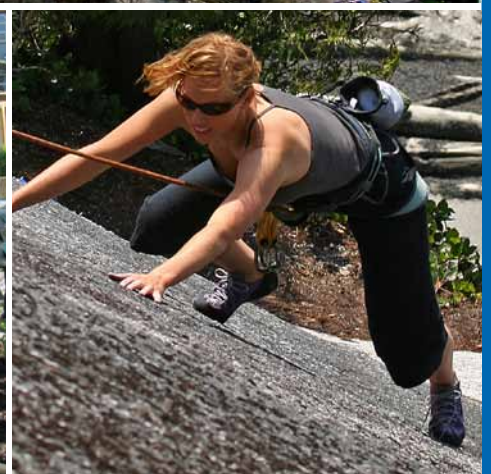


2012 PARKS + RECREATION MASTER PLAN



Prepared by



for the District of Squamish, B.C.



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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; and
- Evidence of 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

Post-it note responses collected at Open House #1



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

- Vision, Principles + Delivery Model;
- Recreation Hubs;
- Recreation Programming;
- Gathering and Celebrating;
- Arts, Culture + Heritage;
- Parks;
- Environment; and
- 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 Engagement Model is 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 community engagement and the manner in which recreation services are delivered. To that end, working toward a Community Development Model for service delivery 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 ongoing community engagement 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. The main topics for ongoing community engagement are recreation programs, Brennan Park Recreation Centre, youth and seniors programs and facilities, outdoor sports and outdoor recreation. Working toward a Community Development Model will help Squamish reach its potential, affordably. Volunteers and the private and not-for-profit sectors will be crucial in truly making Squamish the Outdoor Recreation Capital of Canada.

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 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

ensure 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**, 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 Festival 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, for which preliminary consultation is underway. Among the new programming spaces, a gymnasium is required, given the under-sized, low-height, and poor floor in the existing auditorium. As well, a high priority is to begin planning for the replacement of the existing ice sheet with a 1500 person spectator area. A new ice arena would provide an excellent opportunity to repurpose the existing arena for flexible dry-floor recreation space desired by a variety of organizations.

One of the ideas presented at the 3rd open house and discussed at length with the Squamish Valley Equestrian Association (SVEA) was to relocate the equestrian rings 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 potential recreation demands at Brennan Park, as well as the geotechnical issues could provide challenges to 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 is a need for consideration of additional factors and research on potential new locations required. 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 recommendations, the concerns about the Seniors' Centre becoming more of a multipurpose hub were aired. The upshot of those meetings is that the 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.

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, squash, shooting range, etc.) in Squamish. The Master Plan seeks to build upon and supplement those services and relationships in expanding recreation programming. Other enhancements to recreation programming include increasing 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.

Brennan Park Recreation Centre



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 are already 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. To this end, there is much to be learned from the very successful Squamish Loggers Sports and 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 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 there are opportunities to display valued pieces in District buildings. This includes all forms of arts and culture such as music, dance and performance. The key point here, since this is not a "cultural" plan, is to set the framework for the inclusion and incorporation of arts and culture as an integrated part of facility and program development.

The idea of a Forestry Centre is likely to come before Council at or near Rose Park or adjacent to the Adventure Centre. This Plan suggests those are more advantageous than Brennan Park, given the multiple interests wanting to locate there. Brennan Park, in its current layout, is unlikely to be able to adequately accommodate more in terms of buildings and related parking and circulation without sacrificing many other short and long term goals for amenities.

A parade in Downtown Squamish



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: Dentville, North Yards, Garibaldi Estates, Valleycliffe, Hospital Hill and Garibaldi Highlands. Parkland classifications, parkland acquisition guidelines and park development recommendations are included in the Master Plan and should be applied as and when parkland acquisition and development decisions are made. Although there are mentions of acquiring additional lands, no individual parcels of private or Crown lands are identified. This task is outside the scope of this project and can be completed by District staff as circumstances dictate.

One of the demographic waves that have 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. 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 play elements that reflect Squamish's unique culture and heritage 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 8.3).

Playing and ball field strategies are recommended, including improvements to existing field conditions, the creation of Joint Use Agreements with the School District to upgrade school fields to fill sports fields gaps, adding two ball fields at Hendrickson Field, and (in the long term) adding a second synthetic turf field at Brennan Park. To further enhance the sports field amenities, it is recommended that the District and School District implement a coordinated booking system that improves efficient use of available resources.

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 that a dog-friendly policy with supporting amendments to the Parks Bylaw be adopted. Creation of dog parks, dog-friendly trails, and an education and enforcement effort should be considered.

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, specifically recreational use of “the Spit”, is important. To this end, the Master Plan recommends further discussion of recreation at The Spit and the Training Dike in coordination with the Windsports Society and Squamish Estuary Management Committee and in accordance with the Wildlife Management Area Plan. The goal would be to maintain and enhance the recreation facilities for windsports while recognizing the sensitive environmental setting of the Wildlife Management Area. New opportunities for windsports are recommended for inclusion in the Oceanfront Development.

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. A formal public boat launch should be secured for the long term, including adequate storage; and dredging of the channel to remove “the plug” should be considered during the next capital budget discussion. Boating amenities should also be considered in any future discussions of the Oceanfront Development.

The Environment is crucial to the long term sustainability of the District’s park and 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 where near environmentally sensitive lands and habitats;
- Further development of partnerships with community groups to assist in the management of environment/recreation initiatives and conflict resolution; and
- Continued contribution to stewardship efforts throughout the District.

One of Squamish's many children



Kite boarders in Howe Sound



Trails have been and will continue to underpin some of the best 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 and are only accessible via 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 provision of trailheads and future access to recreation lands. The recommendations regarding trails include the following:

- Continue to implement the 2011 Trails Master Plan, with renewed emphasis on working with CN Rail and BC Rail to ensure ongoing and safe access to trails and dikes;
- Focus on creating a trail system that connects neighbourhoods, parks, and recreation facilities.
- Adopt a “blueway” vision that identifies key water access put-in points, emergency access points and routes that are both enjoyable and do not disturb habitat; and
- Create a key linkage across the Mamquam Channel at Rose Park in order to better access the Smoke Bluffs climbing area and Valleycliffe neighbourhood.

Conclusion

This section of the report summarizes the main recommendations and approaches that are described in 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, pursue capital projects, and embark on program initiatives occur as part of the District’s ongoing budget and priority-setting work.

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

Bird’s-eye view of Mamquam Blind Channel



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”. Squamish is within the Squamish Nation Traditional Territory.

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, windsports, or wilderness biking and hiking activities. It is becoming increasingly well known for special events such as the Logger’s Sports Festival, the Test of Metal mountain bike race, 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 dike, 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. The hub of the District’s 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, equestrian rings, and a small campground.

Other parks such as Rose Park, the Downtown Pavilion Park and Stan Clarke Park 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 a recreation centre with an ice arena and an aquatic centre, as well as a separate Seniors’ Centre and a Youth Centre. Beyond the facilities owned and/or operated by the District, there are many other recreation clubs and organizations, such as the Squash Club, Curling Club, Squamish Valley Rod and Gun Club, Squamish Valley Golf Club and the Squamish Windsports Society, amongst many others. Joint Use Agreements are in place between District and School District #48 (Howe Sound) for community use of a secondary school theatre and secondary 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, writers, musicians, actors, and

dancers contribute to community pride and to celebrations of the natural and cultural heritage throughout the community and wider region.

2.1. The Purpose

The purpose of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan 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. The purpose is also to guide the management of and future investment in public recreation, leisure facilities and infrastructure over the next 30 years, with a strong focus on the shorter 10 year time frame. In 2002 the previous Parks and Recreation Master Plan was received (but not adopted) by the District Council of the day. 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 scope of this Master Plan includes: review of the existing inventory of recreation facilities, parkland, trails and natural features; assessment of current delivery of recreation programming services; and recommendations for future additions, 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.

The resulting recommendations for 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.

Consultation process information board



2.2. The Process

The Plan was completed in three overlapping phases: gathering information, identifying issues, and developing recommendations. The first phase of the Plan entailed the compilation and analysis of relevant reports and data. Reports such as the 2009 Official Community Plan and 2011 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 (see Appendix A: Background References and Demographics).

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, stakeholder interviews, and letters/emails from the general public (see Appendix B: Consultation Process).

3. VISION, PRINCIPLES + DELIVERY MODEL

The following vision, mission and principles set the stage for this Master Plan by establishing a philosophical framework for the two main service providers: Parks and Recreation Services. This framework provides a clear set of high-level goals that will be the touchstone for evaluation of departmental plans and priorities.

The principles were derived from recent discussions around the National Recreation Agenda¹, research on the benefits of recreation, parks, sports, fitness, active living, arts and culture² and through discussions with District staff. The principles, in particular, were drafted to reflect Squamish's culture of volunteerism, community values, and current local trends. National Trends in Parks and Recreation were also reviewed. Additional information on National Trends can be found in Appendix C. A summary of the benefits of parks and recreation is found in Appendix D. It is recommended that these principles be further refined and developed through an internal workshop led by Parks and Recreation Management staff in order to fine tune for Squamish.

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 that is essential to mental, physical, and social well-being.
- We believe volunteering is the cornerstone for community-driven recreation and will strive to provide opportunities for citizens to participate and lead.
- 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.

1 National Recreation Summit Synopsis (2011). Retrieved from <http://lin.ca/national-recreation-summit>

2 National Benefits Hub. <http://lin.ca/benefits-catalogue>

- 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 act as stewards for our environment and provide leadership to protect our cherished spaces.
- We believe that recreation and parks services play an important part in the development of a diversified economy.
- We strive to be excellent communicators and facilitators by using all the tools available to reach our community, ensure we hear their voice and implement actions to meet their needs.

3.1. Community Engagement

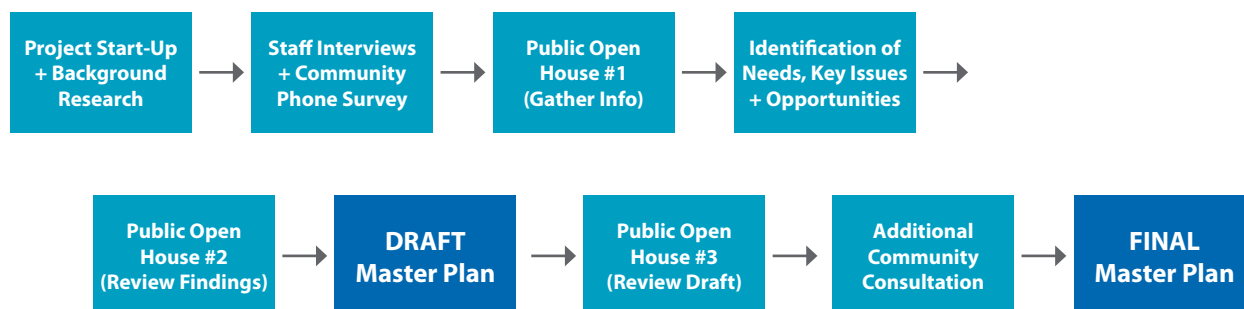
Squamish Recreation Services has recognized the benefits of adopting a stronger mandate for community engagement, community leadership and volunteer development. Recreation Services is eager to build the skills and capacity to effectively involve the community and to support community associations and partners. A key component of this Master Plan is to instigate a shift to a Community Development Model which will be a more effective mechanism for delivering services and creating grassroots involvement for a healthier, sustainable and more resilient community than the current model, which is primarily direct delivery.

The benefits of this approach hinge on partnership development and include:

- Maximizing benefits from limited resources;
- Expanded services;
- Better understanding of community needs, issues and assets;
- Better decision-making as a result of a diversity of perspectives; and
- An increased sense of community pride and ownership.

Shifting from the current approach of direct delivery to a more interactive system with both direct and community-led programming will enable Squamish to better access local talent, leverage resources and optimize opportunities. Recreation Services will play a leadership role in developing the capacity of the community

Master Plan Process Overview



to contribute their specialized skills. Recreation Services will continue to be responsible for planning and operating buildings and providing funding and programming opportunities. The following recommendations are essential to the success of this model:

Recommendations

- Create a culture of ongoing community collaboration and consultation by employing a variety of methods for staff interaction with stakeholders and the wider community;
- Provide staff with training in facilitation, public consultation, and partnership development; and
- Develop partnerships with community organizations to enhance and expand recreational programs and facilities.

3.1.1. Volunteer Engagement

Squamish benefits from an exceptionally high level of volunteer engagement in the recreation and parks realm, but there is always a danger of deterioration of volunteerism due to competing demands for time and general volunteer burnout. Recreation Services would be well served to build a support system for the existing volunteer base. The following recommendations are intended to formally recognize the value and benefit that volunteerism delivers to the community and to provide direction on how the Recreation and Parks departments can nurture and support volunteer organizations.

Recommendations

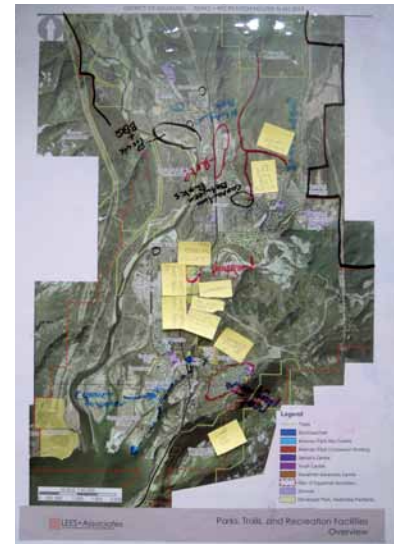
- Develop a Volunteer Policy and Strategy that celebrates the value and benefits that volunteerism delivers to the community;
- Develop a Volunteer Leadership Development program to provide training to partners and community groups and to build volunteer capacity; and
- Provide key staff with training in volunteer coordination and facilitation.

3.1.2. Community Engagement

Opportunities to provide input on policy development or department direction helps further develop community leaders and can take many forms, from short-term working groups to long-standing committees. Parks and Recreation Services are keen to keep the dialogue started through this Master Plan going, but also recognize the many demands on residents' time and energy as well as the limitations of existing staff resources.

The following topics have stood out as priority areas where increased communication and engagement should be prioritized. Also, special attention should always be paid to ensure the inclusion of seniors, youth, minority populations, and other hard-to-reach residents in community consultation processes.

Post-it notes on a map at Open House #1



Recreation Programs – Development of programs (outdoor, seniors, and youth in particular), program evaluation methods, researching program gaps or inequalities, establishing partnerships.

Recreation Centre – Recreation Centre and pool upgrades and development, policies and procedures, development of indoor programming, establishing partnerships.





Arena – Ice allocation, upgrades and development, policies and procedures, establishing partnerships.

Outdoor Sports – Sports field allocation, upgrades and development, other outdoor recreation amenities, establishing partnerships.

Outdoor Recreation – Issues related to trails, dikes, access and maintenance; input on watersports and waterfront access and needs; climbing and backcountry access points and routes; development of program partnerships; tourism.

Development of ongoing, meaningful and effective community engagement needs to be flexible, nimble, and creative which will require use of a range of techniques. Trial and error is inevitable in this process, but the following are some suggested tools that can be employed, as appropriate, with adherence to the District's Communications Plan:

Table 3.1 Community Engagement Toolbox

Method	Who	What	How	When	Why	Example
 Working Group	Clearly identified user groups or stakeholder organizations	Well-defined, specific projects, programs or issues; time-sensitive issues.	Primarily in person with District facilitation	Short-term (<1 year)	Address a specific issue or problem; Provide recommendations and then dissolve.	Sports field allocation policy
 Advisory Group	Clearly identified user groups or stakeholder organizations	Complex issues and broader-based policy and planning.	Primarily in person with District facilitation	Long-term (>1 year)	Provide input on policy and procedures; Provide input on programs or facilities; Undertake research or evaluations; Build partnerships.	Recreation Centre upgrade planning
 Social Media	General Public	Best for <i>specific</i> issues, projects, plans or discussion topics	Online; District Managed	Ongoing / As needed	Increase communication, marketing and publicity for issues, projects and plans; Develop ideas; Create connections; Get basic qualitative feedback.	Posting a volunteer opportunity or program.
 Web-based Community Engagement	General Public	Full range of uses from specific to complex issues and projects, depending on the platform.	Online; District Managed	Ongoing / As needed	Gather information (qualitative and quantitative); Allow for community-wide discussions (i.e. beyond specific user groups); Vet internal departmental plans or Working Group/Advisory Group initiatives.	Posting and requesting feedback on new program proposals.

Does Squamish Need a Parks and Recreation Commission?

The Community Development Model is a continuum, and as the Recreation Services Department incorporates some of the tools such as working groups and advisory groups, there may be a point at which a Parks and Recreation Commission (a Commission) is considered. A Commission is generally made up of 7-9 community members who are appointed by Council for a certain length of time (2 year terms with a total maximum of 6 years, for example).

The terms of reference for a Commission often includes developing annual budgets, recommending policies related to recreation, long-term planning for facilities and amenities, and community engagement. Citizens apply to be appointed to the Commission and are chosen based on their ability to work well on a team, ability to analyze and address complex issues, and experience in finance and budgeting. A Commission should represent a diverse range of interests and perspectives.

At the furthest end of the Community Development spectrum, there is essentially no direct delivery and a Commission distributes funds to individuals or community organizations to offer recreation services. In Squamish, the current system (where Recreation Services provides entry-level programs and those that are necessary to ensure that a baseline level of recreation is available) could be complimented by the addition of a Parks and Recreation Commission at some point in the future, which would be responsible for organizing recreation services above and beyond the baseline level.

Squamish Nation



Quest University



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;
- Develop strong, clear partnerships with key organizations including:
 - **Squamish Nation:** 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 and recreational programming and service partnerships, recreation amenity partnerships (e.g. lacrosse box), and incorporation of heritage interpretation in District facilities, parks, trails, and within natural areas;
 - **School District 48:** The School District should be a key partner in terms of indoor recreation and sports fields. Potential initiatives include creating a centralized, online 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:** The two Universities should be key partners for expanding Squamish's recreation opportunities through athlete development, facility partnerships, and partnered programming opportunities such as continuing education;
 - **SLRD and the Province:** The Regional District and Province should be key partners in providing funding and planning support for recreation, park and cultural assets used by the broader community. Examples include addressing the need for camping facilities and formalizing trailheads and key trail linkages; and
 - **BC Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations:** BC Ministry of Forests should be a key partner in trail and parks planning, camping facilities, joint marketing, advocacy and stewardship opportunities.
- Engage in ongoing discussions and develop relationships with recreation clubs and organizations that offer programs and services beyond District capabilities, such as the Squash Club, Curling Club, Squamish Valley Rod and Gun Club, Squamish Valley Golf Club and the Squamish Windsports Society, amongst many others.

3.2. Customer Service + Marketing

Strong customer service and marketing contributes to improved utilization of recreation facilities, increased participation in recreation, the support of community organizations and initiatives, bolstered partnerships and improved community engagement.

3.2.1. General Recommendations

Stakeholder feedback indicated that there are improvements that can be made regarding access to space in terms of insurance requirements and costs.

- Explore blanket insurance policies, with all community groups named, to eliminate the financial barriers for groups to access space; and
- Undertake a competitive analysis of all community rental space with the objective to ensure municipal space is competitive and aligned.

3.2.2. Embrace Technology

Squamish Recreation Services and Park Operations have hard-working, engaged staff recognized by the community for their dedication and commitment. 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 will enjoy the benefits of social media contacts and web-based enhancements to Recreation Services.

Recommendations

- Upgrade the recreation program management software to a web-based platform (such as ActiveNet);
- Invest in front office, marketing and supervisor staff training to create thorough understanding of the efficiencies, service improvement and marketing opportunities available through technology;
- Incorporate the Seniors' Centre website into the overall District website; and
- Improve community engagement through the prudent use of social media, online communication tools, and web-based engagement methods.

3.2.3. Marketing

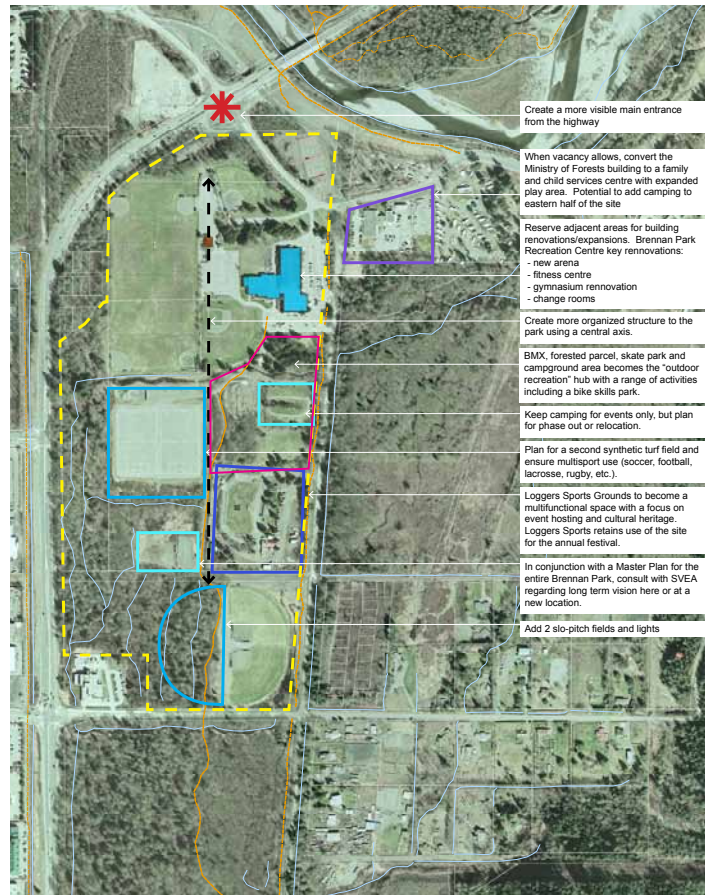
The District needs to improve marketing for recreation services, outdoor recreation and active living in Squamish.

Recommendations

- The Leisure Guide and website should consider the following enhancements:
 - 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;
 - Profile local participants and offer testimonials of programs and services;
 - Enhance financial access promotion and highlight “low cost” and “no cost” programs;
 - Promote clubs, associations and partners; and
 - Increase marketing for the Seniors’ Centre and seniors’ programming.
- Continue to collect email addresses of participants and provide an optional e-newsletter to connect with community participants on a monthly basis;
- Actively utilize Facebook, Twitter and YouTube to profile programs and the benefits of participation in recreation and parks services; and
- Consult with community organizations, clubs, and recreation partners regarding service needs. The District could potentially provide:
 - A one-stop-shop for program registration and facility booking (e.g. skating program registration through the District; booking of District and School fields or gymnasiums);
 - 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 (e.g. curling, golf, shooting range, etc.).

See Appendix E for the full-size Brennan Park Precinct Map



4. RECREATION HUBS

Squamish has one main recreation hub, at Brennan Park, which includes the Brennan Park Recreation Centre, sports fields, skate park, BMX course, Logger Sports grounds, and the equestrian rings. 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 Park Recreation Centre.

4.1. Brennan Park Vision

While this document outlines the general vision for Brennan 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 which maximizes multifunctional, integrated public spaces over discrete, single-use areas;
- Enhance visibility of Brennan Park and the Recreation Centre from Highway 99;
- Create a central axis with features that celebrate Squamish culture and heritage; and
- The District of Squamish should continue to be open to strategic acquisitions, in the immediate vicinity or elsewhere, which offer opportunities for active recreation, support the Outdoor Recreation Capital brand, and can relieve the pressure for space on Brennan Park.

Sport fields

Brennan Park contains nearly all the ball diamonds and soccer fields in the District (collectively known as "Centennial Fields"), most of which were built through grassroots, community-led initiatives. A new synthetic turf field was recently added over an existing all-weather field, which will significantly increase the available game and practice slots. The two slo-pitch fields at the southern end of the park are known as "Hendrickson Fields".

Recommendations

- Establish a proactive plan to eliminate ball diamond and soccer field overlaps. As soccer grows in popularity, demand may increase to

Brennan Park sports fields



nearly year-round play, resulting in field allocation conflicts;

- To relieve the pressure on Brennan Park, create Joint Use Agreements with the School District to upgrade school soccer and ball fields for youth play; coordinate ongoing maintenance; develop a joint booking system to ensure efficient and appropriate use of fields;
- 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 incorporating a track and other amenities (such as a field house). Provide lighting for the synthetic turf fields;
- The current number of slo-pitch teams and game slots available show a clear deficiency. Installing lights on the two existing fields should be done in the short term. In the medium to long term, a 4-diamond configuration should be considered as this would allow the Slo-pitch association to host tournaments, Provincial, and National championships;
- Develop a lacrosse box in partnership with Squamish Nation; and
- Work more closely with Quest University and Capilano University and seek opportunities for joint development and/or use of sports facilities.

Logger Sports Grounds

The main event space in Brennan Park 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 Association 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 set up 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 Association 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.

Loggers Sports



Any redesign will be pursued in close coordination with the Logger Sports Association to ensure a flexible design, suited to the widest possible range of event types, while still maintaining a priority for accommodating Squamish Days. Additional areas of Brennan Park could be used to accommodate larger events such as the Squamish Valley Music Festival, which is seeking to expand.

Recommendation

- Create a vision for enhancement of the Logger Sports grounds in the context of a Brennan Park Master Plan and through consultation with the Squamish Days Logger Sports Association.

Campground

There is a small camping area within Brennan Park and there is a great need for camping throughout the District that is evident in the widespread illegal camping that occurs. Although the District does not anticipate being a campground operator in the long term, this camping area will likely remain while longer-term solutions are developed.

Recommendation

- Within the context of a larger “Camping Strategy” (as outlined in Section 5.2 Outdoor Recreation Programming), the District should consider limiting camping at Brennan Park to events only and, in the long term, consider phasing out camping in favor of additional recreation amenities.

Riding Arena

Two equestrian rings are currently tucked behind the Logger Sports Grounds and Hendrickson Fields (ball diamonds). The Squamish Valley Equestrian Association planned and developed the site through volunteer efforts and fundraising, and they continue to manage the property. Members of the SVEA ride there and Trinity Equestrian also offers riding lessons.

“We need a covered riding ring and trails accessible to horses.”

The SVEA would like to cover one of their existing rings and add a riding track around the perimeter of the rings, which should be considered within the larger context of a Master Plan for the entire park. SVEA has identified that the equestrian rings’ central location allows efficiencies for parents juggling different children in various recreational activities at Brennan Park. Many of the horses that are ridden at the equestrian rings are kept on rural residential lots in proximity to Brennan Park. SVEA has suggested partnering with BMX on a covered area.

Recommendation

- 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.

“We need a mountain bike skills park so old people like me can learn to jump, do skinnies, etc. in a safe environment.”

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.

All-ages bike skills opportunities



Recommendations

- Create an integrated “Outdoor Recreation” 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 a Brennan Park Master Plan process;
- 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 with 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 in the near future. The engineering 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 (arts rooms, wood working rooms, etc.);
- Within District recreation facilities, collaborate with Squamish Nation to find ways to recognize their history, traditional territory, and culture;
- Pursue opportunities for major sponsorships and/or “branding” of facilities to attract funding for additions or upgrades in return for naming rights (i.e. Credit Union or other major corporation). Establish very specific and clear agreements, with time limits, for such rights; and

Brennan Park Recreation Centre



How should Squamish decide when to pursue a second sheet of ice?

There is not a definitive threshold at which the District should pursue two ice sheets. The common standard used over the last 20 years, has been 1 arena for every 20,000 residents, but there are an increasing number of municipalities with populations under 20,000 which have 2 arenas, although many of those either had major capital funding or ongoing tax-based funding available.

The demand for ice time should continue to be evaluated based on the number of hours booked (not just prime time hours), as well as the overall number of current and anticipated future users. User needs should certainly be a significant consideration, but so should the community's capacity to fund and continue to maintain a major facility. A major investment such as a new arena needs to be balanced with the needs of the many other recreation user groups, not to mention other loads on the limited tax base.

It is recommended that the District formulate a strategic plan incorporating the capital and maintenance costs, potential revenue and ongoing replacement costs within a business case analysis for a second ice sheet. It should also include consideration of different options, such as a full ice arena or a practice arena and what portion of the year would be devoted to ice sports compared with summertime dry floor uses. Through this exploration, a clearer picture would emerge that will provide the rationale for developing a new ice sheet (and decommissioning the old), building a second ice sheet or repairing the existing ice sheet.

The benefit of this upfront strategic and business case planning is that it will help the District identify when the time is right. It will also enable the District to take advantage of grant and other funding opportunities on a shorter timeline.

"We definitely need a gym at Brennan Park - great to hear that it is coming."

Brennan Park Auditorium



"...roller derby, wheelchair rugby, and inline hockey struggle to find the space to do it."

- 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.

Overall Building Upgrades

- Upgrade the exterior appearance and profile of the entire facility to clearly identify entrances and purpose of various components;
- Consider ways to improve and enlarge staff office space to modern standards, providing adequate natural light and ventilation;
- Undertake a systematic evaluation of ways to implement energy efficiency improvements and incorporate sustainability initiatives;
- Through the planning process for expansion and upgrading, explore opportunities for private/public services that could be incorporated in order to provide a source of revenue to support the facility. The partnerships should be relevant to recreation and health, such as a physiotherapy office, a wellness clinic, or sporting goods sales outlets (see West Vancouver Community Centre as an example);
- Provide additional storage space for recreation staff, operations/ maintenance, and community organizations within the building or in close proximity; and
- Include improvements to concessions and/or food service options (such as a café).

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 games, indoor lacrosse, concerts, etc. With the separate space for dry-floor uses, the new ice arena could be made available year round and would be of much better quality.

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. Additional upgrades to consider include:
 - An integrated outdoor splash pad area; and
 - Ways to open up the walls and roof to bring in more natural light and views.

Brennan Park Pool



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.

The case for a fitness 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 and increase 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 rehabilitation. Consult with potential clientele regarding equipment preferences (e.g., free weights, strength machines, cardio, etc.) and plan the fitness centre layout accordingly.

Programming Space

- The plan for upgrades to the Recreation Centre should include additional multi-functional programming spaces; and
- 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 the 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; and
- 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

- Immediately address building repairs;
- Initiate planning for renewal of the Youth Centre with Sea to Sky Community Services and other stakeholders (RCMP, School District 48), and include ongoing, meaningful engagement with youth;
- 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 recreation-related financial assistance programs available to youth and families; and
- Consider creating a "Youth Friendly Community Plan", initiated by the DOS Planning Department and including Recreation Services, Sea to Sky Community Services, other youth service agencies, and most importantly – engaging a wide range of Squamish youth.

Skate park adjacent to the Youth Centre



4.5. Seniors' Centre

The Squamish Seniors' Centre is located 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.

Through all of these recommendations, maintain the Seniors' Centre Advisory Board and ensure thorough and ongoing consultation and partnership with them.

Recommendations

- Marketing and Programming
 - Implement a marketing and publicity program to increase awareness and use of the facility. Consider programming community special events or open houses to broaden awareness of the facility;
 - Expand program offerings to attract participation at the centre. Explore adult education, arts, and cultural programs as part of the program mix in the facility;
 - Consider a name change, in consultation with the Seniors' Society, to reflect expanded use of the facility; and
 - Retain programming commitment to seniors from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and open the centre up to full community programming from 4:00 p.m. to closing. Increase hours of operations to align with the hours of the Brennan Park Recreation Centre.
- Visibility and Transportation
 - Improve way-finding signage from the main intersections in town;
 - Undertake a parking plan for the facility to identify additional parking spaces; and
 - Address transit issues (along with transportation to the Youth Centre and Brennan Park). 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, taxis and a specific transport bus for the Seniors' Society should be considered.
- Funding
 - Renew an agreement with the Seniors' Society to establish a sustainable commitment to raise funds for facility, equipment and specialized programs to meet seniors' needs in Squamish; and
 - Revenues from memberships should be directed back to the Society for the purposes of project fundraising. The Society can continue to play a critical role in raising funds for the facility and Recreation Services by attracting "matching fund" grants and donations. The Society and Recreation Services should promote the fundraising goals to increase visibility of the partnership and the Seniors' Society's good works.

Squamish Seniors' Centre



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 "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.

Squamish Adventure Centre



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. The active living opportunities in Squamish attract both short-term visitors and new residents, and contribute greatly to the community's livability. At the same time, recreation programming should be continuously adjusted to meet the changing needs of as many residents as possible.

Improvements to the recreation programs centre on a few key issues that need to be addressed:

- There is a very high proportion of young children in the community, which indicates that currently there should be a strong focus on programming for children under 10. Within the next 5 years, however, the focus will need to shift to developing a strong set of youth programs;
- Squamish has exceptionally active residents, which 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;
- There is a lack of connection between District recreation programming and its “Outdoor Recreation Capital” branding, which staff are already working to change; and
- The connections between access to nature and sustaining human health and wellbeing are not a strong part of the conversation, though there is growing awareness within Recreation Services.

“I’d be delighted to see affordable activities and facilities for little kiddos available on the weekends!”

The following items are proposed as overarching recommendations for improvements to the District’s recreation programming:

Recommendations

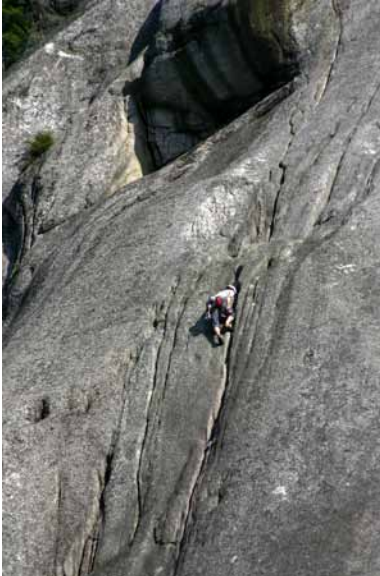
- Children’s and Youth Programming: Adopt the approaches and principles outlined in Canadian Sport for Life (CS4L) <http://www.canadiansportforlife.ca/> in planning and development of District Recreation Programming in development of new programs and initiatives. CS4L provides helpful guidance with respect to developing physical literacy amongst children and youth, and supporting adults to be active for life;
- Support and foster small groups and new programs, and enable participation to grow;
- 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;
- 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

Children’s and youth programming



Outdoor recreation services and facilities “need investment to promote accessibility and stimulate tourism and lifestyle economy”.

Climbing the Chief



- stretching areas (also see Section 4.2. Brennan Recreation Centre); and
- 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.

5.1. 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

- 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;
 - Developing a partnership with the SLRD Recreation Department and BC Parks to increase camping opportunities;
 - A review of District policies to potentially increase the ability of land owners to provide seasonal camping;
 - Assessment of potential camping scenarios/lands for potential zoning restrictions and other land-use suitability criteria; and

- Recognize the potential benefits of the Squamish Legacy Sports Park (see page 40) as a highly valuable asset for the District's Outdoor Recreation resources and support the development process, where prudent.

"We would really like to see the Legacy Park completed!"

Kayaking and hiking



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 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, Parks and Recreation Services, and streamlines approval and coordination processes for community event organizers;
- Enhance the internal Events Working Group with consultation with various District Departments (e.g. Protective Services (Fire, RCMP), Engineering, Economic Development, Planning, Parks, Health (VCH), Bear Aware, Conservation Officers, etc.) with the following terms of reference:
 - Develop clear and simple event policy and procedures;
 - Streamline the event approval processes;
 - Improve coordinated event marketing and public education campaigns;
 - Foster event partnerships; and
 - Provide 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 the community;
- Integrate small scale events into Brennan Park Recreation Centre to increase participation and profile of recreation programs and services;
- Provide suggestions and guidance for “greening” events through environmentally responsible practices and strategies;
- 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

“It would be amazing to see the Farmer’s Market take over Cleveland Street on Saturdays - to see people walking everywhere, enjoying the market, stores, and restaurants.”

Squamish Valley Music Festival



Windsurfing Nationals



physically challenged), 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; and
- Consider establishing a new “events” site in the future that is designed to accommodate larger events beyond the capacity of existing event locations.

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, with capacity depending on the amenities and infrastructure provided. The Squamish Valley Music Festival wishes to grow, which is a serious challenge to the capacity of the park, as currently designed. Specific recommendations for Brennan Park are located under Section 4.1 Brennan Park Vision;
- 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;

Rose Park



- Food services – ensure mobile and permanent food premises meet the requirements of the BC Food Premises Regulations and upgrade temporary food premises buildings;
- Expanded 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.
- Evaluate the current provisions for regular weekly events, whether at parks or other locations, and consult with organizers to find better ways to facilitate them; and
- Establish a partnership with the Logger Sports Association in conjunction with improvements to Brennan Park and the Logger Sports grounds.

6.3. 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; and
 - 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 (Squamish Junction) 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 Squamish Nation, the Squamish Arts Council, local artists, natural resources heritage, climbing pioneers, and the natural history (geology and ecology) of the region. However, there is a lack of integration between recreation 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 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), and 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

- Develop an Arts, Culture and Heritage Strategy to lay out principles, strategic direction, goals, and roles and responsibilities of all parties in fostering a creative community;
- Consult the full spectrum of arts groups, recreation organizations, educational institutions, cultural and heritage groups within the District and potentially the Regional District;
- Foster partnerships between 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;
- Integrate Arts, Culture and Heritage into Tourism planning in the District;
- Consider including space for visual arts, dance, theater, music and multi-media in future facility development and programming. In the interim, consider additions to arts programming at the Senior’s Centre;
- 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;
- Consider an artist-in-residence program for the Brennan Park Recreation Centre and Senior’s Centre to launch introductory quality arts programming;
- Create opportunities for visual art displays in Brennan Park Recreation Centre and the Senior’s Centre;

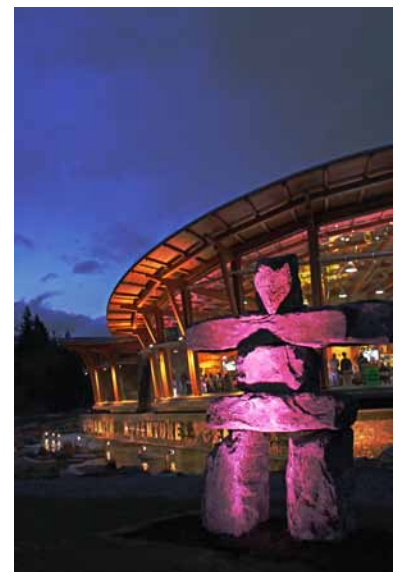
South-Asian Community



“I love street art and want to see more of it.”

“We need more community programs for youth such as art, drama, and dance.”

The Adventure Centre



- Encourage partnerships between event providers, Squamish Arts Council and Squamish Nation to add a cultural arts element 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;
- Increase opportunities for performances and film in parks;
- Engage artists and integrate public art into municipal buildings, public works (man-hole covers, water culverts, bridges, etc.) 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, and other resources; west coast pioneers and environmental interpretation;
- Consider a partnership with the Squamish Days Logger Sports Association to explore opportunities for the creation of an outdoor forestry-centred park space with interpretive signage, displays, and opportunities for interaction; and
- 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”).

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 initiatives and projects to system-wide organizational and operational principles. Overall, these recommendations seek to improve recreation and parks 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 identify 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 E.

8.1. Park Classification System

The existing park classification, as outlined in the 2002 Parks and Recreation Master Plan includes the following:

- Passive Community Park;
- Active Community Park;
- Neighbourhood Park;
- Natural Open Space; and
- Outdoor Recreation Resource.

Many Squamish parks are difficult to fit into a single category within the existing classification system. Eaglewind Park, downtown, for example, is large enough to be considered a "Community Park", but it includes both active and passive recreation features (tennis courts, community gardens, playground, natural areas, etc.) In addition, the categories "Passive Community Park", "natural open space" and "outdoor recreation resource" are not clearly defined.

The following changes to the park classification system are proposed:

- Add "District Park". These are parks that go beyond the "Community Park" functions and service area. They are destination parks that are the cornerstones of the District (see further description below);

- Change “Natural Open Space” to “Environmental Areas and Drainage”. Natural Open Spaces, although they may be officially designated as parkland, are not often usable for active, or even passive, recreation. They include streams and riparian areas, drainage right-of-ways, areas with steep slopes, or other environmentally sensitive features not suitable for recreation; and
- Remove “Outdoor Recreation Resource” as this is a redundant category that includes too much overlap with the “District Park”, “Passive Community Park” and “Natural Open Space” categories.

Recommended Park Classification

District Parks are typically large, and serve the entire population, but can also be smaller parks that are well used by the entire community (i.e. a downtown plaza). They embody the character and identity of the municipality, and are places of celebration, coming together, and play. These are the parks that the Chamber of Commerce will point to on brochures, and are the most recognizable, identifiable members of the parks system. Examples include Smoke Bluffs Park and Rose Park. These parks do not have a minimum size, as they relate to their importance to the District.

Community Parks are the mid-sized parks that provide opportunities at the community or multi-neighbourhood level for play and recreation. These parks often (but not always) have a specific sports component. They are less well-known than “District Parks”, but form the back bone of the parks system. They are generally greater than 4 hectares in size (10 acres), but some may be included in this category for their unique amenities. Examples include Merrill Park (trails) and the Skate Park.

Neighbourhood Parks are the smallest parks in the system, and should be distributed with the goal of providing every resident at least one park within a 10-minute walk, and they are generally not the type of park that people will drive across town to visit (although for a special play feature, they might). These parks serve the needs of residents within their particular catchment areas, and largely respond to demographics. For instance, in areas of higher density and lots of kids, “Neighbourhood Parks” should have play amenities and benches for parents. On the other hand, a “Neighbourhood Park” near a long-term care facility should focus on benches, paths, and horticultural displays that will meet the needs of the users. Neighbourhood Parks include traditional pocket parks, tot lots, and informal sports fields, and thus can vary in size from 0.1 to 4 hectares (0.25 to 10 acres).

Environmental Areas and Drainage are defined by the lack of development potential. They often consist of Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs), detention basins, riparian areas, steep slopes, or other non-traditional parkland. Often, this category has limited (if any) access to the public, is set aside for wildlife, and serves a specific, non-active function in the parks system. It can include wildlife corridors, urban forests, streams and ravines, estuaries, and other unbuildable sites. Thus, the size of parcels can range in size from the very small (0.1 hectares) to the very large (50+ hectares). Provision of this type of parkland is directly driven by the naturally occurring characteristics of the municipality, and thus varies widely depending on urban build-out, density, and location. However, the most sensitive environmental areas in the community should be protected through park dedication rather than through conservation easements or other regulatory means.

Table 8.1 assigns classifications to the existing developed and named parks. There are many other parcels of “dedicated park” which should be reviewed by the District to determine if they are “Environmental Areas and Drainage” or if they have potential for park and recreation amenities. (Note: Tiampo Park is a large park parcel, but is located across Howe Sound and is essentially inaccessible due to topography and a lack of boat docking facilities.)

Table 8.1 Parkland Classifications

Classification	Park Name	Amenities	Area (ha)	Total Hectares
District Parks	Brennan Park	Rec Centre, pool, ice arena, sports fields, Loggers Sports, equestrian rings, campground	36.09	62.94
	Rose Park	Water access, paths, lawn areas and horticulture displays	3.63	
	Smoke Bluff Park	Climbing, hiking, biking	22.17	
	Pavilion Park (Squamish Junction)	Pavilion, historic train station, adjacent to Farmer's Market	0.62	
	Stan Clarke Park	Playground and public gathering space	0.44	
Community Parks	Eaglewind Park	Tennis, playground, lawn bowling, fenced dog park, trails, community garden	4.54	21.85
	Merrill Park	Trails	15.56	
	Squamish Skateboard Park/Carson Place Park	Skateboard Park	1.74	
Neighbourhood Parks	Arrow Head Park	Playground	0.24	8.61
	Boulevard Park	Playground, tennis	0.27	
	Bracken Park	Undeveloped (lawn)	0.10	
	Braemar Park	Playground	0.13	
	Coho Park	Hiking, biking	1.14	
	Cottonwood Park	Playground	0.13	
	Eagle Run Park	Playground	0.31	
	Edgewater Park	Playground	0.30	
	Fisherman's Park	Unofficial Squamish River access	0.35	
	Glacier View Park	Undeveloped (lawn)	0.23	
	John Hunter Park	Undeveloped	2.11	
	Jura Park	Playground	0.45	
	McNaughton Park	Playground	1.26	
	Pat Goode Park	Playground	1.08	
	Porcupine Park	Playground	0.27	
	Willow Park	Playground	0.23	
Environmental Areas + Drainage	Bill's Place Park	Undeveloped	0.29	139.64
	Kingswood Park	Undeveloped	1.03	
	Jack's Trail Park	Undeveloped	0.72	
	McDonald Place Park	Undeveloped	0.26	
	Northridge Park	Undeveloped	0.08	
	Tiampo Park	Undeveloped	137.26	

8.2. Parkland + Amenity Supply

8.2.1. District Standards

"Please keep working on creating parks and usable green space."

Standards are intended for use as basic guidelines, specifically for use by the District in guiding the acquisition and designation of parks and open space. Due to the variety of definitions, inclusions/exclusions, and community-specific considerations (adjacent Provincial parks, for example), the standards across Canadian municipalities vary greatly. Results from a survey of Canadian municipalities³ showed standards ranging from 0.7 to 6.0 hectares per 1,000 residents. The average parkland standard (from the same survey) was 2.8 hectares per 1,000 residents. In comparison, the Squamish standard from the 2002 Parks and Recreation Master Plan was 3.6 ha per 1,000 residents.

Some municipalities also set benchmark goals for providing parkland within a certain distance of residents (i.e. park service areas). The geographic distribution and service areas of Squamish parkland are discussed in Section 8.2.4.

The existing parkland inventory was compared to the standards outlined in the 2002 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, as there was no indication that the standard should change given that it is within the general range used by many other Canadian municipalities. For the comparison below, "District" and "Community Parks" have been combined for comparison to the combined "Passive" and "Active Community Park" categories from the 2002 report. It should also be noted that school grounds are not included in this analysis, though they provide amenities similar to "Neighbourhood Parks".

The District currently has a surplus of "District" and "Community Parks", but has a deficiency in "Neighbourhood Parks". In the past few years, the District has made headway in the "Neighbourhood Park" category by adding parks and upgrading playgrounds.

Table 8.2 Parkland in 2012

	Standard	2012 Inventory (17,200 residents)	
		Total Hectares	Hectares per 1,000
District + Community Parks	2.2 ha / 1,000	84.79	4.93
Neighbourhood Parks	1.4 ha / 1,000	8.61	0.50
TOTAL	3.6 ha / 1,000	93.4	5.43

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 8.3).

³ Evergreen (2004). *Green Space Acquisition and Stewardship in Canada's Urban Municipalities: Results of a Nation-wide Survey*. Retrieved from <http://www.evergreen.ca/docs/res/Green-Space-Canada-Survey.pdf>

Table 8.3 Parkland in 2032

	Standard	2012 Inventory	Hectares of Park Space per 1,000 in 2032	
			25,000 residents	31,000 residents
District + Community Parks	2.2 ha / 1,000	84.79	3.39	2.74
Neighbourhood Parks	1.4 ha / 1,000	8.61	0.34	0.28
TOTAL	3.6 ha / 1,000	93.4	3.74	3.01

Key Findings:

- The “Neighbourhood Park” provision will be significantly lacking if there are no additions; and
- As the population reaches 31,000, the total provision of parkland per 1,000 residents could drop below the District standard.

Recommendations

- Strive to add to the “Neighbourhood Park” supply with the goal of reaching the District provision standard and maintaining it as the population grows; and
- Although the “District” and “Community Park” standards will be met in terms of hectares, the District may still find that additional lands are necessary in order to meet the demand for certain park amenities (sports fields, for example).

8.2.2. 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 8.4). The data has not been verified in the field and represents information available on municipal websites, online resources, and interviews. These findings offer a second perspective indicating that there needs to be a greater emphasis on small, locally-accessible park space.

Table 8.4 Comparison to Provincial Averages for Similar-Sized Communities

Hectares of Park Space per 1,000 residents	Squamish	Average for BC communities of 10-20k residents	How Does Squamish Compare?
District Parks	3.66	2.27	1.39
Community Parks	1.27	2.34	-1.07
Neighbourhood Parks	0.5	0.69	-0.19
Total Parks	5.43	5.3	0.13

Key Findings:

- Squamish is above average in the total amount of parkland, as well as in the amount of land within “District Parks” (generally larger than 12 hectares); and
- The proportion of “Community Parks” and “Neighbourhood Parks” is below average. With regard to “Community Parks”, however, this is primarily due to the fact that Squamish has a very centralized system with Brennan Park as the main hub (a “District Park”).

Recommendation

- This comparison further validates the recommendation that the District needs to increase the supply of “Neighbourhood Parks” and may also need to consider distributing more “Community Parks” throughout the community.

8.2.3. 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 8.5 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 demographics, 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; and
- Squamish is above average in the number of soccer fields. However, the numbers can be misleading as there are only 5 full-sized grass soccer fields and all but 1 overlap with ball diamonds. A synthetic turf field was recently added, which will contribute significantly to playable hours.

Recommendations

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

Table 8.5 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	18,012	24	61	12	6	5	2	0	0	1	5	14	1
Pitt Meadows	City	18,136	20	82	-	-	13	0	0	0	1	11	5	1
Central Saanich	District	16,201	37	84	10	9	6	3	1	0	1	2	4	0
Squamish	District	17,898	23	94	47	25	8^	-	0	0 ⁺	2	13*	4	0
Terrace	City	11,931	22	100	40	-	7	1	0	0	1	8	7	0
Dawson Creek	City	11,860	18	130	7	-	9	0	0	1	1	8	4	0
Port Alberni	City	17,752	38	270	20	5	22	0	1	1	1	5	10	3
Salmon Arm	City	17,128	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	19,123	22	366	30	-	11	2	0	0	1	6	2	2
White Rock	City	19,278	15	-	5	10	4	0	1	0	-	2	5	0
Fort St. John	City	19,873	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.

*7 fullsized fields (5 grass, 2 all weather); 10 out of 13 fields overlap with ball diamonds.

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

8.2.4. Spatial Distribution of Parks + Gap Identification

The distribution of municipal parkland 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.

The park service area map, provided in Appendix C, shows walking distances to the primary “Neighbourhood” and “Community Parks”, as well as potential locations for new parks. The metrics were a five-minute walking distance (280m) and ten-minute walking distance (500m). In addition, Table 8.6 shows developed parks by neighbourhood (not including “Environmental Areas + Drainage”).

The following findings and recommendations address the quantity and spatial distribution of parkland. Additional recommendations on park amenities are included in Section 8.3.

See Appendix E for the full-size Park Service Areas Map

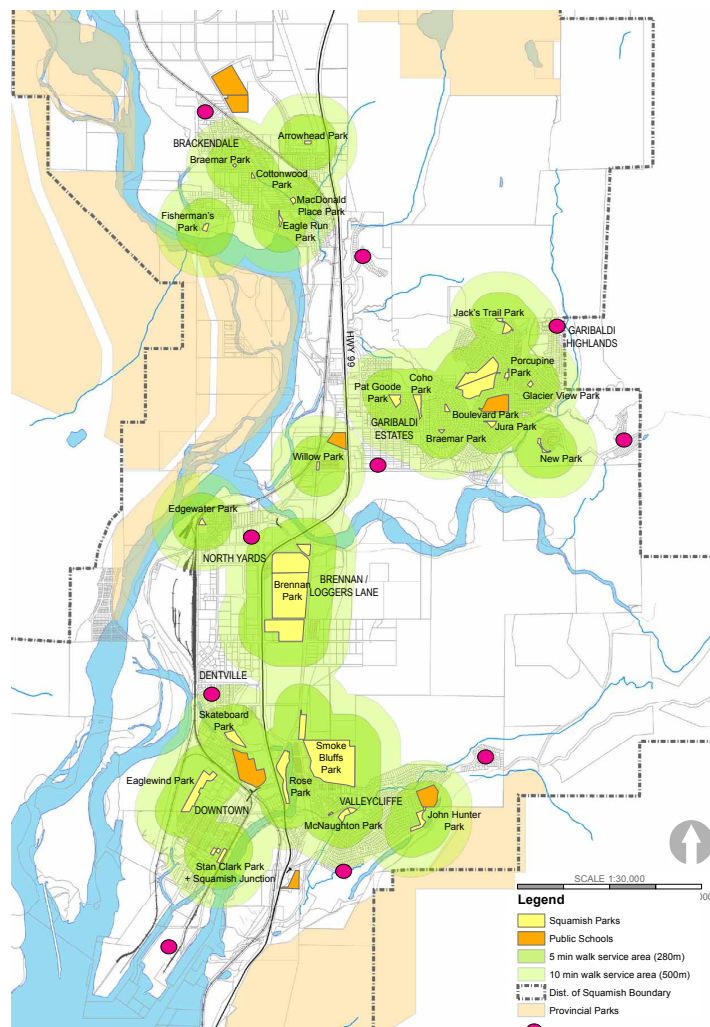


Table 8.6 Developed Parkland Inventory by Neighbourhood

Park Name	Amenities	Neighbourhood	Area (ha)	Total Area
Arrow Head Park	Playground	Brackendale	0.24	1.14
Bracken Park	Playground	Brackendale	0.10	
Cottonwood Park	Playground	Brackendale	0.13	
Eagle Run Park	Playground	Brackendale	0.31	
Fisherman's Park	Unofficial Squamish River access	Brackendale	0.35	
Squamish Skateboard Park/Carson Place Park	Skateboard Park	Dentville	1.74	1.74
Eaglewind Park	Tennis, playground, lawn bowling, dog park, trails, community gardens	Downtown	4.54	9.23
Pavilion Park (Squamish Junction)	Pavilion, historic train station, adjacent to farmers market	Downtown	0.62	
Stan Clarke Park	Playground and public gathering space	Downtown	0.44	
Rose Park	Trails, waterfront access, horticultural garden, lawn area	Downtown	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	Rec Centre, soccer fields, ball diamonds, Loggers Sports, playground, outdoor fitness, tennis, camping, equestrian rings, BMX and skate park, trails	Brennan Park / Loggers Lane	36.09	36.09
John Hunter Park	Undeveloped	Valleycliffe	2.11	3.37
McNaughton Park	Playground, sport court	Valleycliffe	1.26	

District-Wide

As identified in the previous section, the District is deficient in total hectares of “Neighbourhood” and “Community Parks” compared with other similar-sized communities, which is partly due to the centralized structure of Brennan Park (a “District Park”) which is the equivalent of several “Community Parks”. There are advantages and disadvantages of this approach. One of the challenges is that there

are substantial, competing demands on space at Brennan Park. On the other hand, the community appreciates the convenience of the one-stop-shop approach. As the community grows and available space at Brennan Park diminishes, acquisition of additional lands that are suitable for community-scale active recreation would be beneficial.

The planned Squamish Legacy Sports Park, near Brennan Park and adjacent to the Rod and Gun Club, will be a significant benefit to the District and will offer substantial new opportunities for Nordic sports (ski jumping, biathlon), as well as year round recreation and sports opportunities (running, biking, climbing, fitness trail, disc golf etc.)

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). 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, but there is limited land owned by the District within what is considered “Judd Beach” and there are flooding issues and sensitive ecosystems. 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; and
- Clarify District land holdings and public access in the area of Fisherman’s Park. Ensure protection of sensitive environmental areas.

Downtown (9.23 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. Rose Park is also part of the neighbourhood, although across Highway 99 from most residents.

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 Development on the peninsula to the south will need to include parkland for the downtown residents, as well as opportunities to improve waterfront access for the whole community (see Section 8.3.6 Waterfront Parks + Access).

Recommendation

- Plan for additional “Neighbourhood Parks” in the long term, as development occurs.

O’Siem Pavillion



"I love all the pocket parks in the Highlands. They have improved greatly over the years, but there are still opportunities for improvement."

Dentville (1.74 hectares)

Within Dentville to the north of Downtown, the only park within walking distance is Carson Place Park which contains the skateboard park and Britannia Slough. There is no "Neighbourhood Park" or playground in Dentville.

Recommendation

- Expand and improve the north end of Carson Place Park with "Neighbourhood Park" amenities. Improve visibility and security in the vicinity of the Youth Centre and skate park. Avoid sensitive environmental habitats, such as Britannia Slough, and consider including a nature trail through the central portion of the 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 ten-minute walk to a park, although there is access to a large green space in the golf course and surrounding trails. 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 (e.g. Coho Park).

Recommendation

- Add a new "Neighbourhood Park", 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 forested park with trails. The "Neighbourhood Parks" have similar design issues to those in Garibaldi Estates, with visibility, accessibility, and safety/security issues. Most of the parks within walking distance to residents are linear 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 them. The trail from Thunderbird Ridge is an example of a linear park/trail that is important to the neighbourhood 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.

Recommendation

- Add a second “Neighbourhood Park” in the North Yards neighbourhood, if the opportunity arises.

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 “Neighbourhood Parks” acquisition is currently recommended given the current zoning; and
- As the community grows and available space at Brennan Park diminishes, acquisition of additional lands that are suitable for community-scale active recreation would be beneficial, but would not necessarily need to be in the same neighbourhood.

Valleycliffe (3.37 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; and
- A new “Neighbourhood Park” should be considered in the southern part of the neighbourhood if the opportunity arises.

Community Garden



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; and
- Dedicate Smoke Bluffs as municipal parkland by bylaw.

8.3. 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.

8.3.1. System-wide Recommendations

- Create a Playground Strategy that incorporates the unique character of Squamish heritage, culture and recreation into all park design 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;
- Within District parks and trails, collaborate with Squamish Nation to find ways to recognize their history, traditional territory, arts and culture;
- Establish a Community Garden Policy that provides information, guidance and support to enable community and neighbourhood groups to establish, build and maintain community gardens within District lands. Gardening is a popular activity that appeals to a wide range of ages and ability levels and adds to the range of outdoor recreation opportunities in Squamish. The Policy should reflect current best practices for minimizing wildlife attractants, such as Bear Aware. This policy could also be expanded to include District support and encouragement of ornamental garden areas and “raingarden” projects on municipal lands;
- Teenagers are often excluded from parks because of the dominance of play spaces for young children and family-oriented areas. Incorporate areas 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. Incorporate innovative ways to engage youth in park design processes;
- 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

Example of playground climbing features



New Eagle Run Playground



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. Refer to Appendix F for the recommended Park Acquisition Guidelines and the Parkland Acquisition Best Practices Guide⁴;

- Ensure that park designations are clear and that tenure is secured for parks (where required); and
- Add affordable storage space for registered community nonprofit organizations whose activities support recreation, outdoor activities, and community events. There is a dire need for more extensive, permanent storage facilities for community organizations for ongoing equipment storage, event infrastructure storage, etc. Immediately evaluate District lands and identify a long-term location to provide storage facilities. As the events hub, Brennan Park is one potential location that may minimize the need to transport events equipment. However, it would need to be evaluated within the larger Master Planning process. Evaluate the capital costs, the space needed, and the ability of user groups to pay.

8.3.2. 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. Across North America, current playground standards have slowly led to environments that are sterile and standardized and do not offer the opportunities for challenge that benefit a child's cognitive and physical development. Traditional play equipment can still be fun and has a place in Squamish playgrounds. Some play equipment companies have made significant improvements in the range of equipment and customization available. In addition to formal equipment, consideration of features that reference the natural environment, local industries such as logging and rail, Squamish Nation, and outdoor recreation activities like mountain biking, hiking, ropes courses and climbing would elevate playgrounds to be “made for Squamish”.

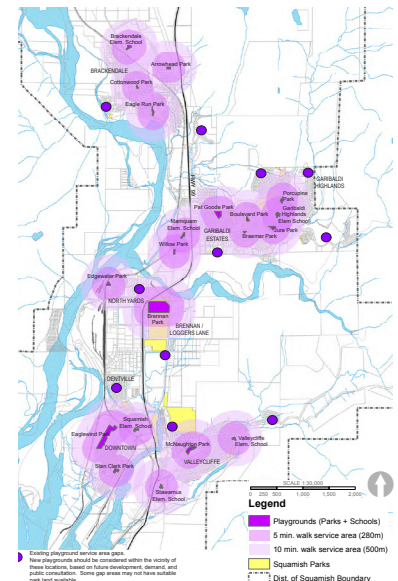
The following are the main recommendations related to playground additions and special features. Additional recommendations are found in the park-by-park projects (Table 8.7).

Recommendations

- Continue ongoing funding and implementation of the playground improvement and upgrade program already underway;
- Create a Playground Strategy that incorporates outdoor recreation elements and reflects the unique character of Squamish heritage, culture, and environment (for example: mini bike skills elements, mini climbing boulders, or rope/challenge course elements);
- 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.

4 BC Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development. (2006). *Parkland Acquisition Best Practices Guide*. BC Development Finance Review Committee. Retrieved from http://www.cscd.gov.bc.ca/lgd/intergov_relations/library/Parkland_Acquisition_BPG.pdf

See Appendix E for the full Playground Service Areas Map



Howe Sound Community Field Opening



8.3.3. Park by Park Recommendations

The following table identifies improvements to District parks which should be implemented over the next 5-10 years.

Table 8.7 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.
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 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 features; see if there is potential for a Neighbourhood Stewardship Group; consider informal play features rather than just equipment.
Carson Place Park / Skate Park	Currently has poor sightlines and the only amenity is the skateboard park; sensitive environmental areas are present (Brittania Slough).	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, while respecting sensitive ecosystems; consider nature interpretation on Britannia Slough.
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 recently replaced (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 Downtown; connected 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 community needs Downtown; potential location for a fenced off-leash dog area.
Edgewater Park	Newly installed playground.	No recommendations at this time.
Fisherman's Park	Unofficial Squamish River access.	Limited amenity additions are possible at Fisherman's Park and the adjacent Judd Beach due to environmentally sensitive areas, flooding issues, and private property. Improve signage and seek ways to clarify land ownership limits and to protect salmon spawning habitats.
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.
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 dike, outside of school hours.
Jura Park	Has recently been renovated; tennis removed and replaced with sport court; playground rebuilt.	No recommendations at this time.

Table 8.7 Recommendations for Parkland Improvements (continued)

Squamish Parks	Park Status / Amenity Notes	Recommendations
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 Crummet Creek Trail pass through; improve the trail and drainage behind tennis court.
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.
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, Lily's 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 play elements, bouldering feature for kids, park kiosk, small gathering area (Smoke Bluffs Road); dedicate as parkland through bylaw; evaluate need for washrooms.
Pavilion Park (Squamish Junction)	Recently upgraded Pavilion; Squamish Arts Council building in historic train station.	Dedicate as parkland through bylaw; consider enhancing this park as a destination; consider adding an interactive fountain/spray focal feature; leverage funding based on the Squamish Centennial.
Stan Clarke Park	Redeveloped in 2012 with Provincial grant funding.	Determine life-cycle replacement costs and incorporate into future budgets; 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.
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.

8.3.4. Outdoor Sports Amenities

Recommendations

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

- Develop a Playing Fields Strategy and Allocation Policy (see description, below);
- Install lighting at the existing Hendrickson Fields;
- Complete a 4-ball diamond “clover leaf” at Hendrickson Fields;
- Implement a phased plan to upgrade existing grass fields at Brennan Park;
- Create Joint Use Agreements with the School District that include phased upgrades to school fields and potentially a joint booking system;
- In the long term, complete a second synthetic turf field at Brennan Park, including lighting; and
- Develop a lacrosse box in partnership with Squamish Nation.

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 logical 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.

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 development of a joint booking system for District and School facilities to improve access and efficiency and to minimize fields that are booked but not used.

How should Squamish decide when to pursue additional sports fields?

There is no clear cut benchmark at which the District should pursue additional outdoor sports amenities. Some municipalities set standards (such as 1 soccer pitch for every 90 participants, City of Waterloo, ON). However, such standards end up as only one consideration amongst many that come into play, such as the quality of fields, how many playable hours are available, and how much practice and game time each user group requires. There are also the additional considerations of capital costs and ongoing maintenance, balance with the needs of other user groups and other loads on the limited tax base. As such, the primary recommendation in this section is to undertake a Playing Fields Strategy in order to develop a strong base of information that can be used in making decisions regarding future field development or redevelopment. The recommendations are also made with the Community Development Model in mind in terms of the role of the District (i.e. the District should support the initiatives and work with stakeholder groups as partners in expanding recreational opportunities).

The only specific additions to the playing field inventory recommended here are 2 additional slo-pitch fields in the medium to long term and consideration of a lacrosse box. The remaining recommendations focus on improving the capacity of existing fields and expanding the inventory in the future by upgrading school fields and conversion of the remaining all-weather soccer pitch to synthetic turf.

The additional slo-pitch fields are based on actual participation numbers that demonstrate the need, the requirement of 4 fields to host tournaments (a Squamish Slopitch Association goal), and the evidence that the SSA is prepared to contribute significantly to that goal. The lacrosse box was brought up at several public consultation sessions as a necessary step to enable a new recreation activity to grow. Similar to the slo-pitch fields, in order to make this facility a reality, those who desire the facility should continue to build and demonstrate community support and generate ideas for funding the project.

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; and
- Commercial groups.

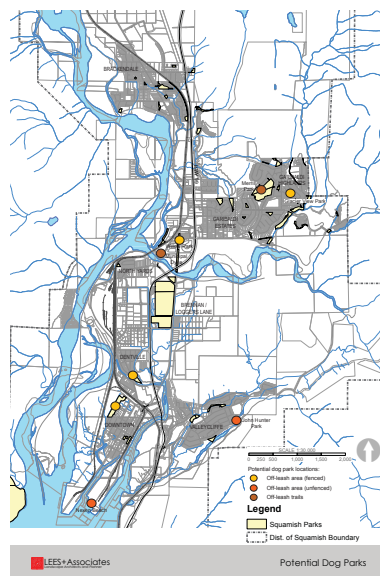
It should also be clearly laid out where recreation programs, tournaments, special events, and provincial, national, and international championships fall within the priority program structure.

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 peak / non-peak hours allocation, etc.

Squamish currently only has one official fenced dog park (Eaglewind Park)



See Appendix E for the full dog park map.



8.3.5. 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 one designated dog park (Eaglewind Park), and 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;
- When considering dog park locations and regulations, include protections for sensitive environmental areas, such as salmon spawning watercourses. Physical barriers are likely to be more effective than signage or regulations (see the split-rail and wire mesh combination fencing used at Pacific Spirit Park in Vancouver);
- 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 Appendix E, Potential Dog Parks Map). Consult adjacent residents prior to finalizing the recommended locations below:
 - 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 Dikes (specified dog-friendly trails)
 - Merrill Park (specified dog-friendly trails)
- General guidelines for fenced dog parks:
 - Ideal size is 0.5 ha;
 - 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; and
 - Regulatory and etiquette signage.
- Develop a website-based public information program to 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 for the dog park information and signage program;
- Create site-specific maintenance management plans and annual maintenance, and life-cycle replacement budgets 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; and
- Consider pursuing opportunities for corporate sponsorship of dog parks or related elements of the program.



"Kiteboarding is one of the fastest growing sport in the world. We need to capitalize on that."

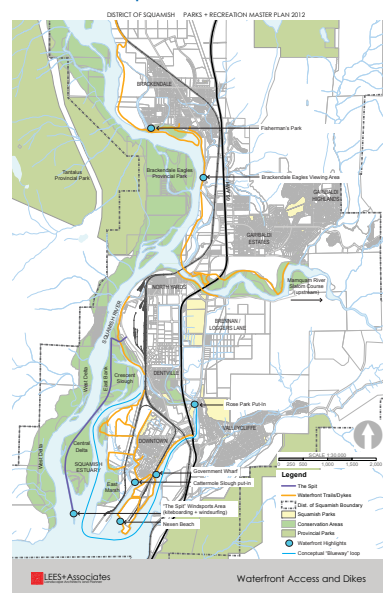
8.3.6. Waterfront Parks + Access

Squamish enjoys a wealth of natural features embodied in the Oceanfront, the Estuary, the Spit and the Training Dike, 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. At the same time, there are sensitive environmental areas that need to be carefully managed in order to prevent impacts from recreation activities. This section assumes that the Squamish Estuary Management Committee and any other appropriate regulatory agencies will be consulted early on with regard to any suggested access or recreational activities. See the "Oceanfront Development" section for recommendations specific to that area.

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 public put-in locations;
 - Creation of "blueways" (or aquatic recreation and interpretive trails) in the Mamquam Blind Channel, Cattermole Slough and the Estuary (Note: Environmental protection should remain the priority in these areas. Closures during breeding seasons or other restrictions may be needed);
 - Expanded waterfront access for kiteboarding and windsurfing 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
 - Addition of or improvements to parking at key water-based recreation access points; and
- As included in the OCP (2009), consider "Green Shores" principles in the planning and design of parks and recreation amenities adjacent to coastal areas.

See Appendix E for the full-size waterfront map



The Training Dike + The Spit

The District of Squamish currently licenses the windsurfing area of the Spit from the Province of BC. Historically there has been a sub-license between District of Squamish and Squamish Windsports Society for the management of these lands during windsports season from May to September.

Recommendations

- If the opportunity arises, explore the benefits of designating the Spit and Training Dike as a park through bylaw (classify as "District Park");
- Coordinate with the community organizations, like Squamish Windsports Society, to address ongoing management and waterfront

access at the Spit, recreational trails and waterways, and other estuary features where environmental protection is the main priority. This is particularly important during discussions with the Squamish Estuary Management Committee (Ministry of Environment, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Squamish Nation, and other local conservation, community 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 parking/transportation planning; 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

At the head of Howe Sound there is a great deal of water frontage, including the Oceanfront peninsula, Mamquam Blind Channel, Upper Mamquam Blind Channel and Cattermole Slough. As the Downtown and Oceanfront 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.

"We need an appropriate place to store and launch canoes and kayaks downtown."

The Sub Area Plans for the Waterfront Landing Neighbourhood and the Oceanfront Development include provisions for public waterfront access including public harbour and moorage options, opportunities for canoes and kayaks, improved aquatic habitat, pedestrian linkages, lookout points, and plazas. From a parks and recreation perspective, these Sub Area Plans would greatly contribute to the accessibility of the waterfront and the overall reconnection of the District to Howe Sound.

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;
- Develop a Waterfront Walkway along the Mamquam and Upper Mamquam Blind Channels and the Oceanfront Peninsula; and
- Develop an Oceanfront Park at the end of the Oceanfront Peninsula per the Oceanfront Development planning process.

Squamish Yacht Club



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, 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 (e.g. Provincial parkland, Crown land, private land holdings) which is a challenge when trying to improve, manage, and protect outdoor recreation opportunities and environmentally sensitive areas.

Recommendations

- Build on and align with ongoing mapping work with updates or new mapping of: terrestrial ecosystem mapping (TEM), ANSI mapping (Areas of Natural and Scientific Importance), wetland mapping, wildlife corridor mapping and a 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 recreation in Squamish's wide variety of natural areas in order to ensure environmental protection;
- Ensure that improvement and expansion of recreation amenities and facilities does not impact environmentally sensitive areas; and
- Develop partnerships with environmental and trails organizations to establish, support and implement long-term stewardship and recreational access strategies, particularly where recreational uses exist that may result in environmental degradation over time.

9.1. Skwelwil'em Squamish Estuary Wildlife Management Area, Site "A" + the Estuary

The main purpose of the Wildlife Management Area (WMA), Site "A" and the Estuary is habitat protection, and any recreation should only be considered if it can be accommodated without degradation and disturbance to the wildlife and habitats that depend on these areas.

- Abide by the guidelines laid out in the Skwelwil'em Squamish Estuary Wildlife Management Area Management Plan (Aug. 2007) and the Squamish Estuary Management Plan (1999), and work collaboratively with the Squamish Estuary Management Committee (SEMC) on stewardship efforts in the Squamish River Estuary area;
- Work with the SEMC through the SEMP review process to integrate a trails plan that respects sensitive habitats and establishes maintenance guidelines. (Note: Trails in the WMA are limited to those identified in the Management Plan);

The Estuary



Brackendale Eagles



- Seek opportunities to partner with Squamish Nation to increase awareness of the cultural history of the Estuary; and
- Pursue opportunities to partner with Squamish Nation to create commercial tourism activities focused on nature appreciation and environmental education (Note: commercial tourism in the WMA must be reviewed and approved by the Province).

9.2. Brackendale Eagles Viewing Dike

One of the primary areas for viewing eagles is in Brackendale, along Government Road, adjacent to the Squamish River Dike. It is a very popular place for tourists to stop because of the many eagles who nest in the area and the clear viewing opportunities provided.

- 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 Dike, 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;
- Continue to partner with 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; and
- Develop formal written agreements, including management plans, with organizations interested in assisting with management of public recreation areas such as the Eagle Viewing Dike.

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 that 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 fence is a significant barrier 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; and
- Support events on trails.

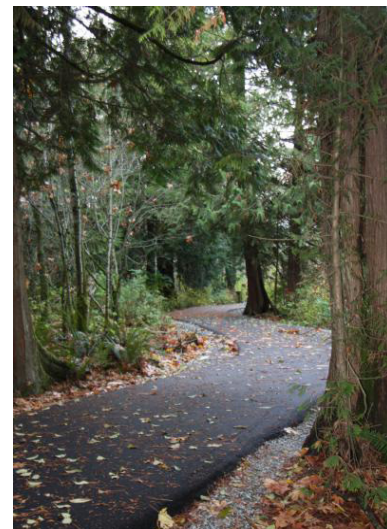
Building on the Trails Master Plan recommendations (above) are these additional specific recommendations:

- Continue to develop integrated web-based mapping of parks, neighbourhoods, and trail connections;
- Develop key trailheads with signage, parking, washrooms, and garbage/recycling. Employ community consultation processes to prioritize trailhead enhancements;
- Support the volunteers who currently undertake the maintenance and development of trails and recognize the economic benefits of their efforts;
- Within the District trails system, collaborate with Squamish Nation to find ways to recognize their history, traditional territory, and culture;
- 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 dike system, with due consideration for public safety and liability; and

Half Nelson Trailhead



Sea to Sky Trail



- Consider a “Blueway” route for canoes and kayaks around the Downtown peninsula, through the Squamish River Estuary and Mamquam Blind Channel, as shown on the Waterfront Access and Dikes Map (Appendix E) 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, the need for dredging, and the need to avoid environmentally sensitive habitats.

“Keep working on all trail systems. The more the better!”

Squamish Area Trails Map



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 + 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, explanation, and additional recommendations that do not have a direct budgetary component. These costs are order of magnitude estimates for planning purposes 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. The recommendations are listed in order of short to long time periods, with the exception of the park-by-park recommendations which are alphabetical by park.

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 \$
Increase community collaboration and consultation through a variety of methods.	Short	\$10,000 *	TBD (Staff Time)
Appoint staff to spearhead the recommended community consultation strategies.	Short	\$10,000 *	TBD (Staff Time)
Appoint staff member to spearhead the recommended volunteer support strategies.	Short	\$10,000 *	TBD (Staff Time)
Develop a Partnership/Collaboration/Sponsorship policy.	Short	\$20,000 to develop policy and plan	n/a
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 plan	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	\$10,000 *	TBD (Staff Time)

* ballpark allowance to account for potential need of external resources

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 the "Outdoor Recreation" zone at Brennan Park.	Short / Ongoing	\$500,000	\$50,000
Create a mountain bike skills park.	Short	\$120,000	\$20,000
Develop a partnership with the Loggers Sports Association for the upgrading and ongoing management of the Logger Sports Grounds.	Short	n/a	\$50,000
Add lights at Hendrickson Fields.	Short	\$500,000	\$30,000
Phase upgrades to Brennan Park fields.	Short - Medium	\$1M per field	n/a^
Develop a lacrosse box.	Short	\$500,000	\$5,000
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
Complete 4 ball diamond "clover leaf" at Hendrickson Fields.	Medium/Long	\$1,000,000	\$50,000
Add a 2nd synthetic turf field.	Long	\$1.5 M	\$50,000

^ already within existing budgets

Brennan Park Recreation Centre	Timeline	Capital \$	Operating \$
Develop a Renovation / Expansion Plan, which could include:	Short	\$100,000 (Plan)	n/a
Fitness centre	Short	\$1,500,000	\$50,000
Improved and enlarged staff office spaces	Short	\$300,000	\$15,000
Upgraded meeting rooms	Short	\$100,000	\$5,000
Replaced ice arena	Short - Medium	\$1 - \$10 M	\$50-800,000
Regulation size gymnasium	Medium	\$1,000,000	\$30,000
Upgraded exterior and signage	Medium	\$100,000	\$5,000
Dedicated space for gymnastics program and cross-training fitness opportunities	Medium	\$500,000	\$30,000
Integrated spaces for preventative health programs, physiotherapy services, or other appropriate businesses	Medium	\$500,000	Revenue generator

Ministry of Forests Site	Timeline	Capital \$	Operating \$
When vacancy allows, create a Family and Children's Centre.	Medium - Long	\$1,000,000	\$50,000
Expand the outdoor play space.	Medium - Long	\$100,000	\$5,000
Upgrade rest of site to support event strategy (e.g. temporary or permanent camping & storage.)	Medium - Long	\$400,000	\$20,000

Youth Centre	Timeline	Capital \$	Operating \$
Renovate the Youth Centre building and address visibility, security, and lighting issues.	Short	\$500,000	\$50,000
Build the array of youth programming and park facilities to serve the increase in Squamish youth population over the next 5-10 years.	Short / Ongoing	TBD based on facilities	TBD based on programs
Consider creating a "Youth-Friendly Community" Plan.	Medium	\$30,000 *	n/a

* ballpark allowance to account for potential need of external resources

Seniors Centre	Timeline	Capital \$	Operating \$
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; incorporate a Parking Plan.	Short	\$20,000	\$1,000

Recreation Programming			
Recommendations	Timeline	Capital \$	Operating \$
In general, expand the range of programming offered at District facilities based on the Vision, Mission and Principles.	Short / Ongoing	TBD based on programs	TBD based on programs
Incorporate community consultation into the recreation programming development process.	Short / Ongoing	n/a	n/a
Increase noncompetitive and drop-in sports programs for youth and adults to attract new users.	Short / Ongoing	TBD based on programs	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 children's programs focused on Squamish culture, heritage, hiking, environmental education, etc.	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 *	n/a

* ballpark allowance to account for potential need of external resources

Events			
Recommendations	Timeline	Capital \$	Operating \$
Assign staff or hire an "Events Coordinator" position.	Short	n/a	TBD
Develop an Events Policy.	Short	\$10,000 *	n/a
Enhance the internal Events Working Group through expanded consultation.	Short	n/a	n/a
Develop a Transportation Strategy for major events.	Short	\$10,000 *	n/a
Strategically add integrated infrastructure to existing event sites to help improve events and increase event capacity.	Short / Ongoing	\$100,000	\$10,000
Integrate more local, small scale events into Brennan Park Recreation Centre.	Medium / Ongoing	\$30,000	\$10,000
Plan for a new events site to accommodate large events.	Long	\$2,000,000	\$200,000

* ballpark allowance to account for potential need of external resources

Squamish Centennial			
Initiate planning for Squamish's 100th birthday (2014) .	Short	n/a	n/a
Undertake a Strategic Plan for the Adventure Centre and 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	\$70,000	n/a
Engage youth in arts and culture programming.	Short	\$10,000 *	n/a
Increase collaboration with Squamish Nation for inclusion of greater recognition of their culture and heritage in District recreation facilities, parks, and trails.	Short / Ongoing	TBD based on projects	TBD based on projects
Create opportunities for visual art displays in Brennan Park Recreation Centre.	Medium	\$50,000	\$5,000
Integrate art installations with trail signage and interpretation program.	Medium / Ongoing	\$10,000/yr	\$1,000
Dedicate outdoor space for a forestry exhibition (equipment, exhibits, interpretive signs, etc.)	Medium	\$50,000	\$5,000
Create an Artist-in-Residence program at the Senior's Centre.	Medium	\$5,000	\$1,000
Establish an Art in the Park program.	TBD Based on Plan	\$10,000/yr	\$1,000

* ballpark allowance to account for potential need of external resources

Park and Amenity Supply Recommendations

Recommendations	Timeline	Capital	Annual Operating
Secure permanent park status for Brackendale Farmers Institute Walking Park.	Short	\$50,000	TBD (Partner w/ Brackendale Farmer's Institute)
Add neighbourhood parks:		(Land Acquisition + Development)	
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

System-Wide Recommendations

Recommendations	Timeline	Capital	Annual Operating
Add affordable storage space for registered community nonprofit organizations whose activities are based in District parks.	Short	Ranges from \$30,000 for storage containers to \$100,000 for steel storage sheds	potential revenue generation
Develop "Park Acquisition Guidelines".	Short	\$10,000 *	n/a
Create a Playground Design Strategy that incorporates outdoor recreation elements and reflects the unique character of Squamish heritage, culture, and environment.	Short	\$10,000 *	n/a
Establish a Community Garden Policy.	Short	\$10,000 *	n/a
Incorporate areas for teenagers at community parks.	Medium	TBD based on amenity	TBD based on amenity

* ballpark allowance to account for potential need of external resources

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 play features like boulders and logs to activate this park in the limited space available.	Long	\$20,000	\$5,000
Braemar Park - Replace playground, install signage and entrance features.	Short	\$100,000	\$10,000
Carson Place Park / Skate 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, while respecting sensitive ecosystems; consider nature interpretation on Britannia Slough.	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 elementary school age.	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 community needs Downtown.	Medium	\$200,000	\$15,000
Fisherman's Park - Improve signage and seek ways to clarify land ownership limits and unofficial Squamish River access.	Medium	\$20,000 *	TBD
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 an informal play area; potential location for off-leash dog area along the dike.	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.	Medium	\$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 activate this park in the limited space available.	Medium	\$20,000	\$2,000
Rose Park - Develop a site-specific Park Plan	Short	\$50,000	n/a
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
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
Smoke Bluffs			
Designate the Smoke Bluffs as a District Park through bylaw.	Short	\$10,000 admin.	n/a
Develop a new neighbourhood park and entrance with bouldering and other play features for kids, 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	n/a	n/a
Pavilion Park (Squamish Junction) - Develop a site-specific Park Plan; consider enhancing this park as a destination; consider adding an interactive fountain/spray focal feature/water park; 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)		

* ballpark allowance to account for potential need of external resources

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
Based on the Playground Design Strategy, incorporate outdoor recreation elements and reflects the unique character of Squamish heritage, culture, and environment.	Ongoing	2 projects per year @ \$10,000-20,000	\$1,000 per project

Outdoor Sports Amenities			
Recommendations	Timeline	Capital \$	Operating \$
Develop a Playing Fields Strategy and Field Allocation Policy.	Short	\$10,000 *	n/a
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	TBD Based on upgrade needs	n/a

* ballpark allowance to account for potential need of external resources

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	\$10,000 *	n/a
Establish two unfenced dog-friendly designated areas.	Short	\$2,000	\$500
Create a public information/education and signage program including web-based information.	Short	\$10,000	\$2,000
Establish three fenced off-leash dog areas.	Short - Medium	\$75,000	\$15,000
Designate specific dog-friendly trails.	Medium	\$2,000	\$500

Waterfront Parks + Access			
Recommendations	Timeline	Capital \$	Operating \$
Develop a Marine Strategy.	Short	\$60,000*	n/a
Dredge the Mamquam Blind Channel (subject to the overall Marine Strategy and necessary approvals).	Short	\$1M	n/a
Consider designating the Spit and Training Dike as a District Park through bylaw.	Short	\$10,000 *	n/a
Improve access and amenities to support recreation at the Spit, while also reducing environmental impacts.	Short - Medium	\$50,000 / \$300,000	\$5,000 / \$30,000
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
Establish a "Blueway" route (i.e. aquatic recreation and interpretive trails) in the Mamquam Blind Channel, Cattermole Slough and the Estuary.	Medium	\$35,000	\$2,000
Develop a Waterfront Walkway along the Mamquam and Upper Mamquam Blind Channels and the Oceanfront Peninsula.	TBD	TBD	TBD
Develop an Oceanfront Park at the end of the Oceanfront Peninsula per the Oceanfront Development planning process.	TBD	TBD	TBD

* ballpark allowance to account for potential need of external resources

Environment			
Recommendations	Timeline	Capital \$	Operating \$
Develop guidelines for decision-making processes to determine compatible/incompatible land uses in environmentally sensitive areas.	Short	n/a	n/a
Continue to inventory all District lands to determine those that should be considered for environmental protection.	Medium / Ongoing	n/a	n/a
Develop partnerships with environmental and trails organizations to establish, support and implement long-term stewardship and recreational access strategies, particularly where recreational uses exist that may result in environmental degradation over time.	Medium/Ongoing	\$50,000/yr	n/a

Skwelwil'em Squamish Estuary Wildlife Management Area, Site 'A', the Estuary, the Training Dike, and the Spit

Recommendation	Timeline	Capital \$	Operating \$
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 Squamish River. (Revolving annual fund for seed money for worthy joint initiatives.)	Short / Ongoing	\$20,000/yr	n/a
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.)	Medium / Ongoing	\$20,000/yr	n/a
Work collaboratively with the Squamish Estuary Management Committee on stewardship efforts in the Squamish River Estuary (Revolving annual fund for seed money for worthy initiatives.)	Medium / Ongoing	\$50,000 /yr	n/a
Work with the SEMC through the SEMP review process to integrate a Trails Management Plan for the Squamish River Estuary that respects sensitive habitat.	Medium	\$50,000 *	n/a

* ballpark allowance to account for potential need of external resources

Brackendale Eagles Viewing Dike			
Recommendations	Timeline	Capital \$	Operating \$
Establish regulatory improvements to reduce problems associated with parking and traffic congestion on the road, and improve public safety.	Short / Ongoing	\$10,000 *	n/a
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	n/a
Pursue opportunities to partner with Squamish Nation to establish tourism.	Medium	\$10,000/yr	n/a
Improve access and amenities to support wildlife/eagle viewing at the Dike.	Medium / Long	\$300,000	\$20,000

Trails			
Recommendations	Timeline	Capital \$	Operating \$
Continue to implement the Trails Master Plan 2011 recommendations.	Ongoing	\$30,000/yr	n/a
Continue to pursue negotiations with land owners and managers along the rail lines, shoreline and dike system with the objective of establishing improved public access.	Short - Medium	Set aside for use when opportunities arise \$100,000	n/a
Collaborate with Squamish Nation to find ways to recognize their history, traditional territory, and culture within the District trails system.	Medium / Ongoing	\$10,000/yr	n/a
Continue to develop integrated web-based mapping of parks, neighbourhoods, and trail connections.	Medium	\$10,000 *	n/a
Develop key trailheads with signage, parking, washrooms, and garbage/recycling.	Medium & Ongoing	\$50,000/yr	\$5,000

* ballpark allowance to account for potential need of external resources

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

11.3.3. Alternative Funding Strategies

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

Community Referendum: In the case of some big-ticket items a community referendum could be held which would allow the public to make the ultimate decision on an increase in taxes to fund a project. A range of options that meet a set of project objectives, but at different price points, could be included.

Corporate Sponsorships: Squamish could consider pursuing corporate support in return for naming rights, and could 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 Squamish Nation, the Regional District, the School District, Quest University and Capilano University, to name a few. Cooperative ventures can include co-location and space sharing of facilities, while 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 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.

