

COWICHAN VALLEY REGIONAL DISTRICT

# Regional Recreation Strategic Plan

Final Draft  
March 2019





# Executive Summary



The Cowichan Valley Regional District and its member municipalities (Municipality of North Cowichan, Town of Ladysmith, Town of Lake Cowichan, City of Duncan) recognize the importance of indoor and outdoor recreational opportunities to residents. Over the past year the partners have undertaken a regional recreation planning initiative to assess the current state of recreation in the region and strategically plan for the future. The final phase of this planning initiative was to develop a Regional Recreation Strategic Plan that will guide future service delivery and collaborations. The Regional Recreation Strategic Plan was developed based on the research and engagement conducted through Phases 1 and 2 of the regional recreation planning initiative.<sup>1</sup>

The Regional Recreation Strategic Plan provides the following **Vision** for recreation in the Cowichan Region:

*Through access to diverse, high quality parks, recreation and cultural opportunities, residents of the Cowichan Region live active healthy lives and are part of strong vibrant communities.*

The following **Service Delivery Goals** are also provided to outline overarching principles and goals that will guide future recreation services and investment.

- Sustainability
- Quality
- Inclusivity
- Diversity
- Collaboration

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<sup>1</sup> Key findings from this research and engagement is summarized in Section 2 and available under separate cover in the respective Phase 1 and 2 report documents.

# Executive Summary



To execute upon the Vision and Service Delivery Goals, seven **Service Delivery Strategies** have been provided which provide specific, suggested focus areas for the CVRD and its member municipalities. These seven Service Delivery Strategies are summarized as follows.

**Service Delivery Strategy #1:** Regularly review and refresh the Terms of Reference for Commissions, Committees, and other entities involved in the oversight of recreation services.

**Service Delivery Strategy #2:** Expand efforts to address financial barriers to participation in recreation.

**Service Delivery Strategy #3:** Develop an engagement protocol specific to recreation service delivery.

**Service Delivery Strategy #4:** Increase investment in the marketing and promotions of recreation opportunities with a focus on getting more residents, more active.

**Service Delivery Strategy #5:** Increase regional collaboration and synergies across all aspects of community services delivery and planning.

**Service Delivery Strategy #6:** As a region, continue to explore potential solutions to address funding model inequalities and misalignment.

**Service Delivery Strategy #7:** Over the next five years, further explore specific needs related to arts and culture in the region.

# Executive Summary



The Cowichan Region has a strong base of indoor and outdoor recreation infrastructure and a diverse array of spaces that support programs and spontaneous / unstructured recreation. The Regional Recreation Strategic Plan provides guidance to ensure that this existing base of infrastructure is sustained and also provides suggested approaches and tactics to support future planning and infrastructure development initiatives. The following **Strategic Infrastructure Principles** are intended to guide overall capital and operational planning for recreation infrastructure in the region.

**Strategic Infrastructure Principle #1:** Ensure that existing key recreational facilities and spaces are sustained before contemplating new capital development.

**Strategic Infrastructure Principle #2:** Major infrastructure projects being contemplated in the region will be explored collaboratively by all regional partners.

**Strategic Infrastructure Principle #3:** Preference will be given to future facility projects that provide multi-purpose and inclusive spaces that serve a cross-section of residents rather than single use or single interest types of facilities.

The Regional Recreation Strategic Plan additionally provides **Facility and Amenity Strategies** specific to a number of key recreation facility and space types (ice arenas, aquatics facilities, indoor multi-purpose spaces, outdoor sport fields, curling facilities, fitness spaces, trails, arts and culture spaces, and specialty recreation spaces). **Planning Tools** are also provided to assist with future analysis and ranking / prioritization of potential projects.

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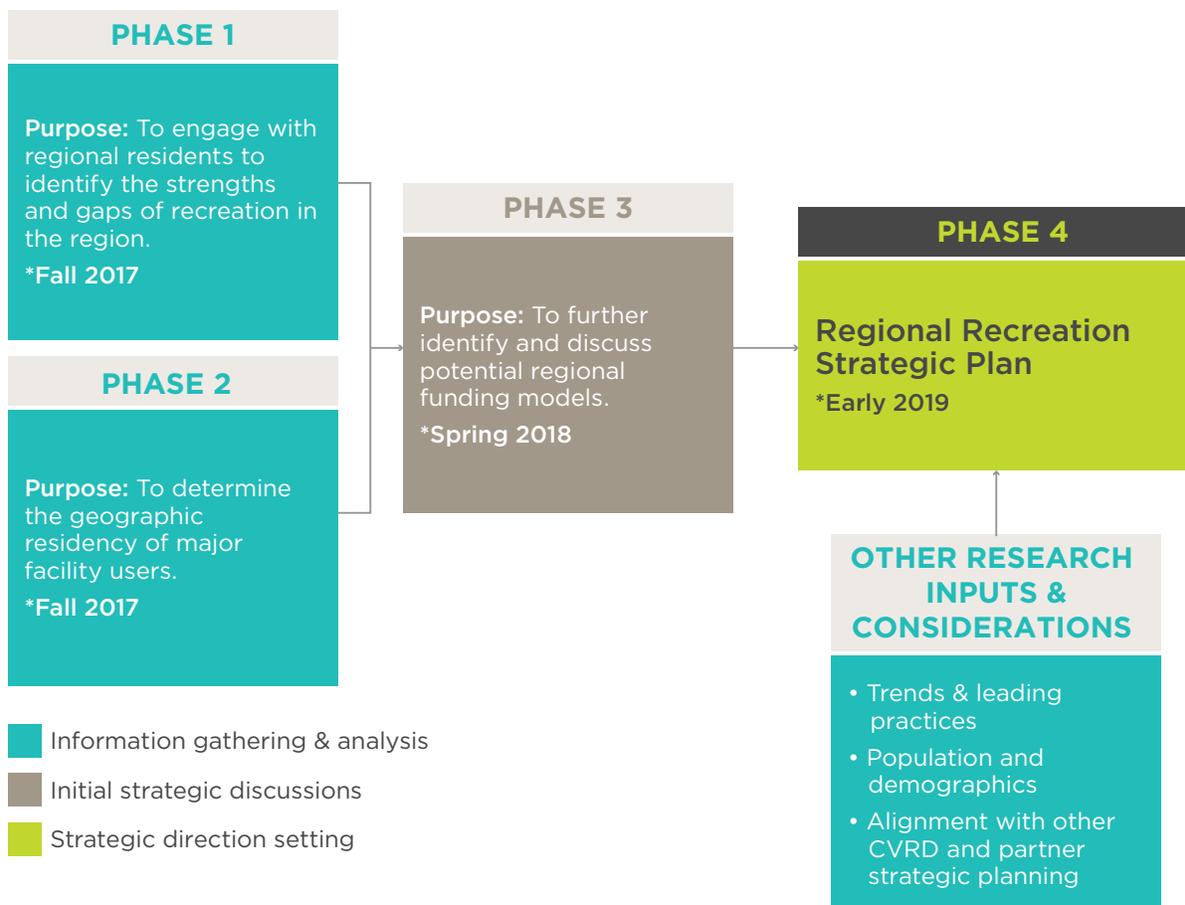
# SECTION ONE

## Introduction

### In This Section

- Project background and context.
- Project process and inputs.
- Overarching objectives and rationale for developing a Regional Recreation Strategic Plan.

The following graphic illustrates the process used to develop the Regional Recreation Strategic Plan. As previously noted in the Executive Summary, this phased project was undertaken jointly by the Cowichan Valley Regional District (hereafter referred to as the CVRD) and its member municipalities (Municipality of North Cowichan, Town of Ladysmith, Town of Lake Cowichan, City of Duncan) over a timeframe of approximately one year.



The Strategic Plan is the fourth and final stage and is intended to provide the CVRD and its member municipalities with a strategic roadmap that can help guide regional service delivery, identify areas of enhancement, and help set future priorities. The Strategic Plan will also provide staff, committee members and elected officials with a tool and point of reference that can be used to inform future decision making related to capital and operating budgets, cost sharing, and potential partnerships.

## Defining Recreation

The term “recreation” can mean different things to different people. **The Framework for Recreation in Canada 2015: Pathways to Wellbeing** provides the following renewed definition for recreation.

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

The Framework also states that “recreational experiences include participation in physical activity and sport, and in artistic, cultural, social and intellectual activities.”

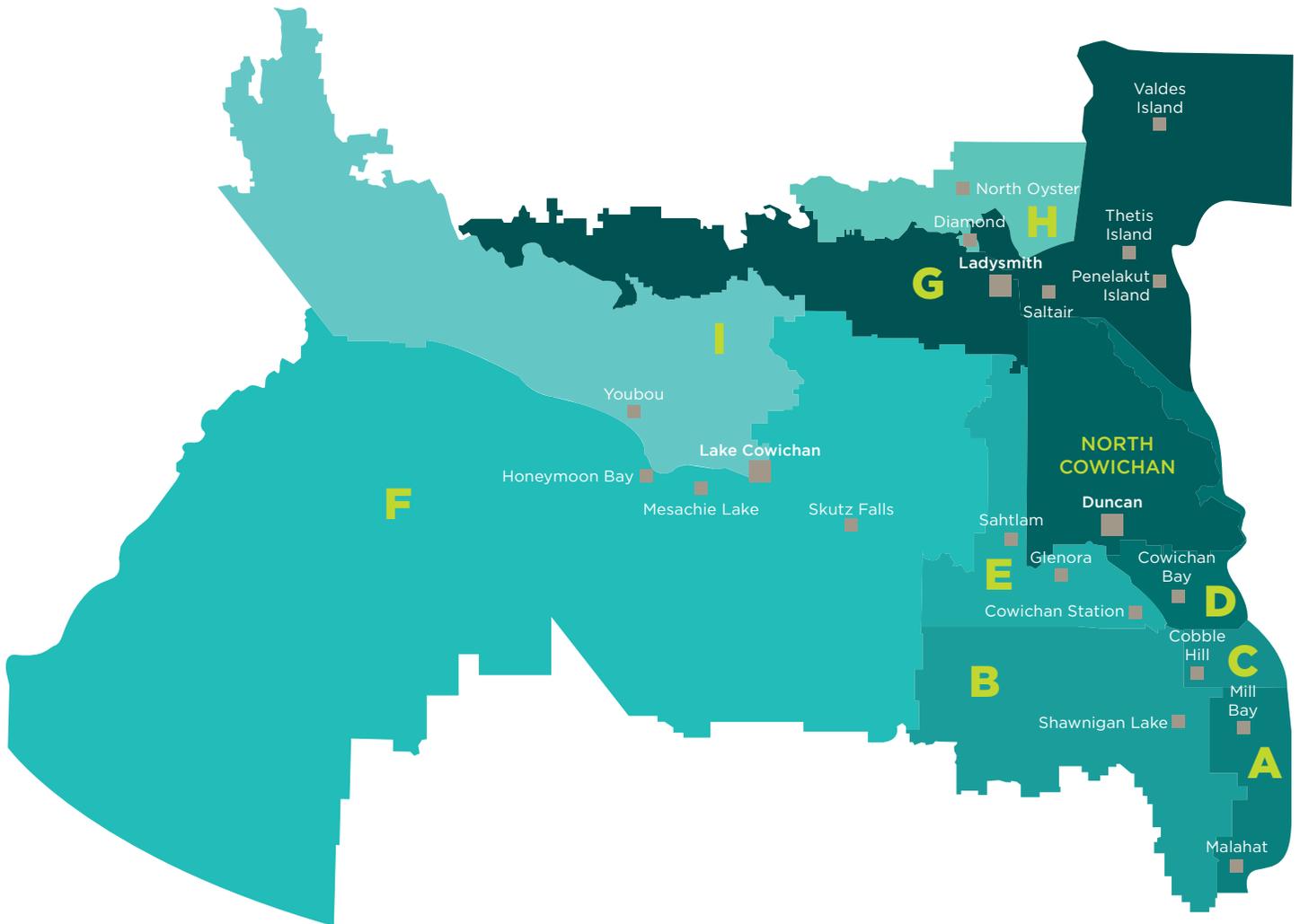
While this Strategic Plan will focus primarily on active forms of recreation such as physical activity and sport, arts and cultural pursuits have been included within the scope of the Strategic Plan and previously conducted research and engagement.

## Commitment to Physical Literacy

Fundamental to recreation provision in the region is a commitment to developing physical literacy. This can broadly be defined as ensuring that residents of all ages and backgrounds have the basic skills to live an active and healthy life. As further detailed in this document, the CVRD and its member municipalities integrate physical literacy into programming and through collaborative initiatives with numerous community organizations and recreation stakeholders.



# Overview - The Cowichan Valley Region



## Key Facts

- Population of 83,739.
- The CVRD encompasses a land area of 3,473 sq. km.
- There are four member municipalities in the CVRD (City of Duncan, Municipality of North Cowichan, Town of Lake Cowichan, Town of Ladysmith) and nine electoral areas.
- There are eight Indigenous communities located within the CVRD (Ditidaht First Nation, Stz'uminus First Nation, Lake Cowichan First Nation, Halalt First Nation, Cowichan Tribes, Malahat Nation, Lyackson First Nation, Penelakut First Nation).

*\*See Section 2 for additional population and demographics characteristics.*

## SECTION TWO

# Research and Engagement Summary

### In This Section

- Summary of key findings from Phases 1 and 2 of the regional recreation planning initiative.

As mentioned in the previous section, significant research and engagement was conducted during Phases 1 and 2 of the regional recreation planning initiative. Summarized in this section are key findings from the research and engagement that have informed the development of the Strategic Plan.

*Note: The detailed Phase 1 and Phase 2 report documents have been published under separate cover.*

## Phase 1

### Overview of Engagement Activities



#### Resident Survey

1,410 responses



#### Focus Group Sessions

4 sessions  
(~90 participants)



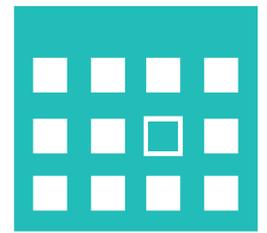
#### Online Engagement through PlaceSpeak

128 connected residents



#### Facility Displays

Residents provided comments on facility displays that were set-up at 10 regional facilities



#### Pop-Up Events

Members of the consulting team visited various locations in communities throughout the Cowichan Region (e.g. community facilities, retail locations, community markets).

### Other Research Conducted

Other forms of research conducted during Phase 1 included:



Review of key population and demographics indicators



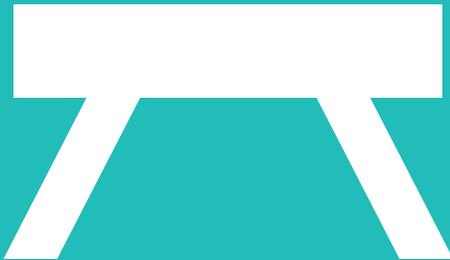
Trends and leading practices research

## Key Findings Summary



### Recreation Activities Preferences

- **Spontaneous / unstructured recreation is important for regional residents.** The majority of activity preferences identified by Resident Survey respondents reflect those that can be done without the need to join a league/team/program.
  - » Favourite Indoor Recreational Activities (Top 5 identified by Resident Survey respondents): walking, theatre performances, arts and crafts, swimming, fitness classes
  - » Favourite Outdoor Activities (Top 5 identified by Resident Survey respondents): hiking/walking, gardening, BBQ/picnic/social gathering, community events, activities at the beach



### Barriers to Participation

- **A number of factors prevent some residents from participating in recreation.**
  - » The top five barriers to participation in recreation pursuits identified by Resident Survey respondents were: age/health issues, cost of programs, inconvenient times, location of facilities, and lack of time.
- **Affordable access to recreation is important to regional residents.** The importance of ensuring affordable access to recreation was commonly mentioned during the Focus Group sessions and on the facility display panels set-up in community facilities. Many residents believe that future facility development needs to keep affordability top of mind.
- **Residents believe opportunities exist to improve the promotions and marketing of recreation.** Resident Survey respondents identified “improvements to the marketing and promotions of existing recreational opportunities” as the top way that the CVRD and its member municipalities can improve recreation participation in the region.



### The Current State of Recreation Services in the Region

- **Resident satisfaction with recreation opportunities is relatively strong.** 80% of Resident Survey respondents indicated satisfaction with the overall availability of recreation opportunities in the region (37% were “very satisfied” and 43% were “somewhat satisfied”).
- **Residents are using facilities across the region.** Utilization data collected through Phases 1 and 2 indicate that many residents use facilities across the region. The data also suggests that in some instances there is not alignment between funding contributions and facility user’s location of residency.

## Key Findings Summary (Continued)



### Future Needs, Demands and Opportunities for Recreation

- **Mixed viewpoints exist on the need for new and/or enhanced facilities.** 35% of Resident Survey respondents believe new and/or enhanced facilities are needed in the region while 40% of respondents do not believe new and/or enhanced facilities are needed (20% were unsure).
- **Residents would like to see expanded programming made available.** Findings from the Resident Survey and Focus Group sessions indicated that there is likely a demand for more outdoor education and skill development programming, arts and cultural programming and fitness/wellness opportunities.
- **Support exists for increased levels of regional collaboration.** 66% of Resident Survey respondents indicated support for some level of increased regional collaboration, while 34% do not favour increased collaboration. When asked about specific types of collaboration, the following responses were provided:
  - » 49% of Resident Survey respondents would like to see increased cost sharing to enhance the operations or capacity of existing facilities.
  - » 40% of Resident Survey respondents would like to see increased cost sharing to undertake major capital facility projects.



### Recreation Infrastructure Trends and Leading Practices (Provincial and National)

- Shift from stand-alone/single purpose facilities to multi-purpose facilities.
- Increasing user demands for comfort and convenience amenities (e.g. public Wi-Fi, social areas, variety of food options, child care services).
- Integration of indoor and outdoor facilities on the same site to capitalize on operational economies, make optimal use of available land, and share support amenities.
- Importance of physical accessibility and spaces that support inclusion.



### Recreation Participation and Activity Trends (Provincial and National)

- Concerning physical activity levels, especially among children and youth cohorts (Only 9% of Canadian kids aged 5 to 17 get the 60 minutes of suggested physical activity they need each day).<sup>1</sup>
- Increasing demand for spontaneous / unstructured recreational opportunities while participation in many organized sports has stagnated or declined.
- Shift in older adult recreation preferences from passive to more active and multi-generational pursuits (fitness classes, pickleball, hiking).
- Quality and timing of programming continues to be an important factor in participation.

<sup>1</sup> ParticipACTION Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth

## Key Findings Summary (Continued)



### Service Delivery Trends (Provincial and National)

- Evolving nature of volunteerism (including: preference for defined roles, personal and professional development as a key motivator).
- Increasing importance of partnerships. This trend is largely driven by increasing capital costs and funding requirements mandated by senior levels of government (examples of common partnerships include those struck between multiple local governments, school boards, community organizations, and the private sector).
- Importance of transparency and engagement in decision making and project planning processes.
- Cross-sectoral collaboration between the recreation, health care and social services sectors.



### Population and Demographics (2016 Statistics Canada Census of the Population)

- Population of 83,739.
- Growth of 4.2% from 2011 to 2016 (Provincial average – 5.6%)
- Median age of 49.9 years (Provincial average – 42.3%)
- Age distribution:
  - » 14.7% of residents are ages 0 to 14 (Provincial average – 14.9%)
  - » 61.3% of residents are ages 15 to 64 (Provincial average – 66.9%)
  - » 24.0% of residents are ages 65 years and older (Provincial average – 18.3%)
- Median household income (gross) of \$80,328 (Provincial average – \$88,451).
  - » Disparities between different areas of the Cowichan Region with regards to overall income levels and the proportion of residents that classify as low income.



## Phase 2

### Overview of the Methodology

The intent of Phase 2 was to determine utilization by area of residency for nine major recreation facilities in the Cowichan Region. This analysis required the project team to utilize a number of methods which included on-site intercept surveying of facility users and analysis of utilization and membership data provided by the facility operators and major user groups.

### Summary of Key Findings

- Community Centre type spaces exist in each of the five subregions so there is no incentive for any significant amount of travel away from the local community centre to use one in an adjacent area. Use of these spaces is predominantly by the residents closest to them.
- However, as soon as an arena ice sheet is added, the user base shifts. Ice user groups don't necessarily use the closest ice surface exclusively. In fact, they are more likely to make use of a variety of ice surfaces in the region, and to use ice wherever it is available.
- Also, as soon as an indoor pool is added to a complex (or provided independently of one) it draws from a larger geographic area. However, most residents of the Cowichan Region that use a pool, use the one that is closest to them.
- The Cowichan Performing Arts Centre is the most "regional" of the nine facilities investigated in this study. Use of this facility is distributed roughly proportionate to the population distribution, with few exceptions. Most facilities in this study show significant inequity between who uses them and who pays for them. Those jurisdictions that spearheaded and developed facilities are more likely to contribute percentages in excess of the amount they are used. Those jurisdictions that don't have a full range of facilities are most likely to benefit from use more than they contribute in taxes. However, this should not be construed to indicate that such jurisdictions need to build more facilities. It is more likely to indicate that they should increase contributions to neighbouring jurisdictions which do have the spaces.

**The data collected and analyzed through Phase 2 was used to facilitate the regional funding discussions that occurred as Phase 3 of the regional recreation planning initiative.**



## SECTION THREE

# The Current Service Delivery Approach

### In This Section

- Overview of roles and responsibilities for recreation service delivery in the CVRD.
- Overview of key recreation facilities.

The provision of public recreation opportunities in the Cowichan Region requires a significant ongoing investment and involves a number of different entities and funding arrangements. The charts on the following pages summarize the overall supply of major recreation infrastructure in the Cowichan Region and the entities that are responsible for providing key recreation and community facilities.



# Overview – Regional Facilities

There are nine facilities in the Cowichan Region that are considered regional in nature. These facilities are summarized in the following chart.

| Facility  | Operator                       | Amenity Spaces  |
|---|--------------------------------|---|
| Cowichan Aquatic Centre   | Municipality of North Cowichan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8 lane, 25 metre program tank</li> <li>• Leisure aquatics amenities (lazy river, play features, twin water slides, steam room, sauna)</li> <li>• Fitness centre</li> <li>• Multi-purpose rooms</li> </ul>  |
| Cowichan Lake Sports Arena  | CVRD                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ice arena</li> <li>• Curling rink (4 sheets) with lounge</li> <li>• Multi-purpose program rooms</li> </ul> <p><i>*Adjacent to outdoor sports fields, skateboard park and the Lake Cowichan Centennial Hall</i></p>   |
| Cowichan Sportsplex   | Chesterfield Sports Society    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 ball diamonds</li> <li>• Synthetic turf field</li> <li>• Athletic track</li> <li>• Natural surface field</li> <li>• Lacrosse box</li> <li>• Fitness pathway</li> </ul>   |
| Cowichan Performing Arts Centre (co-located with the Island Savings Centre) | CVRD                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 731 seat performing arts venue</li> </ul>  |
| Frank Jameson Community Centre  | Town of Ladysmith              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 lane, 25 metre program tank</li> <li>• Leisure aquatics amenities (climbing wall, slides, rope)</li> <li>• Fitness centre</li> <li>• Gymnasium space</li> </ul>  |
| Fuller Lake Arena   | Municipality of North Cowichan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ice arena with spectator capacity of ~600</li> <li>• Multi-purpose rooms</li> </ul>  |
| Island Savings Centre (co-located with the Cowichan Performing Arts Centre) | CVRD                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ice arena with spectator seating for ~1,400</li> <li>• Hall with commercial kitchen</li> <li>• Multi-purpose rooms</li> <li>• Dance and fitness studios</li> <li>• Gymnasium</li> <li>• Library</li> </ul> <p><i>*The Duncan Dynamics Gymnastics Club also leases space at the facility.</i></p> |
| Kerry Park Recreation Centre  | CVRD                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ice arena with spectator seating for ~750</li> <li>• Curling rink (4 sheets) with lounge space</li> <li>• Multi-purpose program rooms</li> </ul> <p><i>*Adjacent to outdoor sports fields</i></p>  |
| Shawnigan Lake Community Centre   | CVRD                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dance studio</li> <li>• Gymnasium</li> <li>• Multi-purpose room</li> <li>• Lounge/social gathering space with commercial kitchen</li> </ul>  |

*\*A number of smaller community venues are also utilized for performing arts*

## Overview – Regional Facilities (Continued)

In addition to the above noted regional facilities there are numerous other recreation spaces within the Cowichan Region. The following chart summarizes the total inventory of recreation spaces in the Cowichan Region (including those amenities listed in the previous chart of regional facilities).

*Note: this inventory includes only those spaces that are considered part of the public inventory (supported by the CVRD, its partner municipalities, or not for profit operated).*

| Facility Type                        | Total Regional Count | Locations   |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|---|
| Outdoor                              |                      |   |
| Ball Diamonds*                       | 32                   | Chemainus Ball Park (4)<br>Crofton Ball Park (2)<br>Properties (2)<br>Cowichan Sportsplex (3)<br>Evans Park (7)<br>Aggie Park (2)<br>Holland Creek Park (2)<br>High Street Park (1)<br>Mesachie Lake Park (1)<br>Youbou Little League Park (1)<br>Shawnigan Hills Athletic Park (1)<br>Saltair Centennial Park (1)<br>Kerry Park (3)<br>Lake Cowichan Apollos Field (1)<br>Lake Cowichan Dawn Coe Jones Field (1) |
| Rectangular Sports Fields*           | 12                   | MacAdam Park (2)<br>Chemainus Ball Park (1)<br>Crofton (1)<br>Properties (1)<br>Evans Park (2)<br>Cowichan Sportsplex (2)<br>Kerry Park (1)<br>Shawnigan Hills (1)<br>Dobie Somerville Field (1)  |
| Synthetic Turf Fields                | 3                    | Cowichan Sportsplex<br>Forrest Field - Ladysmith<br>David Williams Field (at Sherman Road Park)   |
| Major Outdoor Sports Field Complexes | 3                    | Cowichan Sportsplex<br>Kerry Park Sports Fields<br>Evans Park   |

## Overview – Regional Facilities (Continued)

| Facility Type                      | Total Regional Count   | Locations   |
|------------------------------------|--|---|
| Skateboard Parks                   | 6  | Duncan<br>Chemainus<br>Crofton<br>Lake Cowichan<br>Ladysmith<br>Kerry Park  |
| Outdoor Aquatics Facilities        |  | Crofton Outdoor Pool  |
| Indoor                             |  |   |
| Curling Facilities                 | 3 facilities<br>(13 sheets)  | Cowichan Lake Sports Arena (4 sheets)<br>Glen Harper Curling Centre (5 sheets)<br>Kerry Park Recreation Centre (4 sheets)   |
| Ice Arena                          | 4 facilities<br>(4 ice rinks)  | Cowichan Lake Sports Arena (1 rink)<br>Fuller Lake Arena (1 rink)<br>Island Savings Centre (1 rink)<br>Kerry Park Recreation Centre (1)   |
| Indoor Aquatics Facilities         | 2  | Cowichan Aquatics Centre<br>Frank Jameson Community Centre  |
| Multi-Purpose Program Facilities** | 15 (facilities with multi-purpose program rooms)   | Regional Indoor Facilities (the 8 indoor facilities identified under regional facilities provide multi-purpose indoor space)<br>Aggie Hall<br>Elsie Miles Annex<br>Mill Bay Community League Hall<br>Youbou Community Hall<br>Lake Cowichan Centennial Hall<br>Mesachie Lake Community Hall<br>Honeymoon Bay Community Hall |
| Performing Arts Venues***          | 4  | Ladysmith Little Theatre<br>Cowichan Performing Arts Centre<br>Chemainus Theatre<br>The Hub   |
| Bowling Alleys                     | 1  | Youbou Bowling Alley  |
| Visual Arts Facilities             | A variety of spaces are located throughout the Cowichan Region. The CVRD has previously provided grant support to The Waterfront Gallery and The Portals. It is also important to note that public art creation and display space exists in a number of schools, churches and community recreation facilities. |   |

\*Some sports fields and ball diamonds serve a multi-use function (ball and sports field activities cannot occur at the same time).

\*\*Refers to buildings that provide flexible, multi-purpose program space that can be used for a variety of program and activity purposes. A number of these facilities may include multiple rooms or configurations.

\*\*\*Dedicated spaces only. A number of community halls, churches, and gymnasiums are also used for performing arts purposes.

## Summary - Operations and Funding of Regional Facilities in the Cowichan Region

| Facility   | Operator                       | Current Funding Contributors  | Annual Requisition (Total, 2018 \$M) |
|--|--------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| Cowichan Aquatic Centre  | Municipality of North Cowichan | <b>Core Funders:</b><br>Municipality of North Cowichan<br>City of Duncan<br>Cowichan Tribes<br><b>Other Contributors:</b><br>Electoral Areas A, B, C, D, E, F, I<br>Town of Lake Cowichan | \$1.815 M                            |
| Cowichan Lake Recreation (including the Cowichan Lake Sports Arena, Youbou Lanes and four community hall spaces) | CVRD                           | <b>Core Funders:</b><br>Electoral Areas F, I Town of Lake Cowichan  | \$2.508 M                            |
| Cowichan Sportsplex  | Chesterfield Sports Society    | <b>Core Funders:</b><br>Municipality of North Cowichan<br>City of Duncan<br><b>Other Contributors:</b><br>Electoral Areas A, C, D, E  | \$0.251 M                            |
| Cowichan Performing Arts Centre  | CVRD                           | <b>Core Funders:</b><br>City of Duncan<br>Municipality of North Cowichan<br>Electoral Areas D, E<br><b>Other Contributors:</b><br>Electoral Areas A, B, C<br>Town of Ladysmith            | \$1.391                              |
| Frank Jameson Community Centre   | Town of Ladysmith              | <b>Core Funders:</b><br>Town of Ladysmith<br><b>Other Contributors:</b><br>Electoral Areas G, H   | \$1.468 M                            |
| Fuller Lake Arena  | Municipality of North Cowichan | <b>Core Funders:</b><br>Municipality of North Cowichan  | \$0.689 M                            |
| Island Savings Centre  | CVRD                           | <b>Core Funders:</b><br>Electoral Area D, E<br>City of Duncan<br>Municipality of North Cowichan   | \$3.508 M                            |
| Kerry Park Recreation Centre   | CVRD                           | <b>Core Funders:</b><br>Electoral Areas A, B, C, D  | \$2.937 M                            |
| Shawnigan Lake Community Centre  | CVRD                           | <b>Core Funders:</b><br>Electoral Area B  | \$0.735 M                            |



## SECTION FOUR

# The Value and Importance of Recreation Services & National Planning Insights

### In This Section

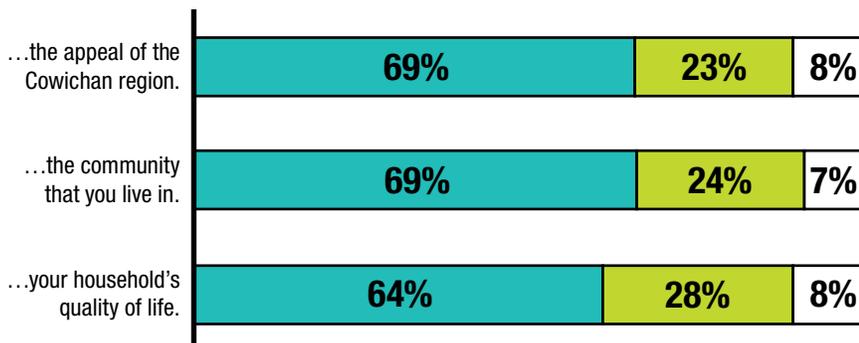
- Supporting research that reflects the benefits of providing inclusive and accessible recreation opportunities.
- Overview of key national planning documents that support recreation investment.

Public sector providers of recreation opportunities are often required to justify the ongoing investment into recreation facilities and programming. However in recent decades there is an increasing recognition of the wide ranging benefit that are accrued through a meaningful investment in recreation and “quality of life” services. Residents of the Cowichan Region also recognize the importance of recreation to their household, community and the broader region.

### The Importance and Value of Recreation (Findings from the 2017 Resident Recreation Survey)

#### How Important are Recreation Opportunities to...

Very Important     Somewhat Important     Not Important



Summarized as follows in this section are key findings and insights from a number of national planning documents which reflect the importance and benefits of investing in recreation as an **essential community service**. Aligning this Strategic Plan document with broader national planning documents also reflects the commitment of the CVRD and its members municipalities to providing recreation in a quality manner than reflects best practices.

## The National Benefits HUB

The National Benefits HUB is a research database which provides access to numerous resources that identify the positive impacts of recreation and related activities (e.g. sport, fitness, arts/culture, heritage, and parks). The following graphic identifies the eight key messages from the National Benefits HUB.<sup>1</sup>



1 For more information on the Benefits HUB and to access the supporting research visit [benefitshub.ca](http://benefitshub.ca).

# National Planning Insights

The recreation sector continues to place significant emphasis on building a case for sustained investment and developing increased capacity and overall alignment within the sector. Guiding these objectives are a number of recently developed framework and strategic planning documents which are summarized as follows to provide broader context for recreation planning and the value of providing quality and sustainable recreational opportunities.

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

Overview: Endorsed by the Government of Canada, Provincial and Territorial Ministers, the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association, Provincial and Territorial Parks and Recreation Associations and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. The Framework provides a new vision for recreation and identifies common ways of thinking about the role of recreation in Canadian life, based on clear goals and underlying values and principles.

### A Renewed Definition of Recreation

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

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

### Canadians Perspectives on the Importance of Quality Recreation Opportunities

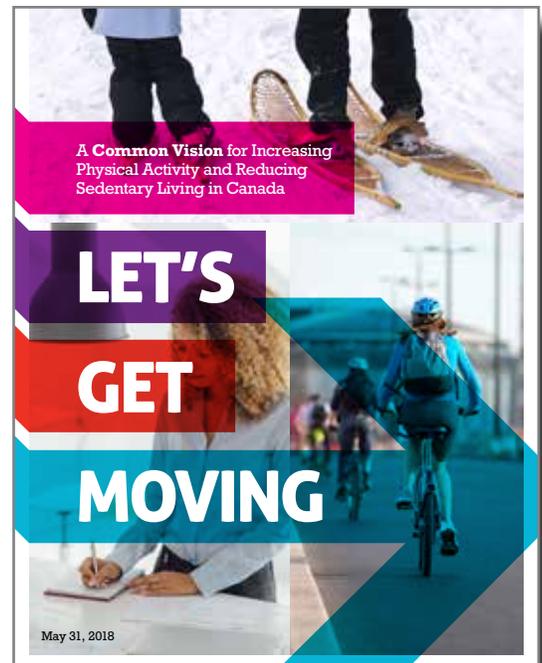
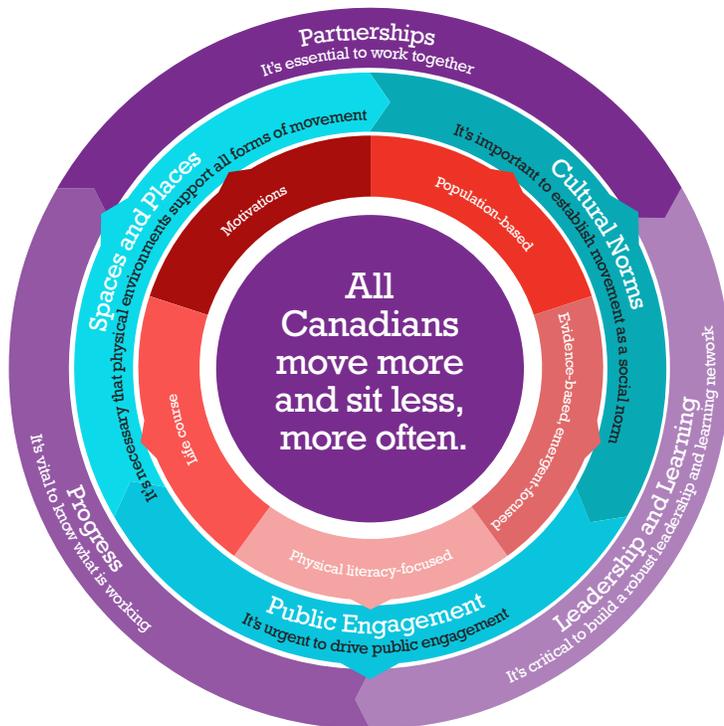
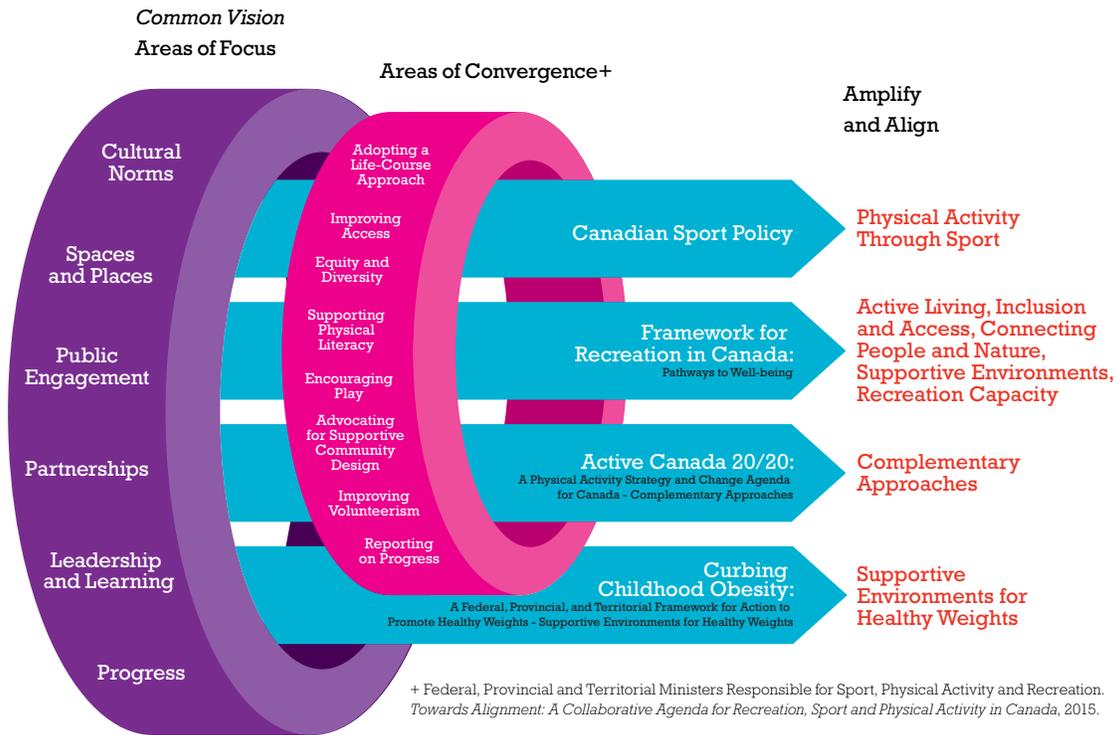
\*Research findings from A Framework for Recreation in Canada 2015: Pathways to Wellbeing

- 98% of Canadians say that recreation benefits the community and is an essential service.
- 75% of Canadians believe that recreation helps children and youth lead healthy lifestyles.
- 77% of Canadians believe that recreation is a major factor in crime reduction.



# A Common Vision for increasing physical activity and reducing sedentary living in Canada: Let's Get Moving

Overview: The Common Vision is a new national policy document that serves to complement and align with other relevant policies, strategies and frameworks with the goal of physical activity and reducing sedentary living. The Common Vision identifies three key areas of focus: Cultural Norms, Places and Spaces, and Engagement.



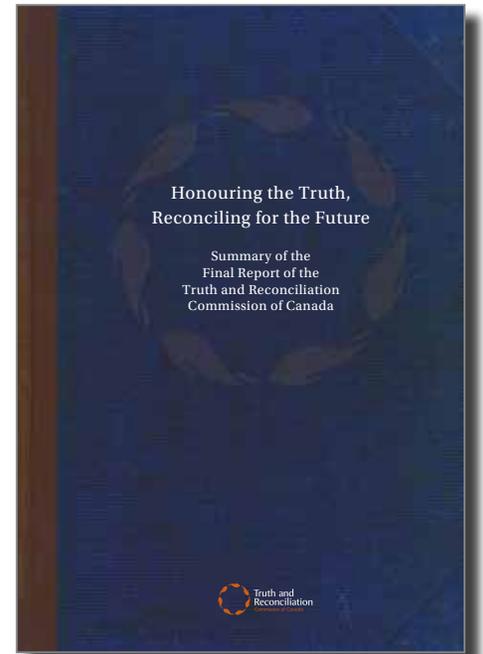
# Truth and Reconciliation: Calls to Action

Overview: The **Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada** was published in 2015. The Commission was formed and tasked with achieving the following goals:

1. Acknowledge Residential School experiences, impacts and consequences;
2. Provide a holistic, culturally appropriate and safe setting for former students, their families and communities as they come forward to the Commission;
3. Witness, support, promote and facilitate truth and reconciliation events at both the national and community levels;
4. Promote awareness and public education of Canadians about the IRS system and its impacts;
5. Identify sources and create as complete an historical record as possible of the IRS system and legacy. The record shall be preserved and made accessible to the public for future study and use;
6. Produce and submit to the Parties of the Agreement a report including recommendations to the Government of Canada concerning the IRS system and experience including: the history, purpose, operation and supervision of the IRS system, the effect and consequences of IRS (including systemic harms, intergenerational consequences and the impact on human dignity) and the ongoing legacy of the residential schools; and
7. Support commemoration of former Indian Residential School students and their families accordance with the Commemoration Policy Directive.

The Report culminated in the identification of ninety-four (94) Calls to Action across a broad array of topic areas. Identified below are those Calls to Action with direct pertinence to the delivery of recreation and related services.

- We call upon the federal government, in consultation with Aboriginal peoples, to establish measurable goals to identify and close the gaps in health outcomes between Aboriginal and non- Aboriginal communities, and to publish annual progress reports and assess long-term trends. Such efforts would focus on indicators such as: infant mortality, maternal health, suicide, mental health, addictions, life expectancy, birth rates, infant and child health issues, chronic diseases, illness and injury incidence, and the availability of appropriate health services. (Call to Action #19)
- We call upon the federal government to amend the Physical Activity and Sport Act to support reconciliation by ensuring that policies to promote physical activity as a fundamental element of health and well-being, reduce barriers to sports participation, increase the pursuit of excellence in sport, and build capacity in the Canadian sport system, are inclusive of Aboriginal peoples. (Call to Action #89)
- We call upon the federal government to ensure that national sports policies, programs, and initiatives are inclusive of Aboriginal peoples, including, but not limited to, establishing:
  - » In collaboration with provincial and territorial governments, stable funding for, and access to, community sports programs that reflect the diverse cultures and traditional sporting activities of Aboriginal peoples;
  - » An elite athlete development program for Aboriginal athletes;
  - » Programs for coaches, trainers, and sports officials that are culturally relevant for Aboriginal peoples; and
  - » Anti-racism awareness and training programs. (Call to Action #90)
- We call upon the officials and host countries of international sporting events such as the Olympics, Pan Am, and Commonwealth games to ensure that Indigenous peoples' territorial protocols are respected, and local Indigenous communities are engaged in all aspects of planning and participating in such events. (Call to Action #91)



# Sport for Life

Overview: Sport for Life exists to build physical literacy and improve the quality of sport based on Long-term athlete development (LTAD). LTAD is a nationally accepted, eight stage framework for developing physical literacy among individuals of all ages and athletic goals. National and Provincial Sport Organizations in Canada are mandated to demonstrate alignment with LTAD principles.

## The Eight Stages of LTAD

### Awareness and First Involvement

To engage in sport and physical activity, individuals must be aware of what opportunities exist for them, and when they try an activity for the first time, it is critical that the experience is positive. That is why Sport for Life emphasizes the two stages of Awareness and First Involvement.



### Train to Train

Athletes enter the Train to Train stage when they have developed proficiency in the athlete development performance components (physical, technical-tactical, mental, and emotional). Rapid physical growth, the development of sporting capability, and commitment occurs in this stage. Athletes will generally specialize in one sport towards the end of the stage. A progression from local to provincial competition occurs over the course of the stage.



### Active Start

From 0-6 years, boys and girls need to be engaged in daily active play. Through play and movement, they develop the fundamental movement skills and learn how to link them together. At this stage developmentally appropriate activities will help participants feel competent and comfortable participating in a variety of fun and challenging activities and games.



### Train to Compete

Athletes enter the Train to Compete stage when they are proficient in sport-specific Train to Train athlete development components (physical, technical-tactical, mental, and emotional). Athletes are training nearly full-time and competing at the national level while being introduced to international competition.



### FUNDamentals

In the FUNDamentals stage, participants develop fundamental movement skills in structured and unstructured environments for play. The focus is on providing fun, inclusive, multisport, and developmentally appropriate sport and physical activity. These experiences will result in the participant developing a wide range of movement skill along with the confidence and desire to participate.



### Train to Win

Athletes in the Train to Win stage are world class competitors who are competing at the highest level of competition in the world (e.g. Olympics, Paralympics, World Championships, World Cups).



### Learn to Train

Once a wide range of fundamental movement skills have been acquired, participants progress into the Learn to Train stage leading to understanding basic rules, tactics, and strategy in games and refinement of sport specific skills. There are opportunities to participate in multiple sports with competitions focused on skill development and retention. Games and activities are inclusive, fun, and skill based. At the end of the Learn to Train stage, participants grow (or progress) towards sport excellence in the Train to Train stage or being Active for Life, either by being Competitive for Life or Fit for Life.



### Active for Life

Individuals who have a desire to be physically active are in the Active for Life stage. A participant may choose to be Competitive for Life or Fit for Life and, if inclined, give back as a sport or physical activity leader. Competitive for Life includes those who compete in any organized sport recreation leagues to Master Games. Fit for Life includes active people who participate in non-competitive physical activity.



## Cowichan Region Alignment with Sport for Life

The CVRD and its member municipalities believe in supporting physical literacy initiatives and have been active partners in Sport for Life initiatives. One example is PLAY Cowichan's Physical Literacy for Communities initiative which is supported by the CVRD, all member municipalities, and a number of cross-sectoral health and wellness partners in the region (including Island Health, Pacific Sport, Our Cowichan Health Network, Cowichan Tribes, ISPARC and Success by 6). The initiative has helped further entrench physical literacy principles in recreation programming offered by the CVRD, its member municipalities and community based organizations by providing tools and resources, advocacy and education efforts, and encouraging greater cross-sectoral alignment.

## SECTION FIVE

# Foundations for Regional Recreation Services

### In This Section

- A Vision for regional recreation services in the Cowichan Region.
- Service Delivery Goals for recreation services in the Cowichan Region.
- Regional alignment with Sport for Life.

The Vision and Service Delivery Goals outlined in this section provide a philosophical basis for the provision of recreation opportunities by the CVRD and its member municipalities. The Vision and Strategic Goals are also intended to clearly articulate the values and principles that will guide service delivery and future decision making.

### A Vision for Recreation Services in the Cowichan Region

*Through access to diverse, high quality parks, recreation and cultural opportunities, residents of the Cowichan Region live active healthy lives and are part of strong vibrant communities.*



# Service Delivery Goals for Recreation Services in the Cowichan Region



## SUSTAINABILITY

### What does this mean?

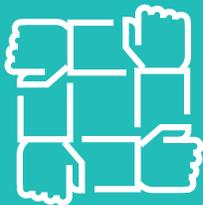
The CVRD and its member municipalities will ensure that parks, recreation and cultural facilities and spaces are planned and managed in such a way that emphasizes long term operational viability and environmental stewardship.



## QUALITY

### What does this mean?

Parks, recreation and cultural opportunities that are offered or supported by the CVRD and its member municipalities will be delivered in a quality manner that aligns with industry standards and leading practices (including Sport for Life, provincial and national guiding strategies and policies, and local initiatives).



## INCLUSIVITY

### What does this mean?

The CVRD and its member municipalities will seek to ensure that all residents can enjoy the numerous benefits of participation in parks, recreation and cultural activities and pursuits. The CVRD and its member municipalities will also continue to undertake initiatives aimed at mitigating potential barriers to participation such as age, financial capacity, ethnicity, physical accessibility and social factors.



## DIVERSITY

### What does this mean?

Opportunities provided by the CVRD and its member municipalities will focus on ensuring a diversity of offerings for a cross-section of age groups, ability levels and interests.



## COLLABORATION

### What does this mean?

The provision of parks, recreation and cultural opportunities for residents and visitors to the Cowichan region will occur in a collaborative manner that leverages the resources and knowledge of the CVRD, member municipalities, and community organizations. Doing so will help achieve optimal efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery (including the health and education sectors).

# Regional Alignment with Sport for Life

The CVRD and its member municipalities have made a commitment to fostering physical literacy as a fundamental aspect of recreation service delivery. This commitment includes alignment with Sport for Life and its key principles, including Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD). To provide an additional basis for future recreation service delivery, the following chart outlines a suggested role for the CVRD and its member municipalities in alignment with the eight stages of Long Term Athlete Development.

## Primary Role vs Secondary Role

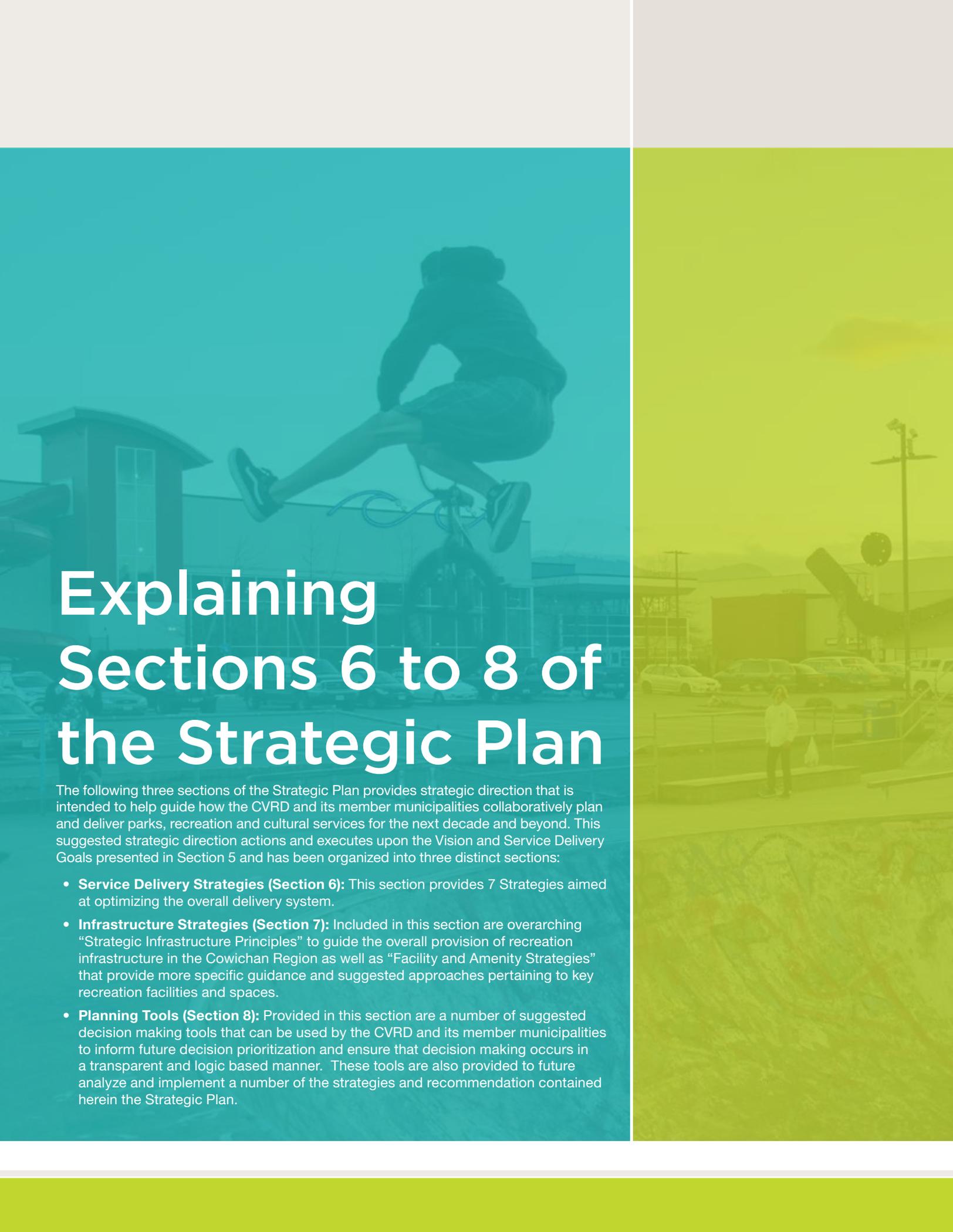
**Primary Role:** The CVRD and its member municipalities should directly deliver programs, opportunities, and focus on providing supportive environment (infrastructure) that supports these stages and, where possible, proactively engage with community initiatives that are well aligned with these stages.

**Secondary Role:** The CVRD and its member municipalities should play a supportive role in fostering programs and opportunities that fit into these stages. While direct delivery may occur in some instances, the main focus should be on partnerships and facilitating a successful landscape for existing and emerging sport organizations that are best suited to direct delivery of programs and opportunities that fit into these stages. This could occur through infrastructure development (when broader community and regional benefit can be sufficiently demonstrated), sport tourism initiatives, and organizational capacity building support.

| LTAD Stage                      | Description   | Role<br>(Primary or Secondary) |
|---------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| Awareness and First Involvement | To engage in sport and physical activity, individuals must be aware of what opportunities exist for them, and when they try an activity for the first time, it is critical that the experience is positive. That is why Sport for Life emphasizes the two stages of Awareness and First Involvement.  | Primary                        |
| Active Start                    | From 0-6 years, boys and girls need to be engaged in daily active play. Through play and movement, they develop the fundamental movement skills and learn how to link them together. At this stage developmentally appropriate activities will help participants feel competent and comfortable participating in a variety of fun and challenging activities and games.   | Primary                        |
| FUNdamentals                    | In the FUNdamentals stage, participants develop fundamental movement skills in structured and unstructured environments for play. The focus is on providing fun, inclusive, multisport, and developmentally appropriate sport and physical activity. These experiences will result in the participant developing a wide range of movement skill along with the confidence and desire to participate.  | Primary                        |
| Learn to Train                  | Once a wide range of fundamental movement skills have been acquired, participants progress into the Learn to Train stage leading to understanding basic rules, tactics, and strategy in games and refinement of sport specific skills. There are opportunities to participate in multiple sports with competitions focused on skill development and retention. Games and activities are inclusive, fun, and skill based. At the end of the Learn to Train stage, participants grow (or progress) towards sport excellence in the Train to Train stage or being Active for Life, either by being Competitive for Life or Fit for Life. | Primary                        |

## Primary Role vs Secondary Role (Continued)

| LTAD Stage       | Description   | Role<br>(Primary or Secondary) |
|------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| Train to Train   | Athletes enter the Train to Train stage when they have developed proficiency in the athlete development performance components (physical, technical-tactical, mental, and emotional). Rapid physical growth, the development of sporting capability, and commitment occurs in this stage. Athletes will generally specialize in one sport towards the end of the stage. A progression from local to provincial competition occurs over the course of the stage. | Secondary                      |
| Train to Compete | Athletes enter the Train to Compete stage when they are proficient in sport-specific Train to Train athlete development components (physical, technical-tactical, mental, and emotional). Athletes are training nearly full-time and competing at the national level while being introduced to international competition.   | Secondary                      |
| Train to Win     | Athletes in the Train to Win stage are world class competitors who are competing at the highest level of competition in the world (e.g. Olympics, Paralympics, World Championships, World Cups)   | Secondary                      |
| Active for Life  | Individuals who have a desire to be physically active are in the Active for Life stage. A participant may choose to be Competitive for Life or Fit for Life and, if inclined, give back as a sport or physical activity leader. Competitive for Life includes those who compete in any organized sport recreation leagues to Master Games. Fit for Life includes active people who participate in non-competitive physical activity.                            | Primary                        |



# Explaining Sections 6 to 8 of the Strategic Plan

The following three sections of the Strategic Plan provides strategic direction that is intended to help guide how the CVRD and its member municipalities collaboratively plan and deliver parks, recreation and cultural services for the next decade and beyond. This suggested strategic direction actions and executes upon the Vision and Service Delivery Goals presented in Section 5 and has been organized into three distinct sections:

- **Service Delivery Strategies (Section 6):** This section provides 7 Strategies aimed at optimizing the overall delivery system.
- **Infrastructure Strategies (Section 7):** Included in this section are overarching “Strategic Infrastructure Principles” to guide the overall provision of recreation infrastructure in the Cowichan Region as well as “Facility and Amenity Strategies” that provide more specific guidance and suggested approaches pertaining to key recreation facilities and spaces.
- **Planning Tools (Section 8):** Provided in this section are a number of suggested decision making tools that can be used by the CVRD and its member municipalities to inform future decision prioritization and ensure that decision making occurs in a transparent and logic based manner. These tools are also provided to future analyze and implement a number of the strategies and recommendation contained herein the Strategic Plan.

## SECTION SIX

# Service Delivery Strategies

### In This Section

- Strategies to optimize the delivery of regional recreation services.
- Potential tactics and success indicators.



# Strategy #1: Ensure that governance structures and guiding documents are reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

**Strategy Rationale:** Recreation service provision in the Cowichan Region is complex and involves a number of different entities. It is also important to note that recreation facilities and amenities provide a broader community benefit, which includes serving as gathering places during community emergencies (i.e. Reception Centres, Warming Centres, Supply Centres, etc.). Ensuring that there is clear understanding of roles and responsibilities is important and will be critical to maximizing the efficiency, effectiveness and quality of recreation and community services provision in the region. It is suggested that the Terms and Reference Review focus on achieving the following overarching objectives:

- Ensuring that roles and responsibilities are clear and up to date.
- Distinguishing between advisory and operational functions.
- Establishing clear parameters for internal and external communications.
- Where applicable, distinguishing clear boundaries between standing entities such as Committees, appointments of the Board such as Commissions, and initiative based entities such as Task Forces and Project Advisory Groups.
- Where potential mandates could overlap or two agencies with similar mandates share a geographic boundary, ensure mandate clarity geographically.

## Potential Tactics:

- Establish regular timeframes / schedules (e.g. every 3 - 5 years) to review the Terms of Reference for Commissions, Committees, and other entities involved in the oversight and guidance of recreation services.
- Establish a review committee that includes representation from the Commissions, staff, CVRD and/or municipal elected officials and other key stakeholders as deemed necessary.

## Success Indicators:

- Roles and responsibilities are clearly understood and defined.
- Minimal conflicts and misunderstanding occur especially in areas of potential overlap.
- Commission and Committee members report positively on their experiences.

## Strategy Alignment with the Service Delivery Goals:



SUSTAINABILITY



QUALITY



COLLABORATION

# Strategy #2: Expand efforts to address financial barriers to participation in recreation.

**Strategy Rationale:** Approximately one-quarter (26%) of Phase 1 Resident Recreation Survey respondents identified that the cost of programs presented a barrier to participation. A review of available Census data also suggests that financial barriers exist for residents in some in the Cowichan Region (e.g. over 10% of households in Area I, the Town of Lake Cowichan, and City of Duncan officially qualify as low income). Currently, financial supports available to residents include:

- Financial assistance programs offered through the CVRD (South Cowichan Recreation Assistance Program, the Island Savings Centre Recreation Assistance Program, and the Cowichan Lake Recreation Assistance Program).
- Leisure access programs offered through the Municipality of North Cowichan and Town of Ladysmith.
- Supports offered through not for profit organizations such as KidSport, JumpStart, and the Cowichan Valley Performing Arts Foundation. *\*The CVRD and its municipal partners provide support to a number of these organizations.*

While the above programs are valued and important it is reasonable to suggest that opportunities may exist to further streamline support programs and increase overall awareness.

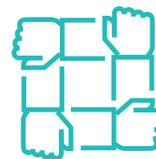
**Potential Tactics:**

- Explore creating one regional leisure access subsidy program.
- Should the above tactic not be possible; develop consistent application forms, adjudication processes, and communication mechanisms (e.g. single website that includes information on all available access programs across the region).
- Increase the overall awareness of financial assistance programs, including those offered by the CVRD, local municipalities and not for profit organizations.

**Success Indicators:**

- Increase in the number of residents accessing subsidy programs.
- Future engagement reveals a reduction in cost of programs / affordability as a barrier to participation.

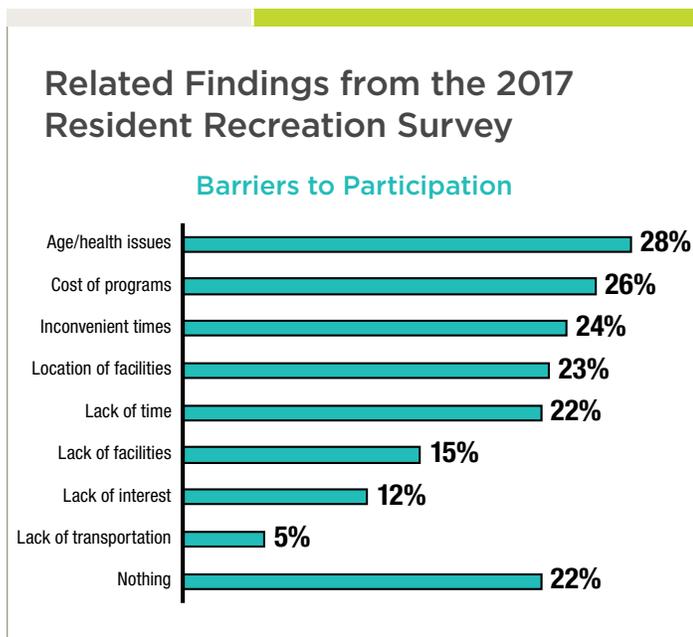
**Strategy Alignment with the Service Delivery Goals:**



INCLUSIVITY



COLLABORATION



# Strategy #3: Develop an engagement protocol specific to recreation service delivery.

**Strategy Rationale:** Recreation demands and preferences are constantly evolving. The engagement conducted through Phase 1 of the regional recreation planning initiative enabled the CVRD and its partners to learn about the current state of recreation in the region, identify trends and get a further sense of demands for new programs and facilities. Undertaking regular engagement with residents and facility users also presents the opportunity to track local trends and shifts in utilization, assess levels of satisfaction on an ongoing basis, and ensure that program offerings are aligned with demands.

## Potential Tactics:

- A recreation engagement protocol could include:
  - » Annual resident and facility user engagement opportunities (e.g. annual survey, annual open house).
  - » Replication of the Phase 1 engagement every 5-7 years (maintaining a similar engagement process allows for trending and consistent data).
  - » Regular experiential engagement (on-site during the recreational experience) with facility users and visitors (i.e. intercept surveys, comments walls, etc.).

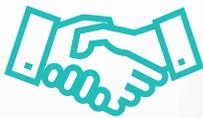
## Success Indicators:

- An ongoing engagement program enables the CVRD and member municipalities to base program offerings and decision making on data.
- Residents and facility users report positive engagement experiences.
- Residents and stakeholders have higher levels of awareness of CVRD and member municipality projects and initiatives.

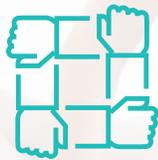
## Strategy Alignment with the Service Delivery Goals:



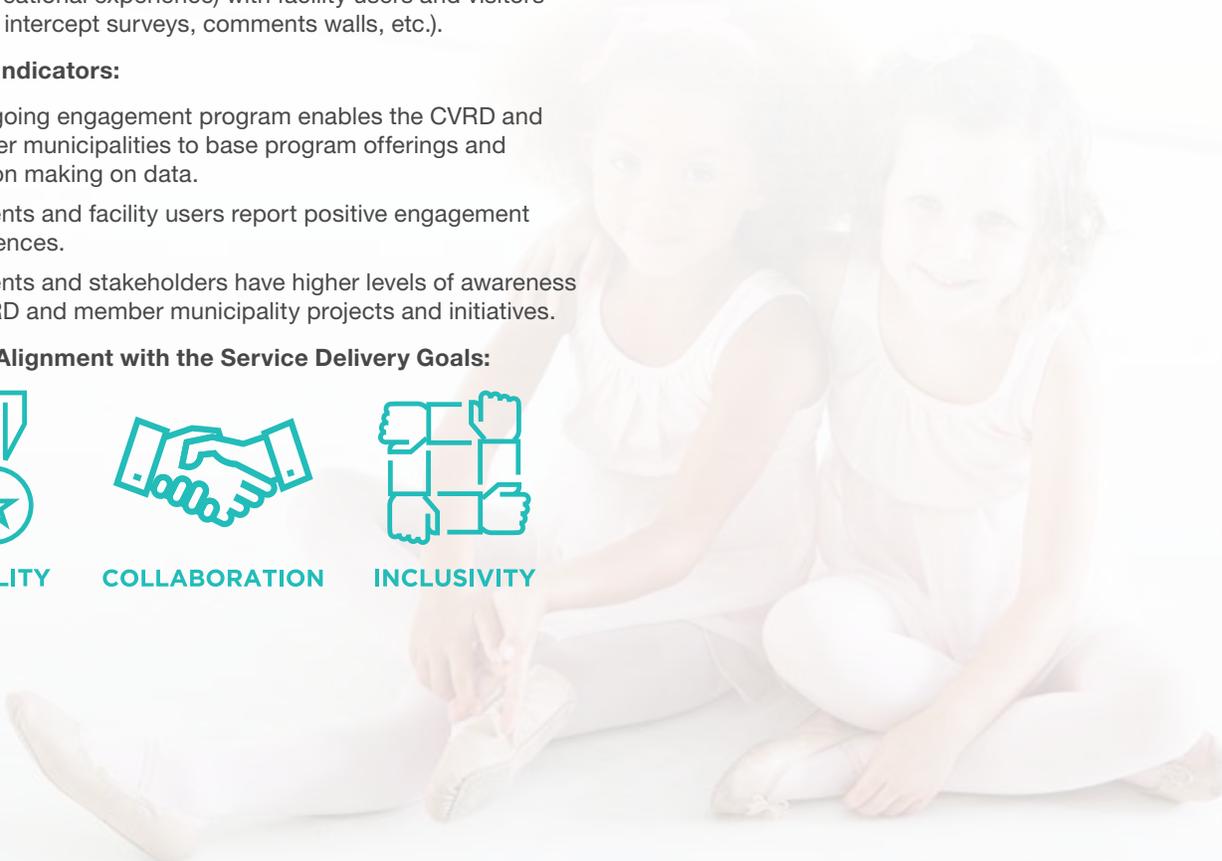
QUALITY



COLLABORATION



INCLUSIVITY



# Strategy #4: Increase investment in the marketing and promotions of recreation opportunities with a focus on getting more residents, more active.

**Strategy Rationale:** While the Resident Recreation Survey and other engagement conducted as part of the Phase 1 engagement suggest that many residents are active and engaged in recreation pursuits, opportunities exist to increase overall participation and maximize the community and regional benefits accrued through an ongoing investment in recreation. Broader provincial and national participation data also re-iterate that overall societal levels of physical activity remain concerning and insufficient. The Resident Survey findings from Phase 1 also suggested that residents believe the CVRD and member municipalities should improve promotions and marketing of recreational opportunities and revealed that residents learn about these opportunities through a variety of communication mediums.

## Potential Tactics:

- Develop marketing and promotional messaging that focuses on both the specific opportunity as well as the broader benefits of participating (i.e. participation in recreational programming will lead to better physical and mental wellbeing, provide opportunities to socialize, feel a strong connection with the community, etc.).
- Ongoing evaluation of promotional and communication mediums to measure effectiveness.
- Ensure that promotions and marketing strategies utilize a mix of methods that can effectively target a wide range of residents.
- Leverage the success of existing community initiatives and cross-sectoral collaborations (e.g. PLAY Cowichan).
- Introduce recreation specific digital platforms and social media to enhance the promotion of existing opportunities and provide an opportunity for increased dialogue.
- Continue to identify opportunities for regional service providers (including the CVRD, member municipalities, and community organizations) with the objective of improving effectiveness and efficiency.
- Identify and celebrate the success of local athletes, coaches, and community recreation role models to encourage participation and demonstrate the benefits of ongoing public investment in recreation.

## Success Indicators:

- Increased participation in programs.
- Future engagement suggests an increased awareness of opportunities and higher level of satisfaction with promotions and marketing efforts.

## Strategy Alignment with the Service Delivery Goals:



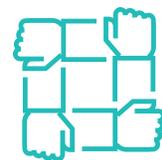
SUSTAINABILITY



DIVERSITY



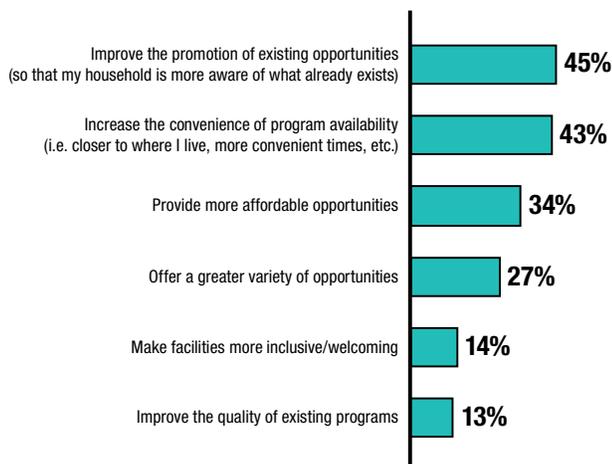
COLLABORATION



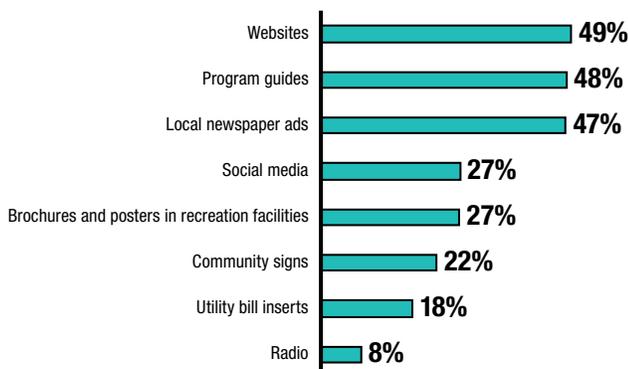
INCLUSIVITY

## Related Findings from the 2017 Resident Recreation Survey

### How the CVRD And Member Municipalities Increase Participation



### Communication Methods



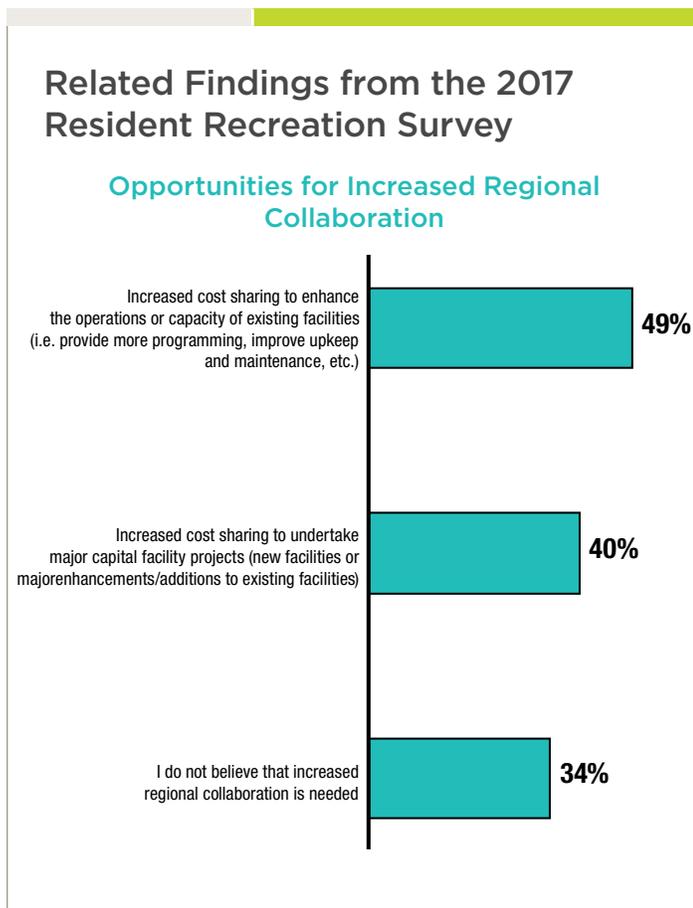
# Strategy #5: Increase regional collaboration and synergies across all aspects of community services delivery and planning.

**Strategy Rationale:** Residents in the Cowichan Region utilize a number of indoor and outdoor spaces for a variety of leisure, active living and quality of life related pursuits. Notable provincial and national trends also suggest that:

- There is increasing demand for spontaneous / unstructured recreational opportunities (e.g. drop in opportunities and special events).
- Residents place a high value on both indoor recreation spaces such as pools and arenas as well as passive outdoor recreation spaces such as parks, trails and open space.
- There is a continued diversification of recreation pursuits and interests.

Findings from the Phase 1 Resident Recreation Survey further validate that the above trends are occurring locally, and that residents view recreation in broad terms that include arts and culture, leisure and social activities. As such, it will be important for all providers of “quality of life” service providers in the region to continue thinking creatively and explore opportunities for collaborations. It is also important to reiterate the broader value and use of community facilities as important gathering facilities, which includes emergency situations. This strategy and the suggested tactics are not intended to suggest that regional collaboration is not currently occurring. To date, the CVRD and its member municipalities have undertaken numerous joint planning and collaboration initiatives which includes:

- The development of a Cowichan Sport Tourism Initiative and ongoing fund to support its mandate.
- Regionally supported programming and advocacy initiatives (e.g. PLAY Cowichan).
- Collaboration on regional parks and trails planning and infrastructure development.
- Cross-sectoral collaboration with the education sector (school district and specific schools), health sector (Island Health) and numerous not for profit community groups and service providers.
- Emergency management planning that encompasses the use of recreation and community facilities in the region.
- Partnering on major event hosting such as the B.C. Summer Games.



Sustaining the regions supply of recreation opportunities (facilities and programming) and meeting demands for new facilities and spaces can best be achieved through ongoing and increased regional coordination. Conducting strategic planning jointly as a region is also a more effective and accurate approach to planning as it allows for broader market needs and wants to be considered, helps avoid duplication, and helps leverage available resources.

# Strategy #5 Continued

## Potential Tactics:

- Where possible, prioritize conducting strategic planning on a regional basis to analyze future needs for key facility and amenity types (example: conduct a regional Sport Field Strategy to assess the current supply and potential gaps for synthetic turf).
- Inventory all past community services and related strategic planning (including plans developed for recreation, parks, leisure, trails, arts and culture, emergency response, etc.) and develop a future (10 year) schedule to align future planning efforts.
- Encourage knowledge sharing and transfer between community organizations and recreation stakeholder groups.
- Identification of creative opportunities for programming and promotions (e.g. integrating nature based and cultural programming units into traditional children and youth recreational program offerings).
- Cross-promotional opportunities.
- Identify opportunities for regional training and education.
- Encourage recreation (and related) staff at all levels to host regular meetings with their regional counterparts.

## Success Indicators:

- Continued increase in the existence of creative and innovative partnerships and collaborations between different sub-sectors of parks, recreation and culture.
- Utilization and participation rates increase across all space and programs types.
- Future infrastructure projects reflect regional considerations.

## Strategy Alignment with the Service Delivery Goals:



QUALITY



COLLABORATION



DIVERSITY

# Strategy #6: As a region, continue to explore potential solutions to address funding model inequalities and misalignments.

**Strategy Rationale:** The Phase 2 analysis of regional resident use of major facilities indicated that in a number of instances, actual utilization is not well aligned with current funding models and contributions. Large numbers of residents in one jurisdiction use a facility in another jurisdiction but don't contribute to the operating deficit associated with that facility. While the discussions undertaken as part of Phase 3 did not result in an agreed to solution, it is suggested that regional partners must re-visit and further explore potential approaches aimed at better aligning facility utilization with funding.

Findings from the Phase 1 engagement confirmed that residents across the Cowichan Region place a high value on recreation opportunities. Residents also recognize the numerous benefits that recreation provides to their local communities and the broader region. Funding existing and future recreational opportunities will require a collaborative approach that can best be achieved through logical and evidenced based funding models.

### Potential Tactics:

- Regional partners and representatives re-engage in discussions on potential funding models and solutions at a time deemed appropriate.
- Develop funding models that address both existing services while also considering future needs for capital re-investment and potential new development.

### Success Indicators:

- Future funding models are more accurately aligned with actual utilization of facilities.

### Strategy Alignment with the Service Delivery Goals:



SUSTAINABILITY



COLLABORATION

# Strategy #7: Over the next five years, further explore specific needs related to arts and culture in the region.

**Strategy Rationale:** Findings from the Phase 1 and 2 engagement revealed that residents across the region value arts and culture and use major hub facilities, notably the Cowichan Performing Arts Centre. Findings from the engagement also suggest that there is a high level of demand for programming and events that are focused on, or involve, arts and cultural pursuits. While the scope of the Strategic Plan was broad based and looked holistically at recreation, further exploration of arts and cultural program and corresponding facility needs may be warranted. Additionally, arts and cultural planning across the Cowichan Region has historically been conducted on localized basis with individual municipalities conducting studies for their community. Undertaking a regional study of arts and culture may help better clarify future needs and the most effective ways to support the numerous organizations across the region that provide programs, events and activities. While the CVRD and its members municipalities play a significant role in the provision of arts and cultural opportunities, so too do a diverse array of local community organizations and the private sector. A focused arts and cultural planning exercise presents the opportunity to further grasp and inventory the numerous opportunities that exist across the region and identify strengths, gaps and areas of opportunity.

## Potential Tactics:

- Conduct a Regional Arts and Cultural Plan. This suggested plan should seek to provide clarity and direction on the following issues / topics:
  - » Inventory and assessment of the current supply of arts and cultural spaces (including a review of utilization and functionality)
  - » Measure needs for new or enhanced arts and cultural infrastructure, including those that have been previously identified by previous planning or community groups (e.g. Public Art Gallery).
  - » Specific programming priorities.
  - » Additional clarity around roles and responsibilities (What opportunities are best provided by local governments, community organizations and the private sector?)

## Success Indicators:

- Successful completion of a regional arts and cultural plan.
- The future delivery of arts and cultural opportunities is based in a more in-depth understanding of both local and regional needs.

## Strategy Alignment with the Service Delivery Goals:



SUSTAINABILITY



DIVERSITY



COLLABORATION



QUALITY

## SECTION SEVEN

# Infrastructure Strategies

### In This Section

- Strategic Infrastructure Principles (overarching guidelines for recreation infrastructure provision).
- Facility and Amenity Strategies (suggested approaches for key recreation facilities and amenities in the region).

## Strategic Infrastructure Principles

The following three Strategic Infrastructure Principles have been developed to guide the overall provision of recreation infrastructure in the Cowichan Region. More specifically, these principles should drive future capital and operational planning for the CVRD and its municipal members.

**Strategic Infrastructure Principle #1:** Ensure that existing key recreational facilities and spaces are sustained before contemplating new capital development.

#### Tactics:

- Allocate appropriate lifecycle / capital reserve contributions.
- Conduct regular facility assessments to identify short, mid and long term needs and re-invest in facilities as required.

**Strategic Infrastructure Principle #2:** Major infrastructure projects being contemplated in the region will be explored collaboratively by all regional partners.

#### Tactics:

- All partners in the region will be invited to participate on a committee or sub-committee (or similar entity) when major recreation infrastructure is being studied. This will help ensure that the broader regional impacts of development are considered (i.e. impacts of increased supply on existing facilities, potential partnerships and synergies, etc.).

**Strategic Infrastructure Principle #3:** Preference will be given to future facility projects that provide multi-purpose and inclusive spaces that serve a cross-section of residents rather than single use or single interest types of facilities.

#### Tactics:

- Consider multiple recreation and community needs when planning and designing new or retrofitted facilities.



# Facility and Amenity Strategies

Outlined in the following chart are strategies specific to a number of key facility and amenity types. **It is important to note that any new capital development identified as a future possibility will require further study and should be carefully analyzed using the planning tools provided in Section 8.**

| Facility / Amenity Types  | Short – Medium Term (2019 - 2025)  | Long Term (2025+)  | Rationale   |
|---|--|--|---|
| Ice Arenas  | Sustain current facilities and conduct regular assessments.<br>Continue to monitor utilization trends.   | If a new and/or replacement ice arena facility is required in the future, development should occur as part of a multi-sheet ice facility.  | There is not currently a multi-sheet ice facility in the Cowichan Region. This type of arena facility would better position the region for tournaments and provide operational efficiencies over a stand-alone facility.* |
| Aquatics Facilities   | Sustain current facilities and conduct regular assessments.<br>Continue to monitor utilization trends.   | If major capital investment into indoor aquatics is considered in the Cowichan Region, it is suggested that a new mid-sized aquatics facility to serve the southern part of the region be prioritized over expansion of the Cowichan Aquatics Centre. This potential facility should be focused primarily on leisure and active living aquatics. | An aquatics facility in the south would make aquatics even more accessible to residents of the north and likely increase aquatics use overall.*   |
| Indoor Multi-Purpose Spaces (dry-floor and gymnasium type spaces) | Sustain current spaces and work with school division partners to ensure continued access (and if possible expanded access) to school gymnasiums.   | If existing recreation facilities in the region are identified for retrofit, explore opportunities to convert these spaces for dry-floor use.<br><br>Consider including a new gymnasium space if a new arena or aquatics project is studied.   | Dry-floor spaces can accommodate a variety of uses and provide valuable spontaneous use space.  |
| Outdoor Sport Field Spaces  | Sustain current facilities and conduct regular assessments.<br>Continue to monitor utilization trends.<br><br>Prioritize quality over quantity in the provision of outdoor sport field spaces.<br><br>Consider conducting a regional sport field plan / study to further assess the current supply and future needs (as suggested in Strategy #5). | Consider partnership requests from outdoor sport groups based on the direction provided by the Sport Field Study / Plan and ongoing trends monitoring.<br><br>Continue to prioritize quality over quantity in the provision of outdoor sport field spaces.   | The current supply of outdoor fields is well distributed across the Cowichan Region.<br><br>Higher quality fields (notably artificial turf) can accommodate greater volumes and types of use.                             |

| Facility / Amenity Types | Short – Medium Term (2019 - 2025)  | Long Term (2025+)   | Rationale   |
|--------------------------|--|---|---|
| Curling Facilities       | Sustain current facilities and conduct regular assessments.<br>Continue to monitor utilization trends.   | Consider decreasing the regional supply of curling ice if A) overall regional participation / utilization levels remain the same or further decrease (this action may also present retrofit opportunities that can address other regional gaps and needs) or B) significant investment is required to sustain or replace an existing facility that cannot be justified relative to other recreation priorities. | Existing curling facilities in the region are aging and are likely to require significant re-investment.<br>Curling participation remains inconsistent across the Cowichan Region with some facilities doing well while other have experienced decline.   |
| Fitness Spaces           | Ensure quality of what exists before an increase in quantity.  | Consider expanding fitness provision only if major capital development occurs in the future (i.e. new aquatics facility in the south, expansion of an existing facility, retrofit of an existing facility).   | The current public provision of fitness appears sufficient.<br>Private sector operators are able to meet some demands and gaps.<br>Future facility development may benefit from the inclusion of fitness (e.g. opportunity to increase operational cost recovery by including new or expanded fitness). |
| Trails                   | Focus on increasing the provision of natural surface trails in the region.<br>Plan new development initiatives and approaches on a regional basis.<br>Ensure that adequate funds are set aside for lifecycle and capital re-investment into all trail surfaces (natural and hard surface). |   | Phase 1 engagement revealed high levels of use and demand for natural surface trails.<br>Trails provide a highly accessible recreational opportunity that can support all ages, abilities and numerous activity types.  |
| Specialty Spaces         | Continue to monitor trends in recreation.<br>Consider conducting a regional study to assess potential options and approaches to meeting pickleball needs.  | Use the planning tools identified in Section 8 to assess potential specialty space initiatives and analyze requests from community groups.<br>Consider actions and initiatives for pickleball based on the options and approaches identified in the suggested study.  | Recreation is continually evolving and requires providers to remain current on trends.<br>Pickleball continues to emerge as an activity of choice.  |

*\*As reflected in the chart, different approaches have been recommended for ice arenas and aquatics facilities. The efficiencies provided by “twinning” ice arenas provides significant benefit when contemplating future development. Additionally, ice arena facilities serve primarily dedicated, drive-to use within a broader region. Conversely, the use of aquatics facilities tends to be more community based and proximity to residency is a greater factor. Developing a new facility in the south would provide geographic balance and increase the access of residents in those areas to aquatics opportunities. However, it is important to note that both of the suggested approaches will require further needs assessment and feasibility analysis before development is contemplated (as per the planning tools suggested in Section 8).*

# SECTION EIGHT

## Planning Tools

### In This Section

- Tools and frameworks to support future decision making and prioritization.

The following planning tools are provided to assist the CVRD and its member municipalities with future decision making which could include:

- Prioritization of future capital projects
- Analysis of future capital projects (e.g. determining capital and operating impacts of a facility project)
- Partnership and funding model analysis and development
- Analyzing funding requests from community organizations and partners.

## Planning Tool: Project Assessment Framework

**Purpose:** To outline a clear and transparent process for assessing major capital projects being considered by the CVRD and member municipalities. This process should be used when assessing projects that it leads as well as those that come forth from the community for funding support. *\*Implementing the Project Assessment Framework may require the allocation of additional resources.*



# Planning Tool: Project Prioritization Framework

**Purpose:** To assist with ranking projects in a logical and transparent manner that takes into account a range of important decision making and benefits based considerations.

*\*Elements of the Framework are likely to require refinement, adaptation and updating on an ongoing basis. Undertaking the scoring may also require additional information and analysis as per the Project Assessment Framework. The intent of the Framework is to provide the basis for a tool that can be used in a variety of circumstances when prioritization is required.*

| Considerations   | Scoring Criteria  | Potential Scoring Inputs & Examples  | Weighting |
|--|---|--|-----------|
| <b>Community Demand</b>  | <p>2 pts: Engagement indicators suggest that the project is a “high” priority for residents.</p> <p>1 pt: Engagement indicators suggest that the project is a “medium” priority for residents.</p> <p>0 pt: Engagement indicators suggest that the project is a “low” priority for residents.</p>                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Phase 1 Engagement Findings</li> <li>Future CVRD and partner engagement initiatives.</li> <li><b>Example: Top 5 facility / amenity priorities from the Resident Survey receive a “2” score.</b></li> </ul>  | TBD       |
| <b>Net Benefit to Recreation</b>   | <p>2 pts: The project would provide a completely new recreation opportunity to the region.</p> <p>1 pt: The project would enhance the provision of an existing opportunity in the region (e.g. address geographic imbalance and/or capacity issues).</p> <p>0 pts: The project would duplicate an existing opportunity.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inventory of existing recreational opportunities in the region.</li> <li><b>Example: The development of a new indoor aquatics facility in the southern portion of CVRD would receive a “1” score.</b></li> </ul>  | TBD       |
| <b>Capital Cost</b>  | <p>2 pts: The project has a low capital cost.</p> <p>1 pt: The project has a moderate capital cost.</p> <p>0 pts: The project has a high capital cost</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capital cost analysis.</li> <li><b>Example: High capital cost (&gt; \$10 M), moderate capital cost (\$2 M - \$10 M), low capital cost (&lt;\$2 M)</b></li> </ul>  | TBD       |
| <b>Operational Impacts*</b>  | <p>2 pts: The facility would require no ongoing subsidy.</p> <p>1 pt: The facility would require a moderate ongoing subsidy.</p> <p>0 pts: The facility would require a significant ongoing subsidy.</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analysis of the anticipated subsidy amount require or impact on the existing tax requisition.</li> <li><b>Example: An aquatics or arena facility is likely to receive a “0” score.</b></li> </ul>   | TBD       |
| <b>Economic Benefits (including: Sport, Recreational and Cultural Tourism)</b> | <p>2 pts: The project would draw significant non-local spending to the region.</p> <p>1 pt: The project would draw moderate non-local spending to the region.</p> <p>0 pts: The project would draw no or minimal non-local spending to the region.</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Findings from a tourism impact study or assessment.</li> <li><b>Example: A facility that hosts tournaments, competitions or performances may score a “1” or “2” while a facility that provides localized programming may score a “0” or “1” depending on the nature of the activity.</b></li> </ul> | TBD       |
| <b>Funding Opportunities &amp; Partnerships</b>                                | <p>2 pts: Grants or funding support are available to cover &gt;50% of the project cost.</p> <p>1 pt: Grants or funding support are available to cover 25% - 49% of the project cost.</p> <p>2 pts: Grants or funding support are available to cover &lt;25% of the project cost.</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussions and commitments from senior levels of government.</li> </ul>  | TBD       |
| <b>Public Accessibility and Access</b>   | <p>2 pts: The facility would be accessible to the public.</p> <p>1 pts: The facility would have some public access but would primarily be used by community organizations.</p> <p>0 pts: The facility would have no or minimal public access.</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public access to be clarified through feasibility analysis.</li> <li><b>Example: A walking trail or track would receive a “2” score while a high performance training facility may receive a “1” or “0” score.</b></li> </ul>   | TBD       |

*\*This metric could also be adjusted to look at cost per use or cost per participant.*



