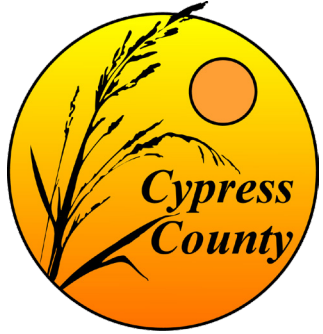


CYPRESS COUNTY
RECREATION MASTER PLAN



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- Great communities are built through active citizen involvement and engagement. Cypress County Recreation Master Plan is developed with input from residents and community stakeholders. Cypress County respects and values the efforts of everyone who participated in the process.
- The consultant team would like to thank the residents of Cypress County for sharing their ideas and experience. A special thank you is extended to County Council and Administration, supporting the communication and offering strategic guidance throughout the process.

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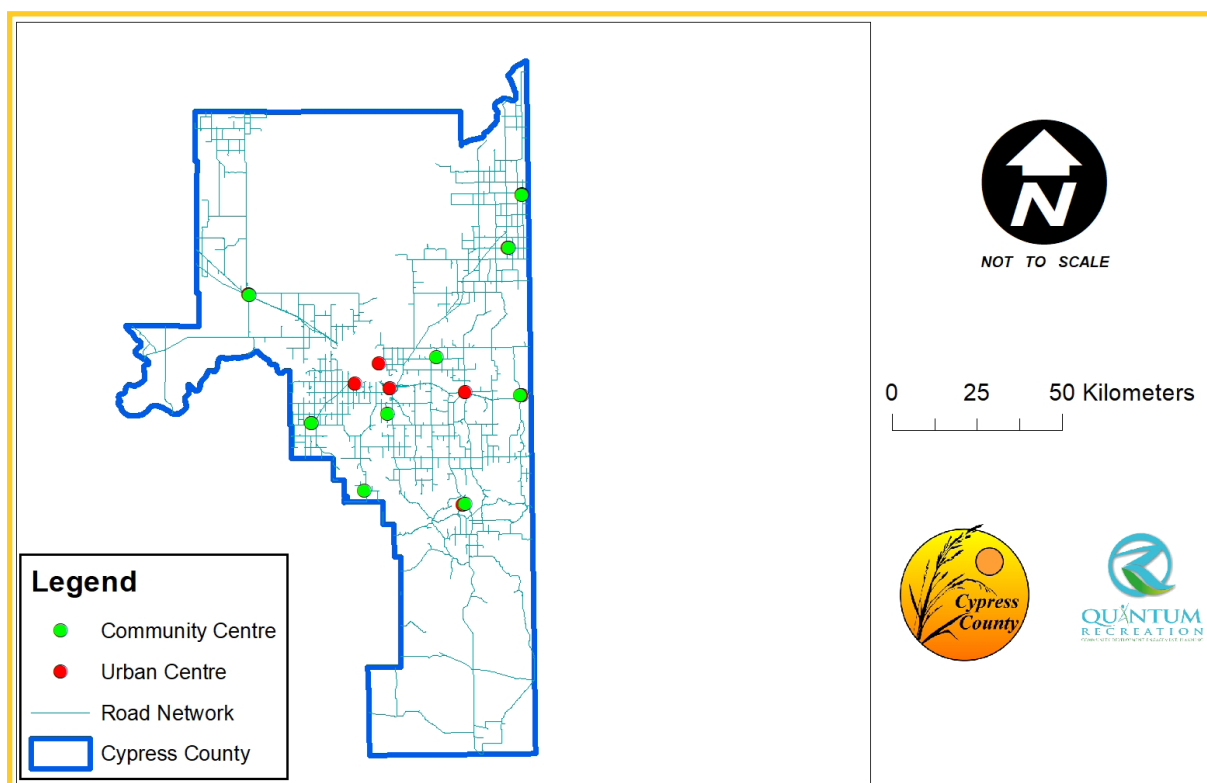
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INTRODUCTION

Plan Area

The County of Cypress is a municipal district in southeastern Alberta and surrounds its urban municipality neighbours, the City of Medicine Hat and the Town of Redcliff. The County is over 5,000 square miles or 13,000 km². Its boundary reaches the Alberta-Saskatchewan border to the east and the Canada- USA border to the south. Cypress County lists eleven hamlets, and each has a variety of indoor and outdoor facilities and parks. The plan area primarily looks within County boundaries and factors in the regional collaboration and facility cost sharing with the City of Medicine Hat to assess recreation opportunities.

Clearwater; Diamond Jubilee; Dunmore; Elkwater; Hilda; Iddesleigh; Irvine; Jenner; Longfellow, Ralston, Schuler, Seven Persons, Suffield, Veinerville, and Walsh.



Purpose of Plan

The purpose of the Cypress County's Recreation Master Plan is to create an attainable mission and clear direction for the sustainable delivery of recreation and parks services for the next fifteen plus years. The mission, goals and strategies serve as a framework for the long-term use and development of facilities and parks, and the implementation of vital recreation programs and services. This comprehensive view of recreation ensures the highest and best use of the County's facilities and programs. The plan is designed to assist decision-makers, key stakeholders, and residents in understanding and identifying the needs and priorities related to recreation and park facilities and programs within the County.



The Recreation Master Plan is guided by the County’s Strategic Plan and Municipal District Plan and the Framework for Recreation in Canada: Pathways to Wellbeing. The vision and goals in the Strategic Plan and the objectives in the Municipal District Plan is the foundation for the development of the Recreation Master Plan and the new recreation and parks mission and goals.

Cypress County’s Strategic Plan Goals Are:

- Ensure infrastructure is effectively maintained, enhanced and evaluated.
- Provides high quality safe and affordable services and amenities.
- Recognized for its strong partnerships and community engagement.
- Focus on economic growth, sustainability and diversification.



The Plan helps achieve an enhanced quality of life with a clear strategic direction and achievable goals and strategies to build healthy and connected communities in the County. The Recreation Master Plan provides recommendations for immediate implementation and short, medium, and long-term strategies . These recommendations will help the County maintain and build collaborative relationships and partnerships to develop a sustainable delivery of recreation and park services for the next fifteen plus years.

Planning Process

The Recreation Master planning process creates a new direction for the future. The planning process completes an assessment of the current state of recreation and parks services (programs, facilities, parks); stakeholder and community consultation to determine current needs and future demands, and provide recommendations for the sustainable delivery of recreation and parks services. The plan also develops an implementation plan with costs estimates for each strategy for the long-term phased approach for facility and program development.



Impact Of Covid -19 Pandemic On RMP Process

As we are all aware, this year, we are confronted with an unprecedented crisis and something the world has never experienced before. Each of us is working from home, practicing social distancing, and finding new routines to keep ourselves safe. During the first week of the shutdown, Quantum Recreation executed the second stage of community engagement, including train the trainer session to host an open house, and seniors and youth surveys. The closure created new challenges for our team and the engagement process. We rewrote the engagement plan, pivoted our process to facilitate a focus group with community leaders, and sent out a user group survey. The feedback received provided essential information to develop a draft recreation plan.

VALUE OF RECREATION



Cypress County is making the following commitments to develop recreation and parks and is stated in its Municipal Development Plan:

- To promote the development of the recreation potential of the municipality.
- To conserve the natural environment of the municipality, especially the river valleys and coulee areas, & existing wetlands and riparian areas.
- To preserve and protect identified historical resources within the municipality.

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

The fundamental purpose of recreation and parks is to have everyone engaged in meaningful, accessible recreation experiences that foster individual well-being, community well-being, and well-being of the natural and built environment.



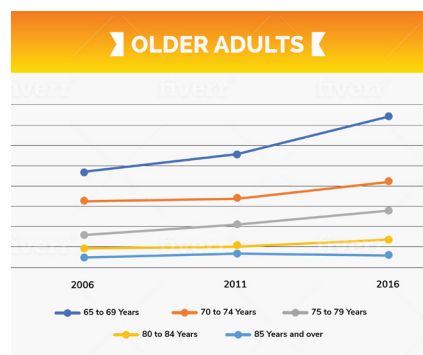
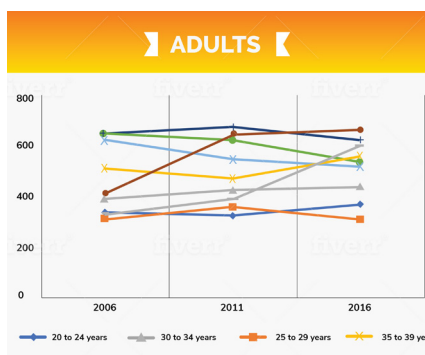
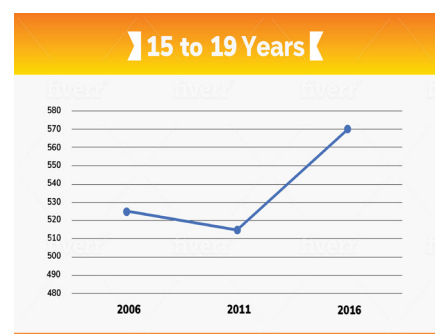
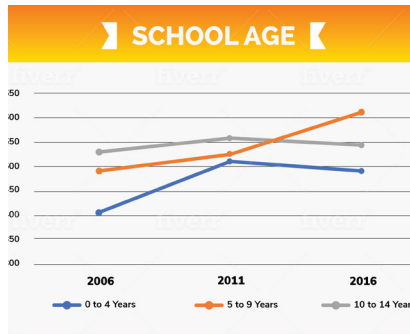
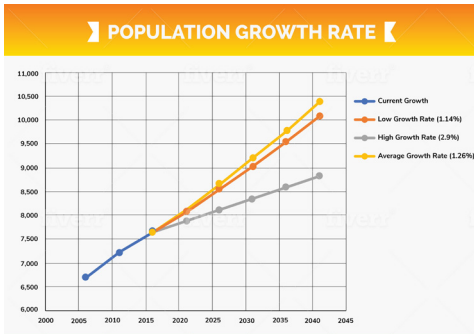
And both are used as a foundation to create a new direction for the County’s Recreation and Parks service. The new path will identify concrete ways to develop a collaborative approach and build partnerships to expand recreation, sport, and cultural programs and enhance recreation and park facilities. The Master Recreation Plan is a road map that delivers a variety of recreational and outdoor experiences for all to enjoy. It boosts the physical and mental well-being of residents, builds healthy families and communities, and connects people with nature.



COMMUNITY PROFILE

County Demographics and Population Growth

The plan aims to encourage sustainable growth and expansion of recreation, sport, and outdoor recreation over the next fifteen plus years. According to the 2016 Cypress County, Municipal District Stats Canada Census, the population of Cypress County is 7,662 people who occupy over 2,683 residences. The County's population is growing at a rate of 1.14% per year.



Changing demographics influence recreation preferences. According to the 2017 Alberta Survey, walking is popular among all age groups. Residents living in the County have an average age of 37 years, with the largest segment of the population aged of 45-64 (2,420). Older age groups tend to favour less strenuous activities, while younger people choose more active pursuits. Baby boomers are expected to be more active as seniors but drive demand for less demanding recreation endeavors.

The County's demographics and population growth can guide how the County develops future recreation and park services. The County is growing, however not quickly, which provides an opportunity to plan for the growth. Also, the changing demographics may influence the recreation preferences of residents and requires offering a diverse range of recreation and park services to meet the new demands, whether for youth, women, seniors, or various ethnic groups.

Planning Context

The various National, Provincial, Regional, and Municipal documents present important policy direction and context for planning the County's recreation and park services. The summary of the documents provides the regulations and planning requirements and their impact on the development of recreation facilities, park spaces, or natural areas.

| | NATIONAL | PROVINCIAL | REGIONAL | LOCAL |
|-------------------------------|---|--|--|--|
| RELEVANCE TO RECREATION | National policy to provide clear direction and coordinate provincial or municipal policy development. | Provides authority for various statutory and non-statutory land use planning tools including land acquisition for future recreation facilities and conservation of natural lands.w | Provides a regional approach for the development and implementation of recreation, culture, and tourism opportunities. | Local planning and policy documents providing strategic direction and strategies too. |
| POLICIES PLANS AND STRATEGIES | National Recreation Framework Long Term Athlete Development Framework 2.1 Canadian Sports Policy Parks For All | Municipal Government Act (MGA) Alberta Land Stewardship Act (ALSA) and the Alberta Land – Use Framework | South Saskatchewan Regional Plan Tri-Area Intermunicipal Development Plan (City of Medicine Hat, Cypress County, Town of Redcliff) MD Taber & Cypress County Intermunicipal Development Plan | Municipal Development Plan 2015/26 Land Use Bylaw 2018.04 Cypress County Strategic Plan Rec 1: Athlete Development Rec 2: Recreation Annual Grants Rec 3: Hamlet Parks Maximum Level of Maintenance Rec 4: Sponsorship |

Recreation Trends and Analysis

As our population changes, so do our expectations of recreation and park activities or experiences. Planning today for the needs of tomorrow is a challenging exercise. Cypress County is a unique community. Decisions made today understand and consider the broader trends occurring in the recreation and parks sector to meet the needs of the County for tomorrow. Below highlights the trends in parks, recreation, sport, lifestyle, leisure, and facilities.



Key Trends in the Parks System

- People want to live near parks and open spaces as they are associated with a higher quality of life.
- Parks are increasingly viewed as an opportunity for non-programmed recreation and cultural activities and are built for all ages to use.
- There is an increased demand for gathering spaces such as public picnic areas or outdoor barbeques, particularly in communities with diverse ethnic populations.
- A resident living in Alberta continue to express concern for environmental issues. The increased awareness of environmental protection has made the integration of environmental features in active parks more popular. Also, there is a growing demand for education and public awareness programs focusing on environmental and park-specific issues including stewardship.

Key Trends in the Parks System

- Recreation infrastructure across Canada is ageing, and facilities' overall lifecycle is ending at a faster pace than it is being replaced. If the current reinvestment levels are maintained, there will be a decline in the overall condition of recreation facilities in the coming years.
- The emphasis for the design and build of recreation and parks facilities today is requiring inclusion and access for all members of the population. Our public facilities need to ensure there are no physical barriers that prevent participation to any members of our population.
- There has been progress by governmental bodies across the country to provide gender-neutral washrooms that are equally inviting for all people, regardless of their gender identification. People are to feel welcome and able to enjoy facilities without fear of discrimination.
- Housing a range of facilities under one roof creates a natural gathering space for the community that can function as a neighborhood hub. Operating recreation facilities as hubs, rather than solely as sports centres, helps with social cohesion and well-being for the community.
- Flexible and adaptable spaces are being created to fit a variety of uses and demands, and more specifically meeting the need for unstructured activities.
- Movements toward sustainable design and ethical sourcing of materials are increasing and include recreation and parks facilities and services. New facilities are being manufactured to meet environmental standards such as LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), while older facilities are being retrofitted to introduce energy-efficient systems. Facilities that can attain net-zero carbon emissions, for example, are often showcased as best practice and leaders in facility design.

Key Lifestyle Trends

- There is increasing momentum in the wellness movement. Lifestyle and recreation are becoming the bottom line for livable communities across the country.
- People are becoming more active but not often enough for optimal health. Recreation professionals are partnering with health care professionals to improve physical, mental and spiritual health through physical activity. This collaborative approach is to tackle the high levels of physical inactivity and obesity observed across the country, largely due to a lack of time and participation in sedentary forms of leisure (i.e. watching television, online activities, etc.).
- To facilitate healthy lifestyles, all levels of government are examining ways to increase physical activity and participation levels through the introduction of programs, funding and other initiatives.

General Trends in the Leisure System

- Income can be a significant barrier to participation in leisure pursuits. Municipalities need to consider the cost of activities or an individual's ability to afford recreation or sport activities, including entry and equipment.
- Demand for unorganized and drop-in activities is on the rise, and this shift is impacting organized and structured programs. Organized programs are considered inflexible for people with limited free time.
- Municipalities are often entering partnerships with community, non-profit, and private-sector organizations to maximize efficiencies associated with capital and operational costs, so long as the municipality and the community benefit.
- Volunteerism is declining across the country; therefore, supporting local volunteers is critical to ensuring that these dedicated individuals continue to participate in civic life, and new volunteers are recruited.

Key Trends in Sports & Recreation

- Adults and older adults are embracing the “active living” or “wellness” philosophy, and municipalities are shifting their programming to respond to these new demands.
- Trails (both natural and paved) continue to be one of the most used “facilities” in a community. Trails encourage the popular forms of leisure and active transportation activities, including walking for leisure, cycling, and inline skating.
- There is a decline in children and youth participation in most organized sports. However, soccer continues to be a popular sport and casual activities that fit their schedule.
- Sport and nature-based tourism is a growing market including a focus on family recreation “destination” facilities, as well as passive outdoor sports or activities such as hiking, bird watching, marine and waterfront activities.



SERVICE DELIVERY OF RECREATION AND PARKS TODAY

Recreation Facility Ownership Models

Cypress County has a variety of recreation facilities and includes recreation, sport, community halls, schools, libraries, museums, fitness centres, bowling alleys, parks, playgrounds, and outdoor facilities. There are different forms of ownership models for each of the facilities. The facility is :

- Owned and operated by the County, i.e., Centennial Park in Schuler.
- Owned by the County and operated by Non- Profit Organizations, i.e., Community Association in Clearwater, Dunmore, Hilda, Iddesleigh, Irvine, Jenner, Longfellow, Schuler, Seven Persons, Suffield, Veinerville, and Walsh and Irvine Recreation Centre.
- Owned and operated by a Private Business, i.e., Riding Centres.
- Owned and operated Federal government (CFB Suffield), i.e.Ralston Recreation Centre
- Joint Use Agreements to use the facility, i.e., the school division.



Strong Community Spirit

There is a strong community spirit in the County. It is demonstrated by the extraordinary volunteer commitment from community associations, non-profit organizations, and volunteers. Volunteers are an incredible asset to each community. They facilitate or coordinate recreation and sport opportunities for their children, youth, and families. The commitment from volunteer organizations and support from the County facilitates the development of new recreation programs, the ability to host sporting or cultural events, and the ongoing maintenance of community facilities.

There are eleven community associations. Many of the associations have a partnership with the County to maintain the community facilities and parks within each of their hamlets. The County supports the partnership with financial funding and administrative support for community associations or non-profit organizations. The benefit of this collaborative approach is the community buildings are in good condition, sport and recreation programs are offered to children and youth, and the parks and playgrounds are being maintained.

Cypress County Parks and Recreation Service Delivery

A municipality can choose the level of support either staff resources, building infrastructure, or allocate funding to deliver recreation and parks services. The level of support is on a continuum with four levels: Direct Provider, Enabler or Coordinator, Supporter, and Arms Length Provider.



- **Direct Provider:** The municipality is the direct provider of recreation and park services for the community. The municipality owns and operates facilities; and implements programs and services coordinated by county staff.
- **Enabler or Coordinator:** The municipality provides funding for ongoing investment and maintenance of County-owned facilities such as recreation facilities, parks, or community halls-also, administrative support to coordinate grant programs and communication.
- **Supporter:** The municipality fosters partnerships with volunteers and community organizations to provide recreation and park services to enable a wide range of experiences and opportunities. The collaborative approach works together to book facilities, cross-promoting recreation, and sport opportunities by all recreation providers in the community (private, non-profit, or municipal).
- **Arms Length Provider:** Develop secondary plans and incentives to guide developers toward building recreation facilities and green space amenities as part of new growth areas.

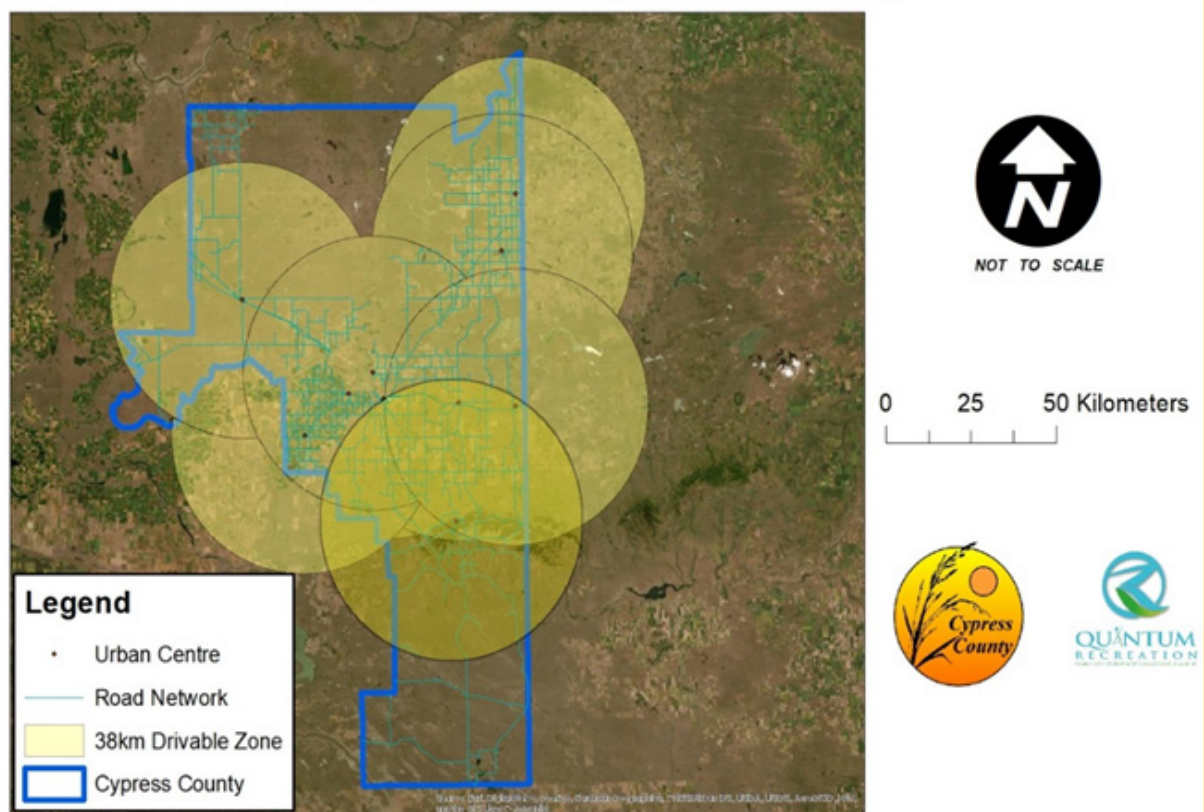
The County currently provides recreation and parks services as an Enabler or Coordinator. The County provides funding to organizations through a grant program and the ongoing investment and maintenance of County-owned recreation, sports facilities, and parks. The County also provides administrative support by coordinating grant programs and promoting recreation, sport, or cultural events.

Inventory of Recreation Facilities and Parks

Before beginning to identify a new direction, it is important to understand the current supply of parks and recreation and how well the current system serves the needs of residents. An inventory of recreation, parks, trails, campground, and environmental areas resources in the County.



Recreation Drivable Service Area



Recreation Facilities Driveable Service Area

A tool is used to determine priority areas for all recreation, parks, and trails in the County. The tool uses science-based criteria to assess the current capacity for Indoor and Outdoor Recreation Facilities, Parks, and Recreation Programs whether, a private lot, parks playgrounds, trails, outdoor and indoor recreation facilities, walkability buffer (400 m), and driving (38.7 km).

Indoor Recreation Facilities

Cypress County has a variety of recreation indoor recreation facilities throughout the County. The facilities include recreation and sports facilities (curling rink, ice arena, gymnasium, indoor swimming pool), community halls, schools, libraries, observatory, museums, fitness centres, multi-purpose space, and bowling alleys.

The most common operating model is facilities directly owned by the County and operated by Community Associations (i.e., Irvin Sports Complex). The second model facilities are owned and operated by private businesses (i.e., Ridding Centres). Finally, Not for Profit organizations owned and operates community halls (i.e., Community Associations).

| FACILITY TYPE | QUANTITY | OWNER |
|----------------------|----------|----------------------------------|
| Fitness Centre | 2 | Association (1) CFB Suffield (1) |
| Indoor Curling | 2 | County (2) |
| Indoor Ice Arena | 3 | County (2) CFB Suffield (1) |
| Multi-purpose Space | 3 | Association (1) County (2) |
| Gymnasium | 2 | Association (1) CFB Suffield (1) |
| Community Hall | 9 | Association (6) County (3) |
| Indoor Swimming Pool | 1 | CFB Suffield (1) |
| Library | 2 | Association (1) County (1) |
| Observatory | 1 | Association (1) |
| School | 5 | |

Parks

The County currently has a total of 28 parks and includes regional, neighborhood, and greenways. Park facilities include all the amenities and site infrastructure in parks, such as parking areas, recreation infrastructure, and site furniture.

Parks provide residents with the ability to participate in recreational activities, which are both passive and active. Passive recreation may include benches or barbeque pits, and active recreation may include playgrounds or hosting a special event.

| Category | Size | Purpose | Servicing | Existing |
|--------------------------|----------------------|---|---|----------|
| Regional Parks | 3.25 to 16 ha | Community sports, some tournaments, and some special events. | Regional | 2 |
| Neighbourhood Parks | 0.25 ha to 3.24 ha | Serve both the structured activity needs of children and the unstructured activity needs of the family. | Generally intended to meet the needs of a population of 2,000 to 2,500 people | 20 |
| Linear Parks / Greenways | Minimum 16m in width | Connectors that link larger parks or open space and for trail access. | Link park spaces | 6 |

In the County, parks are directly owned by the County (i.e., Centennial Park in Schuler). Or, parks are developed and managed through a partnership or joint-use agreement (i.e., school division or not for profit group).

| Facility Type | County Owned | Partner Owned | Quantity |
|---------------|--------------|---------------|----------|
| Playgrounds | 4 | 5 | 9 |
| BBQ Pits | 6 | | 6 |

Outdoor Facilities

The outdoor facilities are located throughout the County and provide a variety of sport and recreational activities, including two golf courses, one tennis court, four ball diamonds, six soccer fields, four sport courts, and four outdoor ice rinks. The County directly owns some facilities (i.e., Hilda Ball Diamonds). Other facilities are offered through joint-use arrangements (i.e., Prairie Rose School Division).

| Facility Type | County Owned | Partner Owned | Privately Owned |
|-----------------------------|--------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Golf Course | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Outdoor Tennis Courts | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Pickle Ball Courts | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Ball Diamonds | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Rectangular Fields (soccer) | 0 | 6 | 0 |
| Outdoor Sport Court | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Ice Rinks | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Riding Arena | 0 | 1 | 13 |

Campgrounds

The County has two campgrounds, Cavan Lake Recreational with 78 sites and Sandy Point Park with 15 sites. The campgrounds provide residents and visitors the opportunity to experience outdoor recreation.



| Campground Name | Sites | Amenities |
|------------------------------------|-------|---|
| Cavan Lake Recreational Campground | 78 | Playground, horseshoe pits, power, trails |
| Sandy Point Park | 15 | Playground, boat Launch |



Trails

The trail network within Cypress County currently is over 3.2 km and the current focus of pathways within hamlets and urban centers, creating safe pedestrian transportation corridors for residents. The creation of trails will increase due to urban development and the needs of the community.

| Community | Metres | Surfacing |
|--------------|---------|-----------|
| Suffield | 2,600 m | Asphalt |
| Desert Blume | 2,450 m | Asphalt |
| Dunmore | 2,175 m | Asphalt |



Environmental Areas

The County has twenty-two Environmental Reserves owned by the County.

Cypress County has environmentally sensitive areas (ESA), which are defined as “areas that have sensitive resources such as large habitat patches, occurrences for species of conservation concern, and rare habitats” (Fiera, 2014). Mapping has been generated by Alberta Environment and Parks, which illustrates the ESA’s throughout Alberta. The County needs to be aware of the potential impacts of development and using lands for recreation within environmentally sensitive areas.

Within the County, there has been land that has been designated Environmental Reserve (ER) under the MGA, which is wetlands, streams, or other environmentally sensitive areas. The primary goal of this designation is environmental protection. The provision of some recreation infrastructure, such as trails or interpretive signage, may be appropriate for these areas.

Finally, working with conservation groups such as Ducks Unlimited highlights other environmental areas. The environmental areas can either be a conservation easement or are owned to help protect important watershed areas that help create waterfowl habitat.

| Land use | Qty | Size | Owners | Uses |
|-----------------------|-----|---------|--------|--|
| Environmental Reserve | 22 | 4297 m2 | County | MGA classification to help protect and preserve areas. |

Recreation Programming

Recreational programs in the County for residents range from general fitness, educational programs, or highly competitive sports. For the most part, community associations and partners coordinate the delivery of recreation programs, such as hiring instructors to deliver a fitness class. Sports groups also rely heavily on the efforts of many dedicated volunteer organizations and their members to deliver the right quantity, type, and quality of sports programs.



Cemeteries

The County requested an assessment of the current number of cemeteries and the owners, either County, non-profit organizations, or private citizens, each responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the cemetery.

The County has a total of 37 cemeteries, which are spread across the 13,173.25 km². The majority of the cemeteries are located in the middle of the County.

The furthest southern cemetery site is located at the Wild Horse Burial. The furthest northern cemetery site is located at the Wolfer Children.

| Ownership | Quantity | Partner Owned |
|-----------------|----------|---------------|
| County Owned | 4 | 5 |
| Religious Owned | 18 | |
| Other Owned | 10 | |

Cemeteries Roles and Responsibilities

The Cemeteries Act (2000) describes the roles and responsibilities of cemetery owners and operators. The Act provides direction that cemeteries need to ensure there are perpetual care funds to ensure the grounds are maintained. The Act has provisions for requesting that if a cemetery is not being maintained or becomes delinquent, an administrator may be appointed by the minister to continue the care for the cemetery. If the funds are not adequate for the care of the cemetery, funds can be loaned to the appointed administrator.



Policies, Guidelines, and Procedures

The County's current policies support athlete development, coordinate the community grant process, encourage sponsorship, and set park maintenance standards. Many of the foundational recreation policies are not in place, and this may be due to the current focus on funding volunteer organizations to maintain facilities, deliver services, or host events. The development of policies will clarify processes, roles, and responsibilities and improve planning, formalize agreements, and develop reporting procedures.

The following policy areas to consider developing are listed below :

01. Facility Allocation. To develop a policy detailing the process to allocate facility space and times equitable. The policy is used to manage situations when demand exceeds supply or how preferred times are assigned.
02. Recreation Fees. To develop a user fee policy for programs and facilities. The County may consider developing a consistent approach that maximizes revenues and the use of facilities for all community associations. The development of the policy can also find differential pricing to encourage the use of non-prime time, or non-residential rates.
03. Community Grants. The County has the policy to provide annual recreation funding for communities responsible for recreation facilities. An improvement to the current policy would enhance the existing grant program and formalize reporting processes. The process includes the responsibilities of the applicant and the requirements for reporting to the County. The annual funding grants would be allocated after receiving a yearly report on facilities, programs and events, and a funding accountability report on the completing a new project or program.
04. Playground Development, Standards, and Inspections. To develop a policy and procedures on playground development, safety standards, and inspections. Also, to provide procedures acknowledging the partnership between volunteer organizations and the County on the development and maintenance of parks and playgrounds.
05. Public Engagement. Cypress County is making a concerted effort to keep residents informed and providing opportunities for input on important issues in their community. The Rural Municipalities of Alberta, in partnership with AUMA, has developed Public Engagement Guide and companion templates. The guide is used to create a Public Participation Policy.
06. Recreation and Parks Service Delivery. Develop policies to adopt an community development approach.
 - Define the County's Service Delivery based on a continuum including Direct Provider, Coordinator, or Enabler.
 - Develop guidelines to build relationship and partnerships to encourage volunteer organizations to continue and grow their role in delivering recreation and parks services in their communities. The guidelines will clarify roles and responsibilities and administrative procedures.
 - The policy outlines the support the County is able to provide to community leaders and organizations to build community leadership and organizational capacity.

WHAT WE HEARD

01

The Council, Staff and Residents are very passionate about Cypress County.

The communities within Cypress County are small; however, volunteers host wonderful events that everyone comes and pack the halls.

02

03

There is a need to clarify the roles and responsibilities of municipal departments and community associations for facilities and parks.

Council is looking for a sustainable financial model for recreation and parks.

04

05

There may be community benefit to encourage or support tourism.

11

The number one barrier to recreation that was noted by the respondents was unaware of activities. This communication concern was identified in verbatim comments and echoed with the favorite indoor activity in Cypress County was none, and that there was a high percentage of respondents that have never been to the facilities in Cypress.

The satisfaction of facilities in the County was that many people feel that the campgrounds are good, and for outdoor facilities, there needs to be increased to the ball facilities in the County.

12

13

The majority of the respondents accepted the vision.

The wants for facilities in the County are: Upgraded Playgrounds, public facilities require garbage cans, more trees in parks and campgrounds, indoor pickleball, multiplex in Dunmore.

14

15

The respondents don't feel there is a need for cemetery plots as the majority of respondents have plots already, and others are not looking for any.

Community Halls are an essential gathering place for County residents, and each community is unique.

06

07

New Draft Vision: "Cypress County's recreation and parks are accessible to all and engage the community to inspire healthy lifestyles, community spirit and tourism that is financially sustainable."

The majority of respondents feel that recreation and leisure are important to them and their quality of life and will travel over 51km to participate in it; however only want to increase taxes by the minimal amount for better access.

08

09

The respondents feel that the County has several strengths like the accessibility, proximity and maintenance with an emphasis on Elkwater as a specific strength for the County. When looking at needs, the respondents would like to see better maintenance, trails and accessibility.

The physical activities are outdoor-based. However, due to the ability to swim at Elkwater, swimming could be indoor-Medicine Hat or outdoor at Elkwater.

10

The survey respondents mirror the actual population of the County, other than being overrepresented in the population categories of 0-4, 10-14, 5- 44 and 65-75. The respondents are long term residents and want to reside in the County for at least five more years.

16

17

Better maintenance in Cypress County parks spaces, especially Desert Blume.

The Community associations are self-sufficient and require only funding and some guidance from the County. As Suffield is would like to upgrade their playground, so they are currently looking for grants.

18

19

Community Facilities are in good condition.

Would like some wayfinding signage in Desert Blume

20

Needs Assessment

The input from residents, stakeholders, staff and Council identified several clear priorities for improvement. The key themes are summarized below:

Communication between residents and Cypress County :

- Need for communication between residents and Cypress County.
- Role and Responsibilities of the County needs to be communicated.
- Promotion of activities.

Community Associations :

- Continue support to Community Associations.
- Improve communication between Community Associations and the County.
- Provide support to Community Associations to create partnerships between school division, Alberta Parks, golf course and other partners.





Parks & Outdoor Activities:

- Develop an interconnected network for nonmotorized trails starting with connection to Medicine Hat; an outward connection to Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park; and improve access within urban areas.
- Upgrade playgrounds.
- Collaborate with Elkwater and Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park as a hub for outdoor activities.
- Desert Blume residents want better wayfinding signage.
- Upgrading Campgrounds, i.e., Pickleball Courts.

Recreation:

- Creation of a multipurpose indoor facility.
- Continue regional access to recreational facilities in Medicine Hat and Canadian Forces Base.
- Find funding to implement the plan.

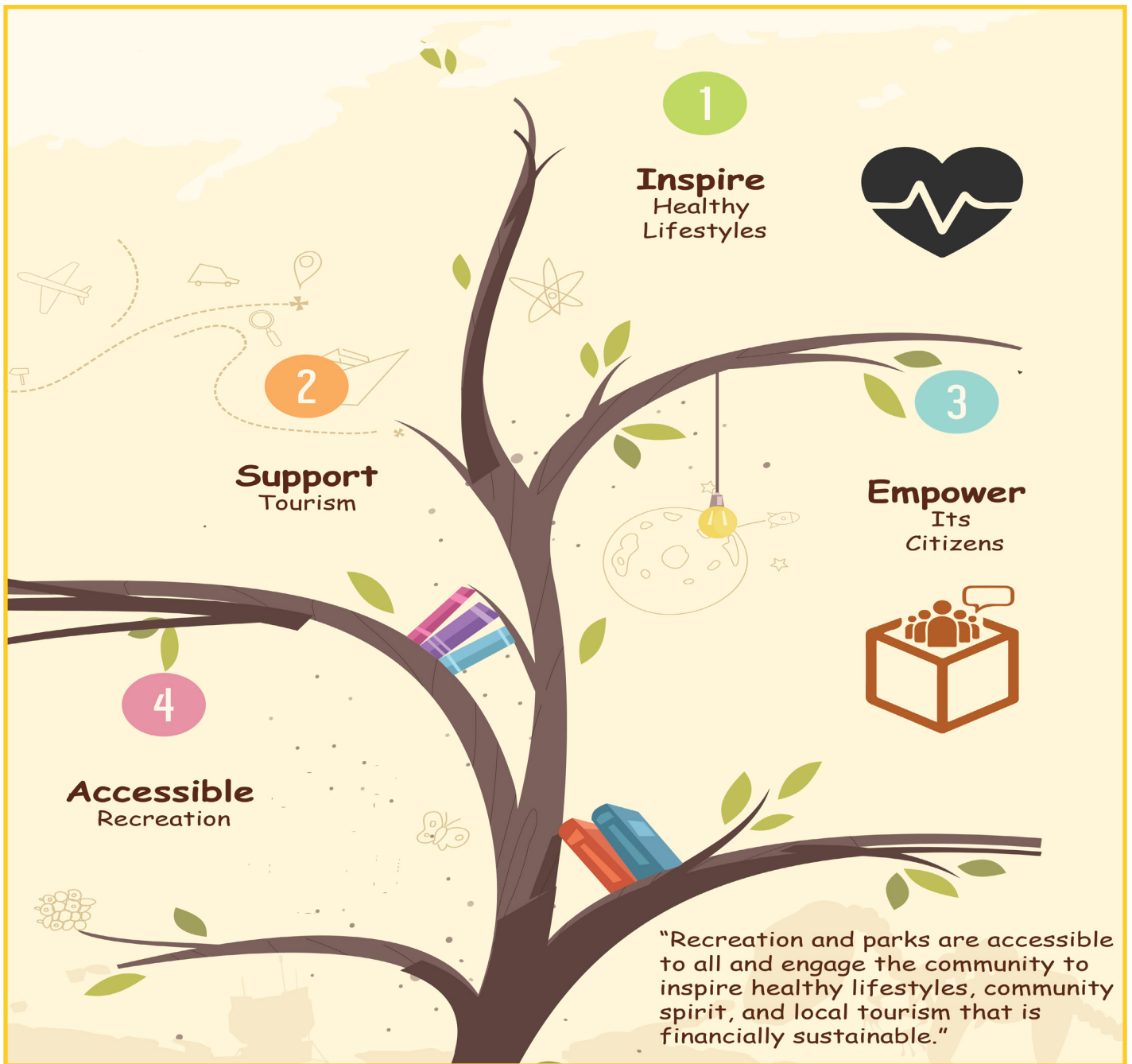
A NEW DIRECTION - THE FUTURE OF RECREATION AND PARKS

Mission

Council and Senior staff worked together to develop a recreation and parks mission with a new focus including four priorities or goals. The community has reviewed the mission and goal and provided positive feedback supporting the new direction.



“ Recreation and parks are accessible to all and engage the community to inspire healthy lifestyles, community spirit, and local tourism that is financially sustainable. ”



Goals and Strategies

The goals are formulated from the key elements of the mission to inspire healthy lifestyles, community spirit, and local tourism.

Accessible Recreation

Goal

- Increase inclusion and access to recreation for populations that face constraints to participate.

STRATEGIES

Recreation Facilities and Parks

- Continue current investment in recreation and parks facilities as outlined in the recreation facilities upgrade plan.
- Lifecycle report on community association facilities.
- Develop maintenance standards for parks.
- Upgrade current community parks and playgrounds.
- Complete needs assessment for multipurpose indoor facility.
- Splash park feasibility study for Elkwater or Desert Blume.
- Build multipurpose indoor facility.
- Irvine Arena ice plant replacement.
- Irvine Library feasibility study.

Administrative Support

- Review existing staff roles to find the best fit for parks and recreation services to develop relationships with recreation providers and expand opportunities for residents.
- Redesign communication position to facilitate community development, accelerate tourism, and increase recreation, sport and culture opportunities utilizing a community development model.
- Adopt the administrative roles and responsibilities for the service delivery of recreation and parks Cypress County (i.e. Roles and Responsibilities Chart).

Communication

- To implement strategies to improve communication between residents and the County.

Regional Collaboration

- Foster regional collaboration with school division, golf course, or province and uses formal agreements (joint use/ cost-sharing agreements) to provide recreation and sport programs or facilities.
- Continue relationship with City of Medicine Hat and Canadian Forces Base to maintain and improve access to recreation facilities.

Programming

- Investigate community partners to provide a recreation subsidy for children and youth.
- Create a recreation subsidy for seniors.

Funding Model

- Review the funding model of recreation facilities (curling rink/ice rink) to safeguard the financial benefit for Cypress County as opposed to non-resident users (i.e. Medicine Hat).
- Evaluate the liability of the operating models of recreation facilities in the County to assist with financial planning.
- Create and administer a resident survey every five years to gauge the progress of recreation and park. Share the results with the residents in a report.



Empowering Its Citizens

Goal

- Enable and support the provision of physical and social environments that encourage participation in recreation and build strong caring communities.

STRATEGIES

Community Development

- Adopt the community development model to cultivate the growth of the volunteer sector to develop new projects or recreation programs, host sporting or cultural events and manage recreation facilities with direct support from County staff.
- Develop community development policy.

Partnerships

- Accelerate mutually beneficial partnerships using guidelines to select, manage and evaluate new partnerships.

Community Associations

- Increase administrative support to volunteer organization through policy development.
- Increase administrative support to volunteer organization with technology (i.e., online registration, booking, collections of fees).
- Facilitate bi-annual meetings with community associations to discuss upcoming programming.
- Create memorandum of understanding (MOU) with community associations describing roles and responsibilities of the County.
- Develop fundraising plan with community associations.

Volunteer Program

- Develop volunteer management plan.
- Promote volunteer opportunities, (i.e. create a volunteer message board to connect people).
- Develop and promote a guardian angel program to support the maintenance of local cemeteries or community parks.

Recreation Board

- Re-establish the purpose and responsibilities of the recreation board to provide direction and support for the County's recreation and parks services including monitoring implementation of Recreation Master Plan.

Grants

- Restructure grant program to improve reporting and accountability with applicants.
- Enhance the Cypress County grant program to include initiatives focused on youth and seniors; and community connections grant (i.e. neighbourhood block party).

Public Engagement

- Develop public engagement policy.

Inspire Healthy Lifestyles

Goal

- Enable or coordinate the implementation of programs and the development of parks, trails, or facilities to promote and foster healthy and active living while reflecting community interests such as outdoor recreation, sport activities, and social opportunities.

STRATEGIES

Build Trails

- Develop Trails Plan for an interconnected network of non-motorized trails.
- Create trail to link urban centre with Medicine Hat.
- Create outward trail connection to Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park.

Communication

- Improve communication and promote healthy lifestyles.
- Create e-newsletter promoting recreation opportunities.
- Create an events page on County website.

Grants

- Change funding structure to create matching grant of \$10,000 a year to promote healthy lifestyles.

Support Tourism

Goal

- To increase economic benefits that flow from sport, recreation and leisure tourism and become a preferred travel and getaway destination.

STRATEGIES

Promote Tourism

- Create a Tourism Strategy which links assets like Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park.
- Develop Tourism Development Program Grant (\$5000) to be administered every two years to support tourism initiatives.
- Facilitate campgrounds improvements, i.e., pickleball courts.
- Purchase a new campground.
- Combining athlete and sponsorship policy to create a sport tourism policy.
- Collaborate with partners to promote Elkwater and Cypress Interprovincial Park as a hub for outdoor activities.



Community Development Model

01. Partnership Development to build Community Leadership and Organizational Capacity.

The County can adopt a community development model to build on the great work that is already been established between the County and their partners. This approach is volunteer-based and works collaboratively to maximize resources for facility management, implementation of recreation programs and services, and create outdoor recreation and tourism opportunities for residents living in the County.

The goal for the community development approach is to:

- Strengthen and formalize partnerships with organizations.
- Foster regional collaboration.
- Support recreation organizations equitably and transparently.
- Deliver recreation service in a responsive and sustainable way.

The model will build community leadership and organizational capacity to coordinate program or event development, find sustainable funding models, utilize a decision-making matrix, and implement communication strategies.



The diagram illustrates the key elements to implement a community development continuum.



Develop Capacity: To provide support to bolster volunteerism and build capacity of volunteers, community organization or user groups. This is implemented through developing resources and tools to support recreation partners, creating volunteer recruitment or training opportunities, and providing either administrative or funding support.

Program and Event Development: To support the development of proposals for new or ongoing programs, event, facilities, or park amenities. Also, provide administrative support or funding for these initiatives.









Funding Models: To find the initial recommendation is to enhance funding with County grant programs for individuals, groups and organizations. The funding proposals support new opportunities, facilities maintenance or lifecycle planning, and program delivery.









Decision-making Matrix: is a tool for systematically analyze and evaluate decisions. It can be used for all recreation opportunities, be tied to grant requests and provides a transparent way to make decisions for future recreation funding. (See Appendix C)

Communication Strategies: Develop a communication strategy to increase knowledge of recreation opportunities happening in the community.

Roles and Responsibilities in Parks and Recreation Operations

Given the diverse nature and sheer vastness of Cypress County of operations of Recreation and Parks programs and services. It is unreasonable to believe that a single service approach would be applied to each service area. The chart below clarifies the service delivery roles for the operations of Parks Services in the County. The roles and responsibilities to operate Parks are shared between County Departments (Public Works, Agricultural, and Corporate Services) and Community Groups.

| Function |  Environmental Reserve |  Parks |  Playgrounds |  Furniture/Shelters |  School Sites |  Trails |  Boulevards-Developer |  Boulevards-Hamlet |
|------------------------|---|---|---|--|---|--|--|---|
| Operations/Maintenance | AS | AS/CG | CG | CS | N/A | CG | N/A | CS |
| Repairs | CS | CS | AS | CS | N/A | CS | N/A | CS |
| Planning | PW | PW/CG/CS | PW | CS | N/A | CS | N/A | CS |
| Construction | N/A | CS | CS/CG | CS | N/A | CS | N/A | CS |
| Booking & Events | N/A | CG | CG | CG | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |

| Function |  Sports Facilities |  Trees |  Outdoor Rinks |  Community Halls |  Curling Rinks/ice Areas |  Recreation Programming |  Campgrounds |  Tourism |
|------------------------|---|---|---|---|--|--|---|---|
| Operations/Maintenance | CS | AS | CG | CG | CG | N/A | PW | N/A |
| Repairs | CS | AS | CG | CG | CG | N/A | PW | N/A |
| Planning | CS | AS | CS | CS | CS | CG | PW | PW |
| Construction | CS | AS | CS | CS | CS | N/A | PW | N/A |
| Booking & Events | CG | AS | CG | CG | CG | CG | CG | CG |

| | | | |
|------------|----------------------|-----------|--------------------|
| PW | Public Works | CG | Community Group |
| AS | Agriculture Services | CS | Corporate Services |
| N/A | Not Applicable | | |

Urban Centre Improvements

An inventory of recreation, sport and trails amenities was completed and recommendations are provided to improve each of the hamlets.

Desert Blume

- 01. Park 1 is located in a residential area and has a tot lot, benches and paved shared use path. An improvement for this park includes swing set, picnic tables and additional seating.

DESERT BLUME PARK 1



0 15 30 Meters

Park Size: 0.568 Ha



- 02. Park 2 is located on Desert Blume Drive and has an unstructured green space. There are no suggestions to improve this park at this time.

- 03. Park 3 is located at Club House Drive, RR 61 and has tot lot, outdoor hard surface basketball court and small parking. An improvement for this park includes converting the basketball court into multi-sport facility to include hockey and install swing set.

DESERT BLUME PARK 3



0 25 50 Meters

Park Size: 0.975 Ha



Dunmore

- 01. Park 1 is located at the end of Eagle Ridge Drive and has a play structure, small basketball court, picnic table and small parking lot. There are no suggestions to improve this park at this time.



- 02. Park 2 is located at the Eagle Butte High School and has a baseball diamond, track and field facilities and football field. An improvement for this park includes tot lot or playground structure with swings.

DUNMORE PARK



0 10 20 Meters

Park Size: 0.1496 Ha



- 03. Park 3 is located at 10th Street and 7th Ave and has baseball diamond, outdoor hockey rink, play structure, basketball court and picnic tables. There are no suggestions for improvement at this time.

Elkwater

- 01. Park 1 is located on 7th Ave and has tennis court and ice rink. There are no suggestions for improvement at this time.



Hilda

- 01. Park 1 is located west of 2nd Ave and has a tennis court, basketball court, and playground. There are not suggestions for improvement at this time.

- 02. Park 2 is located north of Main Street and has three baseball diamonds, and seasonal mud bog. An improvement for this park is upgrading a baseball diamond to have new backstop, benches etc and to upgrade the mud bog to host a regional

HILDA PARK



0 62.5 125 Meters

Park Size: 4.727 Ha



Irvine

- 01. Irvine School has track & field facilities, tennis courts, small soccer pitch, tot lot and playground structures and a baseball diamond. There are no suggestions for improvement at this time.
- 02. Park 1 is located on S Railway Ave and has tot lot, shelter, swing set and picnic tables with a large open green space for passive or non-programmed recreation. There are no suggestions for improvement at this time.

Veinerville

- 01. Small park located south of Natalie Street has outdoor multi-sport facility including hockey rink, basketball court, and tennis court and also a baseball diamond, and small soccer pitch. There are no suggestions for improvement at this time.

Walsh

- Walsh park is located off of 2nd Avenue and has a single basketball court, tot lot, swing set and picnic table. An improvement for this park is installing a multi-sport facility including outdoor hockey rink, larger basketball court and small BMX track.

WALSH PARK



0 15 30 Meters

Park Size:0.3017 Ha



Schuler

- Centennial Park is located on Railway Ave and 1 Street E and has open space with picnic tables, shelter, horseshoe pitches and can accommodate large gatherings or passive /non-programmed recreation. There are no suggestions for improvement at this time.

- 02. School has track and field facilities, two baseball diamonds, tennis courts and playground. An improvement for this park is to develop a regional scale outdoor activity using abandoned railroad track right of way.

SCHULER PARK



0 20 40 Meters

Park Size: 1.002 Ha



Seven Persons

- 01. Day Camp Site is located between Mildred Street and Drinnan Street and has picnic tables, shelter, small BBQs, camping pads, and gravel trails. There are no suggestions for improvement at this time.
- 02. Seven Person School has playground structures, swing set, two baseball diamonds, basketball court, track & field facilities, and outdoor hockey rink. There are no suggestions for improvement at this time.

Suffield

- 01. Open Space located north of Ronald Ave and has a baseball diamond. An improvement for this park is referbishing the existing baseball diamond and backstop.

Funding Recreation

The County should explore and pursue alternative funding sources, such as the private sector, developers, government and association/team sponsorship, naming rights, donations, and contributions to support future recreation and park development, upgrades, and maintenance.



Grants

There are diverse and ever-changing grant programs available for recreation funding.

For Trails: A comprehensive source of information on current grant programs is Alberta Trailnet (<http://www.albertatrailnet.com>). This site includes programs offered by federal and provincial governments, as well by foundations, trusts and other NGOs.

For Recreation Facilities and Programs: Grants are generally used to fund recreation infrastructure improvements or new recreation facilities or amenities. There is a variety of Federal, Provincial, and other funding sources to support capital projects. Several small grant programs that fund special events (Canada Day) or new youth programs or provide financial assistance to participate in sport or recreation programs. (See Appendix A)

Donation

There are also opportunities for private initiatives or partnerships with private landowners and residents.

For Trails: Landowners may choose to gift cash, land, or a partial interest in the land through a conservation easement to a qualified Land Trust in return for a federal tax benefit under the Income Tax Act. If the conservation easement or land gifted can be certified as 'ecologically sensitive'; additional tax benefits may accrue through the Federal Ecological Gifts (Eco gifts) Program.

Cash donations can also be accepted by organizations such as The Land Conservancy and used for land acquisition.

For Recreation Facilities and Programs: An organized donation program can help to attract these opportunities. For example, donations can be sought, along with a method to acknowledge their support, e.g., the brochure could list donors and partners, in association with recreation facilities and programs.

Bequests

For Trails, Recreation Facilities and Programs: A charitable bequest is a gift to an agency, charity or NGO made in the donor's will. Bequests can be made in the form of money or land. This option might appeal particularly to individuals without heirs or who wish their land to be used for a specific purpose after their death.

Local Improvement Tax / Special Tax

For Trails and Recreation Facilities: A local improvement tax is imposed on a specific area within a municipality to fund service or enhance a particular area. The improvement benefits that specific area rather than the municipality as a whole. Some examples of local improvements are sidewalks, trails, lane lighting, or paving. Local improvement taxes are applied to land. This means that the owner of the land is responsible for paying the local improvement tax. A local improvement tax is allocated as an annual charge that is set for a specific period.

A special tax occurs applied to services or construction that benefit a defined area within a municipality. The municipality would levy a special tax to fund the project. Some examples of special services or construction are waterworks and sewers, boulevards, pavement, drainage ditches, and recreation services. The property owner is responsible for paying this tax.

Naming Rights/ Sponsorship

For Trails, Recreation Facilities and Programs: A source of funding is sponsorship, donations, advertising, or leasing space. It is used to offset the operating costs of recreation facilities, programs, or events. The County does have a policy on Sponsorship and understands the value of hosting provincial, national, and international events. The County can take a lead role and provide administrative support to develop strategies and procedures for community associations to increase revenue through sponsorship, advertising, or leasing of space.

Coordination with Infrastructure Upgrades

For Trails: Major infrastructure improvements such as road construction or upgrades may provide opportunities for trails. These could be trails adjacent to the road, trails with a green boulevard, or trails separated from the road edge but still within the road right-of-way.



IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

| | | Immediate 1-5 Years | | Mid Range 6-10 Years | | Long Range 11-15 | | |
|---|---|------------------------|--|-------------------------|--|-----------------------|--|---------------------|
| | | Capital Investment | | Capital Investment | | Capital Investment | | |
| Accessible Recreation | Continue current investment in recreation and parks facilities as outlined in the recreation facilities upgrade plan | \$ 25,000 | | \$ 25,000 | | \$ 25,000 | | \$ 7,395,000 |
| | Lifecycle report on community association facilities. | \$ 45,000 | | | | | | |
| | Irvine Arena Ice Plant Replacement. | | | \$ 180,000 | | | | |
| | Develop maintenance standards for parks. | | | | | | | |
| | Upgrade current community parks and playgrounds | \$ 75,000 | | \$ 75,000 | | \$ 75,000 | | |
| | Irvine Library Feasibility Study. | \$ 75,000 | | | | | | |
| | Complete needs assessment for multipurpose indoor facility | | | \$ 45,000 | | | | |
| | Build multipurpose indoor facility. | | | | | \$ 6,500,000 | | |
| | Splash park feasibility study for Elkwater or Desert Blume. | | | | | \$ 250,000 | | |
| | Investigate community partners to provide a recreation subsidy for children and youth | | | | | | | |
| | Create a recreation subsidy for seniors. | | | | | | | |
| | Review existing staff roles to find the best fit for parks and recreation services to develop relationships with recreation providers and expand opportunities for residents. | | | | | | | |
| | Redesign communication position to facilitate community development, accelerate tourism, and increase recreation, sport and culture opportunities utilizing a community development model | | | | | | | |
| | Adopt the administrative roles and responsibilities for the service delivery of recreation and parks Cypress County (i.e. Roles and Responsibilities Chart) | | | | | | | |
| | Foster regional collaboration with school division, golf course, or province and uses formal agreements (joint use/cost-sharing agreements) to provide recreation and sport programs or facilities. | | | | | | | |
| | Continue relationship with City of Medicine Hat and Canadian Forces Base to maintain and improve access to recreation facilities. | | | | | | | |
| | Review the funding model of recreation facilities (curling rink/ice rink) to safeguard the financial benefit for Cypress County as opposed to non-resident users (i.e. Medicine Hat). | | | | | | | |
| | Evaluate the liability of the operating models of recreation facilities in the County to assist with financial planning | | | | | | | |
| Create and administer a resident survey every five years to gauge the progress of recreation and parks. Share the results with the residents in a report. | | | | | | | | |
| Implement strategies to improve communication between residents and the County. | | | | | | | | |
| Support Tourism | Create a Tourism Strategy which links assets like Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park | | | \$ 55,000 | | | | \$ 445,000 |
| | Develop Tourism Development Program Grant (\$5000) to be administered every two years to support tourism initiatives. | | | \$ 25,000 | | \$ 25,000 | | |
| | Facilitate campgrounds improvements, i.e., pickleball courts | \$ 55,000 | | | | \$ 55,000 | | |
| | Purchase a new campground. | | | | | \$ 230,000 | | |
| | Combining athlete and sponsorship policy to create a sport tourism policy | | | | | | | |
| | Collaborate with partners to promote Elkwater and Cypress Interprovincial Park as a hub for outdoor activities. | | | | | | | |

| | | Immediate 1-5 Years | | Mid Range 6-10 Years | | Long Range 11-15 | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|------------------------|------------|-------------------------|------------|-----------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| | | Capital Investment | | Capital Investment | | Capital Investment | | |
| Empower it's Citizens | Adopt the community development model to cultivate the growth of the volunteer sector to develop new projects or recreation programs, host sporting or cultural events and manage recreation facilities with direct support from County staf | | | | | | | \$ 45,000 |
| | Develop community development policy. | | | | | | | |
| | Increase administrative support to volunteer organization through policy development | | | | | | | |
| | Increase administrative support to volunteer organization with technology (i.e., online registration, booking, collections of fees). | | | | | | | |
| | Accelerate mutually beneficial partnerships using guidelines to select, manage and evaluate new partnerships | | | | | | | |
| | Facilitate bi-annual meetings with community associations to discuss upcoming programming | | | | | | | |
| | Create memorandum of understanding (MOU) with community associations describing roles and responsibilities of the County. | | | | | | | |
| | Develop fundraising plan with community association. | | | | | | | |
| | Develop volunteer management plan. | | | | \$ 45,000 | | | |
| | Promote volunteer opportunities (i.e. create a volunteer message board to connect people) | | | | | | | |
| | Develop and promote a guardian angel program to support the maintenance of local cemeteries or community parks | | | | | | | |
| | Re-establish the purpose and responsibilities of the recreation board to provide direction and support for the County's recreation and parks services including monitoring implementation of Recreation Master Plan | | | | | | | |
| | Restructure grant program to improve reporting and accountability with applicants | | | | | | | |
| | Enhance the Cypress County grant program to include initiatives focused on youth and seniors; and community connections grant (i.e. neighbourhood block party). | | | | | | | |
| Develop public engagement policy. | | | | | | | | |
| Inspire Healthy Lifestyles | Develop Trails Plan for an interconnected network of nonmotorized trails | | \$ 75,000 | | | | | \$ 675,000 |
| | Create trail to link urban centre with Medicine Hat | | | | \$ 250,000 | \$ 250,000 | | |
| | Create outward trail connection to Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park | | | | | | | |
| | Improve communication and promote heathy lifestyles | | | | | | | |
| | Create e-newsletter promoting recreation opportunities. | | | | | | | |
| | Create an events page on County website. | | | | | | | |
| | Use County and partner communication tools to promote healthy lifestyles. | | | | \$ 50,000 | \$ 50,000 | | |
| | | | \$ 350,000 | | \$ 750,000 | \$ 7,460,000 | \$ 8,560,000 | |

APPENDIX A- GRANTS

Federal Programs

01. Canada's Long -Term Infrastructure Plan delivered by Infrastructure Canada – key investment priority is Rural and Northern communities.

Provincial Programs

01. Federal Gas Tax Fund (GTF) provided by Municipal Affairs.
02. Municipal Sustainability Initiative (Capital) provided by Municipal Affairs.
03. Municipal Sustainability Initiative (Operating) provided by Municipal Affairs.
04. Recreation Energy Conservation Program provided by Municipal Climate Change Action Centre.
05. Community Facility Enhancement Program or Community Initiatives Program provided by Alberta
06. Culture, Multiculturalism and Status for Women.

Alberta Parks and Recreation Association

Funding Programs – Organized Sports and Recreation

01. Jumpstart- is committed to ensure children in need have equal access to sport and physical activity.
02. Kidsport – provides grants to children from families facing financial barriers so the can participate in registered sport programs.

Other Funding Sources

01. Community Foundation of Southeastern Alberta.
02. Medicine Hat District Hospital Foundation.
03. Medicine Hat and District Health Foundation.

APPENDIX B- POLICIES

National Policies

| Document | Summary | Relevance for Recreation |
|---|---|--|
| National Recreation Framework | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Was jointly developed by the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association and the Interprovincial Sport and Recreation Council. The Framework also helps shape and rationalize many of the best practices utilized by profession. It contains five goals for recreation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It provides recreation goals and outcomes for municipalities to strive for. |
| Long Term Athlete Development Framework 2.1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The movement introduces the Long-Term Athlete Development Framework, which is a seven-stage training, competition and recovery pathway, guiding an individual's experience in the sport and physical activity from infancy through all phases of adulthood. Framework as a progressive pathway to build athletic ability and improve our sport programs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It helps municipalities understand and define the kind of services for sport and recreation. |
| Canadian Sports Policy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It provides direction for governments, institutions and organizations that are committed to realizing the positive impacts of sport on individuals and communities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensures that recreation provides positive impacts for residents. |
| Parks for All | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An action plan that strategically aligns with and complements the five goals of the Framework for Recreation in Canada 2015 - primarily in relation to Goal 3 "Connecting People and Nature." | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outlines the importance of parks and conservation and the residents connecting with parks. |

Provincial Context:

| Document | Summary | Relevance for Recreation |
|--|--|--|
| Municipal Government Act (MGA) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outlines regulatory framework for all land use planning within Alberta. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides authority for various statutory and non-statutory land use planning tools. Provides framework for land acquisition required for future recreation facilities. |
| Alberta Land Stewardship Act (ALSA) and the Alberta Land – Use Framework | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a sustainable growth model for the Province that balances economics and the environment. Creation of instruments and monitoring to promote land stewardship and conservation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning of communities should include parks and recreation. Identifies the need for development to be sensitive to the natural environment. Works to conserve natural lands that can be used for recreation. Promotion of public health. |

Regional Context:

| Document | Summary | Relevance for Recreation |
|---|--|---|
| South Saskatchewan Regional Plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficient use of land to minimize area taken up by the built environment. • Shared stewardship of ecosystems to promote biodiversity. • Economic growth and diversification | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call for a wide range of recreational opportunities. • Increase in tourism. • Create unique cultural experiences for residents in the region. |
| MD Taber & Cypress County Intermunicipal Development Plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster collaboration and cooperation regarding planning matters and issues of mutual interest, and clarifies land-use expectations. • Planning tool guiding decision-makers through the agreed-upon planning policies that apply to land within the plan area. • To establish an approach to identify possible joint ventures for infrastructure and service sharing to promote efficient planning and potential delivery of services. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate provision of joint recreation and parks facilities and service sharing to meet resident needs. |
| Tri-Area Intermunicipal Development Plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster collaboration and cooperation regarding future land use planning and development. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster regional collaboration and cooperation in developing joint recreation and parks facilities or service sharing. |
| City of Medicine Hat, Cypress County, Town of Redcliff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a regional framework for attracting economic opportunities. • Improve inter-municipal efficiency and communication. • Determine environmental and conservation reserve easement. | |

Municipal:

| Document | Summary | Relevance for Recreation |
|------------------------------------|---|---|
| Municipal Development Plan 2015/26 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To preserve unique natural and historical features within the municipality including. • To promote the development of the recreation potential of the municipality. • To conserve the natural environment of the municipality, especially the river valleys and coulee areas, and protect existing wetlands and riparian areas. • To preserve and protect identified historical resources within the municipality. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the development of recreation and parks to meet the need of the community. • Recreation should not harm the natural environment. • To preserve and protect identified historical resources. |
| Land Use Bylaw 2018.04 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides strategic direction on land use and specifically for recreation use, Recreation Facility District and Recreation / Residential Resort District. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are a multitude of options for recreation development. |

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Cypress County | The strategic direction and priorities: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding opportunities and partnerships to improve recreation and parks services. |
| Strategic Plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fosters sound governance, leadership, and accountability. Ensures infrastructure is effectively maintained, enhanced and evaluated. Provides high quality safe and affordable services and amenities. Recognized for its strong partnerships and community engagement. Focuses on economic growth, sustainability and diversification. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain and develop high-quality community facilities. Promote a supportive environment for tourism, recreational and leisure opportunities. Enhance collaboration and cooperation with neighbouring communities and municipalities. Enhance and promote tourism, heritage and cultural sustainability. |
| Rec 1: Athlete Development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grants for volunteer associations in operating recreation and leisure services. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support may be granted to teams and organizations hosting competitions. | |
| Rec 2: Recreation Annual Grants | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grants to support volunteer associations (registered agencies) with the operation and upkeep of facilities and programs. | |
| | <p>Small project grants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> small project operating grants capital grants Irvine – 75,000/ 25,000 | |
| Rec 3: Hamlet Parks Maximum Level of Maintenance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outlines the maximum level of service provided in parks or green spaces where the County is directly involved in the delivery of maintenance, through either staff or contractors. | |
| Rec 4: Sponsorship | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mutually beneficially sponsorship by supporting both major events and local events that creates a sense of belonging for its residents. Contributes to either the economic, social, sporting, environment or cultural development. | |
| Irvine Sport Complex | <p>Facility built in 1978</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1989 Ice Machine garage. 1990 addition (dressing room). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides immediate, short-term and long-term recommendations for Irvine Sport Complex including structural, mechanical and electrical improvements. |
| Building Assessment (Structural, Mechanical, and Electrical) | <p>Structural</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> General maintenance 52,000. Curling slab 180,000. Hockey slab 20,000 or 250,000. Paint or replace frame 24,000. <p>Mechanical</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> General maintenance 48,000. Replace ice plant 1.5 million. Humidification 20,000. <p>Electrical</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrades 85,000. | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| <p>Seven Persons Community Centre Structural Assessment</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From the inspection no immediate structural concerns. • Repairs for settlement 75,000. • Additional investigation below slab ducts required • Facility life cycle 20 years in the current state. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide immediate and long-term recommendations for Seven Persons Community Centre. |
| <p>Cypress County 10-Year Capital Plan (2016-2027)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irvine AG Complex needs major repairs. Society is waiting for a grant for ice service and board replacement. • County will need to find funding for HVAC, Curling Rink Surface, other cosmetic updating. • Funding allocated • 2017 750,000 • 2019 2,250,000 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding allocated for recreation facility development or improvements for the next ten years. |
| <p>Bylaw 2019/06 Master Rate Bylaw</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal Park Cavan Lake. • Municipal Park Sandy Point. • Equipment and Chemical Service (Noxious Weed). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rate for campgrounds and services for Parks. |
| <p>Dunmore Training Centre Business Plan</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prairie Rose School Division officials approached Cypress County in 2018 to partner on a new arena and Training Centre in the Hamlet of Dunmore on the Eagle Butte High School property. <p>Report includes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Consultation. • Reg Recreation Planning. • Legal Advice for Loan. • Legal Advice -Corporate Structure. • Environmental Review. <p>Comparative information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demographic analysis. • Facility Analysis. • Irvine Sport Complex. • 10-year forecast for Irvine. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council made a resolution, "That Cypress County is unable to partner with the Prairie School Division on the proposed Training Facility in Dunmore due to the uncertainty of economic stability of the County." (November 5, 2019). |
| <p>Dunmore Equestrian Centre Feasibility Study</p> | <p>Feasibility study for the development of a new facility, Dunmore Equestrian Centre.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council made a resolution, "The Cypress County is unable to provide a financial commitment to the Dunmore Equestrian Centre, until such time, as a framework for economic sustainability at the County exists." (November 5,2019). |



Appendix C- Decision- Making Matrix

The decision matrix will help Council and Municipal staff to make decision about recreation and parks initiatives for example capital projects, community programs, grants, and tourism opportunities. The decision-matrix utilizes the specific criteria and is unique for each community.

The criteria developed for Cypress County includes,

“accessibility, capital funding opportunities, condition and functionality, economic benefits, empowering community, matching demographic trends, operating cost impact, promote healthy lifestyles, & utilization and capacity”.

| | | Score | Multiplier |
|---|---|-------|------------|
| Accessibility | <p>1-2- Access to the facility/program will be primarily through and organized group that has programs in place to address.</p> <p>3-4- The facility/program will require a minimum cost with high levels of availability for public use.</p> <p>5- The facility/program will be available at no cost, with high levels of availability for public use.</p> | | |
| Capital Funding Opportunities | <p>1-2- 76%+ needed funding from the County</p> <p>3-4- 25% - 75% of funding from the country.</p> <p>5- Less than 25% of funding from the country.</p> | | |
| Conditions and Functionality | <p>1-2- Building/program in infancy</p> <p>5- Building/program at middle of the lifecycle</p> | | |
| Economic Benefits | <p>1-2- The facility or program will draw minimal levels of non-local spending to cypress County</p> <p>3-4- The facility or program will draw moderate at e levels of non-local spending to cypress County</p> <p>5- The facility or program is unlikely to will draw significant levels of non-locl spending to Cypress County</p> | | |
| Empowering Community | <p>1-2- Will require community developer to provide organization but sweat equity from the country</p> <p>3-4- Community developer will be required only to help if there are major issues</p> <p>5- Will be self-sufficient and volunteer organized</p> | | |
| Matching Demographic Trends | <p>5- Mathces current and expected growth</p> | | |
| Operating Cost Impact | <p>1-2- Facility/program will have a significant ongoing operating impact (\$ 100,000)</p> <p>3-4- Facility/program will have a minimal operating impact (less than \$ 100,000)</p> <p>5- There will no operating impact</p> | | |
| Promote Healthy Lifestyles to the public | <p>1-2- Benefits a select number of public</p> <p>3-4- Benefits medium amount of public</p> <p>5- Everyone benefits</p> | | |
| Utilization and Capacity | <p>1-2- is there prime time availability/program registration has more 50% available</p> <p>3-4- Primetime availability is 100% booked and 25% non-prime time use.</p> <p>5- 100% primetime and 50+% non prime time use</p> | | |

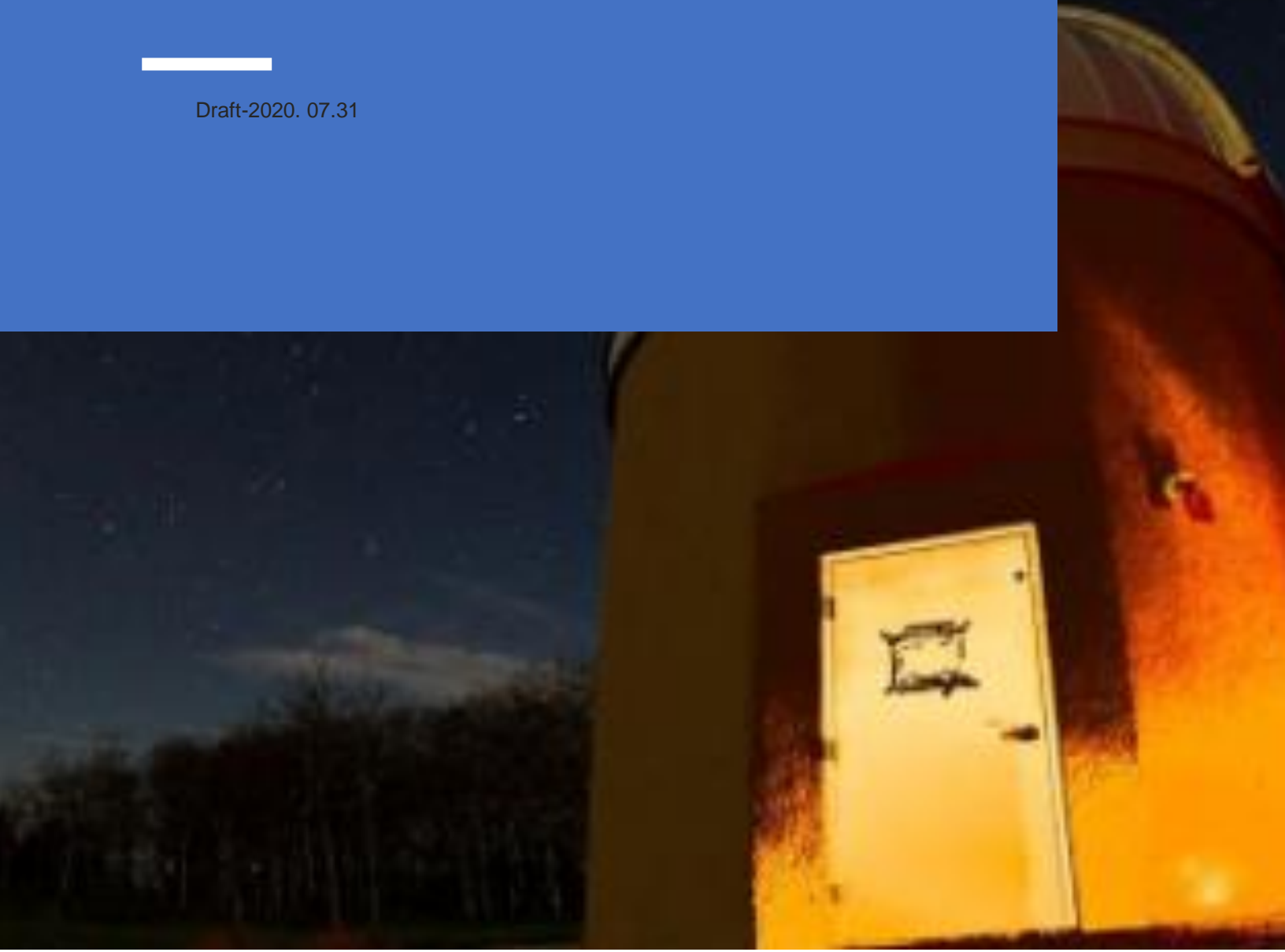


Appendix D- Community Engagement

CYPRESS COUNTY

JULY 31, 2020

Draft-2020. 07.31



1. Overview

Cypress County is creating a Recreation Master Plan. To create the plan, Cypress County is providing an opportunity for Council, staff, stakeholders and the public to provide input to co-create the new recreation master plan and ideas on how to update the current plan to reflect the current priorities.

2. Council & Staff Visioning Session

The Council and staff visioning session were held at Cypress County Administration building on January 7, 2020. The agenda for the meeting was:

1. Introductions
2. Goals
3. Overview of Project
4. Visioning Exercise
5. Break
6. Demographics
7. User Groups Listing
8. Issues and Successes of the Current Recreation and Parks System
9. Closing

2.1. Description of Activities

This session began with an overview of the scope of the project. The project team facilitated the following activities.

2.1.1. Exercise #1- Visioning Questions

The group was asked three questions and responses were assembled into broader themes

1. What do you feel, the purpose of the recreation is in Cypress County?
2. What is a problem/opportunity recreation can fix/provide?



3. What would Cypress County look like without this problem or with this opportunity?

2.1.2. Exercise #2- Strength and Weaknesses

Council and staff were asked the following two questions:

1. Administratively, what are some of the strengths in terms of parks and recreation
2. Greatest challenges Cypress County faces in terms of parks and recreation:

2.2. Participants

The following individuals participated:

| Cypress County Council | Cypress County Staff |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Dan Hamilton, Reeve | Tarolyn Aaserud, Chief Administrative Officer |
| Richard Oster, Deputy Reeve | Jeffrey Dowling, Director of Municipal Services |
| Dustin Vossler, Councillor | John Belanger, Director of Corporate Services |
| Robin Kurpjuweit, Councillor | Kaylene Simpson, Planning Supervisor |
| Darcy Geigle, Councillor | LesleyAnn Collins, Executive Assistant |
| Ernest Mudie, Councillor | |
| Michelle McKenzie, Councillor | |
| Alf Belyea, Councillor | |

2.3. Staff & Council Meeting Results

Data received in response to each question has been analyzed, and the key themes that emerged from the input are presented below for each question.

2.3.1. Exercise #1- Visioning Questions

1. What do you feel the purpose of the recreation is in Cypress County?

Key Themes are:

- Sustainable
- Affordable
- Inclusion
- Accessible
- Safe Place
- Volunteer/ism
- Tourism
- Promote Health and Wellness
- Provide Access to Learn, Play and Grow
- Open Spaces
- Governance
- Support Youth

2. What is a problem/opportunity recreation can fix/provide?

Key Themes are:

- Budget Restraint, Should Not Compete with Private Industry
- Inclusion
- Feeling of Belonging / Social Involvement / Social Isolation
- Community Spirit / Community Capacity
- Tourism / Economic Dev
- Health and Wellness (Mental and Physical)
- Provide Purpose

3. What would Cypress County look like without this problem or with this opportunity (future vision for the community)?

Key Themes are:

- Sustainable
- Socially Desired Community
- Sustainable Energy Capital (solar/wind)Continue to Grow
- Still in Business
- Friendly
- Community Participating
- Mt Bike Travel Destination
- Low Crime Rate
- Updated Affordable Facilities
- Diverse Activities
- Tourism Destination (Agriculture)

2.3.2. Exercise #2- Strength and Weaknesses

1. Administratively, what are some of the strengths in terms of parks and recreation?

Strengths

- Diversity of People, Rural and Non-rural
- Good Community Spirit
- Passionate Residents
- Volunteerism
- Facilities are Well Maintained
- Access to Provincial Park / Typography of the Area (access to river)
- Quality Programs (small and mighty)
- Support from Council and Staff
- Structures of Our Community Organizations

2. Greatest challenges Cypress County Faces in terms of parks and recreation:

Challenges:

- Optimize Reserve from Development
- Declining Linear Assessment
- Support Youth Sport
- Infrastructure and access to municipal utilities (water)
- Roles and Responsibilities for
- Regional Vision
- Declining Population



- Require Support Services for Seniors
 - Community is Spread Out
- staff in Recreation and Parks

2.4. Synthesis of Meeting Results

2.4.1. Key Learnings

The following are the key learnings and themes that came from the Visioning workshop:

1. The Council, Staff and Residents are very passionate about Cypress County.
2. The communities within Cypress County are small; however, volunteers host wonderful events that everyone comes and pack the halls.
3. There is a need to clarify the roles and responsibilities of municipal departments and community associations for facilities and parks.
4. Council is looking for a sustainable financial model for recreation and parks.
5. There may be community benefit to encourage or support tourism.
6. Community Halls are an essential gathering place for County residents, and each community is unique.
7. New Draft Vision:

“Cypress County’s recreation and parks are accessible to all and engage the community to inspire healthy lifestyles, community spirit and tourism that is financially sustainable.”

3. Community Survey

A community-wide online survey was conducted from January 15, 2020, to February 18, 2020, where over 130 survey responses were collected.

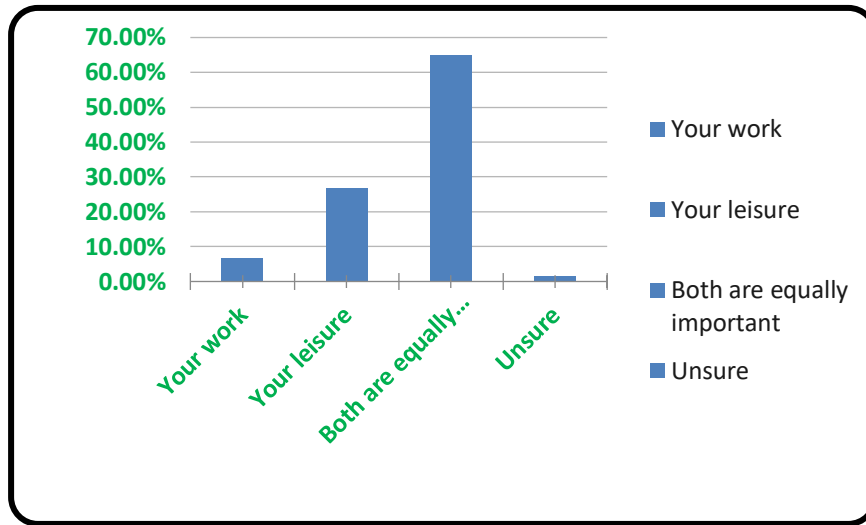
3.1. Description of Activities

Questions were asked from a variety of topic areas.

3.2. Community Survey Results

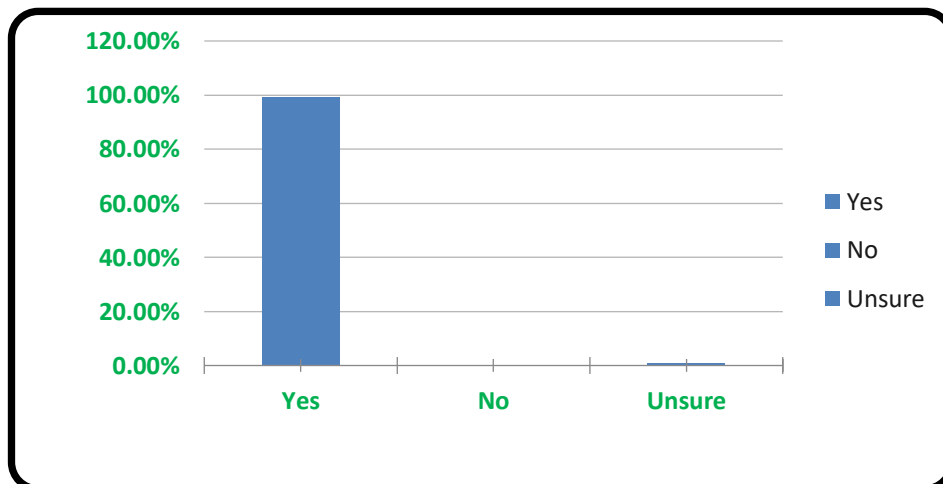
Data received in response to each question has been analyzed, and the key themes that emerged from the input are presented below for each question.

1. What is more important to you?



The majority of respondents feel that work and leisure are equally important. However, when directly comparing work and leisure, the majority of respondents felt that leisure was more important.

2. Are recreation and leisure activities important to your quality of life and wellness?



All respondents felt that leisure activities are important to their quality of life and wellness.

3. What would you identify as the top three strengths of parks and recreation in Cypress County?

| | |
|-------------------------|----|
| Accessibility/Proximity | 35 |
| Maintenance/Cleanliness | 27 |
| Cost | 21 |
| Elkwater | 21 |
| Hiking/Biking Trails | 17 |
| Nature | 14 |
| Camping | 13 |
| Community | 12 |

The respondents feel that one of the top strengths for Cypress County is the cost, accessibility and Elkwater. They also feel the access to hiking and biking trails and maintenance are strengths of the parks and recreation system.

4. What would you identify as the top three needs for parks and recreation in Cypress County?

| | |
|------------------------------|----|
| Maintenance | 29 |
| Biking/Hiking/Walking Trails | 19 |
| Accessibility | 17 |
| Water Recreation | 15 |
| Recreation Facility | 11 |
| Programming | 10 |
| Camping | 10 |
| Family-friendly | 9 |
| Swimming | 8 |
| Parks | 8 |

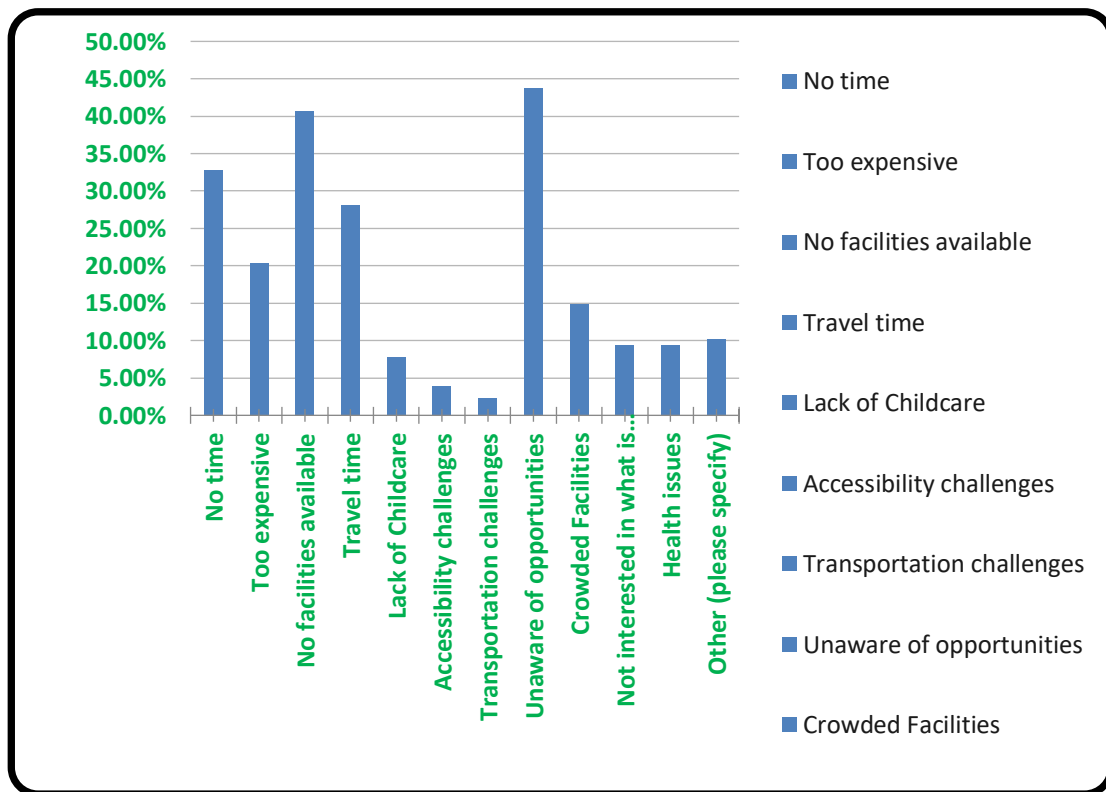
The top three needs for the parks and recreation are maintenance, trails and accessibility.

5. Which three PHYSICAL activities (through sports, programs, drop-in activities or personal time) have you participated in most often over the past 12 months?

| | |
|----------------|----|
| Walking | 76 |
| Swimming | 35 |
| Cycling/Biking | 35 |
| Hiking | 24 |
| Skiing | 13 |
| Golfing | 13 |
| Fishing | 12 |
| Hockey | 10 |
| Skating | 9 |
| Gym | 7 |

The top three activities participated in by the respondents are walking, swimming, and cycling/biking.

6. What barriers prevent you from participating in recreation?

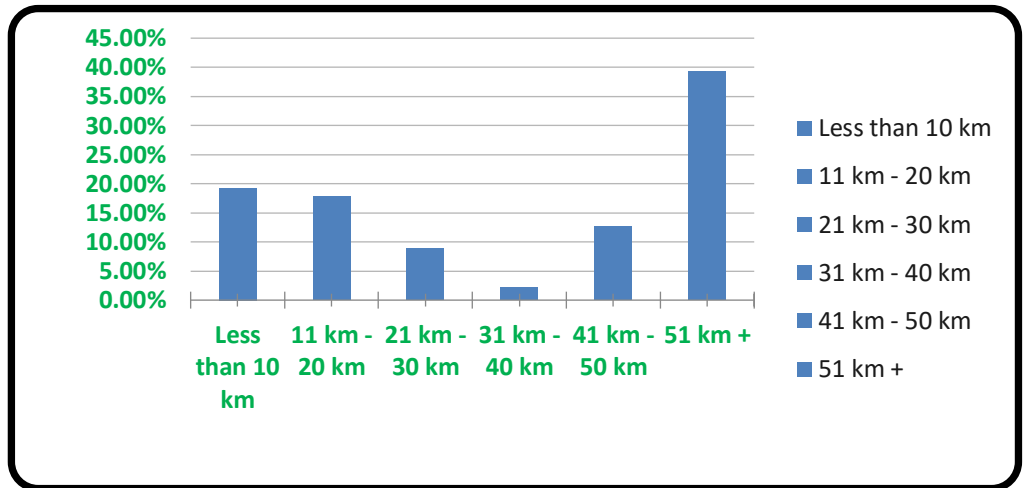


The respondents of the survey stated that the top three barriers in participating in leisure are:

| | |
|--------------------------|--------|
| Unaware of opportunities | 43.75% |
| No facilities available | 40.63% |
| No time | 32.81% |

7. What is the greatest distance you regularly travel to participate in recreation activities?

| | |
|-----------------|--------|
| 51 km + | 38.58% |
| Less than 10 km | 19.69% |
| 11 km - 20 km | 18.11% |



The majority of respondents drive more than 51 km to participate in recreation opportunities. Then followed by up to 20 km.

8. What are your top three favourite outdoor recreation activities that you do in Cypress County? (Please write your favourite activity.)

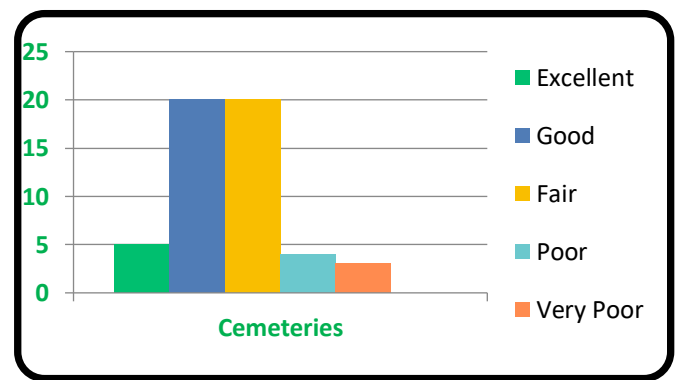
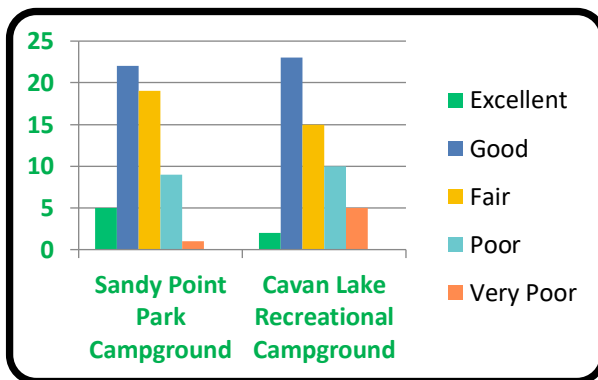
| | |
|----------|----|
| Walking | 47 |
| Hiking | 38 |
| Camping | 22 |
| Fishing | 24 |
| Golfing | 18 |
| Skiing | 17 |
| Biking | 15 |
| Swimming | 11 |
| Cycling | 10 |
| Boating | 10 |
| Skating | 10 |

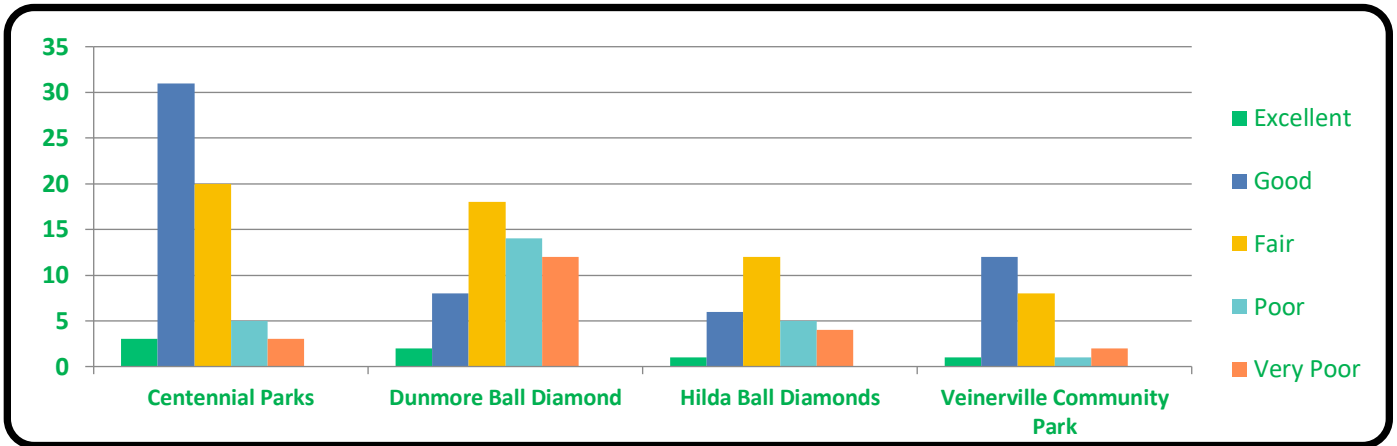
The top three favourite outdoor recreation activities for the respondents are Walking, Hiking and Camping.

9. What are your top three favorite indoor recreation activities that you do in the Cypress County?

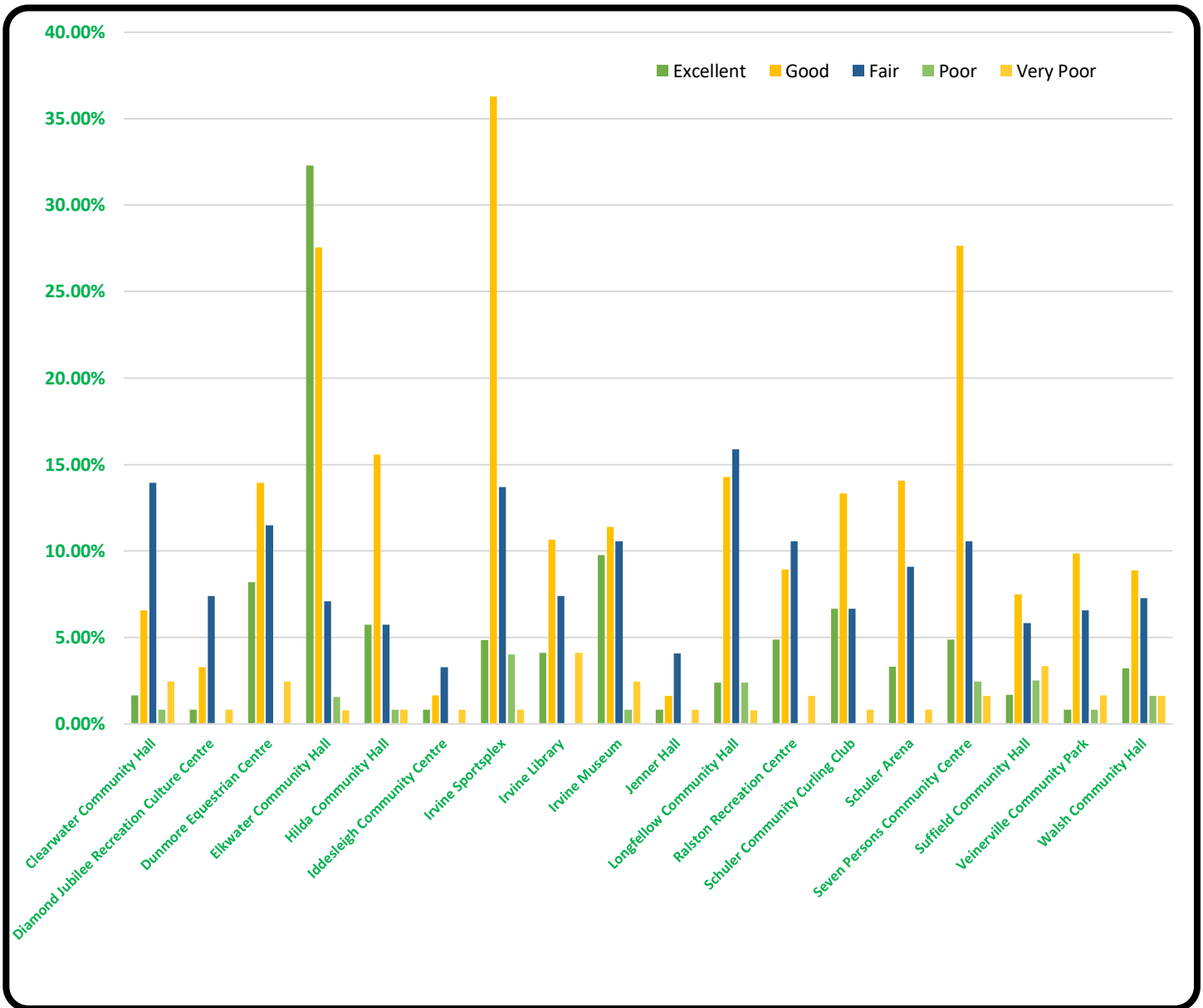
| | |
|---------------|----|
| None | 29 |
| Hockey | 16 |
| Swimming | 11 |
| Curling | 10 |
| Skating | 8 |
| Pickleball | 5 |
| Volleyball | 5 |
| Gym | 5 |
| Walking | 4 |
| Games | 3 |
| Playing games | 3 |
| Reading | 3 |
| Visiting | 3 |

10. What is your overall satisfaction with the following facilities in the County?

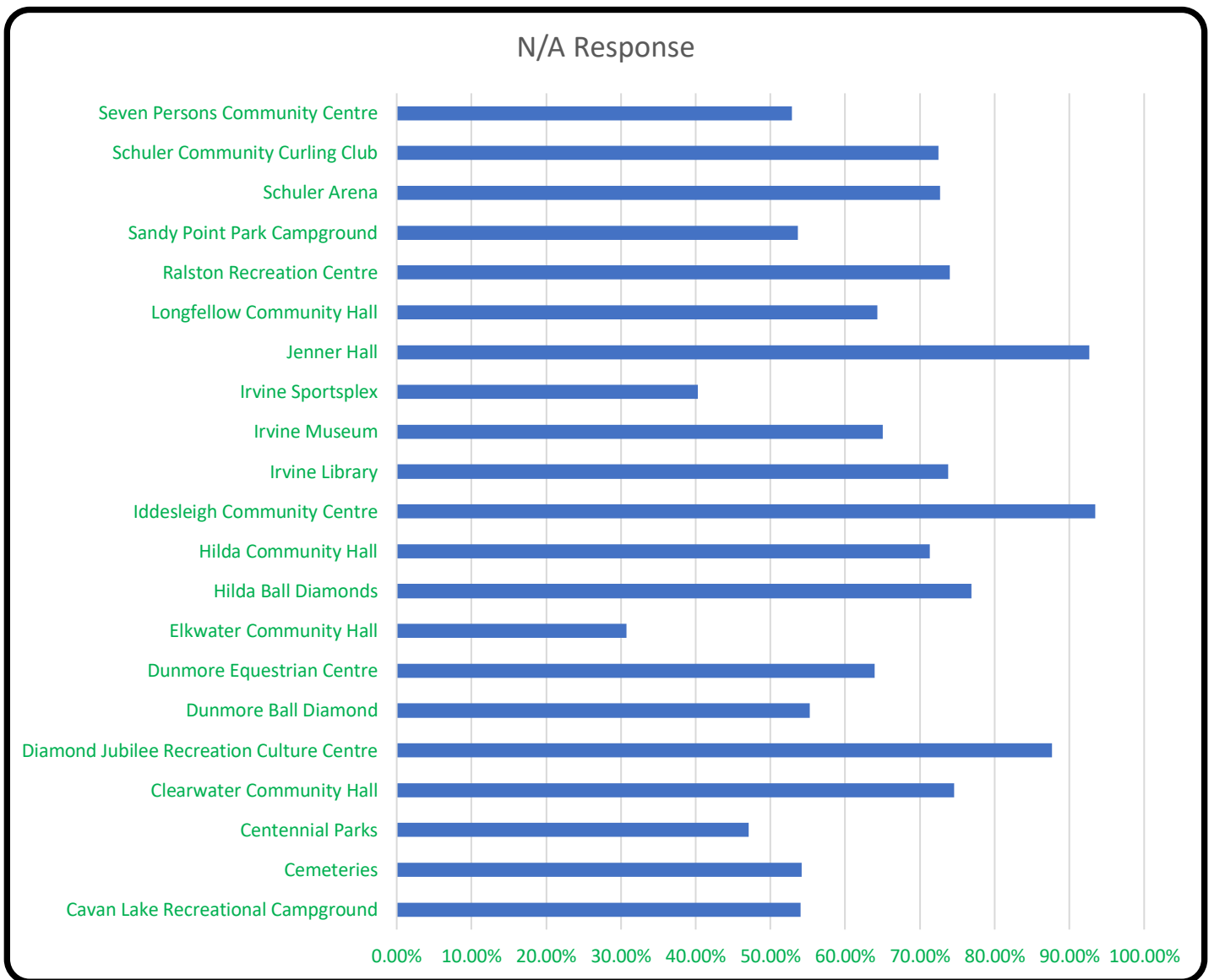




The overall satisfaction from the respondents about outdoor facilities (campgrounds, cemeteries and parks) is good to excellent except for the Ball Diamonds and cemeteries.



The respondents feel that the majority of the indoor facilities are fair to excellent, except for the Elkwater Community Hall and the Dunmore Equestrian Centre. The Irvine Library and the and Jenner Hall.



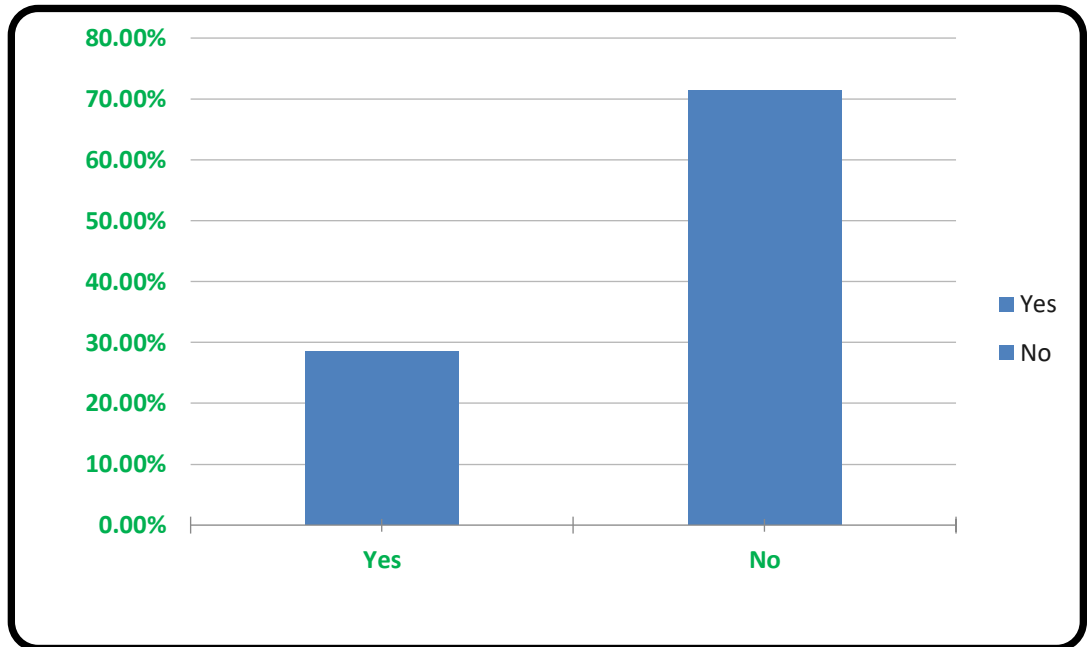
The percentage of respondents who stated N/A on the satisfaction of facilities. Which would translate to the respondents have never visited the facilities.

Verbatim Comments:

| | |
|---------------|---|
| Communication | A country community newsletter highlighting activities and opportunities. Would love to see the halls opened on cold winters day for families to use to be active. Even with a drop in fee to play in the space many would be receptive. |
| Programming | Suffield. Has nothing for Adults |
| | Suffield has nothing kid friendly! The hall is run by older generations that are quite rude! I have attended functions in the facilities indicated as good and I think they are good. |
| Access | Partner with PRRD to provide more activities in school buildings. Not all county residents skate or curl. |
| | The local facilities are great, it's just crappy not having access to the other facilities without making it a day-long event. |
| Maintenance | Keep up the funding to keep facilities and infrastructure in a safe and accessible condition, e.g. community halls, docks for boats, roads, trails, campgrounds. |
| Facility Want | The park areas in Desert Blume are in desperate need of attention! Weeds need taken care of and be controlled, watering for existing plants/trees maintained and overall maintenance should be scheduled. |
| | Dunmore Ball Diamonds at the school are full of Gopher holes in the outfield. Hilda Ball Diamonds need to be revamped as there are a lot of kids in the area who would like to start using the field. We are at Sandy point a lot throughout the summer boating, camping or just going down for supper, it would be nice not to have massive logs to try and chop through for the firepits. I really like the new pits and the new numbers on the campsites easier for filling out the camping forms. The park seems to be getting busier and Ed does a great job at keeping the park looking great! Hope he is back this summer. |
| | I would love to see irvine rink upgraded. I would also love to see a community hall in Dunmore |
| | Dunmore continues to grow and yet we have 1 playground on the new side. Old side of Dunmore playground is so run down. Wish we had a rec center. The driving to the leisure center for swimming and skating and soccer is brutal for gas expenses. My kids are 8 and 11. Need stuff to do out here.....please |
| | Look after playgrounds...we pay taxes??? |
| | Dunmore residents on the west side have a pathetic park/diamond/outdoor rink facility. Kids are scared to play there because of gopher holes and broken equipment. The ball diamond is in shambles and could be a |

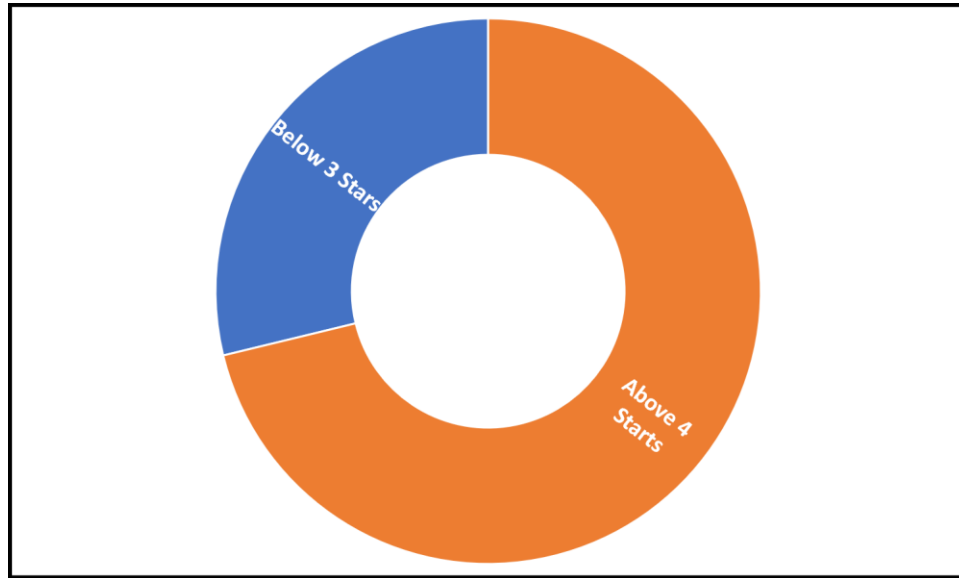
| | |
|-------|---|
| | <p>beautiful facility. The b-ball court/outdoor rink is laughable. Residents have tried forming committees to fix it up but it's beyond our means now. Please consider supporting. Irvine rink is a wonderful place but needs upgrades that the ag society cannot take on by itself. They have done what they can but further resources are needed. With hockey academies and more children enrolled in curling and hockey, upgrades are required to bring it up to full function-ability.</p> |
| | <p>more parks/playgrounds need garbages!</p> |
| | <p>Would be great if Cavan lake camping had more trees</p> |
| | <p>We spend most of our time in our beautiful Elkwater park but we feel that more needs to be done to attract and keep people on the main beach area. Also more advertising of the area as many people we know were not even aware of areas such as Spruce coulee etc. So many people choose the Sask side over Alta side because of swimming pool, zip line etc. and if we haven't enough visitors to the park we will not be able to keep our restaurants open and the other rev facilities that we already have.</p> |
| | <p>Build a Rec facility in Dunmore. Arena, gym, pool, meeting rooms. Etc....</p> |
| | <p>This is laughable. Having a community hall isn't a rec centre. The rec centre in Ralston is also not funded by cypress county, it's owned by PSP and therefore government money. Cypress county offers nothing for people in Suffield.</p> |
| | <p>Buy the farm land between eagle butte high school and the park on the west side of Dunmore, that's next to the 120. Build some berms and make a man made lake there. Something like echo dale.</p> |
| Other | <p>Spend lot's of time in Elkwater</p> |
| | <p>I have not used any of these so can't comment</p> |
| | <p>Never been to most of these facilities</p> |
| | <p>Maybe if there were a different SCRA President, more ideas would get a good chance. As it stands, most ideas are shot down, as fast as it is mentioned</p> |
| | <p>Don't use any of those comments halls</p> |
| | <p>Have not used any</p> |
| | <p>Hey get water in Cavan</p> |
| | <p>I do not feel there is a need for the County to spend money on a public equestrian centre since there is already several private facilities. I feel our tax dollars could be better spent in other areas.</p> |
| | <p>Petition Alberta environment to stop releasing so much water from Cavan and re-establish it as a nice recreational destination.</p> |

11. Would you be interested in participating in volunteer opportunities encouraging stewardship, for example, an adopt a park or graveyard guardian programs?



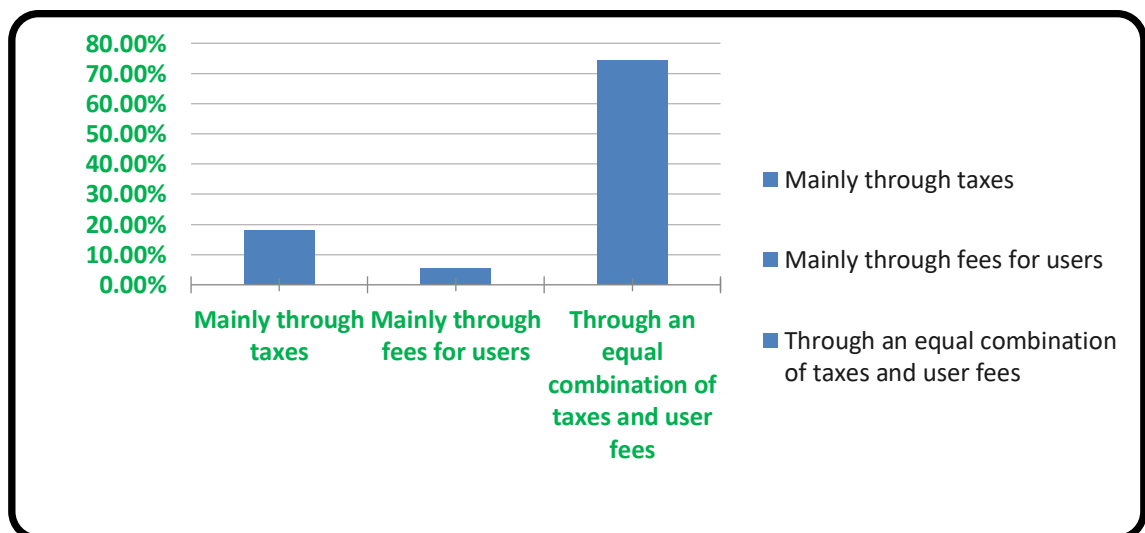
The respondents do not want to participate in park stewardship programs.

12. A vision for recreation will help the County make decisions for the future of recreation and parks. The draft vision is, "Cypress County's recreation and parks are accessible to all and engage the community to inspire healthy lifestyles, community spirit and tourism that is financially sustainable." Out of 5 stars, what rating would you provide this vision statement?



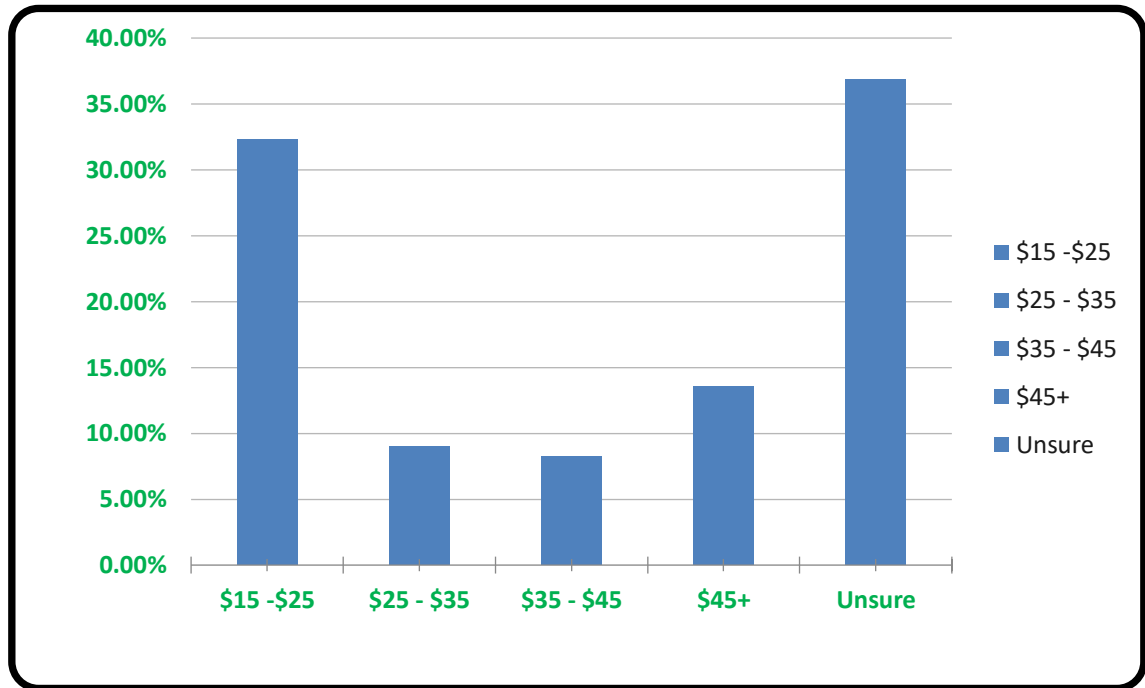
71% of the respondents felt that the vision was four or more out of five stars.

13. In your opinion, how public parks and recreation services should be funded:



The majority of the respondents felt that public parks and recreation should be funded through an equal combination of taxes and user fees.

14. On average, people in Cypress County pay approximately \$1756 per household per year in municipal taxes. Of the \$1756, approximately \$300 is the amount which goes toward Recreation and Parks. The amount you pay may be more or less, but \$300 is the average. How much additional would you be willing to pay through municipal taxation for Recreation & Parks Services per household per year in the future?



When asked the respondents of the survey how much more they would be willing to spend, the majority were unsure how much. The second most answered was \$15-\$25 more a year.

15. As part of the Recreation Master Plan, we are reviewing the cemeteries capacity in the County. How many living family members have cemetery plots?

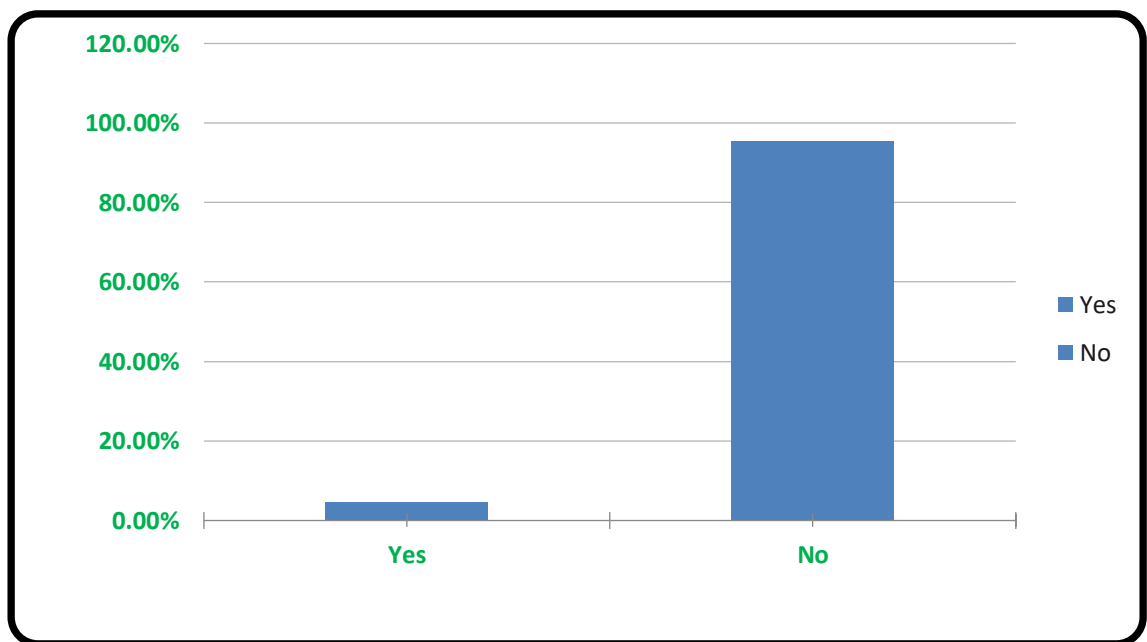
There are 7% of respondents have cemetery plots.

16. Which cemetery are the plots located?

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Medicine Hat | 5 |
| Redcliff | 2 |
| Foremost, not in cypress county | 1 |
| In grounds | 1 |
| Saamis | 1 |

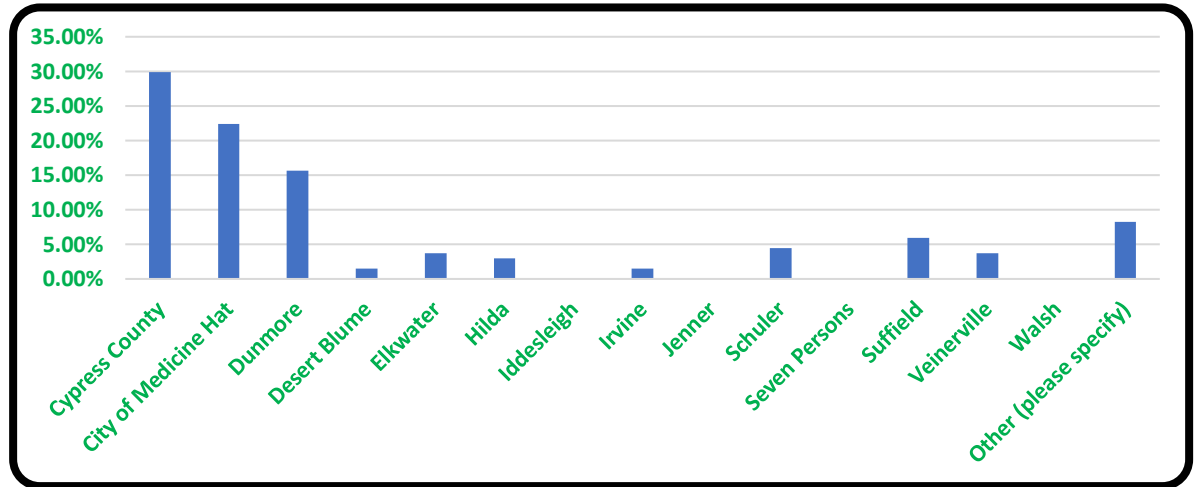
The majority of the respondents have cemetery plots in Medicine hat.

17. Are you looking to purchase a cemetery plot for you or your family?



Most of the respondents are not looking to purchase a cemetery plot for themselves or their family members.

18. Where is your primary residence?

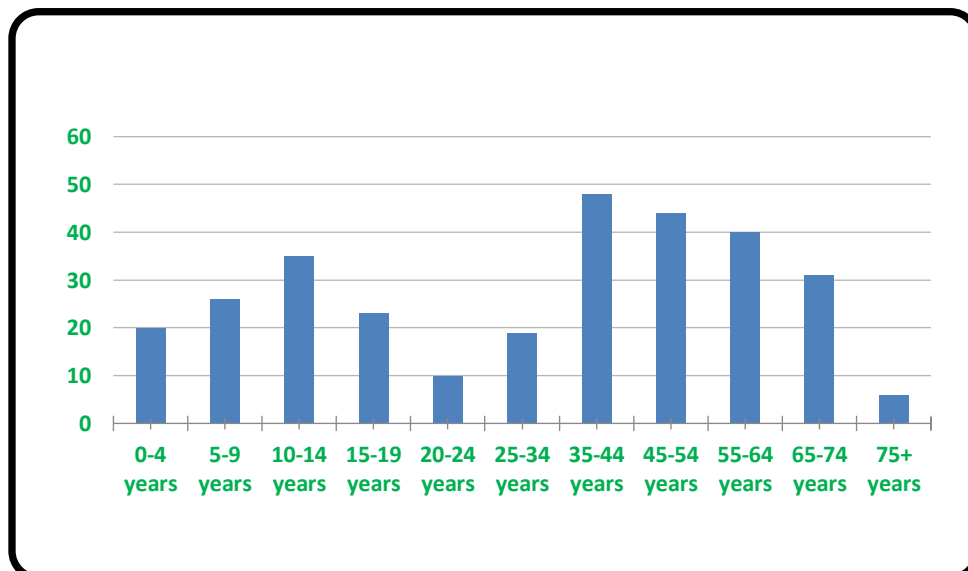


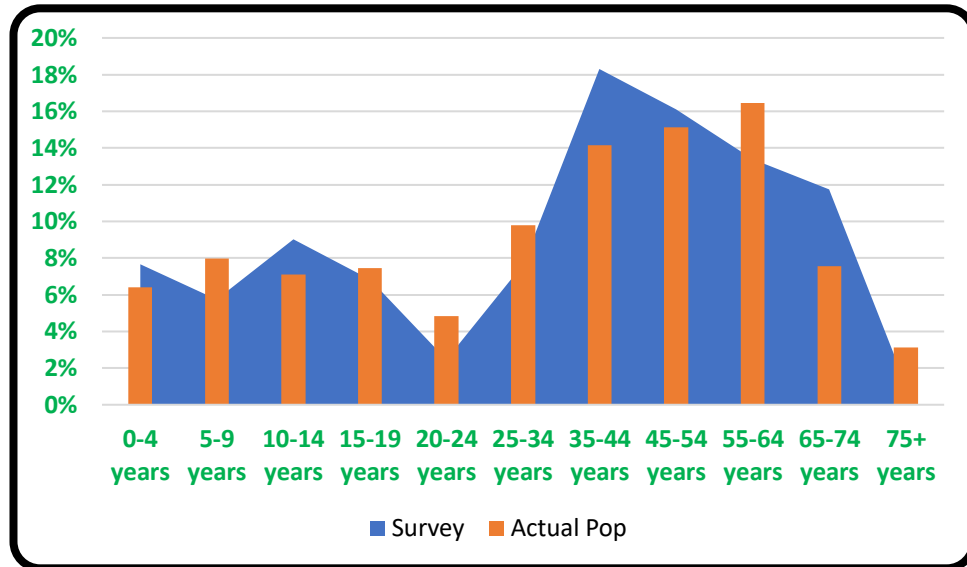
The top three places that the respondents of the survey reside are Cypress County (30%), City of Medicine Hat (22%) and Dunmore (16%).

| | | |
|----------------------|--------|----|
| Cypress County | 29.85% | 40 |
| City of Medicine Hat | 22.39% | 30 |
| Dunmore | 15.67% | 21 |

19. – OMIT Postal Code

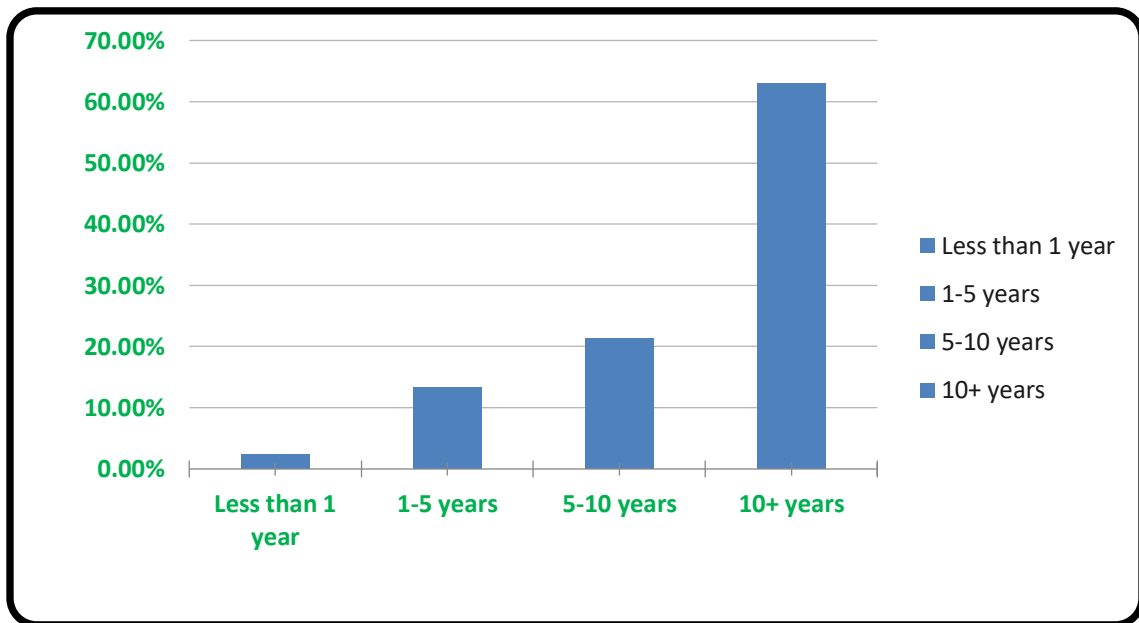
20. Please describe your household by recording the number of members in each of the following age groups. (Please do not forget yourself!)





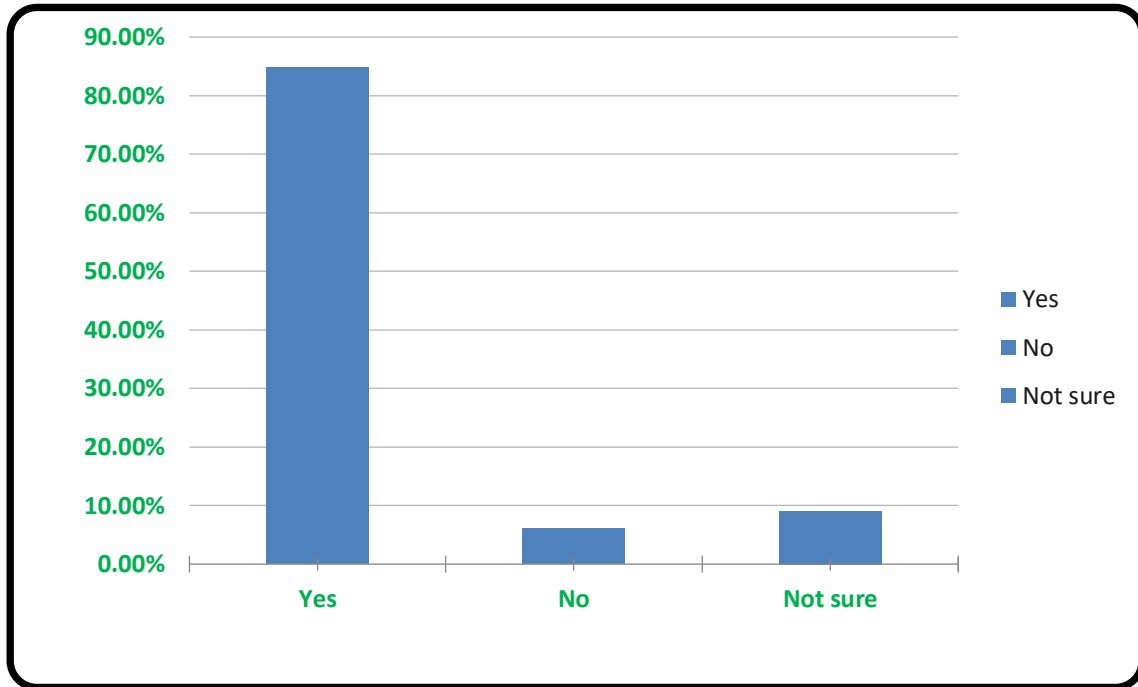
The survey represented respondents in the following age categories, and when correlated with the overall population, you will see the survey overrepresented the following ages; 0-4, 10-14, 35-44 and 65-74.

21. How long have you lived in Cypress County?



Majority of the respondents have lived in the County over ten years

22. Do you expect to be residing in the County for the next five years?



The majority of the respondents would like to live in the County for the next five years.

23. Comments

| | Responses |
|----------------------|--|
| Communication | We would like to be informed as to the opportunities but not using Facebook. Pursuant to Q12: small communities should not be short changed because they are not financially unsustainable. We are prepared to support these financial shortfalls. |
| | For Elkwater there has to be communication on what the County is responsible for and what Parks is expected to complete. Example: Snow removal. |
| | A Recreation Plan is only as good as its purpose and follows through. Make sure part of it is about raising awareness of opportunities is part of it. |
| | We have very few lakes and provincial parks in the SW corner of the province. We are fortunate to have the areas that we have but would like to see more done to promote our parks and encourage tourism to keep us viable for years to come. |
| | Better advertising of public events would be beneficial. |

| | |
|---|---|
| | <p>I have never used any of the facilities that were listed above. More advertising - social media activity, etc. to promote</p> |
| <p>Facility Want</p> | <p>Elkwater needs indoor pickleball facility</p> |
| | <p>Maintenance of existing facilities is very important. Ensure any development benefits the youth right through to seniors.</p> |
| | <p>we vacation in cypress hill frequently and would appreciate effort into roads and recreation</p> |
| | <p>Please revisit the idea of a multiplex by the high school in Dunmore.</p> |
| | <p>Dunmore needs a Rec facility, not a riding arena. Also a walking path for all residents.</p> |
| | <p>Just to be available to all-riding arena, hockey, maybe school gyms</p> |
| | <p>Would like to see off-road vehicle trails. Closest trails are in foothills.</p> |
| | <p>Suffield has always been a laughing stock for the County (I've unfortunately worked there and heard them laughing at people getting their water shut off). Funny how people never look at the bigger picture, thousands of people work at the base and live there at any given time. Most of the soldiers have money to burn, the memberships would pay for themselves. The rec facility which is bound in red tape and dependant on Ottawa's money and final say is a disgusting little hole. No one wants to work out there when it's half falling apart or in constant repairs. Start doing your research cypress county, the world exists outside Dunmore.</p> |
| | <p>Swimming pool facility in Dunmore would be used and is needed</p> |
| | <p>Needs to improve campgrounds</p> |
| | <p>Buy the farmland between eagle butte high school and the kids park on the west side of Dunmore. Build a man made lake on the west side of that parcel of land using the hill and some berms to hold the water. Make a echo dale for the residence of the County please!!!</p> |
| | <p>A partnership with the City of Medicine Hat, Redcliff and Cypress Hills park to make the area a Mountain Biking and cycling destination would be very forward thinking.</p> |
| | <p>I feel that there is very little recreational opportunities for kids around Dunmore. I was very disappointed that the rink in partnership with prrd8 did not happen</p> |
| | <p>After seeing what all the county parks are (not elkwater), we don't use any of them (no lakes for fishing/skiing/no great private treed camp sites) and I'm disappointed how much of my tax money goes to them as I never use them. Same with the halls</p> |
| | <p>OHV trails</p> |
| <p>Need more things for younger children to do at fishing places.</p> | |

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| | <p>We are more into camping and fishing and boating is where our interests lie</p> |
| | <p>Very few facilities for Dunmore. Park is in disrepair. Ball diamond is full of holes from gophers and is unusable. Skating rink is never flooded. We pay taxes and have no access to any services</p> |
| | <p>Get water in Cavan. I have had a seasonal spot for 8 years. I can't do it again. No water sucks. Kids hate it. Fill up the lake and the campgrounds will be full.</p> |
| | <p>In favour of the County financially supporting an indoor/outdoor equestrian facility. There may be hamlet residential support, or support in general for an outdoor, cement skateboard park? There is likely support for additional recreational trails in the hamlets in lieu of sidewalks?</p> |
| <p>Other Comments</p> | <p>Have a summer cottage and farm land in Cypress County, but I do not live full time at either.</p> |
| | <p>Probably improvement of the 41 highway would be a good start.</p> |
| | <p>Another favourite activity is golfing. Elkwater golf club ran by hard working volunteers</p> |
| | <p>Speed bumps on roads in and around parks, connecting trails to city paths</p> |
| | <p>Create future water reservoir to provide the counties own potable water to all residence or at least numerous water outlet locations. Create our own potable water system to ensure access & discontinue being tied & held ransom by the City of Medicine Hat over water issues. The citizens of Cypress County have just a much right to water as anyone else in the province. The cities should not have a monopoly on access to water.</p> |
| | <p>I appreciate the opportunity to live close to a community with recreation facilities. Good use of our tax dollars are important to my family. Our farm/ranch takes most of our time, and our community is important to us.</p> |
| | <p>I feel Peter Swain has done an excellent job in providing family focused activities in Elkwater over the past few years (i.e. luge, skating track, groomed toboggan hill, worked with various stakeholder groups to develop trails).</p> |
| | <p>I feel they should take a second look at the Meridian Dam project at Sandy Point Bridge. This project encompasses all the things mentioned in the vision statement above. Not only would it encourage recreation by Cypress County residents as well as sparking tourism but the economic growth would bring sustainability.</p> |

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| | <p>We don't live in cypress county but have a cottage at Elkwater and live in Calgary</p> <p>You're doing a decent job, just keep brainstorming & acting towards making facilities readily available & affordable to the families way out here.</p> |
| Maintenance | <p>continue to maintain services</p> <p>We can do a better job maintaining them.</p> |
| | <p>Just please take a look at Dunmore west side park. It's awful. No one uses it. Kids go there and either sprain an ankle in gopher holes, cut themselves on broken equipment or find condoms under the pine trees. It's gross. My kids hate it and always want to go to the east side when we live 2 min from our west side park. It needs help.</p> |
| | <p>what do we get for \$1756.00 there is almost nothing maintained by Cypress County. the few facilities available are mostly falling apart</p> |
| | |
| Environment | <p>The Provincial Park is the jewel of the south east and equally for the Saskatchewan side. Continued support for this ecological gem is essential.</p> |
| | <p>We need to ensure that the parks have a environmental and financial plan for sustainability. Both are needed to ensure a healthy and accessible park area. Need to also have good thought around expansion regarding business and commercial considerations, need to balance support of activities with sustainability of park assets and green spaces. Thanks!</p> |
| | <p>I feel fish and game should have the same charges as Manitoba out of province should pay for a full year regardless of planned stay in province would add a few bucks towards our own natural sustainability of lakes and parks.</p> |
| Programming | <p>It would be so nice to see events or activities brought to Suffield it's like we've been left out of life</p> |
| | <p>More activities in Elkwater park.</p> |
| | <p>Foam fests Color me runs etc</p> |
| Funding | <p>I don't want to pay any more tax for parks and recreation</p> |

3.3. Synthesis of Meeting Results

3.3.1. Key Learnings

The following are the key learnings and themes that came from the online community survey

1. The majority of respondents feel that recreation and leisure are important to them and their quality of life and will travel over 51km to participate in it; however only want to increase taxes by the minimal amount for better access.

2. The respondents feel that the County has several strengths like the accessibility, proximity and maintenance with an emphasis on Elkwater as a specific strength for the County. When looking at needs, the respondents would like to see better maintenance, trails and accessibility.
3. The physical activities are outdoor-based. However, due to the ability to swim at Elkwater, swimming could be indoor -Medicine Hat or outdoor at Elkwater.
4. The number one barrier to recreation that was noted by the respondents was unaware of activities. This communication concern was identified in verbatim comments and echoed with the favourite indoor activity in Cypress County was none, and that there was a high percentage of respondents that have never been to the facilities in Cypress.
5. The satisfaction of facilities in the County was that many people feel that the campgrounds are good, and for outdoor facilities, there needs to be increased to the ball facilities in the County.
6. The majority of the respondents accepted the vision.
7. The wants for facilities in the County are: Upgraded Playgrounds, public facilities require garbage cans, more trees in parks and campgrounds, indoor pickleball, multiplex in Dunmore, off-road vehicle trails and -NOT SURE IF WE SHOULD LIST THEM
8. The respondents don't feel there is a need for cemetery plots as the majority of respondents have plots already, and others are not looking for any.
9. The survey respondents mirror the actual population of the County, other than being overrepresented in the population categories of 0-4, 10-14, 5-44 and 65-74. The respondents are long term residents and want to reside in the County for at least five more years.

4. Train the Trainer (CANCELLED)

The team provided training to community members on how to conduct open houses in their communities. However, the week of execution, COVID-19 shut down all community gatherings.

5.0. Seniors Survey (CANCELLED)

The team created a Seniors Survey which was to be executed at a community bingo. However, the week of execution, COVID-19 shut down all community gatherings.

6.0. Focus Group Cypress County Recreation Master Plan

The team executed a focus group for community leaders on April 13, 2020. The focus group was completed using online video conferencing.

| Cypress County | Quantum Recreation: |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alf Belyea- Suffield• Elisha Ammann- Desert Blume• Diane Good – Irvine and Longfellow• Dave Ziegenhagel – Elkwater | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jason Simituk- Project Manager• Lisa Reinders- Community Services Planner |

6.1. Description of Activities

Questions were asked from a variety of topic areas which was accompanied by a PowerPoint.

6.2. Focus Group Results

Comments about community – resident do care about their community

a) Elkwater:

- park programs are changing, they provided naturalist programming however the budget cuts the programs
- has good trails system and boardwalk, park, campground,

- b) Desert Blume: is a small and young community, which the residents change every few years. A survey was completed two years ago and provided information on the needs for the community.
 - comment from the community to not focus on new things when there is need to upkeep current infrastructure
 - Desert Blume does not have a facility, and no programming
 - Homeowners requested golf course to offer yoga classes-need better communication with golf course
 - Great trail system
- c) Irvine and Longfellow
 - Not sure if the community needs more than what is already offered (hockey/curling) as each activity takes time.
- d) Suffield
 - small community
 - high senior population

1. Activities

What are some of recreation opportunities your community would like to participate in?

| Elkwater | Desert Blume | Irvine/Longfellow | Suffield |
|---|--|--------------------|----------|
| Improve Tennis Court (sloped level & paved regularly) | Additional playground equipment | Use public library | |
| Add Splash Park | Add Tennis Court; Basketball Court; Pickleball | | |
| Request for Archery, however, is offered ski hill | Add Trails | | |
| Add skating rink | | | |

2. Recreation and Parks

How can recreation and parks be improved in your community?

| Elkwater | Desert Blume | Irvine/Longfellow | Suffield |
|---|---|---|---|
| Parks programs need to be improved | Better Park management controls | Change Rooms at Irvine Rec Centre | Upgrade playground - currently finding grants |
| Better playground for kids, more swings | Tree management: assess to remove trees; or adding new | Longfellow -park and building in good condition | Assess irrigation |
| | Irrigation overhaul: evaluate planned natural areas (current natural areas are being mowed) | | Tennis Court refurbished |
| | Improve understanding role and responsibilities of parks to determine if golf course, County, or Homeowners | | Upgrade trail to Ralston |

3. Community Parks

Do you agree with the suggested Park's enhancements?

a) Desert Blume

- a. a swing set is good idea
- b. creating an outdoor rink is labour intensive and the community is not able to maintain an ice rink currently
- c. Park 3: trees are dying may be lack of water or bugs

b) Elkwater

- a. The community would like to see a splash park. However it would have to be a joint effort Alberta Environment and Parks, Cypress and community

c) Irvine

- a. school site – encourage public use

- d) Suffield
 - a. need to upgrade playground
 - b. ball field does not get used

4. Community Halls and Recreation Facilities

Do you have any ideas on how to a) operate Community Halls or Recreation Facilities or b) Fund Capital improvements?

- a) Elkwater -hall ten years old, in good condition with a strong volunteer base
 - a. updated flooring, have 3 or 4 BBQ each season,
- b) Longfellow – when require improvement apply for grants either AB or County
- c) Desert Blume – no facility, have a volunteer board as part of home association and increased fees to fund park expenses
- d) Suffield – facility in good condition, recently upgrade furnace, greatest challenge is volunteers (it feels separated from town), to draw people in to become involved in activities or events,

5. General discussion of community needs (youth programming, tourism, seniors programming, volunteerism, new facilities)

- a. Elkwater – assets: the campground is an asset; trails group that maintain and build new trails; also trails around the campground and townsite is good.
- b. Desert Blume- to increase safety in playground areas, to increase monitoring or locally fund a portable flashing speed limit

6. General improvements

- a. Communication with the County
- b. Difficult to understand County staff roles and responsibilities
- c. Way finding signage to Desert Blume to create a sense of place

6.3. Synthesis of Meeting Results

6.3.1. Key Learnings

1. Better communication between the County, Community Groups and Residents. Especially around roles and responsibilities.
2. Better maintenance in Cypress County parks spaces, especially Desert Blume.

3. The Community associations are self-sufficient and require only funding and some guidance from the County. As Suffield is would like to upgrade their playground, so they are currently looking for grants.
4. Community Facilities are in good condition.
5. Would like some wayfinding signage in Desert Blume

7.0. Cypress County Council Survey

The team executed a focus group for community leaders on April 13, 2020. The focus group was completed using online video conferencing.

7.1. Description of Activities

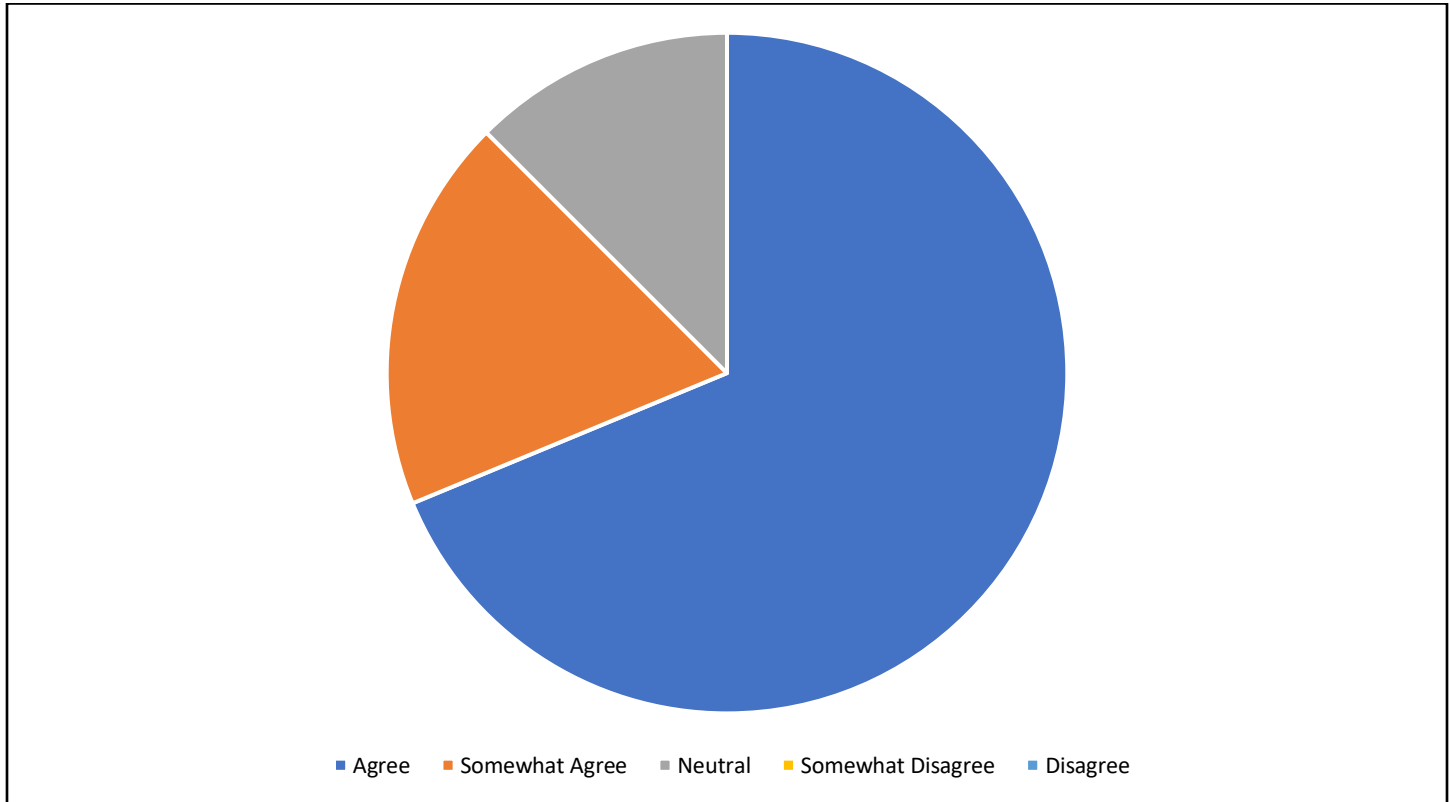
There was a presurvey created which asked not only requested information but educated Council on some of the hot topic issues related to Recreation within the County.

7.2. Summary of Results

Question 1.



Question 2. A mission statement is a short statement of a department's purpose. It identifies the scope of its operations, such as what kind of product or service it provides, its primary customers or market, and its geographical region of operation. To what extent do you agree?



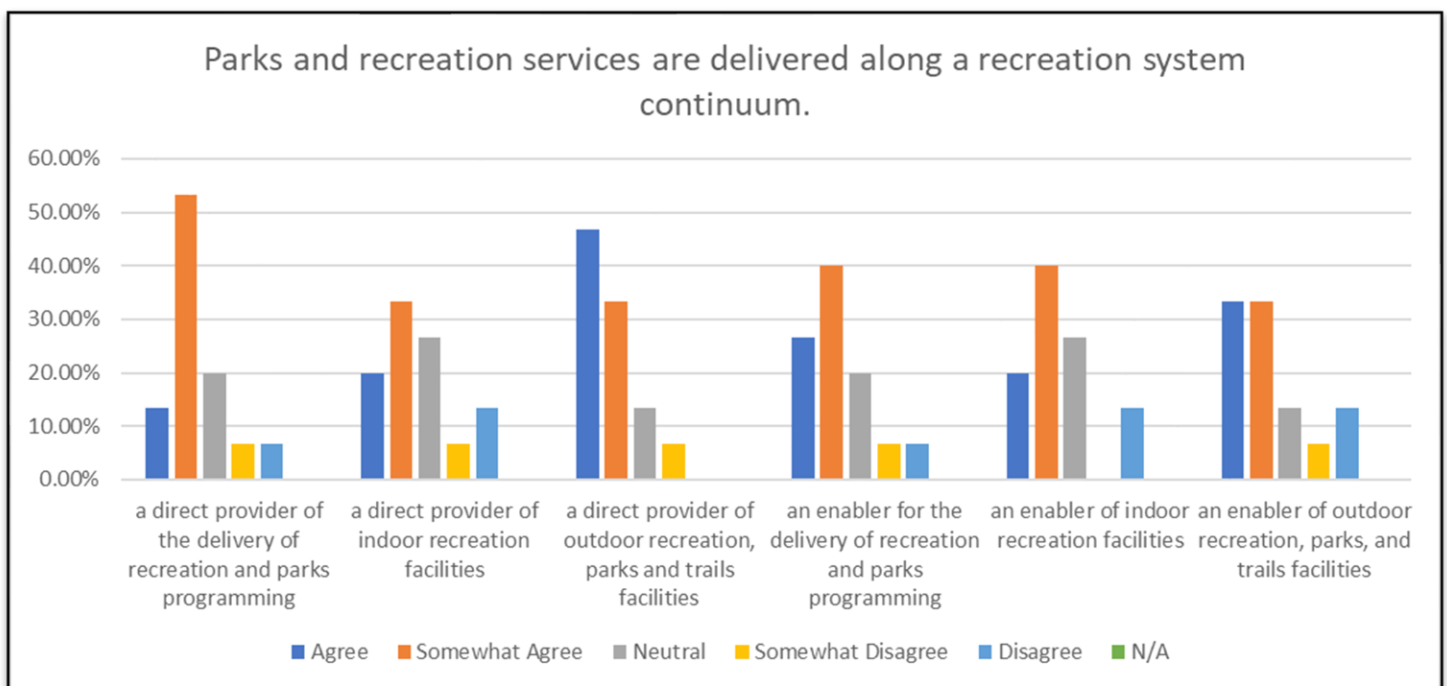
Question 3. What are the top three parks and recreation activities you or your neighbours would like to participate in or are currently not doing in the County?

| Activity | QTY |
|--------------------------|-----|
| Trails | 7 |
| Slo-Pitch/Softball | 3 |
| Water Park (Splash Park) | 2 |
| Playground Equipment | 2 |
| Curling | 1 |
| Frisbee Golf | 1 |
| Pickle Ball | 1 |
| Swimming | 1 |
| Skateboarding | 1 |
| Camping | 1 |
| Trails | 7 |
| Slo-Pitch/Softball | 3 |

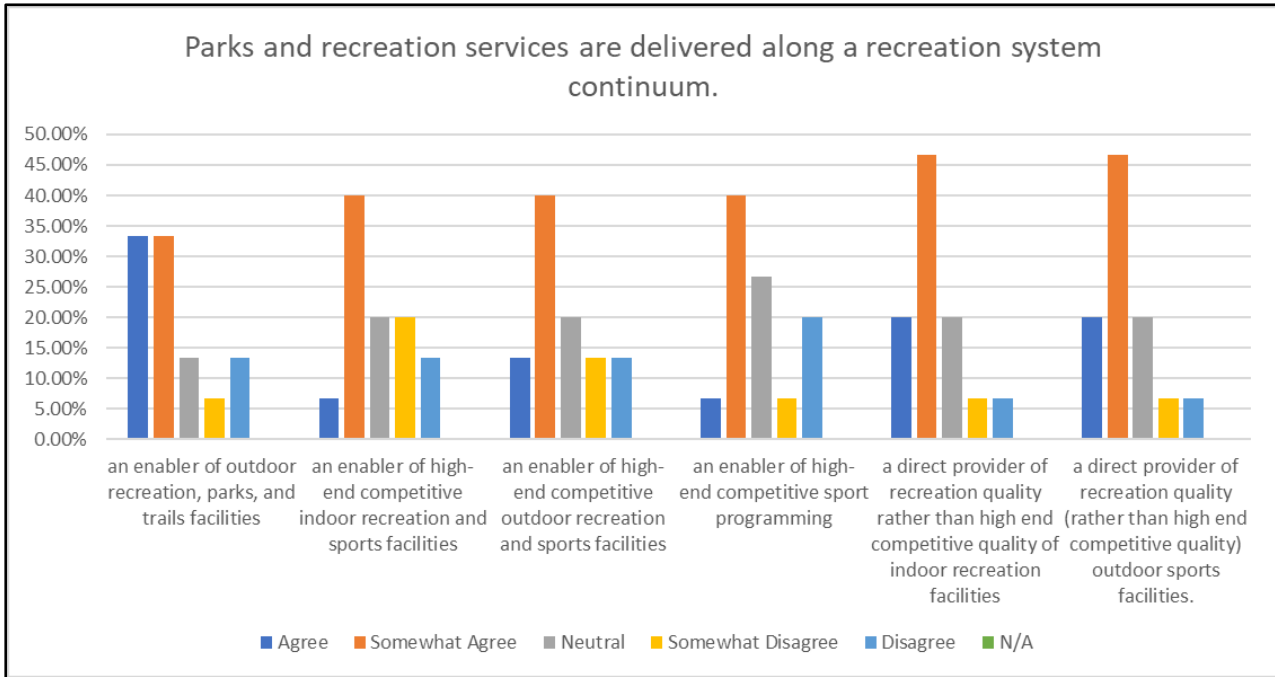
Question 4. What are the top three parks and recreation facilities you or your neighbours would like to have in the County?

| Activity | QTY |
|--|-----|
| Paved Trails | 3 |
| Water Park (Splash Park) | 3 |
| Biking trails | 2 |
| BMX Track | 2 |
| Multiplex with arena | 2 |
| Swimming | 1 |
| Treed Park | 1 |
| Maintained Baseball Diamond with Bleachers | 1 |
| Camping | 1 |
| Fitness Poles | 1 |
| Paved Trails | 3 |
| Water Park (Splash Park) | 3 |
| Biking trails | 2 |
| BMX Track | 2 |
| Multiplex with arena | 2 |
| Swimming | 1 |

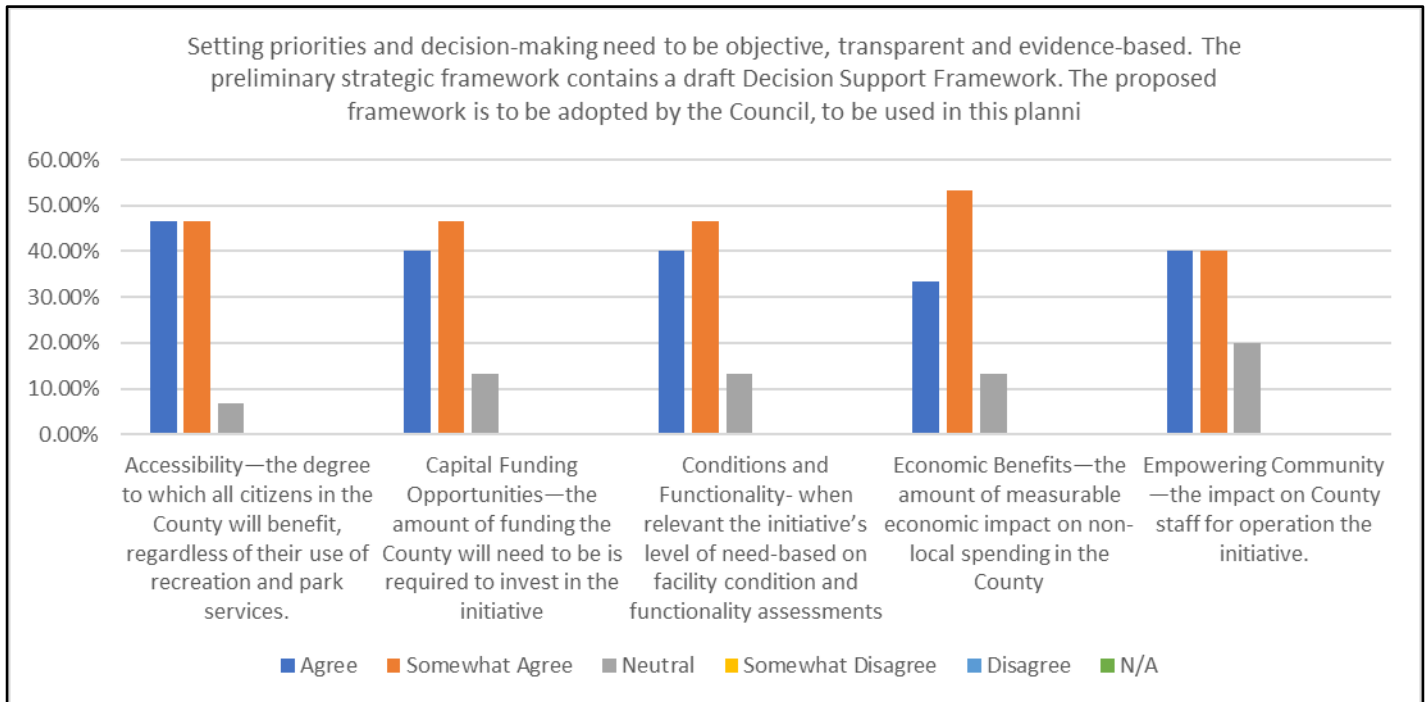
Question 5 (a).



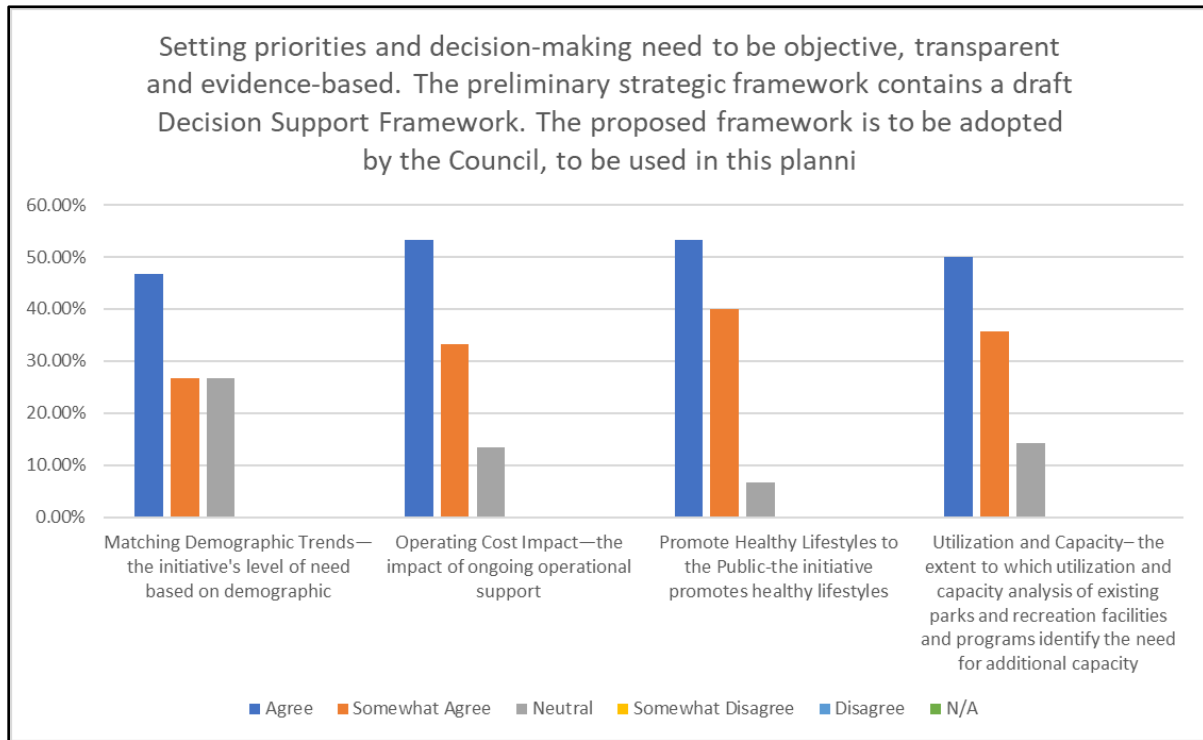
Question 5 (b).



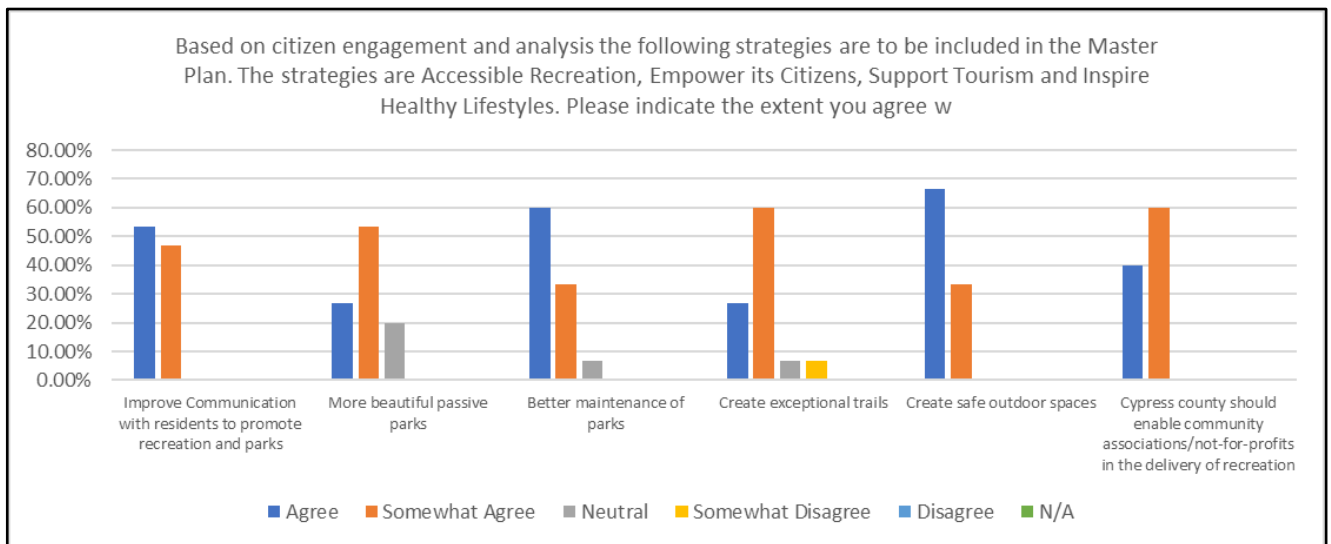
Question 6 (a)



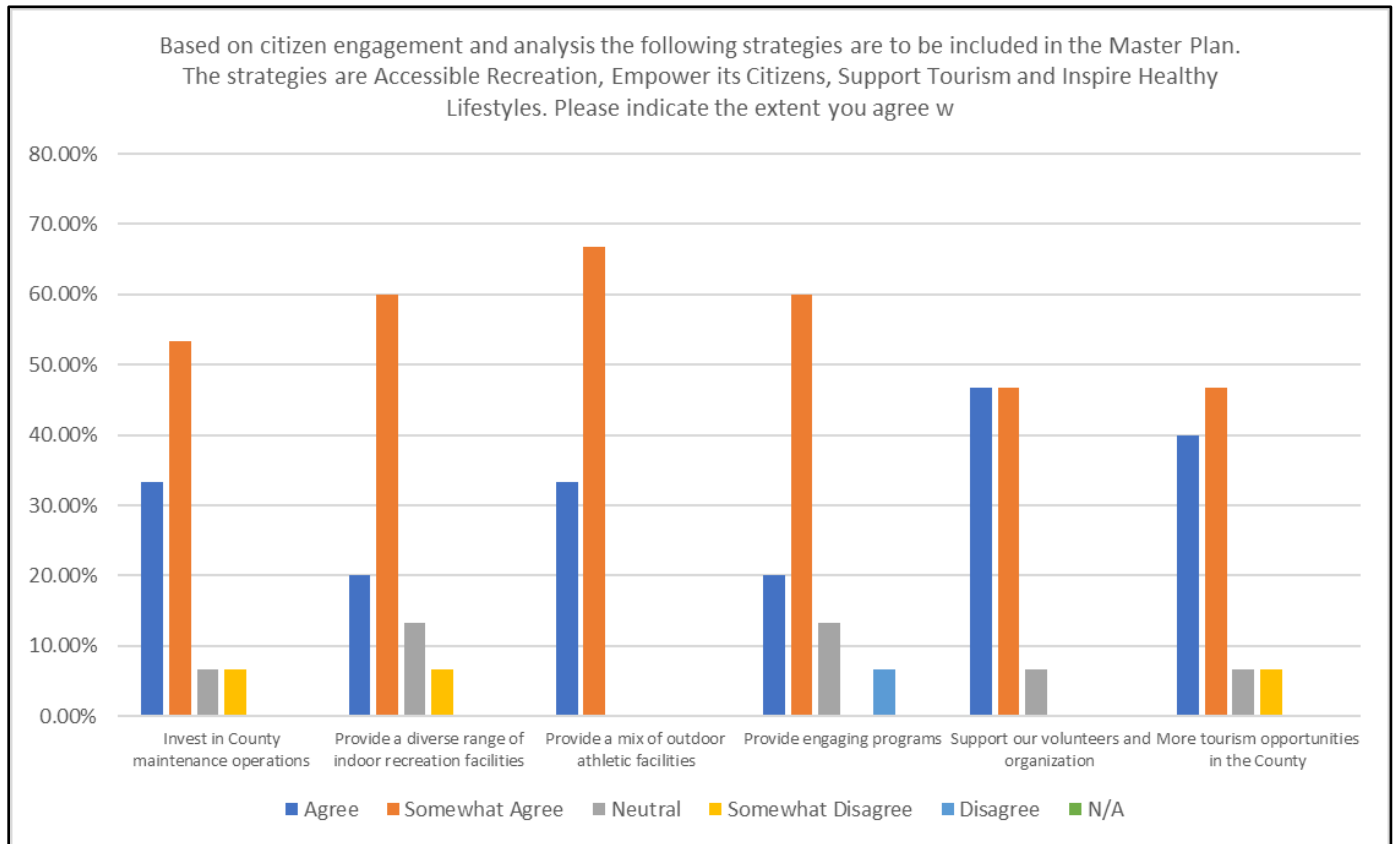
Question 6 (b)



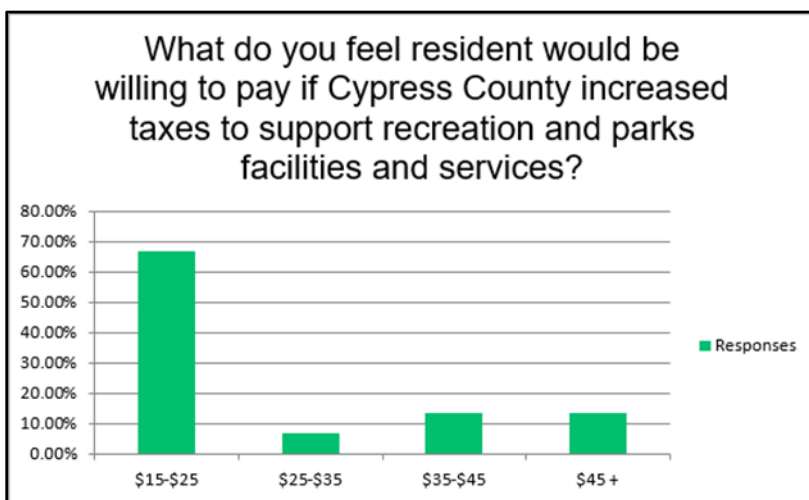
Question 7(a).



Question 7(b).



Question 8. What do you feel resident would be willing to pay if Cypress County increased taxes to support recreation and parks facilities and services?



| |
|---|
| facilities that are not only geared towards young people; that has middle aged and senior citizens in mind |
| Higher level of communication from the County. |
| Apply increased funding towards priority recreation facilities and services that allows full access and use and enjoyment by all residents rather than a select few based on recreational interests/activities. |
| You have to have community support to have a successful recreation events. It is hard to read peoples minds. |
| Increased maintenance, weed control, grass cutting, gopher control, paved trails, benches & garbage cans. |
| User-based payment system |
| access, a variety of choices (parks with different attractions, activities, services), washrooms available, |

Question 9. Any final thoughts or questions regarding the Recreation Master Plan?

| |
|--|
| To have a successful recreation facility and events you have to have community support. For a community to grow and prosper you need this. You have to be able to adapt and interact with new technology. |
| Build it and they will come. |
| The County can not be the owner of recreation programs. We can & should build trails, playgrounds, & assist with community hall maintenance. Our job is to work with the public, not to do the work for them. |
| The majority of the parks and playground equipment in the hamlets are an embarrassment. Some of them are not even to safety codes standard and therefore, a hazard. If the County is not prepared to create new outdoor or indoor spaces, the least the County could do is have high quality playground equipment and well maintained parks for families and children to use. There also needs to be trees and picnic tables added to some of the playground areas in the hamlets. |

7.3 Synthesis of Meeting Results

7.3.1. Key Learnings

1. Trail Development is most important
2. The county feels they would like to be a direct provider in recreation programming and facility development.

3. Improve Communication, More beautiful passive parks, Better maintenance of parks and outdoor spaces, Create exceptional trails and Cypress county should enable the community in the delivery of recreation and parks.
4. A tax increase of \$15-25 for better recreation and parks services.
5. A tax increase would create the following expectations:
 - a. More communication from the County regarding recreation and parks opportunities.
 - b. Recreation opportunities geared toward seniors

8.0. Focus Group (2)

Cypress County Recreation Master Plan

The team executed a focus group for community leaders on April 13, 2020. The focus group was completed using online video conferencing.

| Cypress County Council | Cypress County Staff |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Dan Hamilton, Reeve | Tarolyn Aaserud, Chief Administrative Officer |
| Richard Oster, Deputy Reeve | John Belanger, Director of Corporate Services |
| Dustin Vossler, Councillor | LesleyAnn Collins, Executive Assistant |
| Robin Kurpjuweit, Councillor | |
| Darcy Geigle, Councillor | |
| Ernest Mudie, Councillor | |
| Michelle McKenzie, Councillor | |
| Alf Belyea, Councillor | |

8.1. Description of Activities

There was a presurvey created which asked not only requested information but educated Council on some of the hot topic issues related to Recreation within the County. The focus group questions were asked from a variety of topic areas which was accompanied by a PowerPoint.

8.2. Synthesis of Meeting Results

8.2.1. Key Learnings

The group was asked to choose their top three proposed strategies within each themed priority.

Accessible Recreation:

- Continue current investment in recreation and parks facilities as outlined in the recreation facilities upgrade plan.
- Upgrades to current community parks.
- Evaluate the liability of the operating models of recreation facilities in the County to assist with financial planning.

Inspire Healthy Lifestyles:

- Expand communication to residents with an e-newsletter highlighting recreation and park opportunities and creating an events page on the County website.
- Promote the benefits of a healthy lifestyle and participating in sport and recreation. The benefits include boosting physical and mental well-being, building strong families and communities, and connecting people with nature.
- Creation of a County Trails Plan

Support Tourism:

- Link Cypress County tourism priorities with the strategy of the recreation and tourism alliance using Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park as a starting point.
- Enhance the Cypress County grant program to include a tourism development program grant (\$5000) every two years for innovative project or initiatives promoting local tourism.
- Foster partnerships to support tourism initiatives with direct support from County staff.

Empower It's Citizens

- Develop and promote a guardian angel program to support the maintenance of local cemeteries or community parks.

- Promote volunteer opportunities, (i.e. create a volunteer message board to connect people)
- Cultivate the growth of the volunteer sector to develop new projects or recreation programs, host sporting or cultural events and manage recreation facilities with direct support from County staff.

