be managed by the District. Well thought-out and crafted development agreements can include a variety of amenities on private lands that can be used and enjoyed by the general public.

Recommendations

- The Planning Department and Park Operations Supervisor should be actively involved in planning for parkland and open space creation within the Oceanfront Development initiative, particularly the Oceanfront Park and Beach Park plan.
- Apply the recommendations in this Master Plan wherever possible within the Oceanfront Development.
- Seek opportunities for creation of new parks, public open space and recreation facilities within the Oceanfront Development. Specifically:
- Incorporate facilities for windsurfing, kite boarding, sailing, and other water-based recreational activities as well as a continuous, public Oceanfront walkway.

9. ENVIRONMENT

Squamish is located in a diverse, rich geological and ecological setting that is a primary component of the community culture, pride, and lifestyle. The environmental assets are widely used for outdoor recreation and so are in need of continued stewardship, management, and protection over the long-term. If management of environmentally sensitive areas, parks, and trails are not effectively coordinated and there is a risk of environmental degradation and eventual loss in the quality of this important community asset. Many of Squamish's most beloved natural areas are outside the jurisdiction of the District (i.e. The Chief, private land holdings) which is a challenge when trying to improve, manage, and protect outdoor recreation opportunities and environmentally sensitive areas.

Recommendations

- Building on and aligning with ongoing mapping work, conduct terrestrial ecosystem mapping, wetland mapping, and sensitive habitat inventory of all District lands to determine those that should be considered for environmental protection; especially undeveloped park parcels that are not currently maintained;

- Develop guidelines for decision making processes to determine compatible/incompatible land uses in environmentally sensitive areas in order to balance future recreation demands with environmental protection;
- Provide organizational and budgetary support to ensure that improvement and expansion of amenities and facilities in environmentally sensitive areas supports environmental guidelines as developed under this Plan; and
- Develop partnerships with environmental and trails organizations to establish, support and implement long-term stewardship strategies for sensitive riparian habitats, particularly where trails exist that may result in environmental degradation over time.

9.1. SKWELWIL'EM SQUAMISH ESTUARY WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA + THE ESTUARY

- Abide by the guidelines laid out in the Squamish Estuary Management Plan and work collaboratively with the Squamish Estuary Management Committee (SEMC) on stewardship efforts in the Squamish River Estuary, including maintenance of existing trails, creation of interpretive signage, establishment of sanitary facilities, and habitat restoration efforts, as activities which will improve and protect a valuable environmental and recreational asset. Seek opportunities to partner with the Squamish Nation to increase awareness of the cultural history of the Estuary;
- Pursue opportunities to partner with Squamish Nation to create commercial tourism activities based on water sports, fishing, nature appreciation and other interests associated with the estuary and river; and
- Work with the SEMC through the SEMP review process to integrate a trails plan for the Squamish River Estuary that respect sensitive habitat.

9.2. BRACKENDALE EAGLES VIEWING DYKE

- In the short term, establish regulatory improvements to reduce problems associated with parking and traffic congestion on the road, and improve public safety.
- Over the long term, improve access and amenities to support wildlife/eagle viewing at the Dyke, while also reducing impacts to river and wildlife habitat. Examples: creating off-site parking with shuttle service, improving the limited parking facilities, providing waste management and permanent washrooms, planning for events, and the consideration of limited and regulated concessions.
- Seek opportunities to partner with the Squamish Nation to increase awareness of the cultural history of the Squamish River and Squamish Valley.
- Pursue opportunities to partner with Squamish Nation to establish tourism. Support activities based on wildlife viewing, nature appreciation and other interests associated with the river.
- Develop formal written agreements, including management plans, with organizations interested in assisting with management of public recreation areas such as the Eagle Viewing Dyke.

10. TRAILS

Squamish completed a Trails Master Plan in 2011 which addresses inventory, access, and management of the numerous trails within the District. This Parks and Recreation Master Plan does not duplicate the efforts already made, but overlapping issues and opportunities abound and, ideally, the Squamish parks system would be an interconnected system of parks, trails, and a variety of active transportation alternatives.

A significant issue to connectivity in the District is the BC Rail line that runs parallel and immediately adjacent to Logger's Lane in the Downtown area prevents convenient pedestrian access to the channel shoreline and trail connections. For safety reasons, BC Rail maintains a high chain-link fence along the rail line and only permits legal access at a few controlled points, primarily street crossings. This barrier is a significant bone of contention for local residents trying to find direct routes to local destinations.

Recommendations

Continue to implement the Trails Master Plan 2011 recommendations, such as:

- Make trail support a District priority
- Work to secure trails and trailheads within the District
- Connect neighbourhoods and community destinations
- Celebrate Squamish's history and culture
- Develop a Trail Network Marketing Plan
- Establish a Trails Steering Committee
- Support events on trails

Building on the Trails Master Plan recommendations (above) are these additional specific recommendations:

- Continue to develop integrated web-based mapping of parks, neighbourhoods, and trail connections.
- Develop key trailheads with signage, parking, washrooms, and garbage/recycling. Coordinate with user groups and the Trails Steering Committee to prioritize trailhead enhancements.
- Support the volunteers who currently undertake the maintenance and development of trails and recognize the economic benefits of their efforts. Refer to sections on volunteers (Section 3.1) and events (Section 6.0) in this report for additional applicable recommendations.
- Undertake negotiations with BC Rail, CN and other land owners/managers with the objective of establishing improved public access across rail live tracks, to the water shoreline and along the dyke system, with due consideration for public safety and liability.
- Consider a "Blueway" route for canoes and kayaks around the Downtown peninsula, through the estuary and Mamquam Blind Channel, as shown on the Waterfront Access and Dykes Map (Appendix A) and as described in the 2008 Draft Downtown Neighbourhood Plan (i.e. the Green and Blue Network Plan). There are logistical

issues and limitations to address in order to pursue this project due to the presence of the rail yard and Highway 99, and the need for dredging.

- Name the Thunderbird Ridge trail; Install signage on Thunderbird Ridge and establish a neighbourhood stewardship group to ensure long-term protection and access.

11. IMPLEMENTATION

11.1. USING THE MASTER PLAN

This Master Plan provides recommendations for improvements to the parks and recreation amenities and programs over the next 10 to 20 years. Council's adoption of the Master Plan represents agreement in principle to the overarching vision for the community. This implementation section provides order of magnitude costs and timelines for the recommended initiatives.

This Master Plan is not a commitment to spend. Those decisions are made by Council as part of the defined budget process and over the course of their ongoing deliberations. Although approximate cost estimates for the key recommendations are included in the report, they are provided for planning purposes only – giving Council, Staff and partners a guide as to orders of magnitude costing.

11.2. TIMELINES, CAPITAL AND OPERATING COSTS

The following Table 11.1 outlines those recommendations which have direct capital and budgetary implications and are summarized from the text. Please refer to the appropriate section for greater detail. These costs are order of magnitude estimates only.

The recommendations also have a timeline category, which is intended to identify those items which should be pursued in the short (1-3 years), medium (3-7 years) and long term (7+ years). As the plan is implemented and the community continues to grow and change, these priorities may shift.

There are opportunities to pursue many of these recommendations through the partnerships outlined throughout the report.

Table 11.1. Timelines and Budgets by Recommendation**Partnerships and Community Development**

Recommendations	Timeline	Capital \$	Operating \$
Create volunteer community advisory groups.	Short	n/a	TBD (Staff Time)
Appoint staff to spearhead and liase with Advisory Groups	Short	n/a	TBD (Staff Time)
Appoint staff member to spearhead Volunteer Coordination	Short	n/a	TBD (Staff Time)
Develop a Volunteer Policy and Strategy	Medium	\$20,000 to develop policy and programs	n/a
Provide professional support to partners and community groups to build volunteer capacity within the community	Medium	n/a	\$50,000/yr
Develop a Partnership/Collaboration/Sponsorship policy.	Short	\$20,000 to develop policy and action plan	TBD (Staff Time)
Develop a partnership and strategic plan with the School District for booking, maintenance and management of indoor and outdoor recreation amenities.	Short	\$20,000 to develop partnership and strategic plan	TBD based on the partnership terms

Recreation Hubs

Recommendations	Timeline	Capital \$	Operating \$
Brennan Park Vision			
Create a long-term Vision and Master Plan for Brennan Park	Short	\$75,000	n/a
Enhance visibility of Brennan Park and the Recreation Centre from Hwy 99	Medium	\$100,000	\$10,000
Create a central axis with an "Arts + Heritage" theme	Medium	\$100,000	\$10,000
Create an "outdoor rec" zone at Brennan Park	Short / Ongoing	\$500,000	\$50,000
Create a mountain bike skills park.	Short	\$120,000	\$20,000
Establish District responsibility for the upgrading and ongoing management of the Logger Sports Grounds.	Short	n/a	\$50,000
Complete 4 ball diamond "clover leaf" at Hendrickson Fields	Short	\$1,000,000	\$50,000
Add lights at Hendrickson Fields	Short	\$500,000	\$30,000
Add a 2nd synthetic turf field	Long	\$1.5 M	\$50,000
Phase upgrades to Brennan Park fields	Short Term Plan, Ongoing Implementation	\$100,000	\$50,000
Develop a lacrosse box	Short	\$500,000	\$5,000
Brennan Recreation Centre			
Develop a Renovation / Expansion Plan, which could include:	Short	\$100,000 for the plan	n/a
Fitness centre	Short	\$1,500,000	\$50,000
Regulation size gymnasium	Medium	\$1,000,000	\$30,000
Upgraded exterior and signage	Medium	\$100,000	\$5,000
Improved and enlarge staff office spaces	Short	\$300,000	\$15,000
Dedicated space for gymnastics program and cross-training fitness opportunities	Medium	\$500,000	\$30,000
Upgraded meeting rooms	Short	\$100,000	\$5,000
Integrated spaces for preventative health progams and physiotherapy services	Medium	\$500,000	\$25,000
Replace the ice arena	Short-Medium (3-5 yrs)	\$1M / \$10 M	\$50,000/ \$800,000
Ministry of Forests Site			
When vacancy allows, create a Family and Childrens Centre	Medium - Long	\$1,000,000	\$50,000
Expand the outdoor play space	Medium	\$100,000	\$5,000
Upgrade rest of site to support event strategy (e.g. temporary or permanent camping & storage)	Medium	\$400,000	n/a

Youth Centre			
Renovate the Youth Centre building and address visibility, security, and lighting issues.	Short	\$500,000	50000
Consider creating a "Youth Friendly Community" Plan	Medium	\$30,000	n/a
Squamish Social Centre for Seniors and Volunteers (i.e. Senior's Centre)			
Expand programming, especially arts programming and during evening hours	Short	\$30,000	\$5,000
Implement a marketing, publicity, outreach and partnership program	Short	\$50,000	\$5,000
Replace signage and add additional wayfinding features	Short	\$20,000	\$1,000

Recreation Programming			
Recommendations	Timeline	Capital \$	Operating \$
In general, expand the range of programming offered at District facilities.	Short / Ongoing	n/a	TBD based on programs
Increase noncompetitive and drop-in sports programs for youth and adults to attract new users.	Short / Ongoing	n/a	TBD based on programs
Outdoor Recreation Programming			
Create partnerships to provide beginner level, fundamental skills development in outdoor recreation and sports.	Short/Ongoing	n/a	\$50,000
Add childrens programs focused on nature play, hiking activity programs, and environmental education.	Short/Ongoing	n/a	\$50,000
Create a park-use permit system for commercial operators to generate funds for Outdoor Recreation infrastructure maintenance (signage, trails upkeep, etc.).	Short/Ongoing	n/a	\$2,000
Develop a District-wide Camping Strategy	Short/Ongoing	\$50,000	\$5,000

Events			
Recommendations	Timeline	Capital \$	Operating \$
Assign staff or hire an "Events Coordinator" position	Short	n/a	TBD (Staff Time)
Develop an Events Policy	Short	n/a	n/a
Enhance the internal Events Working Group and	Short	n/a	TBD (Staff Time)
Integrate more local, small scale events into Brennan Park Recreation Centre	Medium	\$30,000	\$5,000
Develop a transportation strategy for major events	Short	\$10,000	n/a
Plan for a new events site to accommodate large events (>15,000 people)	Long	\$2,000,000	\$200,000
Integrate infrastructure to help accommodate events.	Ongoing	\$100,000	\$10,000
Squamish Centennial			
Initiate planning for Squamish's 100th birthday (2014)	Short	n/a	\$5,000
Undertake a strategic planning process for the Adventure Centre / Rose Park area.	Short	\$50,000	n/a

Arts and Culture			
Recommendations	Timeline	Capital \$	Operating \$
Create an Arts, Culture and Heritage Plan or Strategy	Short	\$50,000	n/a
Create an Artist-in-Residence program at the Senior's Centre	Medium	\$5,000	\$1,000
Establish an Art in the Park program	Long	\$10,000/yr	\$1,000
Integrate art installations with trail signage and interpretation program	Medium & Ongoing	\$10,000/yr	\$1,000
Dedicate outdoor space for a full season exhibition of outdoor forestry working machines	Medium	\$50,000	\$5,000
Create opportunities for visual art displays in Brennan Park Recreation Centre	Long	\$50,000	\$5,000
Engage youth in arts and culture programming	Medium	\$50,000	\$10,000

Park and Amenity Supply Recommendations			
Recommendations	Timeline	Capital	Annual Operating
Add neighbourhood parks:		(Land Acquisition + Development Est.)	
North Yards (add a new park)	Medium	\$500,000	\$50,000
Garibaldi Estates (add a new park)	Medium	\$500,000	\$50,000
Valleycliffe (add a new park)	Medium	\$500,000	\$50,000
Garibaldi Highlands (develop existing parkland in the vicinity of Quest Univ.)	Medium	\$200,000	\$20,000
Secure permanent park status for Brackendale Farmers Institute Walking Park	Short	\$50,000	TBD (partner with Brackendale Farmers Institute)
Dedicate the Smoke Bluffs parcels as parkland through bylaw	Short	\$10,000 admin costs	n/a

System-Wide Recommendations			
Recommendations	Timeline	Capital	Annual Operating
Develop "Park Acquisition Guidelines"	Short	n/a	TBD (Staff Time)
Create a Nature Play Strategy	Short	\$10,000	n/a
Incorporate areas for teenagers at community parks	Ongoing	TBD based on amenity	TBD based on amenity
Establish a Community Garden Policy	Short	\$10,000	n/a

Park by Park Recommendations			
Recommendations	Timeline	Capital \$	Operating \$
Arrowhead Park - Verify if a community garden is still desired and, if so, establish a community garden zone.	Medium/Long	\$20,000	n/a
Boulevard Park - Create signage and entrance features (boulders, plantings); Establish a Neighbourhood Park Stewardship Group; Incorporate nature play features like boulders and logs to activate this park in the limited space available.	Long	\$20,000	\$5,000
Braemar Park - Replace playground and add "nature play" features, install signage and entrance feature.	Short	\$100,000	\$10,000
Carson Place Park / Skate Park - Add neighbourhood park amenities (i.e. playground for 2-12 year olds, seating) at the north end to serve Dentville; Expand the recreational activities adjacent to the skate park to include mountain bike skills, BMX, basketball, and a sport court.	Short	\$500,000	\$50,000
Coho Park - Establish access agreement for trail crossing private property or develop alternative access plan; consider adding interpretive signs geared toward children.	Short	\$10,000	\$500
Eaglewind Park - Improve drainage while incorporating bioswales and native plants in wet areas; plan for park renewal in 5-10 years through a comprehensive design process to meet downtown community needs; potential location for a fenced off-leash dog area.	Medium	\$200,000	\$15,000
Fisherman's Park / Judd Beach - A site specific plan that considers environmental and flood issues should be completed. If space allows outside of high water mark, add benches, play area, picnic tables, signage and landscaping; potential unfenced off-leash dog area.	Medium	\$50,000-\$300,000 depending on site potential	\$30,000
Glacier View Park - Consult with the neighbourhood for park improvements; the park could accommodate one of the following features: a playground, a "mini" bike skills area, or a fenced off-leash dog area.	Long	\$75,000	\$10,000

John Hunter Park - Increase maintenance (mowing, regrading, top dressing); partner with the school district to integrate the park with Valleycliffe Elementary school; add nature play area. Potential location for off-leash dog area along the dyke.	Medium	\$100,000	\$10,000
McNaughton Park - Add a mini mountain bike skills area and the Valleycliffe Trail and Crumpet Creek Trail passthrough; improve trails and drainage throughout the park.	Medium	\$100,000	\$10,000
Merrill Park - Clarify the entrance to the park and provide kiosks for trail maps; create a plan and signage for off-leash dog trails.	Long	\$20,000	\$2,000
Pat Goode Park - Improve drainage; target specific areas for turf and drainage upgrades, while incorporating bioswales and native plants in wet areas.	Medium	\$50,000	\$5,000
Porcupine Park - Install signage and improve visibility of entrances; create a neighbourhood park stewardship group; add informal play features like boulders and logs to activate this park in the limited space available.	Long	\$20,000	\$2,000
Rose Park - Develop a Site-Specific Park Plan			
Add washrooms and a picnic / gathering shelter.	Medium & Long	\$250,000 / \$500,000	\$5,000 / \$75,000
Continue thematic enhancement of Rose Park as a garden park with possible addition of an arboretum.	Medium & Long	\$100,000	\$20,000
Pursue a pedestrian/bike crossing of the Mamquam Blind Channel from Rose Park to the Smoke Bluffs or the adjacent neighbourhoods.	Short	\$500,000	\$10,000
Create infrastructure to enable canoe/kayak launching, and non-motorized access to the water.	Short	\$100,000	\$10,000
Smoke Bluffs - Develop a Site-Specific Park Plan			
Develop a new neighbourhood park and entrance with bouldering feature for kids, nature play area, a park kiosk,, and a small gathering area (Smoke Bluffs Road)	Short	\$400,000	\$10,000
Partner with climbing organizations to create new District recreational programs	Short - Ongoing		TBD (Staff Time)
Pavillion Park (Squamish Junction) - Develop a Site-Specific Park Plan. Replace existing single benches with informal and grouped seats; Improve planting and horticultural components; Consider adding an interactive fountain/spray focal feature. Leverage funding based on the Squamish Centennial.	Short	\$500,000	\$50,000
Willow Park - Potential dog park within the existing partially fenced area.	(see Dog Park Recommendations)		

Playgrounds			
Recommendations	Timeline	Capital \$	Operating \$
Continue the playground improvement and upgrade program already underway	Ongoing	2 projects per year @ \$50,000-100,000	\$5,000 per project
Implement nature play and outdoor recreation projects that reflects the unique character of Squamish heritage, culture, and environment.	Ongoing	Budget for 2 projects per year @ \$10,000-20,000 (currently 6 suggested project locations)	\$1,000 per project

Outdoor Sports Amenities			
Recommendations	Timeline	Capital \$	Operating \$
Develop a Playing Fields Strategy and Field Allocation Policy	Short	n/a	\$10,000
Create joint use agreements with School District to phase upgrades to school fields (1 full rectangular field; 2 youth rectangular fields; 2 youth ball diamonds)	Medium	Dependent on field conditions	n/a
Add affordable storage space for registered community nonprofit organizations whose activities are based in District parks.	Short & Medium	Ranges from \$30,000 for storage containers to \$100,000 for a group of steel storage sheds	potential revenue generation

Dog Parks			
Recommendations	Timeline	Capital \$	Operating \$
Adopt policies supportive of dog-friendly parks and areas within parks, with the necessary bylaw amendments to permit proper information programs and regulation.	Short	\$5,000	\$10,000
Establish three fenced off-leash dog areas	Short & Medium	\$75,000	\$15,000
Establish two unfenced dog-friendly designated areas	Short	\$2,000	\$500
Designate specific dog-friendly trails	Medium	\$2,000	\$500
Create a public information/education and signage program including web-based information.	Short	\$10,000	\$2,000

Waterfront Parks + Access			
Recommendations	Timeline	Capital \$	Operating \$
Develop a Marine Strategy	Short	\$50,000 for the Strategy; Capital \$ TBD based on improvements required.	TBD
Dredge the Mamquam Blind Channel	Short	\$1M	n/a
Designate the Spit and Training Dyke as a District Park through bylaw;	n/a	\$10,000 admin.	n/a
Improve access and amenities to support recreation at the Spit, while also reducing impacts to fish and wildlife habitat.	Short & Medium	\$50,000 / \$300,000	\$5,000 / \$30,000
Develop formal written agreements, including management plans, with organizations that are interested in assisting with management of public recreation areas such as The Spit.	Short	\$10,000	n/a
Add or improve parking at key water-based recreation access points (to be identified in the Marine Strategy).	Short & Medium	TBD depending on access improvements	TBD depending on access improvements

Environment			
Recommendations	Timeline	Capital \$	Operating \$
Conduct an inventory of all District lands to determine those that should be considered for environmental protection.	Medium	n/a	TBD (Staff Time)
Develop guidelines for decision making processes to determine compatible/incompatible land uses in environmentally sensitive areas.	Short	n/a	TBD (Staff Time)
Provide organizational and budgetary support to ensure that improvement and expansion of amenities and facilities in environmentally sensitive areas supports environmental guidelines as developed under this Plan	Medium & Long Term	\$100,000 / \$500,000	\$10,000 / \$50,000
Develop partnerships with environmental and trails organizations to establish, support and implement long-term stewardship strategies.	Medium/Ongoing	\$50,000/yr	\$5,000

Skwelwil'em Squamish Estuary Wildlife Management Area, the Estuary, the Training Dyke, and the Spit			
Recommendation	Timeline	Capital \$	Operating \$
Abide by the guidelines laid out in the Squamish Estuary Management Plan (SEMP) and work collaboratively with the Squamish Estuary Management Committee on stewardship efforts in the Squamish River Estuary (Revolving annual fund for seed money for worthy joint initiatives.)	Medium	\$50,000 /yr	\$5,000
Seek opportunities to partner with the Squamish Nation to increase awareness of the cultural history of the Estuary. (Revolving annual fund for seed money for worthy joint initiatives.)	Short & Ongoing	\$20,000/yr	\$2,000
Pursue opportunities to partner with Squamish Nation to create activities based on water sports, fishing, nature appreciation and other interests associated with the estuary and river. (Revolving annual fund for seed money for worthy joint initiatives.)	Short & Ongoing	\$20,000/yr	n/a
Work with the SEMC through the SEMP review process to integrate a trails plan for the Squamish River Estuary that respects sensitive habitat.	Long	\$75,000	n/a

Brackendale Eagles Viewing Dyke			
Recommendations	Timeline	Capital \$	Operating \$
Establish regulatory improvements to reduce problems associated with parking and traffic congestion on the road, and improve public safety.	Short	\$5,000	\$1,000
Improve access and amenities to support wildlife/eagle viewing at the Dyke.	Long	\$300,000	\$20,000
Seek opportunities to partner with the Squamish Nation to increase awareness of the cultural history of the Squamish River and Squamish Valley.	Medium	\$10,000/yr	\$1,000
Pursue opportunities to partner with Squamish Nation to establish tourism.	Medium	\$10,000/yr	n/a
Develop formal written agreements, including management plans, with organizations interested in assisting with management of public recreation areas such as the Eagle Viewing Dyke.	Medium	n/a	n/a

Trails			
Recommendations	Timeline	Capital \$	Operating \$
Continue to implement the Trails Master Plan 2011 recommendations	Ongoing	\$30,000/yr	\$3,000
Continue to develop integrated web-based mapping of parks, neighbourhoods, and trail connections.	Medium	\$10,000	\$1,000
Develop key trailheads with signage, parking, washrooms, and garbage/recycling.	Medium & Ongoing	\$50,000/yr	\$5,000
Continue to pursue negotiations with land owners and managers along the rail lines, shoreline and dyke system with the objective of establishing improved public access.	Short & Medium	Set aside for use when opportunities arise \$100,000	\$5,000
Establish a "Blueway" route (i.e. aquatic recreation and interpretive trails) in the Mamquam Blind Channel, Cattermole Slough and the Estuary.	Medium	\$35,000	\$1,000

11.3. FUNDING STRATEGIES

The capital and operating investment recommended in this master plan presents a challenge for municipal financing, and will require a range of different strategies to address. Squamish, along with all other municipalities in BC, will have to use a combination of conventional and non-conventional methods to address its parks and recreation renewal challenges and to meet the needs of its growing population. The funding strategies below, along with the partnership opportunities described throughout will be key components to implementing this Plan.

11.3.1. ONGOING INVESTMENT GOALS

Most municipalities fail to adequately provide for asset renewal at the level described above, and the result of this shortfall is a progressive infrastructure deficit. The infrastructure deficit in BC for recreation facilities alone has been calculated at \$4 Billion (BCRPA, 2009). Another \$1.2 Billion will be needed to proportionately serve the province's anticipated population growth over the next 10 years.

Ideally, a municipality should invest enough annually in its facility and infrastructure assets to sustain them over the long term. As a rough rule of thumb, for example, this would mean committing about 2% of replacement value of buildings each year, given that the expected life cycle of buildings is approximately 50 years. Actual spending might be incremental, in the form of ongoing upgrades and major maintenance projects, or it might be all at once, in the form of end-of-life-cycle replacement.

Asset life cycles vary in length: many types of infrastructure can reasonably be expected to last 100 years or more; other assets such as pools or rinks – where moisture and chemicals inherent in their operation accelerate structural and mechanical wear and tear – may have only a 35 year functional lifespan. The calculation of required life cycle investment can be fine-tuned on this basis.

New facility development should always include consideration of ongoing operating costs with those of the initial capital outlay. Often a relatively small premium with respect to design and construction can achieve energy and other efficiencies that repay the original cost several times over the life of the facility. Pools and rinks in particular have high potential to deliver energy exchanges to heat other components in a facility.

In relationship to community amenities achieved through local development, the District should always be careful to only accept land which is desirable for park purposes and facilities built to a high standard, to avoid an ongoing burden of maintenance responsibility with little benefit to the community.

11.3.2. CORE FUNDING

Conventionally, the funds to create, sustain and renew civic assets are drawn from the local property tax base, either within annual budgets or, for large ticket items, through voter approved capital plans. This core funding is supplemented by user fees. While user fees are rarely enough to offset capital costs, they can cover a significant proportion of operating expenses.

Some external funding can be realized through such sources as senior government infrastructure renewal and economic stimulus programs, although such provision is intermittent and can rarely be anticipated.

Finally, Development Cost Charges (DCCs) are an essential resource for providing municipal services to a growing population. DCCs can be collected and applied to park acquisition and park improvement projects, including recreation buildings (i.e. washrooms, accessibility upgrades,

change rooms, etc.) and outdoor recreation facilities (i.e. sports fields, playgrounds, trails, fencing, landscaping, drainage and irrigation).

11.3.3. ALTERNATIVE FUNDING STRATEGIES

A range of potential alternative funding strategies involving various types of partnering and sponsorships, are summarized below:

Corporate Sponsorships: Squamish should pursue corporate support in return for naming rights, and should continue to cultivate these relationships and perhaps extend the range of this kind of involvement.

User / Community Groups: Groups who have an interest in or a passion for specific initiatives or causes are often prepared to materially support their realization. Sport clubs and leagues may wish to contribute to the development of sport facilities, environmental groups to habitat and natural area protection or enhancements, and those with a stake in the tourism industry to civic beautification or improvements to waterfront access. Individuals also may donate to small improvements, such as park benches, picnic tables and water fountains, as memorials or charitable giving (municipal governments can issue tax-deductible receipts for voluntary donations on the same basis as federally registered charities). One advantage of working through partnerships is that non-profit agencies and community groups are often able to access funding which municipalities are ineligible for, or unlikely to receive. These include lottery funds, foundation grants and some private sector donations.

Public Agency joint-ventures: The mandate and interests of the District overlap with those of other organizations, institutions, non-profits and other public agencies such as the Regional District, the School District, Quest University and Squamish Nation, to name a few. Cooperative ventures can include co-location and space sharing of facilities and program co-sponsorship can greatly reduce both capital and operating costs.

Revenue Generating Initiatives: Some opportunities arise to establish contracts or partnerships with private enterprise that can generate revenue, particularly when upgrading or developing new recreation facilities. Related services, such as rental or lease space for private enterprises such as a physiotherapy clinic, a fitness club, a high-end restaurant or store, a service related to recreation or the facility itself.

Unfortunately this can be a fairly marginal undertaking if the exposure and patron traffic is insufficient to generate enough volume of business. Many newer big-box stores have a row of small fast-food, eye-wear or financial institution businesses adjacent to their check-stands where the shopper volume is highest. There are examples of other community recreation facilities where this has had good results, and also instances of failure. Delta's Sungod Aquatic Centre has a successful private physiotherapy clinic; the Thompson Rivers University Student Activity Centre athletic complex has a variety of food services and other outlets.

Recommendations

- Prior to implementation, prioritize the expenditure recommendations (see Section 11.2 Capital and Operating Costs) on the basis of existing condition issues, community values and demonstrated demand levels.
- Assign staff for partnership relations and resource development in the area of parks and recreation (as described in Section 3.1). Many of the funding avenues described will require ongoing attention to identify opportunities and to establish and maintain productive partnerships.