

Expanded Regional Recreation Initiative Study



Tla'amin First Nation



2016

City of Powell River, Tla'amin Nation and the Powell River Regional District

Expanded Regional Recreation Initiative Study

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1.0 Executive Summary

This study examined the various components of parks, recreation and cultural services to see what efforts can be made to improve the quality of the services provided and increase the opportunities for residents to participate in achieving personal health and fitness.

The residents of the Powell River region (which includes those who live in the City, in the Regional District and the Tla'amin Nation) had the opportunity to share their views about parks, recreation, and cultural services in the area, through an extensive consultative process. They had the opportunity to participate in a survey and to attend various focus group and public meetings.

Based on the survey results, the most popular programs that the residents participated in throughout the past 12 months include:

- | | |
|--|-------|
| • physical activities (such as aerobics, yoga, jogging) | 63.4% |
| • water sports (such as swimming, surfing, canoeing) | 61.6% |
| • outdoor activities (such as fishing, golfing, camping) | 60.8% |
| • creative/cultural activities (such as concerts, dancing, etc.) | 48.8% |
| • non physical activities (such as playing bingo, video games, picnicking) | 39.4% |
| • cycling sports (such as mountain biking, BMX racing) | 34.5% |
| • group/team sports (such as basketball, hockey, etc.) | 30.4% |
| • snow sports (such as skiing, sledding, etc.) | 18.7% |
| • none | 6.6% |

These results provided much context as to how the residents use the parks, recreation, and cultural services. Given the variety of different activities done by the residents, the residents involved in the consultation process could provide opinions based on personal experience on the various aspects of the services provided.

During the consultation process, the residents revealed that they have certain expectations in what they expect to see with parks, recreation, and cultural services. These expectations include:

- high quality recreational programs and services reflective of current interests and trends;
- enhancement and expansion of parks and open spaces both now and in the future;

- improvements to certain amenities around the region;
- creative ways to develop arts, culture, and heritage in the communities;
- increased accessibility in recreational programs in terms of getting to the facilities, getting in the facilities and being able to pay for the programs; and
- inclusivity of all persons in the community.

By examining the residents' expectations and concerns, residents and staff identified many challenges and concerns which impact the current and future state of recreation in the region in general. As the population increases and people become involved in more activities, the demand for more facilities, both indoors and outdoors, increases as well. The aging infrastructure of the current facilities affects the quality and quantity of the programming and the services, as older buildings without upgrades are expensive to run. The costs of providing recreational services are increasing while the revenues to fund those costs are decreasing. The decreasing number of volunteers has a direct impact on the level of parks, recreational and cultural services provided by volunteers and their organizations.

There have been missed opportunities to combine and leverage resources to provide programs and to improve the use of the facilities. One of the biggest challenges is the reluctance of some residents who live outside of the City to pay their "fair share" of the costs of parks, recreation, and cultural services. They are content to obtain the benefit of using the facilities and programs without making contributions towards the capital and operating costs. However, the majority of those people who live outside of the City and who responded to the survey and focus groups indicated they are willing to contribute. They see the benefit of their contributions enhancing the parks, recreation, and cultural amenities they currently enjoy.

What can be concluded from the study is that there is a desire to have expanded regional recreation services for the City, the Tla'amin Nation and Electoral Areas A, B, C, and D of the Regional District. It is the recommendation of this study that this can best be achieved through a regionally integrated service model. With this type of model for regional recreation services, the residents of Electoral Area E would only pay for their contributions to regional parks, recreation, and cultural services offered on the island.

By undertaking an expansion of regional recreation services, the opportunities to maintain and improve all areas of parks, recreation and cultural services exist. Coordinated efforts will create better opportunities to identify parks, open spaces, nature areas and trails and to improve on the quality of those already in place. The development of management plans and maintenance plans in the areas of parks, recreation and cultural services will create visions to determine how these services

can evolve. Identified partnerships will allow for synergies between different groups of people to contribute what they can to make things better.

Efforts made on a regional basis will help in the removal of barriers to participation which some people experience and create a more inclusive community where people of all ages and abilities can bond together through recreation services. Also, the quality of special events which bring the community together will be heightened through a regional approach to planning and executing them.

2.0 Introduction

2.1 Context

2.1.1 GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE REGION

The Powell River region (the “Region”) is located on the northern Sunshine Coast which is on the eastern shore of the Strait of Georgia in British Columbia. The Region, which is just northwest of Greater Vancouver and accessible only by ferry and plane, has an overall population of roughly 19,906. Three forms of government are located within the Region to serve the population – the City of Powell River, Powell River Regional District, and the Tla’amin Nation, formerly the Sliammon First Nation.

The City of Powell River (the “City”) has a population of 13,165 citizens with four principal neighbourhoods – Cranberry, Townsite, Westside and Wildwood. The majority of the population in the Region lives within the City. The City consists of primarily single family residential zoning with commercial zoning in the downtown core and industrial zoning within the Duncan Avenue corridor and the area surrounding the paper mill.

The Powell River Regional District (the “Regional District”) includes the City and five electoral areas. The population in the Electoral Areas totals approximately 6,741 residents. The Regional District’s electoral areas are organized as follows:

- Electoral Area A – which includes Lund and Savary Island in the northern part of the Regional District with a population of 1,008;
- Electoral Area B – which is located immediately east of the City with a population of 1,488;
- Electoral Area C – which is located east of Electoral Area B with a population of 2,014;
- Electoral Area D – which includes Texada Island, located south of the City with a population of 1,053; and
- Electoral Area E – which includes Lasqueti Island in the southern part of the Regional District with a population of 426.

The Regional District has limited resource-based industries in the form of mining, forestry, and aquaculture.

The Tla’amin Nation (formerly known as the Sliammon First Nation) obtained self-government status effective April 5, 2016 through the implementation of a treaty. The

Tla'amin Nation has a population of 1,077 within the principal community of the Sliammon village.

2.1.2 REASONS FOR THE STUDY

A. Issues Raised in the Gary Young and Associates 2014 Study (the “GYA 2014 Study”)

In 2014, the Regional District hired Gary Young and Associates (“GYA”) to determine the merits of implementing a regional recreation initiative. GYA held several focus group meetings with the Complex user groups in addition to undertaking a survey within the Regional District and the City. At that time, limited input was received from the Tla'amin Nation. The results of that study indicated that funding from the Regional District to assist in the operations of the Complex was warranted because of the large number of residents from the Regional District using the Complex. As well, the City indicated that the bookings of active fields should continue to be assigned to the recreation staff; otherwise no changes were made in current parks management operations. In the report it was further discussed that there is no driving force to merge the City parks and the regional parks into one entity and that the two systems are functioning well. The report further suggested that a proposed partnership could grow to encompass parks in the future. However, no changes were recommended at that time.

Reactions to that study by the various affected parties were mixed. While there was some support as to funding being provided by the Regional District, the exemption of park services raised concerns. The need to consider whether other services should be included for funding was desired before any determination could be made as to the amount of the funding contribution from the Regional District. Moreover, the Tla'amin Nation should have been involved as a full participant in the discussions around parks and recreational services. Although GYA made 5 recommendations within that study, the only recommendation implemented to date was to invite the Tla'amin Nation to participate in partnership discussions.

B. Current Partnering Arrangements

At present, all three local governments collaboratively participate in two agreements. These arrangements include regional health district services and regional emergency services. The collaboration of the three local governments in these arrangements should be considered when determining the degree of benefit of any regional recreation initiative.

2.1.3 PURPOSES OF THE EXPANDED REGIONAL RECREATION INITIATIVE STUDY

The overall purpose of this Expanded Regional Recreation Initiative Study (the "Study") is to examine parks, recreation, and cultural services within the Region to identify any issues or concerns in order to determine what, if any, parks, and recreation services could benefit from a regional approach. Specifically, the subordinate purposes of this Study are several:

- to identify what services are necessary to have a healthy community for all ages in the Region;
- to determine how regional recreation should proceed to support the goal of a healthy community;
- to indicate what services should be included in regional recreation; and
- to develop a ten-year plan showing the priorities in the areas of parks, recreation, and culture in the Region.

This Study will build upon current partnering arrangements and will expand upon the work identified in the GYA 2014 Study by:

- considering all service options for inclusion in a regional recreation initiative;
- reviewing those services and facilities already highlighted in the GYA 2014 Study;
- exploring additional services and facilities; and
- participating with the Tla'amin Nation, recognizing that the Tla'amin Nation's distinct arts and culture should be honoured in a respectful and collaborative manner.

Many potential opportunities for all parties could result from expanded involvement of the Regional District and the Tla'amin Nation in parks and recreation services such as:

- increased service levels for the programs;

- creation of capital reserves to ensure maintenance and utilization of different facilities;
- enhanced recreational and cultural programs throughout the Region;
- sharing of resources and expertise; and
- development of realistic short-term and long-range planning through collaboration.

Such enhancements could create parks, recreation and cultural services in the Region that is inclusive of all citizens and reflective of community values.

2.2 Methodology

The conduct of this Study included discussions with the three local governments, implementation of a communication program, the hosting of focus groups and public meetings, and the conducting of a survey.

In April and May of 2015, a report, accompanied by a presentation, was submitted to each local government. That report recommended the following:

- that an expanded regional recreation initiative study be approved with the scope of work to include all regional parks, golf course, trails, sports fields, community halls, recreational programs, Salish Centre, Arts and Culture, Powell River Recreation Complex, and Dwight Hall;
- that City staff take the lead role in the completion of a detailed study of the Regional Recreation Initiative and report back to the City of Powell River Council, Tla'amin Nation Legislature, and the Powell River Regional District Board to determine other services that should be included in this new initiative; and
- That the City of Powell River fund the completion of the study to a maximum of \$40,000.

Each local government gave its approval for the recommendations. Since that time, staff has conducted individual interviews with all elected officials in each of the local governments.

From September 2015 to April 2016, a communication program was initiated to raise awareness about the Study in the Region. Newspaper and radio advertisements were placed to inform the citizenry and posters were mounted in strategic locations with high public visibility. Newspaper articles were included to provide additional information about the Study.

From September 2015 to April 2016, focus group and public meetings were held to gauge the public's thoughts on parks and recreation in the Region. The focus groups were organized based on geographic areas, demographics, and types of user groups. In all, 55 focus group and public meetings were held in Lund, the Tla'amin Nation, Lang Bay, Kelly Creek, Texada Island, and the City with arts and culture groups, sports groups, various age groups and individuals participating in various programs. In addition, most elected officials from all three local governments were interviewed.

From February 2016 to April 2016, a regional survey was initiated. To start the survey process, City staff consulted a number of persons to ensure that the survey addresses the key areas of concern such as the use of different facilities, parks, programs, special needs, and services. Additionally, a letter was sent to each household in the Region to inform the citizens of the intent of the survey. Survey kiosks were subsequently set up in strategic locations throughout the Region to facilitate people's ability to participate in the survey. Citizens were also able to complete the survey by going on-line or by submitting a complete paper copy of the survey.

The survey received responses from 3,461 of the nearly 20,000 citizens eligible to participate in the survey of which 2,163 responses were useable. The responses can be further broken down by geographic areas as follows:

- City 13.2% (1,762/13,165)
- Electoral Area A 11.9% (130/1,088)
- Electoral Area B 10.4% (156/1,488)
- Electoral Area C 9.0% (182/2,014)
- Electoral Area D 9.9% (104/1,053)
- Tla'amin Nation 12% (130/1,077).

A region wide response of 9 to 13% to a voluntary survey is considered successful and indicative of a good representation across the population base.

2.3 Factors to Consider

This Study recognizes that various factors will have an impact on the analysis of the situation and the recommendations arising from the analysis. The factors include the following:

- demographics in general;
- needs of specific users;
- trends in the areas of parks, recreation, and culture;
- the benefits of parks, recreation, and cultural services for a community; and
- any barriers that impact a person's ability to participate in parks, recreation, and cultural services.

These factors are examined in more detail in the following sections.

2.3.1 DEMOGRAPHICS

The bulk of the population within the Region are 35 years of age and older. To be more specific, middle-aged adults (35 to 64 years old) constitute 46.9% of the population while senior adults (65 years and older) constitute 22.4%. Young adults (20 years to 34 years old) make up only 11.5 %. Collectively, adults in the Region make up 80.8% of the population whereas children and youth (0 to 19 years old) make up only 19.2% of the population.

The needs of the different demographic groups will have a significant impact upon the types of programs offered. For example, even within the senior adult population, there are different needs for those seniors who are 65 to 75 years old and have greater mobility and ability to participate in activities than the needs of those seniors who are more than 75 years old with reduced mobility and ability to participate in specific activities. The Region's ability to create a healthy community for all ages depends upon addressing the needs of the different demographic groups and sub groups.

The exact breakdown of the population for the Region is set out in Attachment No. 1 – Demographic Overview of the Region.

2.3.2 NEEDS OF SPECIFIC USERS

Demographics are not the only aspect of determining the needs of the citizens in terms of parks, recreation, and culture. Certain groups of people, irrespective of age, have specific needs and expectations for services. These groups include those persons with disabilities, dog owners, sports teams, arts and culture groups, and community groups and associations.

A. Persons with Disabilities

For persons with disabilities, accessibility and accommodation are significant concerns. Accessibility impacts not only their ability to get to the facilities to use the services, but also their ability to get into the facilities upon their arrival. As for accommodation, a number of the programs can be adapted to be inclusive of those who are physically challenged. However, these people may still require more assistance in the form of an aide to participate fully in those programs.

B. Dog Owners

There are no accurate estimates for the number of dogs within the Region. While the City has licensed 653 dogs in the City, this number does not reflect the actual number of dogs which are within the Region. This group of park users largely desire open areas located near their residences in which they can permit the dogs to be off-leash. The need for the dogs to have open space in which to run must be managed to minimize the impact on other park users in the area.

Even though a new dog park has been established and recently opened to the public in the City, some dog owners have been using the sports fields and parks throughout the region as open areas for their dogs to run off-leash. Those unleashed dogs cause significant damage to the sports field by digging holes in the playing areas and depositing excrement throughout the area. This damage has reduced the usability of the sports fields for others in the park, while increasing the costs of maintaining the sports fields. Steps need to be taken to minimize the impact of unleashed dogs in the sports fields and other parks and playgrounds.

C. Sports Teams

The Region has a diverse group of sports teams with 11 groups representing outdoor sports teams, clubs, and associations and 16 groups representing indoor sports teams, clubs, and associations. They are listed as follows:

Powell River Outdoor Sports Teams, Clubs, and Associations

- Baseball/Softball (6)
- Flying Club (1)
- Tennis/ Pickleball (2)
- Rod and Gun Club (1)
- Rugby Club (1)
- Soccer (3)
- Track and Field (1)
- Boating (3)
- Therapeutic Riding (1)
- Lawn Bowling Club (1)
- Archery (1)
- Trail Groups/Hikers
- Golf Club (1)
- Horseshoe Pitching Club (1)

Powell River Indoor Sports Teams, Clubs, and Associations

- Aquatic Club (1)
- Wheelchair Basketball/Disabled Sports (3)
- Boxing Club (1)
- Curling Club (1)
- Gymnastics Club (1)
- Hockey (4)
- Martial Arts (3)
- Roller Derby (1)
- Skating Club (1).
- Recreation Associations (2)
- Water Polo (1)
- Badminton Club (1)

Although these groups have specific, different needs based on the type of activity in which they are involved, they do have some general needs and challenges which are similar in nature. These groups all wish to access the facilities during the high demand use times which are preferred by their members. However, some groups do not use facilities owned by any of the local governments. Several of these groups would like to see sufficient facilities to enhance their ability to host tournaments and to practice their activities all year long. The notion of certain sports being limited to specific seasons has been eroding over time. When sports were limited to specific seasons of the year, there were few, if any, scheduling conflicts for the use of the

fields and facilities. Now that the sport seasons are extending beyond the traditional seasons of the year, scheduling conflicts are increasing amongst the sports. As well, extension of the sport seasons is having a significant impact on the maintenance of the sports fields as the wear and tear on the sports fields is increasing. Sports groups are also challenged in terms of recruiting members to play the sports and volunteers to assist in the operation of the associations which run the sports.

D. Community Groups and Associations

The Region has a diverse variety of community groups and associations beyond the sports clubs and associations. These groups can be broken down into the following categories and numbers within those categories:

- Arts and Cultural -- Music, Dance, Drama (25)
- Visual Arts (4)
- Youth and Teens (12)
- Environmental Groups (16)
- Seniors' Groups (3)
- Animals, Birds, and Insects (9)
- Military Organizations (6)
- Fund Raising Groups and Organizations (12)
- Agriculture and Gardening Groups (8)
- Political Groups (11)
- Religious and Spiritual Groups (13)
- Religious Youth Groups (4)
- Other Groups (6)
- Texada Island Groups (19)
- Powell River Special Events (18).

These groups play a vital role in the community as the Region relies heavily on them to provide various non department operated parks and recreation services. As noted with the sports teams and associations, these groups are challenged in terms of recruiting new members which, in turn, impacts the number of volunteers available to help with parks, recreation, and culture.

2.3.3 TRENDS IN PARKS, RECREATION, AND CULTURE

Several trends are emerging in parks, recreation and cultural services which will have a significant impact on the demand for services. These trends include demographic trends, the ability to participate in sports and recreation programs, the way people

participate in recreation, the impact of tourism on recreation, and the physical environment.

The biggest demographic trend indicates that the overall population is aging. When describing population cohorts and shifts in Canada and in British Columbia, roughly one-third of the population is between the ages of 40 to 59. It is estimated that by 2036, one-quarter of the population will be 85 years or older. In the meantime, the population of those who are aged 10 years and under is starting to build again. As such, recreation in general will be dealing with people at both ends of the life cycle and having to focus on meeting those population cohorts' needs.

A person's ability to participate in organized sports and recreation programs is affected by a person's economic status. Higher program costs are creating a situation in which those who have the financial means to pay program costs can participate in organized sports while those who are financially disadvantaged cannot participate. This economic disparity creates barriers in accessing recreation programs and services. To ensure all people can access recreation programs, the fees that people pay to participate in those programs must be kept low to be affordable. Many of these participants are not able to pay the actual costs of participating in the recreation programs and services and, as such, governments should consider what funding they would allocate towards the actual costs of the recreation programs and services.

Some steps have been taken by the City to assist those who are on provincial financial assistance with the costs of participating by means of 20 free passes to the Complex to offset those costs. At this point, only those who are on provincial financial assistance qualify to receive these free passes. Those people who are in the lower income bracket but not on financial assistance (often known as the "working poor") are ineligible to receive access to these passes.

There are two aspects to consider as to how people participate in recreation. National trends show one aspect is a marked decrease in structured recreation participation in general. However, in Powell River, registration in recreation programs is increasing. The other aspect is the way in which people participate in recreation, as people are moving away from organized activities to unstructured activities done by oneself or with a friend. More people are engaging in activities such as walking, cycling, kayaking, and gardening which can be done at a time that is convenient for the participant and at a location which many times does not require a physical structure. As such, the demand for more outdoor areas and indoor facilities that can be used for drop-in purposes where people can partake in these types of activities is increasing. People are leading more sedentary lifestyles as work and technology impact the time

people have to spend on recreational pursuits. The result of the sedentary lifestyles is a rise in obesity rates, which have a negative impact on health.

Other behavioural trends impacting recreation include changing preferences and expectations in recreational activities, time segmentation, reduced volunteerism, wellness and chronic disease, and inactivity.

Some trends in the recreation field impacts how recreation is handled now. These trends include:

- aging infrastructure;
- reduced levels of senior government funding;
- facilities designed as multi-purpose facilities rather than single purpose standalone facilities;
- increased partnerships with public health, libraries, and community services within the facilities;
- health of the environment;
- increased expectations that local governments will be environmentally sensitive in their operations and planning of the outdoors; and
- interest in climate change.

The Region relies on tourism as a major economic driver. People are drawn to the Region to enjoy the area as it is currently and an opportunity exists to promote recreational activities such as hiking trails or camping in the area. There is also a corresponding need for the Region to take steps to maintain the physical environment to sustain these recreational opportunities i.e. -- maintenance of the trails. Currently, many of the natural amenities enjoyed by tourists are maintained by different volunteer groups, who often shoulder the maintenance burdens beyond the traditional forms of volunteer maintenance such as the planning and construction of trails and providing regular maintenance of those trails. As some of the volunteer groups are experiencing a decrease in membership and require younger participants to join their groups, these groups can no longer maintain the level of volunteer service that they used to provide.

As more people come to the Region to fill their outdoor recreational needs, the demands on the physical environment will increase proportionately. The need to preserve open spaces and environmentally sensitive areas will be heightened to ensure there is enough space for all.

2.3.4 BENEFITS OF PARKS, RECREATION, AND CULTURAL SERVICES

People gain many benefits from participating in parks, recreation, and cultural services. On a personal level, people experience enhanced mental and physical wellbeing. At a community level, people experience enhanced social wellbeing as they connect with others through the programs and services. Strengthened social wellbeing for individuals helps to build strong families and communities. Often parks and recreation provide people with the opportunity to connect with the restorative aspects of nature. Investments in parks, recreation and culture pay off in terms of economic benefits for the community.

2.3.5 BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION

A. Common Barriers

Consultation with the focus groups identified several barriers for citizens in terms of participation in parks, recreation, and cultural services. General barriers to participation are financial, transportation, communications, lack of specific services and lack of interest. Although facility accessibility was only mentioned within the City focus groups and not mentioned in the focus group meetings held in the Regional District and the Tla'amin Nation, the age of the existing facilities in the Regional District and the Tla'amin Nation should be included as a common barrier within the Region. The problems with accessibility arise for persons with disabilities being able to enter the facilities and participate in the types of programs that are available.

In terms of financial barriers, a portion of the Region's population are living in poverty or with low, fixed incomes and therefore cannot afford to participate in recreation services which have a fee associated with the service. The costs of providing recreation services have been increasing over the years and financial support has not kept up with the demand.

The ability to get to recreation services has an impact on the ability to participate in those services. Transportation limits impact many citizens, in particular, seniors and those with disabilities, to be socially involved in the community and to partake in recreation programs which can increase their social involvement. For example, limited handi-dart services impact not only seniors' mobility but also the mobility issues of people with disabilities. Focus group participants also mentioned that bus schedules and routes are inconvenient to those wishing to use public transit to get to the recreation facilities.

Effective communications about parks, recreation and cultural services could be enhanced. Focus group participants noted a lack of communication from the

governments to the public exists in programs and services. So, the Region's citizens are not aware of the various programs offered by the three local governments.

Some of the focus group participants commented on the lack of specific services such as facilities for certain activities, funding for recreational facilities and accessibility to name a few. These types of services would assist in better serving the diverse groups within the Region.

Other focus group participants commented that the current offering of programs and services did not appeal to the participants. They indicated that a lack of interest in what was being offered can form a barrier to participation.

B. Barriers Specific to Certain Communities

While there are some general barriers to participation which apply across the Region, there are also some specific barriers which pertain to the specific government jurisdictions.

A barrier specific to the City is that arts, culture, sports, and other groups rely on volunteers to offer their services. The limited number of volunteers is having an impact on their ability to rely on the volunteers to supplement the services provided by their organizations.

While the limited number of volunteers is also a barrier for the Regional District, the biggest barrier for the Regional District is the lack of willingness for some of the citizens to be involved in any type of regional recreation initiatives. Based on the survey results, 60% of persons living outside of the City's boundaries would support contributing through their property taxes towards the parks, recreation and cultural services offered by the City. However, the participants in the focus group at Texada Island had a contrary viewpoint and strongly indicated that they have no desire to become involved in such an initiative. It is worthwhile to note that Texada Island has an aging population with very limited public transportation available to meet the population's needs.

The most significant barrier for the Tla'amin Nation is the degree to which the Tla'amin Nation feels a part of the Region. The relationship between the Tla'amin Nation and the other local governments is improving; however, it still requires some work to strengthen the ties between the communities. Those from the Tla'amin Nation expressed feeling uncomfortable and unwelcomed to participate in community life in the Region.

2.4 Points to Note

2.4.1 DESIGN OF THE REPORT

The rest of the report will focus on specific aspects of parks, recreation, and cultural services. Attention will be placed on:

- recreation services;
- parks and open spaces and outdoor activities;
- arts, culture, heritage;
- specific types of amenities;
- recreational facilities;
- partnerships; and
- financial considerations.

The report will set out the current situation pertaining to the topic, outline gaps revealed during the Study, and articulate recommendations for that specific topic. As well, various charts and tables will be mentioned as required in the body of the report.

To assist the reader, a list of the attachments based on the order in which the attachments are mentioned will precede the attachments themselves. A summary of the recommendations is located at the end of the report.

2.4.2 GLOSSARY

Throughout this report, the following terms will be used to refer to certain persons, organizations, and facilities.

City - means the City of Powell River.

Complex - means the Power River Recreation Complex.

GYA 2014 Study - means the regional recreation initiative study conducted in 2014 by Gary Young and Associates.

Historical Museum - means the Powell River Historical Museum and Archives.

RD Parks Plan - means the 2010 Regional District Parks and Greenspace Plan done in 2010.

Region - means the Powell River geographic area and includes the jurisdictions of the City, the Regional District, and the Tla'amin Nation.

Regional District - means the Powell River Regional District.

Study - means the Expanded Regional Recreation Initiative Study conducted in 2016.

Tla'amin Nation - means the Tla'amin Nation.

3.0 Recreation Services

This part of the report will examine the recreation programs offered in the Region, with comments on programs for specific demographics.

3.1 Recreational Programs in General

3.1.1 GENERAL COMMENTS

Focus group participants are generally satisfied with the instructors and the variety of the recreation programs offered by the City. In the recent survey, however, respondents indicated that, overall, they felt that the programs operated at the Complex are considered average. In 2015, changes were made to the recreation program area of the department to address issues discussed in the GYA 2014 Study and an internal review of program offerings by the department. These changes included the creation of four distinct program streams including aquatic programs, arena and sports programs, community recreation programs and health and fitness programs. With these changes, the City is determined to ensure that the citizens of the Region have greater opportunities to participate in a variety of recreational programs. Although these changes have been put into place, it is not known how many people have had the chance to participate in programs at the Complex since these changes were initiated and whether these changes would increase the respondent's satisfaction with those programs.

While the City offers a variety of recreation programs in four main program streams, the recreation programs offered by the Regional District and the Tla'amin Nation are more limited. In Electoral Area A, the Lund Community Society would like to see greater use of the Lund Community Centre. Many of the recreation programs offered use volunteers to operate them. In the past, programs such as sports days were offered, but because of limited available funding, more programs could not be offered. The focus group participants wanted to see programs such as soccer offered and free opportunities to try programs at the beginning of the program session like what is offered at the Complex.

Electoral Area B does not have any direct programs. Focus group participants indicated they would like to see additional programs offered at the Paradise Exhibition Grounds to assist in getting better use of the buildings on the site and grounds.

In Electoral Area C, residents have access to programs offered by Kelly Creek Community School and Lang Bay Hall. Funding for recreation programs offered by Kelly Creek Community School is provided to the local community committee that oversees the various programs and is financed through the taxpayers of Electoral

Area C. Part of the funding received is used to employ two coordinators who run a number of recreational programs, such as after school sports, arts, games, and music. There are also minimal programs offered through Lang Bay Hall by interested instructors who rent the hall and by the volunteers that operate the Hall. The Lang Bay Hall committee would like to see more use of the hall with the offering of additional recreation programs. People living in this area would like to see additional no-cost drop in programs to create social opportunities for the residents.

In Electoral Area D (Texada Island) many programs are operated by volunteers. The recreation function for Texada Island is administered by the Texada Recreation Commission. Funding for this commission is provided through taxation from Island residents. This group's main function is the administration of the community halls, not in providing recreation programs. The focus group participants mentioned that they have an active seniors' center with some recreational programs. They also have access to the local school gym, but were not sure how well the gym was used. The residents are concerned with the aging population and a need to provide structured activities to keep people healthy, mainly seniors and persons with disabilities. It was also mentioned that additional social opportunities would be welcomed. Texada Island has an aging population with many on fixed incomes who are concerned with increased taxation. They also feel that if the Island community needs something, they will provide it themselves.

The Tla'amin Nation has a limited number of recreation programs, all of which are offered by staff at Tla'amin Health. Employees that provide recreation services included youth workers and an elders coordinator. The focus group participants indicated that the Tla'amin Nation rents the Complex pool weekly for their citizens and, in the past, there was an exceptional soccer program offered. The focus group participants wanted to see programs offered in collaboration with School District No. 47 and Vancouver Coastal Health and wondered how these organizations would work within a new regional recreation function. Both the Tla'amin Nation citizens as well as land leaseholders would like to see more activities offered at the Salish Centre. Because of the limited number and types of recreation programs offered, many residents in the City, the Regional District and the Tla'amin Nation participate in the recreation programs offered at the Complex¹. However, there is an interest in having the recreation programs offered at the Complex being brought out to the rural areas of the Regional District and to the Tla'amin lands. Through focus groups meetings held in Electoral Areas A, B and C, there was an interest in having the City operate recreational programs in these areas.

¹ The exception to this would be the residents in Electoral Area D. It is difficult for the residents on Texada Island in Electoral Area D to access the programs at the Complex because of the costs of the ferry and the times when the ferries are operational.

With the interest shown by citizens in Electoral Areas A and B and the Tla'amin Nation, there is a definite need for offering recreational programs in the area. With the existing recreation staff in place at the Kelly Creek Community School in Electoral Area C, there is an opportunity to work with existing staff members as well using the City Recreation Coordinators to enhance recreation programs in Electoral Area C.

With the approval of this Study, programs will be organized by the recreation coordinators located at the Complex. The types of programs in these areas will be determined through meetings between staff and the local communities as well as through the use of surveys. Staff will also research national and provincial trends to determine other program opportunities. Finally, many dry land programs presently offered at the Complex will also be offered throughout the region.

Offering these programs outside the Complex have many advantages such as people having the ability to participate in recreation programs closer to home, thereby reducing the need to travel. These programs can also be offered in the local schools located within the City boundaries making it easier for the public to participate in programs in their own neighbourhoods.

These program opportunities do not have to be paid programs. Low cost and no cost opportunities can be created closer to home in local parks with the installation of new equipment and in local community halls through sponsorship opportunities.

3.1.2 AREAS OF CONCERN

The costs of participating in recreation programs can be an issue for some residents, in particular, older residents and other residents who do not have the disposable income to participate in recreation programs.

Attending activities and programs at the Complex is not always easy for some residents because of the time it takes them to travel to the Complex and the mode of transportation they must take to get to the Complex. These challenges certainly have an impact on the numbers of those who are enrolled in any recreation programs offered in the early evening hours and at night.

It is time to offer all residents access to direct programs within the various community halls located in the Electoral Areas and the Tla'amin Nation at the Salish Centre. Another opportunity would be to also offer programming throughout all the schools. This would enable Regional District residents, the Tla'amin Nation and City residents to access programs closer to home.

3.1.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 *That the three local governments consider providing more no cost and low cost recreation programs for all residents.*
- 3.2 *That the three local governments offer additional programs using School District No. 47 schools and the Outdoor Learning Centre.*
- 3.3 *That the three local governments seek sponsorships from community businesses wherever possible to offer free public swim and skating sessions.*
- 3.4 *That the three local governments offer recreation programs, as part of a new parks, recreation, and cultural service in the Regional District and the Tla'amin, Nation areas, except in Electoral Area E.*

3.2 Recreation Programs for Children and Youth

3.2.1 GENERAL COMMENTS AND AREAS OF CONCERN

The focus group meetings identified some areas of concern in terms of children and youth recreation programming. Children and youth with disability issues are not able to participate to the degree they would like in certain recreation programs. In the past, there were integrated day camps. With the assistance of helpers working with the people with disabilities, integration of people with disabilities into all recreation programs should be encouraged. The focus groups also thought it would be beneficial to have program offerings and activities in which the whole family could participate as a means of strengthening family bonds while encouraging fitness for all members of the family. As well, special events such as Canada Day celebrations lend themselves well to family recreational activities. Costs to participate in recreation for lower income families can be a significant barrier to the children becoming involved in recreation.

The youth in the Region are requesting a wider spectrum of program offerings. They would like to see programming that focuses on social opportunities, leadership development and organized trips. During the focus group meetings with youth, participants indicated that they would like to be consulted concerning the ways in which to involve the youth in health, fitness, and recreational activities. Also during those meetings, there was not much discussion about having a youth drop-in center. However, this type of facility may become desirable to have as the Region's youth population increases.

3.2.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.5 *That the three local governments work with disability service providers to create more integration of children with disabilities into the day camps and other programs.*
- 3.6 *That the three local governments develop additional sport development program opportunities for those who are disabled.*
- 3.7 *That the three local governments develop additional sport development and sports tourism opportunities.*
- 3.8 *That the three local governments' staff meet with the City's Youth Council to determine the recreational programming and services needs of youth living in the Region.*

- 3.9 *That the three local governments look for ways to offer programs in partnerships with other organizations.*
- 3.10 *That the three local governments examine whether a youth drop-in center is needed in the Region.*
- 3.11 *That the three local governments develop more recreation programs for families to do together.*
- 3.12 *That the Region consider how it accesses other forms of financial assistance to help fund recreational programming for lower income families such as the Canadian Tire Jump Start Program.*
- 3.13 *That the three local governments meet with youth annually to discuss program needs and opportunities.*
- 3.14 *That the three local governments consider additional youth programs that focus on social opportunities and leadership development.*

3.3 Recreation Programs for Adults

3.3.1 GENERAL COMMENTS AND AREAS OF CONCERN

The City offers a variety of recreation programs for adults on land and in the water. However, the existing programs being offered may not be suitable for the needs of the entire adult population. For example, some of the clientele who want to take the recreation programs are young mothers who have limited time available to partake in recreation. Given the busy lives that adults are leading, adults tend to prefer drop-in programs or visits to the fitness rooms which provide the best options for them to accommodate their schedules.

Because more adults are choosing to pursue solitary fitness routines, the Complex's fitness room is being used more and more. The increased use of the equipment in the fitness room is revealing the need for the equipment and the flooring in the Dogwood Room and other program spaces to be replaced or upgraded.

One type of recreation program that has been growing in popularity is yoga. Ideally, yoga classes would be offered in a yoga studio which has controlled heating and floors that can give the participants the necessary comfort and support. At the Complex, yoga classes are being offered in the multi-purpose meeting spaces which are limiting the class participants' yoga experience.

3.3.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.15 *That the existing fitness equipment located in the Complex fitness room be replaced.*
- 3.16 *That the area in the fitness room be expanded to obtain additional space for warm-ups and for use of the free weights.*
- 3.17 *That the flooring in all fitness spaces in the Complex be inspected and replaced as required.*
- 3.18 *That a facility use survey be completed to explore room functionality for the suitability of recreation programming.*
- 3.19 *That the City explore and implement other drop-in programs to accommodate adult schedules.*
- 3.20 *That the Complex fitness equipment be evaluated annually to determine if present equipment is meeting community demands.*

3.4 Recreation Programs for Seniors

3.4.1 GENERAL COMMENTS

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities publication *Seniors and Housing: The Challenge Ahead* (2015) reported that Canada has an aging population. Based on current trends, it is expected that the senior citizen population will constitute 1 in 4 Canadians by 2036. The Region should take steps now to plan for and to accommodate the projected increases in this demographic group.

It is important to note that the senior citizen demographic in the Region is not a homogeneous group since there are two distinct groups of people falling within this age category. The first group consists of the baby boomers (born between 1946 and 1964) that are still active and want to engage in recreational activities that challenge them. The second group consists of the generation preceding the baby boomers that may not be as active as the baby boomers but still wish to be part of a community. Appropriate recreation programs for the older seniors provides social opportunities for those seniors who are living alone to avoid becoming socially isolated.

Seniors have different needs and concerns for recreation programming than the rest of the adult population. Since many of the seniors are no longer in the workforce and are living on a fixed income, the costs of programs are a significant factor in whether the seniors will be signing up for the program or not. Because many of the seniors must rely on public transportation or friends and family to take them to different locations, seniors tend to prefer programs that happen during daylight hours.

To better serve the senior population in the Region, the City has begun to offer fitness programs specifically geared towards seniors as well as a free swimming session once a month. The City has operated many programs that seniors have registered to take at the Complex, even though those programs were not limited to seniors only. The seniors who have registered for those programs appreciate interacting with different age groups and have indicated that they would like to see more multi-generational programs offered at the Complex. Along those lines, creating opportunities for increased interaction outside of registered programs between the youth and the seniors in the Region could also form part of a multi-generational inclusivity.

The City is not the only organization in the Region which provides services for the senior population. The Cranberry Seniors' Centre, which is part of the second largest seniors' association in the province, operates many programs throughout the year. Until recently, the City did not provide any programming at the Cranberry Seniors' Centre and, moreover, still does not provide any funding to this center. The other seniors' group in the Region is found within the Tla'amin Nation and on Texada Island. In the Tla'amin Nation, the Elders have their own programs offered through Tla'amin Health. To assist the highly-regarded seniors' population, the Tla'amin Nation has an elders coordinator. There is an Elders group that meets every Tuesday and is built around a weekly Elders gathering for lunch. Following lunch, the Elders meet and have presentations, discussions or talks based on the theme of the meeting.

There is a registered nurse working at the Tla'amin Nation providing home and community care, which is Elder-focused. The home and community nurse has staff reporting to her, including a licensed practical nurse, plus up to five home care workers, providing home care services to those that need further assistance or

support at home. It is estimated that the cost for services to seniors and Elders for staffing, programming and in-kind facilities is about \$400,000.

In Electoral Area D (Texada Island), the seniors meet on a regular basis and participate in programs such as tai chi, yoga, and organized hikes twice per week. According to the president of the Texada Seniors' Council, the seniors' activities tend to be more ad hoc than organized. The tendency for most seniors on Texada Island is to walk, hike or bike in the many outstanding outdoor locations that the island offers. Islanders with mobility issues enjoy getting outdoors on their scooters and taking in the sights and sounds in the fresh air.

The mainstay of seniors' activities on Texada Island is the social component. The senior's council holds monthly meetings where seniors can get together, often for pot luck events. There are many social groups and organizations on the island, ranging from a quilting group to the island branch of the Royal Canadian Legion. The Legion president indicated there is a strong social network for seniors on the island, which is vital, given that transportation availability and costs can make it difficult for many to leave the island, especially those on fixed incomes.

3.4.2 AREAS OF CONCERN

While there are several organizations which provide services to seniors, there is little coordination between these organizations now. If these organizations worked together more closely, the combined effort of these organizations would go a long way to improving the lives of seniors in the Region while creating synergistic efficiencies in the organization. For example, the Cranberry Seniors' Centre offers many programs and services geared towards seniors, programs, and services that seniors would likely expect the City to provide if this center did not do so. However, marketing of these programs and services has been limited to notifications at the center itself and the placement of brochures at specific locations around the community. The City has recently started to provide a page in the Active Living Guide for the Cranberry Seniors' Centre to advertise their programs and services at no cost to the Cranberry Seniors' Centre. In this way, the Cranberry Seniors' Centre can expand its marketing efforts while the City does not have to duplicate the provisions of certain programs and services that the senior population needs.

Insufficient funding for the seniors' groups has an impact on those groups' ability to meet the needs of seniors. These groups cannot look to the senior population that they serve to bear the full costs of the service provision. Consideration should be given to government funding of some kind towards these groups which are performing a needed service for the community.

As mentioned earlier in this section, transportation is a concern that significantly impacts a senior's ability to engage in recreational activities. A possible service that could be provided is a transportation service that seniors can access to attend evening activities at the Cranberry Seniors' Centre.

3.4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.21 *That all service providers for seniors meet on a regular basis with seniors living in the Region to determine the needs of seniors.*
- 3.22 *That strategies be developed to assist in keeping seniors active and creating an age-friendly community.*
- 3.23 *That the Region complete a study to determine readiness to accommodate an increased seniors' population.*
- 3.24 *That the City's recreation financial assistance program be expanded to accommodate all seniors living in the Region who are living at poverty levels but wish to participate in recreation programs and that the costs be shared by all three local governments.*
- 3.25 *That the three local governments provide funding for seniors' centers to assist with those centers' operating costs.*
- 3.26 *That the City investigates ways in which to assist Cranberry Seniors' Centre in the operation of programs for seniors.*
- 3.27 *That opportunities for multi-generational programs between seniors and younger generations be developed.*
- 3.28 *That a working group be implemented to develop opportunities for seniors to volunteer in the community, in particular, with the Region's younger generations.*

3.29 *That a program be developed to assist local students to volunteer their time or to earn an hourly wage while helping in the operations of the seniors' centers.*

3.5 Recreation Programs for Persons with Disabilities

3.5.1 GENERAL COMMENTS

The provincial average for the number of people receiving disability assistance has been increasing steadily on an annual basis since 1995. It would not be unreasonable to assume that the number of people in this demographic group is increasing in the Region as well, considering the low-cost of living associated with the area and the services available to them in the Region.

The survey conducted for this Study specifically asked questions pertaining to recreation services for persons with disabilities. Survey respondents felt that program suitability, availability of programming and ease of accessibility in the Complex for people with physical disabilities is only average. When the survey asked whether existing programs offered for those persons with these challenges were of interest, the responses varied with the majority giving it only an average rating.

There is some limited funding available to offset the costs of recreational programs for those persons receiving provincial social assistance funding. Limited funding is also available for those receiving disability pensions. At present, the City offers 20 free passes a year for any person receiving income assistance. The City conducted a review of what other local governments were doing to assist those who are financially disadvantaged and found that the other local governments were providing more in the way of assistance to these persons. Depending upon the local government, the number of passes issued varied considerably and some provided discounts or free programs.

3.5.2 AREAS OF CONCERN

Although many of the facilities meet building codes for accessibility access based on the codes of the day when they were constructed, these facilities did not consider accessibility for all persons, including the elderly and those with disabilities that use newer types of wheelchairs and scooters to get around. Participants in the focus group meetings supported the need to improve accessibility to public recreation

facilities², in particular, with access to the Complex. Because of the age of the other Regional and Tla'amin Nation facilities, improvements for accessibility are likely needed at the other recreation facilities as well.

While the area of transportation is outside the scope of this Study, transportation remains an issue for persons with disabilities. People who are physically challenged find that their ability to participate in recreation at the facilities is limited by the schedule and routes for public transportation.

Considering the tepid ratings for meeting the recreation needs of persons with disabilities, the Region would do well to look at how it is communicating with organizations that serve that part of the community to get better information on how to improve recreation services. Staff training in communicating with persons with disabilities would create a more welcoming environment for all residents.

3.5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.30 *That recreation facilities be assessed to determine the types of modifications required to improve accessibility.*
- 3.31 *That the three local governments assess their programs in terms of meeting the needs of persons who are disabled.*
- 3.32 *That the three local governments consider different ways to improve the recreation financial assistance program to improve the opportunities for all persons receiving government assistance as well as those living in poverty to participate in recreation programs.*
- 3.33 *That the three local governments take the lead in scheduling quarterly meetings with all groups providing services for the disabled community.*
- 3.34 *That the three local governments work with agencies providing services for members of the disabled community to develop a vision for the disabled in parks, recreation, and cultural services.*

3.6 Recreation Programs – Health and Fitness

² This same level of support was not reflected in the survey results.

3.6.1 GENERAL COMMENTS

The significant portion of the population in the Region has a definite view about maintaining health. 69% of survey respondents felt that making healthy lifestyle choices with good nutrition and regular activity for themselves and their families is very important while 24% of the respondents thought that it was somewhat important. Considering that opinion, most survey respondents indicated that there are things they can do to improve their health and that they have made an effort to improve their health in the past 12 months. With this type of mindset in the population, residents will be looking for other ways to improve their health and for programs and services to assist with this improvement.

While people want to live healthier lifestyles, there are some forces at work which are counterproductive to achieving that standard. The main force is general inactivity of the population. Activity for adults has been a challenge as adults try to achieve a work-life balance. With many commitments drawing on people's limited time, physical activity is usually one of the areas which is sacrificed. Computers, tablets, and video games are a major factor for youth being inactive. The impact of this inactivity comes at a cost as it is estimated that 50% of sicknesses arise from a person's lifestyle³.

An increased level of physical activity not only improves an individual's health level, but provides opportunity to increase social connections as well. Improved social connections create a positive feedback loop which impacts social, emotional, and physical wellbeing. Activities which foster social connections should be encouraged in the Region and the governments would do well to seek opportunities in which to assist these activities. For example, the City of North Vancouver provides funding for neighbourhood block parties.

One of the goals of recreation programming in this Region is to enable the Region to become the healthiest and the most active region in the province. Given the aging population in the Region⁴, all three governments should offer more programs to help keep the population healthy. To achieve this goal, recreation programming should

³ Lifestyle has many components such as income, early childhood development, education, social safety net, social inclusion, community belonging, employment and working conditions, safe and nutritious foods, and housing. Gender, race, aboriginal status, and disability also play a part in a person's life.

⁴ In 2011, Canada Census showed the median age in the province was 41.9 years old whereas the median age in the Region is 50.1 years old.

encourage people to try something new, to focus on increasing the activity levels of all age groups and to create social opportunities which incorporate physical activities.

There are programs in place at the provincial level to assist in developing more healthy opportunities. In 2015, the province adopted a physical activity strategy called *Active People, Active Places*. This strategy highlights several strategies that can be used to help people of all ages to increase their physical activity levels.

3.6.2 AREAS OF CONCERN

One of the easier ways to encourage people to become more active is to provide no cost or low cost activities for people to do. Walking and bicycling are simple yet effective low cost activities that people can do when it works for their schedules. However, people are less likely to participate in these activities if they are concerned about their safety and if certain parameters are not in place. At this point, there are inconsistent bike lanes throughout the Region. The lack of connectivity between neighbourhoods and the trails reduces people's inclinations to go for a walk. New or upgraded infrastructure for bike lanes and walking trails would provide low to no cost opportunities for people to become more active in the Region.

The goal of making the Region one of the healthiest and the most active in the province cannot be accomplished by one organization in isolation. Partnerships with agencies such as Vancouver Coastal Health, Tla'amin Health, the Division of Family Practitioners, and other health service providers, will enable the Region to offer more services and programs to help people to become more active and healthy. In addition, the inclusion of services by businesses dealing in rehabilitation would be helpful for those residents who have needs for those types of services. An example may be the leasing of spaces in recreational facilities for physiotherapists and chiropractors which would give people easier access to these types of health care professionals.

There are gaps in providing safe, active, and healthy places and activities which help to foster social connectedness. At present, the Region holds many large events which provide residents opportunities to socialize. The large events are held mainly during the summer months. However, there is nothing on a smaller neighbourhood scale or offered year-round which could be used to support social connectedness.

Other no cost or low cost activities and services that should be considered to encourage greater participation include the placement of outdoor fitness equipment in strategic locations throughout the region, in addition to playground equipment and skill areas such as disc golf courses placed in existing public parks.

3.6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.35 *That the three local governments develop a “Healthy Region Strategy” which can incorporate some of the strategies set out in the province’s Active People, Active Places program.*
- 3.36 *That the City create more social opportunities for interactions by the residents, such as:*
- a) providing funding for the development of block party programs to promote the strengthening of neighbourhoods;*
 - b) working with community organizations to increase social connection opportunities;*
 - c) creating get-togethers on a weekly or monthly basis at the recreation facilities; or*
 - d) developing social opportunities that are free or low cost such as sit-down activities with coffee and cookies to active programs that are offered in parks or indoors.*
- 3.37 *That the three local governments work together to develop an active transportation plan to allow people to incorporate walking and biking into their daily lives.*
- 3.38 *That the three local governments create safe biking lanes throughout the Region.*
- 3.39 *That the three local governments work to develop more partnerships and resources for chronic disease and rehabilitation with other health agencies and service providers such as Vancouver Coastal Health.*
- 3.40 *That the City explore opportunities for businesses such as physiotherapists and chiropractors to lease space at the Complex.*
- 3.41 *That the three local governments consider providing additional no cost and low cost services such as the installation of outdoor fitness equipment, the*

introduction of additional playground equipment and skill areas such as disc golf placed in existing public parks.

3.7 Special Events

3.7.1 GENERAL COMMENTS

Special events are a unique form of recreation programming, attracting many residents and tourists alike to partake in something that is generally limited to a few days at most. Many outdoor large special events occur throughout the Region in the spring and summer months, varying in terms of size and description⁵. Often the outdoor special events take place in parks, attracting from a few hundred people up to 20,000 people or more. Generally, the outdoor special events range in duration from one-half day to several days. The variability in terms of size and anticipated attendance also varies when dealing with indoor special events, such as Junior Hockey games and tournaments. Cultural events, such as the Festival of the Arts, PRISMA and Kathaumixw, are also classified as special events.

3.7.2 AREAS OF CONCERN

As more and more special events are held throughout the Region, the lack of coordination between the events is becoming apparent. More coordination between the groups holding the events would keep the special events from being offered at the same time as other special events which thereby diminishes attendance at all special events. Many of these special events rely upon the same service groups and volunteer pool to assist in the staging and running of the special event. If the special events are offered at the same time, there may not be enough volunteers available to put on the event or may impact attendance at each event. A coordinated regional approach to handle special events could help with organizing the needed volunteers while decreasing the potential of volunteer “burn-out”.

Special events, if not managed properly, can have a significant impact on the neighbourhoods surrounding the facilities at which the special events are being held in terms of increased traffic volumes, crowded parking, unruly patrons at the special

⁵ Not all outdoor special events are as large as those described here.

events and increased noise volumes. A coordinated regional approach to managing special events can assist in mitigating many of these neighbourhood impacts.

While these special events may differ in terms of reasons for the events, these special events still have many common challenges and issues to be resolved. For example, the Region's infrastructure is not sufficient to host many of the larger events operated in the Region. The Complex was not designed to accommodate larger events because of its lack of a sprinkler system throughout the building. The outdoor infrastructure deficiencies include a lack of permanent seating areas, inadequate washroom facilities, the need for portable bleachers and picnic tables, and insufficient electrical supply to power acoustic equipment, to name a few. Needless to say, additional costs are incurred by the user group or by the government to provide this infrastructure on a temporary basis. Also, the special event itself can have an impact on the existing infrastructure which may require additional maintenance to compensate for the extra wear and tear on the facilities. As well, the host jurisdiction must have additional staff members on hand to assist.

Often food is an important component of a special event and thus food safety is a priority concern. Since concessions at these facilities are few in number, many of the foods being offered at these special events are served by people operating from food preparation wagons and carts. Care should be taken to ensure that food providers have met all minimum health standards required to serve the food. Vancouver Coastal Health is the agency with the authority to ensure that these health standards are met.

Large crowds of people at special events usually means emergency response is required to deal with incidents that may arise during the special events. However, provision for adequate emergency response is not always incorporated when organizers are planning a special event. At times, organizers have not put procedures into place to deal with emergencies, and thus, sizable special events create problems for the local RCMP detachments and fire departments that may not have additional staff on hand to deal with special event emergencies. Special event organizers should include provision for trained security to be on hand to deal with the crowds.

Sometimes the large crowds at special events mean that bylaw violations can occur. The City has a limited number of bylaw enforcement staff to deal with the bylaw

violations that occur within the City's jurisdiction. A lack of regulatory bylaws enacted within the Regional District means that the RCMP is limited as to what actions it can take, which are largely violations of the Criminal Code.

3.7.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.42 *That the three local governments develop a coordinated program to handle special events in the community with procedures established for the operation of special events including pre- and post-event meetings with all stakeholders.*
- 3.43 *That all food providers at any special event in the Region must be inspected and approved by Vancouver Coastal Health prior to operating at the special event.*
- 3.44 *That joint emergency training exercises involving all three local governments, the RCMP, fire and ambulance services be held to plan for emergencies during special events.*
- 3.45 *That adequate numbers of trained security guards be made a requirement for part of the approval for holding a special event.*
- 3.46 *That the City consider bringing on additional bylaw staff during special events.*
- 3.47 *That the Regional District and the Tla'amin Nation consider adopting regulatory bylaws or laws to assist with the hosting of special events in their jurisdictions.*

4.0 Parks, Open Spaces, and Outdoor Activities

The Region has an abundance of natural resources which lend themselves to outdoor recreational opportunities. The citizens benefit significantly when they strengthen their connections to nature, since people's inherent need to connect with the natural world improves cognitive, mental, and physical health and enhances creativity and social behaviours. The results of the survey confirmed that parks and open spaces are very important to the residents of the Region.

This part of the Study will examine various components which create these outdoor recreational opportunities.

4.1 Regional Parks

4.1.1 GENERAL COMMENTS

The Region has a variety of regional parks which include Craig Park, Haywire Bay Park, Shelter Point Park, Palm Beach Park, Myrtle Rocks Park, Boot Point, Divers Rock, and Paradise Exhibition Park. The Regional District also provides leased land at the Haywire Regional Park to School District No. 47 which operates the Outdoor Education Centre. These regional parks are well attended by all citizens in the Region. For example, the survey indicated that 71% of those responding use the regional parks with Haywire Bay and Palm Beach being the most visited parks, with an average of 11.4 visits per capita per year each, followed by Paradise Exhibition Grounds with an average of 10.6 visits per capita per year. Not only are the citizens using these parks, these citizens are generally satisfied with the quality of the regional parks.

Two concerns identified in the focus group meetings are old growth forests and the protection of the environment throughout the back country. Many citizens in Electoral Area C and elsewhere indicated that they are proponents for the Stillwater Bluffs to become a regional park. Responses from Electoral Area C show a desire to develop more park space and improve access in the back country. In this regard, the focus group meetings revealed an interest in more passive parks as a priority over more sport fields.

With respect to Paradise Exhibition Grounds, the Region's farmers' market is held there on weekends and is an important asset to the Region. A volunteer board, which struggles with many of the same challenges identified for other volunteer organizations, manages the exhibition grounds. The volunteer board is looking for new ways to promote the exhibition grounds and to generate revenue to support the facilities and grounds.

4.1.2 AREAS OF CONCERNS

In 2010, the Regional District created the RD Parks Plan which outlined specific objectives such as:

- to protect areas of significant ecological value;
- to ensure the availability of public areas for passive and active recreation for future generations;
- to preserve and enhance the Region's aesthetic/scenic qualities for the enjoyment of residents and visitors; and
- to develop a parks and greenspace acquisition strategy.

This plan was designed to assist the Regional District in prioritizing realistic, short to medium term investments and to facilitate acquisition strategies, funding, and overall park development over the next ten years. The RD Parks Plan highlighted that limited resources and limited authority, in some cases, are available to enact the strategies contained in the RD Parks Plan. Therefore, cooperation and participation of the various government agencies, private interests and community volunteers is vital to this plan's success.

The RD Parks Plan included many recommendations, some of which have already been implemented and include the creation of a regional trails plan, an increase in the number of beach accesses and the creation of a Parks and Greenspace Advisory Commission. However, the remaining recommendations should be reviewed to consider the large costs associated with implementing this plan. Existing funding in the current parks reserve account is being used to fund existing capital projects. The current tax requisitions for the regional parks services at a rate of \$0.10 per \$1,000.00 is close to the maximum limit set by the existing Regional Park Conversion and Services Establishment Bylaw. The Regional District may increase the tax requisition only by 25% over a five-year period without approval. This makes the creation of a reserve impossible without the approval of the Inspector of Municipalities.

While the Regional District is principally responsible for the regional parks, the other local governments have a role to play in the regional parks. Before the RD Parks Plan should be implemented, the costing of the plan and the participation of the Tla'amin Nation must be determined. The implementation of the RD Parks Plan would assist in developing a regional approach to regional parks. The final priorities identified by the elected officials in the RD Parks Plan would form the basis of a regional plan, building upon work already completed.

Parks management plans would provide guidance as to how those parks are used and developed and what maintenance standards are to be followed to ensure continued enjoyment of the parks. However, these plans need staffing resources to ensure the plans are implemented and managed.

An often mentioned area of concern is the lack of roadway signage directing the public to the parks and park signage indicating what is expected within the parks such as park hours and management of domestic animals.

4.1.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 *That a parks planner position and a manager of parks and open spaces be created as part of a single parks, recreation, and cultural service.*
- 4.2 *That the recommendations made in the RD Parks Plan;*
 - a) *be fully reviewed;*
 - b) *put in priority of importance; and*
 - c) *be costed**before being presented to the three local governments.*
- 4.3 *That a detailed 10-year operations financial plan for all parks and open spaces in the Region be developed.*
- 4.4 *That an alternative approval process be held to secure the required funding to implement the 10-year financial plan.*
- 4.5 *That park management plans be adopted for each of the regional parks and open spaces in the Region.*
- 4.6 *That signage in the regional parks be expanded to include the following:*
 - a) *roadway directional signage;*
 - b) *parking signage; and*
 - c) *park etiquette signage.*

4.2 Sports Fields

4.2.1 GENERAL COMMENTS

Survey results indicated that 45% of the respondents have been frequent users of the sports fields for sports such as softball, baseball, and soccer. Sports fields within the City are used on a daily, weekly, monthly, and seasonal basis by City, Regional District, and Tla'amin Nation residents. The sports fields located in the Regional District are used primarily by the Regional District residents while the Tla'amin Nation sport field is used mainly by the Tla'amin Nation residents.

It has been common practice throughout the province to have sports fields established as multi-use⁶ fields to minimize the costs of acquiring sufficient land for the various sports and the operation of the fields. Traditionally, having multi-uses occurring on the same field has not been an issue when certain sports occurred in specific seasons and did not overlap with other sports. However, scheduling conflicts between sport user groups have been increasing as the seasons for these sports have been extended into other seasons. Many focus group participants gave feedback that they wanted the fields to be more accessible throughout the year and not closed as much during the wet weather. Other feedback indicated that use of individual parks for two different sports resulted in incompatible use of the fields. The conflicts between scheduling are hurting the sports clubs in terms of the quality of the experience and the ability to accommodate more members necessary to sustain the sports clubs.

A trend in sports fields is to have sports complexes instead of individual parks. Sports complexes consist of multiples of the same type of sporting fields located in the same area, complete with washrooms, concessions, changing rooms, and equipment storage. Sports complexes, by their design, lend themselves to the reduction of cost for field operations and the hosting of tournaments, as it is easier to have a number of teams participate in a tournament at the same location, rather than have the games spread out over a community.

Special mention needs to be made of Timberlane Track which is a multi-use facility with track and field facilities, including washrooms and change rooms and a full-sized soccer field located in the center of the track. Survey results indicate that citizens throughout the entire Region use this field, as it is a popular location for people of all ages to walk. Field users who were in the focus groups urged the City to take care with Timberlane Track, recognizing the importance of that playing field for the entire Region. The City has heeded the importance of maintaining the field in the center of the track at a high level. The City currently has standard bleachers in place at the

⁶ Multi-use generally means that different sports use portions of the same fields at different times.

track for the spectators; however, the bleachers are in the open air. Given the large amounts of rain in the winter months, user groups have been requesting that the bleachers be covered to better protect the spectators year-round.

4.2.2 AREAS OF CONCERN

Comments about the state of the sports fields have been mixed. Some users believe that the Region has many good sports fields while others hold the opinion that the sports fields are in rough shape. For example, user groups expect the sports fields to remain open throughout the year because of the longer soccer seasons. The extended availability means that these sports fields not only experience more wear and tear on the playing surfaces, these fields also do not have as much time as they used to have to recuperate from the use. It is difficult to keep the soccer fields always open because of the wet weather. Playing soccer on the fields during the wet, rainy season will result in damage to the sports fields. The increased use of the sports fields has results in increased costs to maintain and to repair the sports fields to a suitable condition. While Brooks High School has an artificial turf soccer field, this artificial turf field still requires grooming and maintenance, but not to the same degree as a natural turf field. Comments from field users indicated that maintenance on the artificial turf needs to be improved.

Many of the sports fields were constructed many years ago, based on a certain level of use and standards. This means the sports field's infrastructures are not only aging, they are also becoming inadequate. For example, some of the softball fields do not meet current size requirements and are not level which, in turn, affects the playing of that sport. Most of the Region's soccer fields can accommodate the needs of all ages. The Brooks High School artificial turf soccer field is not a full-sized field.

Co-ordination of the use of the sports fields could be improved. For example, when City sports fields are closed because of wet weather, there are no alternative sports fields within the City available for use. In the meantime, sports fields located in Craig Park (Electoral Area A) and at Tla'amin are being under-utilized and could be considered for use at times to assist in spreading out field use during the wet seasons.

4.2.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.7 *That the City's existing animal control bylaw be amended to restrict dogs in certain City parks.*
- 4.8 *That a detailed study for each sport field, identifying issues associated with each of the fields, be completed.*
- 4.9 *That a management and maintenance plan for each of the sports fields be developed.*
- 4.10 *That a central booking system for all parks and sports fields within the Region be implemented.*
- 4.11 *That budgets for the sports fields be developed which reflect the costs associated with use of those fields on a year-round basis.*
- 4.12 *That the feasibility of the following items be investigated:*
- a) *specific single use sports complexes such as soccer complex with three to four soccer fields with washrooms, concessions, and changing room facilities; and*
 - b) *the use of Regional District and Tla'amin sports fields as alternative locations to include for use by sports clubs and associations.*
- 4.13 *That covered bleachers be installed at Timberlane Track.*
- 4.1 *That a partnership with School District No. 47 be explored for development of new fields and maintenance of existing fields.*

4.3 Tennis Courts

4.3.1 GENERAL COMMENTS AND AREAS OF CONCERN

Tennis courts are located throughout the Region at the Townsite, Palm Beach and Texada Island.

As a provincial trend, the sport of tennis is losing popularity as evidenced locally through the declining use of tennis courts, despite the courts being conveniently located within the Region.

Another trend to note is the emergence of the sport of pickleball; a cross between tennis, table tennis and badminton that is played with wooden paddles and a plastic whiffle ball. People can play pickleball inside or outdoors and a pickleball court is only slightly smaller than a tennis court. With a few adjustments, existing tennis courts can be converted into pickleball courts which would permit more people in the Region to play this new sport.

4.3.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.15 *That a business case be completed prior to the construction of any additional tennis courts or making any required improvements to any existing tennis courts.*

4.16 *That the Region consider converting some of the existing tennis courts to pickleball courts.*

4.4 City Parks, Tla'amin Nation, and Regional District Neighbourhood Parks

4.4.1 GENERAL COMMENTS

A. City Parks

Sub neighbourhood⁷, neighbourhood⁸, community⁹, City¹⁰ and special area parks¹¹ form the basis of a park system, serving as social and recreational points within City neighbourhoods. Sub neighbourhood parks are passive areas to meet the needs of young children and adults. Neighbourhood parks include playfields and playgrounds with active play areas. Community parks are sports fields usually containing specific spectator areas suitable for a variety of athletic or recreational activities. Some community parks also include playground equipment.

Citizens who are local to Cranberry Lake would like to see greater access to the Cranberry Lake waterfront by way of a trail and the addition of a fishing pier to enhance the lake for family activities.

⁷ Sub neighbourhood parks include Grief Point Park, Joyce Gardens, Alberni/Marine Park (to be opened in 2017), Harbour Park, Dwight Hall Cenotaph, and Whyte's Beach.

⁸ Neighbourhood parks include Henderson Park and Cranberry Field.

⁹ Community parks include Sunset Park, D.A. Evans Park, Timberlane Park, Larry Gouthro Park, J.P. Dallas Park, Townsite Tennis Court, and Lawn Bowling Club.

¹⁰ City parks include Gibsons Beach, Valentine Mountain, Mowat Bay, Scout Park, Willingdon Beach, the Complex and Lindsay Park.

¹¹ Special area parks include the Cranberry Wildlife Sanctuary and Millennium Park.

In 2015, the City opened a new bike and skateboard park. This park was constructed on the Complex grounds and complemented the existing skateboard park in the same location. This new facility was a welcome addition for residents and generated interest from other local governments which were considering a similar type of park. The bike park portion of the park can accommodate riders with various skill levels.

B. Regional Parks

The Regional District has several regional parks including Craig Park, Shelter Point Park, Palm Beach Park, Paradise Exhibition Grounds, Haywire Bay Park, Myrtle Point Park, Boot Point Park, and Divers Rock. The Regional District has some smaller parks located on Texada Island including Van Anda and Gillies Bay parks. All of these parks would be considered community parks.

C. Tla'amin Parks

The Tla'amin Nation has three parks consisting of a large sports field and building along Highway 101, a waterfront park with an outdoor hockey/lacrosse box, play equipment, a gazebo, and a shoreline trail and a small park area consisting of playground equipment beside the Salish Centre. It still must be determined if additional parks should be created for the Tla'amin Nation.

D. Playground Equipment

Playground structures are an important component of community parks. Playground structures can be found at the community parks throughout the Region and at school sites. Playground structures are important in that they provide outdoor play opportunities which are critical in the development of all children. Playground structures encourage active play in children allowing them to use their imaginations and socialize with other children while getting away from video games and other sedentary activities. Given the lower economic income levels for many of the children in the Region, playground structures provide these children with no cost opportunities to engage in recreation.

4.4.2 AREAS OF CONCERN

While some parks are in densely populated areas, other areas within the Region are lacking in sufficient community park space. The one area in the City most noted for lacking in sufficient community park space is the Westview area.

While the Regional District parks on Texada Island are well situated in their communities, the focus groups and the survey revealed that these parks, in their

current design and state, are poorly used by the local citizens. In the focus group meetings, many participants said that the existing baseball field in Van Anda Park would be better utilized if it was repurposed into a track or a skateboard park.

A significant issue in Larry Gouthro Park concerns the use of the park by dog owners. Dog owners have been allowing their dogs to run off-leash which is creating problems for the sports groups that use the sports field there. The dogs have been digging holes in the field and have been leaving behind excrement on the fields which pose hazards to the users of this park.

As noted earlier, Willingdon Beach is no longer just a community park but has become instead a cultural hub of the Region. Unfortunately, Willingdon Beach's main use as a special event venue has evolved in a piecemeal fashion without a long-term vision. For example, while the Loggers' Memorial Bowl was reconstructed to host the Logger Sports Event, it can also be used to host a number of other activities such as movies under the stars, live theatre, and musical events. Reconstruction of the Loggers' Memorial Bowl occurred in response to a specific event, rather than as part of a larger design vision. Also, this park has limited capacity in terms of parking, washroom facilities and existing play structures. Focus group participants expressed their concern about the age of the existing spray park and questioned whether this feature should be replaced. However, if the City intends to continue to use this site for special events, the question is whether a new spray park would be better suited in another location.

In a study done in Ontario¹², it was noted that much of the playground equipment in that province has been under-utilized. Possible reasons for the lack of use could be:

- the equipment being old and outdated;
- the equipment is the same at every park; or
- the equipment does not present a challenge for the children to try or opportunities for creative play.

The playground equipment located throughout the Region may have the same issues. To encourage greater use of all playground equipment, the Region should ensure that different types of playground equipment be installed at designated parks within the Region which will create a unique setting for those who attend the parks. With different equipment located at each park, parents can travel with their children to a different park each week and the children can always have a different play experience. Currently, there has been a lack of communication with other agencies

¹² *Guidelines for Developing Public Recreation Facility Standards* by the Government of Ontario, Ministry of Culture, and Recreation, Sports, and Fitness Division. (2013)

such as the School District and community organizations in terms of discussing where to place certain play equipment in specific parks. Better communications would reduce the chances of duplication of equipment and enhance the design of the play equipment to fit the needs of the users.

Not only are people attracted to the open areas in the community parks, animals are also attracted. Geese and bears have often been seen in the various community parks. Hygiene becomes a concern in that geese often leave excrement all over and, unlike dogs, they do not have owners cleaning up the mess. Bears getting into the garbage are a result of the bears becoming accustomed to and relying on human food and scraps. This creates issues for many communities.

4.4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.17 *That an inventory and analysis of all playground equipment in the parks in the Region be completed to determine if the playing equipment is meeting CSA standards.*
- 4.18 *That a detailed plan be created to identify amenities for parks located throughout the Region.*
- 4.19 *That other agencies such as School District No. 47 and community associations be approached to discuss the placement of play equipment in various communities.*
- 4.20 *That a long-range plan for playground structures be developed which focuses on replacing or installing playground equipment in parks that have been identified as requiring playground structures.*
- 4.21 *That a long-range plan for the management of wild animals and domestic animals for in-community parks be developed.*
- 4.22 *That the City complete a long-term vision and plan for Willingdon Beach Park.*
- 4.23 *That the residents living in the Van Anda area of Texada Island be consulted to determine how the ball diamond at the community park can be repurposed.*
- 4.24 *That a long range plan for sufficient parks within the region be developed.*

4.5 Open Spaces and Nature Areas

4.5.1 GENERAL COMMENTS AND AREAS OF CONCERN

In addition to the parks and open spaces owned by the three local governments, the Region also benefits from several other parks and open spaces operated by others including eight provincial parks, three marine parks, one protected area, twenty forest recreation sites and six sites owned by conservation organizations and agencies.

Through the focus group meetings and the RD Parks Plan, it was determined that many residents throughout the Region want to have more open spaces and nature areas in addition to protecting the current open spaces and nature areas. City residents mentioned that they see Millennium Park¹³ as a valued asset that requires protection to ensure the continued enjoyment of the large treed area located in the central city area and the many trails scattered throughout the park. Residents of the Region would like to see more similarly styled open spaces. There is currently no plan in place to manage and nurture this asset.

Cranberry Lake Wildlife Sanctuary consists of four hectares located on Cranberry Lake and is operated by the City through a partnership with Natures Trust of British Columbia. In addition to this sanctuary, there are other wildlife sanctuaries in the Region such as Kwel Sanctuary (21 hectares) and Mount Trematon Nature Reserve (57.87 hectares) located on Lasqueti Island and operated by the Islands Trust, Lot 35-36 on Savary Island (one-half of 8.40 hectares) operated by Natures Trust of British Columbia and Squitty Bay (5.7 hectares) located on Lasqueti Island and operated by Natures Trust of British Columbia. It should be noted that Lasqueti Island is outside the mandate of this study.

4.5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.25 *That as part of the review of priorities included in the RD Parks Plan, a process be implemented to identify potential open spaces and nature areas and the costs associated with acquisition and operation of the areas.*
- 4.26 *That a management plan be developed for Millennium Park.*
- 4.27 *That partnerships be developed with groups such as the Natures Trust of British Columbia and Ducks Unlimited in acquiring and protecting environmentally sensitive areas.*

¹³ By way of background, the City first purchased the land and then later the timber rights to save the trees located on the land from being harvested. The Powell River Community Forest provided the funding to purchase those trees.

4.6 Trails

4.6.1 GENERAL COMMENTS

Trails form an integral part of the open spaces and the nature areas in the Region and their importance cannot be underestimated as the trail system creates opportunities for a diverse range of recreational pursuits such as mountain biking, cross-country skiing, walking, hiking, camping and horseback riding. A trail system with that range of flexibility in terms of use becomes important for tourism and marketing of the Region, as well as for residents to remain active.

The City has several main areas of trails which are located at Millennium Park, the Penticton Street area, the Seawalk and along the forestry trail at Willingdon Beach Park. It is interesting to note that the Penticton Street area is, at present, not designated as parkland, despite its extensive trail network, whereas the other main areas do have that designation. With limited space available for parkland in the Westview areas, the designation of the Penticton Trail area would ensure public park areas for its residents.

Various volunteer groups have installed and maintained most of the trails within the Region. The principal volunteer groups which have been involved in maintaining the trails within the City are the BOMB Squad and the Forestry Association. Many volunteer groups maintain the trails with the Regional District and the Tla'amin Nation. To coordinate the efforts of the various volunteer groups in maintaining the trails, the Outdoor Recreational User Group (ORUG) was formed to unite all trail volunteer groups under one banner.

The Regional District is presently in the process of completing a regional trail strategy which will involve a comprehensive approach to dealing with trails in the Region and thus only a few comments will be made concerning trails in this Study.

4.6.2 AREAS OF CONCERN

As highlighted earlier, volunteer groups are facing significant challenges in terms of declining membership, insurance requirements and having to use their own money to construct and maintain the trails. While the Region has enjoyed a high level of maintenance of the trails because of the efforts of these volunteer groups, these volunteer groups cannot maintain this level of service without assistance in obtaining insurance and funding for materials and supplies required for maintenance and construction of the many trails.

While the Region's trail system offers a wide variety of different recreational opportunities, a person's ability to experience these recreational opportunities becomes limited if that person cannot access the trails. Given the aging population in the Region and the number of persons with physical challenges, accessibility to the trails gains in importance. Modifications to some trails may be necessary to ensure that the trails are accessible to all. If a person must travel to get to the trails by vehicle, then parking at the start and the end of the trails becomes critical to access the trails.

4.6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.28 *That once completed and reviewed by all three governments, the Powell River Regional District Trail Strategy be costed and implemented.*

4.29 *That the volunteer groups that maintain trails be supported by:*

- a) *Providing insurance to cover their liability for the maintenance;*
- b) *Providing contributions of materials to reduce the costs of the maintenance; and*
- c) *Providing additional financial resources by means of grants.*

4.30 *That the three local governments consider the creation of a staff position to work with each jurisdiction and the trail volunteer groups in all capacities.*

4.7 Linking Neighbourhoods

4.7.1 GENERAL COMMENTS AND AREAS OF CONCERN

As a continuation of the theme of the previous section, people who attended the focus group meetings and responded to the survey would like not only more trails but also more connectivity between neighbourhoods and the trails by means of paths. Ideally, a community that promotes active living has pathways which link the various areas of the community and different communities. In this way, people can traverse the communities by walking or bicycling without the use of major roads and thoroughfares. If these pathways are also linked to the trail system, then use of the trail system is greatly enhanced.

The principal concerns expressed in the focus group meetings are the lack of co-ordination between the three local governments and the lack of community consultation in the area of neighbourhood connectivity.

4.7.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.31 *That the Community Plans of the City, the Regional District, and the Tla'amin Nation be harmonized to ensure connectivity through the Region by means of nature trails, public pathways, and bike paths.*
- 4.32 *That consultation with the public be held on an annual basis to obtain perspective from the public on community connectivity and active transportation.*

4.8 Invasive Species

4.8.1 GENERAL COMMENTS AND AREAS OF CONCERN

Invasive species are defined as plants that are not native to an area and that tend to spread to the surrounding areas. Invasive species are a significant problem in the Region and throughout the province, as they have the potential to do great harm to the environment, as well as properties and buildings if steps are not taken to control these species. Since invasive species do not recognize jurisdictional boundaries, it is imperative that all stakeholders dealing with invasive plant species work together in a coordinated manner.

When dealing with invasive species, the use of pesticides is a matter which comes up for discussion. While the use of pesticides is highly discouraged as a means for dealing with the invasive species, herbicides may be required to deal with the invasive species issue.

4.8.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.33 *That a committee be formed with representation from all stakeholders in the Region dealing with invasive plants to take a comprehensive approach to address the invasive species plant issue.*
- 4.34 *That an invasive species plan be established by the stakeholder group and presented to all three local governments.*

5.0 Arts, Culture, Museums and Heritage

This part of the report will examine how arts, culture, and heritage impact citizens' sense of belonging to a community.

In an article entitled: *Arts and the Positive Change in Communities*¹⁴, it states “arts and culture make considerable and necessary contributions to the wellbeing of communities.”

To assist local governments in assessing arts and culture in their communities, the BC Government developed a Cultural Mapping Tool Kit¹⁵, which mentioned that “cultural mapping is a valuable tool for identifying a community’s strengths and its resources. This process can help as communities move into the planning and implementation phase by identifying early resources and efficiencies, and link between arts and cultural groups, as well as their common aspirations and values.”

The significance of cultural mapping is important since it “enables us to understand and share culture, to rethink history, and to promote creativity and development. Cultural mapping is most valuable in generating new perspectives and preparing the ground for effective cultural planning.”

To acquire a sense of the importance of arts, culture and heritage in the Region, the following results from the community survey (with 2,126 people responding) provide an indication of how much the residents participated in this area in the past year:

Attending a fair/festival	1,340
Attending a cultural event	1,269
Attending a concert	1,227
Attending live theatre	1,047
Doing a craft or creative hobby	1,034
Visiting a museum/art gallery	878
Taking part in the arts and drama	832
Dancing (social, folk, ballet)	702
Other creative/culture activities	487

It is important for the Tla’amin Nation to be able to show and express pride in its deep and rich culture. Some Tla’amin Nation members have suggested the prospect of exhibiting Tla’amin cultural artifacts or putting on performances in non-aboriginal venues to share its culture with others.

¹⁴ This article was published by the Creative City Network of Canada-Canada Council for the Arts. (2005)

¹⁵ This Cultural Mapping Tool Kit comes from a partnership venture between the 2010 Legacies Now and the Creative City Network of Canada. (2010)

5.1 Venues for Art in the Region

5.1.1. GENERAL COMMENTS AND AREAS OF CONCERN

The Region has a strong and dedicated arts and cultural community composed of various disciplines including dance, theatre, music, and fine arts. The groups representing these disciplines are spread throughout the Region. In 2004, the City of Powell River was named a *Cultural Capital of Canada*. This title is awarded by the Government of Canada for up to three communities in Canada on an annual basis. This was a tremendous honour for the arts community in Powell River as it recognized the importance of arts and culture within the Region.

Many of the arts and cultural activities are located within the City. However, many artisans and activities are spread throughout the Regional District and the Tla'amin Nation. That is why the partnerships seem to be strong throughout the communities and the Region.

During discussions with the arts and culture groups, it was heard that there should be emphasis placed on the promotion of the Tla'amin Nation arts and culture. This perspective was also expressed in a meeting with Tla'amin staff, where they felt that, within the City, there is little done to promote and celebrate their culture. For example, there is nothing to promote their culture in the Complex.

The City offered a minimal number of arts and cultural programs before 2015. After 2015, with the reorganization of the recreation program section of the department and the increased number of Recreation Coordinators available, additional arts and cultural programs are now being offered. The department does not wish to compete with services offered by the volunteer groups and, as such, the majority of the services offered in the community are still provided by volunteers and volunteer groups.

Also, during the discussions with arts and culture groups, it was suggested that the City did not provide sufficient funding to support arts and culture; rather that most of the City's funding went instead to support physical activities and other similar types of programs. In 2015, the City contributed close to \$1.1 million on services supporting arts and culture in the community. These services included the library, museum, Arts Council, PRISMA and the Academy of Music.

The Region has a vibrant arts and culture community. However, this community does not have many venues in which to display its talents to the rest of the citizens. People have expressed a desire for a public art gallery in the Region. A possible suggestion is to include a room on the second floor of the new library as an art gallery which would work well for those who are visual artists.

Another group of artists in the community are musicians who also have limited opportunity to share their talents with the rest of the community and receive an income for the services that they provide. The provision of free performance space may help to provide such opportunities. A program that has worked well in other communities is a series of musical concerts held in the parks during the summertime.

Other areas of concern identified by the focus groups and the survey results include the following:

- lack of long range planning for the arts and cultural sectors of the community;
- lack of resources for the arts and culture community to access senior levels of government funding as well as funding from foundations and corporations;
and
- lack of planning between the three local governments, plus Vancouver Island University and School District No. 47 to support and promote arts and culture in the Region.

5.1.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 *That a cultural mapping plan for the Region be completed.*

5.2 *That a long-range plan for arts and culture within the Region be developed.*

5.3 *That any arts and culture plan developed ensures that Tla'amin Nation's arts and culture are fully represented in that plan.*

5.4 *If a regional recreation model is approved, then the funding to the Arts Council be increased to allow expansion of the grants-in-aid program to include the Regional District and the Tla'amin Nation.*

- 5.5 *That the City's Department for Parks, Recreation, and Culture offer more arts and culture program opportunities.*
- 5.6 *That funding be made available to the Arts Council to retain the services of a grant writer.*
- 5.7 *That quarterly meetings occur between the City's Department of Parks, Recreation and Culture and Max Cameron Theatre staff to develop partnership opportunities, marketing initiatives and event co-ordinations.*
- 5.8 *That the three local governments investigate possible venues for an art gallery and determine an operating model.*
- 5.9 *That the three local governments explore more opportunities to showcase additional performing arts opportunities within the communities.*
- 5.10 *That the three local governments consider implementing a weekly "music in the parks" concert series in the summer months.*

5.2 Public Art

5.2.1 GENERAL COMMENTS AND AREAS OF CONCERN

The importance of public art to the community became apparent during the focus group meetings. The participants felt that public art is an appropriate means of defining a community as there are many benefits to public art¹⁶.

The Region has some public art displayed throughout the community such as the acquisitions of the wood carvings that came from the recent logger sports events, as well as the number of totem poles of the Tla'amin Nation. However, there is no overall vision for public art within the Region. If there was overall vision in place, funding would be required to obtain the public art pieces.

¹⁶ These benefits have been substantially delineated in a 2010 publication, entitled the *Public Art Toolkit*, by the Creative City Network of Canada.

5.2.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.11 *That the three local governments work with the Arts Council to develop a vision, policy, and funding recommendation for public art in the Region.*
- 5.12 *That various funding recommendations for public art be identified.*

5.3 Museums and Heritage

5.3.1 GENERAL COMMENTS AND AREAS OF CONCERN

There are three main entities that operate historical entities within the region; the Powell River Historical Museum and Archives, the Texada Museum, and Henderson House. Comments on all three historical entities will be made in this section.

A. Powell River Museum and Archives

The Powell River Historical Museum and Archives (the “Historical Museum”) is operated by the Powell River Historical Museum and Archives Association, a non-profit society. The Historical Museum acquires and preserves artifacts, specimens, and associated information, images, and documents relevant to the history of the Region. The Region encompasses the area from Jervis Inlet to Desolation Sound and adjacent islands (Texada, Harwood, and Savary, among others). The association operates the Historical Museum, the Forestry Museum, and the Archives. The collections and exhibits are housed in three aging buildings on Marine Avenue (Highway 101) at Willingdon Beach.

The Historical Museum houses 260 square meters of exhibits that reflect the cultures of the Region. The Museum has displays depicting the Tla’amin Nation culture, the Powell River Company paper mill, life in the community, and many other small presentations. The collections include about 8,000 objects, and about 500 biological specimens. There is a gift shop featuring traditional Coast Salish weaving and carvings. The Historical Museum is open throughout the year.

The Archives, housed in the administration building, contain about 125,000 images, 95 meters of archival fonds, and 2,000 maps and blueprints. The building for the Archives and Administration is open throughout the year.

The Powell River Forestry Museum is located on Willingdon Beach across Highway 101 from the Historical Museum. The building provides about 180 square meters of displays and covers forestry operations from hand-logging times through steam

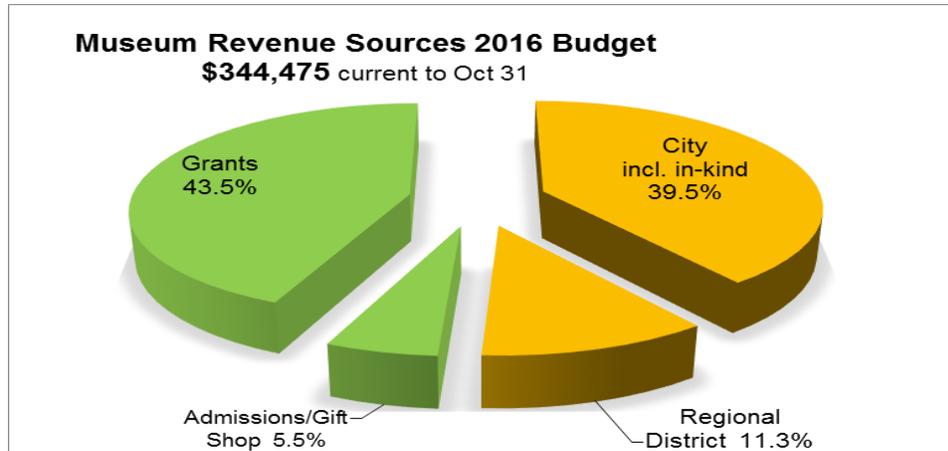
donkeys, rail, and chain saw periods. The Forestry Museum is open from mid June to late September, and closed over winter because of the lack of both heating and insulation in the building.

The Historical Museum is run by a paid staff of 2.4 full time employees including a manager, an archivist/ curator, and a bookkeeper to carry out the core functions of the Museum. Operations are supplemented by contract summer staff in the Forestry Museum and a mix of contract and volunteer staff working with the database, exhibits, and IT areas. Volunteers require a considerable amount of IT training to work in the Museum because the collections database is central to most Museum practices and procedures. In addition, one volunteer with specialized training handles any IT issues and data backup.

The Historical Museum obtains operating funding for its paid staff by making annual funding requests to the City and to the Regional District. In both 2015 and 2016, the requests amounted to \$102,000 in funds and \$34,600 in-kind contributions from the City; and \$39,000 from the Regional District. However, these annual funding requests do not constitute stable funding; they can be reduced or eliminated without notice. The lack of stable funding presents problems for the Historical Museum Board and management in that they cannot adequately budget to plan for the future or maintain the facility in a sustainable manner. It is also a source of stress for staff, not knowing if the Historical Museum will be funded from year to year.

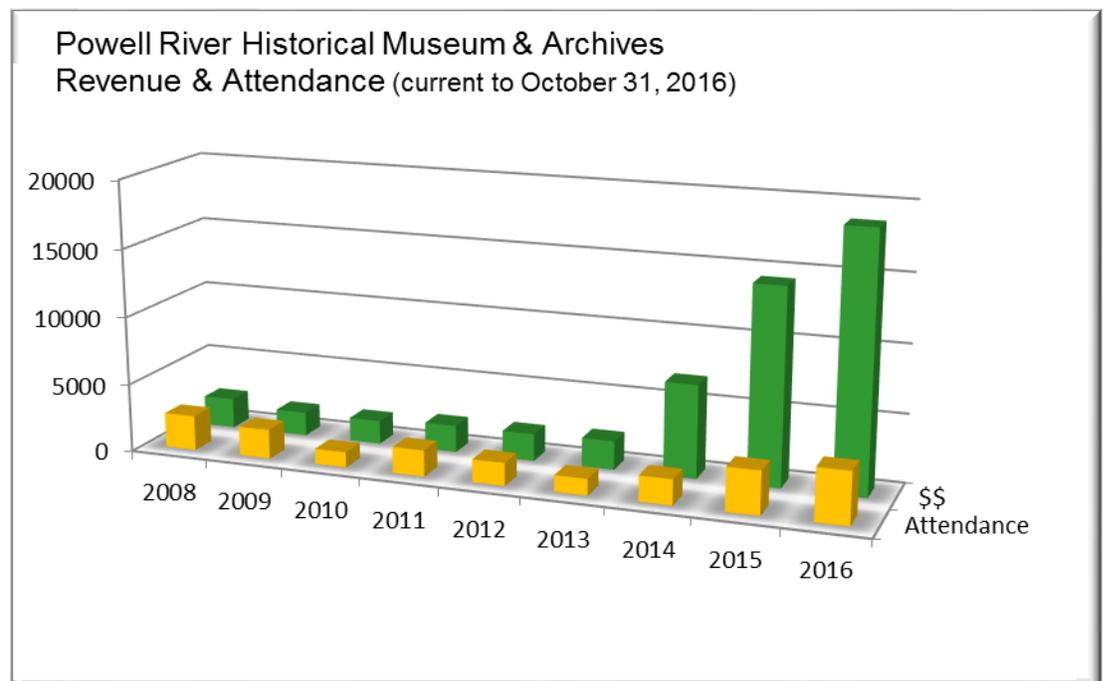
The \$175,600 (including the in-kind contributions) in operational funding obtained from the City and Regional District constitute about half of the total Museum budget for 2016 which is \$344,475 as set out in Figure 1. The other half of the revenue in the budget comes from admissions, sales, and grants. The majority of grant funds raised by the Historical Museum are from provincial and federal sources, in other words, new money coming into the community. Unfortunately, grant funds are restricted to specific projects and cannot be used to fund operating expenses.

Figure 5.1 Museum Revenue Sources



The current level of funding is a vast improvement over the years leading up to 2014 where the City and Regional District were responsible for 85% or more of the total Historical Museum budget. Figure 2 demonstrates the increasing financial viability of the Museum, despite the lack of stability in its operating budget. The gift shop and admissions revenues, also contributing to the financial viability of the Historical Museum, have steadily improved since 2013 (Figure 2) and are becoming a valuable source of operating revenue for the Museum.

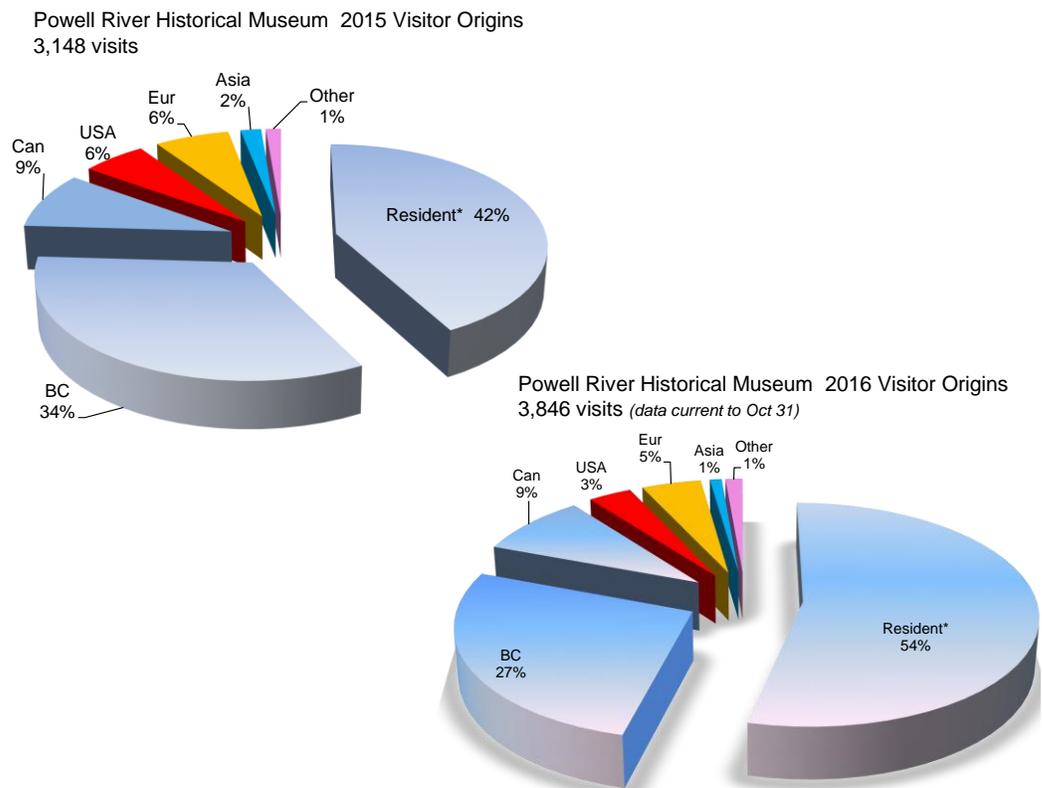
Figure 5.2 Museum Admissions and Gift Shop Revenue



The Historical Museum acquired the Forestry Museum from the Powell River Forestry Heritage Society in 2014. Although the Forest Heritage Society provided \$3,500 in staffing support for the first year, the society reduced support levels to \$1,000 in 2016, which created a small operating deficit for Museum operations in 2016. This is another example of where unstable funding presents budgeting challenges for the Historical Museum. Staffing the Forestry Museum from mid June to late September remains a funding challenge for Museum management.

The number of visits has climbed steadily over the last three years from 1,200 in 2013 to about 4,000 in 2016. The low Canadian dollar has produced a substantial increase in visits from BC residents ("staycations"). About 50% of Historical Museum visitors are non-residents (Figure 3), arriving from outside the Historical Museum catchment area (Saltery Bay to Okeover Peninsula and adjacent islands). These visitors generally stay in the region for one or more nights, eat at restaurants and participate in the many regional recreation opportunities. The Historical Museum acts as an amenity supporting non-resident visitors in that it encourages this group to stay, learn, appreciate, and explore the Region. The Historical Museum caters to the resident population by acting as a repository for old photos, family histories, and artifacts. It also operates on a regional scale by offering workshops on and off site, providing digitization services (Lund Barnacle), archival research, exhibit services (Shelter Point exhibit), talks and presentations. The Historical Museum is a designated repository for the Tla'amin Nation archaeological material, and has recently partnered with the Tla'amin Nation in a study of the Tla'amin place names used on their traditional territory.

Figure 5.3 Museum visitor origins, 2015, 2016.



* Resident - includes visitors within the catchment area of the Museum from Saltery Bay to Okeover Peninsula and adjacent islands.

Focus group participants and survey respondents expressed the opinion that the three local governments should consider the Historical Museum as an integral component of the Region culture. Participants also identified that much work needs to be done at the Historical Museum to meet the needs of the community. Current floor space is insufficient to display much of the collections, and the collection storage area is inadequate. The Forestry Museum has no insulation or heating and can open only during warm summer days. Furthermore, none of the museums' buildings have wheelchair access. Despite these factors, the Historical Museum has become a "going concern" for residents and has been increasing in importance as a visitor attraction in the Region. The Historical Museum Board and management are planning a new facility to replace the aging Historical Museum infrastructure. A new building would provide wheelchair access, adequate environmental controls for collections and exhibits, and staffing efficiency¹⁷, in addition to an enhanced visitor experience. Potential partners in a redevelopment include the City, Regional District, and the

¹⁷ Currently, there is separate staffing for each of the Museums. Efficiencies can be achieved by training staff to work in either of the museums.

Tla'amin Nation. Substantial federal grants are available to assist with Historical Museum capital infrastructure.

B. Texada Museum

The Texada Heritage Society operates the museum located on Texada Island and only uses volunteers to operate this facility. The Texada Museum acquires and preserves all historical information and artifacts from Texada Island. It is operated from the July 1st weekend to Labour Day each year and in 2016, the Texada Museum had 590 people visit the facility with the biggest category of visitors being tourists visiting the island. The site of this museum used to be part of the local public school and there is still sufficient space for an increase of exhibit space without any additions to the building being required. The Texada Museum Society receives a grant-in-aid from the Regional District in the amount of \$20,000 per year.

C. Henderson House

Henderson House is an example of a local heritage success story. The Townsite Heritage Society, a group of dedicated volunteers (mostly residents in the Townsite area), wanted to save the former house of Dr. Henderson, Powell River's first doctor. The goal of the Society is to recreate the look and feel of the Townsite in the 1940s era.

The Townsite Heritage Society has a few challenges in terms of the operations of Henderson House. The Society has limited funds to operate the facility and must rely heavily on volunteers for its operations. Based on survey results, the mean average of visits per year was 3.4 annually. Given the small number of visits to the facility, the Society needs to find a means of promoting the site to the local communities.

5.3.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.13 *That the Powell River Historical Museum develop an asset management and long term funding plan.*
- 5.14 *That a funding agreement between the three local governments and the Powell River Historical Museum be drafted and implemented to provide stable operating funds.*
- 5.15 *That the Powell River Historical Museum be provided with the funds to develop detailed plans and cost estimates required to access federal infrastructure grants for museums.*

5.4 Arts Council

5.4.1 GENERAL COMMENTS AND AREAS OF CONCERN

The City has a local Arts Council that represents the interests of arts and culture in the community. The Arts Council has representatives from most arts and cultural groups, except for the Tla'amin Nation. In the future, the Arts Council should also include representation from the Tla'amin Nation.

The City provides the Arts Council with funding each year to award grants-in-aid to various arts and culture groups throughout the City. There is also a need to address funding for arts and cultural activities held outside the City boundaries. The current level of municipal funding is not sufficient to provide funds to groups outside the City. Receiving funding for arts and cultural events was discussed as important during the focus group meeting held in Electoral Area A.

Other local governments use many different models to support arts and culture in their communities. Many of the larger local governments provide funding to pay for a staff member to work with the local arts councils or with all arts and cultural groups directly. Other local governments and regions with smaller populations may have a staff member who has arts and culture as part of their position or rely only on volunteers to provide the required activities and events. These options are all determined by the availability of funding from the local taxpayer and the importance placed on arts and culture in that region determines the structure.

The City relies heavily on volunteers to offer services in the arts and culture area which is very common with smaller local governments. Presently, the Director of Parks, Recreation and Culture sit on the Arts Council. The existing Community Recreation Coordinator sits on the Cultural Diversity Committee and offers a number of programs in the arts and culture area and will continue to offer services in this area to enhance arts and culture. Funding is often available from senior levels of government to support arts and culture. Unfortunately, most groups have a volunteer base and there is not always time or capability for these groups to apply for grants. The lack of available volunteer hours to apply for grants was mentioned throughout focus group meetings. Many groups felt that applying for funding through available grants should fall under the responsibility of a paid staff member. In addition to local governments and senior levels of government, arts and cultural funding is also available through public foundations and corporations. To research available funding, many hours must be invested in the research.

While the Evergreen Theatre is attracting more activity, the performing arts individuals and groups have no training facility available. Smaller groups find rental fees for pre-show practice sessions to be too expensive.

Other facilities in the community include a fine arts building at Timberlane. This building is owned by the City and leased to the fine arts group. In 2016, funding was received from the municipal Powell River Community Forest Corporation to assist in improvements to the building and a significant building upgrade was completed.

Throughout discussions with the arts and culture groups, a space to display local art or an art gallery was mentioned on many occasions. Throughout past years this has been an ongoing request from the arts community. In the summer of 2016, City Council discussed using the large space on the second floor of the new library to display public art. While this idea does have merit, an alternate suggestion is to create a shared space with the Historical Museum, if funding is made available for a new building. Shared use of buildings is very common with many local governments. Additional information concerning this suggestion is included in the museum section of this report.

5.4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.16 *That the three local governments expand arts and cultural opportunities throughout the Region using volunteers as well as using the City Community Recreation Coordinator.*
- 5.17 *That a representative of the Tla'amin Nation be asked to represent the Tla'amin Nation as a member of the Arts Council.*

6.0 Amenities

For this Study, amenities refer to those specific structures or features located throughout the Region which enhance the use and enjoyment of the recreation facilities or the surrounding area.

6.1 Beach Access

6.1.1 GENERAL COMMENTS AND AREAS OF CONCERN

Access to local beaches is an amenity which enhances many recreational opportunities within a community. The City has a few public access points that the residents can use to access the beaches. These include Grief Point Park, from the Seawalk, Willingdon Beach Park, along the Willingdon Beach Trail and Gibsons Beach. In addition, the public can access beaches from a variety of locations from Westview to Wildwood; however, there are no designated beach accesses in the parks inventory.

While the Regional District has created 27 beach accesses recently, these additions are still not enough to meet the demand for public access to the beaches. During the survey process, residents living in the Region expressed their wish to see existing trails leading to beaches preserved and other locations for beach access added to the inventory.

The Tla'amin Nation has established and signed a number of beach accesses and has excellent beach access along the seawalk in the centre of the community.

In situations where public access to the local beaches are non-existent, citizens who want to go to the beach must drive to the public access points to the beach. The creation of more local public beach accesses will assist in reducing the number of vehicles travelling through neighbourhoods to get to the only public beach accesses available.

When many citizens gather at these public beach access points, a lack of facilities becomes apparent. Parking spaces are at a premium and washroom facilities are not available in most areas to handle the volume of use experienced on a continuous basis.

While the Regional District has put signage in place to identify all regional beach accesses, the City, because it does not have designated beach accesses, does not. This lack of signage makes it difficult for citizens to know where to go to access the beach and creates frustration on the part of citizens wanting to use the beach.

6.1.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 *That the Regional District be encouraged to sustain existing beach accesses and to create additional beach access opportunities.*
- 6.2 *That the Tla'amin Nation be encouraged to sustain existing beach accesses.*
- 6.3 *That a plan be established showing potential beach accesses for the City.*
- 6.4 *That the City ensure that public access to beaches be maintained or be created in any future land developments occurring near waterfront.*
- 6.5 *That the City put signage similar to that provided in the Regional District in place to identify public beach access points.*

6.2 The Powell River Seawalk

6.2.1 GENERAL COMMENTS AND AREAS OF CONCERN

The Powell River Seawalk is an amenity that is important to the Region and is well used by many residents throughout the Region. However, the seawalk is an isolated feature as one end of the walk is connected to a parking area and the other end is not connected to other sites or facilities. The users of the seawalk have shown interest in an expansion to Grief Point Park at one end and to Willingdon Beach Park on the other end.

Funding will become a major issue for the Seawalk as there is currently limited funding available for the maintenance, including the addition of surface material to maintain a level surface for all users. Current funding amounts are inadequate to maintain the amenity in its existing form. As well, there is no funding set aside for any expansion of the seawalk in the future.

6.2.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.6 *That the City examine the feasibility and costs of expanding the Powell River Seawalk to Grief Point Park and Willingdon Beach Park.*
- 6.7 *That funding levels for the Powell River Seawalk be increased to maintain the current condition of the Seawalk.*

6.3 Boat Launches

6.3.1 GENERAL COMMENTS

Boat launches are an important aspect to outdoor recreation activities. According to the survey, fishing is considered to be an important activity within the Region. Thus access to the water is important for this sport. The Region is fortunate to have several boat launches located within the area. The Gibsons Beach boat launch is located on the border between the City and the Tla'amin Nation and residents from both communities as well as the Regional District make use of the area as a boat launch and a beach. Other boat launches that are available to access the ocean include Westview Harbour and Lund Harbour. The boat launches available at Powell Lake are found at Mowat Bay and Shingle Mill parks¹⁸. There are an acceptable number of boat launches in the northern part of the City considering the generally more rugged coastal terrain and waters while there is a lack of sufficient launches in the south. Many survey respondents noted that they would like to see a new boat launch in the southern part of the Regional District.

6.3.2 AREAS OF CONCERN

Mixed reviews about the existing boat launches were evident based on focus group meetings. Many focus group respondents felt that the existing boat launches are overcrowded and unprotected from the wind. While the boat launches are well used by recreational boaters and fishing enthusiasts, improvements and additions are necessary since there is a lack of basic facilities at the boat launches, which, if in place, would enhance the enjoyment of the people using the area. For example, washroom facilities are lacking at Gibson Beach and it has a boat launch which, at present, has limited functionality. Before work can be done on any upgrading to the Gibsons Beach boat launch, a marine study must be conducted to determine what impact the boat launch will have on the environment and nearby sea life.

The boat launch at Mowat Bay has several facilities which establish the standards for the other boat launches. This boat launch is part of a larger park which has a playground, picnic tables, large parking area, public washrooms, and access to the Sunshine Coast Trail. However, Mowat Bay is not without its problems. The survey respondents stated that they would like to see the float extended on the dock of the boat launch which would assist in giving the boaters something to tie onto when the lake water levels are down.

¹⁸ It is important to note that while the boat launches at Mowat Bay and Westview are City-owned assets, the boat launch at Shingle Mill is a privately owned one. The Lund boat launch is owned by the Lund Harbour Authority.

The Shingle Mill Boat launch, the Lund Boat launch, and the Westview Boat launches are excellent examples of boat launches. The Shingle Mill is privately owned and is part of a larger marina complex including a restaurant and a large parking area. The Lund boat launch is conveniently located within easy access to restaurants and accommodations. The Westview boat launch is also conveniently located within a large marina setting close to all services.

6.3.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

6.8 *That a marine study be conducted to determine what impact a repaired boat launch at Gibsons Beach park will have on the environment and the nearby marine life.*

6.9 *That a community needs analysis be completed to determine the needs for a boat launch in the southern part of the Region and to identify the necessary amounts and sources for funding the construction and operation of that boat launch.*

6.10 *That a long-range master plan be developed for all publicly operated boat launches in the Region.*

6.4 Dog Parks

6.4.1 GENERAL COMMENTS AND AREAS OF CONCERN

Dog parks are viewed as an important amenity for certain residents in the Region. Dog parks create social opportunities not only for the dogs but also for the dog owners to interact with each other and their pets.

Without sufficient designated dog parks, dog owners in the Region have been using the trails, sports fields, and community parks to walk their dogs and to allow their dogs to be off-leash. The use of these facilities in that manner has resulted in conflicts between dog owners and the other park users. Not all dog owners have been diligent about controlling their dogs or cleaning up after their dogs.

The Region had an “unofficial dog park” at Henderson Park in the Townsite area which is the only public park in the area. While the park does have an area attached with playground equipment, the residents would like to see the return of the entire park for public use. Since this park has been used for the dogs, the neighbours have expressed concerns about a lack of public park space, the additional traffic going

through their residential area, the times that people have been walking their dogs and the behavior exhibited by some dogs and their owners.

The City has responded to these concerns by constructing a new “official dog park” at the sports field located at the old Max Cameron High School site. This new dog park is larger than the one located in the Townsite area and has separate sections for smaller and larger dogs. The new dog park, which is more centrally located in the Region, will also have trees, access to water and picnic tables to enhance the use of the area for the dog owners.

While it is anticipated that the new dog park will become a heavily used amenity, it may prove to be inadequate in the future as the resident population, and therefore the dog population, increases over time. Steps need to be taken now to determine the need for more dog parks in appropriate locations around the Region.

6.4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.11 *That the City amend its animal control bylaw to restrict unleashed dogs from using the City's sports fields.*
- 6.12 *That the Tla'amin Nation and Regional District be encouraged to adopt animal control bylaws to have uniform animal control standards throughout the Region.*
- 6.13 *That there be an increased bylaw enforcement presence to control dogs at large in the parks.*
- 6.14 *That the Townsite dog park be closed and repurposed into a public park.*
- 6.15 *That a master plan for dog parks be completed within the next five years.*

6.5 Campgrounds

6.5.1 GENERAL COMMENTS AND AREAS OF CONCERN

There are three campgrounds operated by the Regional District or the City – Willingdon Beach, Haywire Bay, and Shelter Point. In addition to these three campgrounds, there are two provincial campgrounds located at Inland Lake and Sallery Bay and a number of private campgrounds and campground locations in the provincial forestry recreation site. The City operates the Willingdon Beach Campground which consists of 79 campsites including no service sites to sites with

full electrical and sani-dump services, two group campsites, two washroom/shower/laundry facilities, picnic shelters and a barbecue. As of October 30, 2016, there were over 2,000 visitors to these campgrounds with a majority of the visitors coming from the Region and the rest of British Columbia. The remaining visitors were from Western Canada, the United States, Europe, and Asia. The campground is open throughout the year and operated by an on-site caretaker. A campground reservation system is available to book the sites throughout the year.

The Regional District operates the Haywire Bay campsite which is in Electoral Area B. The Haywire Bay campsite is very popular for residents of the Region with a majority of its campers coming from the City followed by campers from a number of British Columbia locations. The campground has a limited season, opening in May and closing at the end of October. The campground consists of 48 individual RV and tent sites, two group campsites, dry pit toilets, showers, playground equipment, a lakeside pavilion with a grilling pit. The campground is operated by an on-site caretaker. There are no reservations available so campers are accommodated on a first come first served basis.

The Regional District also operates the Shelter Point campsite on Texada Island. The campgrounds include the main campgrounds and the Bella Maria campground, consisting of showers and flush toilets. While the site is open year-round, the serviced sites are only available to the end of October. In 2016, the residents from other parts of British Columbia were the greatest users of these campgrounds, followed by City residents, Texada Island residents and other rural residents. A caretaker operates the site. Again, there are no reservations available so campers are accommodated on a first come first served basis.

Changing demographics and technologies have had a significant impact on the style of camping that people do. When the campsites were first established, they were designed to accommodate tents and small trailers that could be pulled by a regular car. Nowadays, people are camping with large trailers or motor homes which may require more space than the site's original design. Campers expect to have access to electrical outlets, Wi-Fi, washers and dryers for cleaning clothes and fully serviced washrooms with showers. Because modern trailers are designed for camping year-round, campers expect to be able to access campsites year-round, including in the winter months. Also, campers expect to reserve their campsites on-line in advance of their arrival rather than having to phone or physically attend the site in advance to secure a camping space.

Depending upon the campsite, the current campgrounds in the Region may be limiting themselves to accommodate only a portion of the requirements for this new style of

camping. For example, there are not always modern washroom facilities, modern laundry facilities and full serviced Wi-Fi available. Only the Willingdon Beach Campgrounds have a centralized booking system while Haywire Bay and Shelter Point Campgrounds do not. This may be having an impact on campers coming to the Region to use those two campgrounds.

6.5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.16 *That a 10-year management, marketing and asset management plan for each local government campground be created.*
- 6.17 *That a 10-year capital development plan for each campground be created to modernize the infrastructure.*
- 6.18 *That a centralized reservation system be developed for use with all three campgrounds.*
- 6.19 *That a coordinated local government campground advertising plan be undertaken.*

6.6 Regional Beautification

6.6.1 GENERAL COMMENTS

Community beautification can be defined as making visual improvements to a community through landscaping and decorative features. Community beautification has a number of benefits such as:

- a) creating civic pride in the area;
- b) addressing safety hazards and obstacles;
- c) focusing on community clean-up;
- d) creating a welcoming environment for tourists and citizens; and
- e) developing community interaction points.

Community beautification works well when there are public spaces in place for people to socialize and to relax. Public spaces create a natural focal point as a place to display public art. However, public spaces do not have to be large in size to be functional. People appreciate “pockets of space” in unexpected places -- their own little oasis in a busy existence.

Community gardens are another means of achieving community beautification and creating opportunities for people to socialize. Based on national and local trends, gardening is becoming a significant form of recreation, with participation in this activity growing at a steady pace. Gardening is a way to encourage people to enjoy the outdoors and to get away from the daily stresses of life. Many of the Region's seniors are downsizing from single family residential units and moving into apartments, condominiums, or public seniors' housing. Because of the downsizing, many of them will no longer be able to garden on their properties, an activity that they enjoy. The establishment of community gardens can create opportunities for these people living in multi-family complexes not only to garden but to also interact with others on a frequent basis. The community gardens can be placed in vacant fields, in community parks or close to retirement residential areas.

6.6.2 AREAS OF CONCERN

Survey and focus meeting group respondents had many suggestions as to what steps can be taken for beautification in the region such as:

- improvements to the private lands at the Westview ferry terminals including the oil tanks;
- painting the storefronts along Marine Avenue;
- placing planters, park benches, more flowers and rock gardens along Marine Avenue;
- planting flowers along Joyce Avenue;
- planting more native trees throughout the Region;
- adding murals to the downtown area;
- allowing public visual art on the pavement on Marine Avenue;
- covering the graffiti wall on Willingdon Beach South;
- creation of community gardens which can be taken care of by different groups;
- implementing consistent signage throughout the Region¹⁹;
- adding more directional signage throughout the Region;
- increasing the signage to direct tourists to historical sites and sites of interest;
- placing banners and murals throughout the commercial areas; and
- wrapping utility boxes with graffiti proof nature scenes.

The Communities in Bloom program has been identified as a possible avenue for enhancing regional beautification. However, a regional beautification strategy should

¹⁹ Powell River Tourism has started a consistent signage project with the placement of new “welcome” signage in many communities and along several trails.

be developed and fully implemented before undertaking the Communities in Bloom program.

6.6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.20 *That a Regional Beautification Committee be struck with representatives from all three local governments.*
- 6.21 *That the Regional Beautification Committee work with citizens, the planning departments of all three local governments and with the City's Parks, Recreation, and Culture Department to determine what locations are suitable for additional public spaces and what features should be included in those public spaces.*
- 6.22 *That funding be provided by all three local governments to enable the Regional Beautification Committee to implement the recommendations of the Committee.*
- 6.23 *That community gardens be established close to residential units for seniors and on public lands.*
- 6.24 *That community garden opportunities be created throughout the Region and funding of community gardens be secured through multi-year financial commitment.*
- 6.25 *That a street-scaping plan be established for the Region.*

7.0 Recreational Facilities

Recreation programs and services cannot function without adequate facilities in which the programs and services can take place. This part of the report focuses on the Region's existing recreational facilities.

7.1 General Observations

7.1.1 AREAS OF CONCERNS

A common challenge impacting all recreation service providers around the province is aging infrastructure. As a recreation facility reaches the end of its functional lifespan, both the operating costs and the need for capital upgrades to the facilities increase. Provincial and territorial governments have estimated that \$15 billion dollars of deferred capital investment is required to repair or replace existing sport and recreational facilities. Simply put, new buildings are cheaper to operate. Recreation facilities in the Region are not immune to these concerns about the need for upgrading existing infrastructure and set aside adequate funds for future capital works.

Another challenge for operators of recreational facilities is functional obsolescence which means not being able to accommodate the changing demands of users. Various forms of change in demand and expectations are the principal causes of functional obsolescence. Changes to sports regulations and technical standards result in previously acceptable fields and courts becoming unacceptable. Changes in demographics often result in activities that large numbers of people previously participated in are no longer drawing the same demand while activities that previously had low rates of participation are being demanded.

In addition to capital upgrades required for aging infrastructure, the local governments in the Region must also consider ongoing regular maintenance. By investing just two percent of the capital costs of an asset into maintenance, its deterioration rate slows considerably, potentially doubling the service life of the facility and significantly offsetting replacement costs. Ongoing maintenance includes mechanical systems, flooring, lighting etc. that is important not only to extending the life of the facilities, but also ensuring that there are no liability issues associated with the operations of the facilities.

Another consideration with the operations of the recreation centers is to ensure that there are consistent operating procedures and standards. In the Regional District, this may be difficult to achieve as each hall is operated by a different volunteer board. Bringing these boards together on a regular basis to develop and maintain operating

standards will assist in extending an enjoyable recreation experience for all user groups.

7.1.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 *That a detailed asset management plan be developed for each facility owned by any of the three local governments.*
- 7.2 *That energy studies and updates for each facility owned by any of the three local governments be implemented to reduce energy costs and the facilities' carbon footprints.*
- 7.3 *That a review of all Regional facilities be conducted to determine the type of upgrades required to prolong the use of the facility.*
- 7.4 *That consistent operating standards be established for all Regional facilities.*
- 7.5 *That a long-term funding plan be established for each recreational facility owned and operated by any of the three local governments.*

7.2 Powell River Recreation Complex (the “Complex”)

7.2.1 GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THE COMPLEX

A. General Observations and Areas of Concern

The Complex has been serving the Region for more than 40 years. In the survey, residents were specifically asked questions to determine how well the Complex has performed over that time. Residents rated the Complex and its programs as average. In response to the question “How satisfied are you with the Complex”, respondents in three of the electoral areas felt that the Complex was marginal while residents of the City, the Tla’amin Nation and Electoral Area C felt that the Complex was average.

The Complex is a widely-used facility. Based on survey results, residents visit the Complex on average 40.8 times per year. By comparison, Dwight Hall has an average of 6.3 visits per resident per year, Cranberry Seniors’ Centre, an average of 5.3 visits, and Kelly Creek School, an average of 3.4 visits.

The respondents felt that the Region was fortunate to have such a facility. However, many were of the opinion that upgrades to the Complex are still necessary, even though a Complex Master Plan was completed and some of the upgrades identified in

the master plan were implemented. Some of the upgrades that would be appreciated are changes to the fitness areas and expansion of different structures in the pool area. As for funding of the upgrades, 58% of respondents thought that facility upgrades should be funded through taxation and federal and provincial grants.

B. Recommendations

- 7.6 *That no new facilities be built which replicate what is currently at the Complex.*
- 7.7 *That the three local governments fund the maintenance, capital upgrades, and operations of the existing facilities and that no new facilities be considered until the existing recreation facilities have been brought to an acceptable standard.*
- 7.8 *That a review of the Complex which covers the architectural, mechanical, structural, electrical, and accessibility aspects of the Complex be completed with recommendations to address any deficiencies.*
- 7.9 *That an asset management plan to repair, replace, and maintain what is currently in place in the Complex be developed.*
- 7.10 *That all equipment presently in use at the Complex be reviewed and replacement timelines for that equipment be determined.*

7.2.2 EVERGREEN THEATRE

A. General Observations and Areas of Concern

The Evergreen Theatre, a 720-seat performance theatre, is a well-used facility in the Region. The GYA 2014 Study stated that only 41 performances were held in the Evergreen Theatre in 2013. In a similar review completed in 2015 by the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Culture staff, the number had increased to a total of 186 uses which included 82 rehearsals. There is a total of 355 available event nights showing a 52.39% of all event nights booked. This shows an extremely well-used facility when one considers that the theatre's bookings are at a minimum in the summer months because there is no air conditioning available which makes the space extremely uncomfortable for the user groups. The theatre has sufficient capacity for the types of events that it holds. However, the theatre is beginning to show its age and could do with some upgrades. Accessibility, as with the rest of the Complex, is an issue. Ideally, all theatres areas should be on the same level as the stage. While the City replaced the compact theatre seating in 2015, the extended theatre seating

needs to be replaced. The lack of air conditioning, the noise from the heating and ventilation system and poor acoustics have a negative impact on the audience's sense of the performance and were identified as concerns in the focus group meetings. The stage, along with the portable wall, requires some upgrades and could use some modern equipment for lighting.

The upgrades would assist in making Evergreen Theatre an attractive venue to accommodate high quality events. Those events would form the basis for developing a marketing plan to generate interest from event promoters to rent the theatre. The Evergreen Theatre could work with Max Cameron Theatre on marketing both theatres and bringing different events to the Region.

B. Recommendations

7.11 *That the City develop a capital upgrades plan for the Evergreen Theatre.*

7.12 *That the City promote the Evergreen Theatre to various private promoters to bring shows to the facility.*

7.13 *That the City promote the Evergreen Theatre to other user groups.*

7.2.3 ICE ARENAS

A. General Observations and Areas of Concern

The Region is fortunate to have two ice surfaces for a population of less than 20,000 residents, so capacity at the arenas is not an issue. Upgrades to the refrigeration plant along with the replacement of the arena floors and rink boards were completed in 2006. However, the age and condition of the arenas are an issue. In the focus group meetings, participants indicated that the dressing rooms, shared between the two ice surfaces, are small in size. At times, there are not enough change rooms to support the use of the two ice surfaces at the same time. Mechanical equipment in the arena is aging and needs replacing. Accessibility is a major concern.

To take advantage of the capacity available with the two ice surfaces, the City should consider adding new programs and services to increase the revenue generated by the arenas.

B. Recommendations

- 7.14 *That, as part of the architectural, mechanical, electrical, accessibility, and life safety review of the Complex, the expansion of the change rooms be recommended.*
- 7.15 *That the identified equipment in the ice arena, noted in the asset management plan and the architectural, mechanical, electrical, accessibility, and life safety review, be replaced.*
- 7.16 *That the City add new programs and services for the ice arenas.*

7.2.4 SWIMMING POOL

A. General Observations and Areas of Concern

The swimming pool is an important component of the Complex, as survey respondents indicate that 61.6% participated in swimming and aquasize in the past twelve months. While the swimming pool has sufficient capacity for those who wish to swim lanes, the swimming pool has limited capacity for those who prefer more free time at the pool. Operators of other pools in the province are adding features such as water slides and 'lazy rivers' to increase the attractiveness of the facility, to make the facility not only a place to get fit but also a place to have fun.

As with any 40-year old building, the swimming pool is starting to show its age. Many focus group participants commented on the need to update the aquatic center, noting the slippery pool deck, the outdated equipment, and the need to improve accessibility into the pool. Maintenance of the swimming pool poses an issue as ceiling insulation is falling into the pool and people are cutting the bottom of their feet on the tiles. Focus group participants were specific in requesting that a water slide and a steam room be added and that the change rooms be upgraded. They also noted their concerns about high levels of chlorine being added to the water. They were unaware that the aquatic center has installed an ultra-violet water treatment which has assisted in reducing the amount of chlorine used to treat the water in the pool.

B. Recommendations

- 7.17 *That the following projects be considered as part of the architectural, mechanical, electrical, accessibility, and life safety review for the Complex:*
- a) *that a water slide and a steam room be considered for the swimming pool;*

- b) *that other play opportunities that would support renewed interest for the swimming pool be considered;*
- c) *that the change rooms be modified and upgraded; and*
- d) *that the viewing area be reviewed and modified.*

7.18 *That the existing ceiling insulation in the aquatic centre be replaced with another product.*

7.19 *That information about the swimming pool's new ultra-violet water treatment system be communicated to the public.*

7.20 *That an energy audit for the Complex be completed to determine possible energy costs savings and reductions of the carbon footprint.*

7.2.5 FITNESS AREA AND OTHER ROOMS IN THE COMPLEX

A. General Observations and Areas of Concern

Two concerns with the fitness area are capacity and upgrading of existing equipment. The gym itself is overcrowded during prime times which are afternoons and evenings and busy during the quiet time hours. The degree of use also brings into question whether the Complex should expand the size of the existing weight room. Several upgrades would improve the usability of the fitness area. For example, adequate space for a proper stretching area would be well advised.

Fitness patrons have commented that being able to use the fitness area and the pool are an added advantage to get people active and should be continued.

Something that can be considered to enhance the fitness area is the inclusion of health services such as physiotherapy, chiropractic services and other related medical services. These types of services are a natural fit within the role of the Complex and their inclusion could provide additional funding to support the operations of the Complex.

Several meeting rooms are located within the Complex. However, the meeting rooms are also used as multi-purpose rooms to accommodate programming and other services. For example, some yoga sessions are being held in the meeting rooms, thus the physical layout and the aesthetic flooring in those rooms are not the most conducive to the meditative aspects of yoga. The continued use of meeting rooms as multi-purpose rooms will require some modifications to accommodate fitness needs, such as changes to the flooring.

B. Recommendations

- 7.21 *That options to develop additional space for the fitness room be explored.*
- 7.22 *That steps be taken to accommodate the meeting rooms at the Complex as multi-purpose rooms that can be used for programming.*
- 7.23 *That the creation of a separate yoga space at the Complex or elsewhere be considered.*

7.2.6 LAND AROUND THE COMPLEX

A. General Observations and Areas of Concern

The area surrounding the Complex has great potential to enhance the utility of the facility. The area could be useful for any additions to the facility or developed to enhance the outdoor environment around the Complex. The logged area and main parking lot have generated much discussion about what could be done. A playground at the Complex would be a useful structure to include in future plans.

While there is a lot of potential as to what can be done with the area surrounding the Complex, there is no articulated vision of what that potential might be. Without a vision and a long-range plan to give future direction, the area sits as open space.

B. Recommendations

7.24 That a long-range plan for the land surrounding the Complex be developed by the City.

Dwight Hall

Dwight Hall was constructed in 1927 by the Powell River Company. The building contains a large main floor area consisting of a large ballroom with adjoining supper room, kitchen, and stage. The upper floor is rented out by the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Culture for many community events throughout the year. The lower level consists of leased space. The City presently owns and operates the building.

Dwight Hall is used well by the residents throughout the region. This is evident with the results of the recently completed community survey in which participants indicated they used the facility an average of 6.3 times per year. In focus group discussions, many people spoke of the need to maintain the building in its original heritage character. The building does require upgrades consistent with many other City-owned and operated facilities. These upgrades include the floor, window fixtures, roof, and expansion of the stage. The facility is rented as a site for many social events that provide food as part of the event atmosphere. Unfortunately, the kitchen is only equipped with a microwave, commercial refrigerator and household stove and oven. With the limited commercial kitchen equipment on site, the food providers must prepare the food off site and transport the food to Dwight Hall. In recent years, there have been recommendations for the installation of a commercial kitchen at Dwight Hall. The cost of a full commercial kitchen would be significant and it must be

determined if there is a financial and customer service benefit. Presently companies serving food at Dwight Hall prepare the food off site and deliver the food to the function. While the installation of a full kitchen at Dwight Hall would assist these companies, it would result in a minimal financial benefit through increased usage.

7.25 *That heritage grant applications be explored from senior levels of government for any renovations to Dwight Hall.*

7.26 *That any renovations to Dwight Hall be required to maintain the historical character of the building.*

7.3 Tla'amin Facilities

7.3.1 GENERAL COMMENTS AND AREAS OF CONCERN

The Salish Centre is owned and operated by the Tla'amin Nation and has a large gymnasium which can be used for many sporting programs and services. In addition, the facility also has a large kitchen. At present, there is limited usage of the Salish Centre by both the resident Tla'amin Nation members and lease holders. This facility has the potential to be used as a shared facility between the Tla'amin Nation and Electoral Area A. There are limited details available as to the state of the facility and financial information on the operating costs for the Salish Centre which would be important information for the exploration of the center becoming a shared facility.

7.3.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

7.25 *That a facility review of the Salish Centre include that the architectural, mechanical, structural, electrical and accessibility aspects be completed with recommendations to address any deficiencies, any expansions, and improvements for accessibility.*

7.27 *That an operating budget for the Salish Centre be developed.*

7.4 Max Cameron Theatre

7.4.1 GENERAL COMMENTS AND AREAS OF CONCERN

The Max Cameron Theatre is a modern facility with seating for 440 people, located at Brooks High School. It is owned by School District No. 47 and independently operated. While there is a limited market for having two such similar facilities in the Region, there is the potential for the operators of the two facilities to work together for the benefit of both. For example, the two facilities could be marketed together with details about the suitability of each for different types of events, making it easier for promoters of events to find the most appropriate venue for their events.

7.4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

7.28 *That the staff at the Department of Parks, Recreation and Culture and the Max Cameron Theatre have on-going meetings to explore combined marketing efforts and to create new opportunities and other options to bring events to the Region.*

7.5 Community Halls and Centers

7.5.1 GENERAL COMMENTS AND AREAS OF CONCERN

Recreation infrastructure located in the Regional District is run by volunteer boards or commissions with assistance of Regional District staff. In Electoral Area A, the Lund Community Centre was, at one time, the local elementary school. During the focus group meetings with Electoral Area A residents, those residents mentioned that they wanted a better facility that would suit their needs for larger community events and activities. In Electoral Area C, a community school is used as a recreation facility. This facility seems well maintained and has a large user base predominantly from Electoral Area C. Also, included in Electoral Area C is the Lang Bay Hall. In Electoral Area B, there is no real community center but the residents do use the facility and grounds at the Paradise Exhibition Grounds for many of their activities. In Electoral Area D, the various communities on Texada Island have the use of two community halls.

These community halls are in various states of repair. Some need more attention than others. While the designs of these buildings suited their original purposes, the buildings are not always ideal for their current purpose. As well, the community halls are starting to show their age and many could use upgrades to reduce energy costs,

create accessibility and greater building functionality. The exception is the Texada Island Community Hall which recently has had some upgrades completed.

Funding for these community halls is limited. For example, the Lund Community Society receives funding for the Lund Community Centre annually, with minimal funding allocated to the upkeep of the building. The residents of Electoral Area C receive annual funding for program support at the Kelly Creek Community School, which is still part of School District No. 47. Lang Bay Hall receives no guaranteed funding from the taxpayers in the Regional District, but may receive the occasional grant of money for special requests. The Texada Recreation Commission receives annual funding for Texada Island's community halls from the taxpayers in Electoral Area D.

All community halls can generate revenue independently from taxation. Kelly Creek Community School offers many programs and services and although Texada Island Community Hall does not run programs, it generates funding through rentals of the hall.

Several key items emerged through the focus group discussions about community halls. First, it is difficult to book some of the community halls, as a person must make several phone calls to try and determine what is available for use. There is limited funding which impacts the ability of the boards running the community halls to operate and maintain the community halls. The community halls are in various states of repair which impacts the utility of the facility.

7.5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.29 *That a central booking system for all community halls be implemented through the City's booking system.*
- 7.30 *That consideration be given to making the Salish Centre available for use by other Electoral Area A residents.*
- 7.31 *That a professional engineer or architect be retained to inspect each of the community halls located in the Regional District and recommendations be made to upgrade the facilities to meet the needs of the community.*
- 7.32 *That funding be made available to upgrade the community halls and Salish Centre.*

8.0 Partnerships

The Region would not be able to provide all of the recreation programs and services expected by the citizens without a multitude of partnerships currently existing. The partnerships with other organizations enable the Region to provide the necessary diversity of programming and services. This part of the report will discuss how current and future partnerships can help with an effective regional recreation initiative.

8.1 Partnerships with Specific Organizations

8.1.1 GENERAL COMMENTS

There are some specific organizations within the Region with whom there is potential to enhance parks, recreation, and cultural services. For example, Powell River Tourism is a natural partner to work with promoting parks and culture to the tourists coming to the Region. School District No. 47 with the type and location of its facilities and its youth population is an obvious partner to explore the expansion of programs and services within specific neighbourhoods. The Chamber of Commerce is also another potential partner with an interest in making the Region an attractive place to do business.

The comments regarding how interaction with the Cranberry Seniors' Centre can be enhanced have been made earlier in the report.

The focus group meetings noted that Powell River Tourism needs a new home located closer to the tourism traffic than its current location. It would be an ideal partnership between Powell River Tourism and the Historical Museum with a possible expansion of the Powell River Historical Museum and its location on Marine Avenue. Relocating Powell River Tourism in a new museum would create a revenue stream for the museum by having a permanent tenant.

Many local governments have formed partnerships with land conservancy such as Nature Trust to purchase and operate their nature areas.

8.1.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 *That the three local governments work with Powell River Tourism to develop marketing opportunities, in particular in the areas of sports tourism and camping.*

- 8.2 *That the three local governments work with School District No. 47 under a joint use agreement to explore the shared use of facilities and programs and to partner to increase new parkland attached to school space.*
- 8.3 *That the three local governments offer new recreation program and services throughout the School District.*
- 8.4 *That a newcomer's event be held with the Chamber of Commerce every two years and that recreational opportunities be highlighted.*
- 8.5 *That the three local governments initiate discussions with Chamber of Commerce members about parks, recreation, and cultural services in the Region to include corporate sponsorship.*
- 8.6 *That land conservancies be encouraged to participate in new land acquisition opportunities throughout the Region.*

8.2 Volunteers

8.2.1 GENERAL COMMENTS AND AREAS OF CONCERN

Volunteerism is a critical component of community life, in particular in smaller communities. According to the 2010 Canadian Survey of Giving, adults aged 65-75 years of age volunteered 235 hours per year, compared to 156 hours per year for all other Canadians.²⁰ The mean average for the number of years that people volunteer is 4.55 years. One of the main reasons why people volunteer is because someone they know volunteers. For example, a total of 43% per cent indicated that they performed volunteer work as part of a group project with friends, neighbours and co-workers. Another 25% of those surveyed said that they had joined members of their immediate families in their volunteer work.

Volunteers play a significant role in the provision of parks, recreation, and cultural services in the Region. Volunteers are the reason why large events such as the International Kathaumixw, PRISMA, the festival of performing arts and logger sports, can occur within the Region. Without volunteers, these events simply could not operate. A majority of arts and culture activities exist because of the efforts of many volunteers.

²⁰. For some encouraging news, according to Statistics Canada the number of volunteers 15 years and older was higher in 2010 than previous years.

Volunteers and volunteer boards also form the backbone of the community halls operated in the Region. The massive trail system, which is a benefit to the local citizens and a driver of the tourism economy, is a result of a number of volunteers looking after the many kilometers of trails in the Region.

Based on the survey results, the number of residents who do not volunteer in the region is high, that is to say the majority of those surveyed. Consequently, those people that do volunteer are a minority group who are extremely generous with their time.

Throughout the discussions and the focus group meetings, people noted that volunteerism is not what it used to be. Many of the groups in the Region that rely on volunteers are reporting a reduction of volunteers or volunteer burnout. Often it is the same people who serve as volunteers who provide their time to a number of organizations.

The overall theme arising from the results of the survey is that there is a lack of volunteers in the Region and a lack of community awareness about the volunteer opportunities available throughout the Region. Steps need to be taken to raise awareness about volunteer opportunities and to increase the number of people volunteering.

8.2.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.7 *That the three local governments work with the Powell River Volunteer Centre to determine needs of volunteers.*
- 8.8 *That efforts be made to recruit more seniors to become volunteers in the Region.*
- 8.9 *That the three local governments, in conjunction with the Powell River Volunteer Centre, create a marketing strategy to promote the benefits of volunteering.*
- 8.10 *That the three local governments, working with the Powell River Volunteer Centre and School District No. 47, develop volunteering opportunities for the youth in Brooks High School.*

8.3 Historical Organizations

8.3.1 GENERAL COMMENTS AND AREAS OF CONCERN

There is a potential synergy that could occur with the historical organizations working together. For example, the historical organizations operating the museums could consider how they can work together in the operations of the museums.

Another possibility exists with the Powell River Historical Museum and the Tla'amin Nation working together to construct a long house which can be used to educate people about the Tla'amin Nation and its importance to the Region.

Given the importance of museums to help preserve the heritage and culture of an area, it may be worthwhile to consider the building of a new museum in the Region which could also include a new art gallery or performance venue. However, the Region needs to explore what types of funding opportunities exist to finance such a construction.

8.3.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.11 *That a Historical Board be considered to operate the historical sites in the Region.*
- 8.12 *That if the Townsite Heritage Society is interested, that the Townsite Heritage Society be encouraged to become a member of the Historical Board.*
- 8.13 *That it be considered whether upgrades to the Powell River Museum could also include space to house an art gallery.*
- 8.14 *That consistent signage with a historical theme be developed to promote the historical sites.*
- 8.15 *That investigations be done to determine potential funding sources for a new museum in the Region.*

9.0 The Value and Cost of Regional Parks, Recreation, and Culture

9.1 General Comments

A common theme arising from the focus group meetings in the City, and a lesser extent in some focus group meetings in the Electoral Areas, is that services and facilities across the Region need to improve and that the Regional District and the Tla'amin Nation should assume a greater role in the financing of these improved facilities and services in the entire Region. Part of this perspective arises from the belief that it is difficult for the Regional District and the Tla'amin Nation to offer services on their own, given the shortage of suitable facilities and personnel to run the programs. Consequently, many residents from the Regional District and the Tla'amin Nation participate in programs and services offered by the City, paying only the programs fees alone without any further contribution to the costs of operating the facilities. For example, the Tla'amin Nation rents the swimming pool for an evening a week. City residents contribute financially to the Regional District's parks and campgrounds through their taxes while the Regional District and Tla'amin Nation do not have the same corresponding financial contribution for the City's parks, recreation, and cultural programs, services, and facilities. It will be difficult to discuss any regional recreation initiatives without addressing this particular issue.

It is particularly interesting to note that the survey indicated that 60% of those living outside the City's boundaries would be interested in contributing towards the City's parks, recreation and cultural programs and facilities through their property taxes.

Throughout the focus group meetings, there were a number of comments made both for and against regional recreation. Those comments which were against regional recreation include the following:

- Concerns were expressed about the regional areas losing their identity and autonomy while paying increased taxation. The City has never asked the Regional District to be part of the Complex in the past. So, the question was asked why would the regional residents pay for something that they already receive at no cost.
- If the Regional District residents did pay towards these services, what would they see as added value? Residents in the Regional District have funded their community halls in the past and now the facilities may be operated by someone else.

- If one larger organization took care of all parks, recreation, and cultural services, would the smaller communities be underserved? What is included in the new service?
- Presently many of the services provided in the Regional District are offered by volunteers. What would the impact be on the volunteers because of this new service? Volunteer boards and commissions operate community halls throughout the Regional District. Will those boards and commissions remain in place to serve their areas?
- Some people indicated that they do not use the Complex presently.
- Some do not see centralization of services as the most efficient way of doing things.

Those comments which were in favor of regional recreation include the following:

- There were residents in the Region that supported regional recreation. They would like to see the matter brought forward for discussion.
- One comment that was made often was that the regional recreation process was like all other services created through taxation. You may never get to use the service, but other people now and in the future will, which creates a progressive legacy program. Others commented that a proposed regional recreation service is like the library; it makes the community stronger. In most areas of the Region, people thought that it would enhance the level of services and programs being offered in their respective areas.
- Many people in the Regional District did not know that they did not contribute through their property taxes to the services offered by the City.
- This partnership may also create harmony between the City and the Regional District.
- People felt there should be a fairness in supporting parks, recreation and cultural services provided by the City.

9.2 The Value of Regional Parks, Recreation, and Culture

9.2.1 GENERAL COMMENTS AND AREAS OF CONCERN

If recreation in the Region is to be incorporated into an expanded regional recreation service, the Region's residents want to see greater value for money. They do not want to pay more for the status quo, but are open to paying more for their recommended increases in services. Many of those attending focus group and public meetings mentioned that they wanted additional regional parks or similar high cost items.

Another consideration in terms of value is how the initiative supports the services presently being offered. The facilities, parks and programs throughout the Region are in need of some financial investment, given the age and the state of the facilities. The collective management of a regional service would achieve economies of scale to fund improvements to the services currently being offered independently.

9.3 Marketing

9.3.1 GENERAL COMMENTS AND AREAS OF CONCERN

Having great facilities, programs and services are not enough to ensure the vitality of parks, recreation, and cultural services if people are not familiar with all that is offered. The public would like to see improvements to the marketing and communications of recreation programs and services. The focus groups mentioned regularly that there is a need to make it easier for people to know about events and available services. After all, not everyone reads newspapers, listens to the radio, or uses social media. At this point, a simple and well-subscribed information system is currently not in place. As well, parks, recreation and cultural services would benefit from having a distinct brand that can be used in the marketing so that people recognize immediately from whom the communication is coming.

Not only is there a need for better communications from the three local governments to the residents, there is also a need for enhanced communications between user groups and between user groups and residents. Often these user groups need affordable ways to promote their events since they do not have large advertising and promotional budgets.

9.3.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 *That the three local governments develop a unified brand for the Parks, Recreation, and Culture Department to use with its signage and communications to the public.*
- 9.2 *That an annual Sports Expo event be held to assist in promoting sports organizations in the Region.*
- 9.3 *That an annual Arts and Culture Expo event be held to assist in promotion of arts and culture organizations.*
- 9.4 *That a marketing/business development position be considered to assist in promotion of parks, recreation and cultural services throughout the region.*

9.4 Grant Funding

9.4.1 GENERAL COMMENTS AND AREAS OF CONCERN

The ability to hold large scale events or to address infrastructure deficiencies either through upgrades or new construction requires sufficient funding to support these efforts. While the three local governments can provide some of the funding for the task at hand, they are not able to provide all necessary funding to complete the tasks.

Whenever possible, staff should look for funding sources which are outside of their respective governments. For example, staff should apply for grants for funding from the federal or provincial government which can be used to offset the costs of the task.

9.4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.5 *That staff of all three local governments research and apply for applicable grants coming from the senior levels of government.*
- 9.6 *That the three local governments staff research other private sector funding sources such as corporate donations, corporate sponsorships, and funding through foundations.*
- 9.7 *That the three local governments establish reserve accounts to assist in paying for aging infrastructure and to provide matching funding for grant applications.*

9.5 The Cost of Regional Parks, Recreation, and Culture

9.5.1 GENERAL COMMENTS

The sharing of costs to construct, maintain and provide parks, recreation and cultural services between various local governments is very common throughout British Columbia. This is the most economical way of providing these services because of the high costs of independent operations.

Many areas that have constructed recreation facilities and are operating parks, recreation and cultural services independently are now discussing sharing in regional services and costs with their neighbours. Frequently, these are the only facilities and recreation services in the area and are being utilized by many of the neighbouring municipalities and Regional District Electoral Areas. For example, the Cowichan Valley Regional District has directed staff to explore a fairer funding model to apportion the costs of the services. The City of Trail is also in similar discussions with their neighbours to assist in funding their existing department.

The concept of shared funding is no less logical in our Region. Based on the results from the focus groups, public meetings, and the survey, many of the City's neighbours are using the many services that the City has to offer. For example, based on survey results, the calculated mean average visits per year per resident for the use of the Complex were largely the same across the Region and are as follows:

- City residents 42.5
- Tla'amin Nation 43.4
- Electoral Area A 34.8
- Electoral Area B 38
- Electoral Area C 38.7
- Electoral Area D 20.7

The use of City services is about the same on a per capita basis throughout the Region. Therefore, it is logical and fair that costs should be shared on a per capita basis. This would result in a cost sharing formula of 70% for the City, 25% for the Regional District and 5% for the Tla'amin Nation. This logic mirrors that recommended in the GYA 2014 Study, but is based on more extensive data gathering and takes into consideration the return to self-government of the Tla'amin Nation.

9.5.2 SUPPORT FOR A REGIONAL COST SHARING APPROACH IN THE REGIONAL DISTRICT AND THE TLA'AMIN NATION

The following question was asked in the survey to determine the level of support for a regional cost sharing approach:

“Presently, only City of Powell River Taxpayers pay through their property taxes towards the services provided through the City of Powell River Department of Parks, Recreation and Culture services. Would you, as a Regional District or Tla’amin Community member, be interested in contributing through your property taxes towards these Parks, Recreation and Cultural services?”

Based on the survey responses, 60% of the Tla’amin Nation and Regional District residents supported paying towards the costs associated with the City’s parks, recreation, and cultural services as detailed in Table 9.1.

Table 9.1 The Tla’amin Nation and Regional District Residents responses on regional recreation cost sharing based on Age							
	13-18yrs	19-24yrs	25-34yrs	35-44yrs	45-54yrs	55-69yrs	70+yrs
Yes	54.3%	58.3%	60.0%	69.1%	60.2%	62.0%	47.1%
No	45.7%	41.7%	40.0%	30.9%	39.8%	38.0%	52.9%
Total	35	24	70	81	93	171	68

Table 9.2 shows the breakdown by each area, showing the responses received from residents in those areas on regional recreation cost sharing.

Table 9.2 The Tla’amin Nation and Regional District Residents responses on regional recreation cost sharing based on Area					
	Tla’amin Nation	Electoral Area A	Electoral Area B	Electoral Area C	Electoral Area D
Yes	62.2%	63.6%	71.8%	61.9%	38.6%
No	37.8%	36.4%	28.2%	38.1%	61.4%
Total	90	77	103	126	57

9.5.3 PARKS, RECREATION, AND CULTURE PRESENT COSTS PER AREA

One of the main questions that people have about a regional recreation initiative is how much is it going to cost to participate. To respond to that question, Table 9.3 details the 2015 net operation costs and the cost per capita presently paid by the three-local government.

Table 9.3

Local Government	Present Net Operation Costs	Present Cost per Capita
City of Powell River	\$2,058, 539.00	\$156.00
Tla'amin Nation	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 77.00
Electoral Area 'A'	\$ 70,466.00	\$ 70.00
Electoral Area 'B'	\$ 23,162.00	\$ 16.00
Electoral Area 'C'	\$ 69,406.00	\$ 34.00
Electoral Area 'D'	\$ 83,946.00	\$ 80.00

9.5.4 COST OF EXPANDED PARKS, RECREATION, AND CULTURE

Considering the services that the Region's residents are requesting, the existing budget will not be sufficient to provide the services requested by the population. If the three local governments approve a regional recreation service, a complete budget should be developed for consideration showing funding required after calculating all expenditures and revenues.

Three financial scenarios have been developed, as shown in Table 9.4, if the Regional District and the Tla'amin Nation choose to participate in regional parks, recreation and cultural services.

Scenario 1 includes all existing parks, recreation and culture costs from all three local governments with the City of Powell River paying 70% of the costs, the Regional District paying 25% and the Tla'amin Nation paying 5%; however, there would be no expanded services levels than what is in place presently throughout the region.

Scenario 2 includes City of Powell River actual costs only and would be based on the City paying 70% of the costs, the Regional District paying 25% and Tla'amin paying 5%. In addition to these costs the Regional District and Tla'amin Nation would still be responsible for their own existing costs.

Scenario 3 includes all existing service costs and will be based on a per capita basis. There would be no expanded services levels than what is in place presently throughout the region.

Table 9.4			
Three Cost Sharing Scenarios			
	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3
City of Powell River-Total Percentage	70%	70%	
City of Powell River cost per capita	\$124.41	\$109.46	\$119.94
Powell River Regional District Electoral Area A, B, C &D	25%	25%	
Powell River Regional District cost per capita EA A, B, C and D	\$105.15	EA A \$92.51+\$70=\$162.51 EA B 92.51+\$16.00=\$108.51 EA C \$92.51+\$34.00=\$126.00 EA D \$92.51+\$80.00=\$172.51	\$119.94
Tla'amin Nation	5%	5%	
Tla'amin Nation cost per capita	\$149.99	\$131.96 +\$77.00=\$208.96	\$119.94

These calculations are based on existing 2015 costs. If the regional recreation service is put in place, the costs will likely increase to account for any extra costs. Capital costs were not included in these calculations.

The costs associated with the present services of the Tla'amin Nation would be difficult to determine now as its staff resources and energy costs are included between a numbers of budget functions.

9.5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.8 *That regional parks, recreation, and cultural services be established and include the City, Electoral Areas A, B, C and D of the Regional District and the Tla'amin Nation.*
- 9.9 *That the City contribute 70% towards the costs of the Regional Recreation Service while Electoral Areas A, B, C, and D of the Regional District contribute 25% and the Tla'amin Nation contribute 5%.*
- 9.10 *That Electoral Area E continue to pay 100% of their own recreation costs and their continued contribution to the regional parks.*
- 9.11 *That, once the Regional Parks, Recreation and Culture Service has been approved in principle, a draft budget for this new service be presented to the three local governments for consideration and final approval of the service.*
- 9.12 *That the three local governments conduct public meetings and surveys every second year to determine Parks, Recreation and Culture existing service levels and future needs.*

10.0 Attachments

Attachment No. 1 – Demographic Overview of the Region

(Population Source: Statistics Canada, 2011)

Powell River	City	Area A	Area B	Area C	Area D	Area E	Sechelt (Part)	Sliammon	Harwood Island 2 (Dissolved)	Regional District Totals
Demographics - Population	13,165	1,008	1,488	2,014	1,053	4,26	22	730	0	19,906
Children and Youth										
Babies & Toddlers, 0-4 yrs.	550	45	55	80	25	20	✕	45	✕	810
Children 5-9 yrs.	610	25	55	85	15	15	✕	45	✕	850
Preteens, 10-14 yrs.	700	30	60	70	35	15	✕	60	✕	975
Teens, 15- 9 yrs.	830	40	95	90	50	15	✕	60	✕	1,180
Adults										
Young Adults, 20-34 yrs.	1530	105	170	260	80	40	✕	100	✕	2,290
Middle aged, 35 – 64 yrs.	5815	555	745	1045	580	255	✕	330	✕	9,340
Seniors, 65 yrs. and older	3130	205	305	380	265	65	✕	105	✕	4,460

11.0 Summary of Recommendations

11.1 Explanation for Prioritizing

Rather than merely providing a list of the recommendations in the order in which they were made in the report, this part places the recommendations in order of priority from most to least critical. The priority order is organized under the subject matter heading. For example, the recommendations listed in Part 6 – Amenities, are assembled in priority for that part and not mixed in with recommendations from Part 5 – Arts, Culture and Heritage, and Part 7 – Recreational Facilities. So, there is no global priority order for the recommendations. By keeping the recommendations organized by and prioritized within the subject matter, it will be easier to see the progression within all areas encompassing parks, recreation, and cultural services.

While the recommendations are placed in priority sequence, the re-numbering of recommendations to show priority order will not take place. The numbering of the recommendation, as listed in the section from which the recommendation came, has been retained to assist the reader in knowing in which part of the report the recommendation is from. In addition, the section number has been included after the recommendation for more detail.

Several factors were considered when determining the priority order of the recommendations such as:

- Whether the recommendation addresses a pressing need or concern now;
- Whether the recommendation can be easily implemented now;
- Whether there is a logical sequence to the recommendations;
- Whether a recommendation requires a higher priority recommendation to be adopted and implemented first for the first recommendation to become feasible;
- Whether a recommendation fits within the strategic plans of one or more of the three governments; and
- Whether there is funding for the recommendations now or possible funding available in one to two years.

The priority order of the recommendations can be adjusted as needed and if circumstances change.

11.2 Recommendations in Priority Sequence

Part 3 – Recreational Services (47 Recommendations in Total)

- 3.1 That the three local governments consider providing more no cost and low cost recreation programs for all residents. (Section 3.1.3)
- 3.41 That the three local governments consider providing additional no cost and low cost services such as the installation of outdoor fitness equipment, the introduction of additional playground equipment and skill areas such as disc golf placed in existing public parks. (Section 3.6.3)
- 3.32 That the three local governments consider different ways to improve the recreation financial assistance program to improve the opportunities for all persons receiving government assistances as well as those living in poverty to participate in recreation programs. (Section 3.5.3)
- 3.24 That that the City's recreation financial assistance program be expanded to accommodate all seniors living in the Region who are living at poverty levels but wish to participate in recreation programs and that the costs be shared by all three local governments. (Section 3.4.3)
- 3.15 That the existing fitness equipment located in the Complex's fitness room be replaced. (Section 3.3.2)
- 3.39 That the three local governments work to develop more partnerships and resources for chronic disease and rehabilitation with other health agencies and service providers such as Vancouver Coastal Health. (Section 3.6.3)
- 3.2 That the three local governments offer additional programs using School District No. 47 schools and the Outdoor Learning Centre. (Section 3.1.3)
- 3.3 That the three local governments seek sponsorships from community businesses wherever possible to offer free public swim and skating sessions. (Section 3.1.3)
- 3.8 That the three local governments' staff meet with the City's Youth Council to determine the recreational programming and service needs of youth living in the Region. (Section 3.2.2)

- 3.21 That all services providers for seniors meet on a regular basis with seniors living in the Region to determine the needs of seniors. (Section 3.4.3)
- 3.22 That strategies be developed to assist in keeping seniors active and creating an age-friendly community. (Section 3.4.3)
- 3.23 That the Region complete a study to determine readiness to accommodate an increased seniors' population. (Section 3.4.3)
- 3.30 That recreation facilities be assessed to determine the types of modifications required to improve accessibility. (Section 3.5.3)
- 3.18 That a facility use survey be completed to explore room functionality for the suitability of recreation programming. (Section 3.3.2)
- 3.17 That the flooring in all fitness spaces in the Complex be inspected and replaced as required. (Section 3.3.2)
- 3.36 That the City create more social opportunities for interactions by the residents, such as:
 - a) providing funding for the development of block party programs to promote the strengthening of neighbourhoods;
 - b) working with community organizations to increase social connection opportunities;
 - c) creating get-togethers on a weekly or monthly basis at the recreation facilities; or
 - d) developing social opportunities that are free or low cost such as sit-down activities with coffee and cookies to active programs that are offered in parks or indoors. (Section 3.6.3)
- 3.16 That the area in the fitness room be expanded to obtain additional space for warm-ups and for use of the free weights. (Section 3.3.2)
- 3.40 That the City explore opportunities for businesses such as physiotherapists and chiropractors to lease space at the Complex. (Section 3.6.3)
- 3.11 That the three local governments develop more recreation programs for families to do together. (Section 3.2.2)

- 3.4 That the three local governments offer recreation programs, as part of a new parks, recreation, and cultural service in the Regional District and the Tla'amin, Nation areas, except in Electoral Area E. (Section 3.1.3)
- 3.7 That the three local governments develop additional sport development and sports tourism opportunities. (Section 3.2.2)
- 3.13 That the three local governments meet with youth annually to discuss program needs and opportunities. (Section 3.2.2)
- 3.14 That the three local governments consider additional youth programs that focus on social opportunities and leadership development. (Section 3.2.2)
- 3.20 That the Complex fitness equipment be evaluated annually to determine if present equipment is meeting community demands. (Section 3.3.2)
- 3.29 That a program be developed to assist local students to volunteer their time or to earn an hourly wage while helping in the operations of the seniors' centers. (Section 3.4.3)
- 3.33 That the three local governments take the lead in scheduling quarterly meetings with all groups providing services for the disabled community. (Section 3.5.3)
- 3.31 That the three local governments assess their programs in terms of meeting the needs of persons who are disabled. (Section 3.5.3)
- 3.34 That the three local governments work with agencies providing services for members of the disabled community to develop a vision for the disabled in parks, recreation, and cultural services. (Section 3.5.3)
- 3.6 That the three local governments develop additional sport development program opportunities for those who are disabled. (Section 3.2.2)
- 3.5 That the three local governments work with disability service providers to create more integration of children with disabilities into the day camps and other programs. (Section 3.2.2)
- 3.35 That the Region develop a "Healthy Region Strategy" which can incorporate some of the strategies set out in the province's Active People, Active Places program. (Section 3.6.3)

- 3.9 That the three local governments look for ways to offer programs in partnerships with other organizations. (Section 3.2.2)
- 3.26 That the City investigate ways in which to assist the Cranberry Seniors' Centre in the operation of programs for seniors. (Section 3.4.3)
- 3.12 That the Region consider how it can access other forms of financial assistance to help fund recreational programming for lower income families such as the Canadian Tire Jump Start Program (Section 3.2.2)
- 3.19 That the City explore and implement other drop-in programs to accommodate adult schedules. (Section 3.3.2)
- 3.25 That the three local governments provide funding for seniors' centers to assist with those centers' operating costs. (Section 3.4.3)
- 3.27 That opportunities of multi-generational programs between seniors and younger generations be developed. (Section 3.4.3)
- 3.28 That a working group be implemented to develop opportunities for seniors to volunteer in the community, with the Region's younger generations. (Section 3.4.3)
- 3.37 That the three local governments work together to develop an active transportation plan to allow people to incorporate walking and biking into their daily lives. (Section 3.6.3)
- 3.38 That the three local governments create safe biking lanes throughout the Region. (Section 3.6.3)
- 3.42 That the three local governments develop a coordinated program to handle special events in the community with procedures established for the operation of special events including pre-and post-event meetings with all stakeholders. (Section 3.7.3)
- 3.43 That all food providers at any special event in the Region must be inspected and approved by Vancouver Coastal Health, prior to operating at the special event. (Section 3.7.3)

- 3.44 That joint emergency training exercises involving all three governments, the RCMP, fire and ambulance services be held to plan for emergencies during special events. (Section 3.7.3)
- 3.45 That adequate numbers of trained security guards be made a requirement for part of the approval for holding a special event. (Section 3.7.3)
- 3.46 That the City consider bringing on additional bylaw staff during special events. (Section 3.7.3)
- 3.47 That the Regional District and the Tla'amin Nation consider adopting regulatory bylaws or laws to assist with the hosting of special events in their jurisdictions. (Section 3.7.3)
- 3.10 That the three local governments examine whether a youth drop-in center is needed in the Region. (Section 3.2.2)

Part 4 – Parks, Open Space, and Outdoor Activities (34 -Recommendations in Total)

- 4.7 That the City's existing animal control bylaw be amended to restrict dogs in certain City parks. (Section 4.2.3)
- 4.33 That a committee be formed with representation from all stakeholders in the Region dealing with invasive plants to take a comprehensive approach to address the invasive species plant issue. (Section 4.8.2)
- 4.34 That an invasive species plan be established by the stakeholder group and presented to all three local governments. (Section 4.8.2)
- 4.22 That the City complete a long-term vision and plan for Willingdon Beach Park. (Section 4.4.3)
- 4.1 That a parks planner position and a manager of parks and open spaces be created as part of a single parks, recreation, and cultural service. (Section 4.1.3)
- 4.8 That a detailed study for each sport field, identifying issues associated with each of the fields, be completed. (Section 4.2.3)
- 4.9 That a management and maintenance plan for each of the sports fields be developed. (Section 4.2.3)
- 4.5 That park management plans be adopted for each of the regional parks and open spaces in the Region. (Section 4.1.3)
- 4.26 That a management plan be developed for Millennium Park. (Section 4.5.2)
- 4.6 That signage in the regional parks be expanded to include the following:
 - a) roadway directional signage;
 - b) parking signage; and
 - c) park etiquette signage. (Section 4.1.3)
- 4.13 That covered bleachers be installed at Timberlane Track. (Section 4.2.3)
- 4.10 That a central booking system for all parks and sports fields within the Region be implemented. (Section 4.2.3)

- 4.11 That budgets for the sports fields be developed which reflect the costs associated with use of those fields on a year-round basis. (Section 4.2.3)
- 4.15 That a business case be completed prior to the construction of any additional tennis courts or making any required improvements to any existing tennis courts. (Section 4.3.2)
- 4.25 That as part of the review of priorities included in the RD Parks Plan, a process be implemented to identify potential open spaces and nature areas and the costs associated with acquisition and operation of the areas. (Section 4.5.2)
- 4.28 That once completed and reviewed by all three governments, the Powell River Regional District Trail Strategy be costed and implemented. (Section 4.6.3)
- 4.30 That the three local governments consider the creation of a staff position to work with each jurisdiction and the trail volunteer groups in all capacities. (Section 4.6.3)
- 4.29 That the volunteer groups that maintain trails be supported by:
 - a) Providing insurance to cover their liability for the maintenance;
 - b) Providing contributions of materials to reduce the costs of the maintenance; and
 - c) Providing additional financial resources by means of grants. (Section 4.6.3)
- 4.32 That consultation with the public be held on an annual basis to obtain perspective from the public on community connectivity and active transportation. (Section 4.7.2)
- 4.17 That an inventory and analysis of all playground equipment in the parks in the Region be completed to determine if the playing equipment is meeting CSA standards. (Section 4.4.3)
- 4.18 That a detailed plan be created to identify amenities for parks located throughout the Region. (Section 4.4.3)
- 4.24 That a long range plan for sufficient parks within the region be developed. (Section 4.4.3)

- 4.19 That other agencies such as the School District No. 47 and community associations be approached to discuss the placement of play equipment in various communities. (Section 4.4.3)
- 4.20 That a long-range plan for playground structures be developed which focuses on replacing or installing playground equipment in parks that have been identified as requiring playground structures. (Section 4.4.3)
- 4.3 That a detailed 10-year operations financial plan for all parks and open spaces in the Region be developed. (Section 4.1.3)
- 4.21 That a long-range plan for the management of wild animals and domestic animals for community parks be developed. (Section 4.4.3)
- 4.2 That the recommendations made in the RD Parks Plan;
 - a) be fully reviewed;
 - b) be put in priority of importance; and
 - c) be costedbefore being presented to the three local governments. (Section 4.1.3)
- 4.23 That the residents living in the Van Anda area of Texada Island be consulted to determine how the ball diamond at the community park can be repurposed. (Section 4.4.3)
- 4.27 That partnerships be developed with groups such as the Natures Trust of British Columbia and Ducks Unlimited in acquiring and protecting environmentally sensitive areas. (Section 4.5.2)
- 4.16 That the Region consider converting some of the existing tennis courts to pickleball courts. (Section 4.3.2)
- 4.4 That an alternative approval process be held to secure the required funding to implement the 10-year financial plan. (Section 4.1.3)
- 4.14 That a partnership with School District No. 47 be explored for development of new fields and maintenance of existing fields. (Section 4.2.3)
- 4.31 That the Community Plans of the City, the Regional District, and the Tla'amin Nation be harmonized to ensure connectivity through the Region by means of nature trails, public pathways, and bike paths. (Section 4.7.2)
- 4.12 That the feasibility of the following items be investigated:

- a) specific single use sports complexes such as soccer complex with three to four soccer fields with washrooms, concessions, and changing room facilities; and
- b) the use of Regional District and Tla'amin sports fields as alternative locations to include for use by sports clubs and associations. (Section 4.2.3)

Part 5- Arts, Culture, and Heritage (17 Recommendations in Total)

- 5.6 That funding be made available to the Arts Council to retain the services of a grant writer. (Section 5.1.2)
- 5.4 If a regional recreation model is approved, then the funding to the Arts Council be increased to allow expansion of the grants-in-aid program to include the Regional District and the Tla'amin Nation. (Section 5.1.2)
- 5.17 That a representative of the Tla'amin Nation be asked to represent the Tla'amin Nation as a member of the Arts Council.(Section 5.4.2)
- 5.1 That a cultural mapping plan for the Region be completed. (Section 5.1.2)
- 5.2 That a long-range plan for arts and culture within the Region be developed. (Section 5.1.2)
- 5.3 That any arts and culture plan developed ensures that Tla'amin Nation's arts and culture are fully represented in that plan. (Section 5.1.2)
- 5.5 That the City's Department for Parks, Recreation, and Culture offer more arts and culture program opportunities. (Section 5.1.2)
- 5.7 That quarterly meetings occur between the City's Department of Parks, Recreation and Culture and Max Cameron Theatre staff to develop partnership opportunities, marketing initiatives and event co-ordinations. (Section 5.1.2)
- 5.10 That the three local governments consider implementing a weekly "music in the parks" concert series in the summer months. (Section 5.1.2)
- 5.13 That the Historical Museum develop an asset management and long term funding plan. (Section 5.3.2)
- 5.14 That a funding agreement between the three local governments and the Historical Museum be drafted and implemented to provide stable operating funds for the Historical Museum. (Section 5.3.2)

- 5.8 That the three local governments investigate possible venues for an art gallery and determine an operating model. (Section 5.1.2)
- 5.15 That the Historical Museum be provided with the funds to develop detailed plans and cost estimates required to access federal infrastructure grants for museums. (Section 5.3.2)
- 5.16 That the three local governments expand arts and cultural opportunities throughout the Region using volunteers as well as using the City Community Recreation Coordinator. (Section 5.4.2)
- 5.9 That the three local governments explore more opportunities to showcase additional performing arts opportunities within the communities. (Section 5.1.2)
- 5.11 That the three local governments work with the Arts Council to develop a vision, policy, and funding recommendations for public art in the Region. (Section 5.2.2)
- 5.12 That various funding recommendations for public art be identified. (Section 5.2.2)

Part 6 – Amenities (25 Recommendations in Total)

- 6.1 That the Regional District be encouraged to continue to sustain existing beach accesses and to create additional beach access opportunities. (Section 6.1.2)
- 6.2 That the Tla'amin Nation be encouraged to sustain existing beach accesses. (Section 6.1.2)
- 6.3 That a plan be established showing potential beach accesses for the City. (Section 6.1.2)
- 6.4 That the City ensure that public access to beaches be maintained or be created in any future land developments occurring near waterfront. (Section 6.1.2)
- 6.5 That the City put signage similar to that provided in the Regional District in place to identify public beach access points. (Section 6.1.2)
- 6.14 That the Townsite dog park be closed and repurposed into a public park (Section 6.4.2).
- 6.8 That a marine study be conducted to determine what impact a repaired boat launch at Gibsons Beach park will have on the environment and nearby marine life. (Section 6.3.3)
- 6.11 That the City amend its animal control bylaw to restrict unleashed dogs from using the City's sports fields. (Section 6.4.2)
- 6.13 That there be an increased bylaw enforcement presence to control dogs at large in the parks. (Section 6.4.2)
- 6.19 That a coordinated local government campground advertising plan be undertaken. (Section 6.5.2)
- 6.6 That the City examine the feasibility and costs of expanding the Powell River Seawalk to Grief Point Park and Willingdon Beach Park. (Section 6.2.2)
- 6.9 That a community needs analysis be completed to determine the needs for a boat launch in the southern part of the Region and to identify the necessary

- amounts and sources for funding the construction and operation of that boat launch. (Section 6.3.3)
- 6.16 That a 10-year management, marketing and asset management plan for each local government campground be created. (Section 6.5.2)
- 6.18 That a centralized reservation system be developed for use with all three campgrounds. (Section 6.5.2)
- 6.23 That community gardens be established close to residential units for seniors and on public lands. (Section 6.6.3)
- 6.24 That community garden opportunities be created throughout the Region and funding of community gardens be secured through multi-year financial commitment. (Section 6.6.3)
- 6.7 That funding levels for the Seawalk be increased to maintain the current condition of the Seawalk. (Section 6.2.2)
- 6.10 That a long-range master plan be developed for all publicly operated boat launches in the Region. (Section 6.3.3)
- 6.12 That the Tla'amin Nation and Regional District be encouraged to adopt animal control bylaws to have uniform animal control standards throughout the Region. (Section 6.4.2)
- 6.15 That a master plan for dog parks be completed within the next five years. (Section 6.4.2)
- 6.17 That a 10-year capital development plan for each campground be created to modernize the infrastructure. (Section 6.5.2)
- 6.20 That a Regional Beautification Committee be struck with representatives from all three governments. (Section 6.6.3)
- 6.21 That the Regional Beautification Committee work with citizens, and the planning departments of all three local governments, and with the City's Parks, Recreation, and Culture Department to determine what locations are suitable for additional public spaces and what features should be included in those public spaces. (Section 6.6.3)

- 6.22 That funding is provided by all three local governments to enable the Regional Beautification Committee to implement the recommendations of the Committee. (Section 6.6.3)

- 6.25 That a street-scaping plan be established for the Region. (Section 6.6.3)

Part 7 – Recreational Facilities (33 Recommendations in Total)

- 7.6 That no new facilities be built which replicate what is currently at the Complex. (Section 7.2.1B)
- 7.25 That heritage grant applications be explored from senior levels of government for any renovations to Dwight Hall. (Section 5.3.2)
- 7.26 That any renovations to Dwight Hall be required to maintain the historical character of the building. (Section 5.3.2)
- 7.28 That the staff at the Department of Parks, Recreation and Culture and the Max Cameron Theatre have on-going meetings to explore combined marketing efforts and to create new opportunities and other options to bring events to the Region. (Section 7.4.2)
- 7.7 That the three local governments fund the maintenance, capital upgrades, and operations of the existing facilities and that no new facilities be considered until the existing recreation facilities have been brought to an acceptable standard. (Section 7.2.1B)
- 7.9 That an asset management plan to repair, replace, and maintain what is currently in place in the Complex be developed. (Section 7.2.1B)
- 7.16 That the City add new programs and services for the ice arenas. (Section 7.2.3B)
- 7.8 That a review of the Complex which covers the architectural, mechanical, structural, electrical, and accessibility aspects of the Complex be completed with recommendations to address any deficiencies. (Section 7.2.1B)
- 7.27 That an operating budget for the Salish Centre be developed. (Section 7.3.2)
- 7.17 That the following projects be considered as part of the architectural, mechanical, electrical, accessibility, and life safety review for the Complex:
- a) That a water slide and a steam room be considered for the swimming pool;
 - b) that other play opportunities that would support renewed interest for the swimming pool be considered;
 - c) That the change rooms be modified and upgraded; and
 - d) That the viewing area be reviewed and modified. (Section 7.2.4B)

- 7.14 That, as part of the architectural, mechanical, electrical, accessibility, and life safety review of the Complex, the expansion of the change rooms be recommended. (Section 7.2.3B)
- 7.21 That options to develop additional space for the fitness room be explored. (Section 7.2.5B)
- 7.22 That steps be taken to accommodate the meeting rooms at the Complex as multi-purpose rooms that can be used for programming. (Section 7.2.5B)
- 7.23 That the creation of a separate yoga space at the Complex or elsewhere be considered. (Section 7.2.5B)
- 7.11 That the City develop a capital upgrades plan for the Evergreen Theatre. (Section 7.2.2B)
- 7.4 That consistent operating standards be established for all Regional facilities. (Section 7.1.2)
- 7.19 That information about the swimming pool's new ultra-violet water treatment system be communicated to the public. (Section 7.2.4B)
- 7.20 That an energy audit for the Complex be completed to determine possible energy costs savings and reductions of the carbon footprint. (Section 7.2.4B)
- 7.1 That a detailed asset management plan be developed for each facility owned by any of the three local governments. (Section 7.1.2)
- 7.2 That energy studies and updates for each facility owned by any of the three local governments be implemented to reduce energy costs and the facilities' carbon footprints. (Section 7.1.2)
- 7.3 That a review of all Regional facilities be conducted to determine the type of upgrades required to prolong the use of the facility. (Section 7.1.2)
- 7.25 That a facility review of the Salish Centre include that the architectural, mechanical, structural, electrical and accessibility aspects be completed with recommendations to address any deficiencies, any expansions, and improvements for accessibility. (Section 7.3.2)

- 7.31 That a professional engineer or architect be retained to inspect each of the community halls located in the Regional District and recommendations be made to upgrade the facilities to meet the needs of the community. (Section 7.5.2)
- 7.5 That a long-term funding plan be established for each recreational facility owned and operated by any of the three local governments. (Section 7.1.2)
- 7.15 That the identified equipment in the ice arena, noted in the asset management plan and the architectural, mechanical, electrical, accessibility, and life safety review, be replaced. (Section 7.2.3B)
- 7.10 That all equipment presently in use at the Complex be reviewed and replacement timelines for that equipment be determined. (Section 7.2.1B)
- 7.12 That the City promote the Evergreen Theatre to various private promoters to bring shows to the facility. (Section 7.2.2B)
- 7.13 That the City promote the Evergreen Theatre to other user groups. (Section 7.2.2B)
- 7.18 That the existing ceiling insulation in the aquatic centre be replaced with another product. (Section 7.2.4B)
- 7.24 That a long-range plan for the land surrounding the Complex be developed by the City. (Section 7.2.6B)
- 7.30 That consideration be given to making the Salish Centre available for use by other Electoral Area A residents. (Section 7.5.2)
- 7.29 That a central booking system for all community halls be implemented through the City's booking system. (Section 7.5.2)
- 7.32 That funding be made available to upgrade the community halls and Salish Centre. (Section 7.5.2)

Part 8 – Partnerships (15 Recommendations in Total)

- 8.1 That the three local governments work with the Powell River Tourism to develop marketing opportunities in the areas of sports, tourism and camping. (Section 8.1.2)
- 8.2 That the three local governments work with School District No. 47 under a joint use agreement to explore the shared use of facilities and programs and to collaborate to increase new parkland attached to school space. (Section 8.1.2)
- 8.3 That the three local governments offer new recreation program and services throughout the School District. (Section 8.1.2)
- 8.4 That a newcomer's event be held with the Chamber of Commerce every two years and that recreational opportunities be highlighted (Section 8.1.2)
- 8.15 That investigations be done to determine potential funding sources for a new museum in the Region. (Section 8.3.2)
- 8.13 That it be considered whether upgrades to the Powell River Museum could also include space to house an art gallery. (Section 8.3.2)
- 8.5 That the three local governments initiate discussions with Chamber of Commerce members about parks, recreation, and cultural services in the Region to include corporate sponsorship. (Section 8.1.2)
- 8.6 That land conservancies be encouraged to participate in new land acquisition opportunities throughout the Region. (Section 8.1.2)
- 8.7 That the three local governments work with the Powell River Volunteer Centre to determine needs of volunteers. (Section 8.2.2)
- 8.8 That efforts be made to recruit more seniors to become volunteers in the Region. (Section 8.2.2)
- 8.9 That the three local governments, in conjunction with the Powell River Volunteer Centre, create a marketing strategy to promote the benefits of volunteering. (Section 8.2.2)

- 8.10 That the three local governments, working with the Powell River Volunteer Centre and School District No. 47, develop volunteering opportunities for the youth in Brooks High School. (Section 8.2.2)
- 8.11 That a Heritage Board be considered to operate the heritage site in the Region. (Section 8.3.2)
- 8.12 That if the Henderson House Society is interested, the Henderson House Society be encouraged to become a member of the Heritage Board. (Section 8.3.2)
- 8.14 That consistent signage with a heritage theme be developed to promote the heritage sites. (Section 8.3.2)

Part 9 – The Value and Cost of Regional Parks, Recreation, and Culture (12 Recommendations in Total)

- 9.8 That regional parks, recreation, and culture services be established and include the City, Electoral Areas A, B, C and D of the Regional District and the Tla'amin Nation. (Section 9.5.5)
- 9.9 That the City contribute 70% towards the costs of the Regional Recreation Service while Electoral Areas A, B, C, and D of the Regional District contribute 25% and the Tla'amin Nation contribute 5%. (Section 9.5.5)
- 9.10 That Electoral Area E continue to pay 100% of their own recreation costs and their continued contribution to the regional parks. (Section 9.5.5)
- 9.11 That, once the Regional Parks, Recreation and Culture Service has been approved in principle, a draft budget for this new service be presented to the three local governments for consideration and final approval of the service. (Section 9.5.5)
- 9.1 That the three local governments develop a unified brand for the Parks, Recreation, and Culture Department to use with its signage and communications to the public. (Section 9.3.2)
- 9.5 That staff of all three local governments research and apply for applicable grants coming from senior levels of government. (Section 9.4.2)
- 9.6 That the three local government staff research other private sector funding sources such as corporate donations, corporate sponsorships, and funding through foundations. (Section 9.4.2)
- 9.7 That the three local governments establish reserve accounts to assist in paying for aging infrastructure and to provide matching funding for grant applications. (Section 9.4.2)
- 9.2 That an annual Sports Expo event be held to assist in promoting sports organizations in the Region. (Section 9.3.2)
- 9.3 That an annual Arts and Culture Expo event be held to assist in promotion of arts and culture organizations. (Section 9.3.2)

- 9.4 That a marketing/business development position be considered to assist in promotion of parks, recreation, and cultural services throughout the region. (Section 9.3.2)

- 9.12 That the three local governments conduct public meetings and surveys every second year to determine Parks, Recreation and Culture existing service levels and future needs. (Section 9.5.5)

