

play dawson

CITY OF DAWSON PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

“State of Play” Report



Submitted to



By



in association with

*Across the River Consulting
and
Monarda Communications*

WINTER 2019/20

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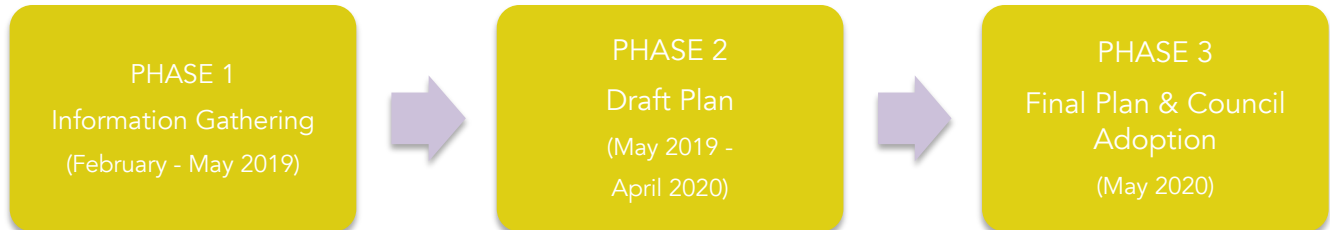
1.0 Introduction

A Parks and Recreation Master Plan (PRMP) sets the high-level, strategic direction for how a municipality delivers parks and recreation programs and infrastructure. The City of Dawson undertook an internal master planning exercise in 2007. The community has grown and changed considerably since that time, and the City determined that 2019 was the ideal time to re-examine and confirm its approach to parks and recreation in order to prepare for the next decade.

The PRMP will create a 10-year blueprint for the City of Dawson that:

- Sets out a **vision** and **guiding principles** for parks and recreation consistent with community needs and Council priorities;
- Establishes key **goals** and **objectives** for municipal recreation services, programs, facilities and events;
- Considers City capacity and budget implications; and,
- Sets out a course for **implementation** and **performance evaluation**.

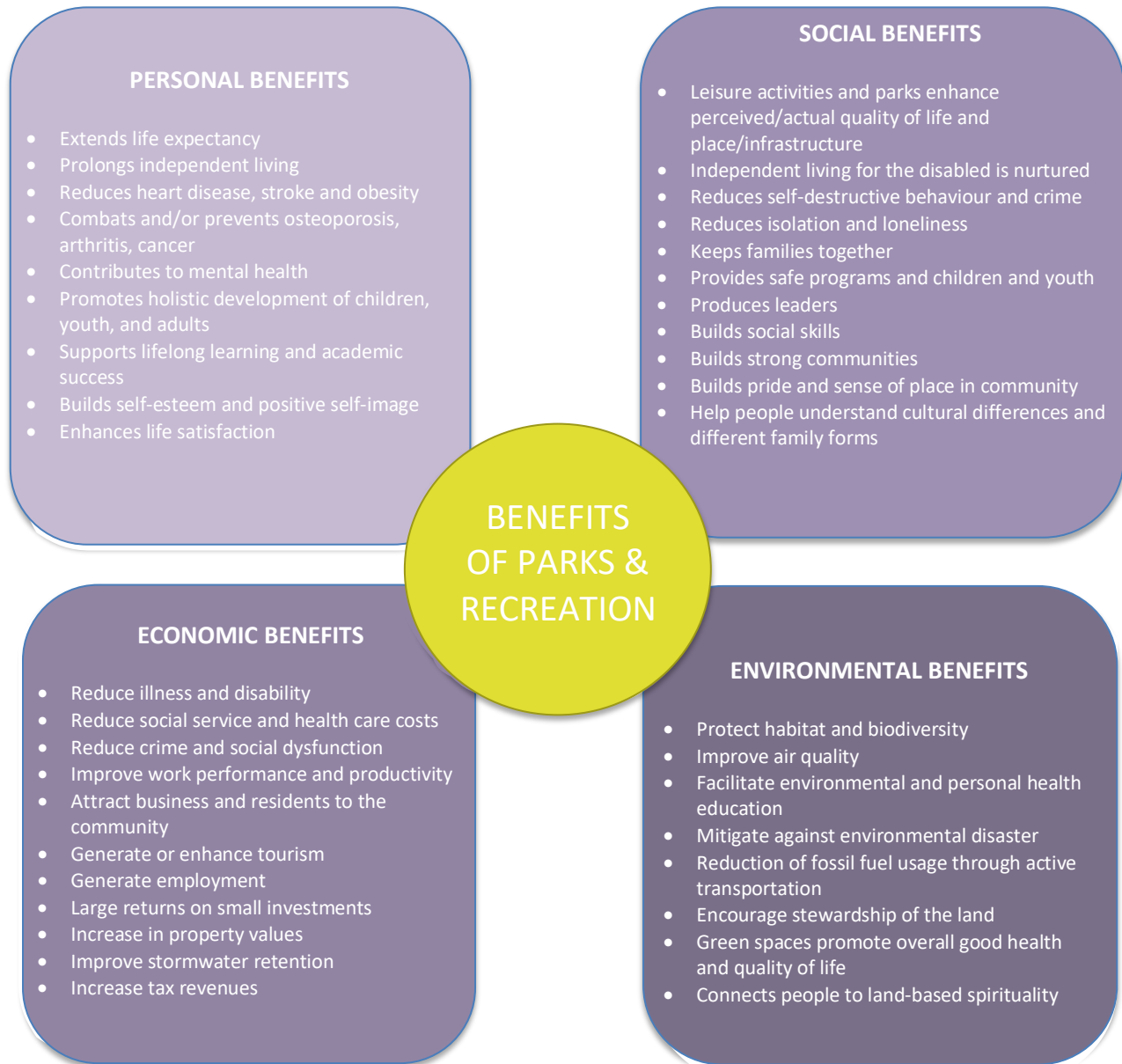
The Plan is being developed over a five-month timeframe and led by Groundswell Planning of Whitehorse. Organized into three distinct phases, the team’s planning process involves compiling background research, engaging the community and stakeholders, working with staff and Council to chart direction and strategy, and drafting the plan document.



This “State of Play” document houses the results of the information gathering phase, including an overview of Dawson’s current recreation picture, City of Dawson service delivery, “what we heard” from community recreation stakeholders and the public, and a summary of trends and practices in the recreation field. It will help set the context for local strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats from which the planning team and City of Dawson can craft a strategic and proactive way forward for the next decade. This broad scan of considerations will help to ensure that the final plan is grounded in the needs of Dawson residents, best practices, key trends, and organizational sustainability.

2.0 Why Parks and Recreation Matters

Recreation is defined as “the experience that results from freely chosen participation in physical, social, intellectual, creative and spiritual pursuits that enhance individual and community well-being.”¹ Governments have a long history of providing parks and recreation to citizens, stemming from a guiding philosophy that views recreation as a “public good” – available to all - akin to schools, roads, drinking water, and law enforcement. This ongoing public investment into recreation has tangible benefits both at an individual and societal level. The graphic below depicts a summary of recreation benefits as compiled by The National Benefits Hub².



¹ Interprovincial Sports and Recreation Council and the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association, 2015. Framework for Recreation in Canada: Pathways to Wellbeing.

² National Benefits Hub. www.benefitshub.ca

3.0 Community Context

3.1 Community Profile

Dawson City is situated in the Traditional Territory of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in (TH), at the culturally, historically, and ecologically rich setting of the confluence of the Klondike and Yukon rivers in central Yukon. The area has been occupied for many millennia by the Han people, "People of the River", who traveled throughout the region harvesting and subsisting off the land as part of their seasonal round. Dawson City became a permanent settlement with the discovery of gold in the placer-rich deposits of the Klondike/Tr'ondëk river valley in 1896 and arrival of some 35,000 newcomers from around the globe during the Klondike Gold Rush. The tangible and intangible heritage connected to both the Gold Rush and Indigenous occupation and use continue to be predominant influences in the community.

The main economic drivers of Dawson are public administration, mining (primarily placer) and tourism. Major employers include four levels of government (federal, territorial, First Nation and municipal), larger non-governmental organizations, and numerous tourism operators. While the community is less reliant on government employment than Whitehorse, it nonetheless has a highly seasonal economic cycle, drawing in large numbers of primarily younger workers during the summer tourism and mining peaks. The economy can be characterized as stable and resilient, with the greatest uncertainty currently being the unknown future and potential impacts (economic, population, and otherwise) of the nearby Coffee Creek mine development.



Population growth has resulted in acute shortages of suitable housing and availability of land for building. Specific local constraints to development include the topography, peripheral industrial and mining activity, and the high cost of expanding and operating service infrastructure in a remote location. The 2018 Official Community Plan (OCP) set out a direction for a more compact urban form to promote both financial and environmental sustainability amidst these population growth pressures. Facilitating the ability of Dawson residents to live, work and play in close, walkable proximity to amenities and services is central to the achievement of the OCP's direction.

The built heritage of the Klondike Gold Rush, and indeed the Gold Rush story itself, is a key pillar upon which Dawson City's status as a premier Yukon destination is based. In recent years there have been a number of initiatives aimed at broadening Dawson City's visitor offer for a shifting visitor demographic and interest (i.e. meetings and incentives, outdoor activities, winter tourism, etc.) The city is connected via the North Klondike Highway and Top of the World Highway (summer only), as well as a year-round airport that was paved in 2019 to facilitate continued summertime passenger jet service.

3.2 Population Characteristics and Projections

The City of Dawson municipality has a population 1,375-strong (Statistics Canada, 2017) and serves a population of 2,341 (Yukon Bureau of Statistics, September 2018) when peripheral rural subdivisions are included. The community has grown by 24% over the last decade. In fact, Dawson is by far the fastest growing community in the Yukon, with its population projected to rise by 24% to 2,906 in 2030 and by 49% to 3,480 by 2040, a total further increase of 1,139 people (preferred projection, Yukon Bureau of Statistics).

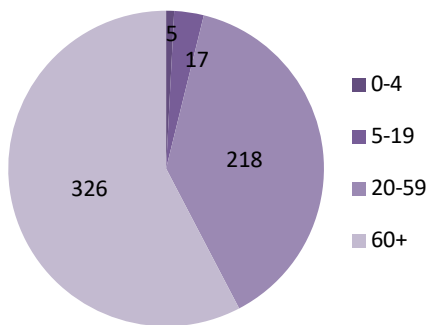
According to census data, the municipality, compared to the Yukon as a whole, has a:

- smaller proportion of First Nation residents;
- slightly smaller proportion of females and immigrants;
- similar age profile;
- much lower average household size, with many more singles;
- higher growth rate;
- much lower income; and
- much higher cost of living.

	Dawson	Yukon
Male	51%	49%
Female	49%	51%
First Nation	16%	21%
Immigrants	12%	13%
10 Year Growth	24%	20%
Median Age	39.7	39.5
Household Size	2.0	2.3
Household Income	\$68,608	\$84,521
Cost of Living	121.3%	100%

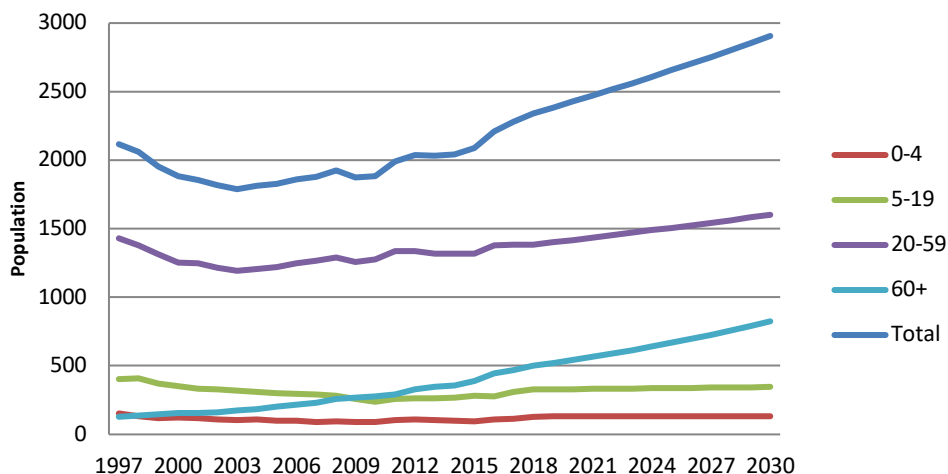
Source: Statistics Canada, 2017

Population Change by Age Segment
2018-2030



Dawson’s population is aging and, combined with broader societal shifts, growth is predicted to occur almost exclusively in 1-2-person adult households (note that Dawson already has a higher percentage of single-person households (45%) than the Yukon average of 32%). The over-60 segment is projected to rise by 326 people, or 65%, by 2030 and account for 58% of growth over the next 12 years.

2030 Population Projection by Age Segment



4.0 Service Delivery Overview

4.1 Services Summary

The City of Dawson’s Recreation Department delivers a wide range of both direct and indirect parks and recreation services to community residents, as illustrated below. The department’s name is somewhat misleading given its responsibilities around parks, playgrounds, and open spaces.



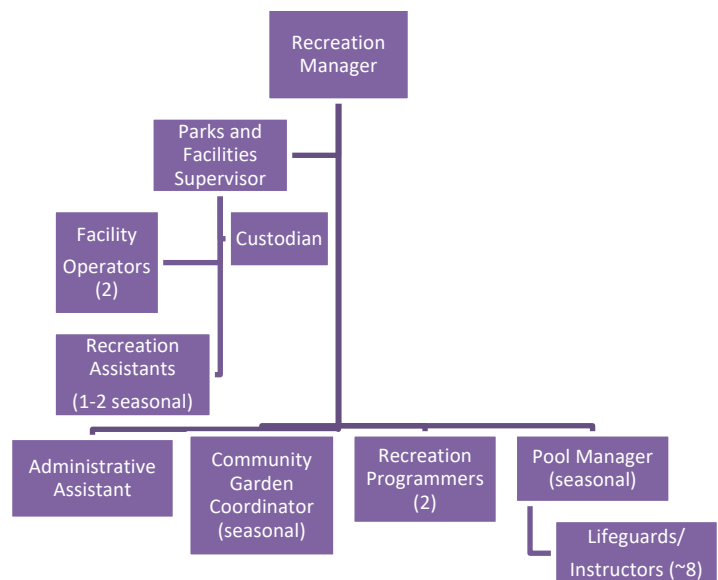
Direct delivery involves programs, facilities, events, and other activities that are planned and executed using municipal staff and resources.

Indirect delivery includes programs, events, and other activities primarily led by community organizations but that are supported by the municipality through facility use/access, financial or in-kind support, etc.

4.2 Organizational Structure

The City’s Recreation Department is overseen by a full-time manager and includes two programmers, an administrative assistant, and numerous facility staff.

A 2018 departmental restructuring created a Parks and Facilities Supervisor position, which manages a year-round Facility Operator and seasonal Recreation Assistants. Other seasonal staff include the Community Garden Coordinator and Pool Manager, who oversees approximately eight part and full-time staff during the pool season. A Custodian position is in the process of being reassigned to the Parks and Facilities Supervisor (as opposed to the Recreation Manager, which it currently reports to).



Staff is housed in the Waterfront Building on Front Street (management, programming, and administration), the Art and Margaret Fry Recreation Centre (facility staff), and the pool (aquatics staff). The Recreation Manager reports to Council and the Chief Administrative Officer on a regular basis about departmental activities.

Pursuant to the *Municipal Act*, Council has delegated some of its “powers, duties, and functions related to recreation services” to a six-member Recreation Board. The role of the Board is defined in the *Recreation Board Policy* as being established by Council. In practice, the Board’s activities are limited to the review of recreation-related funding applications for both the Community Grants Program (Dawson-funded) and Recreation Grant Program (Lotteries Yukon funded). The Board is supposed to meet on a monthly basis but quorum (i.e., three members) is often not achieved. In 2018, a total of six Recreation Board meetings were held due to this ongoing challenge. Board packages are prepared by the Recreation Manager on a monthly basis.

4.3 Policy Framework

A number of municipal and Recreation Department policies guide the delivery of recreation in Dawson. These include:

4.3.1 Municipal-Level Policies

Official Community Plan - The City of Dawson’s *Official Community Plan* (OCP) is a guiding document that establishes a vision for community growth and development and provides Council and staff with a framework through which to develop and implement other plans and policies. Updated in late 2018, Section 12.0 (Parks and Recreation) of the OCP states the following long-term goal:

“Healthy and active lifestyles are encouraged through the provision of parks and recreational resources that meet the needs of Dawson’s diverse population.”

The seven implementation approaches include:

- Maintaining an inventory of recreational resources that meets the needs of Dawson’s diverse population and provides year-round opportunities;
- Providing high-quality recreational infrastructure and facilities;
- Considering partnerships with Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in, Yukon government, industry, or other non-government organizations to enhance recreational facilities and their maintenance; and
- Feasibility studies for facilities that are at the end of their life span to determine replacement, refurbishment and/or relocation.

OCP & Recreation

Dawson City’s Official Community Plan (OCP) touches on the topic of recreation

9.0 Heritage and Culture - support for local festivals and events, collaboration with non-profit organizations, encouragement of public art (including First Nation heritage) on or within, warming shelters in outdoor spaces to encourage year-round use

11.0 Food Security - development and expansion of community gardens

13.0 Transportation - maintaining a walkable community, trail linkages between rural neighbourhoods and the Historic Townsite, a comprehensive and connected trail network by requiring future development to provide connections to surrounding trails

15.0 Municipal Finance - consideration of “fee-for-service” approach for services that are used by peripheral residents, businesses and industry, annual reviews of municipal rates, ensuring adequate reserves available for future infrastructure rehabilitation and expansion

Community Grants Policy – The policy sets out the parameters around eligibility for and distribution of City funds via the Community Grants Program. While applicants are encouraged to be registered societies, this is not a

mandatory requirement for eligibility. The Community Grants Program is distinct from the Recreation Grants Program (see below) but the Recreation Board does make recommendations on recreation-related Level II applications.

Fees and Charges Bylaw - Appendix A (updated annually) establishes fees for various recreation services, including facility and equipment rentals and access to City-operated facilities such as the fitness centre, swimming pool, and arena.

Fitness Centre Policy - The policy provides guidelines and responsibilities for all Fitness Centre users and tries to ensure that the facility is accessible to the community.

Property and Facility Rental Policy - The policy establishes parameters for the use of City facilities for special events, programming and private rental functions. Some of the policy's objectives include assisting community groups by providing facilities at an affordable rate, generating revenues through private rentals, and protecting the City from liability. The policy sets out the application process (involving a City of Dawson Property and Equipment Rental Application Form), insurance requirements, and other approvals that may be required (i.e. liquor license, environmental health permit, etc.) The policy is currently under review by an external consultant.

Recreation Grants Policy - The policy establishes the rules and procedures for the distribution of the City's Recreation Grants Program, which is funded via Lotteries Yukon's Community Grants Program. The City and Board dispense two levels of funding. Level 1 is intended for individuals and small groups, whereas Level 2 is for larger groups, organizations, non-profits and leagues. Level 1 grants can be applied for on a monthly basis and Level 2 grants can be applied for three times annually. The policy includes the evaluation criteria.

Recreation Board Policy - Please see Section 4.2 above

Recreation Tiered Fee Structure Policy - The policy creates a mechanism to discount some fitness centre user fees for tax-paying residents of the municipality. This policy remains under development with an internal working group.

4.3.2 *Department-Level Policies*

In addition to the City-level policies governing recreation delivery, the Recreation Department has developed and enacted a number of other policies and guidelines, including the following:

- *Arena and Pool Rules* – outline expectations for use of arena and pool
- *Program Delivery Procedure* – establishes rules for third party for-profit and non-profit program delivery, including use of City and school facilities, insurance and security requirements, rev
- *Tournament Procedures* – outlines general procedures around scheduling and organization of tournaments using the arena

The City has also developed a Parent Handbook for registered youth programs that contains a number of sub-policies around registration payment, cancellation, refunds, late pick-up, off-site excursions, photo policy, behavioural expectations, inclusive programming, disciplinary protocol, and safety protocol. Many of these same policies apply to adult programming and are contained on the consent form that needs to be signed as part of the registration process.

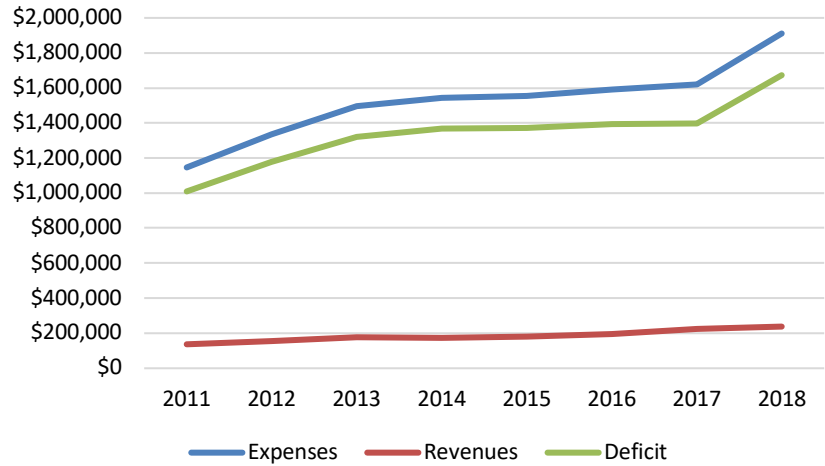
4.4 Financial Resources

The City has spent heavily on recreation in recent years, increasing its budget by 67% to \$1.91 million in the 7 years to 2018, a compound annual rate of 8% that is far in excess of population growth.

Recreation consumes a significant 23% of the total municipal budget, a proportion that has been stable for several years. Despite a steady growth in user fee revenues, the recreation deficit has continued to

rise, reaching a record \$1.67 million in 2018. As the large financial deficit in recreation must be covered by taxpayer subsidies, this places some pressure on the tax base and other municipal services. A total of \$35,000 is set aside annually in recreation reserve funds.

Recreation Budget 2011-2018



	Revenues	Expenses	2018 Cost Recovery
Dept Total	\$238,000	\$1,911,000	12%
AMFRC	\$52,000	\$621,000	8%
Pool	\$32,000	\$300,000	11%
Fitness Centre	\$59,000	\$54,000	109%
Programming	\$60,000	\$264,000	23%
Green spaces	\$12,000	\$292,000	4%

The cost recovery rate for Dawson recreation services is just 12%. Put another way, recreation users are subsidized by the taxpayer at a rate of 88 cents for every dollar spent. This has remained broadly consistent throughout the last 7 years despite strong growth in population and recreation participation.

For context, the City of Whitehorse spends 18% on recreation and achieves a much higher cost recovery rate of 31% and the Town of Faro spends 17% on recreation but achieves only 9% cost recovery.

User fees underwent a major review in 2016 and revenues have grown strongly across the department from facilities such as the AMFRC, programming and especially from the Waterfront Building fitness centre. Centre membership revenues have grown almost ten-fold in four years from just \$6,000 in 2014 to \$59,000 in 2018 and now surpass the Art and Margaret Fry Recreation Centre revenues. Unsurprisingly, the AMFRC and pool have very low-cost recovery rates while the fitness centre is actually profitable. The centre may offer valuable lessons for sustainable recreation planning.

The 2018 recreation deficit measured 83% of the City's general annual property tax revenue of \$2.01 million. It is apparent that the City's ability to offset recreation costs, even at the current level of service, is limited. For example, applying an accelerated general tax rate rise of 1% over inflation would raise only \$20,000 annually. A minor 5% user fee increase would generate only \$10,000. Combining the two measures would represent a meager 1.6% total increase in the recreation budget. Conversely, a significant increase in levels of service could have major financial implications. For example, keeping the pool open 12 months a year could cost in the realm of \$400,000 (pro-rating the net operating cost of the pool from its current 4 months).

5.0 Facilities & Infrastructure

5.1 City Facilities and Amenities

The City of Dawson owns and maintains a variety of indoor and outdoor facilities. These include:

<u>Indoor Facilities/Amenities</u>	<u>Outdoor Facilities/Amenities</u>	
Art and Margaret Fry Recreation Centre (arena, concession, office/meeting room)	Ball diamonds (Minto Park* and Crocus Bluff)	Playgrounds (Minto Park*/community garden)
Fitness centre	Basketball court (shared with tennis)	Skateboard/scooter park
Minto Park concession building*	Community garden	Soccer field (Crocus Bluff)
Swimming pool	Parks - waterfront* (including gazebo, picnic shelter, etc.), Crocus Bluff day use area*, Victory Gardens, etc.	Tennis court (shared with basketball)
		Trails (9 th Avenue/Dyke/Dome)

*Land leased from the Government of Yukon

The following section provides a brief overview of the more significant City recreation facilities:

Art and Margaret Fry Recreation Centre - Constructed in 1999/00, the Art and Margaret Fry Recreation Centre (AMFRC) has been fraught with difficulties since the beginning. Due to unstable subsurface conditions, the building has been deemed seismically unsound and vulnerable to high winds. For a number of years, the City has been paying about \$50,000 annually for ongoing monitoring of the differential settlement of building and subsurface materials in order to evaluate its ongoing suitability for public use. The centre includes a full-sized rink, concession area, change rooms, a medium-sized space utilized by City staff for office space and for periodic programming. A separate curling rink comprised of two ice sheets is leased to and operated by the Dawson City Curling Club.

The second floor of AMFRC has never been used due to the ongoing uncertainty about the stability and safety of the building, although detailed planning for its use occurred as recently as 2016. A portion of the Zamboni room slumped last year, resulting in flooding and a delayed arena opening. At a meeting in late November 2017, Council voted unanimously to build a new centre as opposed to spending an estimated \$19.5 million to fix the existing one. Stantec conducted a preliminary planning exercise with Council in 2019, which concluded with two priority locations (Gold Rush RV park site and bottom of Dome Road) and a list of priority amenities.

Swimming Pool – Constructed in 1999/00, the Dawson City swimming pool is 25 metres long and includes a wading section for young children, deck seating area, and office space for staff. A hot tub is located next to the pool tank but was not operational for last season. Opening day for the pool is usually in mid-June and closure occurs in late August. The pool received an extensive renovation in 2018 to address leakage issues in the pool walls and repair corroded support structures. When operational, the hot tub was only open during fitness swim

City Recreation Facilities and Amenities



Front Street public washrooms



North End playground



Art and Margaret Fry Rec Centre



Crocus Bluff soccer field



Crocus Bluff day use area viewing deck



Front Street/Dyke gazebo



Community garden



Victory Gardens



Arena



Minto Park playground



Fitness centre



Tennis/basketball court



Waterfront and fire pit



Minto Park ball diamond



Gazebo park



Moosehide Trail



Front Street picnic shelter



Swimming pool



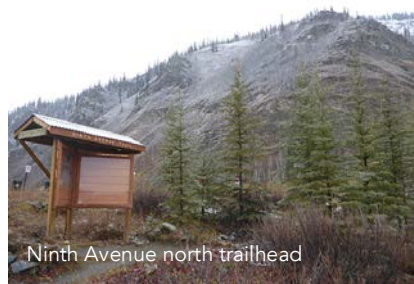
Crocus Bluff concession building



Skate park



Waterfront building
(administration/Fitness Centre)



Ninth Avenue north trailhead



Minto Park concession building



Crocus Bluff ball field

Other Recreation Facilities & Amenities



Robert Service School playground



Moose Mountain alpine facility



Moose Mountain cross-country trails



Klondike Institute of Arts and Culture



TH Youth Centre

times versus public swim times due to challenges maintaining the necessary water chemical composition with higher levels of use.

Fitness Centre – A fitness centre has been located in the Waterfront Building for the past decade, but the City has made a major investment in the facility over the past three years. The fitness centre includes two change rooms with showers and a full suite of weights and fitness equipment. The space is basically at full capacity.

Minto Park complex – Minto Park is a fixture of community life in Dawson, playing host to major events like the Dawson City Music Festival and Canada Day celebrations and located adjacent to the Dawson City Museum and hospital. Minto Park's recreation amenities include a ball diamond, large playground with features for all ages, basketball court and tennis court housed on the same paved surface, and an "above ground" skate park – essentially pre-fabricated features set upon a concrete slab. The swimming pool is also located in the complex. The original Minto Park concession building burnt down in 2016 and a new one was opened in Summer 2018. It includes a covered outdoor picnic area, Parkside Room, and a commercial kitchen.

Crocus Bluff complex – The flat area located immediately east of Crocus Bluff and west of the bottom of the Dome Road is home to a soccer pitch, baseball diamond, and washroom building. The soccer pitch is maintained by a local club with a \$7000 (for 2019) operating grant. There is also a small washroom/concession building at Crocus Bluff. The concession portion of the building is sometimes rented out for tournaments and/or camps, but in general sees little use.

Parks and gardens – The City of Dawson manages and maintains a considerable number of parks and greenspace in and around the historic townsite. The waterfront/Dyke greenspace is leased from the Government of Yukon. The City has developed several key nodes along the waterfront, chief among them gardens, seating, public washrooms and a gazebo between Queen and Princess streets. A timber-framed pavilion is located at the foot of Harper Street, along with picnic tables and an outdoor fire pit, and houses the Farmer's Market during the summer. The City also maintains Victory Gardens in Minto Park.

The City's community garden is located in the City's North End behind the Tr'inke Zoo daycare and consists of 20 raised bed boxes available for private/individual use and two larger community plots. Adjacent to the community garden is a playground area.

Trails – Trails are a fairly new addition to the City's parks and recreation management purview. The City has been involved with occasional maintenance of the Dyke and Millennium trails since the early 2000s. The Ninth Avenue Trail was constructed by the Klondike Active Transport and Trails Society (KATTS) in 2009 but the City has assumed maintenance responsibility for it. While initially developed by the Government of Yukon, the City now maintains the Crocus Bluff day use area and viewing platform, with some support still provided by the territory's local Department of Environment staff.

The City's 2017 Trail Management Plan established a capital and operations plan for the City to develop, sign, and maintain a 35-kilometre formal network of motorized and non-motorized trails within municipal boundaries. Summer 2018 was the first summer of implementation and saw the renovation of the historic Acklen Ditch on the Midnight Dome into a recreational trail and connections from it to the Moosehide Trail and Crocus Bluff day use area constructed. The capital aspects of the plan require several more years of investment and the City will need to restructure its parks operations to incorporate maintenance of the official network. Numerous other policy and communications-related implementation tasks are outlined in the plan as well.

5.2 Other Facilities and Amenities

Other local organizations own and maintain a variety of indoor and outdoor facilities, including:

<u>Indoor Facilities/Amenities</u>	<u>Outdoor Facilities/Amenities</u>
Community halls (Royal Canadian Legion, Yukon Order of Pioneers, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Hall, churches, etc.)	Dog off-leash park*
Klondike Institute of Arts and Culture	Golf course*
Robert Service School (ancillary room, gymnasium, classrooms)	Moose Mountain alpine facility*
Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Youth Centre	Moose Mountain cross-country ski trails
	Robert Service School field/playground

*land leased from City of Dawson

Robert Service School - The school has traditionally been a well-used venue for recreation in Dawson during the winter months and was available for community use after 3:30 pm (ancillary room) and 6 pm (gym); however, the City lost access to the ancillary room at the start of the 2019 school year due to the unanticipated need for new classroom space. Via a Joint Use Agreement with the Department of Education, the City administers access to the school for ongoing recreation programs offered by community groups, while the school can utilize the pool, ball diamonds, and other City facilities at no cost. School activities and community functions “trump” recreational programs and occasional cancellations do happen. The City reports that there have been communications challenges with booking changes and that sometimes they are not informed of cancellations.

Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Youth Centre – The Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in (TH) Youth Centre has lacked a permanent home for a number of years after its original building on 2nd Avenue closed after being deemed unsuitable for continued use. The TH Youth Centre dates back to the early 2000s, when the City of Dawson closed its youth centre on 5th Avenue and a service gap formed. The TH Youth Centre is currently housed in a small rented space on Front Street. TH reports that it is in the early planning stages for the construction of a new centre on the 2nd Avenue property.

Klondike Institute of Arts and Culture – The Klondike Institute of Arts and Culture (KIAC) has become an important cultural hub in Dawson, with studio space, gallery, and a ballroom. Its upstairs ballroom space hosts numerous community events, conferences and performances. The City partners with KIAC to deliver programming, with KIAC providing much needed space.

Outdoor Facilities – Some of Dawson's primary outdoor recreation facilities – namely the golf course, Moose Mountain alpine facility, and off-leash park - are operated and maintained by non-profit groups under a City lease. The City of Dawson golf course receives an annual operating grant from the City in the amount of \$50,000 (\$45,000 for the facility and \$5000 to cover a financial audit). The Moose Mountain Alpine Society receives a grant to cover the cost of municipal taxes on the property and the Recreation Department staffs the facility during Spring Break. The Moose Mountain cross-country trail network is maintained by the Klondike Active Transport and Trails Society, but the group currently has no official tenure for the area from the Government of Yukon.

Other – There is an inventory of community spaces of varying condition located throughout the historic townsite area. Many of these buildings have a religious or club affiliation but are available for rental by the public.

5.3 Facility Utilization and Capacity

The Team heard from staff and community members that utilization and capacity varies considerably by facility.

City Pool and Arena - Utilization of the pool and arena varies according to time of day and week. The arena is reportedly highly underutilized during the weekdays, with the exception of a few group bookings by the school and daycares. Evenings are busy with various recreational group bookings but there is reportedly sufficient ice time to accommodate everyone. In contrast, the pool experiences a steadier stream of traffic throughout the daytime and evenings. Daycare lesson bookings keep the facility generally busy during weekday mornings, and evening public swims are generally well attended. Several user groups mentioned a desire for earlier access to ice for training and programming, suggesting that there is latent demand for October arena times.



Municipalities try to achieve an appropriate balance of private/registered programming and spontaneous, drop-in public use for facilities. A closer look at the 2018 schedules for the City of Dawson’s pool and arena shows that the pool is much more available for spontaneous use by the public than the arena. However, the very low utilization of the arena during non-programmed time suggests this allocation of registered versus drop-in hours is not posing a barrier to use by the general public.

	# Hours Open (per week)	Programmed Hours (per week)	Public Hours (per week)	% of Drop-in Time
Pool	77.5	30.5	47.5	61%
Arena	60.25	38.5	21.75	36%

Other City Spaces - There is a reasonably strong demand for bookings of the Minto Park concession building during prime-time hours (weekdays after work) but the space is not well utilized during the daytime. Demand for parks and green space bookings are well within the City’s capacity to provide.

Although there have been relatively few conflicts around the distribution of access to City facilities (and the school) to date, the City has identified a need for a coherent and transparent approach to facility rental decisions and would like to undertake a review of the rental policy with the help of an independent contractor. This policy will extend not only to City facilities but also bookings at the school.

Staff reports that facilities and lack of programming space is the biggest constraint to their work; it affects both the quantity and variety of programming options they can deliver and support. Staff also shared their observations that facility/amenity usage has shifted somewhat over past decade with more Dawsonites recreating outdoors and in informal, spontaneous ways. Increased use of waterfront parks space and the townsite’s Dyke/9th Avenue Trail “loop” are good examples of this trend.

Non-City Facilities – The Planning Team heard multiple times that the Robert Service School gymnasium and

ancillary room are highly utilized and booking demand is outpacing availability. The high demand is presumed by some to be due to a combination of no fees and the suitability of the school's spaces for a wide range of recreational programming needs in the community. Numerous individuals interviewed by the Planning Team mentioned that there was a lack of neutral spaces to gather, assemble and recreate in the community. Several explained that some spaces "trigger" certain individuals due to religious or other affiliations.

5.4 Re-Investment into Facilities

City facilities have seen considerable capital investment over the last five years, largely the AMFRC, pool and new Minto Park concession building. However, these have been driven mostly by non-discretionary needs for maintenance and replacement within these ageing buildings and have resulted in only relatively small net advances in functional capacity. The notable exceptions are that Minto Park is now a year-round building and the AMFRC now has artificial ice. Outdoor facilities such as parks and trails have also benefited from a renewed emphasis in capital spending although the amounts remain small by comparison to the facilities.

As evidenced by the 2018 Capital Project Plan (below), larger scale capital projects are largely beyond the financial capacity of the City and depend on access to funding programs from the governments of Yukon and Canada. The planned 2018 seismic upgrades to the Recreation Centre were shelved due to Council's decision to cease major investments in the facility. The remainder of the proposed projects for 2019 and 2020 – notably repairs to the waterfront gazebo, Minto Park playground resurfacing, and continued trail network development - are anticipated to proceed.

PROJECTS	Project Value	Funding Source	2018	2019	2020
Minto Concession - Construction	1,000,750	Gas Tax/ CDF/ Other	254,000		
Minto Contents Replacement	20,608	Other	11,464		
Trail Management Plan Implementation	350,000	Gas Tax/CDF/ Other	181,500	100,000	100,000
Pool Upgrades Wall Membrane/Struts/Flooring	293,750	Gas Tax		293,750	
Recreation Centre Seismic Upgrades	145,000	Gas Tax	145,000		
Minto Park Playground Resurfacing	100,000	Other		100,000	
Recreation Centre Planning	40,000	Reserves	40,000		
Gazebo Repairs	25,000	External		25,000	
Pool upgrade	306,250	Gas Tax	306,250		
Total Capital Projects	6,552,203		938,214	518,750	100,000

The Recreation Department has a 10-Year Equipment Replacement Plan in place as well. The 2018 Plan (see below) projects a range of annual spending from \$10,000 to \$151,000 (most of which is for a new Zamboni) and a Recreation Reserve year-end balance of \$213,000 by 2026. Most of the City's ongoing equipment needs can be accommodated within the financial capacity of the City versus outside funding.

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Recreation Reserve Opening Balance	\$116,075	\$100,075	\$94,075	\$99,075	\$149,075	\$144,075	\$162,575	\$182,575
Current Year Equipment Expenditures	\$151,000	\$41,000	\$45,000	\$0	\$40,000	\$16,500	\$10,000	\$0
Outside Financing	\$100,000							
Recreation Reserve Contribution	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$30,000	\$30,001
Recreation Capital Project Withdrawal								
Recreation Reserve Year-End Balance	\$100,075	\$94,075	\$99,075	\$149,075	\$144,075	\$162,575	\$182,575	\$212,576

5.5 Maintenance and Asset Management

The Recreation Department is primarily responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the City's indoor and outdoor recreation facilities. In terms of prioritization and/or formalization of maintenance duties, City staff report the following:

- Daily inspection checklists and logbooks are in place for the pool and arena during operating season;
- All City parks are inspected and maintained on a daily basis for damage, vandalism, garbage, etc.
- Some City parks receive higher maintenance and upkeep priority, specifically the waterfront park spaces (gazebo, Canada 125), Minto Park and Victory Gardens;
- City staff was previously trained in playground inspections, but this skill set is not currently in-house, with repairs generally being complaint driven; and,
- The Parks and Facility Supervisor is in the process of formalizing and documenting the City's parks and grounds maintenance as guidelines/procedures.

For the past year, the City has embarked on the process of implementing a new organization-wide, user-friendly asset management (AM) system. When fully operational, the system will house information about all major City recreation assets of a minimum dollar value (i.e. buildings, furniture, equipment, etc.), including lifecycle and maintenance needs. City staff will be required to issue and respond to work orders through the new system (called Lucity), creating a detailed record of maintenance history over time and better equipping staff to predict and plan for ongoing asset replacement.

The City has a permanent position in place to implement the new AM system across departments, helping each one populate its information and assist with ongoing use and troubleshooting. The workload implications are not fully understood at present; in theory, the system should save staff time over the long-term, but the front-end effort to capture the Department's information could be somewhat onerous (according to City staff, inventory tracking is a weak area, with files disorganized and housed in multiple places).

Currently there is a lack of clarity in regards to roles and responsibilities between the City's Recreation and Public Works departments for the upkeep of the City's four indoor facilities (AMFRC, pool, Minto, and waterfront building). This delineation of roles is the topic of continuing conversations between the two departments.

Recreation staff views the logical allocation of duties as building envelope maintenance to the Building Maintenance staff under Public Works and responsibility for specialized facility operations (i.e. ice plant, swimming pool systems, etc.) falling to Recreation Staff.

Lastly, staff report that the lack of service standards for programs and facilities make it difficult for City and user groups/community to achieve a mutual understanding and set (and fulfill) realistic expectations on facility management, parks and greenspace upkeep, etc.

5.6 Third Party Usage

The *Property and Facility Rental Policy* states that user groups must have liability insurance and pay facility rental fees to the City for special event or recurring use. This policy stance is necessitated by the inability of the City’s liability insurance policy to extend to cover events or activities organized by others on City property. The policy only covers any negligence of the City (such as improper maintenance, etc.)

The policy has created some challenges with user groups but more so with private bookings (although City staff report that individuals have successfully sourced affordable insurance for private rentals). Insurance requirements also apply to third party program instructors whose programs are not registered for through the City.

City staff report that one user group has continued to use City facilities without payment, proof of insurance or formal booking despite repeated requests to do so. In a small community where social and professional relationships heavily overlap, this can be a challenging issue to address.

5.7 Departmental Capacity

According to City staff, the facility-related workload can be high and timelines stressful during the lead-up to pool and arena openings and major tournaments. Facility personnel generally feel that the workload associated with assisting user groups with facility set-up is mostly achievable. The unionization of City staff and resulting Collective Agreement limit the City’s ability to staff facilities on a last-minute basis; typically, the City is required to give workers two weeks’ notice prior to a shift.

The ongoing need to monitor and respond to changing conditions at AMFRC, coupled with routine maintenance of other facilities and new capital projects can create a heavy workload at times. Although funding is generally available, the application and reporting workload associated with major capital projects is considerable, and this skill set primarily resides with the Manager at present. A combination of in-house capacity building continued de-centralization of decision-making and routine administration from the Manager’s position, and additional capacity (most likely via external resources) will likely be needed during the 2-3-year timeframe in which a new Recreation Centre would be designed, tendered, and constructed.

Facility/Equipment Rental Rates	
The following is a snapshot of the rates and fees charged by the City of Dawson for various recreation activities:	
XC ski package	\$20/day
Fitness Centre use	\$35/month
Ball diamond rental	\$850/season
Minto program room	\$15/hr
Gazebo or picnic shelter rental	\$52/day
Pool admission - child	\$3.50/day
Pool season pass – adult/child	\$210/\$140
Swimming pool rental	\$120-\$152/hr
Arena ice rental – adult	\$120/hr
Arena ice rental – adult	\$60/hr
Arena ice rental – tournament	\$1500

6.0 Programming & Other Services

6.1 City Programming

6.1.1 General Inventory

The City offers a variety of programs for a broad demographic spectrum of Dawson residents.

The Team compiled a “snapshot” of program offerings advertised in the Recreation Department

newsletters from the Spring 2018 – Winter 2018/19 timeframe. This quick inventory of program offerings shows that the majority of programming emphasis was on children in the 6-12-year age range. There were considerably fewer options available for 5 & under, youth, adults and seniors during this timeframe overall, although the fall and winter sessions saw an increase for both 5 & under and seniors. The summertime programming “peak” was due to the weekly summer camp offerings for children and youth.

This distribution of programming by age demographic appears to be relatively consistent with the two years previous.

Dance/fitness and sports were a main programming emphasis

during 2018/19; however, a number of other options involving nature/outdoors, heritage, arts and culture, cooking, were offered. The dance and fitness programming were due in part to specific individuals being available in Dawson over that timeframe with an interest in sharing their knowledge and skills with the community.

Age Group	# of 2018 Program Options ³			
	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter
Children (5 years & under)		1	3	3
Children (6-12 years)	9	23	10	6
Youth (13-18 years)	5	5	5	6
Adults (19-54 years)	3	3	4	3
Seniors (55+ years)			1	4

Type of Program	# of 2018 Program Options ⁴			
	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter
Fitness/dance	5	2	9	5
Sports	4	5	4	6
Nature/outdoors	2	4	1	1
Arts/culture	1	5		
Other	1	3	3	2



³ One “count” represents access for part or all of the age group indicated; as such, some programs were counted multiple times. The youth category may be somewhat misleading due to the inclusion of any programs that indicated a “minimum age & up”; in some cases, the minimum age was considerably lower than 13 years old. Does not include swimming lessons and/or pool/arena drop-in programs.

⁴ Does not include swimming lessons and/or pool/arena drop-in programs.

The City's recreation programmers work with a multitude of variables when they are developing ideas and options. These include other programs and events underway by third parties (both in terms of type and timing), skill sets and interesting opportunities that Dawson residents may have to offer, and the availability of programming space. They report constantly scanning the community for ideas and opportunities and constantly needing to remain flexible to changes. One inter-agency meeting occurred this past winter between various organizations offering programming in Dawson; however, this has not been the norm in the past.

The City also organizes programs to support the use of the community garden, including workshops and instruction from various visiting specialists and the "Seedy Saturday".

6.1.2 Programming Priorities & City Role

The City's programming emphasis isn't publicly articulated via policy or other guiding document; however, there is an internal "compass" in place that sets direction and priority for what City programmers pursue. The City views its role as being a leader/initiator where elementary age after-school and summer programming is concerned and a "gap filler" for programming for other age groups/demographics that are served by other organizations. The City sees itself as a supporter and facilitator of interest in activities offered by community groups, citing its "Play Like a Girl" program as an example of how the City's efforts can facilitate interest in club-programmed sports. Gaps are both ones identified by the City as well as broader community; staff cited other examples of individuals or organizations identifying gaps (i.e. seniors) and the City working to bridge them.

6.1.3 Successes and Challenges

City staff describes their efforts to offer an appropriate mix of programming as an ongoing challenge. Despite years of experience in the community, programmers can still be surprised by the lack of uptake for certain programs. Children's programs typically fill up but wait lists aren't long and are rarely large enough to fill a second offering. Programs may be successful for a time (for example, dance in 2018/19) and still face declining registrations if families/participants want to experience something new and/or different.

City staff are constantly monitoring and adapting their efforts based on these "ebbs and flows" in interest, demographics, and demand. Recent trends noted by the City include declining public swimming lesson registrations and increasing registrations from the daycare lessons. Senior's fitness programming offered this past winter has been highly successful, whereas past attempts to reach this demographic have had less success. In general, the City is recruiting more third-party instructors than in previous years to provide more specialized programming options (i.e., karate, dance, etc.) and this approach has generally been successful.

The Department issues a newsletter/program guides four times each year, usually about 10 days in advance of registration day (but sometimes less). Registration usually occurs on a weekday morning and priority is assigned on a first-come, first-serve basis to individuals who provide payment and sign the consent form in person. The City used to accept over-the-phone or email registrations, but some programs were jeopardized due to issues with non-payment. The City investigated the feasibility of subscribing to an online registration system but concluded that the costs were prohibitive.

6.2 Other Programming

Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in – TH's Health and Social Services Department offers programming for both citizens and – via the Youth Centre – the broader community. TH runs a Healthy Active Youth (HAY) after-school program specifically for Indigenous youth; otherwise, its programming – including First Hunt opportunities and the Youth Centre – are open to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth. A quick scan of the February youth centre calendar showed a daily program option every day of the week, with some being recurring activities (i.e. dance, gym night, cooking club, and skiing) and some being special events such as board game tournaments. TH provides various health and wellness programs to its Elders as well. Both the City and TH receive \$12,500 in annual funding via the Youth Leadership and Activities Program (YLAP) administered by the Government of Yukon.

Sport Groups – A variety of registered and drop-in programming is made available courtesy of Dawson's many sport groups. Winter 2018-19 saw table tennis, muay thai, medieval combat training, cricket, co-ed volleyball, basketball, soccer, badminton, girls' and women's volleyball, etc. There are regular youth leagues for soccer and hockey. Most adult drop-in leagues offered during the winter catered to ages 14 & up.

Outdoor-based programming (running, alpine skiing and snowboarding, golf, and cross-country skiing) is available through local organizations. City does youth golf program and if City has instructors available they will provide ski lessons. City staff operate the ski hill during Spring Break.

Klondike Institute of Arts & Culture – The Klondike Institute of Arts and Culture (KIAC) has a full calendar of courses, workshops, exhibitions, and events throughout the year. KIAC sometimes partners with the City to offer programs out of its space, with the City hiring the instructor and handling registrations.

Other – A number of other groups provide informal and formal recreation opportunities in Dawson for specific age groups. The Canadian Prenatal Nutrition Program (CPNP) offers a weekly hour-long program for parents and babies. The Trinke Zho daycare opens up its indoor play space for a City-offered program for young children and their parents on Wednesday mornings each week. The Royal Canadian Legion has assumed a leadership role in the past year to provide senior's programming and raise general awareness about opportunities with a recreation calendar. Staff at McDonald Lodge also works to integrate passive and active/outdoor recreation opportunities for residents.

6.3 Events

The Dawson calendar is full of community, cultural and sporting



Dawson Events

Events are a mainstay of life in Dawson. Some of Dawson's larger and/or longer-running events include:

- (s)hiver Winter Arts Festival (January)
- Trek over the Top (March)
- Thaw-di-Gras (March)
- Dawson International Short Film Festival (March/April)
- International Gold Show (May)
- Commissioner's Ball (May)
- Dempster to Dawson City Race (June)
- National Indigenous Peoples Day
- Canada Day (June)
- Yukon Gold Panning Championships (July)
- Dawson City Music Festival (July)
- Midnight Dome Race (July)
- Moosehide Gathering (July, bi-annual)
- Discovery Days (August)
- Yukon Riverside Arts Festival (August)
- Weekend on the Rocks (August)
- Great Klondike Intl Outhouse Race (Sept)
- CYFT Talent Night (September)

events. The summer season is particularly busy with larger-scale events, but even the winter has a reasonably full schedule of cultural performances and sporting opportunities. The City Recreation Department delivers several larger events – Canada Day festivities, Discovery Days parade, and the Festival of Lights in December. A few smaller events are hosted by the City throughout the year, sometimes as a family-friendly “add-on” to events with a primarily adult focus (i.e. “Santa” skate at Christmas, family “glow” skate during Thaw-di-Gras, etc.)

6.4 Community Support

The City of Dawson distributes approximately \$62,000 in funding annually through the Recreation Grants Program (\$32,000) and Community Grants Program (~\$30,000). Groups and individuals can apply three times per year for the Community Grants and monthly for Recreation Grant support. City staff feels that there is generally sufficient funding for groups who put forth good project ideas to receive their full ask. A broad range of items is eligible for funding between the two programs, including City facility rental fees⁵.



Requests for in-kind support from the City are supposed to flow through the Community Grants Program application process, but there is some allowance to accommodate more informal asks of a minor nature (picnic tables, garbage cans, barricades, etc.) between the Recreation and Public Works departments. The City charges a nominal fee for use of picnic tables. City staff acknowledges that people can get “bounced around” between City departments and the process for assisting groups with these types of event requirements could use streamlining.

6.5 Communications & Outreach

The Recreation Department’s primary communications channels are the City of Dawson website and Facebook. The website houses a variety of orientation information, such as arena/pool schedules, fitness centre hours, programs, and facility rules/guidelines. The Recreation Department’s Facebook page is updated frequently with programming notices, facility and office closures, etc. The quarterly newsletters/program catalogues are published digitally and shared on the City’s website and Facebook pages. There are reportedly a multitude of recreation calendars in Dawson but no shared repository for information.

Other communications channels include the City’s back page advertisement in the Klondike Sun, e-news, the radio station, posters, and the City’s e-mail notification system (which residents sign up for). The City hosts user group meetings for the school in the fall and pre and post-arena meetings. These meetings are reasonably well attended but City staff has observed varying levels of participation in the discussion.

Staff commented that they sometimes feel there can be unfair criticism, misunderstanding and misinformation in the broader community in regards to the Department’s activities. There were a few reports of City efforts and/or initiatives being attributed to other groups and the City missing opportunities to “self-promote” in the community. This type of criticism can be hard on staff morale.

⁵ As a matter of policy, the City can’t waive rental fees for groups. This is reportedly a legacy of the City’s time under trusteeship and heightened requirements around accounting for use of City resources.

6.6 Departmental Capacity

Currently two programmers work on a year-round basis, with an assistant programmer hired for the busier summer season when multiple summer day camps are running concurrently. This structure lends itself to an ongoing reliance on the Manager position for decision-making. In addition, some routine administrative tasks, such as third-party contracts, are still under the purview of the Manager.

Several of the key staff (specifically manager and programmers) have worked together for over a decade. Internal planning and communications happen in a fairly informal manner; there is a logical workflow and deadlines are effectively organized around the issuance of the newsletters. The workload can be high and somewhat stressful during the lead-up to newsletter publication.

The City's Recreation Department staff generally feels that they work well as a team and have an "all hands in" approach. An overarching "can do" attitude extends to program and service delivery, for which staff report having the ability to stretch limited resources; for example, materials/supplies for all of the City's youth programs are sourced within the \$12,500 of annual funding from the Government of Yukon Youth Directorate.

Staff generally feel that they have sufficient capacity to deliver quality recreation programs at the current level of service. The addition of a full-time administrator has enabled programmers to better adapt to the inevitable variables (i.e. no-shows, etc.) associated with children's programming in particular, and critical policies are in place⁶. However, staff also feel that misperceptions about the nature of their work and capacity can be a source of tension with user groups and/or community members occasionally.

Programmers note that residents are most likely to see them out in the community actually delivering programs and may fail to realize not only how much planning and preparation time happens "behind the scenes", but also that (due to the nature of a small department) they carry out non-programming tasks that don't fall neatly within other job descriptions. They estimate that a minimum of three hours of preparation time goes into each hour of delivered programming.

When requests come in from community members or groups for programs or support, the Department tries to make them happen using either third parties or City resources. However, in some cases, requests/ideas are not feasible to implement without a corresponding decrease in level of service for core City programs. Further, certain requests – such as hands-on care of 5 & under children – conflict with how the City views its role as a recreation provider. Staff feel that these "no's" can result in frustration on the part of initiating community members or groups and a perception that the Department is resistant to partnering or new ideas.

6.7 Departmental Training

A variety of training and professional development opportunities are periodically available from organizations like Recreation and Parks Association Yukon and the Yukon Sport and Recreation Branch, typically in Whitehorse. The limited staff to cover absences, advance timeframe (3+ months) for program scheduling, and significant travel time can pose serious barriers to participation, however. Programmers expressed a desire for more training around youth behavioural needs and mental health "First Aid".

⁶ Even with such policy supports in place, staff shared that it can be challenging to implement them in a small community where programmers know participating children (and their families) in multiple contexts.

7.0 What We Heard

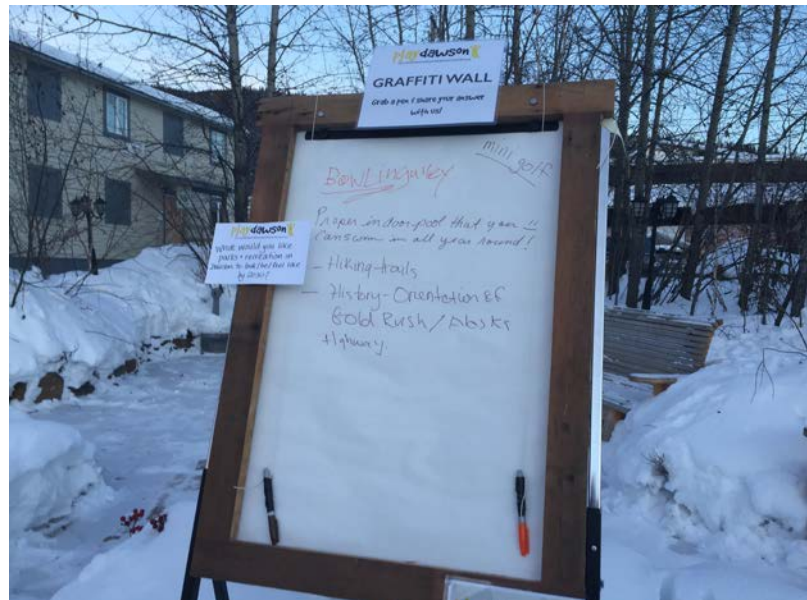
7.1 Overview of Engagement

In order to facilitate the identification of key planning issues and opportunities, the Planning Team provided a number of input opportunities for Dawson residents, including:

Input Opportunity	Timeline	Participation
User Group Online Survey	March 6 - 22	12 surveys
Household Survey	March 8 - 31	173 surveys
User Group/Facility User Drop-in Session	March 12	1 group
Graffiti Wall – Downtown/Arena	March 11-15	20-40 ppl
Graffiti Wall – Robert Service School	March 12-15	~50 ppl

External Interviewees

City of Dawson Recreation Board
 Dänojà Zho Cultural Centre
 Dawson City Chamber of Commerce
 Dawson City Museum
 Government of Yukon – Community Affairs Branch
 Government of Yukon – Sport and Recreation Branch
 Klondike Institute of Arts and Culture
 Klondike Visitors Association
 Little Blue Daycare
 McDonald Lodge
 Recreation and Parks Association of Yukon
 Robert Service School (2 interviews)
 Royal Canadian Legion
 Tr'inke Zho Daycare
 Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Health and Social Services (2 interviews)
 Tr'ondek Hwëch'in Youth Centre



7.2 Household Survey Findings

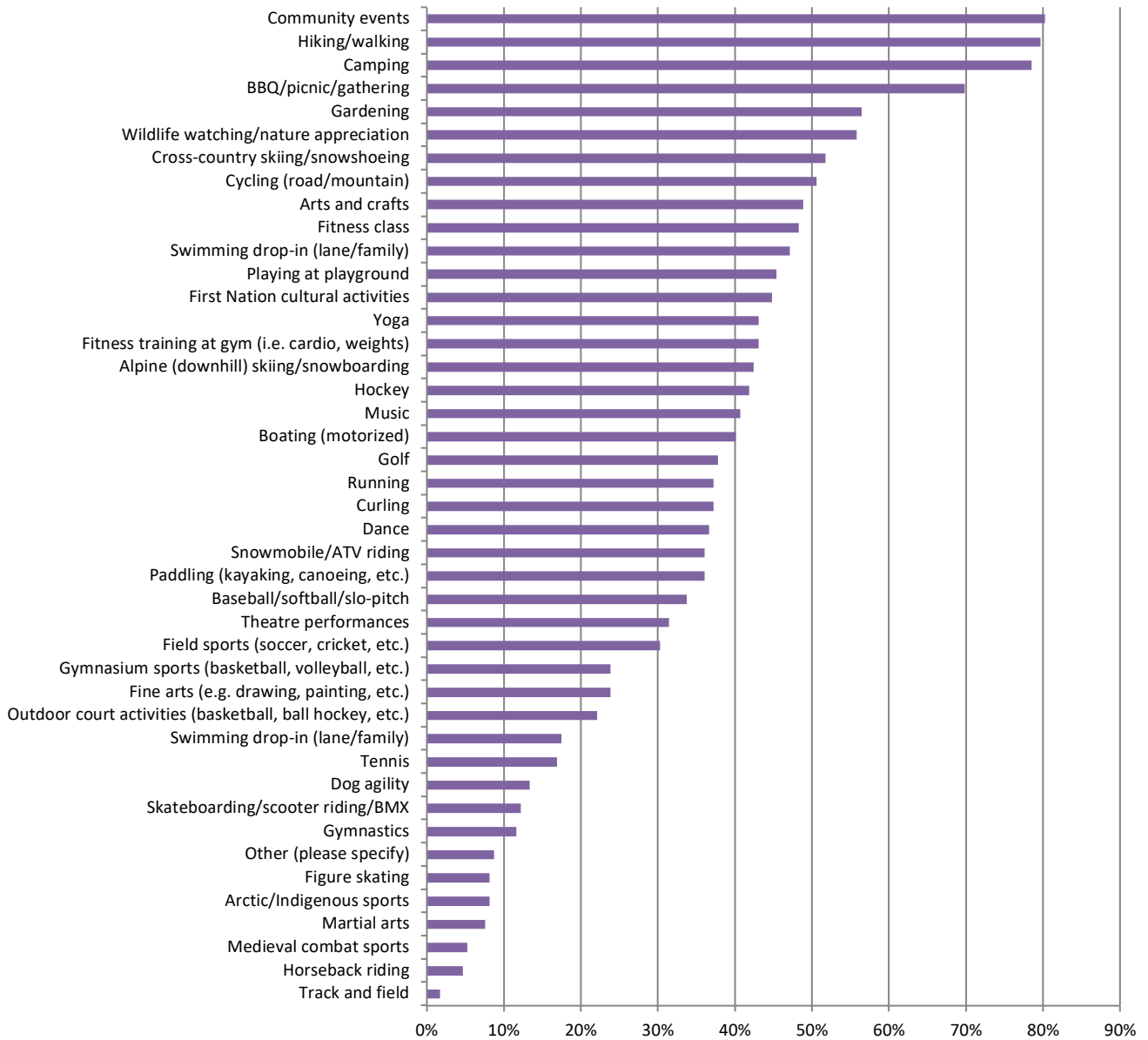
173 Dawson residents participated in an online survey exploring recreation patterns, levels of satisfaction with facilities and programming, and areas for improvement. The survey was administered via Survey Monkey for the purposes of quickly and broadly canvassing the community and results should not be considered statistically valid.

The following is a summary of survey results, complete with excerpts of respondent comments intended to highlight recurring or insightful themes. The complete results are available from the City of Dawson upon request.

Current Participation

Respondents were asked to identify the recreation and parks activities their household members participated in over the past year. The majority of the “Top 10” resulting activities were outdoors-based, including hiking/walking (80%), camping (78%), picnicking/gathering (70%), gardening (56%), wildlife/nature appreciation (56%), and cross-country skiing/snowshoeing (52%). The top indoor-based activities were community events (80%), fitness classes (48%) and swimming (47%).

In which of the following recreation, parks, and leisure activities did you and/or members of your household participate in the past year?



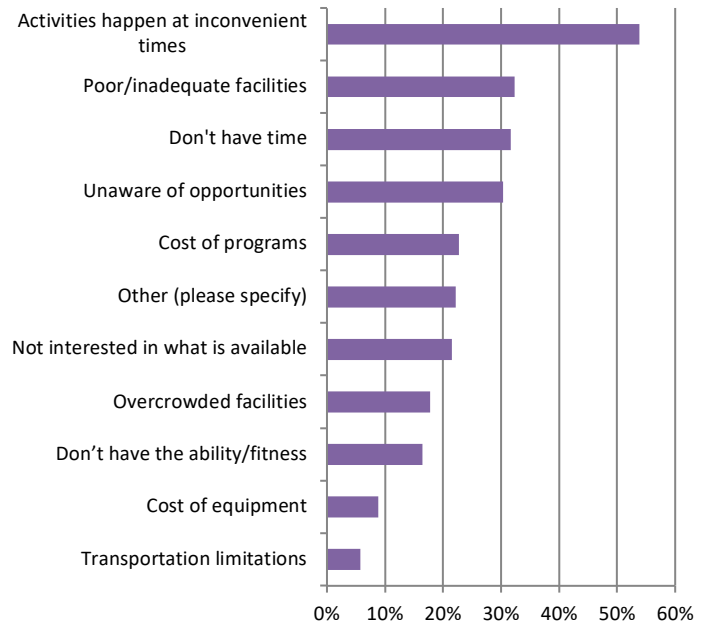
Barriers to Participation

Inconvenient times (54%), poor/inadequate facilities (32%), lack of time in general (32%), lack of awareness (30%), and cost of programs (23%) were cited as the Top 5 barriers to participation in recreation by respondents. Numerous comments received in the "Other" category involved a lack of space/programs for young children. Cold temperatures, access challenges, limited registration spaces, and seasonal closures and/or inoperable amenities at the pool.

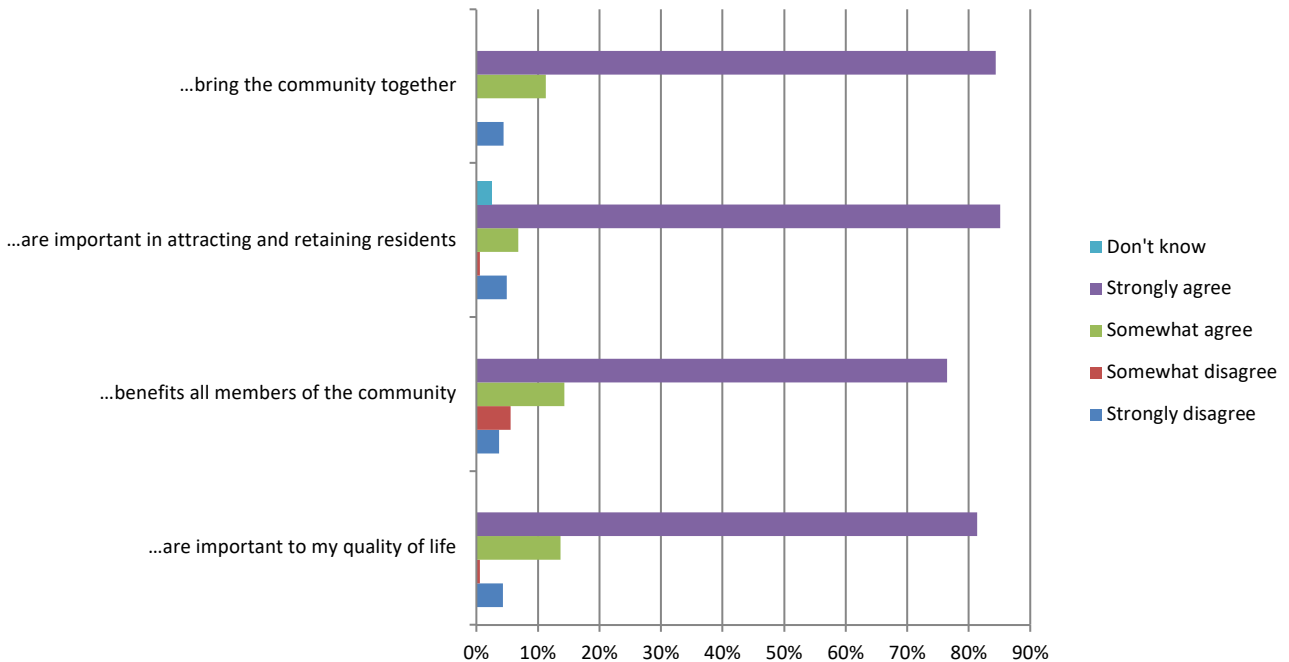
Value and Importance of Recreation

Survey respondents indicated that recreation is important to both their own quality of life and the vitality of the community as a whole. The highest level of agreement (and least disagreement) pertained to the role of recreation in attracting and retaining residents. There was softer agreement as to recreation's benefits to all members of the community (10% somewhat or strongly disagreed).

What, if anything, prevents you or someone in your household from participating in recreation, parks, and leisure activities?



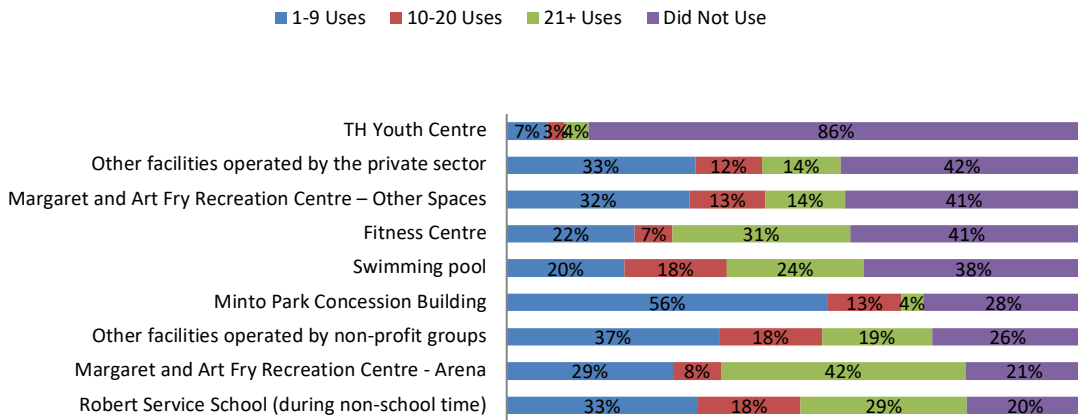
Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement. Parks and recreation opportunities in Dawson....



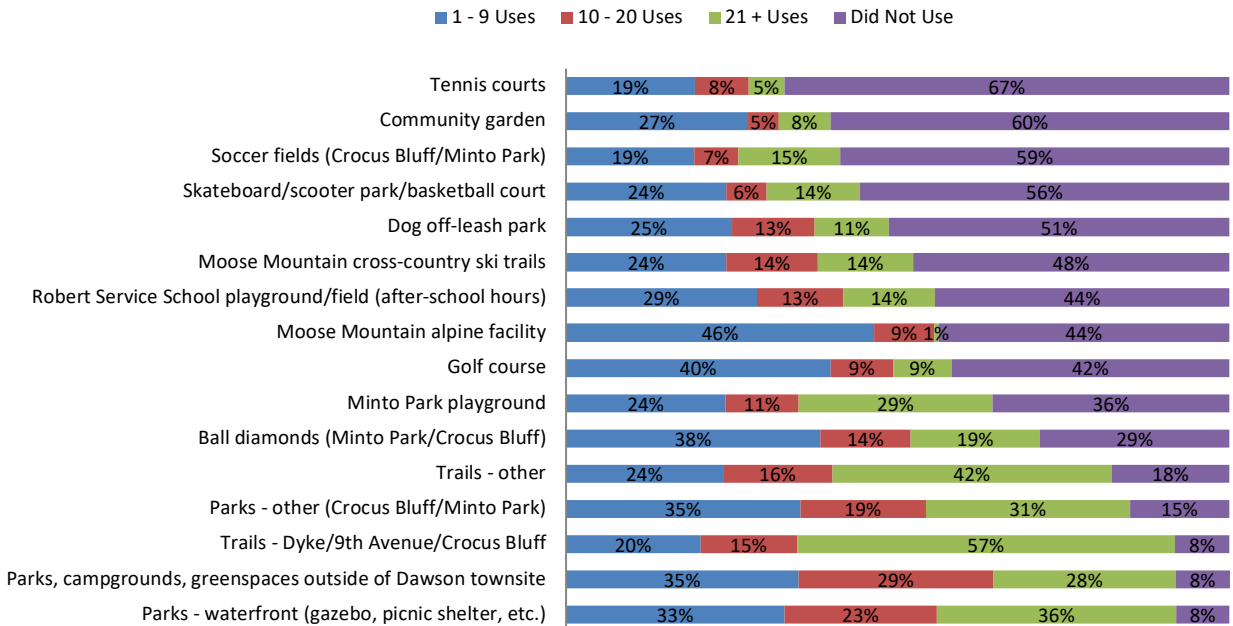
Utilization of Recreation Facilities and Amenities

Parks, trails, and greenspaces received the broadest visitation by households of survey respondents, with the Dyke/9th Avenue trails receiving the highest level of frequent (21+ times) use of all facilities. The most broadly used indoor facilities included the Robert Service School, arena, and facilities operated by local non-profit groups. Single-purpose or specialized facilities were most likely to receive no use by respondent households, including the TH Youth Centre (86%), tennis court (67%), community garden (60%), soccer fields (59%), skateboard park/basketball court (56%), and the off-leash dog park (51%).

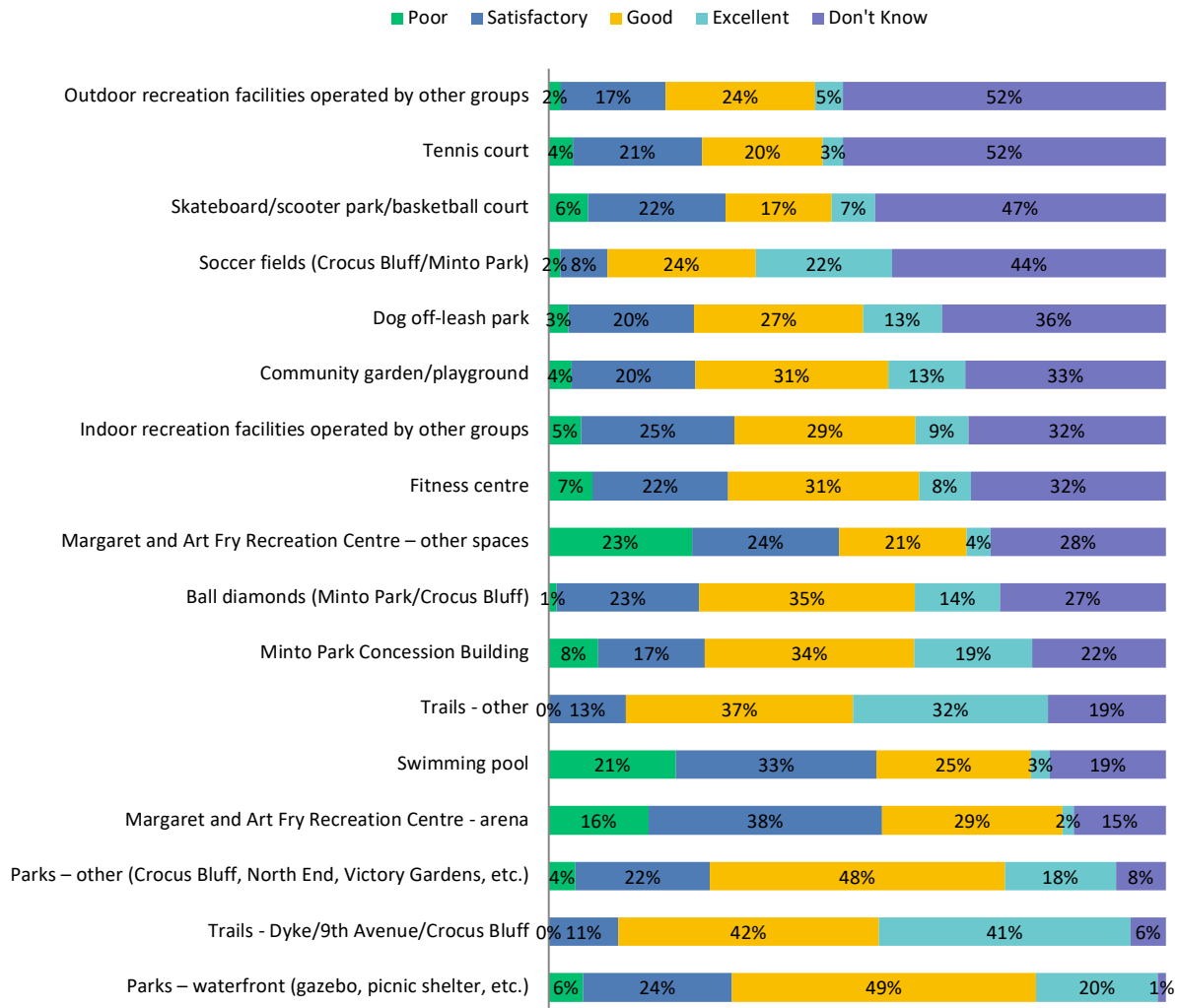
Please indicate how many times in the past twelve (12) months someone in your household used/visited the following indoor facilities (i.e. total uses per household).



Please indicate how many times in the past twelve (12) months someone in your household used/visited the following outdoor facilities (i.e. total uses/visits per household).



How would you rate the availability and quality of indoor and outdoor recreation, parks, and leisure facilities in Dawson?



Availability/Quality of Recreation Facilities

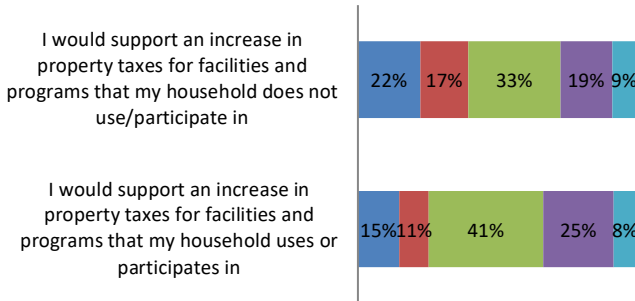
Respondents conferred the highest overall ratings to parks and major trails (Dyke/9th Avenue), with trails being the most likely to receive “excellent”. The highest proportion of “good” and “excellent” ratings for indoor facilities was for the Minto Park concession building (53%), Fitness Centre (39%), and facilities operated by other groups (38%).

The spaces most likely to receive “poor” ratings were the Recreation Centre non-arena spaces (23%), swimming pool (21%), and arena (16%). The most varied responses – that being a mix of good/satisfactory/poor – were received for the pool, arena and other Recreation Centre spaces.

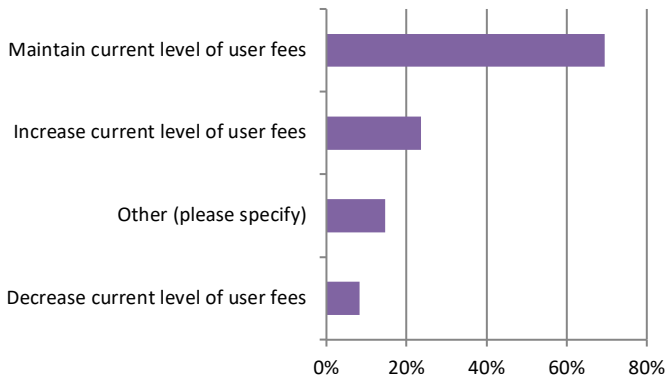
It is worth noting that these results are consistent with the Municipal Services Review conducted in 2013, in which parks and trails received the most positive reviews and indoor facilities – particularly the pool and arena – were rated more negatively.

Please indicate your household's level of agreement with the following statements:

■ Strongly disagree
 ■ Somewhat disagree
 ■ Somewhat agree
■ Strongly agree
 ■ Don't know



Which of the following options do you support in relation to user fees for the City's parks and recreation programs and facilities?

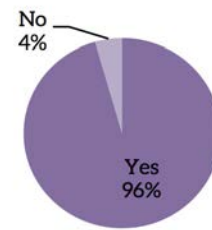


Financial Considerations & Investment Criteria

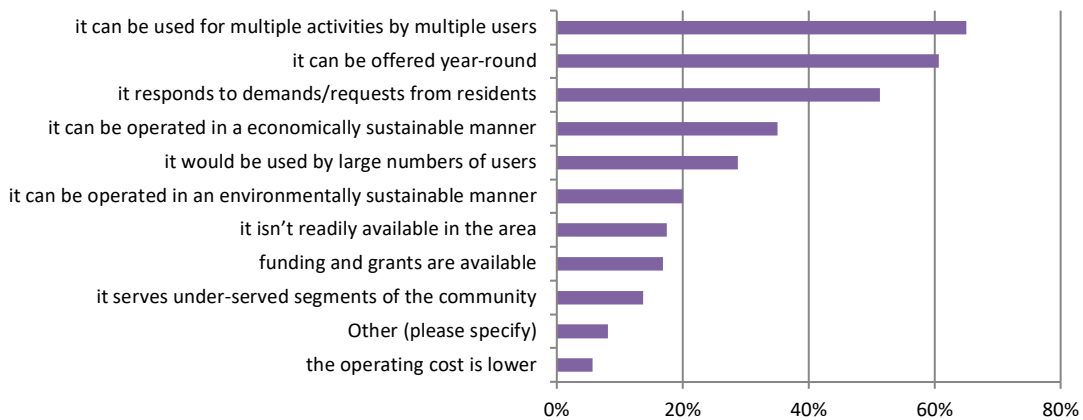
Over half (66%) of respondents indicated some level of support for a tax increase for recreation that would directly benefit them, with support softening to 52% for services without a direct benefit. A healthy majority (69%) preferred maintaining the current level of user fees; however, 24% indicated support for an increase.

96% of respondents indicated a need for new and/or enhanced facilities within the next decade. Their "Top 3" criteria for prioritizing new facilities included multiple uses/users (65%), year-round function (61%), and responsiveness to resident demands/ requests (51%). Economic sustainability came in a distant 4th place (35%).

Is there is a need for new and/or enhanced recreation, parks, and leisure facilities or spaces (indoor and/or outdoor) in Dawson City over the next 10 years?



A recreation, parks, and leisure facility project should be a higher priority if...



"For the size of the town, I think we are very lucky to have what we have. Thank you! But, I would love to swim year round, and I panic when I think about the rink being closed for a year."

"Some things just aren't possible, so please focus on multi-use and combined use spaces that can be economically viable, i.e., one viewing/concession space for hockey and curling."

"The bigger issue is that we are supporting communities outside of city limits who pay no taxes. Their fees should be increased."

"the Dyke trail...is many years past needing to be resurfaced, and is borderline hazardous."

"Pool, hot tub and sauna should be operational and available all year round."

"Maybe user fees should increase. My property taxes are quite high. And there are many users who live outside of city limits that pay no taxes to the city. I do realize how expensive it is to

maintain everything. But I do feel like my taxes are subsidizing other users who don't pay city taxes."

"..please consider demographics, spaces that promote community hubs, and activities that we are not able to do otherwise without the right space. Winter is especially hard so spaces that can be used all year round would be great, spaces that can cater to different demographics, needs, and abilities."

"With the addition of the ice mats, it's brought along a longer season, however, it's less the duration and more the commencement of hockey and ice sports that is important. Beginning hockey as of October 1 would be a tremendous asset."

"The Front Street gym has become a big issue for our family since it is one of our most used facilities and it is just too small to properly function in, especially between the hours of 4-8pm."

"the pool is weird and unpleasant...it's hot and stuffy in there when it's nice

out and cold and awful otherwise, so I never want to use the facility myself and dislike taking my kids there. An outdoor swimming option would be amazing...or even big opening windows so that one could almost feel like they were outside."

"The pool and arena are the biggest let downs."

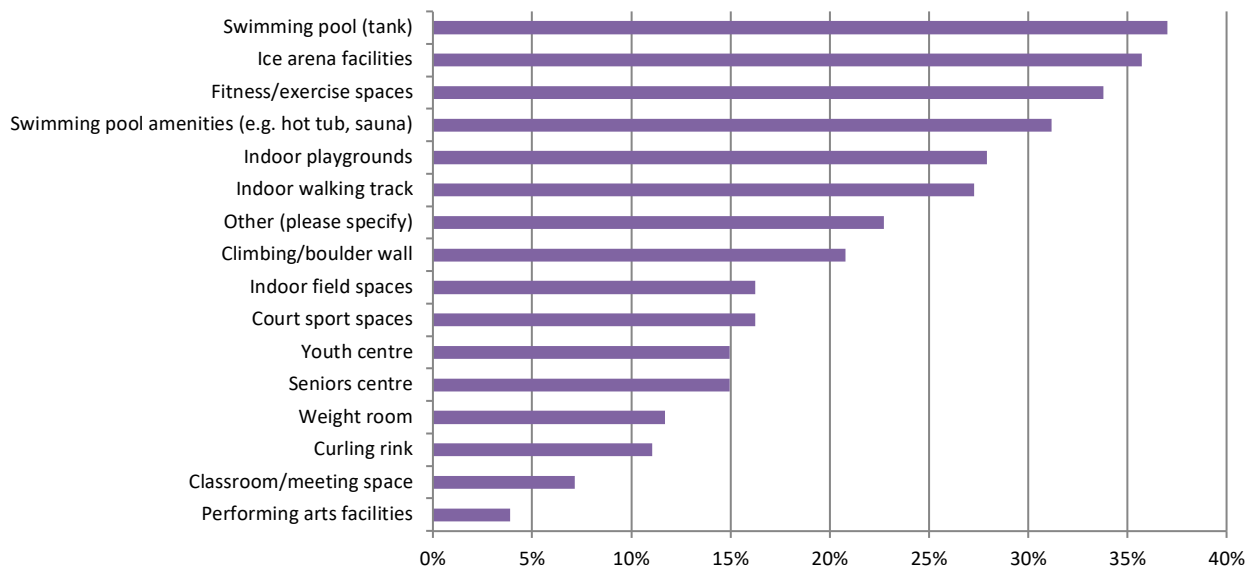
"While I realize we live in a small town, and that we cannot expect all the advantages a larger city has, we do get the short end of the stick. An arena that was supposed to be open longer due to ice mats opens in November. A pool that is most always too cold for small children is only open 3 months of the year. We have one gymnasium space, and an ancillary room of the school that is half used as a storage space for mats and bleachers."

"The weight room/fitness centre is adequate, the main limitation to it being good or excellent is the space it is in. The ceiling is too low and there needs to be more open space for exercise."

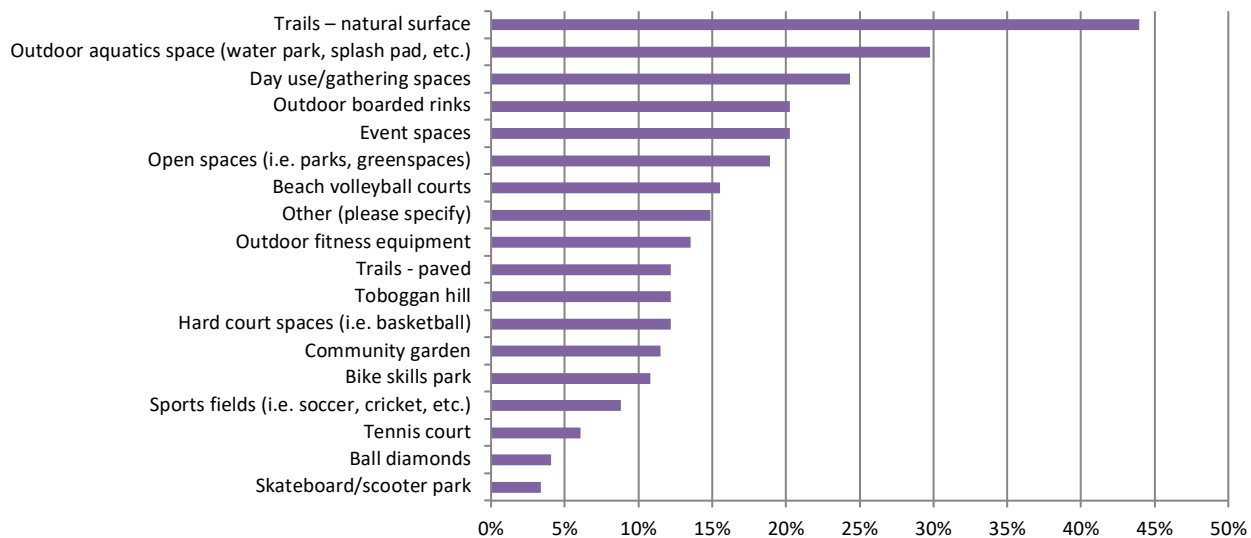
Facility Priorities

Respondents who indicated a need for new and/or enhanced facilities were asked to identify their “Top 3” choices. For indoor facilities, the swimming pool (37%), ice arena (36%), fitness/exercise spaces (34%), pool amenities (i.e. hot tub/sauna) (31%), and indoor playground (27%) made the “Top 5”. The most desired outdoor enhancements and/or additions were natural surface trails (44%), outdoor aquatics spaces (30%), day use/gathering spaces (24%), outdoor rinks (20%), and event spaces (21%).

Please select up to three (3) indoor recreation and parks facilities that should be more available or enhanced to meet your household’s recreation needs:



Please select up to three (3) outdoor recreation and parks facilities that should be more available or enhanced to meet your household’s recreation needs:



"The arena unfortunately needs to be addressed before it is condemned. In my mind this is the number one issue as it serves so many people during a critical time of year that people need to recreate along with creating a major social scene for many people. Indoor gym space would be next on my list."

"We have a darned good recreation dept. We need a full-bore year-round recreation complex!"

"The community desperately needs an indoor year round space where young families can gather. This space should be open 7 days a week and after the workday is complete to enable access by working and non-working parents and kids."

"The youth centre has been moved around from one poorly maintained and inadequate space to the next every couple of years for the last 15 years. It needs a good home."

"It's pretty obvious we need a new Rec Center. Can we please just dispense with all of the other noise and make this the number one priority."

"It would be great to have more level-surface running/

walking trails in Dawson in places where you don't meet bears or (get) taken out by quads!"

"Year-round swimming pool please!"

"We need a mini Canada Games Centre that can offer a variety of programs that will connect 3 generations year-round without alcohol."

"(It would) be nice for everyone to enjoy multi-facilities together, people to get to know one another and form new friendships. Keep town folks together instead of separated."

"Year round (winter specifically) multi-use spaces are what I would emphasize are needed in Dawson."

"The City can not solely depend on the school for fitness space and gym space, our community needs more recreation/gym locations."

"A year-round pool would cater to all demographics. Most importantly children and seniors. It's a low impact, low cost activity for all to enjoy."

"I think that the top priority for indoor spaces is multi-purpose gym space that can be used for soccer, fitness

classes, yoga, basketball, etc. I think the top priority for outdoor space is continuing to increase the trail network for biking and hiking."

"We desperately need a multi-use "flexihall" type of space with adequate and accessible storage and upgraded, equipment for programs. As a frequent user of the ancillary room at the school, the amount of items stored by the school in the room makes the a lot of the space unusable."

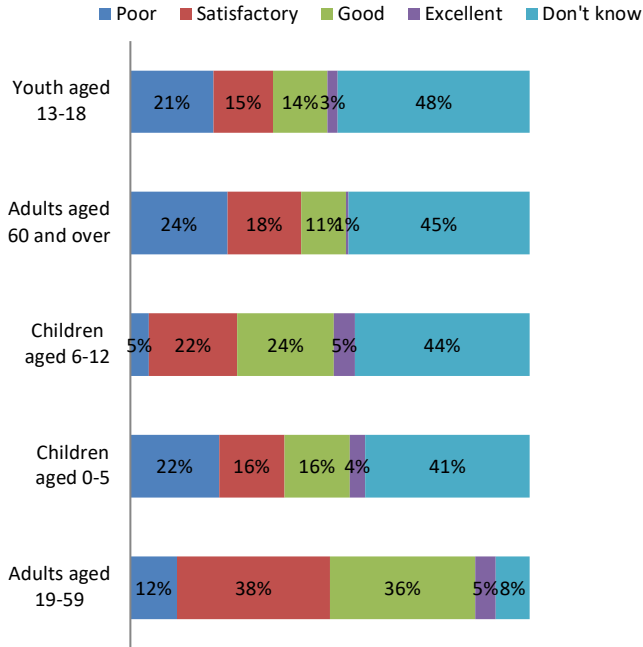
"INDOOR PLAY SPACE FOR KIDS that isn't an arena. We have very long winters and it is crazy to me that it is just assumed that everyone in town plays hockey. My family does but my children are too young to play hockey and what Dawson needs is a space for parents to take their young kids that can't move in the snow in the depths of winter."

"Cover the basics first. Make sure we can afford it. Make it is accessible by foot in the historic townsite."

How would you rate the availability and quality of indoor and outdoor recreation, parks, and leisure programming and events in Dawson for the following age groups?

Programming

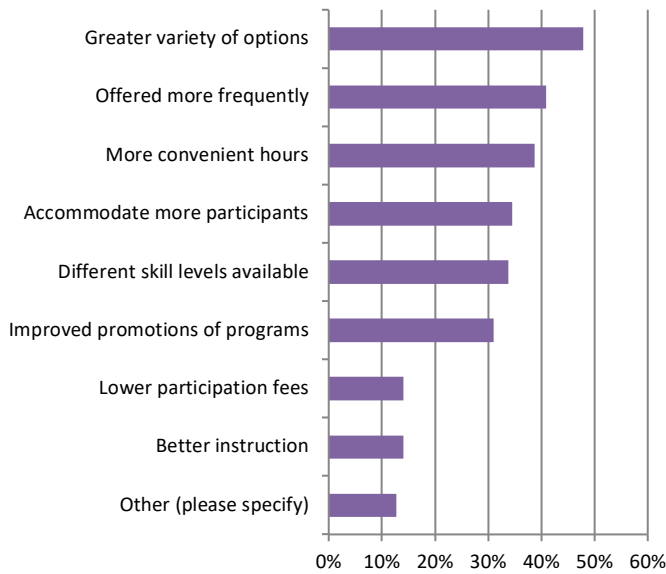
Respondents were asked to rate the availability and quality of recreation programming and events in Dawson for various age groups.



Adult programming was rated most highly, with 41% describing it as “good” or “excellent” and 38% assigning a “satisfactory” rating to it. Elementary age children’s programming was rated the next highest, with 52% of the respondents who registered an opinion describing it as “good” or “excellent”.

Programming for residents aged 60+ years, 13-18-year olds, and children aged 0-5 years was rated most poorly. Of the respondents who registered an opinion, 44% (for seniors), 40% (for youth), and 37% (for young children) described programming as “poor”.

Thinking about existing and new programs by the City and/or other organizations, what improvements or changes are needed?



When asked for improvements or changes to consider for new or revamping existing programs, respondents identified a greater variety of options (48%), more frequent offerings (41%), and more convenient hours (39%) as being key.

Numerous comments were made around insufficient programming and lack of play spaces (in winter) for very young children. The need for accessible spaces for seniors was also emphasized. Several comments suggested that “more convenient hours” pertained to accommodating 9-to-5 workdays and providing more flexibility for parents of young children.

“Doing a great job! With a few tweaks the programs will do just a bit better. These programs are fundamental to a happy and healthy community....”

“Programming should occur on weekends so working parents can attend with their children. There should be at least 1 program offered by the Rec Dept for each demographic during each session.”

“0-5 programming is underrepresented big time. It's a very lonely existence during these years. The big largely empty room at the arena could easily be turned into an indoor play space. Make a small office in there for your needs but that is currently wasted space.”

“My grandchildren are as busy as they want to be with activities 4 to 5 times a week. There does not seem to be enough space to offer much adults programming. Senior programming is nonexistent as far as I know.”

“Under 5 and over 60. Both of these groups are very neglected - the under 5 category depends on volunteer or non-profits to provide daytime only activities, which are neither structured or consistent or available to those that work; the over 60 group would benefit from fitness programming that is accessible (both physically and interest wise”

“Need more fitness classes that work for the 9-5 households.

Morning (early) would be great! Outdoor ice rink. More focus on seniors and aging folk. Better advertising about options provided by the City.”

“I know rec has attempted to cater to and program for elders in the community with not a lot of success. I wonder if we need a community centre where they would feel welcome and have opportunities for fitness like lawn bowling, aquasize that sort of thing.”

“Sign up system needs to be more accessible. Often seems like the same families that are able to access after school programming as a result of accessibility for sign up and limited space.”

“Activities rely on numbers and in a small community that is difficult at times -- especially with new activities. I propose that activities should happen whenever possible despite the numbers so they can become known to others. There needs to be some risk taken.”

“A more equitable way to distribute youth programming is needed. Some kids get all the programs and others get few or none. Rec programming also knows what is successful and has a high level of interest. Please offer more of those where possible including bringing in more external experts where needed.”

“City does a good job of offering a variety of options.”

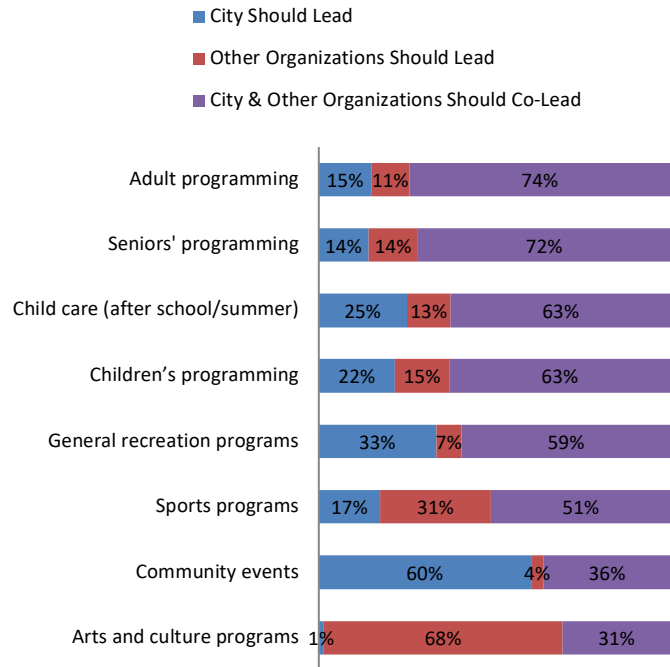
“The sign up for rec programs needs work: line up during work hours is not fair!”

“I would have selected "greater variety" but I think it would be more accurate to suggest that the programming "move with the times" (i.e. some programs have been around so long, they are outdated or have become stagnant.) I think some things could be "retired" and some time should be spent looking into new ideas for rec, and annual outreach to new community members to see what they can offer...we have such a resource in our youthful and ever-changing population from "outside" we should be tapping into this.”

“Overall, I think what the rec department offers is pretty impressive given the number of staff they have to run programs.”

“I understand we are a small town, so not all programming will be possible (year-round swimming pool), but I do think you would get more people to turn-out if there were more times offered, and genuine attempts at making the activity fun, available and exciting from the staff.”

Please indicate which areas you feel the City should be leading in, versus other organizations:



Roles of City and Others in Delivering Recreation

The survey asked respondents for their opinion on what areas of recreation programming the City, versus other groups, should be leading in.

For the most part, respondents indicated that they viewed recreation delivery as a shared responsibility between the City and other groups. A majority of respondents (60%) felt that the City should lead on community events; a much smaller percentage felt similarly for general recreation programs (33%), child care (25%), and children's programming (22%).

A majority (68%) of respondents felt that other groups should be leading arts and culture programs; sports programs were viewed similarly by 31%.

Where is your household's primary residence?	
Inside municipal boundaries	83%
Outside municipal boundaries	17%
Is anyone in your household a Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in citizen?	
Yes	17%
No	83%
Is anyone in your household affiliated with a Dawson recreation organization?	
Yes	23%
No	77%
Please describe your household by telling us how old the members of your household are:	
0-5 years	36%
6-12 years	34%
13-19 years	17%
20-34 years	48%
35-49 years	83%
50-64 years	35%
65-79 years	16%
80+ years	1%

"Thanks for doing a great job."

"We need to increase our activity level! This reduces health costs long term. Work with what we have and keep things modest. Affordability is important in the long run, which (I think) means focusing more on simple outdoor activities that would not cost much. Example: outdoor arena, crokicurl, more ski trails/walking trails, snowshoe baseball, ice sculpting area, etc."

"I don't want to sound critical, as I know how hard working the Rec Dept is, but I think the staff has grown complacent and just keep repeating the same stuff. This happens to anyone in a job for a long time...send them out for some training, workshops and give them time to do research on new stuff happening in the rec world! There must be cool stuff being done elsewhere!"

"The town does a great job of programming. We're getting bigger, though. Might be time to get more staff and more programs. Also, we have a large immigrant population in town. I don't see them at activities enough. We should

have programs geared to getting them on the ice or accommodating their needs-like cricket."

"This town seems an ideal place to raise children - up to a certain age. After that, families often face making the decision about whether to leave town to see to older children's needs /well-being."

"Overall incredible for a town this size. BUT...there is definitely a need for more gym/court space, as sharing the gym with RSS leaves little programming time. I also think that the definition of "rec" needs to be considered...does it all have to be "athletic"? Many people are not athletes or artists, so I think more passive forms of rec could be implemented (games nights, cards, chess or ???). There is a void."

"You folks are doing a great job. We enjoy great services for a town or size."

"I would say outside of recreation, but within the lens of access, is the ill-graded streets and boardwalks. The inaccess to those with mobility issues or small kids on foot, makes it difficult to get out and access what is already available and being done well."

"Space and partnerships for early childhood care are very important if families are going to stay in Dawson. I am considering leaving because of care and extra-curricular opportunities for my child, and I have already seen a number of other families make that choice (or are making it.)"

"Overall, I think what the rec department offers is pretty impressive given the number of staff they have to run programs."

"The city of Dawson needs to have the spaces available for their programming and not rely on private or other spaces. This would mean that their programming will happen how/ when and where they want it and not always dependent on other organizations."

"Rec dept budget and spending should be included in newsletters and program guides so tax payers can make informed decisions about the value of recreation in town."

7.3 User Group Survey Findings

Nine local recreation groups and three private sector facility users responded to an online survey about their facility needs, experience working with the City, and areas for improvement. The survey was administered via Survey Monkey and is intended for broad interpretation only.

The following is a summary of results and comments received. The complete survey results are available from the City of Dawson upon request.

Future Growth Expectations

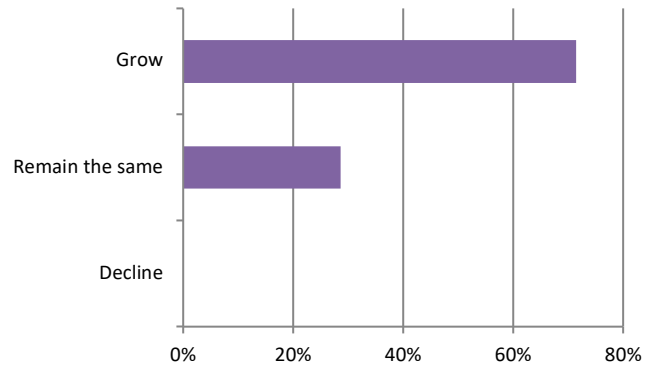
When asked about expectations for future trends in participation in their group’s recreation-related activities, 71% of respondents predicted growth and 29% anticipated numbers remaining stable. Nobody anticipated declining numbers.

Facility Needs

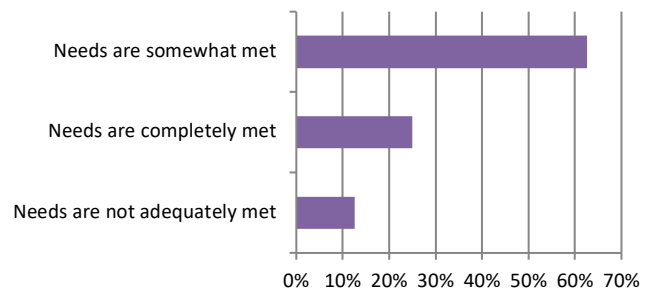
Respondents indicated using a wide variety of City and non-City recreation facilities to conduct their activities, including parks, Fitness Centre, arena, local trails, playgrounds, swimming pool, Minto Park concession building, Robert Service School, and Moose Mountain, and local community halls. One quarter of respondents indicated that their needs were currently met by Dawson recreation spaces and 63% indicated needs were somewhat met.

78% of respondents felt that new facilities needed to be developed in the next decade. Suggestions included earlier arena openings, larger open spaces for fitness-oriented activity, a refurbished arena, indoor play spaces for children, trail improvements at Crocus Bluff and new trail development on the Klondike east bench outside of municipal limits.

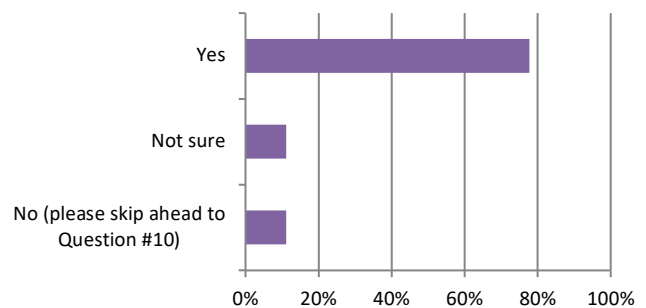
Over the next few years, what are your expectations for the numbers of participants in your group’s recreation-related activities?



To what degree do the current recreation, parks, and leisure facilities and spaces in Dawson meet you and/or your organization’s needs?

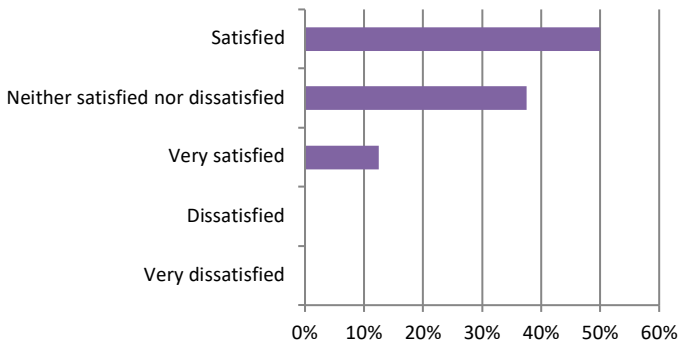


Do you feel there is a need for new and/or enhanced recreation and parks facilities or spaces to be developed in Dawson City within the next decade?



Level of Satisfaction with City

How satisfied are you/your group with your experience working with the City of Dawson?

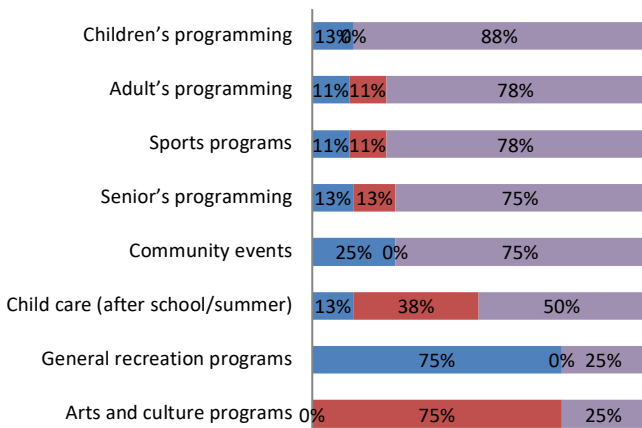


Most user group respondents indicated that they had worked with the City through the Recreation Grant process or had received in-kind or other assistance from it. 63% indicated being "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their City interactions, while 37% were neutral. Liability insurance, inconsistent communications, and general attitudes towards accommodating user groups were cited as areas for improvement.

Roles of City and Others in Recreation

Please indicate which areas of service delivery you feel the City and/or other organizations should be leading in

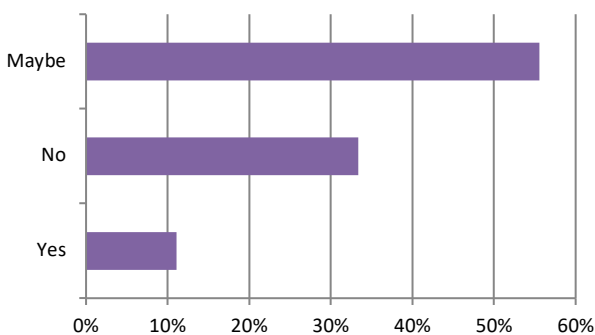
City should lead Others should lead City & others should co-lead



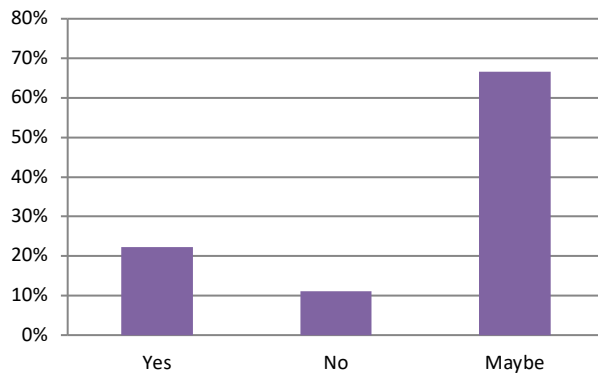
Respondents viewed recreation as a shared responsibility to an even greater degree than participants in the household survey. Again, a strong majority of groups felt that the City could let others lead where arts and culture programming is concerned. General recreation was viewed as a City responsibility, whereas community events were not.

A majority (56%) of respondents answered "maybe" or "no" to the question of duplication between City and other recreation services; however, no comments were received to illuminate further. 67% of respondents answered "maybe" and 22% answered "yes" to the matter of gaps in delivery; facility maintenance deficiencies, young children, and seniors were cited as specific examples.

Are the City of Dawson's parks and recreation programs and services creating duplication and/or competition with other organizations?



Are there recreation-related programs and service gaps that other organizations aren't likely to fill and the City should address?



“Rec staff are willing to assist with scheduling, issues with programming if we approach them directly. If correspondence is forwarded to Rec Dept during off-season relating to user groups it is often not forwarded to relevant contacts or ignored as not being part of rec programming so kids are missing out on opportunities. I feel that the relationship between Dept and user groups can often be confrontational but if I go into the office it is often a result of miscommunication and can be easily resolved.”

“I have found the advertising and communication at times to be slower and more complicated than expected or needed.”

“It's challenging to have liability insurance in order to use the City's facilities i.e. the waterfront. It's rare for many non-profits to have this sort of insurance.”

“Communication! Rec Department needs to include user groups in discussions regarding facility usage upgrades/ staffing before decisions are made. More effort needs to be made to keep facilities clean and operating efficiently.”

“Maintenance capacity and volunteers are important for non-profits. Each non-profit has different needs and the city should further explore ways to provide assistance.”

“City requests volunteers to help offer certain programs but City provides no training or support e.g. baseball (kids). Need to host volunteer drives, provide training and structured programs for those activities not directed by a Sport Governing Body e.g., ski hill. There is a lot of misinformation relating to Recreation Department and Community Grants.”

“The City has been supportive of our efforts...”

“This could be accommodated to a greater degree by more communication with user groups and a greater level of input from user groups into the management of the recreation facilities. It is understood that there are business and operational concerns that have to be addressed by management, but observations of other recreational facilities outside of Dawson, indicate that a more meaningful coexistence is certainly a viable thing.”

“City Rec Department needs to decide if they are offering programming or overseeing facilities. Revenues from programming need to be tracked properly to account for actual costs. In other communities the Rec Department offers kids programming including swim club, skiing, minor hockey, etc. In Dawson programmers pick and choose those. Programs do not have to cover costs in the same way the user groups are charged, causing programs to suffer. Rec programmers should be working evenings and weekends, not 9-5 weekdays.”

“There's a ton of buy-in and continued community support - are important to health and well-being - are most often barrier-free, open to all community members and visitors, with no or minimal user fees - are good for the economy by encouraging visitors to our community to hang around longer.”

“We partner on events all the time and the City's funding programs are easy to access and have a good range of eligible expenses.”

6.3 Interview Findings

The Team conducted 15 interviews with 23 individuals representing 16 different organizations directly or indirectly involved with parks and recreation and health and wellness in Dawson City between early March and early April 2019. The key themes that emerged from these conversations include:

Facilities are considered the primary barrier to quality recreation in Dawson.

Insufficient programming space and poor facilities were cited as chief barriers to recreation delivery by many interviewees. These individuals identified a need for an additional gym space, multi-purpose spaces, and spaces appropriate for seniors, young children, and teens. The lack of a permanent, suitable home for the youth centre was a concern to some. A few interviewees felt there was also a strong need for a year-round pool to keep families active and facilitate restorative and rehabilitative activities for an aging population.

There is a deep legacy of community frustration and disappointment over local recreation facilities and concerns about mistakes being repeated in the future.

Many interviewees spoke to high levels of community frustration around facilities, and a resulting degree of cynicism towards the City and its Recreation Department. This frustration relates not only to the ongoing uncertainty that has surrounded the use of the Recreation Centre since its early years but also to public and/or political promises that were reportedly made to build a year-round pool, replace the problematic Centre, and/or open up the second storey. One interviewee said that the public has been “burned many times” and will have a hard time trusting that the outcomes for a new facility will be better.

The City is making valued contributions to recreation and quality of life in Dawson.

Many interviewees described the quantity and quality of recreation available in Dawson as being good to excellent. Despite prevailing concerns about indoor facilities, the City’s work on the fitness centre, local trails, and parks and greenspaces was cited by numerous stakeholders as being valued contributions. Numerous interviewees expressed appreciation for the City’s programming efforts and felt that there is a concerted effort to diversify programs, try new things, and fill gaps in programming.

Needs and expectations around a new Recreation Centre vary and satisfying them all may be difficult.

Numerous interviewees articulated a vision for a new recreation facility to be as accessible as possible to all segments of the population and serve a dual role of providing both recreation and a critical venue for social integration (particularly for seniors, young children and their parents) and substance-free interactions between community residents. Some stressed that a new recreation facility must remain in the historic townsite in order to succeed, but that building on the same site or close by would be problematic. A few interviewees felt that a new facility could help to address the lack of a proper conference and large event space in the community and satisfy tourism and economic development objectives and suggested Inuvik as a model to explore. Government representatives suggested that a highly multi-use, efficient, and (relatively) affordable facility plan would be most likely to receive a green light for funding and cautioned against the overbuilds and excessively high operations and maintenance costs that have created challenges for other communities in the territory and beyond.

The potential negative impacts of a Recreation Centre closure are considered high.

Numerous stakeholders registered concerns about the potential negative impacts of a Recreation Centre closure on the on the health and well-being of Dawsonites during the darker, colder winter months and urged the City to have a contingency plan in place in the event that ongoing monitoring of the facility determines that it is unsafe for continued use. Similarly, some felt that the construction of a new facility must be planned and executed in such a manner as to minimize programming interruptions or cancellations during the winter.

Some partnerships and relationships between the Department and other groups are highly successful.

The City has established some highly positive and productive partnerships with other recreation providers in the community. These stakeholders described City staff as being responsive to requests, willing to collaborate, and solutions-oriented. Some of these positive relationships are long-standing, whereas others are relatively new.

Other partnerships and relationships are in need of more attention from the City.

Relationships with a few important community recreation providers were felt to fall short of productive, collaborative partnerships. Several interviewees felt that the lack of a joint City-Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in effort in regard to a youth centre was a significant issue on both a symbolic and operational level. The City was described as being more likely to duplicate than assist and reluctant to participate in projects/programs that it is not initiating or overseeing. A few organizations felt that the scale and broad nature of their contributions and service delivery to Dawsonites should exempt them from the user fees and/or funding applications that facility user groups are subject to as a tangible element of a genuine partnership. The City was also described as tending to "offload" events and programs that it initiates on to others and in a few cases not contributing sufficiently to ensure joint initiatives truly succeed.

Pressures on the Recreation Department are high, and expectations can be unrealistic.

Several interviewees commented that the City Recreation Department is in a uniquely difficult position trying to satisfy a broad range of user groups, Council and the general public amid the strong passions that tend to be ignited around recreation in general. User groups may not understand or appreciate the pressures placed on the City and recognize that resources are limited. Better communications about internal activities, the creation of two-way dialogue, improved transparency, and an enhanced "buffer" function for the Recreation Board were suggested as avenues to pursue. One interviewee felt that the City was potentially feeding into unrealistic expectations by not being clear enough about its role and priorities.

The recreation calendar is busier than ever, but some non-profits are feeling stretched thin.

A "can do" attitude, local talent, innovation, and community spirit were cited as the enabling elements of what some interviewees described as an impressive array of events and programs for a community of Dawson's size. However, volunteer "burn-out" is reportedly a challenge for many recreation-oriented non-profit groups. The event and activity calendar was described as being fuller than ever, but volunteer numbers are reportedly not increasing in a corresponding manner. Reportedly some events are contemplating bi-annual scheduling to remain viable. Several stakeholders felt that the City could assist by minimizing barriers to already stressed volunteer organizations with streamlined administrative and booking processes, better communications, and improved in-kind support.

The Department is perceived as being isolated and unapproachable by some.

The Team heard from several stakeholders that there is a general perception in the non-profit community that the City is unsupportive and at times even obstructive – with rental fees, difficulties accessing in-kind support, and lack of flexibility around tournaments or other events given as specific examples. Some described relationships with local user groups as being strained and even confrontational; however, facility staff was mostly exempt from this criticism. One interviewee commented that the physical separation of Recreation Department management, administrative and programming staff from user groups (by virtue of their location upstairs in the Waterfront Building) may inadvertently be undermining those relationships, whereas facility staff benefit from ongoing interaction with them being based at the Recreation Centre.

Several interviewees commented that the Department seems resistant to input or outside ideas. This perception was voiced both within and outside of the community. A few commented that the Department does not seem to

7.5.2 Robert Service School “Graffiti Wall”

A “graffiti wall” installation was placed in the Robert Service School gymnasium from March 12-15 and three separate questions were posed to students.

Favourite Recreation

Many students referred to organized sports as their favourite way to recreate, with hockey and soccer being the most common. A number of other students cited informal, unstructured activities like swimming, running and lifting weights.

What are your favourite ways to have fun and play in Dawson?



Favourite Places

Students’ favourite places to recreate in Dawson had parallels to favourite activities – for example, the soccer field, swimming pool, and arena were cited numerous times. Interestingly, the North End was mentioned by a number of youth as a favoured location. One interpretation is that the lack of formal park space or amenity enhances its appeal to youth.

What are the best places to play and have fun and play in Dawson?

Making Recreation Better

When asked how to improve Dawson for recreation, many students expressed a wish for commercial amenities available in larger centres – malls, Walmart, and dollar stores being frequent responses. Free wi-fi was also suggested numerous times. The most frequent recreation-related ideas included video games/arcade, movie theatre, and a bowling alley. A new basketball court was the most common request relating to current amenities.



What would you like to change, add or improve to make Dawson an even better place to play and have fun?

8.0 Recreation Trends & Best Practices

Dawson City is a unique community. The following section highlights some of the key trends and best practices shaping the delivery of parks and recreation services around the country and for all sectors.

8.1 Health, Fitness and Activity Trends

The **Pan-Canadian Public Health Network's 2015 Progress Report on Advancing the Federal/ Provincial/Territorial Framework on Healthy Weights** found that:

- Almost 1/3 (31%) of Canadian children are either overweight or obese;
- Less than 1/3 (32.5%) of children use active travel as their main form of transportation to school;
- 9% of children and youth meet Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines of at least 60 minutes per day of moderate to vigorous physical activity;
- 8% of Canadian parents report 'often' or 'very often' playing active games with their children in the past year; and
- 74.5% of children and youth exceed Canadian Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines for screen time (i.e. 2 hrs per day).

Yukon Health Indicators

The obesity rate in the Yukon in 2014 was 31.47%, higher than the national average of 26.1% (Stats Can, 2017).

The **2016 ParticipACTION Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth** gave Canadian kids a D+ grade for their overall level of physical activity due to:

- Only 62% of kids aged 3-4 years getting the recommended physical activity levels for their age;
- 35% of children between the ages of 5 to 17 are getting the recommended physical activity levels for their age;
- Both groups are getting more screen time than recommended; and,
- Children who get the recommended amount of physical activity are more creative, problem solve, and are less likely to suffer from mental health problems like depression and anxiety.

Yukon Physical Activity Levels

The 2016 Yukon Healthy Living Study was conducted by DataPathSystems of Marsh Lake, Yukon for the Recreation and Parks Association of the Yukon and Yukon Government Sport and Recreation Branch. Some of the study's insights into the activity and recreation patterns of Yukon residents include:

- 70% of Yukoners describe themselves as being moderate/very active in summer, versus 55% in winter. The figure is slightly lower in seniors (65%/52%) and slightly higher in the communities versus Whitehorse.
- 8% of Yukoners rate their typical summer exertion level as very high; ¾ report low to moderate exertion levels. Winter exertion is slightly higher than summer levels.

The **2014 Canadian Community Health Survey** found that:

- Adult obesity has doubled over the past 35 years, from 13.8% in 1978-79 to 28.2% in 2014; and,
- Only 15% of Canadian adults achieve the recommended amount of exercise (150 minutes) each week.

Interestingly, the same survey suggests that lack of access to recreation is not the reason for low levels of activity, as 92% of parents of children aged 5-17 who report availability and adequacy of local public facilities and programs for physical activity and sports for their children.

The policy directive *A Common Vision for increasing physical activity and reducing sedentary living in Canada: Let's Get Moving* estimates that:

- Physical inactivity cost the Canadian economy \$6.8 billion in 2009 due to illness, employee disability, reduced productivity, among other factors.

8.2 Recreation Participation Trends

When Canadians *are* being active, what do they actually like to do? The following section provides a brief overview of various study findings.

- The **2013 Canadian Community Health Survey** revealed that the majority of youth and adults prefer recreation pursuits of a spontaneous, unstructured nature, with walking, bicycling, and swimming landing in the "Top 5" for both adults and youth.

"Top 5" Physical Activities in Canada, 2013	
Adults	Youth
• Walking	• Walking
• Gardening	• Bicycling
• Home exercise	• Swimming
• Swimming	• Running/jogging
• Bicycling	• Basketball

Source: 2013 Canadian Community Health Survey

- The **Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute's 2014-15 Physical Activity Monitor**

"Top 20" Physical Activities in Canada 2014-15			
Activity	Participation	Activity	Participation
Walking for exercise	84%	Yoga or tai chi	27%
Gardening/yard work	74%	Golfing	23%
Exercise at home	65%	Bowling	22%
Swimming	58%	Soccer	22%
Jogging or running	49%	Baseball/softball	49%
Bicycling	49%	Basketball	49%
Weight training	41%	Badminton	41%
Social dancing	39%	Downhill skiing	39%
Ice skating	29%	Volleyball	29%
Exercise classes or aerobics	28%	Ice hockey	12%

Source: 2014-15 Physical Activity Monitor, Canadian Fitness Lifestyle Research Institute

survey similarly found that the most frequently participated in physical activities were of a spontaneous, unstructured nature. The study also revealed significant participation patterns between men and women, with men being more likely to participate in competitive sports and women more likely to participate in exercise classes and yoga.

- The **Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute's 2011-12 Sport Monitor Report** found that:
 - Younger Canadians are more likely to participate in sport. Nearly three-quarters of Canadians aged 15-17 play sports, but

Activity	Participation Rate	
	Men	Women
Walking for exercise	80%	88%
Gardening/yard work	80%	69%
Bicycling	55%	43%
Social dancing	33%	45%
Ice skating	34%	24%
Exercise classes/aerobics	15%	39%
Yoga or tai chi	15%	39%
Golfing	33%	13%
Baseball/softball	23%	12%
Basketball	21%	11%
Ice hockey	21%	4%
Football	18%	4%

Source: 2014-15 Physical Activity Monitor, Canadian Fitness Lifestyle Research Institute

participation progressively drops off with increasing age.

- There is a correlation between household income and education levels. Households with an annual income in excess of \$100,000 have participation levels almost two and over three times higher than households earning \$20,000-\$39,999 and less than \$20,000, respectively.
- Substantially more adult men (45%) play organized sports than women (24%).

The Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute's 2016-2018 Physical Activity Monitor found that:

- 28% of adults say they frequently use parks and green spaces, 53% sometimes do, and 19% never do;
- Usage varies by age, with adults aged 25 to 44 being most likely to frequently use green spaces and a greater proportion of older and younger people being most likely to never use green spaces; and
- While there are no significant gender differences, a greater proportion of adults who are widowed, divorced or separated report never using parks and green spaces as compared to those married or living with a partner; however, the opposite is true for frequent users of parks and green spaces.

8.3 Policy Guidance

A number of national and territorial policies, papers and frameworks have been developed within the past 10 years that have an influence on how parks and recreation is both funded and delivered. These include:



Common Vision (2018) - A Common Vision for increasing physical activity and reducing sedentary living in Canada: *Let's Get Moving* is a national policy that sets out a pathway to realize a future in which all Canadians move more and sit less, more often. The policy recognizes that physical activity is influenced by a complex, interrelated set of factors at both individual and societal levels – many of which are not in the

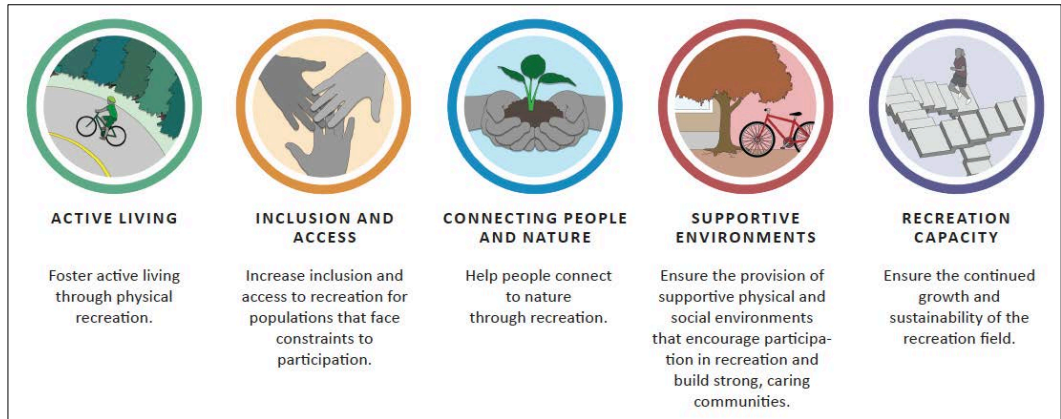
domain of sport and recreation policy and programs. The Six Areas of Focus include Partnerships, Cultural Norms, Spaces and Places, Public Engagement, Leadership and Learning, and Progress.

Yukon Participation Patterns

The 2016 Yukon Healthy Living Study asked Yukoners about their recreation participation patterns, with findings including:

- The “Top 10” recreational activities participated in were:
 - Walking (92%)
 - Gardening (75%)
 - Passive activities (71%)
 - Hiking/camping (70%)
 - Biking/walking for transportation (58%)
 - Home exercise (57%)
 - Berry picking (47%)
 - Bicycling (45%)
 - Hunting/fishing (40%)
 - Canoeing/kayaking (30%)
- For most activities Yukoners either participated frequently (at least 15 times) or not at all. Among Yukoners who participate in at least one “active” activity, they participate in their Top 2 activities at least 82 times each year.
- The majority (70%) of Yukoners will do an activity more if they have a friend or family member to do it with.
- 89% of Yukoners report using a trail for non-motorized activities versus 40% for motorized activities.
- Top motivations for healthy living include losing weight (61%), setting a good example for children (60%), exercising dogs (52%), spending time (50%), and managing a medical condition (49%).

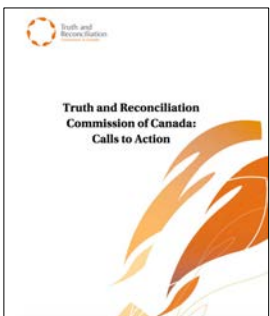
The Framework for Recreation in Canada (2015) – The Framework for Recreation in Canada is the guiding document for public recreation providers. The framework is intended to help guide programming decisions, public



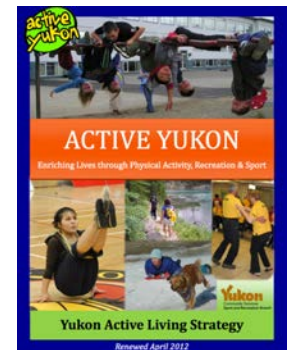
investment, recreation leadership and education, and much more. A suite of communications and implementation tools have been developed to encourage the Framework’s adoption and integration at the community level. The framework sets out numerous priorities organized under five Goals: Active Living, Inclusion and Access, Connecting People and Nature, Supportive Environments, and Recreation Capacity.



Canadian Sport Policy (2012) – The *Canadian Sport Policy* sets a direction for sport and recreation providers to ensure sport has a positive impact on Canadians and their communities. Specific policy goals and objectives are organized under five broad objectives – Introduction to Sport, Recreational Sport, Competitive Sport, High Performance Sport, and Sport for Development. The first two and last objective have particular resonance for public recreation providers.



Yukon Active Living Strategy (2012) – The *Yukon Active Living Strategy* sets out a vision, principles, strategic directions and goals for enabling a more physically active territory. The strategy provided the impetus for continued funding of Rural Healthy Eating Active Living (RHEAL) Leaders program in Yukon communities (including Dawson) and Active Living Coordinators employed by Recreation and Parks Association Yukon (RPAY).



Indigenous Peoples Policy – Sport Canada’s *Policy on Aboriginal Participation in Sport* and several of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Calls to Action focus on the inclusion of Indigenous peoples in recreation and sport experiences at all levels of participation.

8.4 Recreation Delivery Trends

Social Determinants of Health – For decades, the Canadian public health and recreation fields have been focused on trying to promote healthy behaviours in society. In recent years, the concept of social determinants of health changes the lens through which practitioners view health outcomes. The social determinants of health approach recognizes that outcomes are influenced by a complex myriad of inter-related factors, most of which fall outside the control of individuals. These determinants include factors such as Aboriginal status, disability,

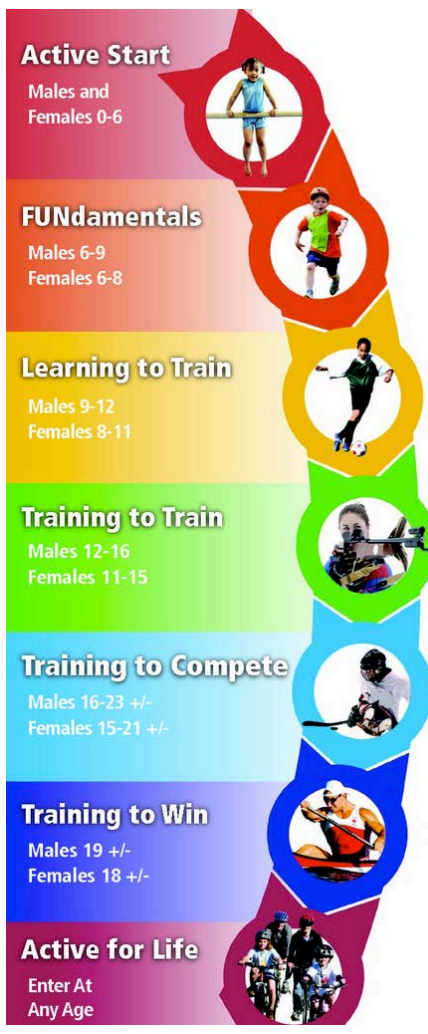
early life, education, food insecurity, housing, income and income distribution, social exclusion, unemployment and job security. The evidence is daunting: for example, individuals in the lowest income brackets are 33% less likely to be moderately active than those in the highest income group⁷.

In a recreation context, the social determinants of health mindset shifts the conversation from “how do we get individuals to choose healthier lifestyles” to “how can we create the community environments that make the healthier choice the easier choice.” This is coupled with an understanding of the significant influence that the built environment has on our daily lives and activity patterns and the reality that physical activity has largely been designed out of our lives for the sake of convenience, speed, urbanization, etc.

“Nudge theory” – which originated in the UK but has a growing following in public governments around the world – proposes that positive reinforcement and indirect suggestions are more effective ways of influencing behaviour and decision-making than education, legislation or enforcement. “Nudges” like outdoor gyms placed in busy traffic areas, interactive staircases, and adult playgrounds are examples with relevance to recreation and fitness.

Local Opportunity

Sport Yukon employs a full-time Physical Literacy Coordinator who works with Yukon schools, communities, and recreation/sport groups.



Physical Literacy and Lifelong Participation - Physical literacy is defined as the “motivation, confidence, physical competence, knowledge and understanding to value and take responsibility for engagement in physical activities for life”. Physical literacy is recognized as the precondition for lifelong participation in, and enjoyment of sport; as such, this relatively new concept has fundamentally reshaped how sport and recreation programs are designed and delivered.

Canadian Sport for Life (CS4L) is regarded as the national leader in physical literacy advocacy and resource support. The movement was formed to create cross-sectoral partnerships between sport, education, recreation and health. Guided by the Sport for Life Society, C4SL has many resources available to sport and recreation practitioners.

C4SL’s *Long-Term Athlete Development (LTAD)* framework is a seven-stage training, competition, and recovery pathway for individuals’ sport and physical activity from infancy through late life. LTAD focuses on the development of a strong physical literacy foundation in early life through its Active Start and FUNdamentals stages. The movement calls on municipalities to help implement LTAD in a variety of ways, including physical literacy program development, access and allocation.

Places and Spaces - A broad recognition of the importance of parks and green spaces has underpinned public investments for decades. Increasingly, the planning and recreation fields are working not just to create spaces, but “places” – spaces that draw people in and in which

⁷ A Common Vision for increasing physical activity and reducing sedentary living in Canada: Let’s Get Moving. 2018.

social connections and cohesion happen. The fields of transformative placemaking and tactical urbanism are about making strategic interventions, testing their impacts, and refining. The movement cautions that placemaking is never finished – instead, the ongoing changes of the community change and require attention and being open to the need for change is critical.

Some commonly accepted elements of preferred “places” include support amenities (Wi-Fi, seating, cafes, washrooms), safety and accessibility (access via trails, signage, lighting, etc.), all ages and abilities design, a mix of active and passive activities, new and innovative play features, public art, and community gardens.

Inclusion and Access - Reducing and/or removing barriers to recreation continues to be a major focus of recreation policy and practice across the country. Inclusion and access have traditionally focused on specific demographics, including women and seniors, mobility-challenged individuals, and lower income individuals and households. More recently, the movement has expanded to include Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (LBTQ) individuals and families.

Barriers can be complex and interconnected and take a variety of forms - attitudinal, policy, financial, architectural, cultural, etc. While staff education, policy development, and space design can help to address some of these barriers, financial barriers can be particularly challenging to overcome. Many municipalities and other public service recreation providers are placing an increased emphasis on developing supports to assist residents who face barriers to participation. However, some research is showing that subsidy programs that involve paperwork and submission of proof of income are a deterrent to target families⁸ and that low-income individuals prefer low or no-cost activities that are open to everyone.

The City of Toronto believes so strongly in recreation as a vehicle for social cohesion (and ultimately crime prevention) within predominantly immigrant neighbourhoods that it offers free recreation programming and other family-direct supports in high-priority areas of the city.

Multi-Use Functionality and Clustering - A long-established trend that shows no signs of weakening is that of multi-use amenities and facilities. Multi-use facilities stretch a limited public dollar to a much greater degree than single-purpose or specialized facilities. Another related trend is the clustering of complementary services such as community libraries with leisure-oriented complexes. In some cases, multi-functionality can be difficult to achieve as emerging sports demand more and different types of facilities. The change in terminology from “soccer fields” to “sports fields”, as just one example, represents this shift in thinking. Pools are responding to this trend by incorporating a broader range of

Yukon Barriers to Participation

The 2016 Yukon Healthy Living Study investigated barriers to participation in physical activity for Yukoners and found that:

- Cost of recreation centre and programs were the two most frequently cited barriers at 29% and 28%;
- Lack of time were the 3rd most frequent barrier at 26%; and,
- Overall, cost of programs was less of a barrier for rural Yukoners.

Local Opportunity

The Kids Recreation Fund is administered by Government of Yukon Health and Social Services. The City of Dawson promotes the fund.

National Opportunity

The *Everybody Gets to Play Toolkit* is available through the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association and provides a framework and template to help communities develop a support program that can help reduce financial barriers.

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amenities to support leisure swimming, therapy and rehabilitation.

Revenue Generation - The constant pressures on public recreation – not least among them a critical infrastructure deficit and public aversion to tax increases – have forced some municipalities to adopt new and creative ways to generate revenues outside of traditional government funding streams. These include adopt-a-park programs, facility sponsorships, naming rights, advertising in public buildings and on major equipment, planned giving programs and gift catalogues.

Active Transportation - Active transportation refers to any form of human-powered transportation, such as walking, cycling, using a wheelchair, etc. In 2011, 5.7% of Canadian commuters walked to work regularly while 1.3% cycled, accounting for over one million Canadians⁹. Climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies, including carbon taxation, can be expected to result in higher gasoline prices and more people adopting other, less expensive transport modes. Good active transportation is closely intertwined with parks and open space networks.



Changing Nature of Volunteerism - Canadians volunteered almost two billion hours in 2013, with 44% of Canadians volunteering an average of 154 hours each year¹⁰. The Statistics Canada data shows that:

- The volunteer rate remained relatively stable over a ten-year period from 2004 to 2013, but average annual volunteer hours decreased by 7%; and,
- Younger people aged 15-19 years are the most likely to volunteer (66%), likely due to mandatory school service obligations, followed by 35-44-year olds at 48%. The lowest rates of volunteerism were seen in the 65 & over demographic;
- Older Canadians were less likely to volunteer but contributed the highest average annual hours (231), almost double those recorded for volunteers in the 35-44-year age bracket.

Charity Village reports that several broad trends are reshaping the face of volunteerism in Canada, including:

- Canada's aging population has not yielded the large infusion of new volunteers that was once anticipated by the non-profit sector as people extend their careers, even if on a part-time basis, or take advantage of health and mobility to participate more in travel and other pursuits;
- There has been a shift in the length of volunteer commitments, with more people looking for episodic commitments versus ongoing or multi-year ones;
- Lack of time is a chief barrier to volunteering, with stressful and busy work lives compounding the problem;
- Motivations for volunteering have shifted from "giving back" to a "two-way street". Young people volunteer to gain work related skills, while new Canadians also volunteer to develop work experience and to practice language skills; and,

⁹ Turcotte, M. Volunteering and Charitable Giving in Canada. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-652-x/89-652-x2015001-eng.htm>

¹⁰ Fish, S. 2014. https://charityvillage.com/cms/content/topic/the_changing_face_of_volunteering_in_canada#.XLqKGqZ7lBw

- Many non-profits are adapting to changing volunteer needs and higher standards of conduct by adopting volunteer risk management, investing more resources in volunteer recruitment and fulfillment, pooling volunteer resources with other non-profits.



Return to Outdoor, “Adventurous” Play - Concerns about “nature deficit disorder”, rising obesity levels, declining levels of physical activity, and evidence of health and social benefits have spawned a movement to get children and youth to get back outdoors and engage in “adventurous” (also referred to as “risky”) play. Recreational professionals are working to avoid the over sanitation of play environments, minimize rules and regulations, and give children space to explore and push limits while ensuring an environment free of hazards. A surge in natural playgrounds is evidence of this trend; more recently, there has also been a movement for adult playgrounds in some larger urban centres. Outdoor Play Canada offers a wide range of resources to help practitioners to promote and facilitate outdoor, “risky” play.

Integration of Wellness and Community Development into Recreation - The medical and recreation communities’ growing understanding of the highly complex nature of health outcomes and barriers to participation is contributing to a broadening view of what recreation service delivery is and/or should be. Increasingly, recreation provision is viewed as being concerned with reducing barriers to participation, increasing physical activity, addressing healthy eating/nutrition, and facilitating personal health and wellness, mental health, and social inclusion. The aims and outcomes of recreation are also closely intertwined with the aims and outcomes of community development.

This shifting view of recreation service delivery necessitates a different skill set than that traditionally associated with the recreation field – towards more research and planning, volunteer engagement, partnership building, marketing, training and program development, etc.

Partnerships - The historical trajectory of modern parks and recreation shows an origin of programs with grassroots groups (i.e. YMCA, Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, etc.), a dramatic shift in responsibility to public governments, and – in present day – a balance between the two. Partnerships allow municipalities to stretch limited resources to maintain and/or enhance levels of service. These partnerships can be with other governments, private sector, and non-profit organizations. Indirect service provision via partnerships with is a well-established trend for municipalities.

Motivations for Yukoners

The 2016 Yukon Healthy Living Study investigated motivators for participation in healthier lifestyles and found that:

- Having activities out on the land was cited as the greatest motivator (48%); and,
- Workshops (35%) and improved access to outdoor activities (33%) were rated 2nd and 3rd greatest motivators, respectively.

9.0 SWOT Summary and Planning Considerations

9.1 Governance

STRENGTHS (Internal/City)	WEAKNESSES (Internal/City)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current and past Councils are highly supportive of recreation • There is a solid foundation of policy and procedures supporting fair, transparent decision-making • Creation of new Supervisor position better distributes responsibilities across the department • Council's investment in recreation is significant (23% of budget in 2018) • A Recreation Board is in place to help administration adjudicate funding applications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department and Manager titles do not reflect actual scope of recreation delivery system (i.e. parks, trails, etc.) • Routine administration, communications and decision-making around user group support, contracts, and programming still resides with the Manager due to organizational structure, office set-up and task distribution • Collective agreement of department employees creates limitations to "last minute" scheduling changes to accommodate community group requests, etc. • Policies and bylaws limit in-kind support that can be critical to user and community groups • The mandate for the Recreation Board is vague • The Board achieves quorum about half of the time and considerable staff time is used preparing monthly packages • Dawson's pattern budget increases for recreation and cost recovery is not sustainable over the long-term
OPPORTUNITIES (External)	THREATS (External)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projected population growth will lead to increases in tax and recreation-related revenues and distribution of fixed costs across larger population base • Policy and governance advice and support is available from other municipalities (particularly City of Whitehorse), online sources, etc. • External project-based funding may allow for short-term project management assistance • Residents highly value recreation and potentially support tax/fee increases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revenue generating potential of recreation is highly limited with a small population and desire to maintain access and affordability • Seasonal worker population and population residing outside of municipal boundaries places pressure on City resources with lower cost recovery potential • Low incomes and high living costs pose barriers to the amount of disposable income that Dawson residents can spend on recreation; increases in the senior population will compound this situation • A growing population and new facilities will continue to necessitate new policy development and adaptation
KEY PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considerable further growth in demand for recreation services should be expected to accompany population growth over the next decade; • Both the community and scope of City recreation services have become more sophisticated and the department may require further restructuring to ensure the levels of service are maintained and/or improved in coming years (particularly with a major capital project on the horizon); • Staff skills and capacity may need to broaden to reflect the broader community development function of the department; • Recreation spending increases may need to be curbed and the City should ensure that operations and maintenance needs of a new recreation centre are within range of current costs given the limited potential for increased revenues in the short to medium-term; and • The City should look to diversify funding sources, pursue low-cost approaches that can leverage existing capital assets and other amenities to the fullest extent through sound policy and partnership development. 	

9.2 Facilities

STRENGTHS (Internal/City)	WEAKNESSES (Internal/City)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an impressive mix/variety of outdoor and indoor facilities for a community of Dawson’s size • Parks, trails and outdoor spaces are highly rated and well used • Facilities are in generally good condition and many have considerable asset life remaining • Access to funding for larger capital projects is good and equipment replacement needs can be internally funded • Asset management system is being implemented and will facilitate better decision-making over time • Staff generally have capacity/skills to maintain assets • Fees and charges do not appear to pose barriers to participation* • A trail plan is complete and being implemented; this aligns with resident priorities for parks and open space amenities* • Facility allocation among user groups poses relatively few conflicts, even with limited multi-use spaces available • Facilities are scheduled with a mix of programmed and spontaneous, drop-in opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rec Centre has major structural issues and an unknown lifespan • Multi-purpose spaces are in limited supply; City is vulnerable to being “bumped” by school • Options for wintertime indoor recreation highly limited • Residents desire a year-round or new pool despite significant recent investments and possibly low likelihood of replacement or funding to extend the season • Maintenance roles need formalizing and internal agreement among City staff • Some issues with existing facilities – Minto Park building not fully functional, skate park, pool amenities out of commission, Minto Park playground surface • Parks offer is passive (gardens, landscaping, seating) for adults; not as many active amenities • Local costs of construction, operations and maintenance are high • The workload implications of the City’s new asset management system are still unclear and front-end effort could be considerable • The arena is heavily underutilized during the daytime hours
OPPORTUNITIES (External)	THREATS (External)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government of Yukon is committed to helping fund a new recreation centre that can address not only priority gaps in the facility offer but compensate for likelihood that a year-round pool is not financially feasible • Dawson resident criteria for facility investment and top facility priorities align with best practices and likely funding reality* (with exception of new pool) • Non-profit groups manage and maintain quality facilities that the City does not have to • TH plans to develop a new Youth Centre • National, territorial and local data points to a strong preference for participation in unstructured activities that require open spaces with lower operating costs as compared to indoor facilities (i.e., arenas and pools) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government expectations around recreation centre and appropriate funding levels may not satisfy all needs/expectations of public and key stakeholders • Land use constraints/topography pose limitations to continued open space development/protection • The potential amenities included in a new recreation centre will be highly site-dependent; trade-offs between location and features should be anticipated • Dawson’s built environment poses many physical barriers for an aging population • Climate change policies such as carbon pricing could raise operating costs of large indoor facilities considerably • Dawson residents have high skepticism and negativity around facilities; pressure to “get it right” is equally high
KEY PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning for the replacement of the recreation centre must be based in financial feasibility (both capital and O&M) and the consideration of priority amenities and preferred location should be approached jointly to regain/maintain public trust; • Optimization of current facilities to ensure maximum benefit and stay current with trends, including more activation of park/open spaces, adaptation of amenities to support more uses/users • With population growth and an aging population, planning for seniors-friendly infrastructure and ensuring convenient access to parks and open spaces for new neighbourhoods • Prioritization of active transportation and accessible infrastructure for an aging population • New neighbourhoods will require parks and open space 	

9.3 Programming

STRENGTHS (Internal/City)	WEAKNESSES (Internal/City)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City offers a broad range of programming for all ages and interests • City has two programmers with extensive experience and a willingness to try new things • Children’s programming is rated well and program registration has steadily increased in past 5-10 years • City successfully delivers three major family-oriented community events • Increased use of third party instructors has improved breadth and variety of options available • City programs are very affordable • Quarterly newsletters/program catalogues showcase City offerings as well as other recreation opportunities such as drop-in leagues, etc. • City successfully adapts to constantly changing circumstances • Inter-agency coordination has been initiated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs for seniors and 5 & under are less available from the City than those for elementary aged children • City capacity to deliver programming is limited • Lack of facility space is a key constraint and the City sometimes has to “bump” other groups to ensure its own programs can run • Programs are vulnerable to low numbers of available participants, conflicting scheduling of other programs or events, availability of instructors, etc. • More specialized programming can be challenging to sustain due to dependence on instructors in a somewhat transient community • Residents cite inconvenient times as a constraint to participation in recreation • City’s registration system and communications approach may pose barriers to participation/awareness
OPPORTUNITIES (External)	THREATS (External)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing and increasingly diverse population creates new programming opportunities and new instructors • Many other groups are providing quality programs in arts and culture and residents feel these groups should lead in these areas versus City; • Residents feel that the City and other groups share responsibility; the City need not “go it alone” and could potentially reallocate efforts from certain groups • There are a wide variety of partners for the City • Participation, lifestyle and population trends point to an increased need for wellness, active living facilitation • Dawson has a full events calendar • Dawson’s small size conducive to highly visible and “viral” programming ideas • A new, functional recreation centre is likely to “spark” an increase in volunteer-run programming • More distance, online training available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many Dawson events have an adult, alcoholic element; not as many family events • Non-profit community is feeling “stretched thin” with events in Dawson and this situation could worsen with an aging population • Residents feel that the City and other groups should share responsibility for providing recreation opportunities* • Residents perceive the availability and quality of programs for 5 & under, youth, and seniors to be low • Growing cohort of seniors will create new programming needs and demands • Time constraints, excessive screen time, and low rates of physical activity are barriers to participation • It can be difficult for Dawson residents to stay informed of opportunities, with many different groups utilizing different communications channels and no one shared repository for recreation happenings
KEY PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inter-agency coordination will be key to building partnerships, creating a “whole of community” approach that serves all demographics, and minimizing duplication and inefficiencies for both City and other recreation service providers • Dawson’s aging population and broader societal trends suggest a shift towards an increased focus on wellness and active/healthy living facilitation and programming • Limited capacity for hands-on program delivery and indoor facility space can be augmented via “how-to” programming geared towards increased use and enjoyment of the outdoors and the City’s open space amenities • The City could consider maintaining its emphasis on affordable children’s programming delivered directly and facilitating more specialized options; a few more family-friendly recreation options could help bridge gaps • Use of training supports in areas such as mental health first aid, program development, physical literacy, etc. • Revisiting registration process and communications approach 	

9.4 Partnerships and Community Development

STRENGTHS (Internal/City)	WEAKNESSES (Internal/City)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding for a wide range of needs is readily available to community groups and individuals, usually within a very short time frame • Direct funding is in place for certain partners in recognition of unique service and to reduce administrative effort • Some partnerships are highly successful and the City has productive, positive working relationships in the community • City has some communications channels established and working reasonably well • There is a mechanism for third party usage of City facilities and rentals are affordable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications capacity and effectiveness is limited • The City does not have a streamlined, effective way of assisting individuals and groups seeking support; considerable staff time is dedicated to this and process can be confusing and time-consuming for groups • Some partnerships and funding relationships are not clearly rationalized/articulated i.e., golf course, Moose Mountain; there may be inconsistent approaches towards major partners • Third party liability issues, such as private rentals, need further clarity and policy work
OPPORTUNITIES (External)	THREATS (External)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dawson is an active, engaged community with a strong volunteer ethic • The relatively small number of external groups and partners makes communications easier • A high proportion of Dawson children are in City camps; opportunity to reach families through them • There are numerous successful partnerships to build on • Major partners continue to provide services in Dawson and the City can evolve these relationships • City recreation facilities are well visited and a great venue to share information and seek input 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some partnerships need renewed attention; feeling that the City does not value major partners equally • There are some perceptions that the department is isolated from the community and not receptive to residents' ideas • Dawson residents can have unrealistic expectations of service delivery and lack awareness of actual costs/capacity issues • Non-profit community is feeling "stretched thin" with events in Dawson and this situation could worsen with an aging population • City policy and organizational framework may not always "mesh" with a non-bureaucratic community culture
KEY PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A review and clear policy-based articulation of the City's arrangements with major partners to ensure fairness, transparency and effectiveness – including possible expansion of direct funding relationships • Streamlining the process for City support internally to save staff time and communicating a clear, simple approach to individuals and community groups seeking support • Being more accessible to community groups in a manner that is most convenient/helpful to them • Increasing the City's positive profile in the community and supporting the efforts of other groups in visible ways • Educating residents about City recreation spending and its impact on the community • Finding ways to solicit resident input and signal an openness to feedback and learning 	