



Photo Credit: Town of Rocky Mountain House

Rocky Mountain House Recreation Master Plan

Draft: August 7, 2025



expedition
MANAGEMENT CONSULTING



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Photo Credit: Town of Rocky Mountain House



Introduction

Nestled in the scenic foothills of the Rocky Mountains along the North Saskatchewan River, the Town of Rocky Mountain House is a hub of recreation and adventure. Located in Treaty 6 territory and surrounded by Clearwater County's landscape of forests, lakes and rivers, the community and region offer an unbeatable backdrop for sport and cultural activities. The area is energized by strong partnerships, with the Town of Rocky Mountain House working with Clearwater County and local organizations to deliver high-quality recreation programs and facilities. Building on this collaborative spirit, the Recreation Master Plan sets the course for an exciting future, shaping the next decade of recreational opportunities for current and future residents, and fostering growth in sport tourism in the community.

The Project

This Master Plan will guide decisions about recreation facilities and programs over the next decade. It was developed based on input from residents and community groups, Town Council, County Council, Town staff as well as research and analysis by the consulting team.

VISION FOR RECREATION

Investment in recreation, parks and culture will result in the development of facilities, amenities and programs that will make Rocky Mountain House a community of choice in Central Alberta.

OUTCOMES FOR RECREATION

Through implementation of this plan, we will:

1. Develop new recreation facilities that are in high demand and are not currently available in the area.
2. Invest in existing recreation facilities.
3. Support access to recreational facilities and programs for people of all ages and abilities.
4. Improve recreational access to the North Saskatchewan River and river valley.
5. Increase sport tourism in the community for the benefit of residents, businesses, and visitors.
6. Attract new residents and retain existing residents by supporting high quality of life through recreation services.



Photo Credit: Town of Rocky Mountain House

Master Plan Priorities

The plan identifies the following priorities for recreation.

Indoor Facility Development

- Working toward the addition of a new fieldhouse (pg. 43).
- Maintaining existing facilities (pg. 45).
- Supporting spaces for arts and culture (pg. 46).
- Adopting location criteria for new indoor facilities (pg. 46).
- Considering renovations to the aquatic centre (pg. 47).
- Assessing the need for an additional indoor ice surface in the medium term (pg. 48).

Outdoor Facility Development

- Building new fields and sports courts (pg. 49).
- Improving access to the North Saskatchewan River (pg. 51).
- Repurposing Centennial Park Campground as a community event and recreation space (pg. 52).
- Refurbishing the skatepark (pg. 53).
- Developing plans to expand the trail network (pg. 54).
- Building an inclusive playground (pg. 56).
- Planning for the future of the North Saskatchewan River Park (pg. 57).

Program Development

- Offering more public programming at facilities during prime time (pg. 58).
- Increasing programming for children and youth (pg. 59).
- Introducing programming for young adults (pg. 59).
- Diversifying programming for adults, seniors and people with disabilities (pg. 60).
- Increasing visual arts programming (pg. 60).
- Enhancing community events (pg. 61).

Service Delivery and Community Partnerships

- Assisting community groups to deliver recreation programming and facilities (pg. 63).
- Updating facility allocation policies to address gaps (pg. 64).
- Strengthening the Town's approach to fee setting (pg. 65).
- Enhancing facility connections and design (pg. 66).
- Reviewing and updating the Recreation Master Plan every five years (pg. 67).

Sport Tourism Development

- Advancing sport tourism by establishing a Working Group, pursuing short-term hosting opportunities and developing a multi-year event schedule (pg. 68).

Top 10 Actions

The following 10 actions have been identified as those with the most potential to advance the vision for recreation in the short to medium term. They are listed in a recommended order of importance.


1

Develop two new rectangular sports fields that can accommodate multiple field sports and host tournaments.


2

Undertake a feasibility study for a new fieldhouse facility that could include an indoor walking/running track, multi-sport courts, turf field, indoor playground, and climbing wall.


3

Undertake a concept design to initiate the re-purposing of Centennial Park Campground as a Community Event and Recreation Space.


4

Strive to increase public access to facilities during prime time.


5

Grow sport tourism by bidding on events that are aligned with the community's assets and by building local capacity for event hosting and event development.


6

Develop new public access points to the North Saskatchewan River, including hand carry and trailered boat launches and docks, and related supporting infrastructure.


7

Complete core upgrades for existing facilities to maintain service levels, including items identified in the Arena and Aquatics Facility condition assessments, and consider renovations to the aquatic centre.


8

In the medium term, assess the need to add another indoor ice surface.


9

Enhance facilities and programming for performing and visual arts.


10

Increase the capacity of community groups to deliver recreational programs and facilities through the creation of a Community Recreation Support Initiative.

It should be recognized that this Master Plan is a non-statutory plan whose purpose is to provide direction and guidance only. Approval of the plan does not imply that facilities will be built as all recommended actions in the plan will be subject to future funding constraints and priorities which will be evaluated by Council during annual budget deliberations.

Conclusion

This Master Plan positions the community for elevated recreational services. It confirms the importance of partnerships and of connections to the natural and built assets that make the area a great place to live and invest. It also strengthens the commitment of the Town to provide facilities and programs that enliven the community and best meet the needs of residents. It similarly positions the Town to attract more sport events and visitors for the benefit of the community. Through implementation of the Master Plan, partnerships with community groups will be strengthened, recreational offerings will be diversified, and new people will be attracted to live, visit and play.



1

PROJECT OVERVIEW



Introduction

The Town of Rocky Mountain House is a historic and energetic community in West Central Alberta. It is situated within Treaty 6 territory in the foothills of the majestic Rocky Mountains along the North Saskatchewan River. The Town is located within Clearwater County, which is a large region that encompasses agricultural lands, forests, hamlets, lakes and rivers.

The Town of Rocky Mountain House is well known as being the place “Where Adventure Begins!”. The community and surrounding region are a destination of choice for people who love to enjoy nature and participate in outdoor adventures. The area’s excellent outdoor activity offerings contribute to the unique character that recreation has in Rocky Mountain House and Clearwater County.

The community is highly engaged and collaborative, with multiple partners contributing to and delivering recreation offerings. For example, local organizations deliver a considerable amount of recreation programming, and many have taken bold steps toward supporting facility development. The Town has joint use agreements in place with local schools that increase access for the community to their respective recreation facilities. Furthermore, there is a strong relationship between the Town of Rocky Mountain House and Clearwater County whereby both partners are committed to supporting recreation operations and capital development. This level of partnership and collaboration is a key strength. This Recreation Master Plan builds on this strong foundation to guide recreation service delivery.





Photo Credit: Town of Rocky Mountain House

Process

The Rocky Mountain House Recreation Master Plan process has five, interconnected phases, as described next. It is currently in Phase 4. A Project Steering Committee comprised of Town staff was established to oversee the project, provide input, and give feedback on the overall direction of the Master Plan. The plan was developed by Expedition Management Consulting Ltd.



Overview of Research

A variety of primary and secondary research activities were conducted to develop the Master Plan. Primary research was completed through surveys of the public and community groups, community input workshops, Town Council Workshop, Clearwater County Workshop, interviews, in-person engagement stations, a community tour, and discussions with facility operators.

1. Surveys Administered

- a. Public Survey
- b. Community Group Survey

2. Meetings Conducted

- a. Project Steering Committee Meetings
Dates: March 20, April 3, and June 17, 2025
- b. Community Input Workshops
Date: May 8 and 14, 2025
- c. In-Person Engagement Stations
Dates: May 2 and 3, 2025
- d. Town Council Input Workshop
Date: April 15, 2025
- e. Clearwater County Input Workshop
Date: April 25, 2025

3. Recreation Groups Engaged (through interviews and/or surveys):

Invites to participate in the engagement process were sent out to stakeholder groups by the Town. The Town also invited Indigenous recreation groups from the Suncild First Nation and O'Chiese First Nation. 42 groups chose to participate, including representatives of the following organizations.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Alberta Canoe Polo Association | 22. Rocky Barracuda Swim Club |
| 2. Alberta Federation of Shooting Sports | 23. Rocky Canoe Club |
| 3. Alberta Whitewater Association | 24. Rocky Chamber of Commerce |
| 4. AMT Arbeau Muay Thai & Kickboxing | 25. Rocky Christian School |
| 5. Angela Di Stefano Yoga | 26. Rocky Knights Soccer Club |
| 6. Canalta Hotel | 27. Rocky Learning Centre |
| 7. Caroline Chamber of Commerce | 28. Rocky Minor Baseball |
| 8. Caroline Playschool Society | 29. Rocky Minor Hockey Association |
| 9. Central Alberta Forage and Livestock Association | 30. Rocky Mountain House Agricultural Society |
| 10. Clearwater County | 31. Rocky Mountain House Bike Park Society |
| 11. Curling Alberta | 32. Rocky Mountain House Chuckwagon Association |
| 12. Ecole Rocky Elementary | 33. Rocky Mountain House Speed Skating Club |
| 13. Football Alberta | 34. Rocky Museum |
| 14. Krazy Lanes | 35. Rocky North 4H Club |
| 15. Nordegg Recreation Committee | 36. Rocky Rams Jr. Hockey Club |
| 16. Northern Crossing Music and Drama Society | 37. Rocky Spinners |
| 17. Pioneer Middle School | 38. Rocky Support Services Society |
| 18. Rapids Basketball Club | 39. Rocky Trail Blazers Rec Hockey |
| 19. Rocky & District Baseball Association | 40. Speed Skating Alberta |
| 20. Rocky Agricultural and Stampede Association | 41. Thick as Thieves Entertainment |
| 21. Rocky Alliance Youth | 42. West Central High School – Athletics |

4. In-Person Tour

Members of the consulting team toured the study area to gain a first-hand perspective of recreation assets.

5. Documents Reviewed

- Strategies, plans, and other documents from municipal partners.
- Reports, statistics, surveys, and planning documents from community groups.
- Recreation frameworks and policies from provincial and national sources.



Photo Credits: Town of Rocky Mountain House

2

COMMUNITY ANALYSIS

Recreation Overview

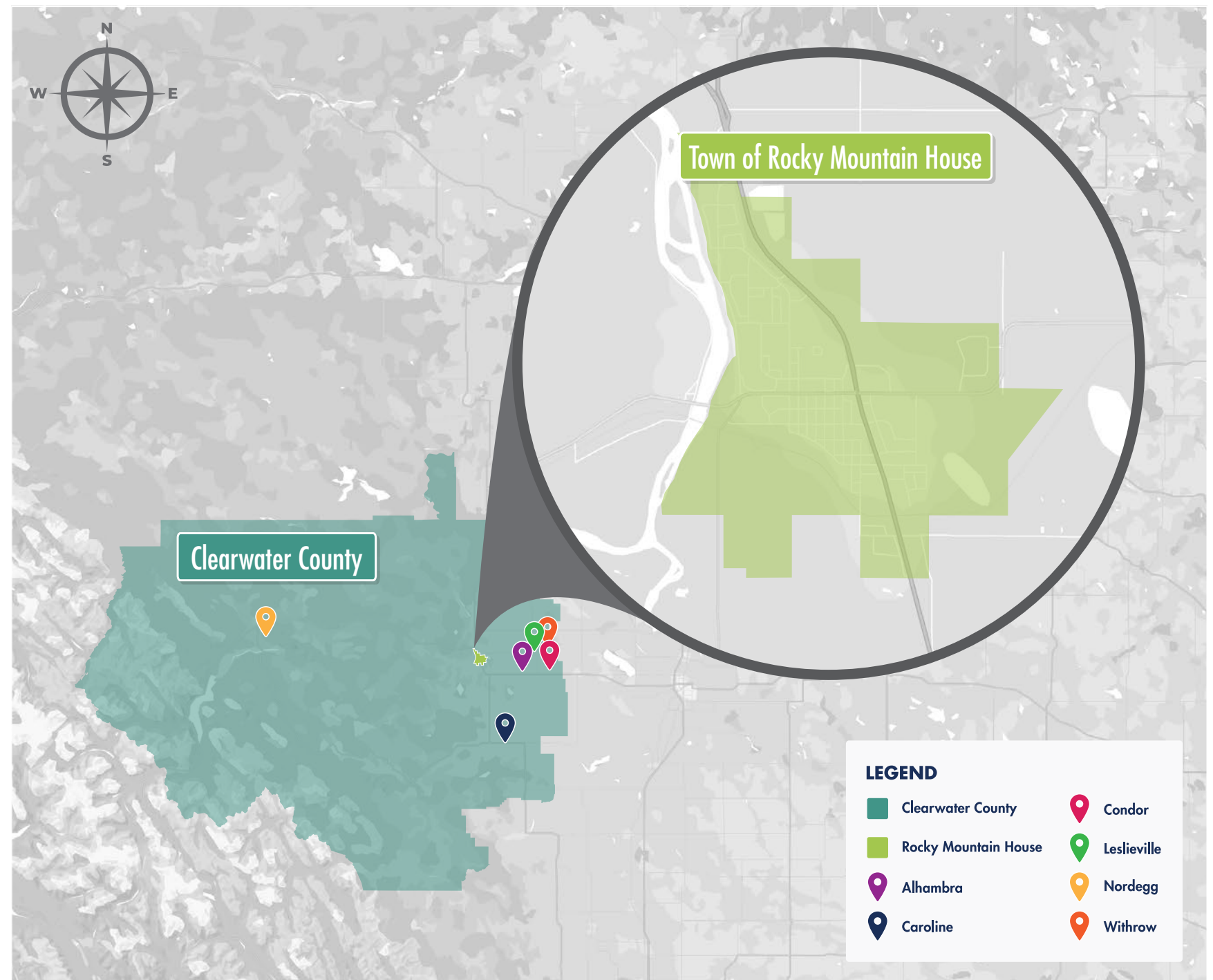
The Town of Rocky Mountain House contains a variety of recreation and parks facilities. These include both indoor and outdoor amenities such as an aquatic centre, two ice arenas, fitness centre, curling rink, community hall, numerous sports fields, parks and trails. These facilities are home to a diversity of recreation programs. Clearwater County is also home to recreation facilities, including community halls, parks, fields, and an ice arena in Caroline. The Town, Clearwater County, residents and community groups have been integral to developing and maintaining many of these amenities. There are dozens of recreation clubs, associations and related businesses in the area. These groups provide many activities, from water based to land based, indoor to outdoor pursuits, court sports to field sports, athletic to artistic endeavors. Local organizations also work together to host a number of tournaments and events.

“

“When my family first came to Rocky, we headed to the rec centre. It didn’t take long to meet people and feel like we were valued members of this community.”

Survey Respondent

Figure 1. Rocky Mountain House and Clearwater County Map



Community Demographics

The Town of Rocky Mountain House had a population of 6,518 in 2021 and 6,635 in 2024.^{1,2} The projected annual growth rate is 0.5%. Based on this rate, the population is expected to be 7,331 by 2044. See Figure 2. Should a proposed coal mine be approved south of the community, many more people may call the Town home within the next five years.

The current median age in the Town is 38, which is the same as the provincial median. The proportion of town residents 65 years and over (17%) is slightly higher than the provincial average (14%). In 2021, 11% of the population identified as Indigenous, and 8% identified as a member of a racialized group. The median income in 2021 was \$82,000, which is lower than the \$96,000 provincial average. 30% of residents live in one person households. This is higher than the provincial average of 26%. 60% live in single detached houses, 13% live in semi-detached houses, 14% live in apartments, and the remainder live in a variety of attached or mobile forms of housing.

From the perspective of recreational services and amenities, these community demographics highlight the need to cater to all age groups, and a growing and aging population.

Rocky Mountain House is a service centre for the approximately 20,000 people living in the surrounding region. This means that recreational

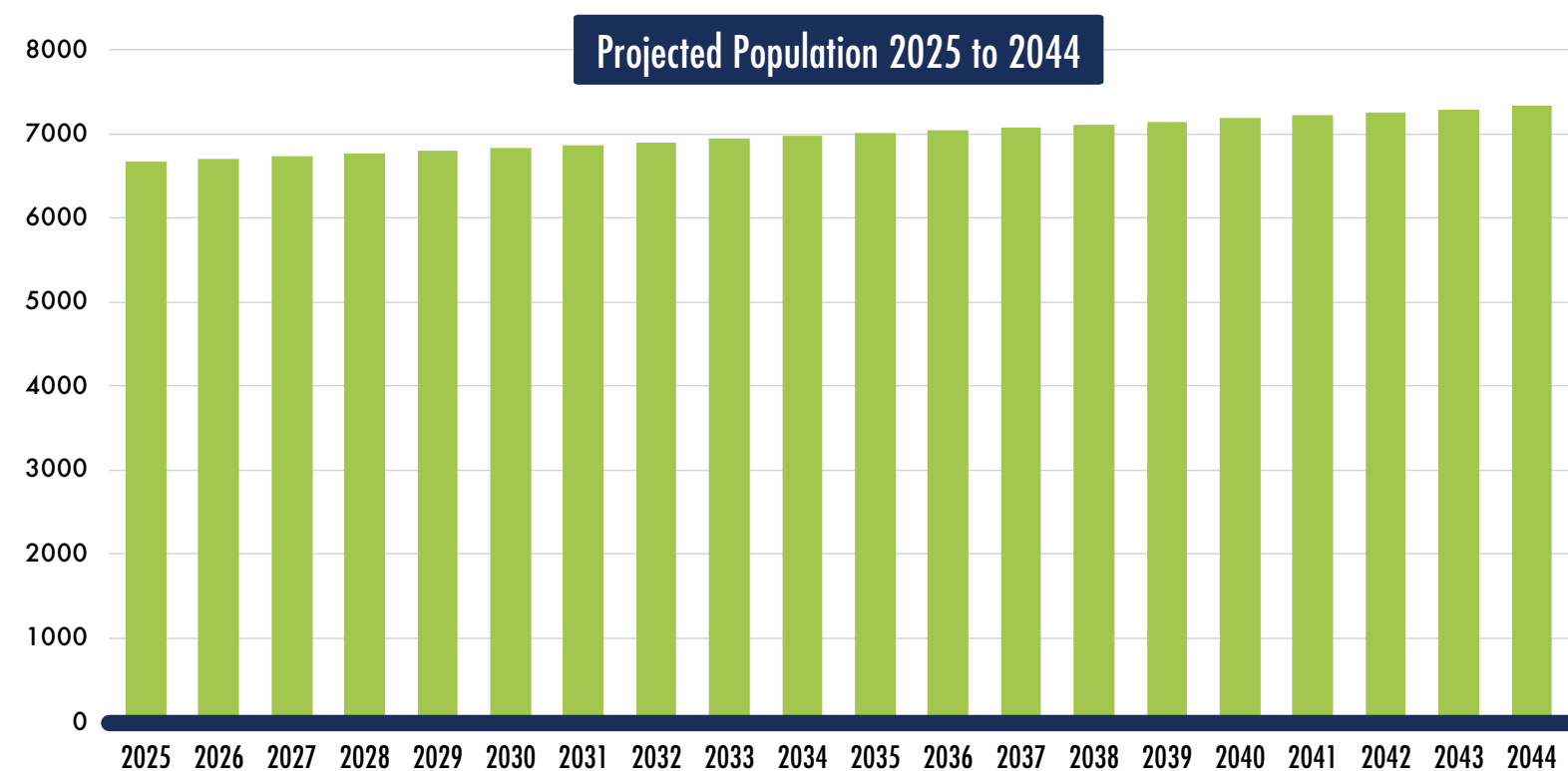
facilities are accessed and enjoyed by residents in Clearwater County, as well as visitors from further afield. Therefore, future improvements and directions should also consider the needs of those users.

The County's population was 11,865 in 2021 and 11,940 in 2024.^{3,4} The population is predicted to increase by approximately 3.7% by 2034.⁵ The median age in 2021 was 46. This is higher than the provincial median and Town median. Twenty percent of County residents are 65 years old and over. The median income in the County was \$83,000. In 2021, 7% of the population identified as Indigenous and

less than 1% identified as a member of a racialized group. 13% live in single person households, 7% live in single detached houses and 22% live in a movable dwelling. Overall, County residents are older than Town residents, less culturally diverse, and live in larger households.

There are also three First Nation reserves in Clearwater County. These are Big Horn 144A, O'Chiese 203, and Sunchild 202. Their combined population in 2021 was 1,670.⁶

Figure 2. Town of Rocky Mountain House Projected Population



Facility Inventory

The Town of Rocky Mountain House is home to a diversity of recreation and parks facilities. Notable assets within the Town include the Rocky Regional Recreation Centre, Co-operative Aquatic Centre, Lou Soppit Community Centre, Rocky Mountain House Public Library, North Saskatchewan River Park, Curtis Field and Track, Recreation Park ball diamonds, skate and spray park. There are also numerous playgrounds and trails, including unsanctioned mountain bike trails in the river valley. A bike park and disc golf course are being developed, and the Town plans to build a new accessible playground.

Notable assets within Clearwater County include the Caroline Community HUB and Kurt Browning Arena, numerous community halls and associated sports fields, and several privately operated agricultural recreation facilities. The County is also investigating the feasibility of an agricultural recreation facility. For a complete inventory of the Town's and the County's current recreation infrastructure, please see Appendix A.

Overall, facilities are well-maintained. However, the age and state of recreation facilities varies. For example, the Town's Empringham Arena contains building elements that are over 60 years old. Some facilities, such as the aquatic centre, community centre, skate park and numerous playgrounds were built well over 25 years ago. Grass fields across

the community are owned by the school district, and are in need of enhanced annual maintenance. Newer Town-owned facilities include the spray park and pickleball courts.

Some trails in the community were formally developed while some in the river valley were built informally and are unsanctioned. There is a popular 7km paved multipurpose trail that loops through residential and commercial parts of Town. A 5km bicentennial trail connects the Town to the Rocky Mountain House National Historic Site. The total trail distance in the community is 15km.

Highly visible parks include Riverside Park, Big Rock Parkette, and the North Saskatchewan River Park. The Centennial Park Campground is also a prominent and centrally located recreation facility in the community. It is open seasonally for camping.

There are no purpose-built event spaces in the community, no fieldhouses, and limited sport courts and gymnasiums.

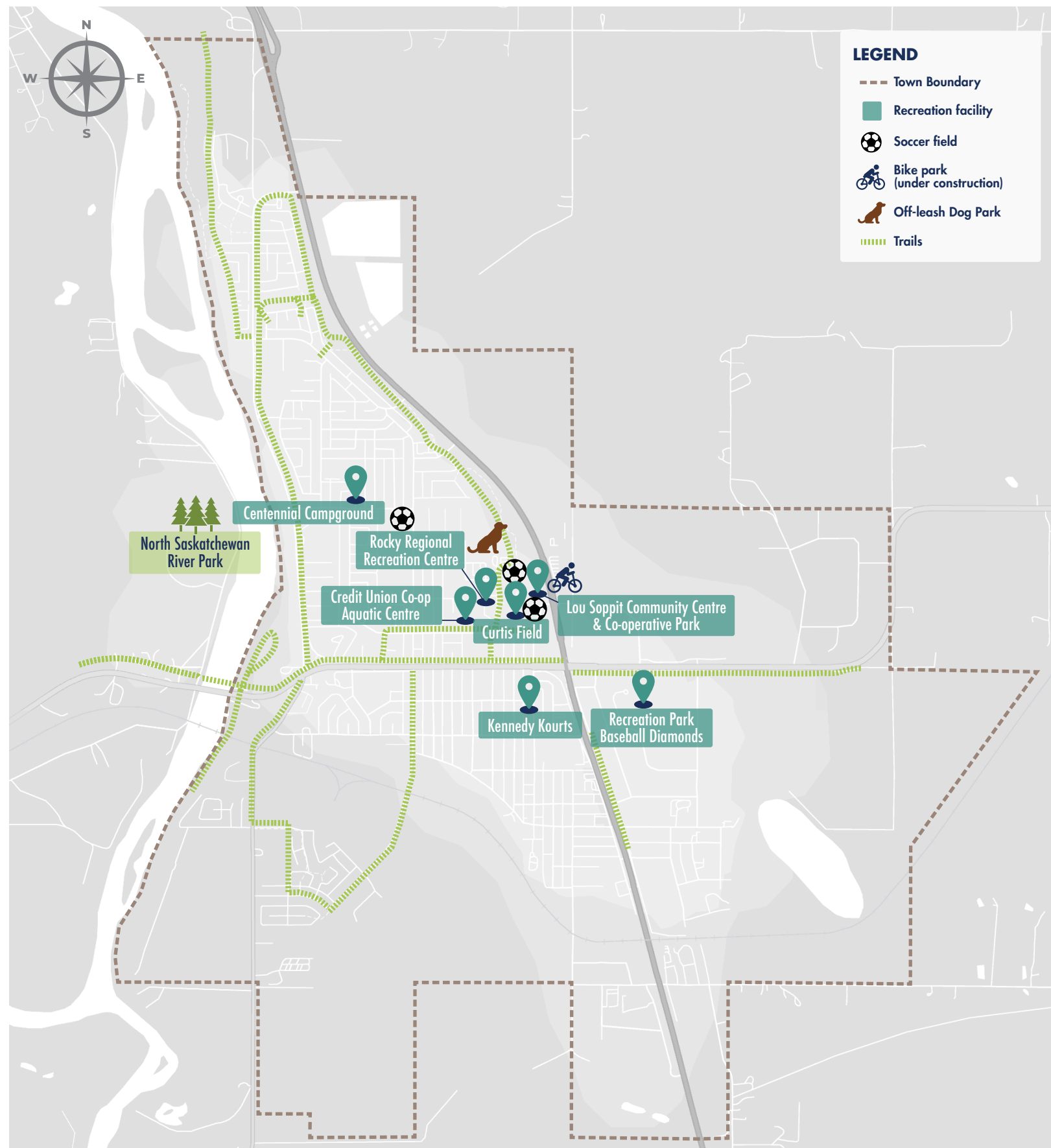
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“My family has happy memories at the splash park, and we love swimming at the pool.”

Survey Respondent



Figure 3. Existing Recreation Facilities



There are also several privately and not-for-profit owned recreation facilities in the community. These include a dance school/studio, Royal Canadian Legion (music/events/entertainment), gymnastics club, martial arts gyms, movie theatre, several fitness and wellness studios, a seniors centre and a bowling alley. The Âsokêwin Friendship Centre is also located in the Town. The Rocky Mountain House National Historic Site is approximately 5km outside of the community, and Crimson Lake Provincial Park is 10km outside the community. The surrounding area contains additional outdoor recreational amenities such as lakes, campgrounds, a golf course and rod and gun club.

Regional Supply Analysis

The closest recreational facilities outside of the Town and County are in Sylvan Lake and Red Deer. Sylvan Lake is 60km east of the region or approximately 40 minutes by car. Its NexSource Centre is a 155,000+ square foot multi-use recreation facility. It includes an aquatic area with a dedicated 6-lane 25m lap pool, leisure pool, and hot tub. It also houses a five sheet curling rink and two ice arenas, each with NHL-sized ice surfaces. One of these arenas can seat 720 people. The community is also home to several parks and outdoor fields, including two competitive soccer pitches.

The City of Red Deer is 25km further east of Sylvan Lake and is approximately one hour from Rocky Mountain House by car. It is home to several large multipurpose recreation facilities. The G.H. Dawe Recreation Centre includes a 9,500ft² fitness area, a water park, two NHL sized ice surfaces, a library, and other supporting amenities. The Collicutt Centre has a water park with wave pool, indoor walking/running track, fitness centre, NHL sized arena, gymnastics facility, a fieldhouse with court space and boarded soccer pitch, and a climbing wall and bouldering features. Some residents of the Town of Rocky Mountain House and Clearwater County travel to these facilities to access amenities not available locally.

Comparative Benchmarking

The Town of Rocky Mountain House is within comparator benchmark ranges for the provision of many indoor and outdoor recreation and parks facilities. The Town exceeds comparator service levels for outdoor ice surfaces, tennis and pickleball courts, dog parks and playgrounds. To meet benchmark standards for publicly operated facilities, the Town would need to add an indoor walking/running track, a fieldhouse and two rectangular sports fields.



Service Delivery Model Analysis

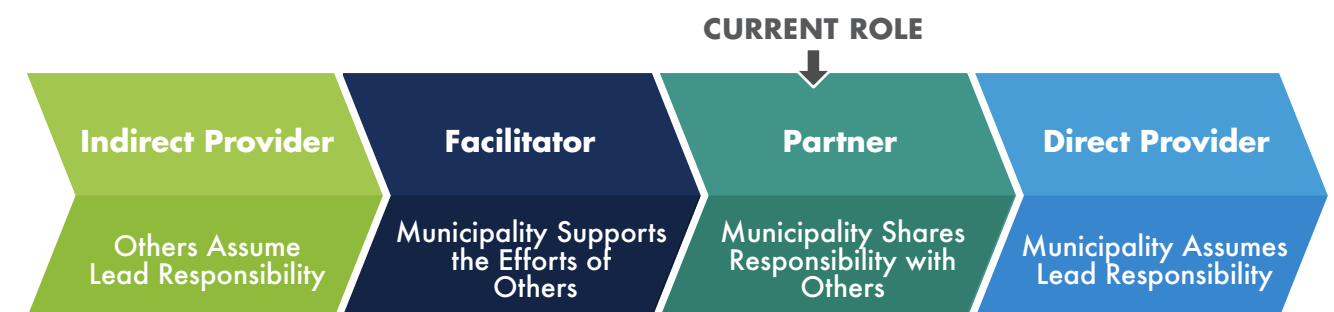
Every municipality determines how it will deliver recreation and parks services to their community. Many factors affect this decision, including differences in demographics, geography, involvement of community groups and the private sector, service level expectations, and resident preferences. There is no single correct way to deliver these services, but it is advisable to focus on one general approach to provide clarity for the municipality, community groups, and residents.

Figure 4 outlines a continuum of municipal service delivery and identifies the Town's current role. At the present time, the Town of Rocky Mountain House's approach is best described as Partner. While the Town owns and operates facilities in the community, it partners with Clearwater County to fund operations. Under the agreement between the two municipalities the County funds 50% of facility operations. It also contributes 50% towards the development of public recreation facilities in Rocky Mountain House that will benefit County residents. Volunteer groups are invested in Town facilities, sometimes contributing to the maintenance or fundraising in support of improvements. Residents and businesses have donated significant resources and facilities. Local businesses have also sponsored Town-owned facilities and recreation programs.

In addition, under Joint Use Agreements with Rocky Mountain School District No. 6 and the Wild Rose School Division No. 66, the Town manages school facility bookings for community organizations. The Town also provides aquatic services to two local school boards (Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools and Wild Rose School Division), three First Nation schools, some schools outside of the County, Aboriginal Head Start, and homeschool groups. The Town leases space in the RRRC to the Rocky Arts and Crafts Guild.

The Town's Recreation and Community Services Department leads recreation facility and program delivery. The department is organized into eight business units. From a recreation perspective, core among these are the Arena, Aquatics, Recreational Programming, Guest Services, Fitness Centre, and Building Maintenance divisions. Together they employ 17 full time staff and 44 casual/contract staff. Over half of all casual staff work in Aquatics. The department also includes FCSS and Social Housing. Two full time staff lead the department, including the director and recreational administrative clerk. The department is supported by others across the Town's administration including Engineering and Operations (Parks Maintenance), Planning and Community Development, Corporate Services and the Chief Administrator's Office (Communications). The Recreation and Community Services Department books and operates recreational facilities including the Centennial Park Campground, hosts and supports local and provincial events, delivers programming, manages sponsorships, maintains the North Saskatchewan River Park (NSRP), produces seasonal programming guides, and acts as the liaison for the Town's Community Events Committee. FCSS provides program and event delivery within the Town and County, and supports volunteer coordination and capacity for non-profit community organizations.

Figure 4. Service Delivery Spectrum



Program and Facility Analysis

It is important to consider program offerings and facility utilization when determining current and future needs. The following provides a description of programs and facility utilization in the Town of Rocky Mountain House (where data was available).

Many public facilities in the community are heavily used and at capacity. These include the aquatic centre, fitness centre, arts guild room and ice surfaces at the Rocky Regional Recreation Centre. The skate park and spray park are heavily used, as are the Town’s ball fields. There are waiting lists for groups that use these facilities, such as slo-pitch teams.

Fields, including the oval track, ball fields, Curtis and Practice fields were booked for 1,810 hours in 2024. School facilities across the community’s seven schools, including gyms and fields, were booked for 2,439 hours that year. The Lou Soppit Centre was booked for 1,974 hours, including seven rentals of Helen Hunley Park.

Dozens of user groups utilize Town-owned facilities. These include hockey leagues and teams, minor sports organizations (e.g. figure skating, hockey, ringette, speed skating), arts and craft associations, swim and kayak clubs, schools, and other sport teams and groups. Participants are from the Town, County, and local First Nations.

Figure 5 provides a snapshot of registration numbers provided by organized sport groups that participated in the engagement process.

“My children really enjoy the summer camp programs offered by the Town.”
Survey Respondent

Figure 5. Organized Sport Participation By the Numbers

Organization	Number of Participants*
Rocky Knights Soccer	291
Rocky Minor Hockey	265
Rocky and District Baseball	250
Rocky Adult Slo-Pitch	237
Rapids Basketball	180
West Central High School Athletics	170
Trail Blazers Recreational Hockey	167
Rocky Figure Skating Club	125
Rocky Canoe Club	100
Rocky Mountain House and District Minor Football	72
Rocky Mountain 4-H Club	58
Barracuda Swim Club	34
Rocky Rams Jr. Hockey Club	30
Rocky Speed Skating Club	20
Rocky Ringette	17
Total	2,016

*2024 or most recent available registration data, self-reported by the organizations.



Ice Arena Usage

Ice is bookable from 6:00am until 11:00pm, September through March. Both arenas are fully booked weekdays from 4:00pm to 11:00pm (prime time), and nearly fully booked on weekends. Youth hockey groups are by far the largest ice users, with approximately 59% of weekday primetime bookings and 100% of weekend daytime bookings. The next largest users are other youth ice sports including speed skating, figure skating and ringette, with 27% of weekday prime time bookings. Only 9% of weekday prime time bookings are for adult hockey. Ice is primarily used for school bookings during the day Monday to Friday. No indoor public skating or drop-in sessions are available during prime time on weekdays; however, the Outdoor Rink and Oval are available freely through the winter months. They are scheduled sporadically on weekends when ice has not been booked by user groups. Weekend evenings are typically fully booked with hockey games.

During the spring and summer months (April to August) dry surfaces are available for drop-in sports Monday to Sunday. Operating hours in this season are 6:00am to 9:00pm Monday to Friday, 8:00am to 8:00pm Saturday, and 8:00am to 4:00pm Sunday. Private rentals for events such as birthday parties are also available.

Arena users include:

- Rocky Minor Hockey
- Trailblazers Recreational Hockey
- Rocky Figure Skating Club
- Rocky Speed Skating Club
- Rocky Rams Junior Hockey Club
- Rocky Ringette
- Rocky Mountain House Over 30 Hockey League
- O'Chiese Warriors
- Rocky Mountain House Hockey School
- Rocky Christian School
- Ice Dogs
- Sunchild Men's League

Ball and Sport Field Usage

Ball fields are bookable May through September, weather dependent. A typical evening in May or June will see all five fields booked from 5:00pm to 9:00pm for minor ball and slo-pitch.

Town-maintained sports fields (Curtis and Practice) are bookable May through November, weather dependent. A typical evening in the spring will see both fields used for school athletics from 4:00pm to 6:00pm, and booked from 6:00pm to 8:00pm for soccer and rugby. In season and during the academic year, West Central High School often uses the fields during the day for gym class and track meets.

The low level of maintenance at other school-owned fields limits their use. Some soccer teams in the community report that they do not host games or tournaments in Rocky Mountain House because of the marginal quality of the fields.



Some soccer teams in the community report that they do not host games or tournaments in Rocky Mountain House because of the marginal quality of the fields.

Pool Usage

The pool is open Monday to Friday 6:00am-9:00pm, and 12:00pm-4:00pm Saturday, Sunday and holidays. It is available for rental from 11:00am-12:00pm and 4:00pm-5:00pm on weekends. Public drop-in swim times (including twoonie, adult and seniors swims) account for 18% of total available pool time (non-rentable hours). Public swims are available five evenings/week during prime time evening hours. They are also available on weekends during afternoon prime time hours. School bookings account for 13% of total available pool time during weekdays, and swim lessons account for 16%. Length swims,

preschool swims and aquafit classes are available for the balance of time, during the day and from 7:30pm to close. A swim club and paddling club also use the pool outside of public hours.

Aquatics programming at the pool is in high demand, including swimming lessons, dive-in-movies and public swims. In 2024, the Town offered 385 aquatics programs that drew a total of 2,705 participants. Of these programs six were for adults, seven were aquatics leadership programs, and nine were for kayaking. The remainder were for parents and tots, children and youth. The Co-operative Aquatic Centre staff recently earned the Jordan Neave Swim to Survive Award from the Lifesaving Society. This award recognizes the Town for having the highest total of Swim to Survive participants in a community of less than 15,000.

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Programs and Events

The Town's recreation department offers a variety of public programs in the community. These include fitness programs, day camps, and youth programs. See Appendix A for a program inventory.

Town and County owned facilities are used by external organizations to host events. These include professional rodeo and chuckwagon events, and a demolition derby at the North Saskatchewan River Park annually, numerous slo-pitch tournaments at local ball fields, swim meets at the aquatic centre, and plays and other performing arts events at the Lou Soppit Community Centre. Facilities such as the arena dry floors and North Saskatchewan River Park are also used for community celebrations, trade shows, private functions, concerts and festivals, and fundraising events.

Sport Tourism

Sport tourism presents a valuable opportunity to align recreation service delivery with broader community development goals. Hosting sport events activates local facilities, strengthens community pride, encourages volunteerism, and celebrates local culture. These events bring residents together while creating memorable experiences that enhance quality of life and build a sense of belonging. When planned strategically, sport tourism can also serve as a tool for new resident attraction by showcasing the vibrancy, hospitality, and amenities of the community to visitors. This synergy between recreational programming and sport event hosting supports the Town of Rocky Mountain House in its goal to be an attractive place to live, work and play.

Beyond the community and recreational benefits, sport tourism also offers significant economic and environmental advantages. Events attract athletes, coaches, families, and spectators, generating visitor spending on accommodation, food, fuel, and entertainment. This injects vitality into the local economy and supports businesses. Over time, this contributes to job creation, increased tax revenue, and stronger business retention. Furthermore, the emotional connections formed through sport and recreation can lead to greater appreciation of both built and natural spaces, encouraging environmental stewardship and investment in infrastructure. As such, integrating sport tourism into the Town's recreation strategy not only amplifies the reach of local services but also supports growth and long-term community well-being.



3

STRATEGIC ANALYSIS



Current State of Recreation

The local recreation system has several strengths, including strong support and involvement from community groups and businesses, and a commitment to staying current with recreational trends. A solid partnership between the Town and Clearwater County, and a history of successful recreation planning and implementation also stand out. Facilities are well maintained, but there are gaps in offerings such as sport courts and arts spaces. Accessibility issues, limited river access, and a greater emphasis on sports over artistic and cultural pursuits present growth areas.

Opportunities include using recreation, including parks and culture, to support residents, attract events and visitors, and support economic growth. Underused land near current facilities could support new amenities. However, threats like worsening wildfires, aging infrastructure, and high construction and operational costs could impact long-term success.



SWOT Analysis

A high-level analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) as they relate recreation was completed to support the Master Plan. The key findings from this analysis are provided below.

S	W	O	T
Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong relationship between Town and County for recreation service provision • Highly engaged community groups and local businesses that support recreation amenities • Up to date with new trends/ recreation demands (e.g. bike park, disc golf, off leash dog park, pickleball courts) • History of effective recreation master plan implementation • Existing facilities are well maintained • Experience hosting tournaments and sport events • Recreation Facilities Access Program reduces financial barriers and increases participation in leisure opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gaps in facilities, programs and event venues (e.g. sport courts, gymnasiums, outdoor event infrastructure, performing arts space) • Limited river access points and few opportunities to interact with the North Saskatchewan River • Accessibility challenges in some facilities • A focus on sport and athletics over arts and culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential to leverage recreation for tourism, event attraction, local economic development, resident attraction and retention • Provision of recreation services that are appropriate to and welcoming of all residents of the Town and County • Underused lands adjacent to existing recreation facilities may support expansion or new amenities • Maintenance improvements to existing amenities to support enhanced safety and utilization • Programming and facilities to better connect residents and visitors to natural assets • Using recreational facilities to reflect and reinforce the community's identity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve a regional population across a large geographical area • Worsening wildfire seasons threaten Town and County assets including structures, built amenities, and natural areas • Long term lifecycle renewal requirements for major facilities • Large scale facilities in other municipalities draw residents out of the community for recreation • Rising construction and operational costs

Strategic Alignment Analysis

The concepts identified in this plan are aligned with the direction of other Town of Rocky Mountain House documents. They are also aligned with Clearwater County planning documents. In addition, the broader planning context of provincial and national recreation frameworks and plans were also considered.

Town of Rocky Mountain House Plans and Policies

Strategic Plan 2024-2026

Presents Town Council's vision for the community. It includes a commitment to continuing to action the 2017 Recreation Master Plan and to a long-term facilities plan.

Municipal Development Plan 2020

Lays out the community's growth and development vision and goals. As part of its vision, the plan identifies being the adventure capital of Alberta and being a livable, inclusive community where residents of all ages can access community amenities within walking and cycling distance. Guiding principles and goals support abundant recreational opportunities, and the continued improvement of the Town's indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, including parks, trails, and other open space amenities.

Trails Development and Implementation Plan (2009)

Provides a vision for trails in Rocky Mountain House that directs the Town to build on its trail network, create safe environments for trail users, and encourage residents to walk and cycle as part of their daily routines.

Community Events Committee Bylaw (2024)

Establishes a committee to participate in the creation, coordination and promotion of community events that showcase the Town of Rocky Mountain House.

Tree Bylaw (2012)

Protects and preserves trees in public places.

Budget and Taxation Policy (2023)

Provides direction with respect to the development of Town budgets and the setting of tax rates.

Anti-Racial Discrimination and Anti-Racism Policy (2023)

Lays out expectations related to anti-racism for all Town activities.

Community Partnership Funding Policy (2022)

Provides direction with respect to the development of community partnerships for capital projects between community groups and the Town of Rocky Mountain House.

Ice Allocation Policy (2021)

Commits the Town to fairly and equitably balance the needs of the community, organized groups and user group requests to access ice facilities. The policy includes a list of scheduling priorities.

Sports Field Allocation Policy (2014)

Establishes the rules and principles to preserve the sports fields within the community. The policy includes a scheduling priority list.

Asset Management Policy (2020)

Guides practice of asset management in a way that aligns with approved principles and values.

Clearwater County Plans and Policies

Strategic Plan

Contains a vision and purpose statement to direct Council and Administration in the creation and implementation of operational plans. These statements speak to the importance of environmental stewardship, economic prosperity, quality of life, partnerships and innovative investment.

Municipal Development Plan (2023)

Sets a vision for growing desirable communities in the County and recognizes that recreational assets serve residents and draw visitors. The plan states that private and public recreational facilities need to be encouraged and accommodated to add to the variety of experiences available within the County, and that the County may partner in the development of regional recreation facilities.

National and Provincial Policies and Frameworks

National Framework for Recreation: Pathways to Wellbeing (2015)

Provides a vision for recreation in Canada whereby everyone is engaged in meaningful, accessible recreation experiences that foster individual wellbeing, community wellbeing and the wellbeing of natural and built environments.

Event Funding Policy (2010)

Provides direction concerning the types of events and the conditions that must be met for Clearwater County Council to assist with the funding of community, cultural or sporting events or celebrations.

Parks Funding Policy (2020)

Directs the manner in which the County will allocate funds to municipal campgrounds and parks. Under this policy the County will only provide funding to parks it owns.

Active Alberta Policy (2011-2021)

Recognizes the importance of recreation, active living and sport to quality of life, health and wellness, strong communities, economic benefits and personal fulfillment. Encourages Albertans to become more active.

4

TRENDS AND BENEFITS



Recreation and Parks Trends

Trends that affect the delivery of recreation services were reviewed to inform the planning process. Trends were utilized as one indicator to justify future initiatives. The most relevant trends for the Town of Rocky Mountain House and Clearwater County are provided next.



Growing Interest in Informal and Individual Activities

Participation in independent, life sport activities has been increasing and is a programming trend across the recreation sector. Life sport activities include things like biking, swimming, walking, hiking, and other pursuits that are non-competitive, fun, and individualized.⁷ 76% of Albertans say that a park is their favorite recreation destination.⁸



Changing Lifestyle Habits

Leisure screen use has increased, indicating shifts in how people choose to spend their free time. Enhancing access and encouraging more use of facilities and recreational services is important to support ongoing community health.



Engagement with the Natural World

According to the 2022 Alberta Recreation Survey, 85% of Albertans enjoy the outdoors. Both land and water-based activities have grown in popularity.⁹ Visitation to nature-based destinations for outdoor recreation has also been accelerated with the desire to be connected to nature.¹⁰



Decline in Youth Sports Participation

Membership in youth sports organizations has not kept pace with the annual increase in provincial population. This is a trend across North America with multiple studies finding a continued decline in youth sports participation.¹¹



Youth Sport Popularity and Preferences

Soccer, swimming and hockey are the most popular organized sports for youth participation. Basketball and volleyball are also growing in popularity. Preferences vary by gender and origin. New Canadian youth exhibit a preference for soccer, swimming and basketball. One in four girls between 3 and 17 participate in dance, ballet and gymnastics.¹²



Household Income and Youth Sports Participation

Sport participation of children and youth increases with increasing household income. According to a 2022 Canadian survey, 60% of children and youth living in lower income households (<\$60,000 per year) reported participating in sport in the past year compared to 73% of those living in higher income households (≥\$100,000 per year).¹³



Growth in Elite Youth Sports

Participation in elite youth sports continues to increase. Compared to recreational sport participation, elite sport participation is marked by an increase in specialization, year-round training, and a focus on performance.¹⁴



Boom in Women's Sport

Women's participation and interest in professional and recreational organized sports is growing fast. According to the 2024 Rally Report, 63% of girls aged 6 to 18 participate in organized sports at least weekly.¹⁵



Gender Equity

There is growing recognition of the importance of supporting gender equity in sport. Jurisdictions and organizations are beginning to set targets to increase the number of girls, women, and gender diverse people in sport.

Facility Planning, Program and Development Trends



Aging Infrastructure

Aging infrastructure poses a significant challenge for municipalities across the country. It will be important to ensure facility maintenance is a priority to support the longevity of facilities.¹⁶



Increased Emphasis on Inclusion and Access

Municipalities are taking strong steps to address barriers and constraints that their residents face when participating in recreation services. The importance of inclusion and access in the sector is also being recognized and acted on at provincial and federal levels.



Focus on Sustainability and Capacity of Recreation

An appropriate mix of individuals including professional staff and volunteers are needed for delivering high quality recreation programs and services.



The Integration of Technology into Recreation and Leisure

The use of web, mobile, and cloud-based platforms has increased, indicating a shift in programming, information delivery, and data collection.



Evolving Nature of Volunteerism

Volunteers remain essential to the planning and delivery of recreation, events, and programs. Trends that could impact the Town include an aging volunteer base and a redefining of volunteer commitment as a negotiated and mutually beneficial arrangement rather than a one-way investment of time by the volunteer.¹⁷



Increasing Costs

The costs to maintain, operate, and build new recreation and parks infrastructure have increased significantly. Supply chain issues, cost of materials, and labour shortages have all contributed to increases in the cost of construction and project timelines.¹⁸



Changing Demographics

It is important to consider demographics when planning for parks and recreation. Service delivery systems must evolve and grow alongside the population as there are more people to serve and changing user profiles and interests.



Rapid Growth of Select Sports and Leisure Activities

Numerous activities have ballooned in popularity since the COVID-19 pandemic. Examples include paddling, mountain biking, and trail running. Participation in soccer, basketball and rugby is also growing, as is the participation of women and girls in ice sports such as hockey and ringette. Pickleball has also taken off in popularity, as has disc golf.



Changing Environment and Climate

The effects of climate change are becoming more apparent and there is an increasing feeling of urgency to adapt quickly. Parks and facilities will need thoughtful planning and maintenance to respond to climate change and reduce environmental impacts. Extended wildfire seasons, increased wildfire severity, and extreme weather causing flooding are threats of particular relevance to the Town of Rocky Mountain House and Clearwater County.

Benefits of Recreation



1

Enhanced Mental and Physical Well-Being

Recreation has an important role to play in increasing physical activity, which is a crucial factor in physical and mental health. People who participate in recreation have reported improved self-esteem and life satisfaction.



2

Enhanced Social Well-Being

Experiencing recreational activities has been shown to enhance social well-being. For both children and adults, participation supports the development and strengthening of social relationships.



3

Builds Strong Families and Communities

Participation in recreational activities can be an important component of fostering family cohesion, adaptability and resilience while helping to build welcoming communities for people and families from diverse cultures.



4

Helps People Connect with the Outdoors

Connecting citizens with the outdoors can provide both environmental and human benefits. Exposure to green spaces can have a positive effect on health, including reducing stress levels and improving cognitive development in children.



5

Economic Benefits

Recreation has been shown to be a powerful contributor to community revitalization and economic development. Spending on recreation provides local economic benefits including providing employment opportunities and attracting events. There are also significant cost savings to society through reductions in obesity and other chronic health conditions, and strain on social services.

5

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT RESULTS



Summary of Engagement Process

Input from the public, community groups, Town Council, Clearwater County Council, and Town staff was gathered between April 22 to May 20, 2025. In total, the Phase 2 engagement process produced 624 touchpoints with the community. Figure 6 provides a summary of the engagement process.

62% of respondents to the public survey reside in the Town of Rocky Mountain House and 37% of respondents reside in Clearwater County. The remaining responses preferred not to say or identified their community as other. Responses from both Town and County residents were aligned, with no significant differences identified in their facility and program needs.

Responses from both Town and County residents were aligned, with no significant differences identified in their facility and program needs.

Figure 6. Summary of Engagement Touchpoints

Engagement Activity	Total Engagement
Public Survey	443 responses
Community Group Survey	43 responses
Digital Community Input Workshops	8 participants
In-Person Engagement	110 participants
Town Council Workshop	6 participants
Clearwater County Workshop	7 participants
Interviews	7 completed
Total Touchpoints	624

Key Findings

The remainder of this section summarizes the key findings from the input received. To view expanded engagement results, please see Appendix B.



Photo Credit (top-bottom): Town of Rocky Mountain House, Travel Alberta, Town of Rocky Mountain House

Public Survey Results

NEW OR IMPROVED FACILITY AND PROGRAM NEEDS



Indoor sport and wellness

Indoor running/walking track, indoor court space/gymnasium, indoor turf field, indoor playground, and indoor pool



Indoor cultural

Performing arts facilities and visual arts facilities



Outdoor facilities

River access areas, outdoor festival/event space, trails/pathways, and bike skills park/pump track



Recreation programming

Educational/skill-building programs, festivals/events, and children/youth activity programs



QUALITY OF LIFE

94%

"Indoor and outdoor recreation opportunities are important to my **quality of life**"



LEVEL OF SATISFACTION WITH OPPORTUNITIES BY POPULATION



Respondents had lower levels of satisfaction with recreation opportunities for youth, families, children, and people with disabilities.

BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION



57% Scheduling/timing of activities



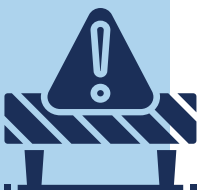
35% Too expensive



56% Program(s) not offered



33% Unaware of available activities



SUPPORT FOR INCREASED TAXATION AND USER FEES

54%

of respondents indicated they would support some level of increased property taxes to better meet indoor and outdoor recreation facility and program needs in Rocky Mountain House.

51%

of respondents indicated support for increased user fees to better meet their needs.



Community Group Survey Results

BARRIERS



Respondents identified barriers their organization is experiencing in meeting the needs of their participants. Respondents identified the following most often:

- Lack of available ice times.
- Lack of available gymnasium space.
- Suitable performing arts venue.
- Cost of facility rentals and travel.
- Maintenance needed at sports fields.

FACILITY NEEDS



Respondents identified new facilities and upgrades to existing facilities in order to serve their organization and participants. Respondents identified the following most often:

- New performing arts centre.
- Additional ice surface.
- Fieldhouse facility and more gymnasium spaces.
- Facility upgrades (e.g. Lou Soppit, ball fields, arena dressing rooms, and pool)

GROWTH IN PARTICIPATION



80%

of community groups anticipate growth in the number of participants in their programs over the next five years.

SUPPORT FOR INCREASED USER FEES



41%

of community groups that responded to the survey said they would be willing to pay for increased user fees.

PARTICIPATION IN FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGNS



84%

of community groups that responded indicated that their organization would be interested in participating in fundraising campaigns to support the development of new or enhanced facilities in Rocky Mountain House.



Photo Credits: Town of Rocky Mountain House

Community Road Show

Members of the consulting team visited the Town of Rocky Mountain House on May 2 and 3, 2025 to conduct in-person engagement stations. Staffed engagement stations were set up at multiple locations to collect input from community members regarding the recreation facility and program needs. The stations had table-top presentation boards where participants could “stick” their input onto the boards. In total, the consultant team engaged with 88 community members. Additionally, two Digital Community Input Workshops were hosted on May 8 and 15, 2025. 8 people from the community participated in the sessions. The following summarizes the input received.



Indoor Facility Requests:

- Indoor walking track
- Fieldhouse and indoor courts
- New facilities (e.g. climbing wall, indoor play space)
- Upgrades to pool (e.g. warmer pool, changerooms, HVAC)



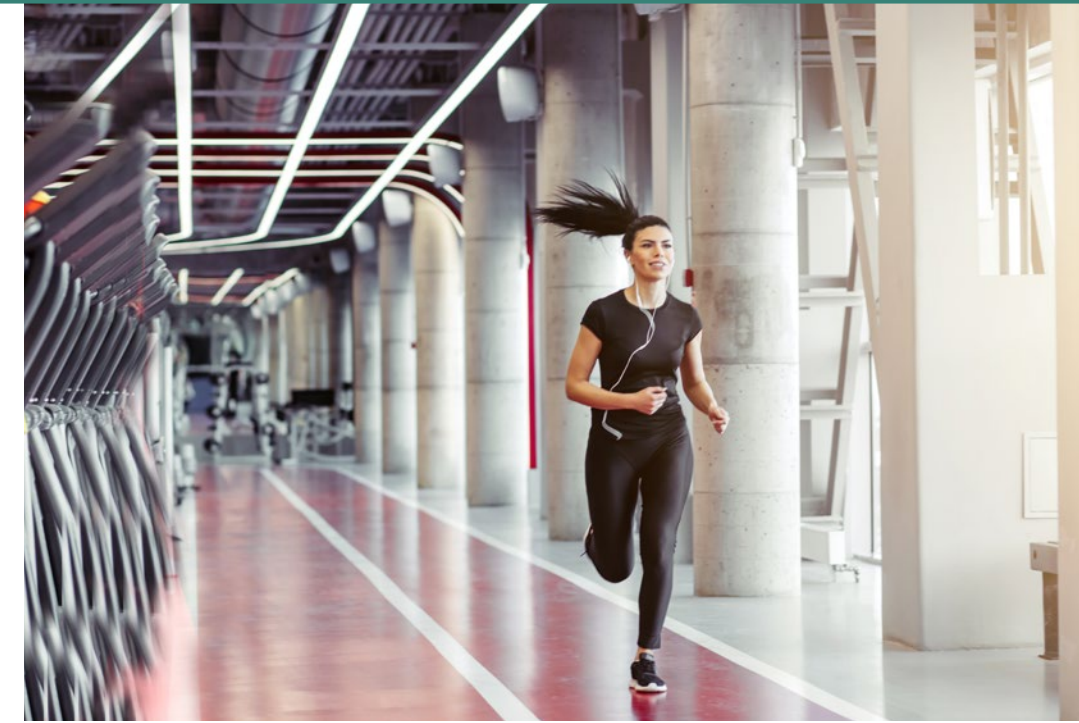
Outdoor Facility Requests:

- Better maintained sport fields (particularly soccer fields)
- Outdoor pool
- Expand skate park
- Trail improvements (e.g. signage)



Program/Activity Requests:

- More activities for youth
- More drop-in programs
- Costs can be a barrier
- Nature programs
- Events (e.g. music in the park, outdoor performances)
- Aquatic programs (e.g. more adult leisure swim, consistent Saturday swim lessons)



Seniors Engagement

A seniors session was hosted on May 2, 2025. 15 seniors attended the session. The following summarizes the input received.



Indoor Facility Requests:

- Indoor walking track
- Upgrades to pool
- Maintain existing facilities
- More of a balance between athletic and artistic facilities and programs



Outdoor Facility Requests:

- Trail amenities (e.g. benches, washrooms)
- Important to protect natural spaces
- Appreciation for what the community has



Program/Activity Requests:

- Enhanced communication and marketing
- Nature programming
- Dance programs
- Technology programs
- More adult swim times

Youth Engagement

A youth session was hosted on May 2, 2025. 7 youth attended the session. The following summarizes the input received.



Indoor Facility Requests:

- Multipurpose court space
- Enhanced pool amenities (e.g. slide, diving board)
- Youth centre



Outdoor Facility Requests:

- Skatepark upgrades (e.g. seating, more jumps, shade)
- Better connected trails
- Outdoor courts



Program/Activity Requests:

- More sport programs (e.g. volleyball, basketball)

Input from Town Council

An input workshop was held on April 15, 2025, for Town Council. 6 Councillors participated. The following summarizes the input received.

- Recreation is very important to the community. It is key to offering a high-quality life.
- There is a desire to attract new residents and retain existing residents. Additional indoor facilities, such as a fieldhouse, would support this.
- There is a desire to pursue sport tourism and further leverage recreation development as an economic driver.
- Build community pride and transform residents into ambassadors.
- Increase awareness of all that there is to do in Rocky Mountain House.
- Consideration of co-locating a new civic building with a fieldhouse.



Photo Credit: Rocky Mountain House Trail Blazers Rec Hockey Facebook

Input from Clearwater County Council

An input workshop was held on April 25, 2025, for Clearwater County Council. 7 Councillors participated. The following summarizes the input received.

- Recreation has been a primary focus and residents have high expectations for services.
- There is importance of regional collaboration, buy-in to a community vision, and a "one-door-in" approach.
- There is a desire for a long-term vision for the North Saskatchewan River Park site.
- Councillors are hearing from residents that there is a need for a fieldhouse and a large indoor riding arena.
- There is interest in expanding trail systems and connecting them regionally.
- There is interest in more events celebrating rural lifestyles.

“

Input Provided by Community Groups Based in Clearwater County

- *There is a desire for ball diamonds at the rodeo grounds.*
- *The cost of transportation can be a barrier to accessing programming in Rocky Mountain House.*
- *Camping infrastructure at the North Saskatchewan River Park is not well suited to rainy conditions.*
- *There is interest in improvements to bar area of the North Saskatchewan River Park to accommodate users without reefer trailers.*

6

VISION FOR
THE FUTURE



The community is poised to build on previous successes to enhance recreational services for the benefit of residents and visitors. Their commitment to fostering a high quality of life, strong partnerships, and the passion of community members and community organizations will fuel implementation of this plan over the coming years.

VISION FOR RECREATION

Investment in recreation, parks and culture will result in the development of facilities, amenities and programs that will make Rocky Mountain House a community of choice in Central Alberta.

OUTCOMES FOR RECREATION

Through implementation of this plan, we will:

1. Develop new recreation facilities that are in high demand and are not currently available in the area.
2. Invest in existing recreation facilities.
3. Support access to recreational facilities and programs for people of all ages and abilities.
4. Improve recreational access to the North Saskatchewan River and river valley.
5. Increase sport tourism in the community for the benefit of residents, businesses, and visitors.
6. Attract new residents and retain existing residents by supporting high quality of life through recreation services.

Guiding Principles for Service Delivery

To support implementation of the master plan we will follow these guiding principles:

1. Provide equitable access to facilities, services and programs which will include a balance between access for:
 - Organized groups and the general public
 - Passive and active endeavors
 - Competitive and non-competitive pursuits
 - Structured and spontaneous activities
 - Diverse ages, cultures, and abilities
 - Indoor and outdoor opportunities
2. Ensure accessibility and inclusion in all programs, facilities, and services.
3. Strive to achieve long-term sustainability, continuity, and adaptability in recreation infrastructure and programs.
4. Prioritize community engagement and participation in the planning, development, and evaluation of recreation programs and facilities.
5. Foster strong collaborations and partnerships with local organizations to leverage resources, expertise, and support for the delivery of recreation services.

7

**MASTER PLAN
PRIORITIES**

This section outlines the key areas of focus for developing recreation in the community. Priorities were identified based on extensive research, analysis, review of trends, consultant assessments, and engagement with residents and local groups. Some of the priorities will take more time to accomplish than others, so the Town and its partners are encouraged to pursue multiple priorities at the same time, as resources allow.

Priorities have been divided into five categories for organizational purposes (note that the numbering does not indicate priority). These categories include:

- 1. Indoor Facility Development
- 2. Outdoor Facility Development
- 3. Program Development
- 4. Service Delivery and Community Partnerships
- 5. Sport Tourism

Action items are identified under each priority. Each action item has been assigned a suggested priority rating, anticipated timeline, and estimated cost for implementation.

It should be recognized that this Master Plan is a non-statutory plan whose purpose is to provide direction and guidance. Implementation of the plan may be impacted by a variety of factors, including Council priorities, available resources, and emerging opportunities/challenges.

Legend

Recommended Direction

 MAINTAIN	Maintain the amenity or program at its current service level.
 IMPROVE	The amenity needs improvement to meet community needs.
 REPLACE	The amenity provides significant value to the community; however, it is no longer meeting community needs and should be replaced or significantly refurbished.
 REPURPOSE	The amenity is not providing significant value to the community and there are opportunities to repurpose it to better meet community needs.
 NEW AMENITY OR SERVICE	New amenity or service to meet community needs.
 FURTHER STUDY	Further study is recommended before proceeding with development.
 NEW STRATEGY, POLICY, OR TOOL	This would be a new strategy, policy or administrative tool that would serve to meet community needs.

Timeline

Short Term	2025 – 2027
Medium Term	2028 – 2031
Long Term	2031 – 2035


Priority

High Priority
Medium Priority
Lower Priority

Cost Criteria

\$	Less than \$100,000
\$\$	\$100,000 – \$999,999
\$\$\$	\$1,000,000 – \$4,999,999
\$\$\$\$	\$5,000,000 – \$9,999,999
\$\$\$\$\$	More than \$10,000,000
Staff and/or Contractors	Action can be undertaken with existing staff resources or contractors. Re-allocation of priorities or duties may be required.
Community	Action can be led or supported by resources from the community (e.g. volunteers, groups, businesses, etc.).

Quick Wins

 A blue star indicates that an action item is a “Quick Win.” Quick wins are actions that can be implemented within a short timeframe, have a high probability of success, and have a relatively low cost.



Indoor Facility Development

A. Work Toward the Addition of a New Fieldhouse

B. Maintain Existing Facilities

C. Support Spaces for Arts and Culture




D. Adopt Location Criteria for New Recreation Facilities

E. Consider Renovating the Aquatic Centre

F. Assess the Need for an Additional Ice Surface

1. Indoor Facility Development

A. Work Toward the Addition of a New Fieldhouse

Recommended Direction	Recommendation(s)	Rationale
 FURTHER STUDY	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Undertake a feasibility study for a new fieldhouse. Suggested amenities include an indoor walking/running track, multi-sport courts, turf field, indoor playground, and climbing wall. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A running/walking track, court/gym space and indoor turf were identified through the resident survey as the top requested new or improved indoor recreation facilities. An indoor playground and climbing wall also ranked highly.
 NEW AMENITY OR SERVICE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Consider putting down  movable court/turf sections on existing arena dry floors as an interim measure until a fieldhouse is developed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several community recreation groups have expressed interest in new indoor training facilities for various field and court sports to allow improved access and training opportunities year-round. • The only indoor court facilities in the community are in school gyms which are highly utilized and at capacity. • The RRRC has room for expansion north of the Bunch arena. This is the recommended location for a new fieldhouse. Co-locating a fieldhouse with the arenas and aquatic centre would further position the property as a recreation hub in the community. • A feasibility study for a new Town Hall from 2022 identified that adding a new Town Hall to the RRRC would minimize possibilities for future expansion of both buildings and that parking would likely need to be expanded. This further supports the recommendation to locate the fieldhouse at the RRRC. • A feasibility study for a fieldhouse should identify a vision for the facility and recommended amenities, and should investigate capital and operational costs, operating model, funding and revenue sources, programming, and action items to advance implementation.



Indoor Facility Development

- A. Work Toward the Addition of a New Fieldhouse
- B. Maintain Existing Facilities
- C. Support Spaces for Arts and Culture
- D. Adopt Location Criteria for New Recreation Facilities
- E. Consider Renovating the Aquatic Centre
- F. Assess the Need for an Additional Ice Surface

Recommended Direction	Recommendation(s)	Rationale
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">The amount of land needed to build a fieldhouse on varies depending on the scope and size of amenities that are included. The building footprint of a basic single fieldhouse (i.e. similar size to a hockey rink) that can leverage supporting indoor spaces of an existing building could be accommodated on 0.75 acres of land. Larger fieldhouses with multiple boarded courts can take up to 3 acres of land. Additional land would be needed for parking and circulation.



Timeline
Short



Priority
High




Cost
\$ (feasibility study)
\$\$\$\$\$ (construction)
Community



Indoor Facility Development

- A. Work Toward the Addition of a New Fieldhouse
- B. Maintain Existing Facilities
- C. Support Spaces for Arts and Culture
- D. Adopt Location Criteria for New Recreation Facilities
- E. Consider Renovating the Aquatic Centre
- F. Assess the Need for an Additional Ice Surface

B. Maintain Existing Facilities

Recommended Direction	Recommendation(s)	Rationale
 MAINTAIN	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Complete core upgrades to existing facilities to maintain service levels.2. Consider renovating the aquatic centre to enhance services and user experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Indoor facilities are highly utilized and highly valued in the community. They should be maintained to continue to provide access to the public and user groups until such a time as they require full lifecycle replacement.• A facility assessment of the RRRC in 2024 recommended additional studies for some building elements, including structural elements of an arena roof.• Potential aquatic centre renovations would include an elevator to enhance accessibility to the second floor, private changing areas in the change rooms, more bathrooms, enhanced amenities like a sauna or larger main tank, and a larger viewing area.



Timeline
Short/Ongoing



Priority
High



Cost
\$\$-\$\$\$



Indoor Facility Development

A. Work Toward the Addition of a New Fieldhouse

B. Maintain Existing Facilities

C. Support Spaces for Arts and Culture

D. Adopt Location Criteria for New Recreation Facilities

E. Consider Renovating the Aquatic Centre

F. Assess the Need for an Additional Ice Surface

C. Support Spaces for Arts and Culture

Recommended Direction	Recommendation(s)	Rationale
 NEW STRATEGY, POLICY, OR TOOL	1. Work with community organizations to explore potential options to improve access to and the quality of performing and visual arts facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performing and visual arts facilities were identified as the two most needed new or improved indoor cultural facilities through the public survey. There are limited performing and visual arts facilities in the community currently.



Timeline
Medium



Priority
Medium



Cost
Community/\$-\$

D. Adopt Location Criteria for New Recreation Facilities

Recommended Direction	Recommendation(s)	Rationale
 NEW STRATEGY, POLICY, OR TOOL	1. Adopt criteria to guide the location of new indoor facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Location criteria for future indoor facilities would help the Town to strategically assess the suitability of different sites for new recreational uses. See Appendix C for suggested criteria.



Timeline
Medium



Priority
Medium




Cost
Staff and/or Contractors



Indoor Facility Development

- A. Work Toward the Addition of a New Fieldhouse
- B. Maintain Existing Facilities
- C. Support Spaces for Arts and Culture
- D. Adopt Location Criteria for New Recreation Facilities
- E. Consider Renovating the Aquatic Centre
- F. Assess the Need for an Additional Ice Surface

E. Consider Renovating the Aquatic Centre

Recommended Direction	Recommendation(s)	Rationale
 IMPROVE	1. Consider renovating the aquatic centre to enhance services and user experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">22% of participants in the public survey identified a new or improved pool as the most needed indoor recreation facility. Many also noted the existing pool and associated amenities are in need of repair.The existing aquatic centre is highly utilized.Some residents are travelling to Red Deer and Sylvan Lake to access enhanced aquatic facilities. These facilities have amenities such as lazy rivers, diving boards, float structures, waterslides, warmer water, hot tubs, larger tot pools, and more modern showers and change rooms.A facility assessment of the aquatic centre in 2024 indicated that full life-cycle replacement was anticipated by 2052.Potential aquatic centre renovations would include an elevator to enhance accessibility to the second floor, private changing areas in the change rooms, more bathrooms, enhanced amenities like a sauna or larger main tank, and a larger viewing area.



Timeline
Medium



Priority
Medium




Cost
\$\$\$



Indoor Facility Development

- A. Work Toward the Addition of a New Fieldhouse
- B. Maintain Existing Facilities
- C. Support Spaces for Arts and Culture
- D. Adopt Location Criteria for New Recreation Facilities
- E. Consider Renovating the Aquatic Centre
- F. Assess the Need for an Additional Ice Surface

F. Assess the Need for an Additional Ice Surface

Recommended Direction	Recommendation(s)	Rationale
 NEW AMENITY OR SERVICE	1. In the medium term, assess the need for an additional ice surface.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Existing ice surfaces are fully allocated during prime time and are nearing maximum capacity. As the region’s population grows and demand for ice potentially increases, another ice surface may be needed in the future to address demand.Utilize the Town’s Amenity Investment Prioritization Matrix to assist in decision making for when to add another indoor ice surface.The amount of land needed to build an indoor ice surface varies depending on the scope and size of amenities that are included. The building footprint of a basic arena is approximately 0.75 acres. Additional land would be needed for parking and circulation.



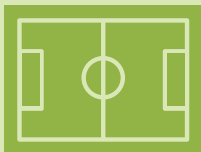
Timeline
Medium-Long



Priority
Low



Cost
\$ (needs assessment)



Outdoor Facility Development

A. Build New Fields and Sport Courts

- B. Improve Access to the North Saskatchewan River
- C. Repurpose Centennial Park Campground as a Community Event and Recreation Space
- D. Refurbish the Skate Park
- E. Develop Plans to Expand the Trail Network
- F. Build an Inclusive Playground
- G. Plan for the Future of the North Saskatchewan River Park

2. Outdoor Facility Development

A. Build New Fields and Sport Courts

Recommended Direction	Recommendation(s)	Rationale
 NEW AMENITY OR SERVICE	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Develop two new rectangular sports fields.2. Develop outdoor sport courts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Soccer fields were identified as the fourth most needed outdoor recreation facility through the public survey.• Existing fields in the community are school owned and maintained. The Town provides maintenance support for Curtis Field and Practice Field. Sport groups are unhappy with the state of these fields and are interested in enhanced facilities.• Some local teams travel out of Town for tournaments because local facilities are not adequate.• New rectangular fields could help to attract tournaments/sports tourism.• Any new rectangular fields should be built to accommodate multiple field sports. Related amenities such as washrooms/changerooms, lighting, storage, should also be considered to enhance user experience and facility availability throughout the season.• The amount of land needed to build a full-sized rectangular sport field is approximately 1.5-2 acres. Additional land would be needed for parking and circulation.



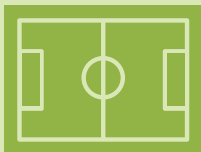
Timeline
Short



Priority
High








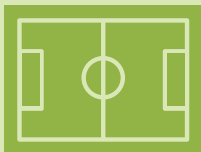
Cost
\$\$\$



Outdoor Facility Development

- A. Build New Fields and Sport Courts
- B. Improve Access to the North Saskatchewan River
- C. Repurpose Centennial Park Campground as a Community Event and Recreation Space
- D. Refurbish the Skate Park
- E. Develop Plans to Expand the Trail Network
- F. Build an Inclusive Playground
- G. Plan for the Future of the North Saskatchewan River Park

Recommended Direction	Recommendation(s)	Rationale
 IMPROVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">2. Work with ball sport organizations  to extend their seasons to allow additional teams to access ball fields.3. Consider upgrading existing ball diamonds to expand their use.4. Explore the potential to develop new ball fields.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There are five ball diamonds in the community, and 23 minor ball and 18 slo-pitch teams. There are eight slo-pitch teams on a waiting list.• Access to ball diamonds for games and practice is limited due to the popularity of the sport. All five ballfields are typically booked during prime time hours in season.• The Town could host tournaments if additional ball fields were available. Any new field should be adjustable so that they can be used by different divisions.• The Town could consider upgrading existing fields in the interim to support enhanced use for different divisions.
 Timeline Medium	 Priority Medium	 Cost Staff and/or Contractors/ Community/\$-\$\$\$



Outdoor Facility Development

A. Build New Fields and Sport Courts

B. Improve Access to the North Saskatchewan River

C. Repurpose Centennial Park Campground as a Community Event and Recreation Space



D. Refurbish the Skate Park

E. Develop Plans to Expand the Trail Network

F. Build an Inclusive Playground

G. Plan for the Future of the North Saskatchewan River Park

B. Improve Access to the North Saskatchewan River

Recommended Direction	Recommendation(s)	Rationale
 FURTHER STUDY  IMPROVE	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Undertake a feasibility study to develop new public access points to the North Saskatchewan River, including hand carry and trailered boat launches and docks, and related supporting infrastructure.2. Upgrade existing river side parks to enhance public access to the North Saskatchewan River, including trails to the water, seating areas and other amenities to support additional recreational activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• River access areas were identified through the public survey as the most needed new or improved outdoor recreation facility.• There are limited river access points currently.• Amenities such as washrooms, changerooms, boat storage, signage, maps and safety information, waste collection, and parking would further support those who participate in water-based activities.• While there are parks next to the water, there are few formal and comfortable opportunities to spend time at the water's edge. Improvements such as new trails and stairs to the riverside, seating and viewing areas would support more direct land-based interaction with the river and help the Town embrace and celebrate its connection to this important waterbody.



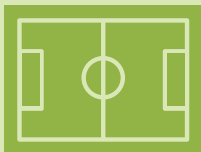
Timeline
Short



Priority
High



Cost
\$-\$\$\$ (feasibility study)
\$-\$\$\$\$ (improvements)



Outdoor Facility Development

A. Build New Fields and Sport Courts

B. Improve Access to the North Saskatchewan River

C. Repurpose Centennial Park Campground as a Community Event and Recreation Space


D. Refurbish the Skate Park

E. Develop Plans to Expand the Trail Network

F. Build an Inclusive Playground

G. Plan for the Future of the North Saskatchewan River Park

C. Repurpose Centennial Park Campground as a Community Event and Recreation Space

Recommended Direction	Recommendation(s)	Rationale
 REPURPOSE	<ol style="list-style-type: none">Undertake a concept design to initiate the repurposing of Centennial Park Campground as a Community Event and Recreation Space. Proposed amenities include:<ul style="list-style-type: none">permanent stage or amphitheaterevent supporting features (i.e. utility connections, seating, washrooms, hardscaping, shade structures)multi-sport courtsnatural play elementsConduct community engagement to confirm the concept design.Redevelop the site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">There is strong demand for festivals and events, and spaces to host them, in the community. There is also strong demand, especially among youth, for sport courts.There are no purpose-built outdoor event venues in Rocky Mountain House and no existing multi-sport courts that can accommodate basketball and volleyball. There are also no nature inspired play spaces, another amenity that residents would like to see more of in the community.An event and recreation space would help attract new festivals and events to the Town, providing residents and visitors with new recreation offerings. It would also attract spontaneous use by people of all ages outside of events. Increased use of the park would help to limit the problematic uses and incidents that the existing campground experiences. See Appendix D for an assessment of Centennial Park Campground.The addition of a beach volleyball court to the park would support the community’s bid for the 2028 Alberta Summer Games.An event and recreation space would take advantage of existing amenities on and near the site.



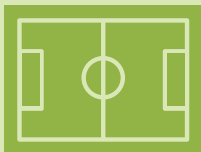
Timeline
Short-Medium



Priority
High



Cost
\$ (concept design)
\$\$\$ (construction)



Outdoor Facility Development

A. Build New Fields and Sport Courts

B. Improve Access to the North Saskatchewan River

C. Repurpose Centennial Park Campground as a Community Event and Recreation Space


D. Refurbish the Skate Park

E. Develop Plans to Expand the Trail Network

F. Build an Inclusive Playground

G. Plan for the Future of the North Saskatchewan River Park

D. Refurbish the Skate Park

Recommended Direction	Recommendation(s)	Rationale
 IMPROVE	1. Renovate and expand the skatepark.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The skatepark is a well-used amenity. It offers kids, youth and adults opportunities for spontaneous activity. It could be enhanced and enlarged to better serve the community.Renovations would also address safety issues related to deteriorating concrete and metal surfaces.Youth engagement session participants requested seating, more jumps, tables, more shade, more security presence, washrooms and lighting at the park.



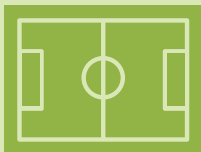
Timeline
Short-Medium



Priority
High




Cost
Community/\$\$



Outdoor Facility Development

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- G. Plan for the Future of the North Saskatchewan River Park

E. Develop Plans to Expand the Trail Network

Recommended Direction	Recommendation(s)	Rationale
 NEW STRATEGY, POLICY, OR TOOL	1. Update the Town's Trail Master Plan, focusing on expanding the trail network and improving connections between activity hubs and destinations (e.g. river, downtown, rec facilities, across the river and across the highway).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Trails/pathways were identified through the public survey as the third most needed new or improved outdoor amenity.An update to the Town’s Trails Master Plan (2009) would better align it with current community aspirations as expressed through the public survey and goals of the Town’s Municipal Development Plan.An updated trail master plan should include guidance on the future of multi-use trails, paths and mountain bike trails in the community.



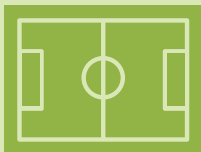
Timeline
Medium



Priority
Medium





Cost
\$





Outdoor Facility Development

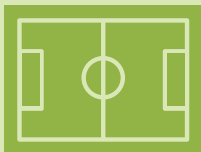
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- G. Plan for the Future of the North Saskatchewan River Park

Recommended Direction	Recommendation(s)	Rationale
 NEW STRATEGY, POLICY, OR TOOL	2. Consider working with Clearwater County to develop a regional trail strategy, including the creation of trail connections between the Town and County and key destinations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Formal trail connections to regional destinations would also support active lifestyles and safer non-motorized access to nearby amenities such as Crimson Lake and Twin Lakes.Clearwater County’s Municipal Development Plan supports the continuation of efforts to develop a system of interconnected trails between Rocky Mountain House and Nordegg.

**Timeline**
Medium

**Priority**
Low


**Cost**
\$



Outdoor Facility Development

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F. Build an Inclusive Playground

Recommended Direction	Recommendation(s)	Rationale
 NEW AMENITY OR SERVICE	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Build an inclusive playground.2. Consider incorporating nature-based play elements as playgrounds are renewed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rocky Mountain House does not currently have an inclusive playground.• Survey respondents indicated an interest in more natural play spaces for kids.



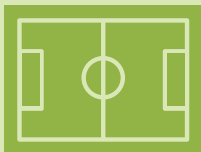
Timeline
Medium



Priority
Medium




Cost
\$\$



Outdoor Facility Development

- A. Build New Fields and Sport Courts
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- G. Plan for the Future of the North Saskatchewan River Park

G. Plan for the Future of the North Saskatchewan River Park

Recommended Direction	Recommendation(s)	Rationale
 NEW STRATEGY, POLICY, OR TOOL	1. Develop a management plan for the site including the investigation and evaluation of feasible future options for its use, operations, and ownership.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The NSRP is a significant recreational asset for the region.The site is currently underutilized and improvements to the site have historically been made on an ad-hoc basis.The site currently lacks the infrastructure needed to enhance its use for additional activities.Evaluation of options for the future of the site could include alternative uses, programming, operational, partnership and ownership models.



Timeline
Medium



Priority
Low



Cost
\$




Program Development

- A. Offer More Public Programming During Prime Time
- B. Increase Programming for Children and Youth
- C. Introduce Programming for Young Adults
- D. Diversify Programming for Adults, Seniors and People with Disabilities
- E. Increase Visual Arts Programming
- F. Enhance Community Events

3. Program Development

A. Offer More Public Programming During Prime Time

Recommended Direction	Recommendation(s)	Rationale
 IMPROVE	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Offer more public programming at anchor recreation facilities during prime time (i.e. RRRC, Co-operative Aquatic Centre).2. Offer 'learn to play' recreation programs and provide the equipment required to participate in these programs and in spontaneous recreational activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There are no regularly scheduled prime time public drop in opportunities at the ice arenas. This limits public access to these facilities and prioritizes user groups over casual users.• Increasing public access on weekday evenings and weekends could result in greater user satisfaction and more equity between casual users and organized user groups.• Additional facility access opportunities should be paired with free or low cost rental equipment and 'learn to' programs. These would help to further reduce barriers for people who may not have the equipment or skills needed to allow them to participate fully.



Timeline
Short



Priority
High



Cost
Staff and/or Contractors/\$



Program Development

A. Offer More Public Programming During Prime Time

B. Increase Programming for Children and Youth



C. Introduce Programming for Young Adults

D. Diversify Programming for Adults, Seniors and People with Disabilities

E. Increase Visual Arts Programming

F. Enhance Community Events

B. Increase Programming for Children and Youth

Recommended Direction	Recommendation(s)	Rationale
 NEW AMENITY OR SERVICE	 1. Expand programming for children and youth, including camps, play days, and sports programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programming for children and youth was identified as the third more needed program. More sport programs (volleyball, basketball) were specifically requested by youth at the youth engagement session.



Timeline
Short





Priority
Medium



Cost
Staff and/or Contractors/\$

C. Introduce Programming for Young Adults

Recommended Direction	Recommendation(s)	Rationale
 NEW AMENITY OR SERVICE	 1. Provide fun opportunities for young adults to be social, get active and stay connected to the community by expanding casual recreational programming in the spring and summer months, including piloting new field and court sport programs and rec league opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Casual programming for young adults would foster local connections, support well-being during school breaks, and help strengthen long-term community attachment.



Timeline
Short



Priority
Medium



Cost
Staff and/or Contractors/\$



Program Development

- A. Offer More Public Programming During Prime Time
- B. Increase Programming for Children and Youth
- C. Introduce Programming for Young Adults
- D. Diversify Programming for Adults, Seniors and People with Disabilities**
- E. Increase Visual Arts Programming
- F. Enhance Community Events

D. Diversify Programming for Adults, Seniors and People with Disabilities

Recommended Direction	Recommendation(s)	Rationale
 NEW AMENITY OR SERVICE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduce new fun and educational skill building programs for residents of all ages, including those that support skills related to safe recreation in the surrounding region. 2. Expand programming for seniors to provide more opportunities for fun, active living and social connections. 3. Develop programming for people with disabilities, working with community organizations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational and skill building programs were identified as the most needed indoor or outdoor program. • The public survey indicated there are low levels of satisfaction with current programs for youth, seniors, adults, and people with disabilities.



Timeline
Short




Priority
Medium



Cost
Staff and/or Contractors/
Community/\$

E. Increase Visual Arts Programming

Recommended Direction	Recommendation(s)	Rationale
 NEW AMENITY OR SERVICE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work with community groups to increase visual arts programming. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New and improved visual arts programming (painting, pottery, weaving, etc.) was requested by survey respondents. • Visual arts programs are currently limited in the community.



Timeline
Short



Priority
Medium




Cost
Staff and/or Contractors/
Community/\$



Program Development

- A. Offer More Public Programming During Prime Time
- B. Increase Programming for Children and Youth
- C. Introduce Programming for Young Adults
- D. Diversify Programming for Adults, Seniors and People with Disabilities
- E. Increase Visual Arts Programming
- F. Enhance Community Events

F. Enhance Community Events

Recommended Direction	Recommendation(s)	Rationale
 NEW AMENITY OR SERVICE	1. Work with community groups and residents to identify opportunities and challenges related to the delivery of community-led events, and to find ways for the Town to support more community-led activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Festivals/events were identified through the public survey as the second most needed program.• There are limited events/festivals held in the community.• Supporting community groups to host events would enhance recreational activities available to residents and build the capacity of groups to deliver local programming.• Capacity building activities could include helping groups with event planning and permitting, providing event hosting kits, volunteer support, and event delivery training opportunities.• The Town’s recently formed Community Events Committee could support event creation, coordination and support activities.



Timeline
Ongoing



Priority
Medium




Cost
Community/Staff and/or Contractors/\$



Program Development

- A. Offer More Public Programming During Prime Time
- B. Increase Programming for Children and Youth
- C. Introduce Programming for Young Adults
- D. Diversify Programming for Adults, Seniors and People with Disabilities
- E. Increase Visual Arts Programming
- F. Enhance Community Events

Recommended Direction	Recommendation(s)	Rationale
 FURTHER STUDY	2. Explore the potential of reestablishing an annual event that celebrates the community's cultural, heritage and recreational assets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">There is no longer a signature annual community celebration in the Town or region.The Town, Clearwater County, tourism partners and First Nations could collaborate to establish a new annual event that celebrates the community and its cultural, recreational and natural assets. A large-scale multi-day festival could also attract visitors to the community.



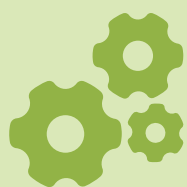
Timeline
Medium



Priority
Low



Cost
Community/Staff and/or Contractors/\$




Service Delivery and Community Partnerships

- A. Assist Community Groups to Deliver Recreation Programming and Facilities
- B. Update Facility Allocation Policies
- C. Strengthen the Town’s Approach to Fee Setting
- D. Enhance Facility Connections and Design
- E. Review and Update the Recreation Master Plan Every Five Years

4. Service Delivery and Community Partnerships

A. Assist Community Groups to Deliver Recreation Programming and Facilities

Recommended Direction	Recommendation(s)	Rationale
 NEW AMENITY OR SERVICE	1. Create a Community Recreation Support Initiative that provides focused assistance to community groups to deliver recreational programs and facilities for the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The community benefits greatly from the efforts of local recreational organizations. These groups provide recreational programming and plan for and help fund recreational facilities in the region.• Formalized assistance for community groups to continue to undertake these activities would help to ensure their continued participation in recreation service delivery, along with the resulting benefits to program participants and facility users.• A Community Recreation Support Initiative could provide: capacity building support for local organizations (e.g. board, grant writing, project management and volunteer training), access to funding (e.g. incorporation and expansion of the Town’s Community Grant Program and connections to external grant providers), facilitation services (e.g. liaison and navigation support for groups across the Town’s administration), convening (e.g. engaging groups on a regular basis to understand evolving needs and issues), and reporting (e.g. regularly communicating about the outcomes of the initiative to enhance accountability, transparency and communicate commitment).



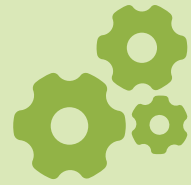
Timeline
Short



Priority
Medium



Cost
Staff and/or Contractors



Service Delivery and Community Partnerships

A. Assist Community Groups to Deliver Recreation Programming and Facilities


B. Update Facility Allocation Policies

C. Strengthen the Town's Approach to Fee Setting

D. Enhance Facility Connections and Design

E. Review and Update the Recreation Master Plan Every Five Years

B. Update Facility Allocation Policies

Recommended Direction	Recommendation(s)	Rationale
 IMPROVE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Update the Ice Allocation Policy to address gaps related to access by all residents. 2. Consider including other high demand bookable recreation facilities (e.g. pool, sports fields) in an updated allocation policy to guide equitable allocation. 3. Conduct facility allocation audits on an annual basis to track and better understand who is using facilities, and to determine if changes are required to enhance equitable access to facilities through changes to allocation policies and practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Despite public programming being identified as the first allocation priority, there are no regularly scheduled public skate or shiny drop-in opportunities during prime time hours, limiting access for residents of the Town and County who do not participate in organized ice sports. • Other gaps in the policy include: lack of reference to gender or equity deserving groups (including people with disabilities or people from disadvantaged economic or cultural groups), and lack of direction for making space for emerging groups (e.g. those not historically using ice surfaces). The policy also entrenches historical precedents as an allocation factor. • The policy does not include direction for monitoring implementation. Monitoring would improve accountability to evaluate the policy's efficacy and practices in place to implement it.



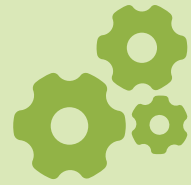
Timeline
Short



Priority
High



Cost
Staff and/or Contractors



Service Delivery and Community Partnerships

A. Assist Community Groups to Deliver Recreation Programming and Facilities


B. Update Facility Allocation Policies

C. Strengthen the Town's Approach to Fee Setting

D. Enhance Facility Connections and Design

E. Review and Update the Recreation Master Plan Every Five Years

C. Strengthen the Town's Approach to Fee Setting

Recommended Direction	Recommendation(s)	Rationale
 IMPROVE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider updating the Fees, Rates and Charges Bylaw 2024/16 to incorporate a sound philosophy/strategy and a clear process for setting fees and charges. 2. Review all recreation related fees and charges based on the strategic guidance in a revised Fees, Rates and Charges Bylaw, and establish new fees that align with it. 3. Review fees and charges every two years and update the bylaw accordingly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Town's existing Fees, Rates and Charges Bylaw provides direction on what recreation services entail a fee and what amount these fees should be. However, it does not contain principles or a methodology for fee setting. • Fees are a key tool for cost recovery of recreation services. They should be reviewed on a regular basis and set based on multiple factors that are codified as criteria in a corresponding Town policy. • Current fees for indoor ice surface bookings are low in comparison to other communities. There is opportunity to enhance cost recovery and the extent to which those who benefit the most from this service contribute to it in a way that corresponds with the benefits they receive. • Examples of fee setting criteria include strategic direction from Town Council and senior staff, community input (residents, users, and user groups), level of community demand for the service, consideration of existing market prices and competition from the non-profit and private sector, and equity in tax support among comparable recreational pursuits in the community.



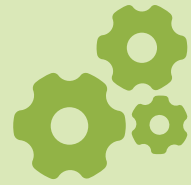
Timeline
Medium



Priority
Low



Cost
Staff and/or Contractors



Service Delivery and Community Partnerships

A. Assist Community Groups to Deliver Recreation Programming and Facilities


B. Update Facility Allocation Policies

C. Strengthen the Town's Approach to Fee Setting

D. Enhance Facility Connections and Design

E. Review and Update the Recreation Master Plan Every Five Years

D. Enhance Facility Connections and Design

Recommended Direction	Recommendation(s)	Rationale
 IMPROVE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strive to enhance the standard of building design and landscape connections between indoor and outdoor recreation amenities when new facilities are built and when existing facilities are renovated/expanded. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While many existing facilities (e.g. RRRC, Aquatic Centre, Lou Soppit and surrounding fields) are located close to one another, there are limited landscape and pedestrian connections between them. • Facilities were built at different times, and design standards and expectations have changed. • Building facades, landscaping and pedestrian connections could be upgraded to support the evolution of the Town's cluster of recreational amenities into a cohesive and iconic 'recreational precinct' and destination for leisure and wellness. Such a precinct would help build community pride, attract residents and investment, and better support events held at recreation facilities. • The design of new facilities should incorporate building elements that reinforce the identity of the community and showcase its cultural and natural assets.



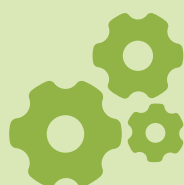
Timeline
Ongoing



Priority
Low



Cost
Variable



Service Delivery and Community Partnerships

A. Assist Community Groups to Deliver Recreation Programming and Facilities


B. Update Facility Allocation Policies

C. Strengthen the Town’s Approach to Fee Setting

D. Enhance Facility Connections and Design

E. Review and Update the Recreation Master Plan Every Five Years

E. Review and Update the Recreation Master Plan Every Five Years

Recommended Direction	Recommendation(s)	Rationale
 NEW STRATEGY, POLICY, OR TOOL	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Review the Master Plan every five years and undertake a fulsome update as required.2. Re-evaluate the plan if local economic conditions shift substantially.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A review of the Master Plan should be completed after five years of implementation.• A fulsome update may be needed at that time depending on progress made and evolving circumstances.



Timeline
Ongoing



Priority
High



Cost
Staff and/or Contractors/\$




Sports Tourism

A. Advance Sport Tourism

5. Sports Tourism

A. Advance Sport Tourism

Recommended Direction	Recommendation(s)	Rationale
 NEW AMENITY OR SERVICE	1. Advance the actions identified in the Implementation Plan of Appendix E – Sports Event Tourism Opportunity Assessment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sport tourism can benefit the community in many ways, including by building community pride, attracting overnight visitors, and injecting visitor spending into the local economy.• The Town has many assets to build on in bids to host small and mid-sized sport events in the short term. It is particularly well suited to attract events that are youth and family friendly, development level and amateur focused, and that cater to niche outdoor recreation activities and enthusiasts.• Hosting small to medium-sized events that are well aligned with available capacity and facilities will help grow the community’s potential to host larger events and to foster new home grown events in the longer term.• Many actions outlined in this Master Plan complement those identified in the Sports Event Tourism Opportunity Assessment.



Timeline
Short - Medium



Priority
High



Cost
Staff and/or Contractors/
Community/\$-\$-\$

8

MEASURING PROGRESS

Photo Credit: Expedition Management Consulting Ltd.



This section provides guidance toward implementing the Master Plan.

Organizational Lead

The Town of Rocky Mountain House will take the lead role in implementing the Master Plan. It will work with partners including Clearwater County, community organizations, user groups and the local business community, and is encouraged to seek partnerships with the provincial government to leverage available expertise and resources.

Future Planning, Evaluation, and Reporting

A key component of the success of the Master Plan will be the evaluation of its initiatives. Recommended performance measures are included in this section. The action plan should be reviewed bi-annually, at which time priorities should be re-evaluated and a discussion of any variances should occur in reference to performance measures. If new projects are added (or old projects removed) as the plan progresses, this should be done by weighing the relative priority of all projects in the plan. The action plan should be updated on a yearly basis; therefore, the third quarter evaluation period will set the stage for the updated version of the plan. In the fourth quarter, the updated plan should be formalized, and a draft approved by the end of the year. A fulsome update of the Master Plan may be needed after year five of implementation, depending on progress made and circumstances at the time.

Implementation Considerations

The Master Plan recommends several priorities and supporting recommendations. Attempting to complete all initiatives concurrently will stretch the resources and limit the focus of the Town as it implements the plan. Therefore, it is recommended that implementation of the plan begins with the highest priority items and quick wins.

Top 10 Actions

The following actions have been identified as the top priorities of the master plan. They are listed in a recommended order of priority. This priority list and all components of the plan are for planning purposes only and subject to annual budget approvals and ongoing planning efforts from the municipal partners. The Town may add, remove or re-order activities based on the needs of the community at the time of implementation.


1

Develop two new rectangular sports fields that can accommodate multiple field sports and host tournaments.


2

Undertake a feasibility study for a new fieldhouse facility that could include an indoor walking/running track, multi-sport courts, turf field, indoor playground, and climbing wall.


3

Undertake a concept design to initiate the re-purposing of Centennial Park Campground as a Community Event and Recreation Space.


4

Strive to increase public access to facilities during prime time.


5

Grow sport tourism by bidding on events that are aligned with the community's assets and by building local capacity for event hosting and event development.


6

Develop new public access points to the North Saskatchewan River, including hand carry and trailered boat launches and docks, and related supporting infrastructure.


7

Complete core upgrades for existing facilities to maintain service levels, including items identified in the Arena and Aquatics Facility condition assessments, and consider renovations to the aquatic centre.


8

In the medium term, assess the need to add another indoor ice surface.


9

Enhance facilities and programming for performing and visual arts.


10

Increase the capacity of community groups to deliver recreational programs and facilities through the creation of a Community Recreation Support Initiative.

Performance Measures

The Town of Rocky Mountain House can use the following measures to track performance during implementation of the Master Plan. Exact numbers and percentages should be added to each performance measure once benchmarks have been developed.

Outcomes	KPI	Measurement Tools	Measurement Value
Social Measures	1.1 Increased public utilization of amenities (e.g. ice surfaces, sports fields, parks and trails).	User statistics Capacity analysis	% Growth % Utilization
	1.2 Strong support for recreation offerings in the community.	Resident and user surveys	% Support
	1.3 Facilities and programs positively impact individual and community wellness.	Resident and user surveys	% Satisfaction
	1.4 Facilities and programs demonstrate a high level of maintenance and accessibility.	Accessibility audits, user surveys	% Satisfaction
	1.5 Increased user satisfaction.	User surveys	% Satisfaction
	1.6 Increased equity in facility allocation.	Allocation audits	% Allocation alignment with policy
	1.7 Increase in community festivals and events.	Event calendar	% Growth
	1.8 Enhanced access to the North Saskatchewan River and River Valley.	Infrastructure improvements and new access points	% Growth
	1.9 Residents report that recreation amenities are a key factor in their decision to live in the community.	Resident surveys	% Growth
	1.10 Increase in the number of sport events hosted in the community.	Event calendar	% Growth
	1.11 Increase in the number of local sport organizations bidding to host events in Rocky Mountain House.	Bid tracking	% Growth
Economic Measures	2.1 Increased revenue from programs/rentals/events.	Revenue tracking	% Growth
	2.2 Cost control measures are in place.	Expense tracking	% Target Realization
	2.3 Budget targets are achieved.	Dept. budget	% Target Realization

Outcomes	KPI	Measurement Tools	Measurement Value
	2.4 Increased market reach and awareness (for facilities, events, tourism and community overall).	Resident and user surveys	% Market Growth % Awareness
	2.5 Growth in facility bookings in the community.	Facility bookings	% Growth
	2.6 Increase in visitors to the community.	Visitor numbers	% Growth
	2.7 Capital projects and programs are funded through a diversity of sources (including grants, business sponsorships, local fundraising, tax support and/or borrowing).	Annual and project budgets	% Target Realization
Organizational Measures	3.1 Facilities are appropriately staffed to successfully deliver programs and run operations.	Staffing complement, staff survey	% Satisfaction
	3.2 Facility and program performance are reviewed annually.	Annual report	% Target Realization % Growth
	3.3 Community organizations report enhanced support.	User group survey	% Satisfaction
	3.4 Municipal-led and municipal-supported initiatives align with the directions of this Master Plan.	Annual report	% Alignment
	3.5 Partnerships for service delivery are strong.	Partner feedback and results	% Satisfaction
	3.6 Increase in the number of successful event bids.	Event bid results	% Growth
Environmental Measures	4.1 Facility use and development minimizes negative impact to the environment.	Environmental impact assessments, energy audits	Impacts Identified % Energy Savings
	4.2 Facility use and development minimizes wildfire and extreme weather related risks.	Audits	Risks and impacts Identified
	4.3 Facility use and development encourages active transportation (walking, biking, etc.) to and from recreational amenities.	User surveys	% Growth in Use

9

CONCLUSION



Photo Credit: Rocky Mountain House



This Master Plan positions the community for elevated recreational services. It confirms the importance of partnerships, of connections to the natural and built assets that make the area a great place to live and invest, and of providing facilities and programs that enliven the community and best meet the needs of residents. It similarly positions the Town to attract more sport events and visitors for the benefit of the community. Through implementation of the Master Plan, partnerships with community groups will be strengthened, recreational offerings will be diversified, and new people will be attracted to live, visit and play.

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Facility and Program Inventory

Indoor Facilities in the Town of Rocky Mountain House

Rocky Regional Recreation Centre (RRRC)

The Town's largest recreation facility featuring two arenas (Empringham Arena and Bunch Arena), a fitness centre, dance studio, curling rink and lounge, meeting rooms, an arts and crafts studio, indoor children's play centre and offices. It also has a large lobby, on-site catering and concession services. The Bunch Arena seats 910 people. The centre is located north of downtown and is close to other recreation facilities. The facility was built in 2001. Arenas operate daily in the winter months from 6:00am to 12:30am.

Co-operative Aquatic Centre

Dedicated aquatic centre with a pool that can be used for lane swimming (five lanes) and public swimming, a play pool, waterslide and hot tub. There is a viewing area and multipurpose room on the second floor of the facility. They are accessed via stairs only. The centre is located north of downtown and next to the RRRC. It was built in 1976. Open hours are Monday to Friday 6:00am-9:00pm, Saturday and Sunday 12:00pm-4:00pm, and holidays 12:00pm-4:00pm.

Lou Soppit Community Centre

Community gathering place with over 5,000ft² of rental spaces including two halls. It also contains a

kitchen, stage, and meeting room. Suitable for large events, weddings, special events, and community meetings. Located approximately 400m east of the RRRC and aquatic centre. Built in 1987.

Rocky Mountain House Public Library

The library is operated by the Parkland Regional Library System. It is just west of downtown on a street with a mix of commercial and residential buildings.

School Gyms

There are nine school gyms in the community. The majority can be used for basketball, volleyball and badminton.

Indoor Facilities in Clearwater County

Kurt Browing Arena and Caroline Community Hub

This facility is in the hamlet of Caroline. It includes a community hall, one arena ice surface/dry floor, fitness centre, hall kitchen, and three sheet curling rink with a lounge and viewing area. The curling rink is available for dry floor use in the summer. The recreation grounds around the facility include two ball diamonds and beach volleyball court, washrooms with showers, and a concession. The facility is largely operated by the Caroline Agricultural Society. The Caroline Curling Club operates the curling rink.

Community Halls

There are 20 community halls in the County. Most of them are clustered in the eastern area.

Libraries

There are two libraries in the County, the Caroline Library and Nordegg Library. Both are operated by the Parkland Regional Library System.

Outdoor Facilities in the Town of Rocky Mountain House

North Saskatchewan River Park

This is a 140-acre outdoor event centre and rodeo grounds. It includes an arena, livestock pens, a barn style rental hall with capacity for 300, a ½ mile dirt track, and covered grandstands with seating for 3,000. Dry camping can be accommodated on site (up to 500 campers). Three rodeos are hosted there annually. The park is west of the Town centre, across the North Saskatchewan River.

Curtis Field

A playing field with lighting and a 400m shale track. In the winter it is home to an outdoor skating track. There is also a practice field on site. Football, rugby and soccer can be played here. The site is across from the RRRC on Wild Rose School Division land.

Centennial Park Campground

A treed park and campground within the Town. It contains 15 campsites with gravel pads. Some sites are powered. There are washrooms with showers and potable water. It is across from the Pioneer school, surrounded by residential on three sides and a school field on the other. The campground is operated seasonally by the Town.

Cooperative Park

Contains a spray park and skate park, and has a washroom on site. Located behind the Lou Soppit Centre on Wild Rose School Division land.

Helen Hunley Memorial Park

Includes an amphitheatre, picnic shelter, picnic tables, and washrooms. Located across from the Lou Soppit Centre.

Edward Jones Community Courts

Reservable tennis (3) or pickleball (6) courts. Located next to Curtis Fiels.

Tennis and Pickleball Courts

There are reservable tennis (3) or pickleball (6) courts located next to Curtis Field. Additionally, there are four pickleball courts located in the centre of Town that are available for drop-in use.

Off-leash Dog Park

A fenced area with trees north of the high school and next to Highway 11.

Recreation Park Ball Diamonds

Site includes five ball diamonds, a catering facility, a shower house and washrooms. Four diamonds are for slo-pitch and one is sized for baseball. Located east of Highway 11, removed from other key recreation amenities. Used for tournaments and league play.

Soccer Fields

There are three soccer fields in the community. They are owned by the School Division.

Outdoor Rink (ODR)

A seasonal outdoor rink with boards and hockey nets. Located just north of the RRCC.

Bike Park

The park is scheduled to be built in 2026. It will include two asphalt pump tracks, a dirt skills track, and a jump line. One of the pump tracks will be an advanced line that can accommodate races. It will be located just south of the off-leash dog park.

Parks and Playgrounds

In addition to those described above, there are 20 parks in the community. Two are next to the North Saskatchewan River. There are also 17 playgrounds throughout the community.

Trails

There are several kilometres of trails in the community. Key among these is a 7-kilometre paved multipurpose trail that loops through Town and a 5km trail that connects the community to the Rocky Mountain House National Historic site. There are several shorter gravel trails in the Town and informal mountain bike trails in the river valley.

Outdoor Facilities in Clearwater County

Leslieville Recreation Area

An eight acre recreation space in the hamlet of Leslieville. It includes a baseball diamond and soccer pitch, playground and trails.

Outdoor Skating Rinks

There are seven outdoor skating rinks in the County. Most are co-located with community halls.

Ball Diamonds

There are twelve baseball diamonds in the County. Most are co-located with community halls.

Playgrounds

There are twelve playgrounds in the County. Most are co-located with community halls.

Camping Areas

There are six camping areas at community halls in the County.

Nordegg Historical Golf Course

The Nordegg Historical Golf Course is operated by the Nordegg Golf Association. It is an executive length 9-hole course.



Nordegg Historical Golf Course
Photo Credit: Golf Pass

Programs

The Town of Rocky Mountain House offers a variety of programs for residents of the Town and County. They include:

- Aquatics
 - Learn to swim (all ages)
 - Lifesaving/leadership
 - Kayaking
 - Lane swim
 - Public swim
 - Special needs swim
 - Pre-school swim
 - Adult leisure swim
 - Senior swim
 - Aquafit
- Drop-in Arena
 - Drop-in sports
 - Drop-in wheels
- Day Camps
 - Spring Break
 - Summer
- Ice
 - Learn to Skate
 - Public Skate
 - Pre-school Skate
 - Shinny (seniors and adult)
- Fitness
 - Circuit/TRX
 - Boot Camp (adult and youth)
 - Yoga/Pilates
 - Senior/Gentle Fitness
 - Spin
- Other
 - Girls Unleashed
 - Guys Unleashed
 - ESCAPE program
 - Seniors week

Events

The following identifies the main events that are offered in the Town.

Town-run Events

- Alberta Days
- Marketplace on Main
- Family Day Celebration
- Outdoor Movies
- Spring Into Summer

Community-run Events

- Rocky Chamber Trade Show
- Sports tournaments
- Canada Day Celebrations
- Parade of Lights
- Halloween Bash
- Rocky Pro Rodeo
- Chucks WPCA
- Demo Derby
- Western Wheels

Through the Recreation Facility Access Program, the Town and County partner to provide affordable access to individuals and families facing financial barriers to participation in recreation.

There are also numerous community organizations that offer recreation programs including arts and crafts, dance, gymnastics, cheerleading, baseball, soccer, rugby, football, skating, pickleball, hockey, figure skating, speedskating, paddling, seniors programming and more.

Appendix B – Expanded Engagement Results

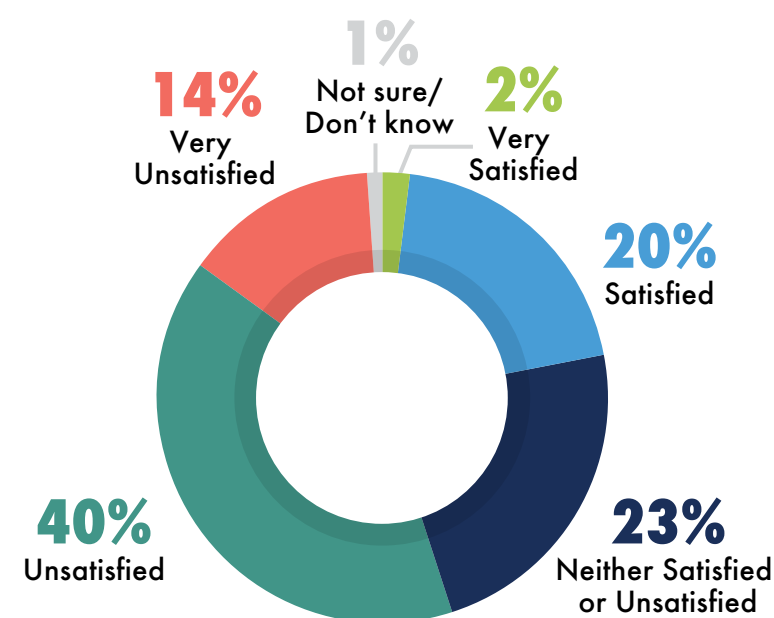
Public Survey

A public survey was conducted from April 22 to May 20, 2025. The objective of the public survey was to gain a deeper understanding of the public's needs for recreation facilities and programs in Rocky Mountain House.

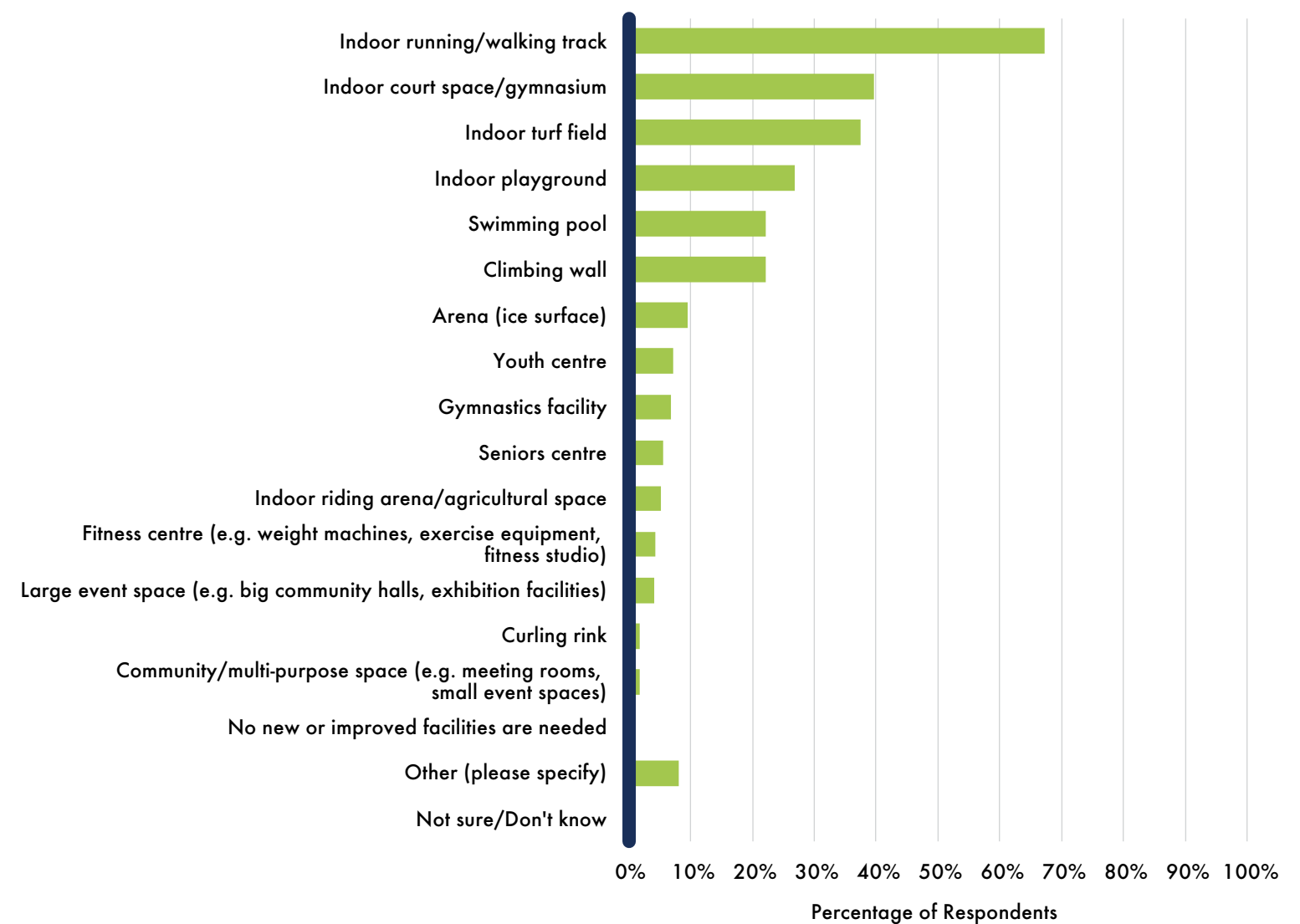
In total, 443 responses were received. 62% of respondents indicated they reside in the Town of Rocky Mountain House, 37% said they reside in Clearwater County, 0.42% preferred not to say, and 0.21% of respondents said other. 77% of respondents identified as female, 21% identified as male, and 2% preferred not to say. Respondents were primarily between the ages of 30-39 (33%), 40-49 (27%), 50-59 (15%), and 60-69 (10%).



Please rate your level of satisfaction with indoor recreation facilities in Rocky Mountain House.

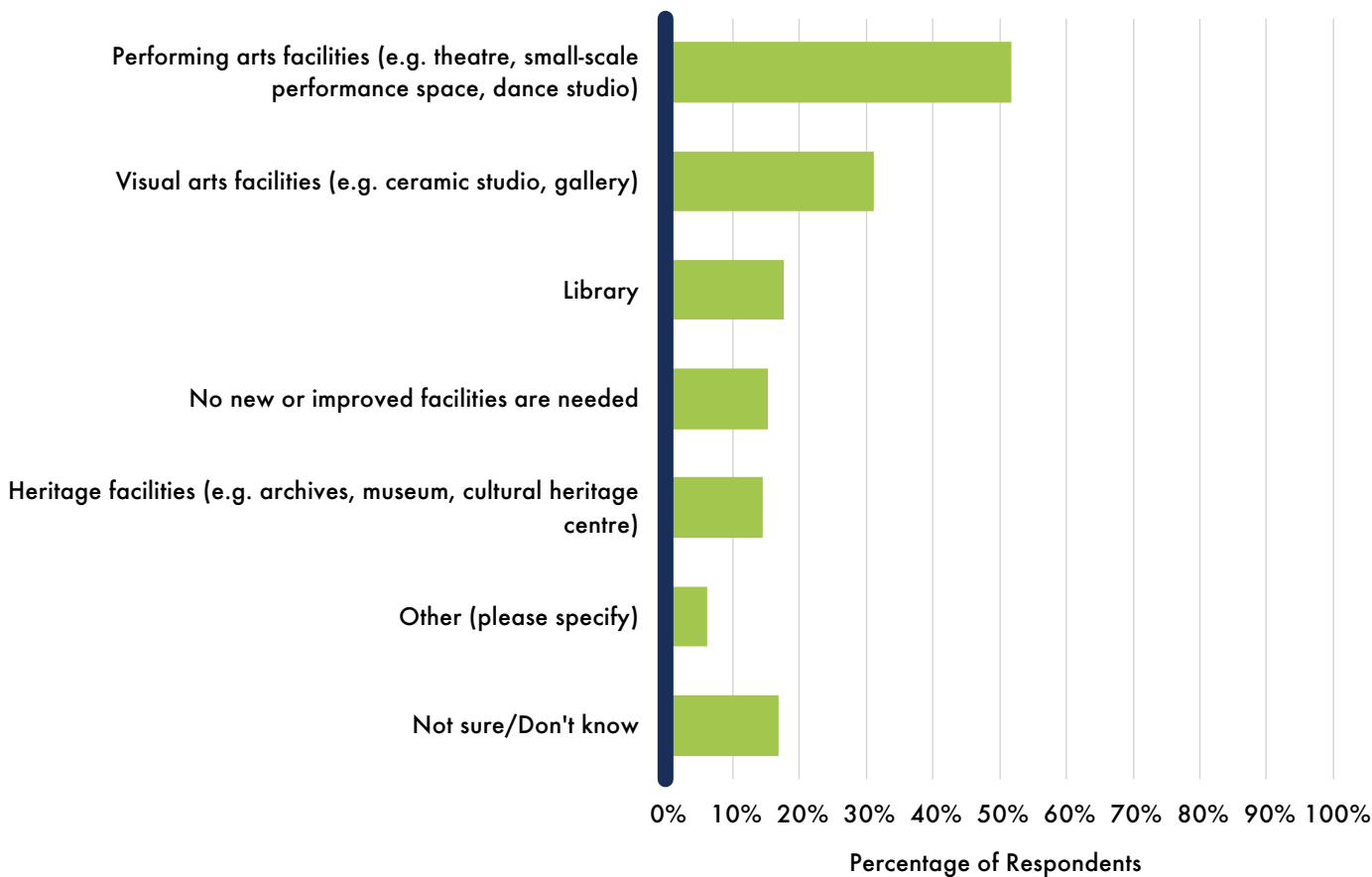


What, if any, new or improved indoor sport and wellness facilities are most needed in Rocky Mountain House? Please select up to three priorities.

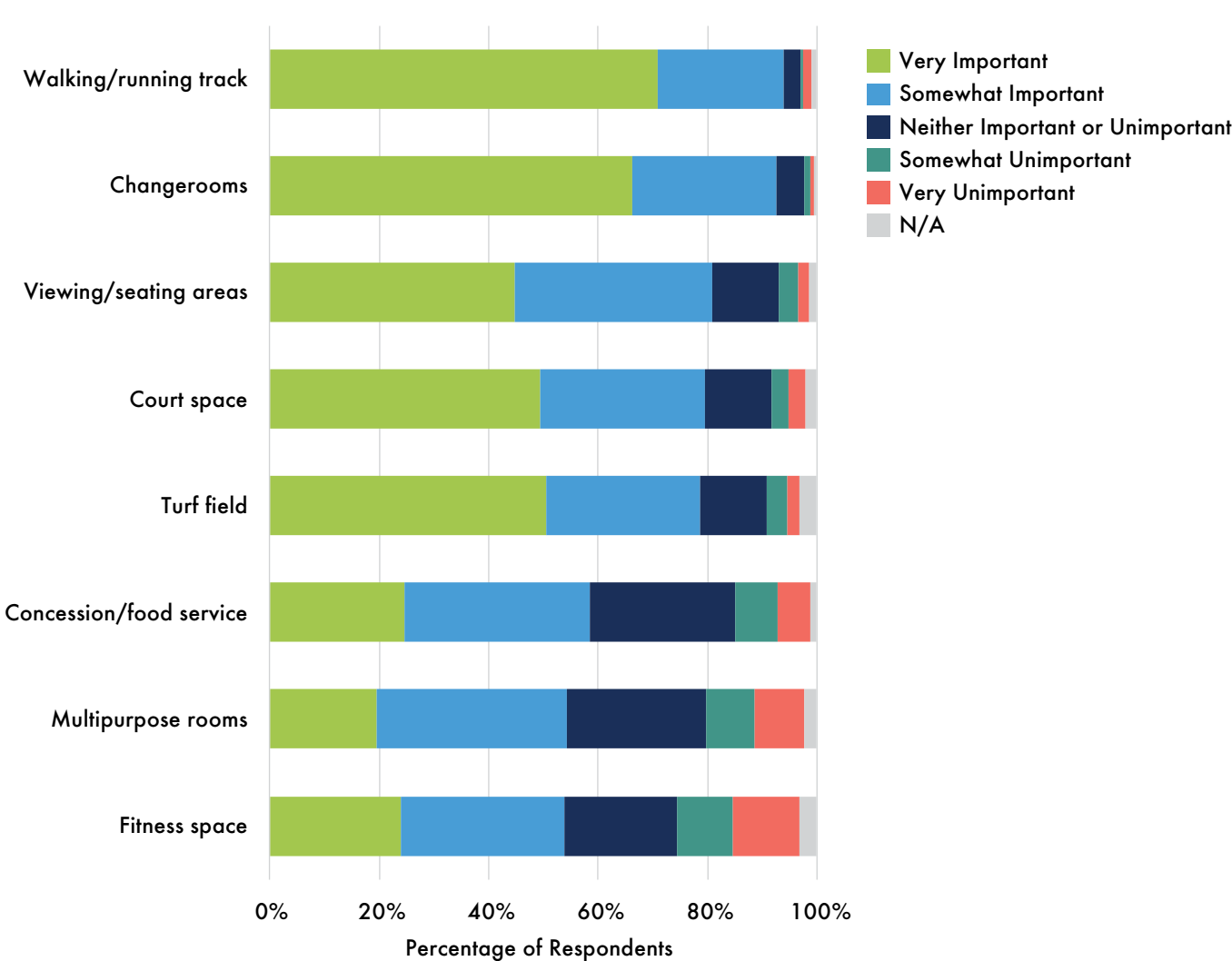




What, if any, new or improved indoor culture facilities are most needed in Rocky Mountain House? Please select up to three priorities.

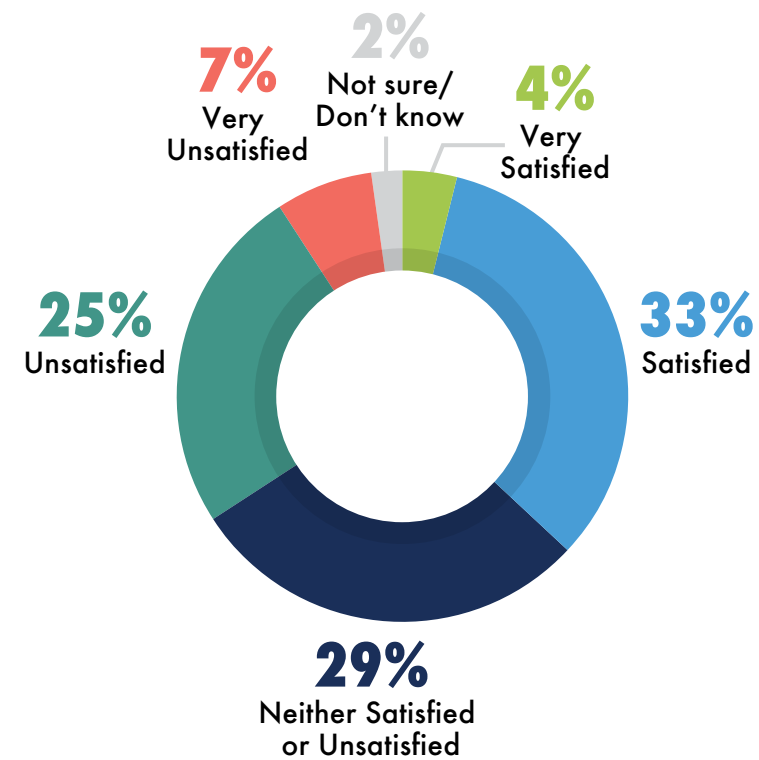


If the Town were to consider building a fieldhouse, how important would it be to include the following amenities in the facility?

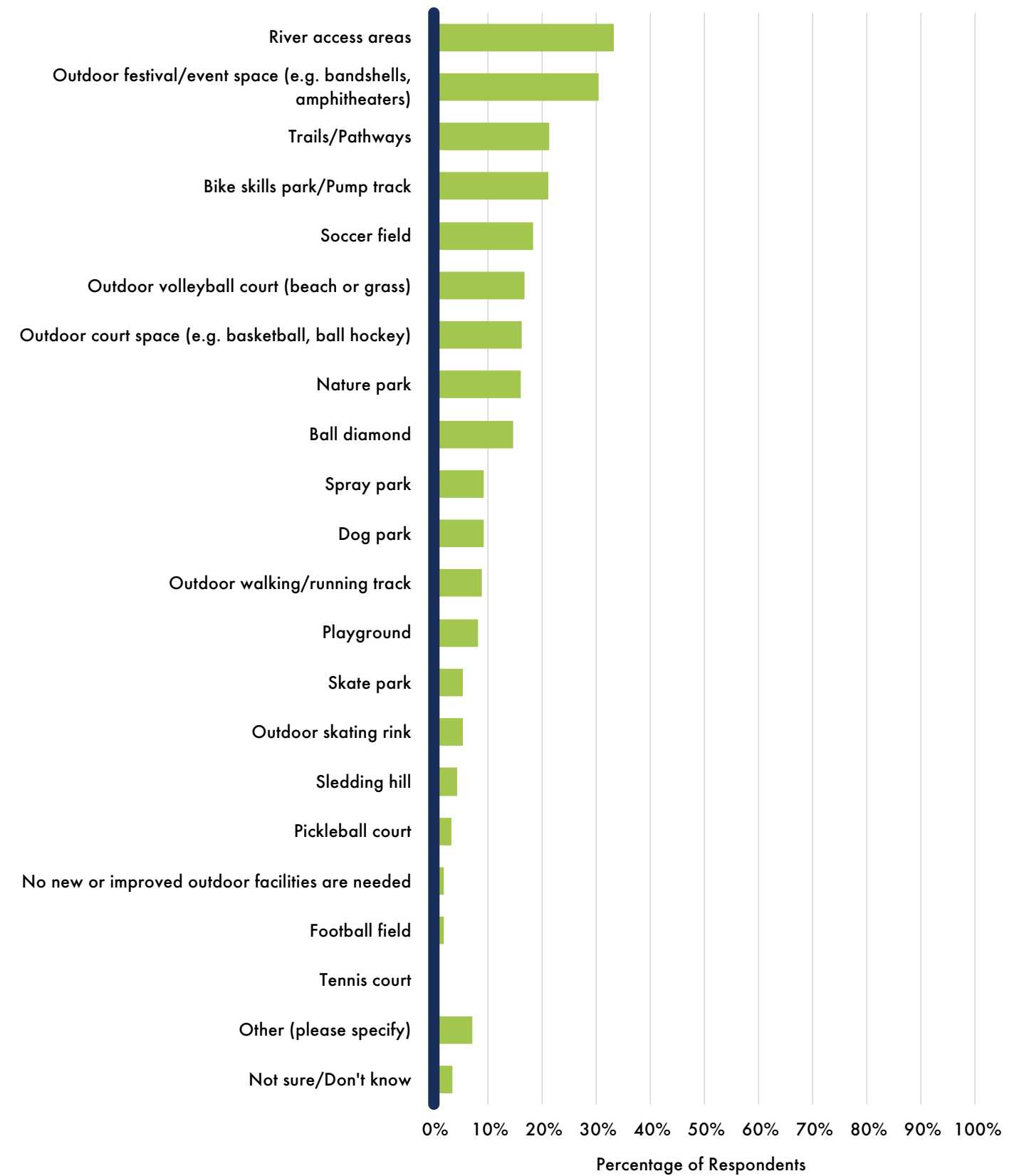




Please rate your level of satisfaction with outdoor recreation facilities in Rocky Mountain House.



What, if any, new or improved outdoor recreation facilities are most needed in Rocky Mountain House? Please select up to three priorities.





Future Vision for Centennial Park Campground Site

Current State: If you visit the site, what are the main activities that you do when you are there? What do you like most about the site? What could be improved?

Respondents identified the following most often:

- Several respondents do not currently use or visit the site.
- Leaving the site and campground as is with opportunities for upgrades such as a new playground and washroom facilities.
- Respondents have appreciation for the site as a natural area/green space.
- Current uses include walking, utilizing the playground, day-use such as picnics, exploring nature, campfires and camping, and educational opportunities.
- Respondents identified security challenges such as theft and safety.
- Some support for removing the campsite and replacing it with other amenities such as trails, outdoor recreation assets, or a large green space.



Future Vision for Centennial Park Campground Site

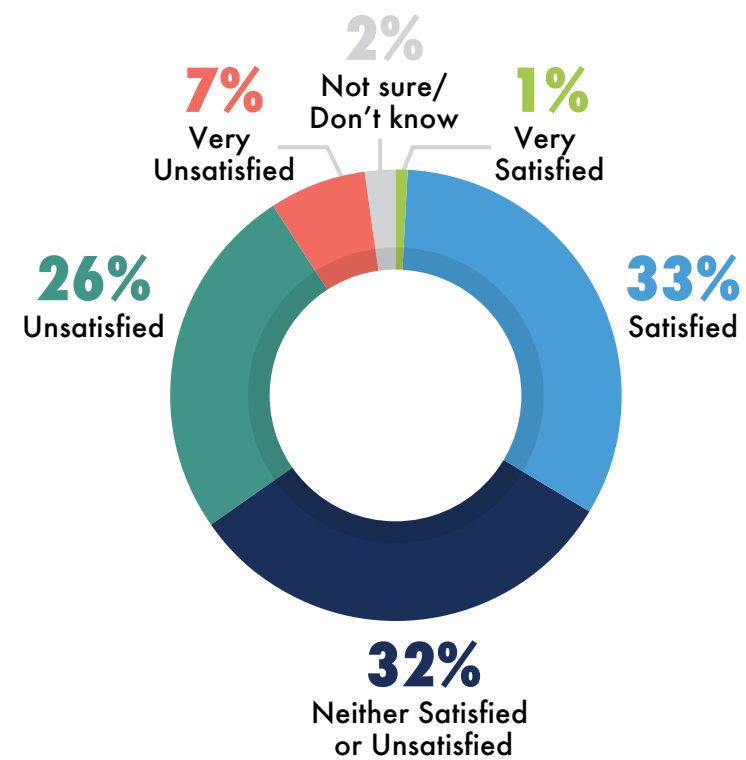
Future Opportunities: Please describe what types of activities, features and amenities you would like to see in this space in the future. Consider what might be different from today, and what might stay the same.

Respondents identified the following most often:

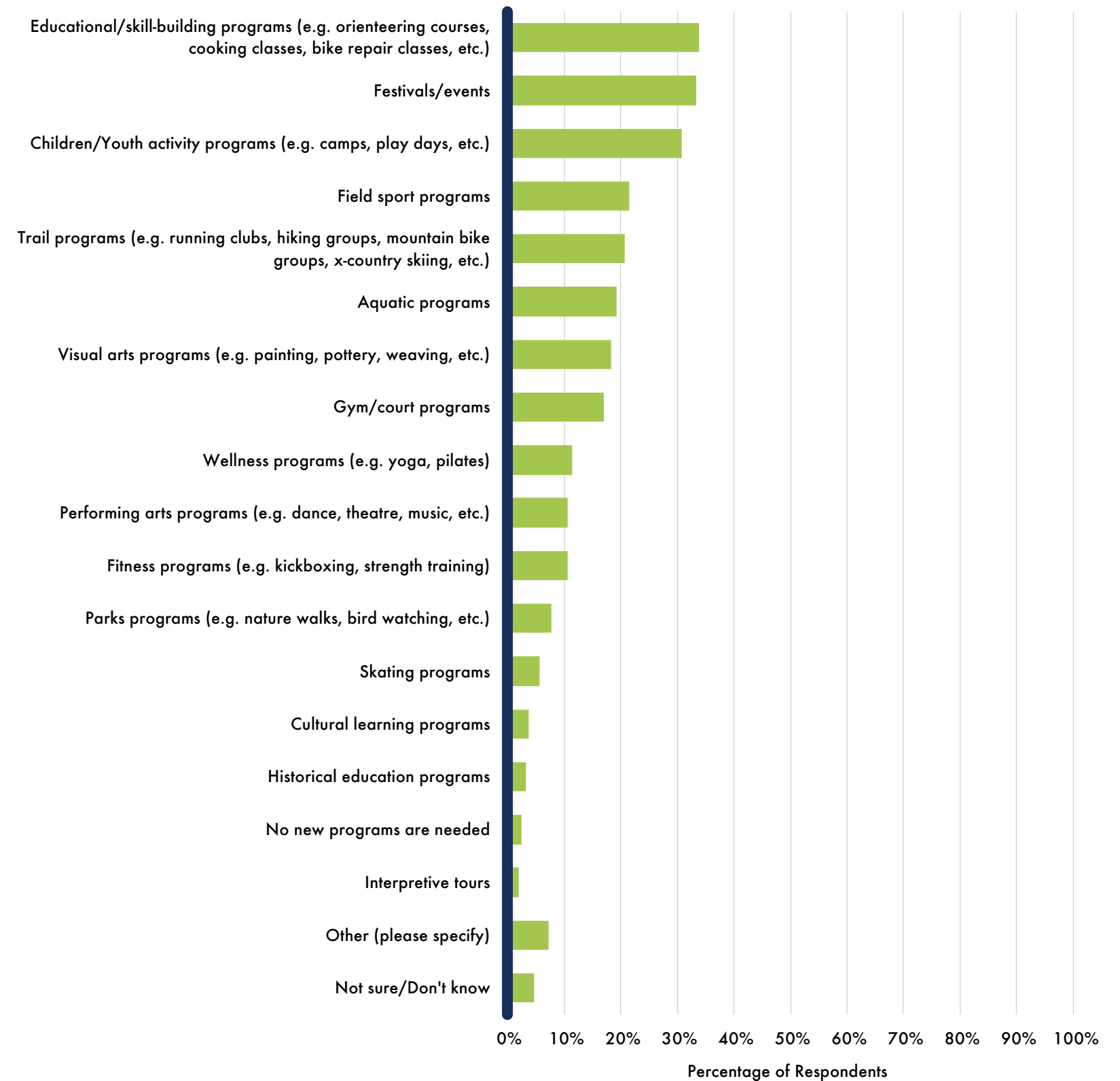
- 54% of respondents want to repurpose the site for other outdoor recreation uses. Ideas include:
 - 48% want a community park space, sport court, outdoor theatre, trails, day use amenities, and an outdoor rink.
 - 6% want to repurpose the site to sports fields.
- There was strong sentiment that the site should remain a natural, treed area.
- 13% want to repurpose the site with indoor recreation facilities. Ideas include:
 - Building multipurpose indoor facility with a walking track, fieldhouse, and/or gymnasium.
- 8% want to repurpose the site for other uses.
- 20% of respondents prefer the site to remain as a campground.
 - 13% want to leave the site as is.
 - 6% would like to see upgrades (e.g., more serviced sites).
 - 1% want to keep it a campground but also add outdoor recreation amenities.
- 5% of respondents were unsure about the future of the site.



Please rate your level of satisfaction with indoor and outdoor recreation programs in Rocky Mountain House.

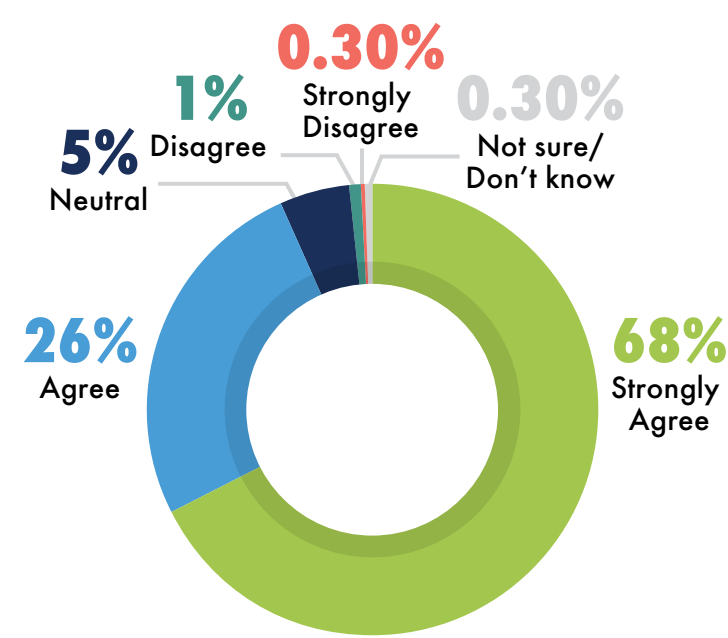


What, if any, new or improved indoor and outdoor recreation programs are most needed in Rocky Mountain House? Please select up to three priorities.

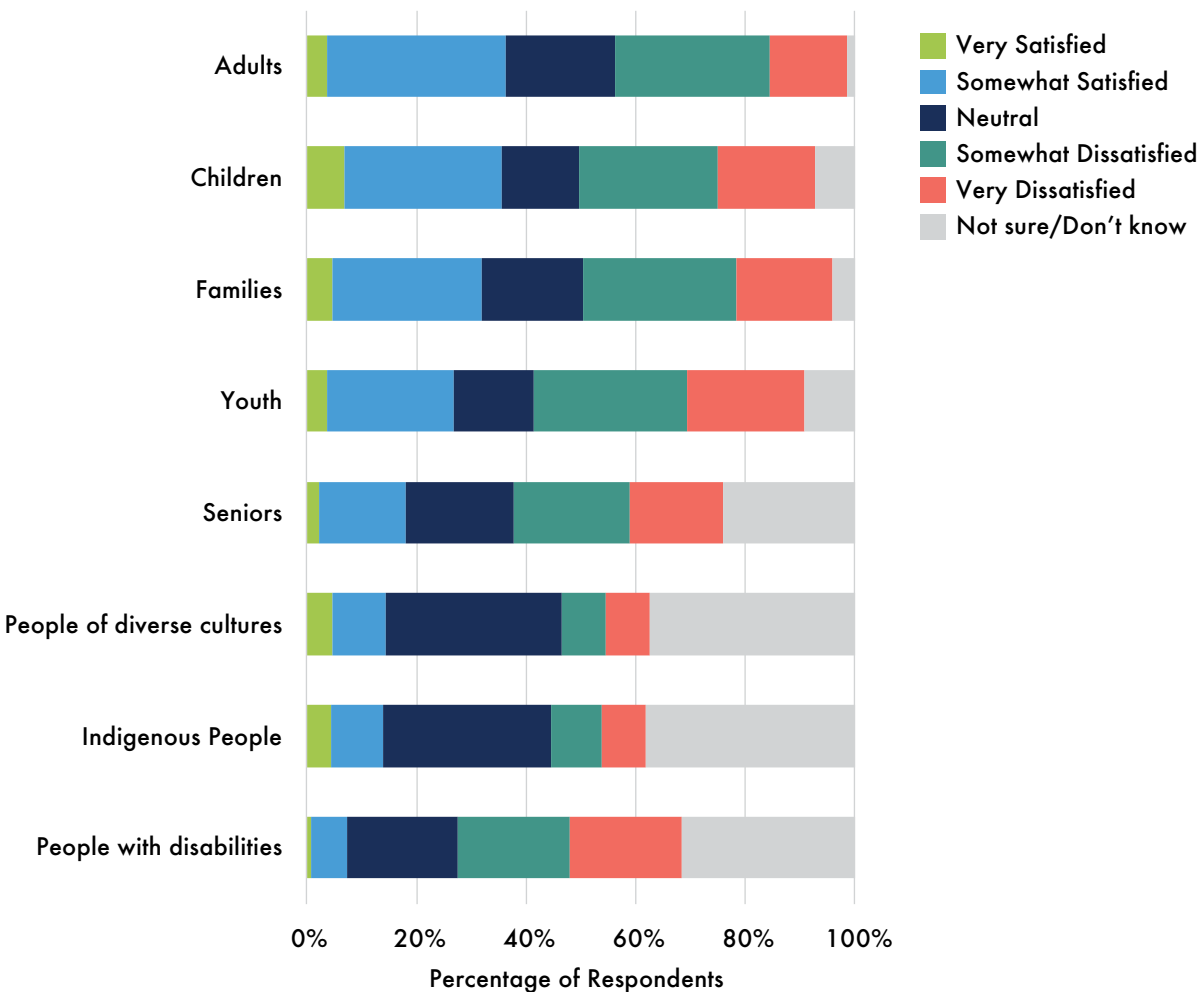




Please rate your level of agreement with the following statement: Indoor and outdoor recreation opportunities in my community are important to my quality of life.

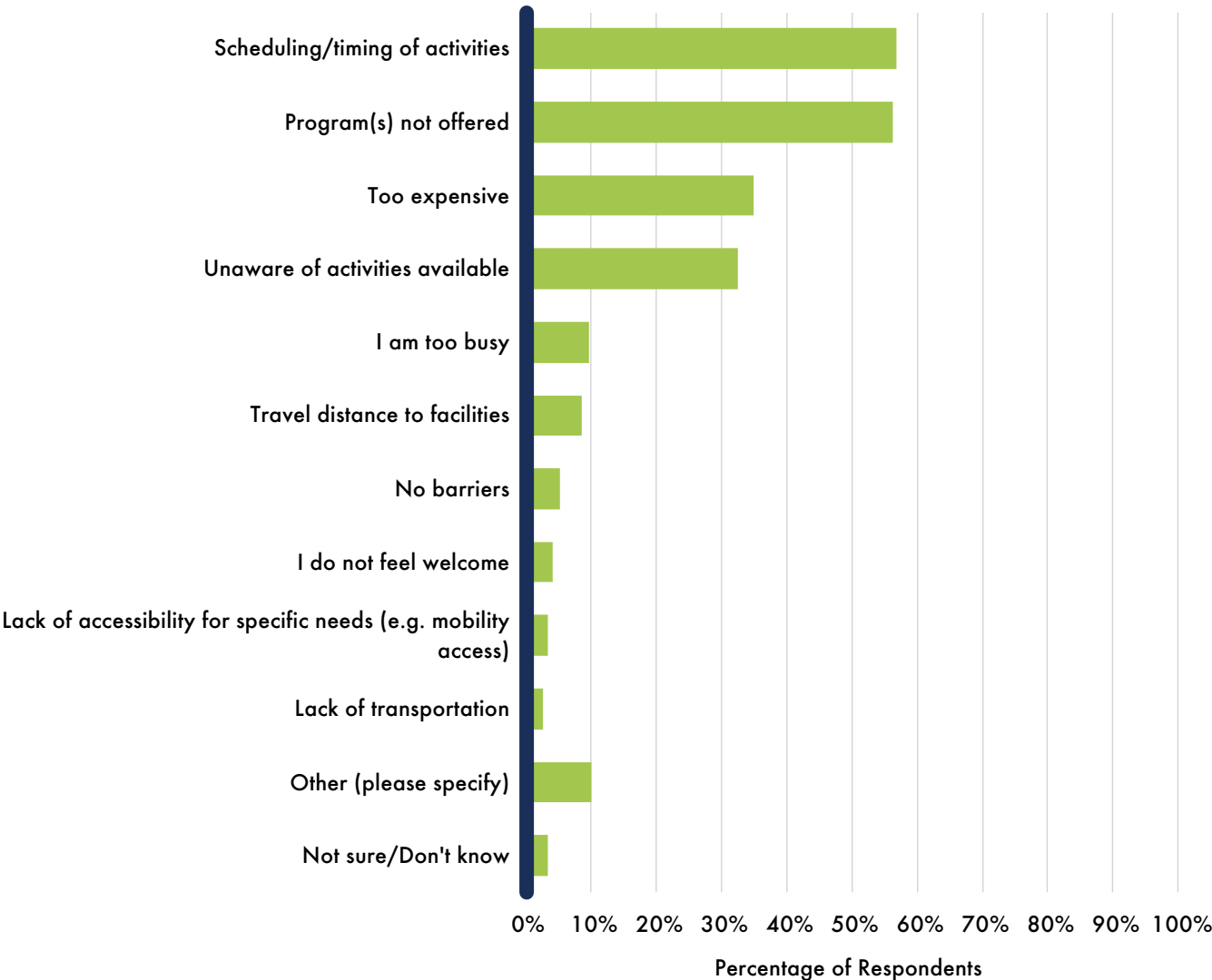


Overall, how satisfied are you with indoor and outdoor recreation opportunities for the following populations in Rocky Mountain House.

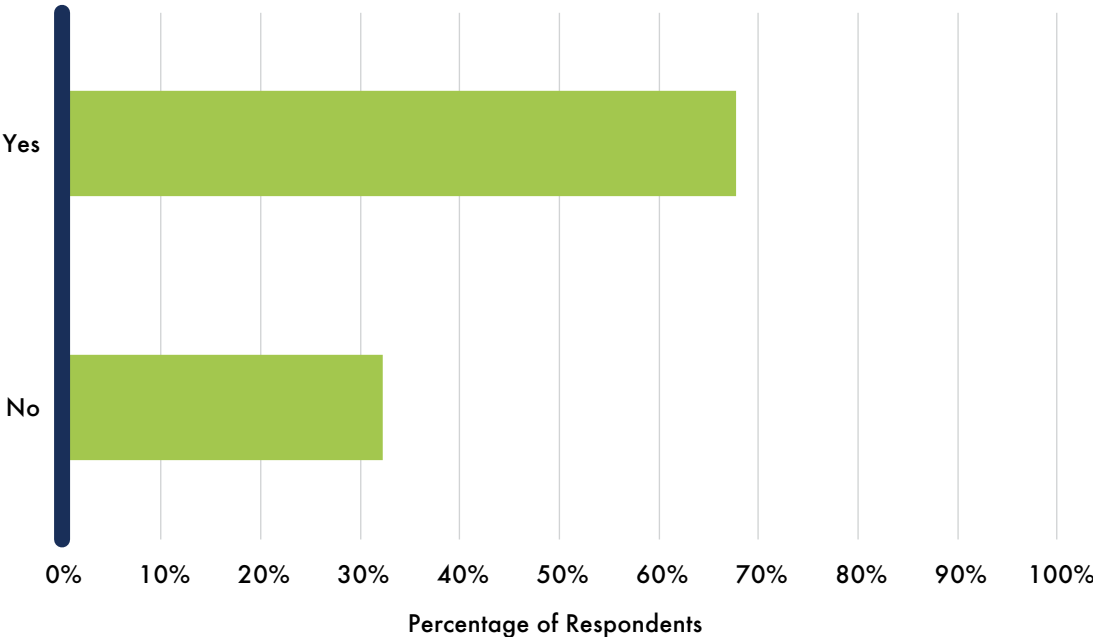




What, if anything, prevents you from participating in indoor and outdoor recreation activities more often? Please select all that apply.



Do you travel outside of Rocky Mountain House to access recreation facilities and programs?





If you answered “yes” to the question above, please describe where you travel and what facilities and/or programs you participate in.

Respondents identified the following most often:

- Swimming pools and lessons.
- Climbing walls. Several respondents travel to Red Deer.
- Indoor playground and/or play place.
- Utilizing the Collicutt Centre for various activities such as the pool, fieldhouse, and indoor playground.
- Utilizing the Dome in Red Deer for sports (e.g. baseball and football).
- Travelling to utilize arenas.
- Travelling to participate in field sports such as soccer, baseball, football, and slo-pitch.
- Utilizing spray parks, parks, and playgrounds.
- Bike and walking trails in Nordegg, Red Deer, and Sylvan Lake.
- Travel for indoor sports including basketball, volleyball, and indoor soccer.
- Travel to utilizing indoor walking tracks, curling facilities, fieldhouses, and/or the NexSource Centre.
- Several respondents travel to Red Deer, Blackfalds, and Sylvan Lake.
- Travel for outdoor uses such as bike pump tracks, disc golf, golfing, and cycling.



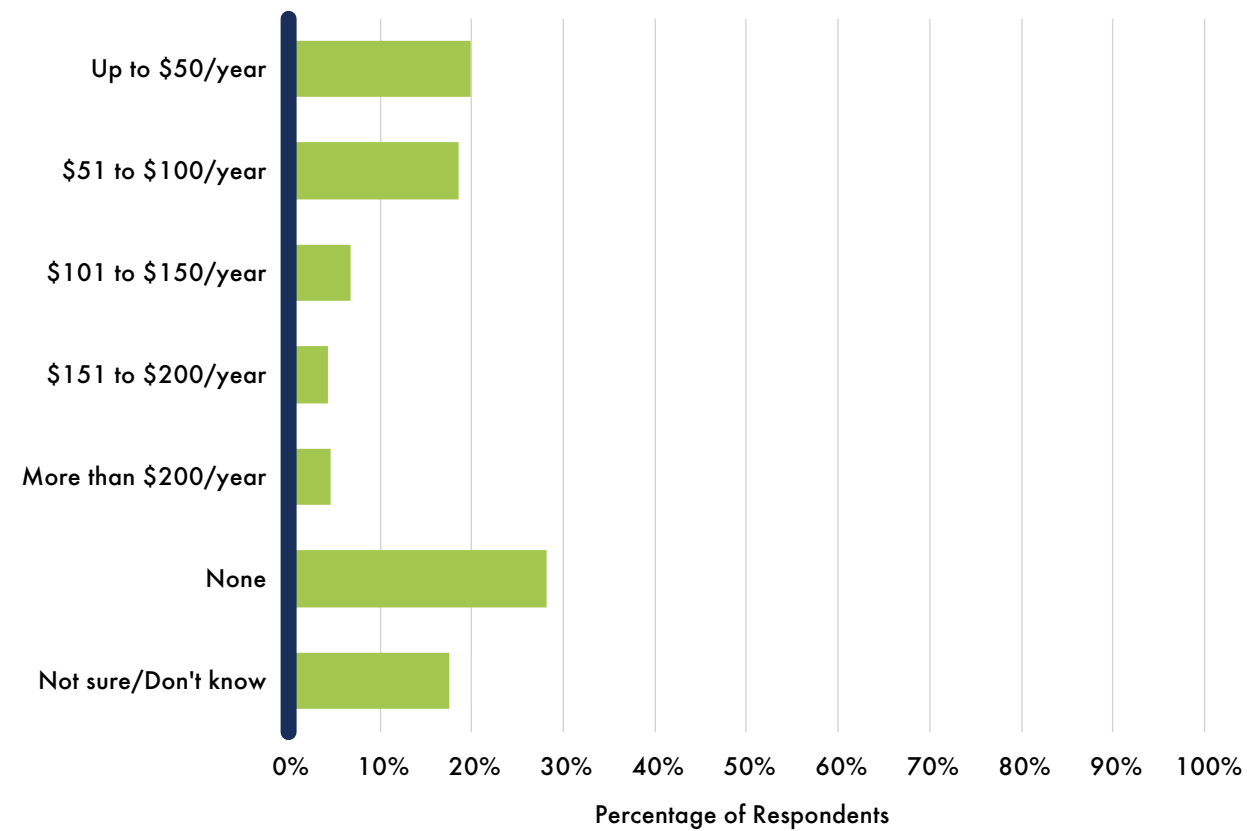
If one improvement could be made to indoor and outdoor recreation facilities and programs in Rocky Mountain House, what would your top priority be?

Respondents identified the following most often:

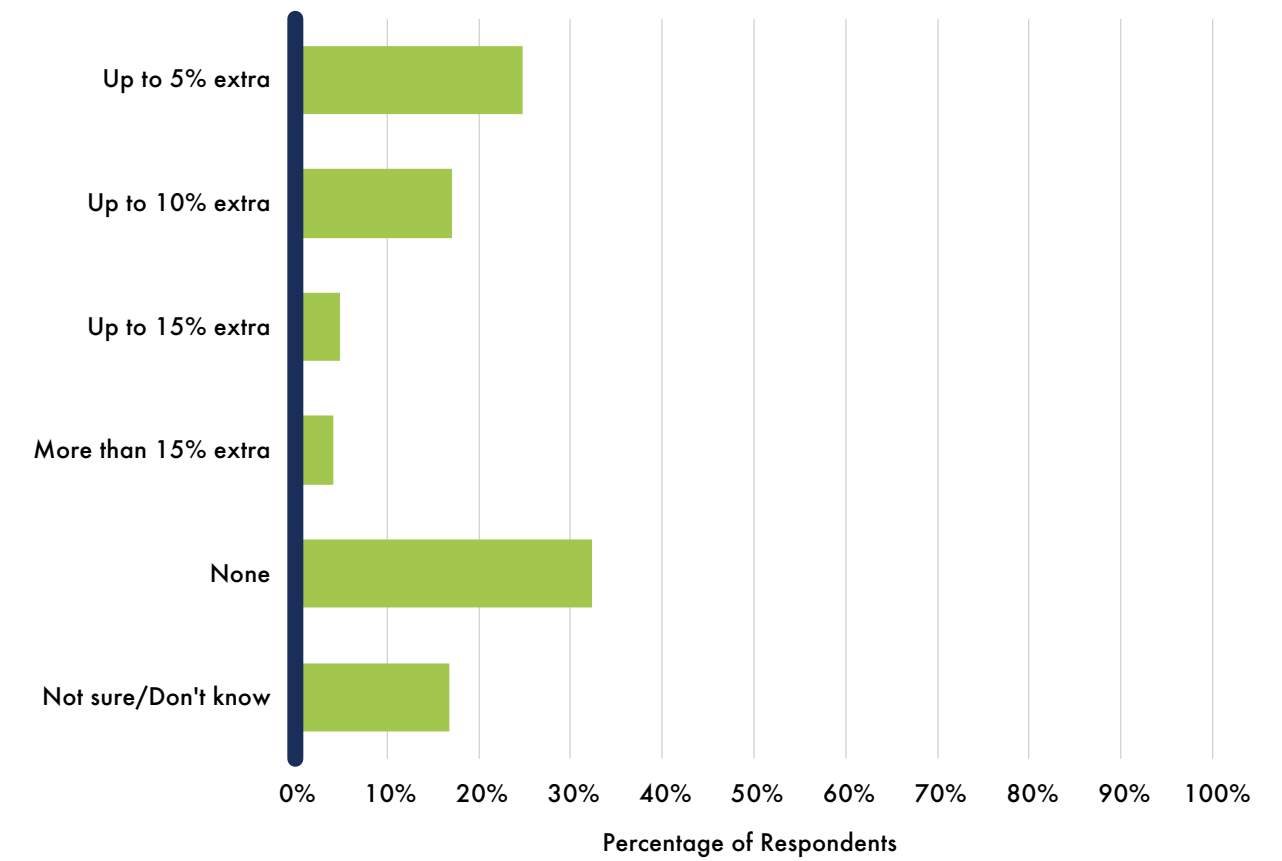
- An indoor walking/running track.
- Fieldhouse facility.
- Need for a new pool and pool upgrades to existing facility.
- Gymnasium and court space.
- Indoor multipurpose sports complex.
- More swimming lessons, children’s programs, and program variety.
- Additional ice surface and arena upgrades.
- Maintaining and upgrading existing sports fields and new soccer and baseball fields are needed.
- Comments about access and availability including lack of gymnasium space, more open lane swim, and ice allocation.
- Comments about outdoor facilities including river access, pickleball courts, park space and trails.
- Comments about indoor facilities including a climbing wall, indoor playground, more indoor facilities for winter, and a performing arts theatre.
- Some comments about cost, affordability, and free programming.



Would you support an increase in property taxes to better meet indoor and outdoor recreation facility and program needs in Rocky Mountain House? If so, how much?



Would you support an increase in user fees to better meet indoor and outdoor recreation facility and program needs in Rocky Mountain House? If so, how much?



If there are opportunities to participate in fundraising campaigns to support the development of new or enhanced facilities in Rocky Mountain House, would you be interested in participating?

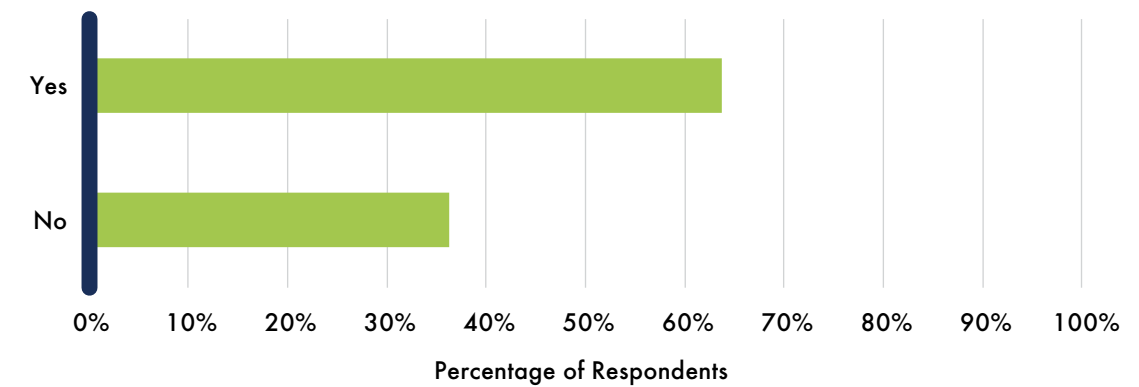


Photo Credit: Town of Rocky Mountain House

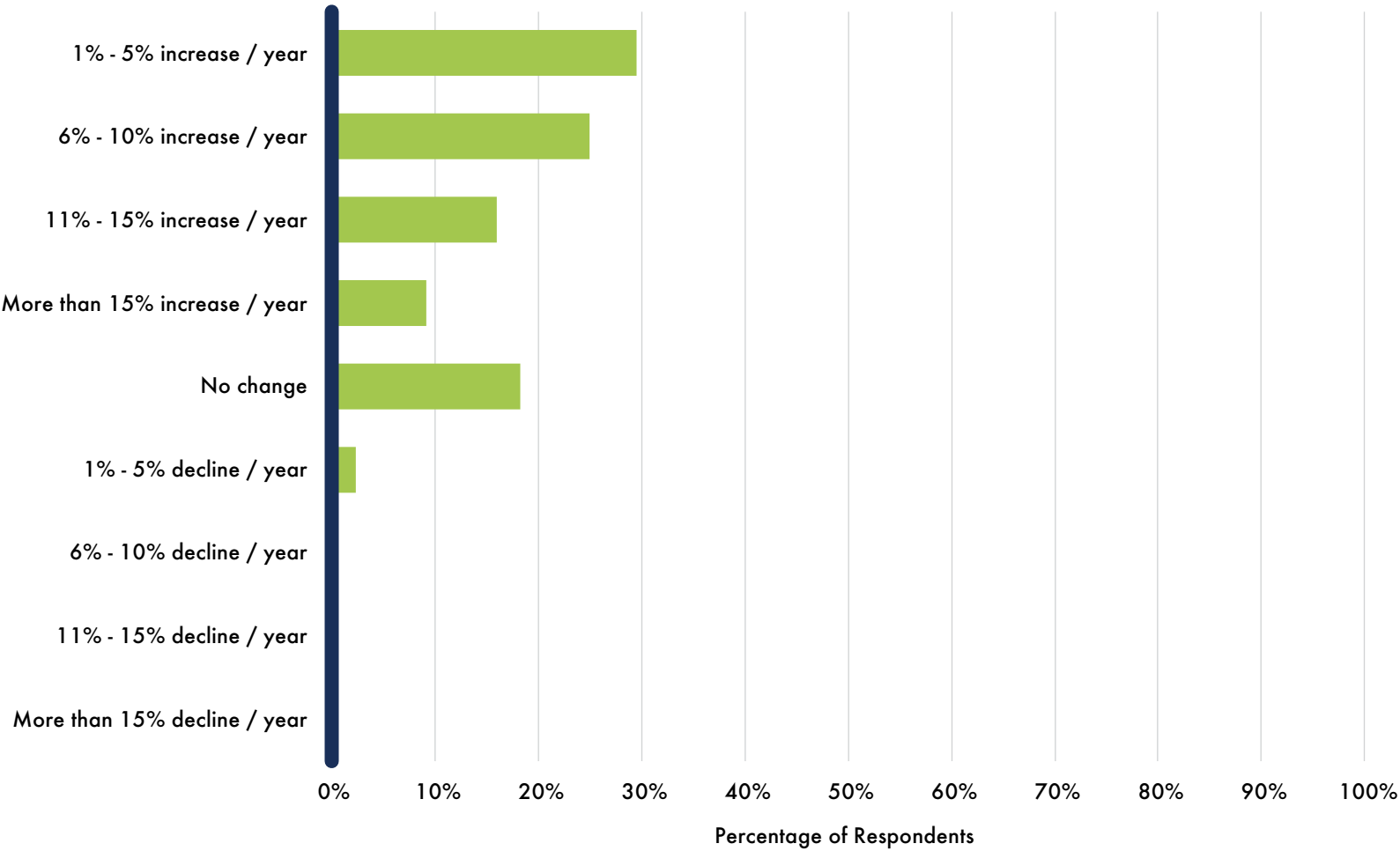


Community Group Survey

A community group survey was conducted from April 22 to May 20, 2025. The objective of the survey was to gain a deeper understanding of community group’s perspectives in relation to recreation facilities and programs in Rocky Mountain House. In total, 43 responses were received.



How do you expect the number of participants in your programs to change over the next five years?





Please describe any barriers your organization experiences in meeting the needs of its participants.

Respondents identified the following most often:

- Lack of available ice times.
- Lack of available gymnasium space.
- Suitable performing arts venue.
- Cost of facility rentals and travel.
- Maintenance needed at sports fields.



If applicable, please describe any new facilities or upgrades to existing facilities that are needed to better serve your organization and its participants.

Respondents identified the following most often:

- Dedicated performance arts facility.
- Upgrades to existing facilities including the Lou Soppit, sports fields, washrooms at the spray park, modernizing track and field facilities, and arena dressing rooms.
- Additional ice surfaces.
- Indoor practice facility such as a fieldhouse.
- More gymnasium space.
- New location for the sani-dump.
- Equipment storage.
- Agricultural facility for year-round events.



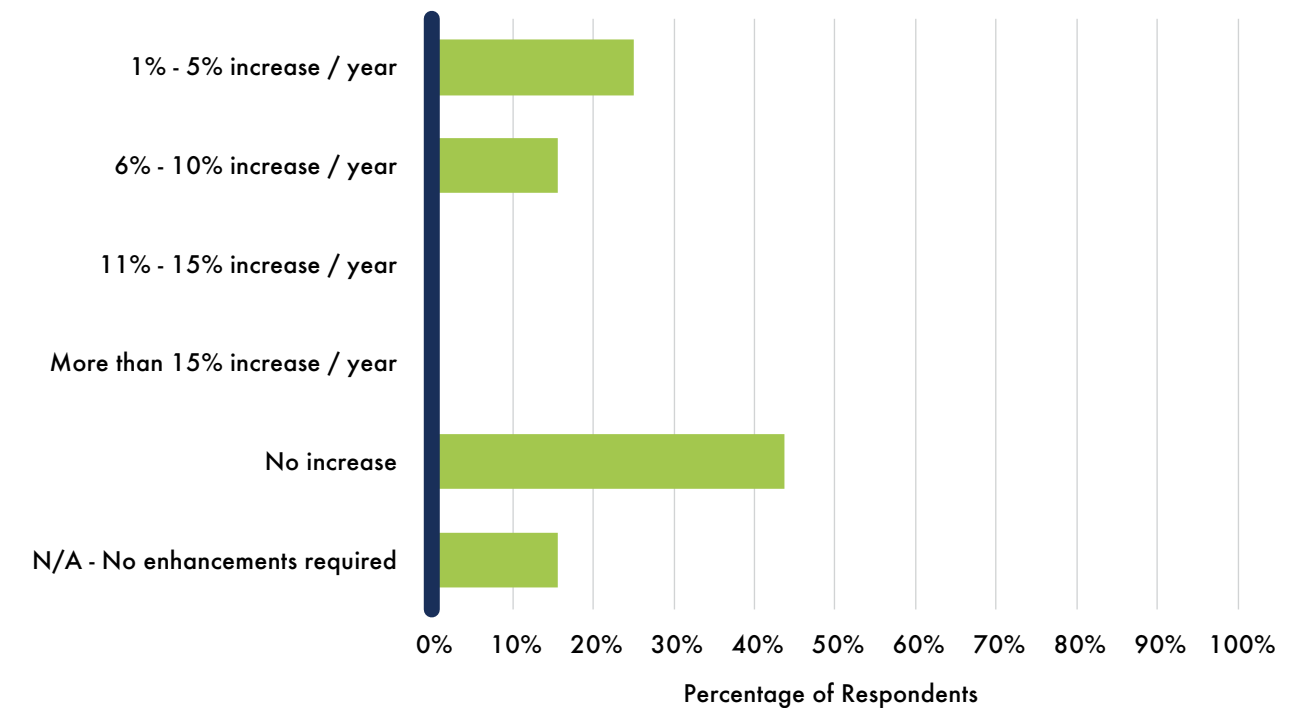
Please describe why these enhancements are necessary to better serve your organization and its participants.

Respondents identified the following most often:

- Aging performance arts and pool facilities.
- Retention and benefits of participants.
- Ability to host events and tournaments.
- Poor drainage causes cancellations due to unsafe conditions at the rodeo grounds.
- Upgrades to facilities including the arena and hall.
- Impression of Rocky Mountain House.
- Increasing costs.



Would your organization be willing to pay increased user fees in order to utilize enhanced facilities?





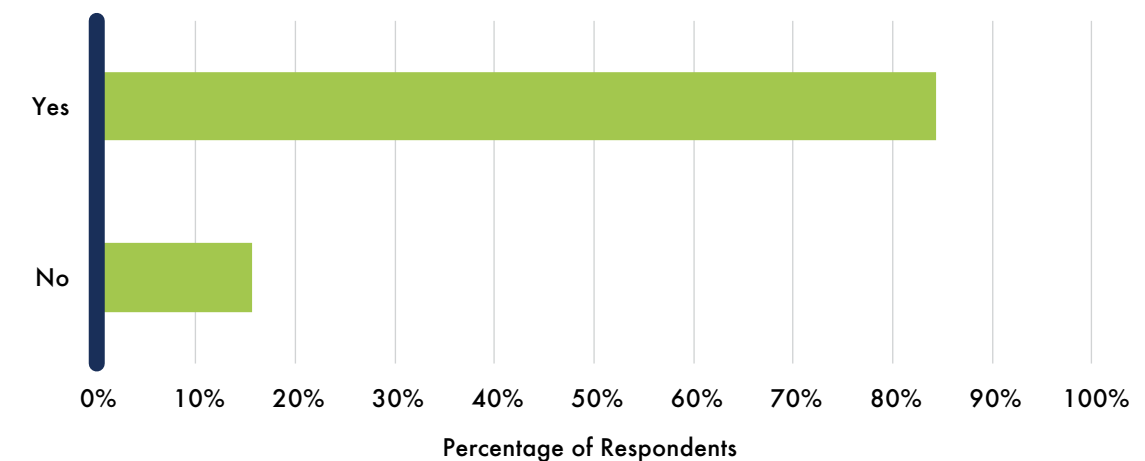
Is your group planning any capital development projects over the next 10 years? If so, please describe.

Respondents identified the following most often:

- Recently updated performing arts technical equipment including lights and sound boards.
- Planning for a new hall.
- Discussions were had in the past, however, haven't been able to move forward with capital development due to lack of support.
- Full renovation of inside and outside of a third-party owned building.
- New offices, gym storage, and changing rooms at a local school.
- Some groups would find it helpful to have more storage areas for equipment.
- Potential new playground equipment and new gym if new school funding occurs.
- Several groups indicated no plans for capital development projects.
- Construction of new recreation facilities in the County.
- Interest in a new scoreboard for the swimming pool.



If there are opportunities to participate in funding campaigns to support the development of new or enhanced facilities in Rocky Mountain House, would your organization be interested in participating?



If you would like to provide any further input toward the Recreation Master Plan, please do so here.

Respondents identified the following most often:

- Need for more support towards the arts.
- New performing arts centre would enhance the type of shows that could be brought to the Town.
- Challenges with meeting costs.
- Interest in boardroom and office space rentals.
- Stronger collaboration between groups and facilities and the Town.
- Quality sports fields.
- Appreciation for new facilities that are being built (e.g. disc golf and bike track).
- Open to assisting with getting a new arena in collaboration with other users.
- More ice surfaces will allow for more practices.
- Interest in providing insights for use or planning.

In-Person Engagement Stations

Indoor Facility Requests	Outdoor Facility Requests	Program/Activity Requests
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indoor walking track • Fieldhouse • Indoor courts • Climbing wall • Indoor play space • Warmer pool and hot tub • Roller skating • Gymnasium • Multipurpose facility • Indoor splash pad • 2nd elevator at the recreation centre • Axe throwing • Larger pool and tot pool • Lazy river • Larger Zamboni room • Existing changerooms are too small • Diving board, waterslides, beachballs, and float structures at the pool • Dome • Escape room • Indoor golf • Longer hours at the fitness centre • Multipurpose space • Mini putt • Partnering with the County • Performing arts theatre • Pool hall • Riding arena • Squash and racquet ball courts • Viewing area in the arena 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdoor pool • Maintain ball fields • Maintain soccer fields • Expand skate park • Amphitheater • Recycle water at the spray park • Happy with ball diamonds (tall fence) • Larger spray park and more seating • Changing rooms at the football field • Concrete basketball court • Lights at the skatepark • Like the bike trails, walking trails, and outdoor skating track • Nature facilities • Newer amenities • Relocate Centennial Park Campground • Scooter park with shade seating • Extend trail from 60th street to north side • Walkway for individuals with physical disabilities to access splash park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More activities for youth • More programs for kids on PD days • Cost is a barrier • Homeschool programs (during the day) • Benchmark for subsidy program could be lower • Better organized swim lessons • Birdwatching • Lessons for Long Term Athlete Development • Consistent Saturday swim lessons • Corporate sponsorships • Drop in programs • Improve marketing • Like the fitness instructors • Low sensory swim • More adult leisure swim • More sport programs • Music in the park • Nature festival • Theatre for youth • Toddler and family activities

Seniors Engagement

Indoor Facility Requests	Outdoor Facility Requests	Program/Activity Requests
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indoor walking track Upgrades to pool (facility is aging) Maintaining existing facilities Larger/upgraded senior's space Nature interpretive centre Important to ensure there is a balance between athletic, arts, and seniors' facilities/programs. Currently, it seems heavier on athletics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trail amenities (benches and washrooms) Happy with existing trails and they are well maintained. Some opportunities for enhancements include trails at Creekside to be expanded, walkway loop and steps at River Road) Important to protect natural spaces (i.e. trees, trails, and green spaces) Appreciation for what we have More transportation options Expand parking at the Pioneer Centre Outdoor pool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced and improved communication with residents Dance programs Technology classes for seniors Any development needs to be done in a fiscally responsible manner Nature programming Enhanced collaboration between committees More adult swim times Ensuring hard copy materials are still available Lots of things for seniors to do

Youth Engagement

Indoor Facility Requests	Outdoor Facility Requests	Program/Activity Requests
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arcade facility with more games. Multipurpose space for youth. Pool amenities (i.e. slides and diving board) Trampoline park Enjoy the fitness centre Youth centre with ping pong tables, couches, and pool table. Indoor courts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skatepark upgrades (i.e. seating, more jumps, tables, more shade, more security presence, washrooms and lighting). Water fountains at trails and parks Love walking trails. Some could have more connection and more trails. Outdoor courts Revamp the campground into basketball courts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More sport programs (i.e. volleyball, basketball, volleyball). More contents for youth

Digital Community Input Workshops

Indoor Facility Requests	Outdoor Facility Requests	Program/Activity Requests
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Upgrades to the pool (e.g. HVAC challenges, shower temperatures, and changerooms)• New and larger pool facility (25m and 6 to 8 lanes)• Challenges with pool staffing• Cost of renting facilities is a challenge• Indoor walking track• Fieldhouse with sport courts• Performing arts venue• More gymnasium space• Climbing/bouldering facility• Dryland training facility• Agricultural riding facility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Better maintenance of sports fields• Location for storing equipment• Washrooms at primary river access points• More formalized access to the river (e.g. trails, signage, stairs, launches, paved roads)• More mountain bike trails• Adding lighting to trails• Change room at the splash park• More leisure amenities near river access points• Indigenous Cultural Interpretive Centre & Forest Trail Experience• Eco-Adventure Challenge Park• Outdoor Skills & Wilderness Survival School• Community Equestrian Heritage Centre• Nature Immersion & Wellness Retreats• Stargazing & Dark Sky Interpretation Park• Community Food Forest & Wild Edible Garden• Rocky Arts & Nature Amphitheatre• Wildlife Viewing Boardwalk & Eco-Learning Station	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ice Sculpture & Winter Lights Festival• More collaboration and support between community groups and the Town• Community does a great job with programming• Music festival• Adventure race• More gatherings for small businesses (i.e. Trade Shows)

Digital Interactive Mapping

A digital interactive mapping tool was made available to the public to collect location-based input. Participants were able to drag and drop markers on the map and had the opportunity to provide input at specific locations. The following summarizes the input received.

Centennial Park Campground

- Would like to see something that could be used by locals. It could be a beautiful park with some sports activities. It is a great location.

Recreation Park (adjacent to 52 avenue)

- Kids need a place to play and hang out during ball season. Would like to see a covered playground in a central location for all ages.

60 Street and 70 Avenue

- Needs to be a playground zone.

49 Avenue and 47 Street

- Another dog park in this area and more things to do.

South of 52 Avenue and East of 43 Street

- There is a need for additional land to be set aside for future recreation growth. This parcel of land, although privately owned, would lend itself to additional ball diamonds, soccer fields, trails, disc golf, dog park, etc.

60 Street and 66 Avenue

- Issue with the unlevel path that results in tripping hazards.
- Remove poplar trees along with trails and roots.
- Repave the path and plant trees/shrubs.

West Side of the River

- Extend trail system. Connect to twin lake access on highway 11 as well as connecting to back access to historical site on RR 74.
- Need better parking on highway 11 and RR74 for trail use.

Highway 11

- Update the boat launch, provide picnic tables/benches, and potable water station.

Spray Park

- Add trees for shade and shrubs for privacy along the fence.

Trails

- Extend walking path from 47 avenue to 44 avenues on 62 street to complete the loop through Creekside with the rest of Town.



Photo Credit: Town of Rocky Mountain House

Appendix C – Proposed Location Criteria

The following location criteria are recommended to assess the suitability of potential sites for new indoor recreational facilities.

Criteria for Indoor Recreation Facility Location

1. Capacity

- Capacity of the site to accommodate the proposed facility.

2. Site Availability and Potential Cost of Development

- Confirmation of whether the site can feasibly be acquired.
- Potential cost to service and develop.

3. Site Accessibility and Visibility

- Prominence of the site and ease of access, including location on a major route and visibility. Access by bike, transit, and walking are also key considerations.

4. Proximity to Complementary Recreation Areas

- The extent to which the site is in proximity to complementary recreation assets (e.g. other indoor facilities, fields, parks, schools, etc.).

5. Co-location with Other Public Facilities

- -Potential to co-locate the facility with a new or existing public building and potential for related cost savings (e.g. site development costs, operational costs, etc.) and building synergies (e.g. shared infrastructure, shared multi-purpose spaces, etc.).

6. Proximity to Population

- The extent to which the site supports ease of access from residents in the Town and region.

7. Program Synergies

- Opportunities for programming partnerships and program development to serve facility users and residents.

8. Operations and Revenue Generation

- Considerations that may affect facility operations (e.g., operational efficiency, potential for diversified revenue streams, etc.).

9. Other

- Consideration for emerging community priorities and opportunities.

Appendix D – Centennial Park Campground Assessment and Options

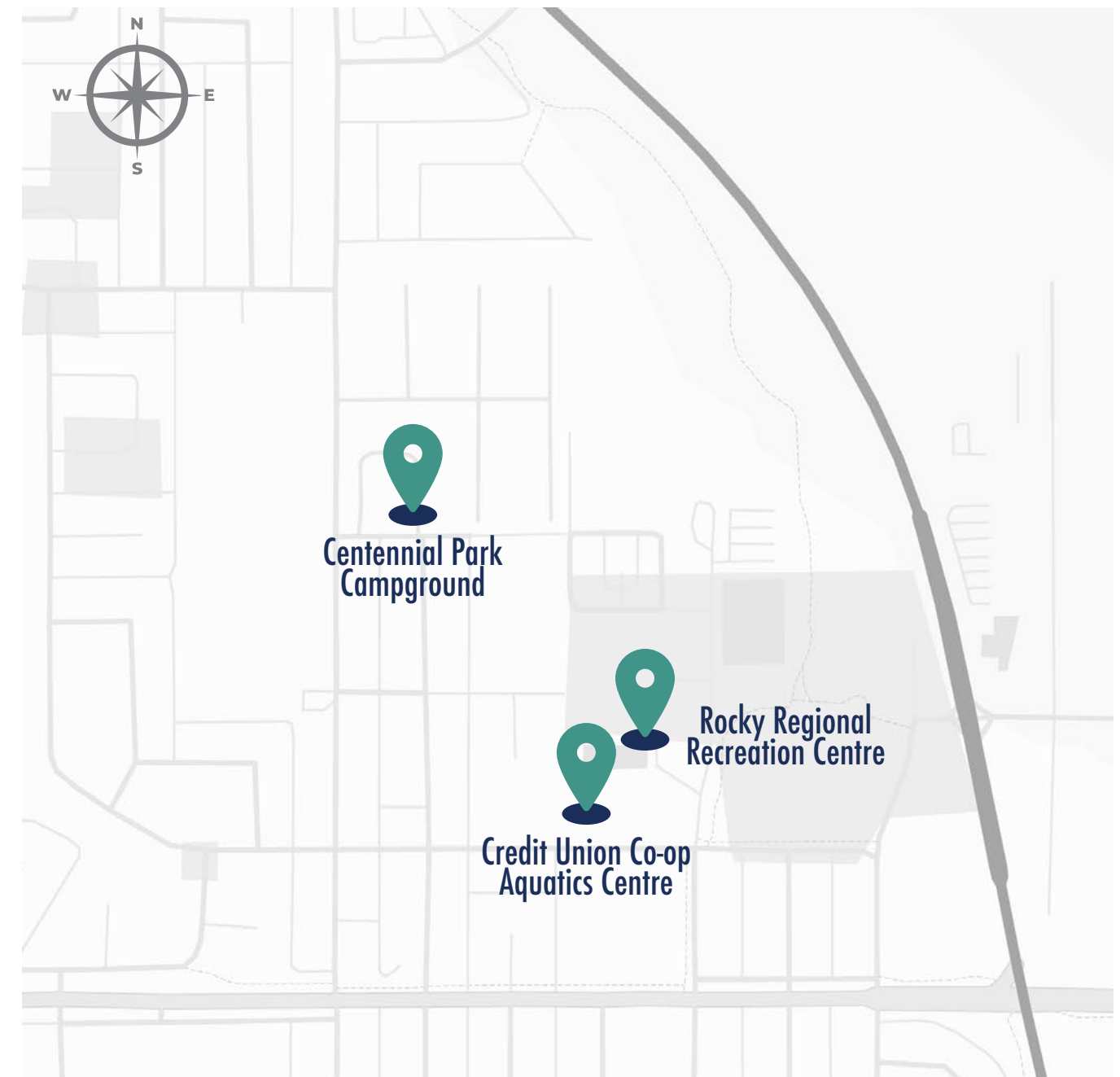
The Centennial Park Campground and options for its future were assessed as part of the development of this plan. Current conditions, use and operations, opportunities and constraints were identified. Based on these and demands for recreational facilities in the community, four future options were investigated. A recommended future use was identified.

Campground Assessment

About the Park

Centennial Park Campground is located centrally in Rocky Mountain House on a five acre site. It is across from the Pioneer School on its west side and from residential areas on the other three sides. It is a well treed park with 15 campsites, a playground, washroom and shower building. It is the only campground within the municipality; however, there are several other provincially and privately owned campgrounds within 15km of Town.

Figure 8. Park Location



Park Use and Operations

The park is open year-round for resident use and seasonally for registered camping during the summer. Overall occupancy for campsites is approximately 20% for the entire season, and 63% on weekends. The campground is managed by the Town. Facilities Maintenance staff take care of the washroom and shower facility, and Parks Maintenance staff take care of the grounds. Average campground revenues between 2022 and 2024 were \$18,000 annually. Average annual expenses were \$27,000, which means the Town is operating the campground at a financial loss.

The Town receives numerous complaints related to the campground each year. In 2024 there were 18 incidents reported in June, July and August. Issues included drug use, graffiti, disruptive behaviour, washroom codes being used by people who are not registered campers, and occupation of campsites by unregistered campers.

Current Opportunities

- Five acre parcel centrally located in the community
- Proximity to other recreational facilities (indoor and outdoor)
- Well-treed
- Already serviced (water and power)
- Separated from nearby residential development by streets (not directly abutting)
- Across from school field (limited potential for conflicts compared to residential)
- Potential to reduce inappropriate activities at the site through alternative uses and programming
- Potential to enhance year-round use of the site for residents
- Existing roads and paths on the site may serve future alternative uses
- Redevelopment may provide opportunity to improve sidewalk infrastructure along 54th Street

Current Constraints

- Existing campground infrastructure would require removal to accommodate new uses
- Proximity to residential areas may result in conflicts between those living near and recreating on the site
- Site size may limit facility development and future expansion opportunities
- Site is not level and may require significant earthwork to redevelop (depending on future use)

Public Survey Findings

- The public survey for this Master Plan asked respondents to provide input on ideas for the park's future. 75% support repurposing the site. 20% prefer the site remain as a campground. 5% are unsure. Of those who support repurposing, 54% want to see the site used for other outdoor recreation uses. There was a strong sentiment among them that the site should remain a natural, treed area. 13% of respondents want to repurpose the park for indoor recreation facilities and 8% want to see it as housing or other uses.

Recommendation and Next Steps

It is recommended that Centennial Park Campground be re-purposed into a community event and recreation space. Such a space would include amenities to support small to mid-sized gatherings and day use by residents of all ages. Festivals and events would be accommodated with a permanent stage or amphitheater, utility connections, seating, washrooms, hardscaping, and shade structures. Spontaneous recreational activities would be supported through a multi-sport court, natural play elements, picnic areas and the retention of significant tree cover.

Repurposing the park will require several steps. These include:

- Developing an initial design concept for the park.
- Conducting community engagement to confirm the design.
- Developing a Class D capital cost estimate for the design.
- Developing a capital financing plan and securing funds to make enhancements.
- Completing detailed design and construction.

Photo Credit: City of Greensboro



Overview of Assessed Site Options

1. Community Event and Recreation Space (recommended option)

Benefits



- The site is already serviced and includes washroom facilities.
- The site is within walking distance of other public recreation facilities and their amenities including parking, multipurpose rooms, and additional washrooms.
- Recreational amenities on the site (multi-purpose court space and natural play elements) would activate it outside of events and provide casual use opportunities for residents.
- Site bookings could generate some revenue for the Town/offset operating expenses.
- A formal space would help to attract more festivals and events to the community.
- A multi-purpose court space could be used for other purposes during events (e.g. seating, vendors).
- A site that is actively used by many in the community is less likely to attract problematic behaviour or unauthorized overnight use.

Challenges



- Some capital work would be required to reconfigure the site.
- Should access to the washrooms on site be maintained outside of events the site may attract problematic behaviour.
- The site would attract more people during events than the campsite currently accommodates, which may result in noise disturbances to nearby residential areas.
- Parking would be limited on site, resulting in the need for eventgoers to park off-site.



2. Nature Park

Benefits



- Creating a nature park at this location would not require complete redevelopment of the site.
- Removal of campsites and washroom access could help to reduce incidents at the site.
- A nature park would not require as many staff resources to operate as a campground.
- Inclusion of a basic pavilion or shelter would support programming and community use.

Challenges



- Capital work would be required to remove utilities from the five serviced campsites.
- The site may still attract inappropriate uses and may still require some level of incident response. There is the potential for more inappropriate use at the site with less frequent use by registered campers.
- Should public access to the washrooms on site be provided, the site may attract problematic behaviour.



3. Sports Fields

Benefits



- The site is already serviced and includes washroom facilities.
- The site is within walking distance of other public recreation facilities and their amenities including parking, multipurpose rooms, and additional washrooms.
- Sports fields could be used for spontaneous public play when not booked by user groups.
- Additional sports fields could support the growth of related sports participation in the community.
- The site would be open and have clear sightlines, reducing the likelihood of it attracting problematic behaviour or unauthorized overnight use.

Challenges



- Visitors would no longer have access to campsites within the Town’s boundaries.
- Significant capital work would be required to completely reconfigure the site.
- Redevelopment of the park for sports fields would require the removal of many trees.
- The site would attract more people during games, practices and tournaments than the campsite currently accommodates, which may result in noise disturbances to nearby residential areas.
- Due to the size of the site and the space needs of fields, parking is likely to be limited on-site if two fields were developed, resulting in the need for users to park off-site. Some parking could potentially be accommodated on site if only one field was developed.



Indoor Fieldhouse

Benefits



- The site could be used by many different user groups and residents than it is currently.
- The site is within walking distance of other public recreation facilities in the Town.
- An indoor facility may be more utilized than outdoor sports fields and courts.

Challenges



- The site would need to be fully redeveloped and infrastructure upgrades may be required for a fieldhouse facility.
- The site’s size would not accommodate a large facility and onsite parking, limiting the extent of amenities that a new fieldhouse could contain.
- As a standalone facility, a fieldhouse at this location would not leverage existing amenities (e.g. washrooms, parking, foyer) as it would next to an existing facility such as the RRRC.

**APPENDIX E –
SPORTS EVENT
TOURISM
OPPORTUNITY
ASSESSMENT**



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Photo Credit: 2019 Alberta Masters Games Facebook

Introduction

Sport events build community pride and vibrancy. They also attract visitors in the form of athletes, coaches, spectators and families who spend money on accommodation, food, fuel, and entertainment, which supports the local economy. In these ways, developing as a sport tourism destination would help the Town of Rocky Mountain House attract and retain residents, boost local business, enhance its reputation and build the community's brand.

This Sports Event Tourism Opportunity Assessment provides an initial snapshot of the current state of sports event tourism in Rocky Mountain House. It identifies current strengths and weaknesses, assets and gaps, and sport events that align with these. It also proposes short and medium term steps for the Town to take to grow a stronger sport tourism and event portfolio. These steps are complementary to many of the actions in the Recreation Master Plan.

Primary research was gathered through interviews with Town staff, industry representatives, provincial sport organizations (PSO's) and other events rights holders. Secondary research was gathered from information requests of the Client and a review of relevant literature.

Why Invest in Sports Event Tourism

There are many economic, community and environmental benefits to be gained by investing in sport tourism events. These are identified below, along with key industry insights and trends.



Economic Benefits

- Increased visitation, visitor spending and economic activity.
- New jobs are created, and existing jobs are sustained.
- Enhanced business attraction and retention.
- Increased tax revenue for governments.



Community Benefits

- Celebrating local culture and sharing it with visitors through events can be a significant source of pride for communities.
- Sport tourism events have the capacity to encourage community engagement through volunteerism.
- Resident quality of life can be enhanced.
- New resident attraction.



Environmental Benefits

- Emotional connections provide enhanced value to built and natural environments.
- Can contribute to the preservation and revitalization of built and natural environments.

The Multiplier Effect of Visitor Spending

Visitor spending is “new” money that circulates throughout the local economy, multiplying its benefit. Here is an illustration:

A family travels to Rocky Mountain House to take part in a sport event. They purchase fuel, stay in a local hotel, and purchase food from local restaurants and grocery stores. This is the “direct” impact of their spending: local businesses receive money from visitor spending.

As a result of this spending, the businesses offering these services are able to make a profit and hire more staff. This “indirect” impact of visitor spending produces a multiplying effect as an economic driver by increasing wages, salaries, and profits. Also, as more visitors come to the community, more work is generated in the supply chain, as wholesalers, food and beverage suppliers, tour planners, retailers, manufacturers, etc., are called upon to meet customers’ demands.

The new employees hired by the tourism industry now have money to spend on clothes, food, transportation, entertainment and to pay taxes. This is the “induced” impact of visitor spending. The ripple or spillover effects of this induced impact are felt as income, and taxes are spent throughout the community on housing, education, transportation, infrastructure, energy, communication, health care and other personal expenditures.

The end result is that visitor dollars circulate throughout the economy, amplifying their impact along the way, resulting in enhanced support for community building and economic well-being.

Sport Tourism Industry Trends and Insights

The state of the sport tourism industry and current trends were reviewed to inform the opportunity assessment. The most relevant insights for Rocky Mountain House are provided next.

Large Number of Provincial Sport Organizations (PSOs)

Nearly 90 PSOs operate in Alberta, hosting hundreds of sanctioned events and championships annually.

Grassroots Sport Tourism is King

While major events dominate media attention, most sport tourism activity occurs at the community and regional level.

Provincial Funding for Facilities

The Alberta government has committed \$10 million in 2025–26 through the Active Communities Initiative to support small and mid-sized facility development.

Adult Participation in Organized Sport

19.9% of Alberta adults participated in organized sport in 2023–24.¹⁹

Youth Participation in Organized Sport

55.5% of Alberta children participated in organized sport in 2023–24.²⁰

Economic Impact of Sport Tourism

Sport tourism is a multibillion-dollar segment of Canada's tourism industry.

Growth in Indigenous Sport Tourism

A rapidly growing sector across Canada that emphasizes cultural relevance and community-based sport.



Situational Analysis

SWOT Analysis

The following SWOT analysis is a high-level evaluation of the current sport and event tourism landscape in Rocky Mountain House, identifying its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. This analysis highlights key factors to consider as Rocky Mountain House strives to develop and enhance its events portfolio while addressing existing barriers.

S	
Strengths	
<p>Central and Accessible Location:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Strongly positioned between Alberta’s largest urban centres and along a key highway corridorAccessible year round <p>Municipal Commitment to Tourism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Developing a sport tourism destination is identified as a strategic objective in the Town’s 2023 Strategic Plan <p>Previous Hosting Experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">2019 Alberta Masters GamesPro Rodeo and Chuckwagon FinalsTour of AlbertaSport development summer camps <p>Engaged Community Groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Local organizations host tournaments and eventsLocal groups contribute to the development of event-worthy recreation facilities	<p>Engaged Business Community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Active Chamber of Commerce with a Tourism CommitteeEstablished Visitor Information Centre at the Chamber <p>Regional Collaboration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">The Town is partnering with Clearwater County on an Alberta Summer Games bid <p>Compact Venue Footprint:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Multiple sport venues located within close proximity providing a hub model for multisport games <p>Natural and Cultural Attractions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Trails, rivers, campgrounds and outdoor recreation opportunitiesRocky Mountain House National Historic Site <p>Accommodation Capacity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">There are 491 hotel rooms in Town and 425 campsites nearby. This is a strong inventory of accommodation options for a community of this sizeFamily friendly hotels with amenities like waterslides

W

Weaknesses

Tourism Staffing:

- Tourism development activities are split between departments within the Town's Administration
- There is no dedicated position or role for tourism development

Facilities and Venues:

- Some sport infrastructure is aging and lacks technical standards for high-performance competition. Key limitations include:
 - No synthetic track
 - Small sized pool
 - No fieldhouse or turf field
 - Limited availability of ball diamonds and court space

Lack of a Premium Anchor Sport Venue:

- No premium or specialized facility to differentiate the Town as a host destination. For example:
 - Gary W. Harris Canada Games Centre in Red Deer
 - H4 Stadium in Sylvan Lake
 - Eagle Builders Centre in Blackfalds

Accommodation Availability:

- Hotel rooms are often occupied by workers supporting regional industries
- Relationships with hotels are not fully developed or currently aligned with a dedicated event strategy

Tourism Event Funding:

- There is no dedicated or consistent municipal funding for sport and event attraction
- There is no Destination Marketing/Management Fee in place to support investment in event attraction

Existing DMO Focus:

- Local and regional tourism organizations have limited capacity and mandates do not include a focus on sport or events

Airport Access:

- Lack of proximity to an international airport weakens the community's ability to host large-scale national or international events



Opportunities

Capitalizing on Existing Capabilities:

- Building on community strengths in curling, shooting sports, rodeo and other western events with existing venues and local expertise

Building Hosting Capacity:

- Enhancing the community's ability to host events as it gains more experience

Pursuing Homegrown and Community Events:

- Growing and expanding popular events like the Car Show, western events, performing arts or existing sport tournaments
- Re-establishing a signature annual festival

Tapping into Niche Tourism Markets:

- Potential to tap into or develop:
 - Agritourism
 - Outdoor adventure or endurance events
 - Film production and tourism

Enhancing Regional Collaboration:

- Pursuing partnerships with Clearwater County and nearby hubs like Sylvan Lake to co-host events and leverage resources

Leveraging Travel Alberta Tourism Development Zones:

- Rocky Mountain House is identified within two Travel Alberta Tourism Development Zones

Boosting Indigenous Sport Tourism:

- Collaborating with Indigenous partners and organizations to host culturally significant and low-barrier single or multi-sport event



Threats

Competition from Larger Centres:

- Red Deer, Sylvan Lake and other established host destinations have more sport and event infrastructure, funding and brand recognition

Local User Group Displacement:

- Indoor and outdoor facilities are mostly at capacity
- Hosting events may decrease local user group access for regular programming and bookings

Limited Tourism Funding:

- Provincial funding is limited and competitive
- Rural communities may face eligibility or capacity barriers
- Matching grants
- Minimum thresholds for size and scope of events

Volunteer Capacity:

- Risk of volunteer burnout
- Local organizing committee experience not as established as other markets

Extreme Weather:

- Unpredictable weather may create challenges for outdoor events and visitor travel

Alberta Summer Games Bids

The Alberta Summer Games, a biennial milestone event in the province's sport development system, provides over 1,200 youth athletes with multi-sport competition and generates economic benefits for host communities. The Town of Rocky Mountain House and Clearwater County have submitted an expression of interest to host the 2028 Games. This builds on lessons learned from a joint, though unfortunately unsuccessful, bid to host the 2026 games. Current efforts re-affirm the commitment of both partners to grow the region as a sport tourism destination.

2019 Alberta Masters Games Spotlight

Rocky Mountain House hosted the inaugural Alberta Masters Games in August 2019. The event welcomed over 1,200 participants aged 35 and up to compete in 12 sports at 17 different venues. Supported by hundreds of volunteers, the event generated significant economic impact for the Town and more than \$150,000 of legacy funds for community organizations.²¹ The Masters Games celebrated lifelong sport participation and served as a showcase for the Town as a capable multi-sport games host.



Photo Credits: 2019 Alberta Masters Games Facebook

Current State Summary

Rocky Mountain House is well-positioned geographically to develop a regional and provincial sport and event tourism portfolio. Municipal interest, Council support, and previous hosting experience provide a solid foundation. Long-term success will require investment in leadership and capacity, as well as upgraded infrastructure to meet technical standards for high-performance sport. Key opportunities include regional partnerships, expanding existing events, leveraging current strengths, niche markets, and natural assets. To compete with more established hosts, Rocky Mountain House should look to address funding gaps, build brand awareness, and navigate risks such as local organizing committee capacity, and accommodation pressure from industrial workers.

Opportunity Assessment

This section describes different sport tourism events that Rocky Mountain House can consider pursuing in the near term. These were identified based on current facilities and capacity, previous hosting experience, event hosting requirements and brand alignment. The section also describes sport event types that complement current assets, as well as homegrown event examples.

Overall, it is recommended that the community's focus should remain on realistic, logistically viable opportunities that complement existing assets and expertise and that build local hosting capacity over time. This includes focusing on attracting small to mid-sized events, including those that are not well-served by other host communities. It also includes focusing on youth and family friendly events, development level and amateur sport, and niche outdoor adventure activities. It is also recommended that the Town seeks to attract and host events through bid opportunities in the short term, and to grow homegrown events in the longer term.

With further investment in sport infrastructure and targeted event attraction, Rocky Mountain House has the potential to strengthen its position in Alberta's regional and provincial network of host communities.

It is recommended that the community's focus should remain on realistic, logistically viable opportunities that complement existing assets and expertise to build hosting capacity over time.



Event Hosting Opportunities

The following events are viable opportunities that could be achieved in the short term. These events align with existing venue capacity, local club hosting experience and offer economic impact while building hosting capacity at the provincial and national level. They are a starting point for further action and demonstrate the niche event market that Rocky Mountain House can begin to tap into. It is recommended that they be used as the basis of an event hosting and bidding schedule.

Rocky Mountain House's Sport Tourism Foundations

- ✓ *Small to mid-sized competitions*
- ✓ *Development and amateur level*
- ✓ *Youth and family friendly*
- ✓ *Niche outdoor sport and adventure*
- ✓ *Regional and provincial reach*

Canadian Mixed Curling Championship

The Rocky Curling Club would be eligible to host this national championship, as it requires just four sheets. It features seven days of competition with 14 teams, generating over 200 hotel room nights. Rocky Curling Club and Curling Alberta would be the key partners in a bid for this event. Through discussions to inform this assessment, Curling Alberta expressed interest in working with the Rocky Curling Club to build their event hosting portfolio.

Bids for this event typically open in February and close in early spring. The event requires a minimum bid fee of \$5,000 which can be made up of cash or value in kind.

Recommended Approach

Connect with Rocky Curling Club and gauge interest. Evaluate any Town support that could be provided. Key consideration for the Curling Club is the exclusive access to the event over 7 days and displacement of its regularly scheduled member leagues and programming. Should the Town wish to pursue a bid for the next cycle (2027 event), Curling Alberta should be notified and endorse the bid. The bid should be co-created between Rocky Curling Club and the Town.

Alberta Golf Provincial Championships

The Pine Hills Golf Club in Rocky Mountain House hosted the Alberta Women's Seniors Championship in 2024 and is well-positioned to host future Alberta Golf Championships, and potentially Golf Canada Championships. Opportunities include the Men's Mid-Amateur, U17 Championship, Women's Amateur, and more. Each event provides multiple days of competition and a significant incremental visitor draw.

Recommended Approach

Contact Alberta Golf, which circulates hosting opportunities directly to golf clubs across the province. Connect with Pine Hills Golf Club and learn about their hosting experience of the 2024 Alberta Women's Senior Championships, and to determine if they are interested in pursuing future events. Evaluate any Town support that could be provided. Pine Hills Golf Club should lead the pursuit of any bids, with support from the Town for funding, hotel arrangements, etc.

Alberta Hockey Junior B Provincial Championship (Russ Barnes Cup)

The Rocky Rams Junior B Hockey Club, members of the Heritage Junior Hockey League, could apply to host Alberta Hockey's Junior B Provincial Championship. The event takes place annually in early April and features five teams over multiple days of competition. It is regularly hosted in smaller centres, making it a potential fit for the Rocky Arena Complex and Rams Hockey Club.

Alberta Hockey accepts applications for consideration to host a Hockey Alberta Provincial Championship in the fall.

Recommended Approach

Connect with the Rocky Rams Hockey Club to gauge interest in pursuing hosting a provincial championship for 2026, 2027 or 2028. Evaluate any Town support that could be provided.

Archery Canada Outdoor and Indoor Championships

Rocky Mountain House could explore hosting the Canadian Outdoor Archery Championships which include 3D, Target and Field events. The event occurs annually in August and could be pursued in partnership with the Rocky Rod and Gun Club. The Indoor 3D Archery Championships are also an option, a 3-day spring event that can be held in an arena dry pad.

The process of seeking a host club typically takes place at least two years in advance of an event. The Provincial Members (PSO) will seek hosts by distributing the Bid Application and links to the Hosting Manual to their affiliated clubs, or work with a tourism partner to find a suitable host and venue for the event. The Member will forward to Archery Canada the strongest bid application which has been endorsed by its Board of Directors.

Recommended Approach

Connect with Rocky Rod and Gun Club to gauge interest in hosting events. If interest is there, connect with Archery Alberta to understand the next available events and bidding cycles.

Canadian Orienteering Festival

The Canadian Orienteering Festival is Canada's premier event for orienteering, drawing participants from across the country and internationally for a week of races and events in natural settings. The festival returns to Alberta in 2025 with stops in Red Deer and Edmonton area. Known as a base camp for adventure, Rocky Mountain House is well suited to host orienteering events with its surrounding forest, river and varied topography.

Information on bidding and hosting RFPs and timelines is not publicly available. The Town should consult Orienteering Canada for more information.

Recommended Approach

Contact the Alberta Orienteering Association directly to begin discussions about hosting the event.

Suggested Event Types

The following event types and examples are also aligned with the community's existing assets. The Town may wish to consider related opportunities and to pursue bids to host events in these categories in the future. Further engagement with event rights holders would be needed to ensure that the Town meets requirements of the various events.

Arena & Ice Sports

- Hockey Alberta Provincials (minor hockey, female, or tiered divisions)
- Spring & Summer Hockey Development Camp
- Ringette Alberta Provincials
- Skate Canada: Alberta-NWT/Nunavut Events (regional or development-level competitions)
- Short Track Speed Skating Events (Alberta Speed Skating Association)
- Curling Alberta Qualifiers and Provincial Championships
- Curling Canada National Championships (Mixed, Seniors, U18, Mixed Doubles)

Field & Diamond Sports

- Baseball Alberta Provincials
- Softball Alberta and Slo-Pitch Provincials
- Alberta Schools' Athletic Association Championships
- Archery Alberta Events (3D or field events)

Indigenous Sports

- Indigenous Multisport or Traditional Games (sanctioned by the Indigenous Sport Council of Alberta or similar organizations)

Endurance & Adventure Events

- Adventure Racing World Series (Qualifier)
- Spartan Race or Tough Mudder (Regional Events)
- Orienteering Canada Cup or Western Festival
- Alberta Bicycle Association Events (*mountain bike, gravel, or cyclocross races*)

Shooting Sports

- IPSC Canadian Handgun Nationals (*based on facility standards and safety regulations*)
- Other Sport Shooting Events (*trap, skeet, or rifle shooting sanctioned provincially or nationally*)

Water Sports

- Swim Alberta Regional Meets (*suitable for development or age group competition based on current pool size*)
- Paddling (slalom, polo)

Golf

- Alberta Golf Qualifiers and Championships (*Junior, Amateur, or Senior categories at Pine Hills Golf Club*)

Rodeo

- Pro rodeo events similar to those already held in the community

Spotlight on Western Events

Western heritage is part of the identity of Rocky Mountain House. The Town is home to the North Saskatchewan River Park Rodeo grounds, an outdoor event centre with seating capacity for 3,000 spectators. They annually host the Rocky Pro Rodeo, an event that celebrated its 51st edition in June 2025. It is a sanctioned event of the Canadian Professional Rodeo Association (CPRA) and features various rodeo events such as saddle bronc and bull riding. The Rocky Mountain House Chuckwagon Association also hosts the World Professional Chuckwagon Association (WPCA) Pro Tour and will be the site of the Finals in August 2025.



Photo Credit: Rocky Pro Rodeo Facebook

Developing Home Grown Events

Homegrown events are those that are developed and delivered in host communities. The following are examples of successful event models from other Alberta communities that can serve as inspiration for Rocky Mountain House to create homegrown events. These scalable formats offer tourism potential, community engagement, and growth opportunities when aligned with local identity and capacity.

Canmore Folk Music Festival

This festival has been running since 1978 and is an example of a successful, homegrown event. The festival draws thousands of attendees over three days in August and has become a signature celebration that blends community spirit and visitor appeal.

This event example is relevant to Rocky Mountain House in several ways. There is strong resident support in the town for more festivals and events. Repurposing Centennial Park Campground as a dedicated event space would enable a signature or seasonal series of outdoor events celebrating music, arts and culture in the community.



Photo Credit: Travel Alberta



Hockey Calgary U13AA Thanksgiving Classic

This homegrown youth hockey tournament has been held in Calgary since 2021. Organized by Hockey Calgary and supported by the local tourism board, the tournament was strategically created to fill a gap in the market and take advantage of a lower occupancy period for local hotels, generating significant economic impact. The tournament offers elite youth competition, drawing dozens of teams from across Western Canada and serves as a model of success for developing scalable, community-driven events rather than single opportunity hosting rights.

Rocky Mountain House is well suited to hosting youth hockey tournaments, with its strong hockey community and arenas at the Rocky Regional Recreation Centre. Family friendly hotel options and its relatively central location in Alberta would also help to draw in youth focused sport events. As additional recreation facilities are developed in the future, and as improvements are made to existing facilities, tournaments and meets for other sports such as soccer, basketball, and volleyball may also become possible.

Photo Credit: Hockey Calgary

Key Actions

By targeting strategic hosting opportunities in the near term, establishing homegrown events, and planning for future growth through capacity and facility development, Rocky Mountain House can strengthen its position as a sport and event tourism destination. This section describes three categories of actions that the Town can advance towards this goal. These include capacity building, event bidding and hosting, and facility and homegrown event development. While actions in different categories may be advanced concurrently, the actions identified under each category are listed in a recommended order of priority. Those that are foundational and recommended to be completed in the short term are marked with a blue star.



Photo Credit: Rocky Pro Rodeo

Capacity Building

The following actions will result in greater internal capacity, an understanding of baseline conditions and funding opportunities, and collaborative relationships with local partners.

Assign a Staff Lead

Designate a municipal staff member with dedicated time and budget to oversee sport and event tourism initiatives. It is anticipated this role would not require full time hours to action. It is suggested the Town considers reprioritizing existing staff responsibilities or reallocating existing staff time before bringing on additional human resources. Another option could be to hire contracted resources on a term basis to action sport tourism initiatives.

Establish a Sport & Event Working Group ★

Form a collaborative group including Town staff, local sport organizations and clubs, regional partners, and the Chamber of Commerce to support strategy implementation.

Consult with Local Clubs and Event Organizers ★

Identify existing local champions, evaluate hosting experience, volunteer base, and fundraising capacity to support bids and local organizing committee formation.

Explore Funding Opportunities to Support Sport and Event Tourism

Explore opportunities to create a hosting grant for sport and event bids and hosting opportunities. Many destinations and municipalities have dedicated bid reserve funds or formalized grant programs. Additionally, collaborate with hotels on implementing a Destination

Marketing Fund where a portion of revenues would go toward supporting the attraction of events that fill room nights for participating hotels. Consider budget inclusions for familiarization tours, site-visits and event servicing and activations to elevate the experience for participants and visitors.

Conduct a Facility and Venue Audit

Inventory and assess all existing sport, recreation, and event venues to determine technical capabilities and identify upgrade or replacement opportunities in alignment with indoor and outdoor facility development from the Recreation Master Plan.

Engage with Hotels and Other Accommodation Providers

Meet with local accommodation businesses to understand occupancy cycles, capacity, and buy-in for supporting event tourism.

Develop a Sport & Event Bid Toolkit

Create a resource to support event attraction, including venue specs based on the facility and venue audit, hotel inventory, a seasonal event calendar, and community appeal.



Hosting Events

The following actions will result in a greater understanding of hosting opportunities, new events being hosted in the community, and existing events being more fully leveraged to grow visitation.

Pursue Short-Term Event Hosting Opportunities ★

Begin exploring bidding opportunities for events that are most strongly aligned with Rocky Mountain House's strengths and assets, such as provincial qualifiers, small championships, or national events that fit within existing capacity. This can be done in partnership with local clubs and venues who will hold the relationships with relevant provincial and national sporting organizations.

Identify Target Events & Develop a Multi-Year Event Schedule ★

Prioritize bidding on realistic and high-potential events aligned with local infrastructure and club capacity across sport, culture, and niche tourism.

Consider Joining Sport Tourism Canada

Becoming a member would grant access to bidding opportunities, industry resources and attendance at the annual Sport Events Congress. While some national-level events may be beyond Rocky Mountain House's current capacity, membership provides valuable networking opportunities and builds understanding of how the sport and event industry functions in Canada. This knowledge will be important for long-term development and capacity building.

Leverage High-Potential Existing Events

Collaborate with local events like the Rocky Pro Rodeo, Chuckwagon Finals, and Hooked on Classics Car Show to expand their local and regional profile to grow visitation. Gain understanding of their challenges and successes in hosting significant events locally.

Collaborate with the Business Community

Bring local businesses into the process to activate the community during events and secure sponsorships, in-kind support, and regional buy-in for future events.



Facility and Home Grown Event Development

The following actions will result in the development of facilities that are well equipped to host sport bid events, a compelling and authentic local sport tourism brand, and the establishment of new home grown events.

Consider sport event hosting when redeveloping existing facilities or building new facilities.

Sport event hosting requires facilities that have been designed with athletes, games and spectators in mind. This includes provision of regulation size amenities (fields, courts, pools, etc.), spectator seating, adequate dressing rooms and team gathering spaces, and multi-purpose rooms for activity staging and ceremonies.

Build and market an event tourism brand.

Building and marketing an event tourism brand will strengthen the Town's reputation as an event destination, and help to attract event producers and provincial sport organizations. An event tourism brand should be promoted year-round, and should be linked to and enhance Rocky Mountain House's community brand. Individual events and event success stories should be leveraged as branding opportunities to catalyze resident and business attraction.

Explore establishing a new signature event

In the medium to longer term explore the development of a locally driven music, cultural, or outdoor adventure festival. There is opportunity to repurpose Centennial Park Campground to support this vision (see the Recreation Master Plan).

Conclusion

This Sports Event Tourism Opportunity Assessment highlights the strong potential for Rocky Mountain House to grow as a sport and event tourism destination. The Town is well-positioned to pursue targeted opportunities that align with its assets, and to invest in infrastructure, build organizational capacity, and foster partnerships that will strengthen local event hosting capacity. Doing so will enhance event offerings, attract new visitors, and support local economic and community development. With thoughtful planning and sustained commitment, sport tourism can become a key pillar of the Town's identity and long-term prosperity.

Appendix F – References

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