



# Norman Wells Recreation Master Plan

Final: April 29, 2021



**expedition**  
MANAGEMENT CONSULTING



**expedition**  
MANAGEMENT CONSULTING

April 29, 2021

Alex Millette  
Recreation Director  
Town of Norman Wells  
PO Box 5, #3 Mackenzie Drive  
Norman Wells, NT  
XOE 0V0

Dear Mr. Millette,

Please find enclosed the final Norman Wells Recreation Master Plan. It has been a pleasure working with you and the community to develop this important document. We look forward to hearing about your successes in implementation.

If you have any questions or require clarification on the attached report, please feel free to contact me at 780-266-7888.

Sincerely,



Justin Rousseau, Managing Director  
Expedition Management Consulting Ltd.

*Footbridge in Norman Wells  
Photo Credit: Town of Norman Wells*

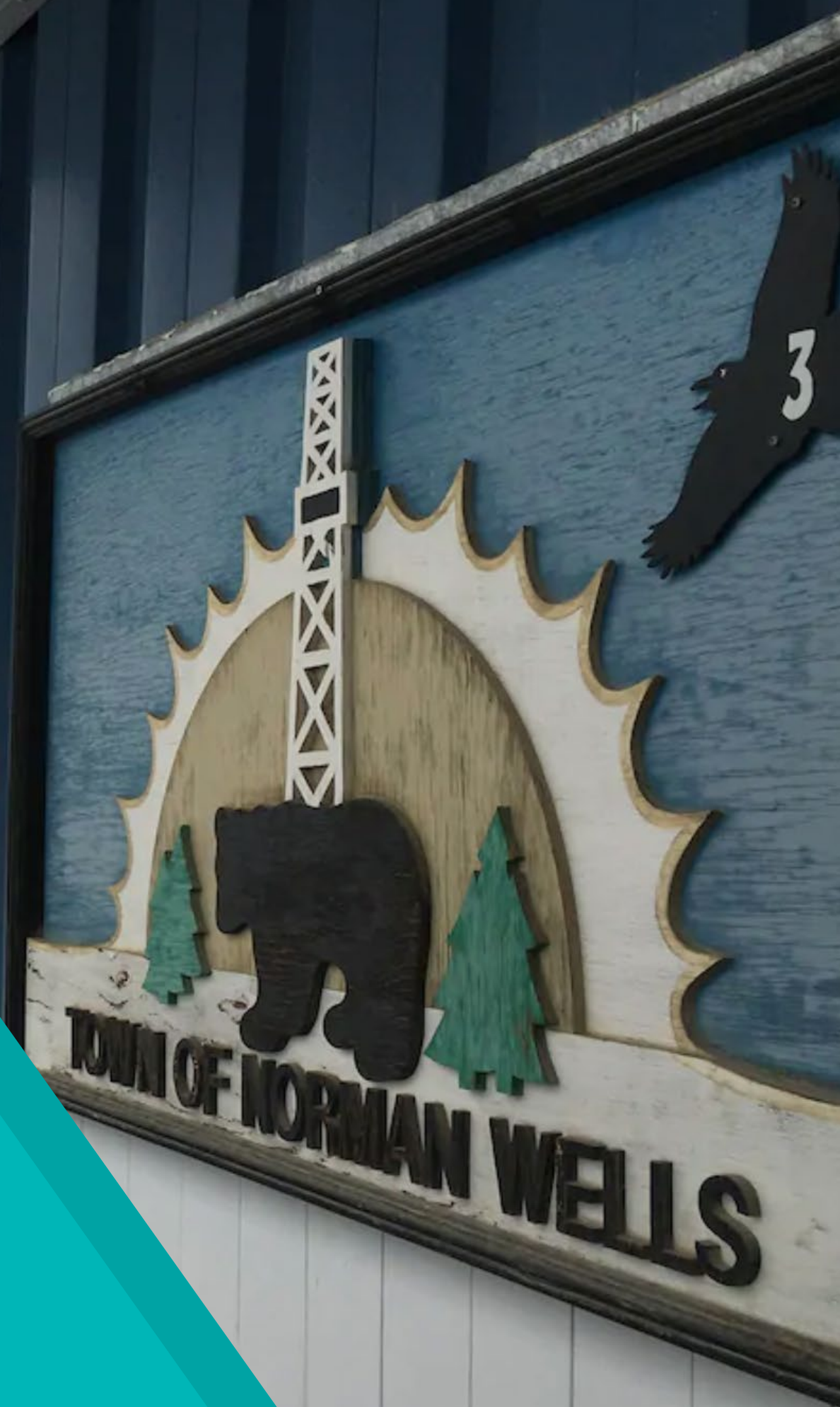




# Table of Contents

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>06 VISION FOR THE FUTURE.....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>01 PROJECT OVERVIEW.....</b>	<b>12</b>	Vision for Recreation in Norman Wells.....	43
Introduction.....	13	Guiding Principles for Service Delivery.....	43
Process.....	13	<b>07 MASTER PLAN PRIORITIES.....</b>	<b>44</b>
Project Team.....	13	1. Indoor Facilities and Programming.....	46
Overview of Research.....	14	2. Outdoor Facilities and Programming.....	53
<b>02 COMMUNITY ANALYSIS.....</b>	<b>15</b>	3. Service Delivery and Communication.....	57
Recreation, Parks, and Culture Overview.....	17	4. Tourism Linkages.....	61
SWOT Analysis.....	18	<b>08 TOP FACILITY AND OPERATIONAL PRIORITIES.....</b>	<b>62</b>
Community Demographics.....	19	Top 5 Facility Priorities.....	63
Recreation, Parks, and Culture Infrastructure.....	21	Top 5 Operational Priorities.....	66
Regional Context.....	21	Master Plan Scorecard - Measuring Success.....	67
Current Spending on Recreation, Parks, and Culture.....	22	Funding Opportunities.....	68
Benchmarking Research.....	25	<b>09 CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>69</b>
Strategic Alignment Analysis.....	26	<b>APPENDICES.....</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>03 TRENDS.....</b>	<b>27</b>	APPENDIX A: Recreation, Parks, and Culture Inventory.....	72
Recreation, Park, and Culture Trends.....	28	APPENDIX B: Facility Utilization and Community Programming.....	73
Facility Planning and Development Trends.....	30	APPENDIX C: Comparative Service Level Analysis.....	74
<b>04 CASE FOR INVESTMENT IN RECREATION, PARKS, AND CULTURE.....</b>	<b>31</b>	APPENDIX D: Expanded Strategic Alignment Analysis.....	76
Benefits of Recreation, Parks, and Culture.....	32	APPENDIX E: Trends in Recreation, Parks, and Culture.....	78
Supporting Pandemic Recovery Efforts.....	33	APPENDIX F: Expanded Resident Survey Results.....	81
Tourism Linkages.....	34	APPENDIX G: Capital Project Evaluation Criteria.....	85
<b>05 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT RESULTS.....</b>	<b>35</b>	APPENDIX H: Service Delivery Approaches.....	88
Resident Survey Results.....	37	APPENDIX I: Funding Opportunities.....	89
Youth Engagement Session.....	39	APPENDIX J: Implementation Plan.....	90
Stakeholder Engagement.....	40	APPENDIX K: References.....	95
Council Input Workshop.....	41		
Recreation Committee Input Workshop.....	41		

# Executive Summary





## Introduction

Recreation, parks, and culture services provide a variety of quality of life benefits to the residents in Norman Wells and the surrounding Sahtu Region. These services also feature prominently in the potential to attract new residents, increase visitation, and support the social, economic, and environmental well-being of the community. The Town of Norman Wells is focused on meeting the needs of its community, diversifying the local economy, and maintaining its role as the primary hub of the Sahtu region. It is recognized that recreation, parks, and culture can play a significant role in achieving these objectives. Therefore, the Town has developed a comprehensive Recreation Master Plan. The plan will provide a firm steppingstone for continued planning in the community, guide future investment in recreation, parks, and culture, and support the long-term success of the Town.



*Sightseeing Atop the Franklin Mountains  
Photo Credit: Spectacular NWT*

## Community Overview

The Town of Norman Wells is the largest community in the Sahtu Region and serves as a hub for governmental, industrial, and transportation services. The community is located in the heart of the Northwest Territories (NWT) along the Mackenzie River next to the Franklin Mountains. The land is governed by the Sahtu Dene and Metis Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement. Local amenities, attractions, and events draw in people from across the Sahtu Region and the territory. Unlike most other communities along the Mackenzie River, which originated as fur trading posts, Norman Wells was the first community in the NWT established solely as a result of non-renewable resource development.<sup>1</sup> Its traditional name, Tlegohli, means “Where There is Oil”. As such, the Town features a strong oil and gas industry that has played a large part in the community’s history and development.

The Town and surrounding region offer an abundance of year-round natural attractions and outdoor recreation opportunities that contribute to the quality of life of residents and attract visitors. Whether one is looking to hike the Canol Trail, fish at Jackfish Lake Park, hunt in the surrounding forests, or ride motorized vehicles through the hinterland, the Town is a launching pad for countless Sahtu adventures. The community is also home to several indoor recreation assets that offer residents the chance to enjoy sport, stay healthy, and improve their overall wellness.

The Town takes the lead in providing recreation services but also supports numerous community associations, who in turn provide community recreation programs and services to residents. Due to the current state of some facilities, certain recreational pursuits in the community are contingent upon seasonal weather changes (e.g. aquatics, ice surfaces).



## Current State

### SWOT Analysis

A high-level analysis of the Town's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) as they relate to recreation, parks, and culture is provided below.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wealth of outdoor recreation opportunities with close proximity to natural attractions (e.g. Mackenzie River, Franklin Mountains, Canol Trail, etc.).</li> <li>• The Town is the primary service centre for the Sahtu region.</li> <li>• Strong supply of indoor recreation facilities.</li> <li>• Active community associations and societies.</li> <li>• Strong resident and stakeholder support for recreation, parks, and culture development.</li> <li>• Strong links to Indigenous history and culture.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recreation facilities are aging, and some are in need of upgrades, enhancements, or potentially replacement.</li> <li>• Population growth has stagnated in recent years.</li> <li>• Heavy reliance on a single industry to support the local economy.</li> <li>• There are no permanent roads into Town.</li> <li>• Lack of integration between recreation and tourism planning.</li> <li>• Limited availability of facility and program utilization information.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing resident participation in recreation, parks, and culture through enhanced facilities and programs.</li> <li>• Improving the physical, mental, emotional, and social health of the community through increased participation in recreation, parks, and culture.</li> <li>• Leveraging recreation, parks, and culture offerings to attract and retain residents.</li> <li>• Offering four-season outdoor recreation opportunities.</li> <li>• Linking recreation, parks, culture developments with tourism development to attract visitors.</li> <li>• Potential development of a permanent road to Norman Wells which would improve access.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic.</li> <li>• Unpredictable economic situation tied to variable commodity prices. This could impact local population levels.</li> <li>• Balancing the needs and demands of different user groups within the Town.</li> <li>• Expectations for service delivery may be higher than resources allow.</li> <li>• Obtaining funding for capital project development and operations.</li> </ul>



## Comparative Service Level Analysis

Norman Wells meets comparative service levels for indoor natural ice surfaces, curling sheets, small indoor pools (seasonal), fitness centres, arts/culture facilities, programmable centres/halls, gymnasiums, libraries, outdoor paved courts, ball diamonds, golf courses, and parks/playgrounds. To meet current benchmark standards, Norman Wells would need to add an indoor artificial ice sheet, skatepark, rectangular field, dog park, and campground. It is important to note the condition of facilities when comparing to benchmarks. For example, although Norman Wells may meet benchmark standards for a pool, we know that some pools in comparator communities have enhanced buildings (i.e. size and operating season).

## Community Engagement

The Master Plan considered the goals and needs of a broad range of community members and groups. The following figure describes the inputs into the plan.



## Community Engagement Results:

- The vast majority of respondents to the resident survey strongly agreed (48%) or agreed (42%) that recreation, parks, and culture opportunities are important to their quality of life.
- In terms of indoor facilities, respondents were most in favour of a new or improved pool, ice arena, and indoor playground.
- Respondents would like to see new or improved indoor activities focused on education and skill-building, fitness, culture, and aquatics.
- In terms of outdoor facilities, respondents indicated that the Town should focus on new or improved sledding hills, trails, paved court spaces, skateparks, and dog parks.
- In alignment with indoor programming needs, respondents supported new or improved outdoor activities focused on education and skill-building, culture, fitness, and parks and trails.
- The most common barriers to participation in recreation, parks, and culture are a lack of programs, lack of facilities, poor facility condition, and a lack of awareness of services/facilities/programs.
- Respondents indicated that the one improvement to recreation, parks, and culture they would like to see in Norman Wells was the development of a multiplex that houses a variety of amenities, followed by upgrades to existing facilities, upgrades to the pool, and activities for youth.
- A majority of resident survey respondents indicated support for an increase in property taxes (67% support) and user fees (63% support), to support recreation, parks, and culture needs.
- Stakeholder groups indicated they would benefit from improvements to critical indoor facilities such as the arena, curling rink, and pool. Stakeholders also identified the need for new or improved outdoor facilities to support youth recreation, such as a skatepark, basketball court, sledding/ski hill, trails, and a soccer field.
- 75% of stakeholder groups are anticipating growth annually over the next 5 years.



## Vision for Recreation in Norman Wells

Norman Wells has several challenges to face over the coming years, including the social and financial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and disruptions caused to the oil and gas industry due to the global economic slow down. However, the community is resilient and has made significant investments in its people and infrastructure. As the Town moves forward with this plan, it will do so in a strategic way that will leverage community assets and build off community strengths. Investment in recreation, parks, and culture will be an integral part of enhancing the social, economic, and environmental value of the community. The statement described below outlines a vision for the future.

### Vision Statement

*Recreational services and offerings will become a core strength of our community. Investments in recreation will support the resiliency and self-sufficiency of residents; it will attract newcomers and visitors; it will contribute to economic diversification; and it will further position Norman Wells as the primary hub of the Sahtu region.*



## Guiding Principles for Service Delivery

Guiding principles for recreation, parks, and culture service delivery were developed to support the implementation of the Master Plan. The Town will:

1. Acknowledge recreation, parks, and culture has an important role to play in attracting new residents, attracting investment, and improving quality of life for all residents.
2. Ensure recreation, parks, and culture supports the Town's strategic direction.
3. Ensure inclusion and accessibility in all programs, facilities, and services.
4. Provide equitable access to facilities, services, and programs which will include a balance between access for:
  - Organized groups and the general public
  - Passive and active endeavours
  - Competitive and non-competitive pursuits
  - Structured and spontaneous activities
  - Diverse ages, cultures, and abilities
  - Indoor and outdoor opportunities
5. Ensure integration and connectivity of indoor, outdoor, and cultural spaces to create a wholistic and rich experience for residents.
6. Regularly engage with citizens to ensure services are delivered that meet the needs of the community in the most effective way.
7. Seek solutions that preserve and enhance the natural environment.
8. Undertake sound planning for new developments including a comprehensive review of supply, demand, cost and benefit, and further integration into broader municipal planning.
9. Seek enhanced opportunities for year-round provision of facilities.



## Top 5 Facility Priorities

The master plan process considered a wide variety of inputs including community engagement, supply/demand analysis, and a review of the demographics of the community. The top five recommended facility priorities are as follows.



### ***1. Complete a feasibility study to upgrade or replace the pool***

Assuming the overall building condition is deemed acceptable, complete a feasibility study to upgrade the existing pool in the near term to expand its operational season. If the building condition is not acceptable, complete a feasibility study to replace the pool with a new facility that is capable of year-round operation.



### ***2. Complete a feasibility study to upgrade or replace the arena***

Assuming the overall building condition is deemed acceptable, complete a feasibility study to install a concrete floor and ice plant in the near term to create artificial ice and extend the operational season of the arena. If the building condition is not acceptable, complete a feasibility study to consider replacing the arena with a new facility capable of producing artificial ice.



### ***3. Expand and enhance the trail system***

Conduct a community and regional trail assessment and inventory. Based on the findings from the trail inventory, expand and enhance the local trail network for non-mechanized and mechanized uses. The Town should also develop a trail map and signage program while considering the incorporation of interpretive elements to enhance tourism value.



### ***4. Develop a larger sledding hill***

Develop a larger sledding hill in Town. Consider adding stairs and/or reducing the grade of approaches to enhance accessibility. Safety guidelines should be clearly outlined by adequate signage and Town policy.



### ***5. Develop a mobile skatepark***

Explore purchasing mobile and modular skatepark equipment so that the park can be moved indoors and outdoors, as needed.



## Top 5 Operational Priorities

In addition to facility development priorities, the master plan process also considered operational priorities that will help move the Town forward in the coming years. The top five recommended operational priorities are as follows.



### ***1. Implement the capital project evaluation process***

Implement a formalized and data-based process for evaluating new capital projects utilizing sound business planning and a robust set of criteria.



### ***2. Enhance indoor and outdoor programming***

In the short-term, develop age-specific program plans and expand and enhance the provision of indoor and outdoor programs with a focus on education and skill-building, arts and culture, fitness, sports, parks and trails, and winter activities.



### ***3. Improve communication***

Improve communications by improving online information, facilitating collaboration, and enhancing print information and signage.



### ***4. Develop a tourism strategy***

Develop a tourism strategy to provide a shared vision for tourism, a framework for stakeholders to collaborate, and a direction for tourism development in Norman Wells. The strategy should align with the Recreation Master Plan and other community plans and strategies.



### ***5. Evaluate services by regularly collecting feedback from the public, tracking amenity use, and adopting performance measures.***

Create a system to receive regular feedback on the facility and service needs of the community. This could include regular public/stakeholder surveys and community engagement sessions. Establish a set of metrics for tracking amenity usage, including facility utilization, program participation, and event attendance. Adopt comprehensive performance measures to better manage recreation and culture services in the community.





*Birdhouse Painting*  
Photo Credit: Town of Norman Wells

## Conclusion

The Master Plan puts forward a strategic direction that will guide the community toward its vision to deliver high quality recreation, parks, and culture services and facilities, enhance community development opportunities, and support local sustainability.

Implementation of the Master Plan will require investment and concerted effort on the part of the Town, funding partners and the community. This investment will ensure that the enhanced recreation, parks, and culture system is recognized as a core strength of the community, contributing to the sustainability of the community and encourage vitality, energy, and future growth.



# 1

## Project Overview





# Introduction

Recreation, parks, and culture services provide a variety of quality of life benefits to the residents in Norman Wells and the surrounding Sahtu Region. These services also feature prominently in the potential to attract new residents, increase visitation, and support the social, economic, and environmental well-being of the community. The Town of Norman Wells is focused on meeting the needs of its community, diversifying the local economy, and maintaining its role as the primary hub of the Sahtu region. It is recognized that recreation, parks, and culture can play a significant role in achieving these objectives. Therefore, the Town has developed a comprehensive Recreation Master Plan. The plan will provide a firm steppingstone for continued planning in the community, guide future investment in recreation, parks, and culture, and support the long-term success of the Town.

The Master Plan includes an assessment of the current state of recreation, parks, and culture infrastructure and service delivery, recommended priorities to meet current and future needs, and a prioritized implementation plan that will guide decisions related to recreation, parks, and culture in the Town.

# Process

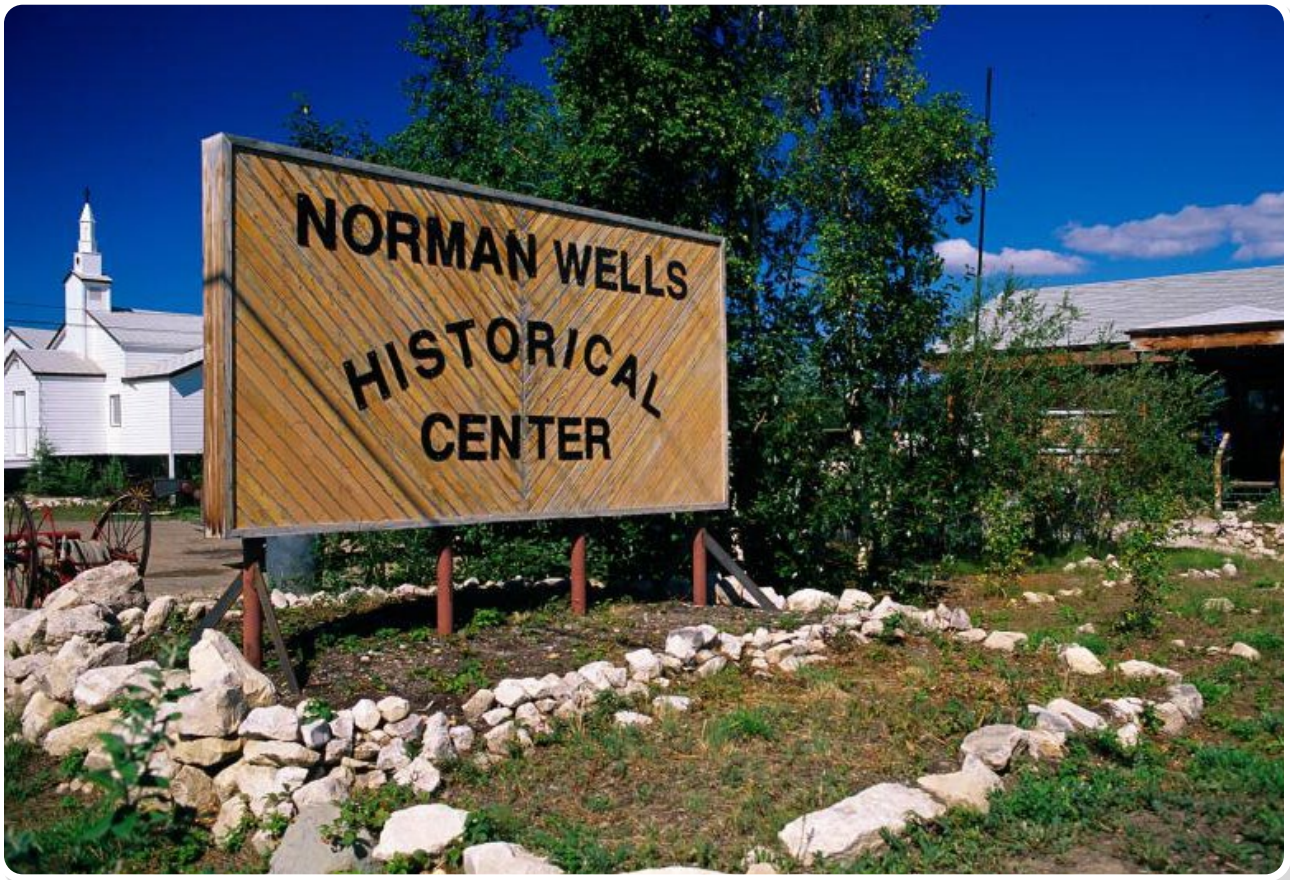
The Master Plan process had five, interconnected phases as described next.



# Project Team

The Town of Norman Wells Recreation Master Plan was overseen and developed by the Project Team. Below is a list of Project Team representatives.

Project Team	
Organization	Representatives
Town of Norman Wells	Alex Millette – Recreation Director, Town of Norman Wells
Consultant Team	Justin Rousseau – Expedition Management Consulting Ltd. (Consulting Team Lead)
	Drew Ziegler – Expedition Management Consulting Ltd.
	Maxwell Harrison – Expedition Management Consulting Ltd.



Norman Wells Historical Centre  
Photo Credit: Norman Wells and District Chamber of Commerce



## Overview of Research

A variety of primary and secondary research activities were conducted to develop this report. Primary research was completed through a resident survey, stakeholder survey, interviews with stakeholders, public engagement sessions, a youth engagement session, and workshops with Town Council and the Recreation Committee. Secondary research consisted of a review of key internal and external documents, benchmarking research, and territorial and national recreation documents.

### 1. Surveys Administered:

- a. Norman Wells Resident Survey (62 responses)
- b. Norman Wells Stakeholder Survey (7 stakeholder groups responded)

### 2. Meetings Conducted:

- a. Committee Project Meetings  
Dates: Throughout project.  
Purpose: Project management and input.
- b. Public Engagement Sessions  
Dates: December 2 and 3, 2020.  
Purpose: Gather input from residents and stakeholders.
- c. Town Council Input Workshop  
Date: November 23, 2020  
Purpose: Gather input from Town Council.
- d. Youth Engagement Session  
Dates: December 3, 2020  
Purpose: Gather input from local youth.
- e. Recreation Committee Workshop  
Date: November 24, 2020  
Purpose: Gather input from the Recreation Committee.
- f. Recreation Committee Draft Plan Feedback Session  
Date: March 24, 2021  
Purpose: Gather feedback on the draft plan from the Recreation Committee.

- g. Town Council Draft Plan Feedback Session  
Date: March 30, 2021  
Purpose: Gather feedback on the draft plan from Town Council.
- h. Public Draft Plan Feedback Sessions  
Date: April 13, 2021  
Purpose: Gather feedback on the draft plan from the public.

### 3. Recreation, Parks, and Culture Stakeholders Consulted (through interviews and/or stakeholder survey):

- a. Invites to participate in the engagement process were sent out to stakeholder groups. 15 groups chose to provide input, including representatives of the following organizations:

#### Local Stakeholder Groups:

- i. Norman Wells Minor Hockey Association
- ii. Norman Wells Curling Club
- iii. Norman Wells Volleyball Association
- iv. Norman Wells Softball Association
- v. Norman Wells Tennis Federation
- vi. Norman Wells Ski Club
- vii. Ptarmigan Ridge Golf Club
- viii. Norman Wells Children's Playgroup Association
- ix. Sahtu Paddleboard
- x. Royal Canadian Legion
- xi. Sahtu Cup
- xii. Mackenzie Mountain School
- xiii. NWT Municipal and Community Affairs
- xiv. NWT Industry, Tourism and Investment
- xv. Saint Anthony's Parish

### 4. Document Reviewed

- a. Strategies, plans, and other documents from the Town of Norman Wells.
- b. Planning documents from stakeholder groups.
- c. Recreation frameworks and policies from territorial and national sources.



# 2

## Community Analysis



The Town of Norman Wells is the largest community in the Sahtu Region and serves as a hub for governmental, industrial, and transportation services. The community is located in the heart of the Northwest Territories (NWT) along the Mackenzie River next to the Franklin Mountains. The land is governed by the Sahtu Dene and Metis Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement. Local amenities, attractions, and events draw in people from across the Sahtu Region and the territory. Unlike most other communities along the Mackenzie River, which originated as fur trading posts, Norman Wells was the first community in the NWT established solely as a result of non-renewable resource development.<sup>2</sup> Its traditional name, Tlegohli, means “Where There is Oil”. As such, the Town features a strong oil and gas industry that has played a large part in the community’s history and development.

The Town and surrounding region offer an abundance of year-round natural attractions and outdoor recreation opportunities that contribute to the quality of life of residents and attract visitors. Whether one is looking to hike the Canol Trail, fish at Jackfish Lake Park, hunt in the surrounding forests, or ride motorized vehicles through the hinterland, the Town is a launching pad for countless Sahtu adventures. The community is also home to several indoor recreation assets that offer residents the chance to enjoy sport, stay healthy, and improve their overall wellness.

*Figure 1. Norman Wells Regional Map*





## Recreation, Parks and Culture Overview

The Town has a history of supporting the recreational pursuits of its residents through investments in indoor amenities such as the pool, arena, community hall, and youth and elder centre. The Town has also demonstrated a commitment to supporting programs through direct service provision and strategic partnerships. The community's accessible natural features and proximity to beautiful natural environments such as the Mackenzie River and Franklin Mountains are key contributors to the community's recreation and parks offering.

*"We envision a territory where everyone has access to recreation programs and spaces that foster healthy families, strong cultures, and vibrant communities."*

**NWT Recreation and Parks Association**

The Town takes the lead in providing recreation services but also supports numerous community associations, who in turn provide community recreation programs and services to residents. Due to the current state of some facilities, certain recreational pursuits in the community are contingent upon seasonal weather changes (e.g. aquatics, ice surfaces).

*"Recreation is a fundamental human need in all ages and stages of life. It is the pursuit of physical, social, intellectual creative and spiritual experiences that enhance individual and community wellbeing."*

**Canadian Recreation and Parks Association**

*Canol Heritage Trail  
Photo Credit: Norman Wells Historical Society*





## SWOT Analysis

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

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wealth of outdoor recreation opportunities with close proximity to natural attractions (e.g. Mackenzie River, Franklin Mountains, Canol Trail, etc.).</li> <li>• The Town is the primary service centre for the Sahtu region.</li> <li>• Strong supply of indoor recreation facilities.</li> <li>• Active community associations and societies.</li> <li>• Strong resident and stakeholder support for recreation, parks, and culture development.</li> <li>• Strong links to Indigenous history and culture.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recreation facilities are aging, and some are in need of upgrades, enhancements, or potentially replacement.</li> <li>• Population growth has stagnated in recent years.</li> <li>• Heavy reliance on a single industry to support the local economy.</li> <li>• There are no permanent roads into Town.</li> <li>• Lack of integration between recreation and tourism planning.</li> <li>• Limited availability of facility and program utilization information.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing resident participation in recreation, parks, and culture through enhanced facilities and programs.</li> <li>• Improving the physical, mental, emotional, and social health of the community through increased participation in recreation, parks, and culture.</li> <li>• Leveraging recreation, parks, and culture offerings to attract and retain residents.</li> <li>• Offering four-season outdoor recreation opportunities.</li> <li>• Linking recreation, parks, culture developments with tourism development to attract visitors.</li> <li>• Potential development of a permanent road to Norman Wells which would improve access.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic.</li> <li>• Unpredictable economic situation tied to variable commodity prices. This could impact local population levels.</li> <li>• Balancing the needs and demands of different user groups within the Town.</li> <li>• Expectations for service delivery may be higher than resources allow.</li> <li>• Obtaining funding for capital project development and operations.</li> </ul>

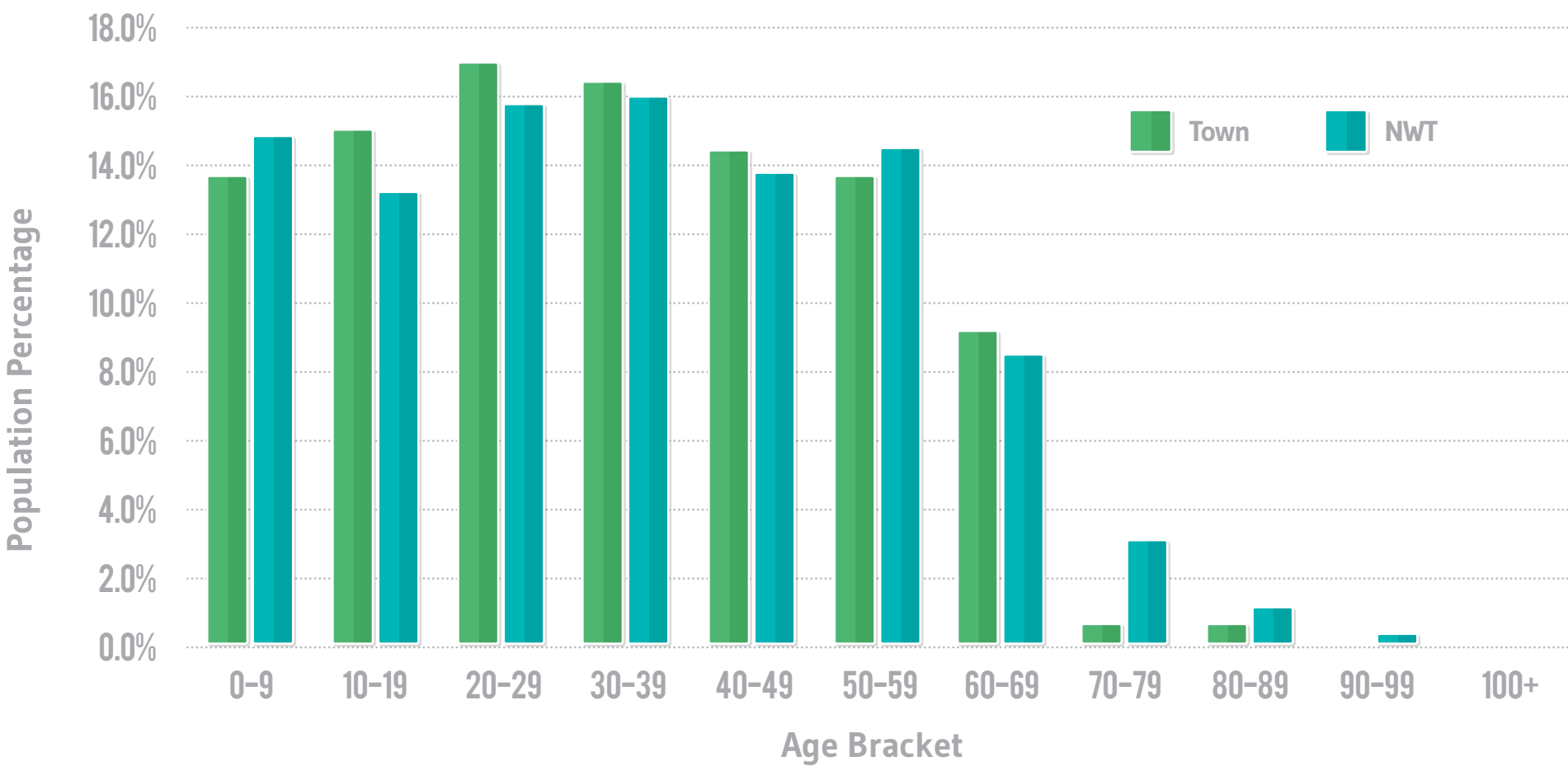


# Community Demographics

The population of the Town of Norman Wells was 778 residents in 2016 according to the most recent Federal Census. However, the NWT Bureau of Statistics estimates the population in 2020 to be 735, and the Town has indicated that the permanent population might be even lower (approximately 600). With another Federal Census in 2021, more detailed information on the community’s population and demographics will be available and should be considered for future planning purposes.

According to data from the 2016 Federal Census, the Town’s median age is 32.8 years old, which is slightly lower than the Territorial median of 34.0 years old. This is due to the Town having a larger proportion of residents between the ages of 10-50 compared to the Territory as a whole. This has implications for recreation, parks, and culture planning because the Town is serving a slightly younger population whose needs could differ from older community members. A complete breakdown of the Town and territorial age demographics is shown in Figure 2.<sup>3</sup>

Figure 2. Age Distribution Comparison of the Town to Territorial Average



Median individual incomes in the Town of Norman Wells (\$82,624) were significantly higher than the territorial median (\$50,618). Similarly, median household incomes in the Town (\$154,624) were higher than the territorial median (\$117,688). The majority of Town residents worked in Norman Wells (95%) and the most common industries were public administration (23%), oil and gas extraction (15%), transportation (15%), construction (11%), and educational services (7%).<sup>4</sup>

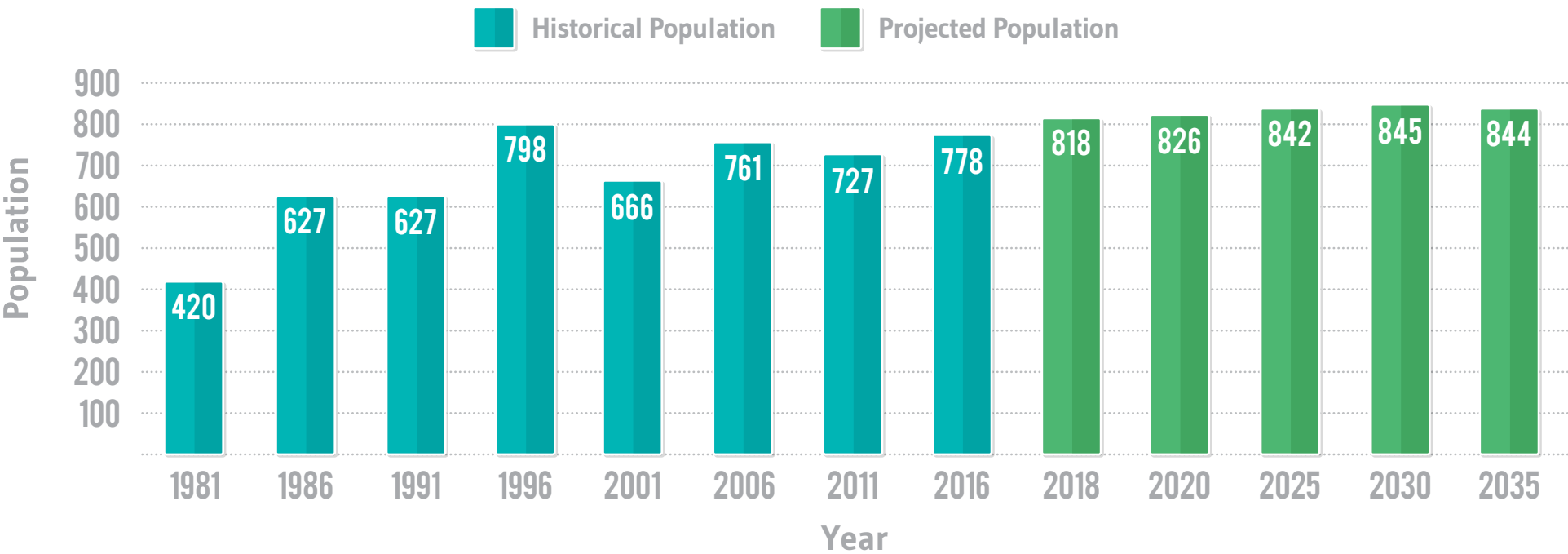


Population Projections

The region’s population is strongly linked to local economic activity making it difficult to predict future population based on past changes alone. The permanent population of the Town has shown negative growth in recent years, but remained relatively stable over the past two decades. However, this trend could be disrupted depending on the state of the local economy, which is strongly tied to the fortunes of the oil and gas sector, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

For the purposes of this report, projections for the Town of Norman Wells from the Government of The Northwest Territories in 2018 have been utilized. The report estimates modest annual population growth.<sup>5</sup> If these projections hold, the Town population will grow to approximately 845 over the next 15 years. Growth projections for the Town of Norman Wells are shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Town of Norman Wells Population Projections\*



\*Based on NWT Bureau of Statistics projections (2018-2035).

It should be noted that, despite the Territorial population growth forecasts, recent population estimates by the Territorial government and the Town could reduce these forecasts. A drop in population could affect the ability of the Town to support recreation, parks, and culture development.

The Town is also home to a sizable “shadow population”, often defined as “temporary residents of a municipality who are employed by an industrial or commercial establishment in the municipality for a minimum of 30 days.”<sup>6</sup> These people are not considered visitors as they are employed and live in the community on a regular basis. However, the shadow population could change if local industry alters its operations in the area. As of early 2020, Imperial Oil estimated that it employed around 70 employees and 50 contractors full-time in Norman Wells.<sup>7</sup>



## Recreation, Parks, and Culture Infrastructure

Indoor recreation facilities located in Norman Wells include a pool, ice arena, curling rink, library, and community hall. The surrounding region is home to an abundance of outdoor recreation opportunities and natural attractions, such as rivers, lakes, mountains, campground, parks, and trails. For a complete summary of the Town's recreation, parks, and culture infrastructure please see Appendix A. The utilization of facilities and programs, along with an overview of community and partner programs and events is shown in Appendix B.

### Joint Use Agreement

Through a joint use agreement with Mackenzie Mountain School, the Town is provided access to the school gymnasium for after school-hours sports and recreation activities.

## Regional Context

Norman Wells has an estimated trading area of 2,600 people (including Norman Wells).<sup>8</sup> Residents from the Sahtu region occasionally travel to Norman Wells to satisfy their family's recreation, parks, and culture needs. If populations grow, a higher level of demand will be placed on recreation, parks, and culture services. Additionally, as regional municipalities develop recreation facilities and programs, there may be impacts on the supply of facilities available to Norman Wells.



*Canoeing the Mackenzie River  
Photo Credit: Get My Boat*



*Norman Wells Historical Society  
Photo Credit: Spectacular NWT*



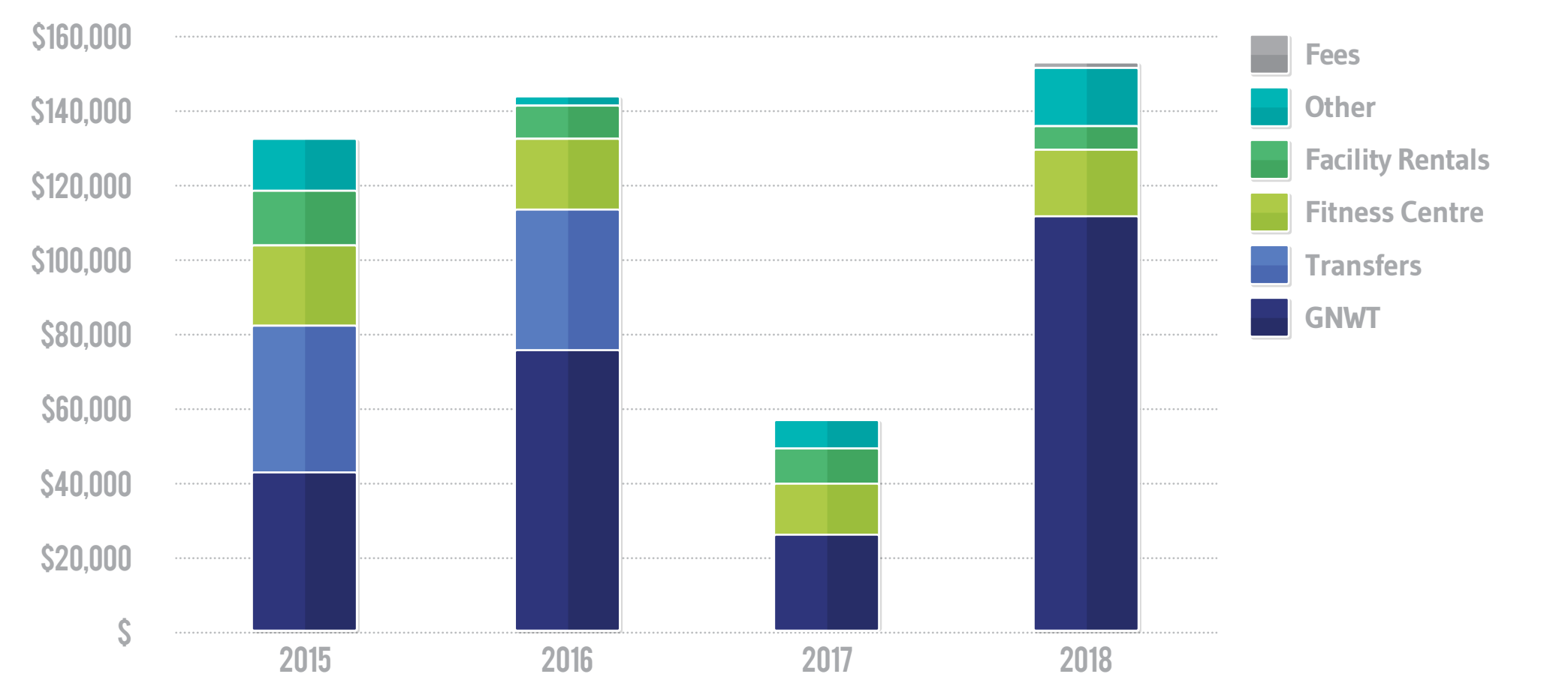
# Current Spending on Recreation, Parks, and Culture

The Town of Norman Wells makes significant investments in recreation, parks, and culture, making up approximately 10-13% of municipal operational expenses.

## Revenues

Revenues associated with recreation, parks, and culture have historically been largely comprised of Territorial funding and government transfers. A decline in these funds is responsible for reduced revenues in 2017. For a summary of recreation, parks, and culture operating revenues, see Figure 4.

Figure 4. Operational Revenues from Recreation, Parks, and Culture in the Town of Norman Wells (2015 - 2018)

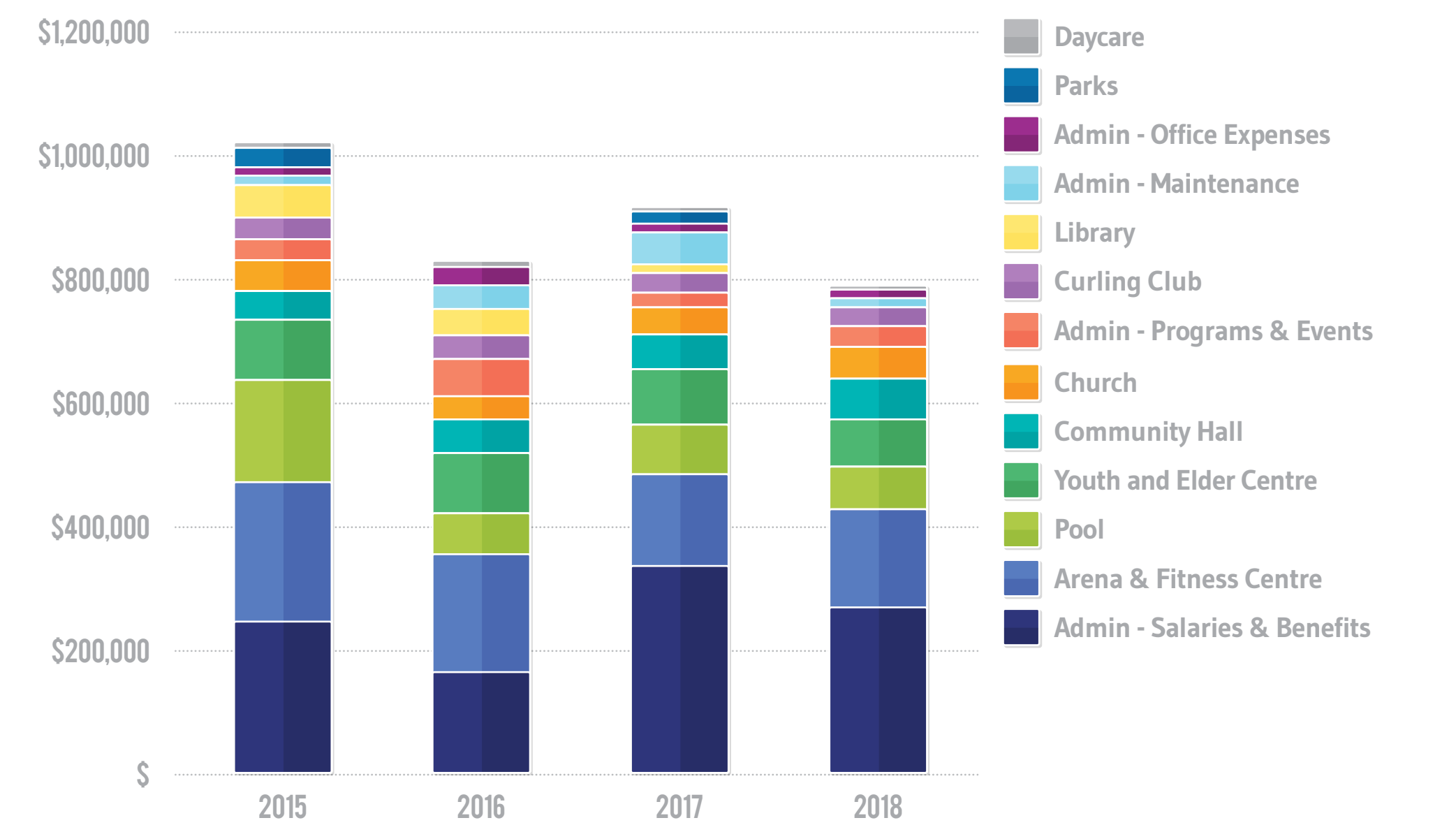




Expenses

From 2015 to 2018, operating expenses associated with the Town’s recreation, parks, and culture services have remained stable following a sharp decline in 2016 due largely to reductions in salaries and pool maintenance costs. For associated expenses, see Figure 5.

Figure 5. Operational Expenses from Recreation, Parks, and Culture in the Town of Norman Wells (2015 - 2018)

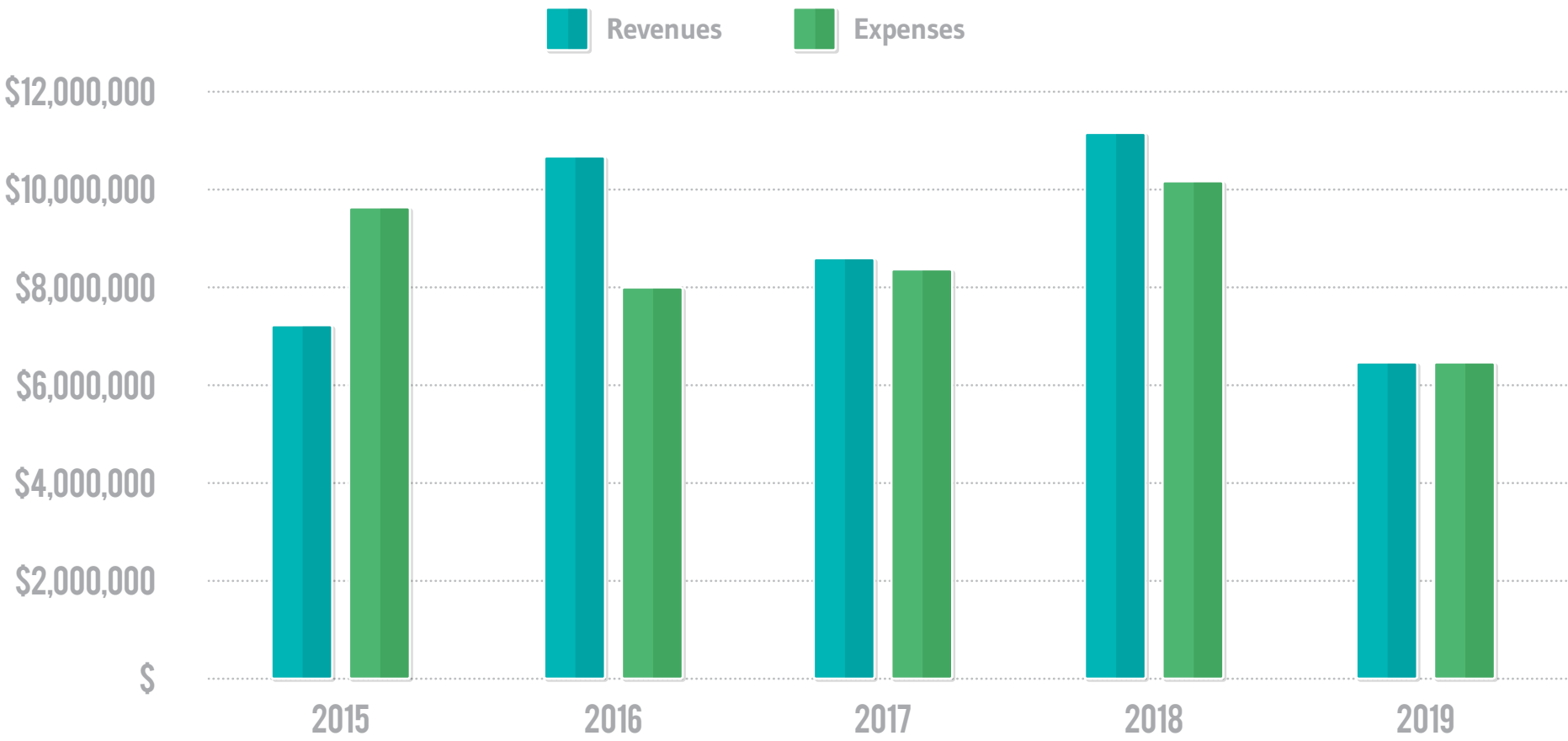




Five-Year Financials (All Services)

A summary of the Town’s annual revenues and expenses from 2015-2019 is provided in Figure 6.

Figure 6. Town of Norman Wells Five-Year Financials (2015-2019)



*Hiking the Franklin Mountains*  
*Photo Credit: Spectacular NWT*

## Benchmarking Research

A comparative analysis to communities similar to Norman Wells was conducted in order to provide a reference point for the Town's level of service provision. Municipalities were chosen as comparators if they satisfied the following requirements:

- A. The municipality is located in northern Canada.
- B. The municipality is considered a regional service centre or an industrial hub.
- C. The municipality has a similar population to the Town of Norman Wells.

The Hamlet of Fort Chipewyan (AB), City of Dawson (YK), Village of Fort Simpson (NWT), and Town of Watson Lake (YK) met all three criteria and were selected as comparators. For more information see Appendix C.

### Comparative Service Level Analysis Key Findings

The following key findings were derived from the comparative analysis:

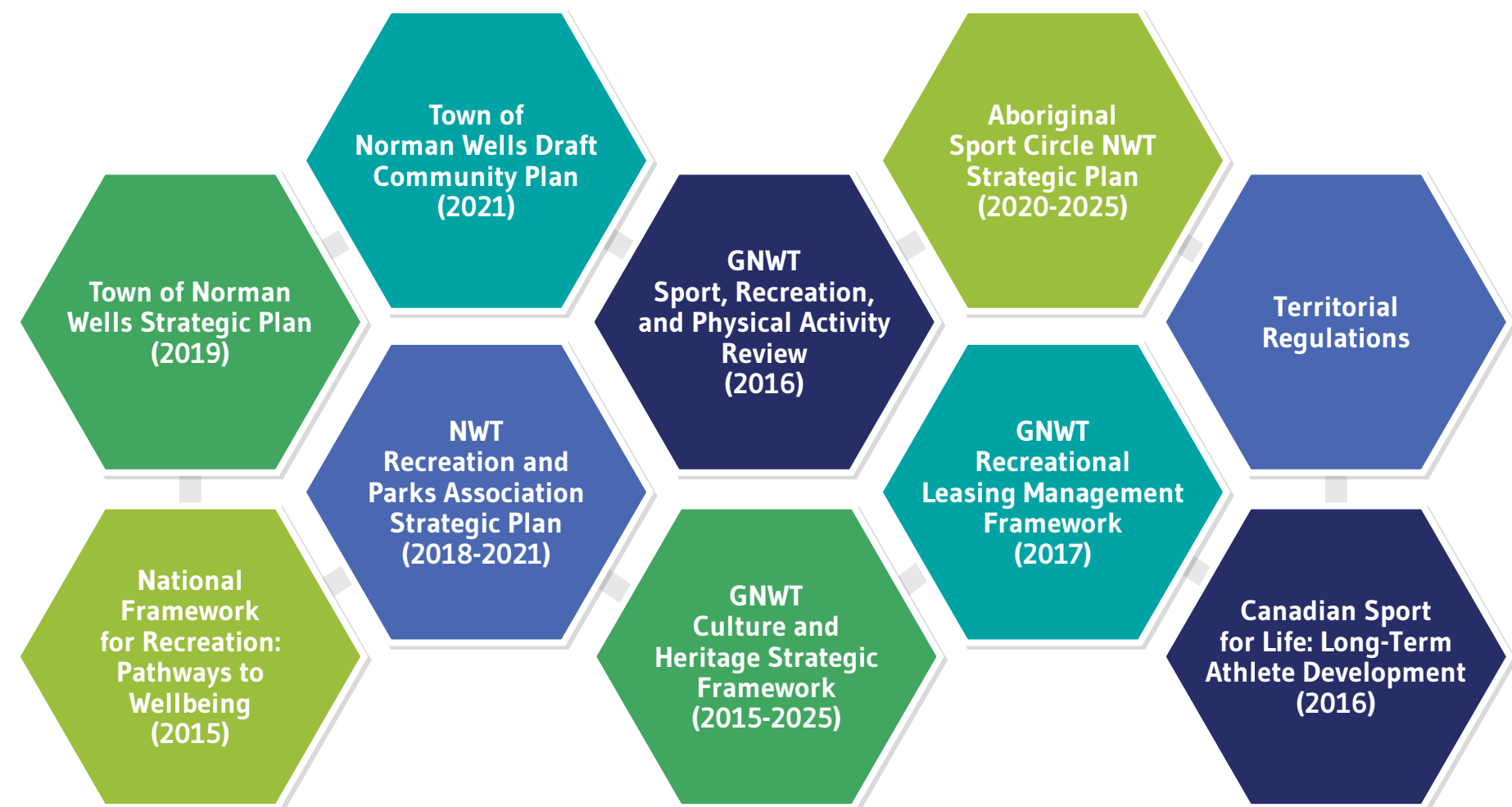
- Norman Wells meets comparative service levels for indoor natural ice surfaces, curling sheets, small indoor pools (seasonal), fitness centres, arts/culture facilities, programmable centres/halls, gymnasiums, libraries, outdoor paved courts, ball diamonds, golf courses, and parks/playgrounds.
- To meet current benchmark standards, Norman Wells would need to add an indoor artificial ice sheet, skatepark, rectangular field, dog park, and campground.
- It is important to note the condition of facilities when comparing to benchmarks. For example, although Norman Wells may meet benchmark standards for a pool, we know that some pools in comparator communities have enhanced buildings (i.e. size and operating season).





## Strategic Alignment Analysis

The concepts identified in this document are aligned with the strategic direction used to plan other aspects of infrastructure and services within the Town. In addition, the broader planning context of territorial and national recreation frameworks and plans is also considered. When considered together, these documents and the Master Plan form an overarching framework for recreation, parks, and culture in the community. The strategic alignment analysis was utilized as one indicator to justify future initiatives. For an expanded discussion on these strategies, see Appendix D.



# 3

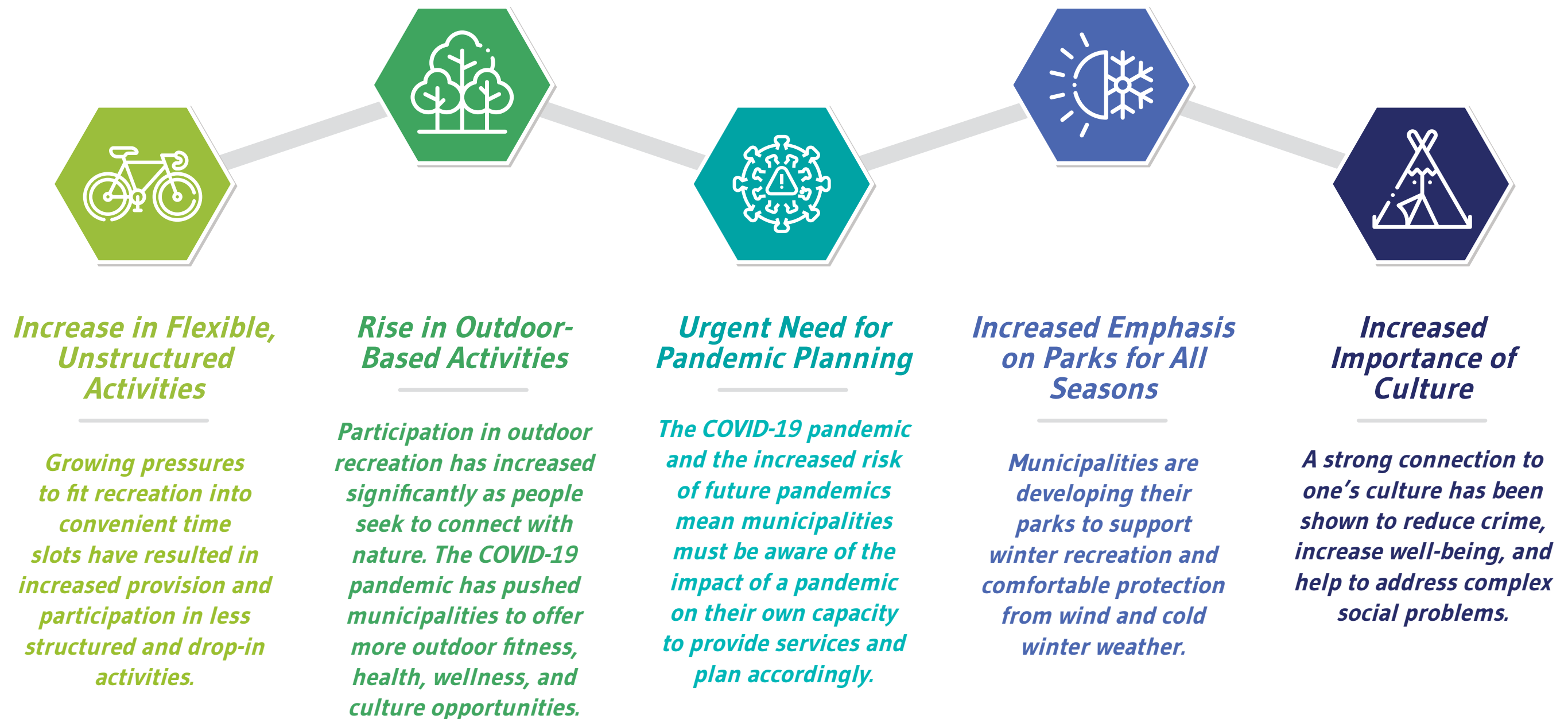
## Trends





In order to inform the planning process, it is important to review trends that affect the delivery of recreation, parks, and culture services. Trends were used as one indicator to justify future initiatives. For a full review of relevant trends see Appendix E.

## Recreation, Park, and Culture Trends





### ***Increased Focus on Natural Playground Environments and Youth Recreation Opportunities***

*“Nature play” areas incorporate natural elements to enhance the play environment and complement traditional play structures. Providing recreational opportunities and community spaces specifically for youth are critical to positive youth development and engagement in the community.*

### ***Increased Emphasis on Inclusion and Access***

*Municipalities must strategically address any barriers and constraints that specific populations may face when participating in recreation, parks, and culture services.*

### ***Focus on Sustainability and Capacity of Recreation***

*An appropriate mix of individuals, including professional staff and volunteers, is needed for delivering high-quality recreation programs and services.*

### ***Naming Policies Being Reassessed Amid Growing Cultural Shift***

*A growing cultural movement has focused on reconsidering how communities use historical iconography such as statues, memorials, and prominent names.*

### ***Evolving Nature of Volunteerism***

*Volunteers continue to be vitally important to the planning and delivery of recreation services. However, municipalities must consider the shifting motivations and capacity of volunteers when looking to expand the volunteer base.*



## Facility Planning and Development Trends<sup>9</sup>



### *Dedicated Funding and Partnerships Needed to Address Infrastructure Deficits*

*Many communities have faced significant costs associated with aging infrastructure, so capital reserve funds and funding partnerships have become more commonplace to ensure that funding is set aside for regular capital maintenance.*



### *Rise in Multipurpose Facilities*

*The use of multipurpose facilities is on the rise. Consolidation of services often leads to effective use of resources and increased efficiencies through economies of scale.*



### *Embracing New Technology*

*Communities and recreation departments are finding it critical to embrace new technology to meet the changing demographics and needs of their citizens and users.*





4

## Case for Investment in Recreation, Parks, and Culture





Investment in recreation, parks, and culture services is fundamental to building a healthy, connected, and thriving community. Now more than ever, prioritizing this investment is key to realizing the benefits of recreation, parks, and culture and supporting the economic, social, and environmental health of the community.

## Benefits of Recreation, Parks, and Culture

The contribution of recreation, parks, and culture amenities to a community in terms of health, quality of life, and environmental benefits are well known, but the linkages between these and a host of broader-reaching benefits are stronger than previously recognized. The Canadian Parks and Recreation Association has compiled research and evidence that points to five broad benefits of recreation.<sup>10</sup>

### Enhanced Mental and Physical Well-Being

Recreation and parks have an important role to play in increasing physical activity, which is a crucial factor in physical and mental health. Increased physical activity levels are associated with the presence of trails for walking, hiking and cycling, and organized events, including sport competitions and other attractions. People who participate in recreation have reported improved self-esteem and life satisfaction.

### Enhanced Social Well-Being

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

### Builds Strong Families and Communities

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

### Helps People Connect with Nature

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

### Economic Benefits

Recreation has been shown to be a powerful contributor to community economic development. Spending on recreation provides local economic benefits, creates employment opportunities, helps retain existing residents, and can attract new residents and visitors. There are also significant cost savings that can be generated through reductions in obesity and other chronic health conditions, strain on social services, and crime.



*"The benefits of recreation cannot be overstated; it can enhance mental, physical and social wellbeing, help build strong families and communities, help connect people to nature, and provides economic benefits such as jobs and tourism."*

*Canadian Recreation and Parks Association*

## Supporting Pandemic Recovery Efforts

Recreation, parks, and culture can play an important role in economic recovery following COVID-19. The Canadian Parks and Recreation Association has identified four mechanisms to support recreation, parks, culture, and recovery efforts.<sup>11</sup>



### Youth Employment in Municipal Recreation, Parks, and Culture

Post-COVID-19 economic stimulus provided by government should include a youth employment program targeted at jobs in municipal recreation, parks, and culture. The program(s) would better connect youth to their communities, increase the speed by which municipalities can ramp up the return of their services, and create jobs for youth experiencing a slow uptake in employment post-COVID-19.

### Community Sport and Recreation Funding

Funding programs that support the costs of ramping up recreation services to support individual and societal recovery from COVID-19 should be prioritized by municipal, provincial, and federal governments.

### Investment in Sport and Recreation Community Infrastructure

Recreation has been long identified as one of the municipal infrastructure systems in most need of investment. And now, unlike roads, water and bridges that have not been impacted by COVID-19, recreation is in further need of support. Stimulating jobs and the economy through investing in community sport and recreation infrastructure addresses multiple economic and social government priorities and would be an investment that the public may prioritize in a post-COVID-19 environment.

### Funding Support for Not-for-Profits

The economic impact of COVID-19 on not-for-profit organizations is substantial. While the federal wage subsidy program has been a critical first step, without additional federal, provincial/territorial government, and municipal stimulus, there will be many not-for-profits that will not have the financial capacity to keep doors open after the COVID-19 crisis.



## Tourism Linkages

Tourism is a growth industry in Canada that provides a variety of community, economic, and environmental benefits, with respect to recreation, parks, and culture. A summary of the benefits are shown below.



### Community Benefits:

- Can become a source of community pride.
  - Community tourism assets become revered by residents and part of the community identity.
- Can encourage community engagement.
  - Tourism development presents additional opportunities for residents and businesses to become involved with the community.
- Can enhance quality of life for residents.
  - Improvements to amenities for the purpose of tourism are also enjoyed by residents.



### Economic Benefits:

- Can bring visitor dollars into the community.
  - Visitor dollars have a high multiplier and can be used to enhance the quality of life of residents.
- Can expose the community to potential investors and homeowners.
  - Tourism provides a great opportunity to showcase the region to outsiders.
- Can positively impact multiple sectors and encourage business retention.
  - A vibrant tourism industry has a reinforcing effect on regional businesses that improves overall economic well-being.



### Environmental Benefits:

- Can raise awareness and appreciation for the environment.
  - Both residents and visitors recognize the beauty and importance of the environment, locally and on a broader scale.
- Can lead to preservation of built and natural environments.
  - Conservation efforts are strengthened by increased awareness, appreciation, prioritization, and investment.
- Strengthens the case for enhancements to built and natural environments.
  - The positive effects of tourism support the justification for further investment into the local environment.

There are opportunities to utilize developments in recreation, parks, and culture to support and capture the benefits of tourism development in Norman Wells.



*Norman Wells Sign  
Photo Credit: Yahoo News Canada*



5

## Community Engagement Results



The Master Plan considered the goals and needs of a broad range of community members and groups. Engaging with stakeholders and residents was important at every stage of the process to ensure that the plan will be supported by the community as a whole. This is especially important as the community moves forward into the implementation stages. Figure 7 summarizes the various methods utilized to engage the community throughout the process.

Figure 7. Master Plan Community Input



Norman Wells Historical Society Museum  
Photo Credit: Spectacular NWT

The main research questions we asked the community for input on were:

1. What new or improved indoor facilities are needed?
2. What new or improved outdoor facilities are needed?
3. What new or improved programs, activities or events are needed?

The remainder of this section summarizes the key findings from the input gathering activities.

## Resident Survey Results

The resident survey was conducted between November 16 and December 18, 2020. The objective of the resident survey was to gain a deeper understanding of resident perspectives in relation to recreation, parks, and culture in Norman Wells. The survey was promoted through the municipal website and social media posts. In total, 62 responses were received. For an expanded review of the survey results, see Appendix F.

### Indoor Recreation Facility Needs

In terms of indoor facilities, respondents were most in favour of a new or improved pool (61%), ice arena (29%), indoor playground (27%), and fitness centre (27%).

### Indoor Programming Needs

Respondents most supported new or improved indoor activities focused on education and skill-building (57%), fitness (47%), culture (37%), and aquatics (31%).

### Outdoor Facility Needs

In terms of outdoor facilities, respondents indicated that the Town should focus on new or improved sledding hills (28%), trails (25%), paved court spaces (22%), skateparks (22%), and dog parks (22%).

### Outdoor Program Needs

In alignment with indoor programming needs, respondents supported new or improved outdoor activities focused on education and skill-building (50%), culture (42%), fitness (37%), and parks and trails (35%).

### Quality of Life

An overwhelming number of respondents strongly agreed (48%) or agreed (42%) that recreation, parks, and culture opportunities are important to their quality of life.

### Level of Satisfaction with Programs

Respondents indicated they are more dissatisfied than satisfied with existing indoor programs (36% dissatisfied vs 23% satisfied).

Respondents indicated they are more dissatisfied than satisfied with existing outdoor programs (30% dissatisfied vs 20% satisfied).

### Level of Satisfaction with Opportunities (By Age)

Respondents were most satisfied with recreation, parks, and culture opportunities in Norman Wells for children (36%) and families (40%) and most dissatisfied with opportunities for youth (52%) and seniors (47%).

### Barriers to Participation

Many respondents indicated they are prevented from participating in recreation, parks, and cultural activities in Norman Wells most often because the programs are not offered (47%), there is a lack of facilities (45%), facilities are poor (35%), or they are unaware of services/facilities/programs (22%).

*Many respondents indicated they are prevented from participating in activities because the programs are not offered.*

### Activities Residents Would Like to Participate in But Are Not Available in the Community

Respondents indicated that the activities they would most like to participate in but are not able to within Norman Wells fall under the categories of arts/culture (14 responses), sports (9), education/skill-building (8), cooking (7), and swimming (6). 27 of the 62 respondents (44%) to the survey answered this question.



## Top Priority for Improvement

Respondents indicated that the one improvement to recreation, parks, and culture they would like to see in Norman Wells were the development of a multiplex that houses a variety of amenities (19%), followed by upgrades to existing facilities (16%), upgrades to the pool (13%), and activities for youth (13%).

## Support for Increased Taxation\*

67% of respondents indicated support for an increase in property taxes to support recreation, parks, and culture needs.

\*Some respondents to this question may not be responsible for paying property taxes.

## Support for Increased User Fees

63% of respondents indicated support for an increase in user fees to support recreation, parks, and culture needs.





# Youth Engagement Session

A Youth Engagement Session was hosted on December 3, 2020 to gather input into the Master Plan from youth at Mackenzie Mountain School. Two student representatives spoke with the consultant team and shared the consolidated input of youth at the school.

Local youth are proponents of a new multiplex facility that would house a variety of amenities including a soccer pitch, court space (volleyball/basketball), skatepark, and study space. Youth would also like to see further development of groomed ski trails and hills for skiing. The students indicated a need for more weekday evening activities, sport programming and organization, outdoor (canoe) programs, Town and regional events, and activities for visitors. The top facility and programming needs expressed through the session are in the following figure.

Indoor Facility Needs	Outdoor Facility Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Multiplex (including the amenities listed below)</li><li>• Court space</li><li>• Soccer pitch</li><li>• Skatepark</li><li>• Study space</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ski trails</li><li>• Skiing/sledding hills</li></ul>
Programming Needs	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Weekday evening activities</li><li>• Sport programs</li><li>• Outdoor programs</li><li>• Town and regional events</li><li>• Visitor activities</li></ul>	

Playing with Playdough  
Photo Credit: Town of Norman Wells







## Stakeholder Engagement

Many stakeholders who responded to the engagement process indicated that their organization, the Town, and residents would benefit from improvements to critical indoor facilities such as the arena, curling rink, pool, and community hall. Stakeholders also identified the need for new or improved outdoor facilities to support youth and recreation such as a skatepark, basketball court, ski/sledding hill, trails, and a soccer field.

Stakeholders also indicated the need to provide enhanced activities and programming for children, youth, and families. Respondents identified programs focused on arts/culture, the outdoors, sports, and volunteer development as most important to develop. Respondents were also asked to describe the barriers facing their organization in meeting the needs of their participants. The top two barriers were the need for funding and support, and a need for facility improvements.

75% of stakeholder groups are anticipating growth annually over the next 5 years. To better serve their participants, 71% of stakeholder groups are willing to pay increased user fees to provide enhanced facilities and programs. The top results from the survey and interviews are shown below.

*To better serve their participants, stakeholder groups identified the need for upgrades to existing facilities.*

Indoor Facility Needs	Outdoor Facility Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Pool upgrades</li><li>Ice arena upgrades</li><li>Multi-use facility</li><li>Curling rink upgrades</li><li>Storage for equipment</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Trails</li><li>Sports fields (soccer)</li><li>Ski/sledding hills</li><li>Outdoor courts (tennis/basketball)</li><li>Skatepark</li></ul>
Programming Needs	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Arts/culture programming</li><li>Trails programming</li><li>Sports programming and development</li><li>Youth programming</li><li>Volunteer development</li></ul>	

## Council Input Workshop

A Council Input Workshop was hosted on November 23, 2020 to gather input into the Master Plan from Town Council.

Councillors were in agreement on the importance of recreation, parks, and culture as a means to promote physical and mental health, attract and retain residents, and engage with other community members. Councillors identified many of the same indoor and outdoor facility needs as the community and were largely in agreement with the community with regards to programming needs. The top facility and programming needs expressed through the workshop are in the following figure.

Indoor Facility Needs	Outdoor Facility Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facility maintenance and upgrades (arena, pool, curling rink)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trails and signage</li> <li>Upgraded playgrounds and green spaces</li> <li>Motor sport amenities</li> </ul>
Programming Needs	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attracting regional events and sport tourism</li> <li>Improved programming</li> <li>New programming models</li> </ul>	

## Recreation Committee Input Workshop

A Recreation Advisory Committee Input Workshop was hosted on November 24, 2020 to gather input into the Master Plan from the Recreation Committee.

Committee members provided insight into the past and current needs regarding recreation, parks, and culture in the community. The Committee also affirmed the importance of recreation, parks, and culture in promoting health, wellness, and community interaction.

Indoor and outdoor facility and programming needs aligned with those identified in other engagement activities. The top needs identified through the workshop are shown in the following figure.

Indoor Facility Needs	Outdoor Facility Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arts/culture space</li> <li>Multiplex (including amenities such as a pool, arena, and multipurpose space)</li> <li>Year-round facilities (pool and arena)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trails and signage</li> <li>Sports fields (soccer)</li> <li>Track and field amenities</li> </ul>
Programming Needs	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Winter programs (skiing, sledding, snowmobiling, skating)</li> <li>Arts/culture programming</li> <li>Youth programming</li> <li>Year-round programming at upgraded facilities</li> </ul>	



6

## Vision for the Future





Norman Wells has several challenges to face over the coming years, including the social and financial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and disruptions caused to the oil and gas industry due to the global economic slow down. However, the community is resilient and has made significant investments in its people and infrastructure. As the Town moves forward with this plan, it will do so in a strategic way that will leverage community assets and build off community strengths. Investment in recreation, parks, and culture will be an integral part of enhancing the social, economic, and environmental value of the community. The statement described below outlines a vision for the future.

## Vision for Recreation in Norman Wells

*Recreational services and offerings will become a core strength of our community. Investments in recreation will support the resiliency and self-sufficiency of residents; it will attract newcomers and visitors; it will contribute to economic diversification; and it will further position Norman Wells as the primary hub of the Sahtu region.*



*Terry Fox Run  
Photo Credit: Town of Norman Wells*

## Guiding Principles for Service Delivery

Guiding principles for recreation, parks, and culture service delivery were developed to support the implementation of the Master Plan. The Town will:

1. Acknowledge recreation, parks, and culture has an important role to play in attracting new residents, attracting investment, and improving quality of life for all residents.
2. Ensure recreation, parks, and culture supports the Town's strategic direction.
3. Ensure inclusion and accessibility in all programs, facilities, and services.
4. Provide equitable access to facilities, services, and programs which will include a balance between access for:
  - Organized groups and the general public
  - Passive and active endeavours
  - Competitive and non-competitive pursuits
  - Structured and spontaneous activities
  - Diverse ages, cultures, and abilities
  - Indoor and outdoor opportunities
5. Ensure integration and connectivity of indoor, outdoor, and cultural spaces to create a wholistic and rich experience for residents.
6. Regularly engage with citizens to ensure services are delivered that meet the needs of the community in the most effective way.
7. Seek solutions that preserve and enhance the natural environment.
8. Undertake sound planning for new developments including a comprehensive review of supply, demand, cost and benefit, and further integration into broader municipal planning.
9. Seek enhanced opportunities for year-round provision of facilities.



7

## Master Plan Priorities





## Master Plan Priorities

This section outlines the priorities that have been identified for recreation, parks, and culture in Norman Wells. These priorities were identified based on research, analysis and the findings collected through the community engagement activities.

Priorities have been divided into four categories for organizational purposes. These categories include:

1. Indoor Facilities and Programming

2. Outdoor Facilities and Programming

3. Service Delivery and Communication

4. Tourism Linkages

*Detailed action items stemming from the master plan priorities are provided in Appendix J – Implementation Plan.*





# 1. Indoor Facilities and Programming

- A. Complete a Feasibility Study to Upgrade or Replace the Pool
- B. Complete a Feasibility Study to Upgrade or Replace the Ice Arena
- C. Enhance Age-Specific Programming for All Ages
- D. Expand Indoor Programming for Different Interests
- E. Add Storage
- F. Complete a Feasibility Study to Upgrade or Replace the Curling Rink
- G. Develop an Indoor Playground
- H. Explore Multi-use Facility (Multiplex) Development



## A. Complete a Feasibility Study to Upgrade or Replace the Pool

The existing pool (Penguin Palace) operates during a short window in summer and provides residents with an opportunity to enjoy indoor aquatic activities and programs. The facility lacks sufficient insulation to support year-round operation and preliminary assessments by the Town have identified the potential need for significant infrastructure upgrades to support continued operation. The Town is planning to conduct a detailed facility condition assessment on the pool, which will identify needed upgrades and clarify the estimated lifespan of the facility.

Respondents to the resident survey indicated that the pool was the top indoor recreation facility in need of improvement or replacement (61%) and many identified pool upgrades as the top priority for recreation, parks, and culture development. Similarly, stakeholders, Town Council, and the Recreation Committee identified pool upgrades/replacement as a community need. Upgrades to this facility could bolster its utilization, expand participation in aquatic programs, and provide opportunities to support additional community programs and events.

Assuming the overall building condition is deemed acceptable, the Town should consider upgrading the existing pool in the near term to expand its operational window. If the building condition is not acceptable, the Town should consider replacing the pool with a new facility that is capable of year-round operation.

It is important to note that the capital and operating costs of aquatic facilities are significant, so benefits must be carefully weighed against costs. Operational expenses could vary based on several factors, including operating hours, availability of labour, cost of utilities, etc. Revenues for an upgraded facility are projected to be low; therefore, the Town is unlikely to recover much of these costs through user fees. It is recommended the Town complete a comprehensive feasibility study and business case for an expanded facility that would include a program analysis, concept design, estimate of capital costs, and estimate of operational costs. The study should compare the cost/benefit of operating year-round vs. seasonal.

# 1. Indoor Facilities and Programming

- A. Complete a Feasibility Study to Upgrade or Replace the Pool
- B. Complete a Feasibility Study to Upgrade or Replace the Ice Arena**
- C. Enhance Age-Specific Programming for All Ages
- D. Expand Indoor Programming for Different Interests
- E. Add Storage
- F. Complete a Feasibility Study to Upgrade or Replace the Curling Rink
- G. Develop an Indoor Playground
- H. Explore Multi-use Facility (Multiplex) Development



## B. Complete a Feasibility Study to Upgrade or Replace the Ice Arena

The Ray Persson Memorial Arena has one indoor natural ice sheet that provides opportunities for public skating, figure skating, minor hockey, adult recreational hockey, facility rentals, and special events. The dirt floor and natural ice limit utilization to the winter months where temperatures remain low enough to sustain sufficient ice coverage.

The Town has indicated that the arena could benefit from upgrades to critical infrastructure, including new boards, a concrete floor, and an ice plant capable of producing and sustaining artificial ice.

Respondents to the resident survey indicated that the arena was a top indoor recreation facility in need of improvement or replacement (29%) and many identified arena upgrades as one of the top priorities for recreation, parks, and culture development. Stakeholders, Town Council, and the Recreation Committee echoed this public sentiment when they identified arena upgrades or replacement as a community need. Upgrades to the arena could bolster the facility's utilization, expand programming, and create opportunities for sport tourism.

Assuming the overall building condition is deemed acceptable, the Town should install a concrete floor and ice plant in the near term to create artificial ice and extend the operational season of the arena. If the building condition is not acceptable, the Town should consider replacing the arena with a new facility capable of producing artificial ice.

It is important to note that the capital and operating costs of arenas are significant, so benefits must be carefully weighed against costs. Operational expenses could vary based on several factors, including operating hours, availability of labour, cost of utilities, etc. Revenues for an upgraded facility are projected to be low; therefore, the Town is unlikely to recover much of these costs through user fees. It is recommended the Town complete a comprehensive feasibility study and business case for an upgraded facility that would include a program analysis, concept design, estimate of capital costs, and estimate of operational costs.



# 1. Indoor Facilities and Programming

- A. Complete a Feasibility Study to Upgrade or Replace the Pool
- B. Complete a Feasibility Study to Upgrade or Replace the Ice Arena
- C. Enhance Age-Specific Programming for All Ages**
- D. Expand Indoor Programming for Different Interests
- E. Add Storage
- F. Complete a Feasibility Study to Upgrade or Replace the Curling Rink
- G. Develop an Indoor Playground
- H. Explore Multi-use Facility (Multiplex) Development



## C. Enhance Age-Specific Programming for All Ages

There is a need for enhanced indoor recreation, parks, and culture programming in Norman Wells. 47% of resident survey respondents identified a lack of programs as the top barrier to participation in recreation, parks, and culture.

To address the need for enhanced recreational and culture programs, the Town should develop age-specific program plans that clearly outline:

- a. The current program offerings available in the Town (including partner-run programs).
- b. The program demands from the public.
- c. How the Town and its partners in recreation and culture will meet those demands through program offerings.

In the short-term, it is recommended that the Town utilize existing programmable space at the community facilities, library, and school to offer a greater variety of recreation and culture opportunities for different age groups.

### Youth Programming

Recreation and culture programming for youth was identified as a top priority during the community engagement activities as survey respondents were most dissatisfied with recreation, parks, and culture opportunities for youth (52%). Youth engagement indicated a need for more weekday evening activities, sport programming and organization, Town and regional events, activities for visitors.

### Senior's Programming

Recreation and culture programming for seniors was identified as a high priority during the community engagement activities as survey respondents were largely dissatisfied with recreation, parks, and culture opportunities for seniors (47%). Seniors indicated a desire to become more engaged in the community and provide opportunities to pass along knowledge and skills to younger generations.

# 1. Indoor Facilities and Programming

- A. Complete a Feasibility Study to Upgrade or Replace the Pool
- B. Complete a Feasibility Study to Upgrade or Replace the Ice Arena
- C. Enhance Age-Specific Programming for All Ages
- D. Expand Indoor Programming for Different Interests**
- E. Add Storage
- F. Complete a Feasibility Study to Upgrade or Replace the Curling Rink
- G. Develop an Indoor Playground
- H. Explore Multi-use Facility (Multiplex) Development

## D. Expand Indoor Programming for Different Interests

Similar to age-specific programming, residents and stakeholders communicated the need for expanded programming for a variety of interests. Residents most supported new or improved indoor activities focused on education and skill-building (57%), fitness (47%), culture (37%), aquatics (31%), arts (29%), skating (29%), and gym/court (21%). Residents indicated that the activities they would most like to participate in but are not able to within Norman Wells fall under the categories of arts/culture (14 responses), sports (9), education/skill-building (8), cooking (7), and swimming (6).

In the short-term, it is recommended that the Town expand the provision of programs for different interests either directly or in partnership with local groups.



### Educational and Skill-building Programming

Educational and skill-building programs were identified by survey respondents as the most needed new or improved indoor programming. For example, programs could feature nutrition, health and wellness education, career planning, mentorship, and leadership skills development. Residents and stakeholders also provided program ideas including, cooking, Girl Guides or Scouts, maker programs (e.g. tool use instruction), candle making, food/meat preparation, and repair skills.



### Arts and Culture Programming

Survey respondents indicated that they would most like to participate in more arts and culture activities in Norman Wells, but are not able to. The Town and region have a rich cultural heritage and unique historical sites and attractions. The Town should provide opportunities for arts and cultural programming and activities directly or through the support of local organizations. These activities could include drum dances, hide tanning, cultural skills and education, arts and crafts, language programs, music programs, and dance.



### Sport and Fitness Programming

Community engagement identified the need for enhanced sport and fitness programming at existing facilities. Specifically, respondents indicated a strong need for programs centered around hockey, hand games, table tennis, basketball, youth sport camps, ball hockey, volleyball, yoga, youth fitness, and group fitness.



### Winter Programming

Community engagement strongly indicated that more programs, activities, and events are needed for residents during the long winter months. As outdoor recreation opportunities becomes more limited during winter, the Town should increase the provision of indoor programs to maintain strong participation and community health and wellness. As facilities are upgraded or developed, the opportunities for indoor winter programming will increase.



# 1. Indoor Facilities and Programming

- A. Complete a Feasibility Study to Upgrade or Replace the Pool
- B. Complete a Feasibility Study to Upgrade or Replace the Ice Arena
- C. Enhance Age-Specific Programming for All Ages
- D. Expand Indoor Programming for Different Interests
- E. Add Storage**
- F. Complete a Feasibility Study to Upgrade or Replace the Curling Rink
- G. Develop an Indoor Playground
- H. Explore Multi-use Facility (Multiplex) Development



## E. Add Storage

Stakeholders identified the need for additional storage for equipment at a variety of facilities including the arena, curling rink, community hall, and tennis court. Stakeholders also identified the need for better access to storage that is less reliant on the availability of Town employees. With improvements in storage, community groups could be better able to enhance programming and support service provision.

In the short to medium-term, the Town should explore opportunities for additional storage at key facilities or the development of a standalone storage structure for recreation equipment.

# 1. Indoor Facilities and Programming

- A. Complete a Feasibility Study to Upgrade or Replace the Pool
- B. Complete a Feasibility Study to Upgrade or Replace the Ice Arena
- C. Enhance Age-Specific Programming for All Ages
- D. Expand Indoor Programming for Different Interests
- E. Add Storage
- F. Complete a Feasibility Study to Upgrade or Replace the Curling Rink**
- G. Develop an Indoor Playground
- H. Explore Multi-use Facility (Multiplex) Development



## F. Complete a Feasibility Study to Upgrade or Replace the Curling Rink

While curling participation on a national level is declining, due largely to shifting demographics and difficulty attracting younger participants, curling remains strong part of Canadian sport culture.<sup>12</sup> The growing popularity and accessibility of stirring curling, which provides a unique curling experience for seniors, youth, and those with disabilities, has encouraged communities to reconsider its notions around curling club users.

Like the pool and arena, a comprehensive facility assessment is planned for this facility. However, the Town has indicated that the curling rink could benefit from upgrades to critical infrastructure, such as replacing the current dirt floor with a concrete slab.

Stakeholders and Town Council identified curling rink upgrades or replacement as a community need. Upgrades to the facility could provide opportunities for youth programming, sport tourism, and space for other activities.

In the short to medium-term, assuming the overall building condition is deemed acceptable, the Town should upgrade the facility as required by the assessment and install a concrete floor and artificial ice plant to extend its operational season and expand its utilization for other activities and groups throughout the year. If the building condition is not acceptable, the Town should consider replacing the curling rink with a new facility capable of producing artificial ice.

It is important to note that the capital and operating costs of curling rinks are significant, so benefits must be carefully weighed against costs. Operational expenses could vary based on several factors, including operating hours, availability of labour, cost of utilities, etc. Revenues for an upgraded facility are projected to be low; therefore, the Town is unlikely to recover much of these costs through user fees. It is recommended the Town complete a comprehensive feasibility study and business case for an upgraded facility that would include a program analysis, concept design, estimate of capital costs, and estimate of operational costs.



## 1. Indoor Facilities and Programming

- A. Complete a Feasibility Study to Upgrade or Replace the Pool
- B. Complete a Feasibility Study to Upgrade or Replace the Ice Arena
- C. Enhance Age-Specific Programming for All Ages
- D. Expand Indoor Programming for Different Interests
- E. Add Storage
- F. Complete a Feasibility Study to Upgrade or Replace the Curling Rink
- G. Develop an Indoor Playground**
- H. Explore Multi-use Facility (Multiplex) Development**



### G. Develop an Indoor Playground

At present, no indoor playground exists in Norman Wells and the Children's Play Group Association uses the Community Hall with small toys and play structures for children's play. Resident survey respondents identified a lack of facilities as a significant barrier to participation (45%) and were in favour of a new indoor playground (27%). An indoor playground would provide opportunities for programming and activities for children and families, potentially attracting and retaining residents, and providing things to do for visiting friends and family.

In the short to medium-term, the Town should explore the opportunity to add an indoor playground to an existing facility or develop a standalone facility.

### H. Explore Multi-use Facility (Multiplex) Development

Throughout the engagement and research phase of the project, the desire for a large multi-use facility or multiplex was identified. 19% of resident survey respondents indicated that the one improvement to recreation, parks, and culture they would like to see in Norman Wells would be the development of a multiplex that houses a variety of recreational amenities. Engagement with youth, stakeholders, Council, and the Recreation Committee also identified a multiplex with major indoor amenities (e.g. pool, arena, playground, multi-use space, fieldhouse) as a community need.

In the medium to long-term, the Town should explore the opportunity to develop a phased-in multiplex facility that would replace existing facilities, such as the pool, arena, and curling rink. The opportunity to add new amenities that are not currently available in Norman Wells to a multiplex development should also be considered.

While the development of multiplex facilities in Canada is on the rise due to their strengths as community hubs and the potential to generate operational synergies and efficiencies through economies of scale, these facilities require substantial capital and ongoing operational investment. The Town must carefully weigh the benefits and costs of developing a new multiplex facility as opposed to upgrading or replacing existing infrastructure.

## 2. Outdoor Facilities and Programming

- A. Expand and Enhance Trail System
- B. Expand Outdoor Programming
- C. Develop a Larger Sledding Hill
- D. Add Mobile Skatepark Equipment
- E. Upgrade the Outdoor Court
- F. Develop a Rectangular Field
- G. Develop a Dog Park
- H. Assess the Need to Develop a Campground/RV Park



### A. Expand and Enhance Trail System

Existing trails in Norman Wells include the historic Canol Trail, Norman Wells Trail, and D.O.T. Trail. However, the Town has a limited established trail network with many unmarked trails extending out into the surrounding region.

Community engagement indicated trails for walking, hiking, biking, skiing, and motorized vehicles are a priority for improvement and further development. There is a need for a variety of trail types, including wide, paved and fully accessible trails to low maintenance gravel or natural surface pathways. Meandering pathways, vegetated corridors, and viewpoints can be added to create a more enjoyable experience. A comprehensive, well connected trail system will encourage people to get outside and live healthy, active lifestyles, as well as promote increased visitation.

In the short to medium-term, the Town should conduct a community and regional trail inventory. As part of this inventory, it is recommended that trails be assessed for their tourism value. Based on the findings from the trail inventory, expand and enhance the local trail network for non-mechanized and mechanized uses. The Town should also develop a trail map and signage program while considering the incorporation of interpretive elements to enhance the user experience.



## 2. Outdoor Facilities and Programming

- A. Expand and Enhance Trail System
- B. Expand Outdoor Programming**
- C. Develop a Larger Sledding Hill
- D. Add Mobile Skatepark Equipment
- E. Upgrade the Outdoor Court
- F. Develop a Rectangular Field
- G. Develop a Dog Park
- H. Assess the Need to Develop a Campground/RV Park

### B. Expand Outdoor Programming

COVID-19 has forced many municipalities to reconsider how they deliver programs. Many have responded by shifting to offering more outdoor programs in the short-term. However, we will likely see this shift continue into the long-term as municipalities see the value in providing more programs in an outdoor setting.

At present, there are a limited number of outdoor programs currently provided by the Town. Resident survey respondents communicated the need for improvements as they were least satisfied with outdoor recreational programming. Respondents also indicated that a lack of programming was the top barrier to participation. Youth, stakeholders, Council, and the Recreation Committee agreed with residents that expanded outdoor programming is needed throughout the year.

In alignment with indoor programming needs, residents supported new or improved outdoor activities focused on education and skill-building (50%), culture (42%), fitness (37%), and parks and trails (35%).

#### Educational and Skill-building Programming

Residents and stakeholders provided program ideas including Girl Guides or Scouts, food/meat preparation, youth camps, canoeing, adventure education, survival skills, and repair skills.

#### Arts and Culture Programming

The Town and region's rich cultural heritage should be leveraged to provide opportunities for outdoor arts and cultural programming and activities directly or through the support of local organizations. These activities could include drum dances, hide tanning, cultural skills & education, and outdoor arts and crafts.

#### Fitness Programming

The Town may want to consider offering registered outdoor fitness classes including yoga, cardio, bodyweight bootcamp and a variety of other classes for all levels of fitness. The programs would make use of existing outdoor recreation facilities, such as those at Jackfish Lake, and allow participants to enjoy the fitness experience in nature. The Town could partner with a fitness provider to offer outdoor fitness opportunities during the summer. Even winter outdoor fitness programs could be developed for participants that enjoy a more challenging fitness experience.

#### Parks and Trails Programming

With the recommended expansion of the trail network, opportunities exist to develop programs that utilize the Town's most prominent outdoor recreation assets. Programs could be designed for all ages and be developed in conjunction with local social clubs and organizations. For example, the Town could create a trail walking program that encourages residents to explore the outdoors. Programs should be developed that offer opportunities for parks and trail use year-round.

#### Winter Programming

The Town should consider expanding the number of outdoor programs offered during the winter months. These programs would offer residents an excellent opportunity to participate year-round and make the most of Canada's long winter season.

## 2. Outdoor Facilities and Programming

- A. Expand and Enhance Trail System
- B. Expand Outdoor Programming
- C. Develop a Larger Sledding Hill**
- D. Add Mobile Skatepark Equipment**
- E. Upgrade the Outdoor Court**
- F. Develop a Rectangular Field
- G. Develop a Dog Park
- H. Assess the Need to Develop a Campground/RV Park



### C. Develop a Larger Sledding Hill

Tobogganing and sledding are excellent opportunities for families to get outside and stay active during the winter months. Toboggan hills provide a simple, low maintenance and low cost outdoor amenity that can be engineered for enhanced safety and appeal. Resident survey respondents indicated sledding hills were the top outdoor facility need (28%), while youth and stakeholders also identified the need to provide opportunities for sledding and skiing.

The Town should develop a larger sledding hill in Norman Wells and consider adding stairs and/or reducing the grade of approaches to enhance accessibility. Safety guidelines should be clearly outlined by adequate signage and Town policy. The Town may also consider the feasibility of developing a small ski hill.

### D. Add Mobile Skatepark Equipment

Norman Wells is currently below comparator communities in its provision of skateparks. Residents, youth, and stakeholders identified a skatepark as one of the main outdoor facility needs. A skatepark could provide opportunities for expanded outdoor recreation and programming. In addition, mobile/modular skateparks can be a cost-effective way to increase service offerings for skateparks. The Town should explore purchasing mobile and modular skatepark equipment so that the park can be moved indoors and outdoors, as needed.

### E. Upgrade the Outdoor Court

The existing outdoor court is utilized for tennis, basketball, and other activities. Residents indicated improved paved court spaces were the third highest outdoor facility need (22%), while consultation with the local Tennis Federation identified the need for resurfacing and new painted lines on the court.

It is recommended the Town upgrade the outdoor paved court (resurfacing, line painting). The Town should also consider utilizing the court for new activities and programming such as pickleball.



## 2. Outdoor Facilities and Programming

- A. Expand and Enhance Trail System
- B. Expand Outdoor Programming
- C. Develop a Larger Sledding Hill
- D. Add Mobile Skatepark Equipment
- E. Upgrade the Outdoor Court
- F. Develop a Rectangular Field**
- G. Develop a Dog Park**
- H. Assess the Need to Develop a Campground/RV Park**



### F. Develop a Rectangular Field

Stakeholders and the Recreation Committee identified the need for a rectangular field to support opportunities for expanded outdoor recreation, programming, and community events. Norman Wells is also below comparator communities in its provision of rectangular fields. In the medium to long term, the Town should develop a rectangular field to support outdoor recreation programs and spontaneous use.

### G. Develop a Dog Park

Norman Wells is currently below comparator communities in its provision of dog parks as there are no official, permanent dog parks or off-leash areas within Town. Through public and stakeholder engagement, the lack of this amenity was one of the top gaps identified in Town. In Canada, it is estimated that approximately 41% of households have at least one dog.<sup>13</sup> The Town should address the lack of facilities for these residents and establish a fenced, off-leash dog park with strong connections to the expanded trail network. The park will offer a central location for public and pet socialization safe from difficult terrain or regional wildlife.

### H. Assess the Need to Develop a Campground/RV Park

Located just outside of Town, Mackinnon Territorial Park offers residents and visitor access to eight non-powered camping sites. However, the potential development of year-round road access via the proposed Mackenzie Valley Highway is anticipated to significantly increase visitation to the community, including those seeking camping and RV amenities.<sup>14</sup> Consultation with the Territory indicated that visitation to Tuktoyaktuk tripled under similar circumstances, and that Norman Wells should be prepared to handle an influx of visitors. The Town should explore the development of a campground and RV park once year-round road access has been established.

## 3. Service Delivery and Communication

### A. Capital Project Evaluation

- B. Maintain Municipal Role in Service Delivery
- C. Improve Communications
- D. Regularly Collect Feedback
- E. Track Amenity Use
- F. Implement New Policies and Plans

### A. Capital Project Evaluation

A formalized and data-based process for evaluating new capital projects and new partnerships is needed to ensure capital projects being funded provide adequate value for taxpayer investment. The Town should adopt the following business case and partnership framework.



#### Feasibility Study and Business Case Development

Budgeting for new facilities requires advanced analysis and planning in order to properly estimate resource requirements, prove the need for new infrastructure exists, and to gain support from the public and from funders. The analysis and business planning process often begins years before construction takes place to ensure adequate time for consultation and planning, and to confirm that the necessary funds are budgeted to begin construction.

The Town should consider starting the process when certain indicators show that new facility development is required. This can include facilities reaching end of life, growth in market size, facilities reaching capacity, or demand for new facilities that are not provided within the market area. Proper analysis and business planning is a multi-step process, involving a high level of engagement of both stakeholders and the public. See Appendix G for a recommended outline of the process.



#### Criteria for Evaluating Major Capital Development Projects

The Town recognizes the importance of enhancing recreation and culture infrastructure and, funding permitted, will seek to partner on capital projects that demonstrate a high degree of community need and viability. Appendix G describes a set of criteria that will be used by the Town to evaluate business cases for major capital funding. Business cases may be submitted by external partners seeking funding from the Town or developed by the Town itself.



### 3. Service Delivery and Communication

- A. Capital Project Evaluation
- B. Maintain Municipal Role in Service Delivery**
- C. Improve Communications
- D. Regularly Collect Feedback
- E. Track Amenity Use
- F. Implement New Policies and Plans



#### B. Maintain Municipal Role in Service Delivery

The community engagement process indicated that community groups are in need of more support from the Town in terms of communication, guidance, and capacity building. An assessment of local stakeholders indicated that many of the same individuals are active with community groups and tasked with providing recreation services. We recommend that the Town maintain its current role in recreation, parks, and culture service delivery (see Figure 8). The role of the Town will be to:

1. Provide recreation, parks, and culture programs for residents.
2. Build capacity among stakeholder groups to offer programs.
3. Educate and build the local volunteer base.

See Appendix H for an explanation of service delivery approaches.

Figure 8. Role of the Town in Recreation, Parks, and Culture Service Delivery



## 3. Service Delivery and Communication

- A. Capital Project Evaluation
- B. Maintain Municipal Role in Service Delivery
- C. Improve Communications**
- D. Regularly Collect Feedback**
- E. Track Amenity Use**
- F. Implement New Policies and Plans

### C. Improve Communications

Communication of the recreation, parks, and culture opportunities available in Norman Wells was identified as an area for improvement by residents and stakeholder groups. Nearly 1 in 5 resident survey respondents (22%) indicated that a lack of awareness of available facilities, programs, and services keeps them from participating in recreation, parks, and culture opportunities.

Many stakeholders who responded to the survey thought that their organization would benefit from continued engagement, collaboration, and communication. At present, the Town website, Town social media accounts, and local print and digital media are the primary channels for communicating recreation, parks, and culture opportunities.



#### Online Information

The Town's webpage should be easy for users to understand and navigate. Improvements to the website could be made to ensure residents, user groups and visitors are able to easily find the information they are looking for. These improvements could include improvement to the layout and organization of topics on the landing page to make it easier for different groups to find the information they need.



#### Collaboration and Planning Forums

The Town should seek to host regular recreation, parks, and culture forums for residents and stakeholder groups to improve communication and collaboration.



#### Print Information

While communications have recently shifted to online platforms, the Town should consider the distribution of a printed recreation, parks, and culture newsletter or booklet to better inform residents of programs, upcoming events, and opportunities.

### D. Regularly Collect Feedback

The Town should also create a system to receive regular feedback on the facility and service needs of the community. This could include regular public/stakeholder surveys and community engagement sessions.

### E. Track Amenity Use

Establishing a set of metrics for tracking amenity usage will help the Town make decisions related to recreation, parks, and culture. At present, data on facility utilization, program participation, and event attendance is not available. More detailed tracking is needed to identify opportunities for enhanced utilization during peak and non-peak hours and community group capacity growth. Tracking usage is key for Norman Wells to better understand demand within the community and predict future trends moving forward.



## 3. Service Delivery and Communication

- A. Capital Project Evaluation
- B. Maintain Municipal Role in Service Delivery
- C. Improve Communications
- D. Regularly Collect Feedback
- E. Track Amenity Use
- F. Implement New Policies and Plans**

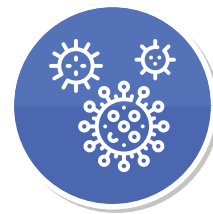
### F. Implement New Policies and Plans

Analysis of the current situation in Norman Wells identified some policy gaps that impact the development of recreation, parks, and culture. Addressing these gaps will be important in the coming years.



#### Naming Policy

At present, the Town does not have policies that address the naming of new or existing municipal facilities. With the recent cultural movement calling into question the historical naming of public facilities, sports teams, and parks, the Town should develop a policy that outlines the criteria for facility naming. It is important that the policy mitigates the risk associated with the naming of public facilities in these rapidly changing social times. The policy should also outline opportunities for corporate partnerships and sponsorships. The Town should consider the development of a Naming Committee to work in conjunction with Town Council and Administration to evaluate potential names that reflect Norman Wells' heritage. The Naming Committee could be a sub-committee of the existing Recreation Committee.



#### Pandemic Plan

The Town should develop a Pandemic Plan that supports an approved municipal emergency plan and business continuity plans with strong consideration for the impact to recreation, parks, and culture services.



#### Town Funding Grants

The Town should consider the establishment of grants for recreation and culture organizations to support the development and provision of programs and events. These grants would provide greater control to the Town over program development and could improve collaboration with stakeholder groups.



#### Recreation Master Plan Update

Formally update the Recreation Master Plan in 2026 to reflect new community information, needs, amenities, and alignment with strategic planning.

## 4. Tourism Linkages

- A. Develop a Tourism Strategy
- B. Improve Tourism Marketing, Promotion, and Signage

### A. Develop a Tourism Strategy

Given the opportunity tourism presents to diversify the local economy and benefit residents, it is recommended that the Town develop a tourism strategy. The tourism strategy should provide a shared vision, clarify the Town's strategy, identify target markets and product development opportunities, establish a framework for stakeholders to collaborate, and provide overall direction for tourism development in Norman Wells. The strategy should align with the Recreation Master Plan and other community plans and strategies.



#### Opportunity for Nature-Based Tourism

The region is home to an abundance of attractive natural environments and outdoor recreation opportunities, such as the Franklin Mountains, Canol Trail, Mackenzie River, and Mackinnon Territorial Park. The Town is also a regional transportation hub and a launching point for outdoor adventures in the region. Opportunities exist to leverage these outdoor assets and community traits to establish Norman Wells as a renowned nature-based tourism and outdoor recreation destination in the Territory.



#### Opportunity for Cultural Tourism

The Town and region are home to a strong supply of assets that showcase a compelling cultural heritage. For thousands of years, the Dene of the Sahtu shared stories, legends, and history at events such as spiritual gatherings and family celebrations.<sup>15</sup> More recently, the Sahtu Dene and Métis have collaborated to preserve the rich cultural heritage of the region. Across the Mackenzie River from Norman Wells is the start of the Canol Trail, the WWII-era pipeline that was built to supply oil for the war effort. Some historic buildings and vehicles can still be found along the trail.<sup>16</sup> Further development of these cultural assets in addition to experiential, interpretive programming would create opportunities for increased visitation.



#### Opportunity for Sport Tourism

Sport teams from throughout the Sahtu region often travel to Norman Wells to participate in sport events and competitions. New and improved facilities offer greater opportunities to attract sport events of growing size and significance. Sport tourism has the potential for significant spin off effects for local businesses as the athletes, coaching staff and family members who attend tournaments will need accommodation, food and beverage, and other entertainment options during the course of their events.

### B. Improve Tourism Marketing, Promotion, and Signage

Tourism marketing, promotion, and signage in the Town and surrounding region is limited. In the short-term, it is recommended that the Town enhance regional tourism marketing and promotion through social, digital, and print media in a coordinated campaign that clearly identifies the region's tourism identity and offerings. In the short to medium-term the Town should work to develop signage network that will assist visitors and residents in accessing key tourism areas. Signage should have a consistent theme that matches the brand of the community.



8

## Top Facility and Operational Priorities





This section provides a summary of the top facility and operational priorities identified for recreation, parks, and culture in Norman Wells.

## Top 5 Facility Priorities

### Priority Action Items



*1. Complete a feasibility study to upgrade or replace the pool*



*2. Complete a feasibility study to upgrade or replace the arena*



*3. Expand and enhance the trail system*



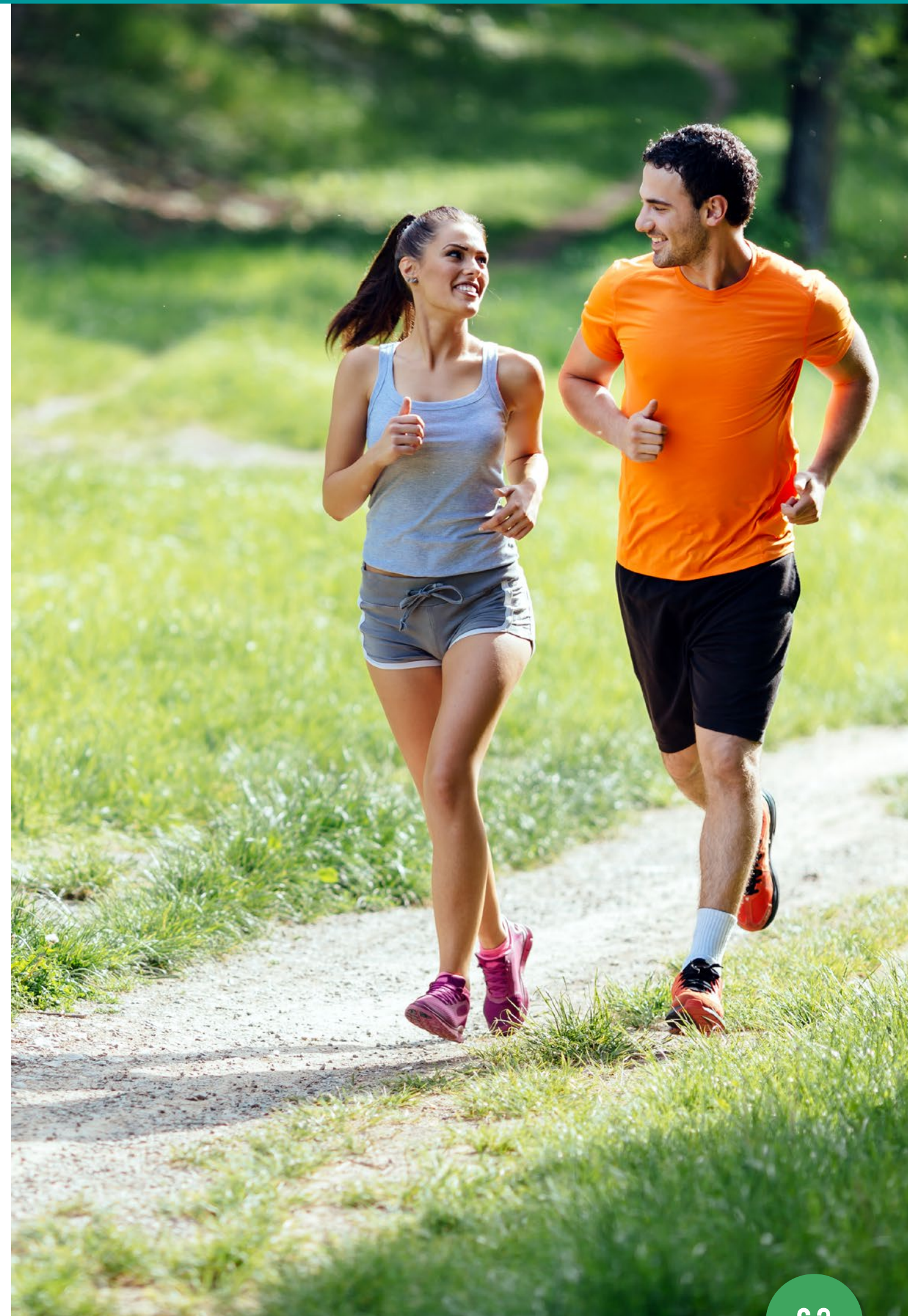
*4. Develop a larger sledding hill*



*5. Develop a mobile skatepark*

#### Important Note:

It is recommended that the Town utilize the Capital Project Development Process and create business cases for major capital projects prior to committing to development (see Appendix G). The Town should utilize the master plan as a starting point and re-adjust priorities as detailed costs and benefits are identified.





The following evaluation matrix was established to prioritize important recommendations involving potential capital projects. The process provides greater weighting to community engagement as three indicators relate to engagement results. This matrix can be further utilized by the Town when considering future development priorities. In future years, the weighting of each indicator should be considered and amended based upon importance to the community at that point in time.

Evaluation Indicators												
Scoring Chart 0 = clearly does not support 1 = somewhat supports 2 = clearly supports 3 = exceedingly supports	Public Engagement	Stakeholder Engagement	Council Engagement	Comparator Benchmarks	Facility Utilization	Supply/Existing Condition	Future Growth Projections	Trends	Strategic Alignment	Public Access	Cost	Total Score
1. Pool upgrade feasibility	3	2	2	2	2	3	1	2	3	3	1	24
2. Arena upgrade feasibility	3	2	2	2	2	3	1	2	3	3	1	24
3. Trails	3	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	3	2	22
4. Sledding hill	3	1	1	1	2	3	1	2	2	2	3	21
5. Mobile skatepark	3	2	1	2	2	3	1	2	1	1	2	20
6. Outdoor court upgrades	3	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	19
7. Storage	1	3	1	1	3	2	1	1	1	2	3	19
8. Curling rink upgrade feasibility	1	2	2	1	2	3	1	1	2	3	1	19
9. Rectangular field	1	2	1	2	1	3	1	2	2	2	2	19
10. Indoor Playground	3	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	19
11. Dog park	2	1	1	2	1	3	1	2	2	2	2	19
12. Multiplex	2	2	2	1	2	1	1	3	1	3	1	19
13. Wayfinding and Tourism Signage	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	2	3	2	17
14. Campground/RV park	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	2	16





A variety of evaluation indicators were used to develop a total score for each recommendation. Descriptions of the indicators are shown below.

Indicators	Description
Public Engagement	Public support for the recommendation based on the resident survey and engagement sessions/stations.
Stakeholder Engagement	Stakeholder support for the recommendation based on the stakeholder survey, interviews, and engagement sessions/stations.
Council Engagement	Town Council support based on the Council Input Workshop.
Comparator Benchmarks	The degree to which the recommendation aligns with needs identified by comparator benchmarks.
Facility Utilization	The degree to which the facility is utilized by the community. Facility utilization was estimated from the engagement process and stakeholder group projections as adequate user statistics were unavailable.
Supply/Existing Condition	The degree to which the recommendation addresses gaps in regional facility supply and current facility condition.
Future Growth Projections	The degree to which the recommendation is supported by activity participation, general population, and demographic growth.
Trends	The degree to which the recommendation is supported by trends in recreation, parks, culture, facility development, and tourism.
Strategic Alignment	The degree to which the recommendation aligns with the Master Plan and other community strategies and plans.
Public Access	The degree to which the facility is accessible to the public.
Cost	The estimated cost of the facility.



## Top 5 Operational Priorities

### Priority Action Items



*1. Implement the capital project evaluation process*



*2. Enhance indoor and outdoor programming*



*3. Improve communication*



*4. Develop a tourism strategy*



*5. Evaluate services by regularly collecting feedback from the public, tracking amenity use, and adopting performance measures.*



## Master Plan Scorecard - Measuring Success

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

Goal	Performance Measures	Measurement Tools	Measurement Value
<b>Social Measures</b>	1.1 Increased utilization of facility amenities (e.g. ice sheets, pool, ball diamond, etc.).	User Statistics	% Growth % Utilization
	1.2 Strong public support for recreation, parks, and culture offerings.	Resident and user surveys	% Support
	1.3 Facilities and programs positively impact individual and community wellness.	Resident and user surveys	% Satisfaction
	1.4 Facilities and programs demonstrate a high level of accessibility.	Accessibility audits, user survey	% Satisfaction
	1.5 Increased user satisfaction.	User survey	% Satisfaction
<b>Economic Measures</b>	2.1 Increased revenue from programs/events.	Revenue tracking	% Growth
	2.2 Cost control measures in place.	Expense tracking	% Target Realization
	2.3 The department achieves budget targets.	Dept. budget	% Target Realization
<b>Organizational Measures</b>	3.1 Facilities are appropriately staffed to successfully deliver programs and run operations.	Staffing complement, staff survey	% Satisfaction
	3.2 Facility and program performance are reviewed annually.	Annual report	% Target Realization % Growth
	3.3 Improved support is offered to community organizations.	User group survey	% Satisfaction
	3.4 Increased market reach and awareness.	Resident and user surveys	% Market Growth % Awareness
<b>Environmental Measures</b>	4.1 Facility use and development minimizes negative impact to the environment.	Environmental impact assessments, energy audits	Impacts Identified % Energy Savings
	4.2 Increased awareness of environmental issues, conservation efforts, and impactful behaviours.	Resident and user surveys	% Aware
	4.3 Increased number of program initiatives that reduce environmental footprint.	Annual report	% Growth in Initiatives





## Funding Opportunities

Successful implementation of the master plan will require time, energy, and resources. Potential funding opportunities to support this master plan include the following. Each of these opportunities are described in greater detail in Appendix I.

- Review existing municipal budget
- Enhanced corporate sponsorships
- Grant funding
- Involvement of the non-profit sector
- Alternative operating models for facilities and programs



*Photography Contest  
Photo Credit: Town of Norman Wells*



# 9

## Conclusion





## Conclusion

The Master Plan puts forward a strategic direction that will guide the community toward its vision to deliver high quality recreation, parks, and culture services and facilities, enhance community development opportunities, and support local sustainability.

Implementation of the Master Plan will require investment and concerted effort on the part of the Town, funding partners and the community. This investment will ensure that the enhanced recreation, parks, and culture system is recognized as a core strength of the community, contributing to the sustainability of the community and encourage vitality, energy, and future growth.



# Appendices





## APPENDIX A: Recreation, Parks, and Culture Inventory

The following is a summary of the indoor and outdoor facilities available in the Town of Norman Wells (see Map 1).

### Town of Norman Wells

#### Penguin Palace (Pool)

The community pool is open during the summer months, offering open swimming and aquatics programs such as youth swimming lessons, lane swimming, Aquafit, and parent and tot swims. The pool also host swim meets at select times.

#### Ray Persson Memorial Arena

The Town has one indoor ice sheet located at the Ray Persson Memorial Arena. The arena is used for public skating, figure skating, minor hockey, adult recreational hockey, facility rentals, and special events. The ice sheet has a dirt floor instead of a concrete slab.

#### Norman Wells Curling Club

The local curling club offers curling, league play, bonspiels, and school programs on two ice sheets (dirt floor) along with facility rentals.

#### Mackenzie Mountain School Gymnasium

The Mackenzie Mountain School gymnasium provides community groups and organizations opportunities for recreation, sport, and community events.

#### Dennis Drolet Memorial (Community) Hall

The Community Hall is equipped with partial kitchen facilities and is available for rentals and community events.

#### Norman Wells Library

The Norman Wells Library is located in Mackenzie Mountain School and hosts a variety of social and cultural programs.

#### Norman Wells Youth and Elder Centre

The Norman Wells Youth and Elder Centre is a welcoming drop-in center which provides programmed events for Youth and Elders in the community.

#### Fitness Centre

Located in the arena, the fitness centre provides access to fitness equipment such as treadmills, weight racks, and rowing machines.

#### Royal Canadian Legion

The local Royal Canadian Legion provides facility rentals to community groups including school graduates and the Cadet Corps.

#### Ptarmigan Field (Ball Diamond)

Ptarmigan Field is home to the Town's single ball diamond that plays host to the Norman Wells Softball Association.

#### Ptarmigan Ridge Golf Club

The Ptarmigan Ridge Golf Club is a four-hole public course that offers league play, tournaments, public play, and spectacular views. The clubhouse is open year-round and available for rentals and special events.

#### Norman Wells Historical Centre

The Norman Wells Historical Centre is open year-round and plays home to the Museum and Visitor Information Centre for Norman Wells and the Canol Trail. The Centre's store carries gifts, clothing, unique fossils, and Dene crafts from the Sahtu area.

#### Tennis/Basketball Court

A joint tennis/basketball court offers residents the opportunity to play drop-in basketball or participate in local tennis programs.

#### Parks and Playgrounds

Playgrounds are located at five local parks throughout Town, including Mackenzie Mountain School, the RCMP detachment, Tulita Street, Jackfish Lake Park, and Mountain Avens Court.

#### Trails

A small number of trails are located throughout Town while longer, more expansive trail networks are found in the surrounding area near Jackfish Lake and the Mackenzie Mountains. There are also several kilometers of groomed cross-country trails in the Norman Wells area.

#### Canol Trail

Cutting through Norman Wells, this 355-kilometre trek follows the route of a defunct military road that once transected the Mackenzie Mountains is one of North America's most rigorous backpacking trails.

#### Mackinnon Territorial Park

Located southeast of the Town, the Territorial park features 8 non-powered campsites and offers a great view across the Mackenzie River to the Mackenzie Mountains.

## APPENDIX B: Facility Utilization and Community Programming

### Facility Utilization

Town facilities are utilized by a variety of people and organizations throughout the year. A breakdown of the hours of operation and peak hours for the pool, arena, curling club, community hall, Youth & Elder Centre, and fitness centre is shown in this section. Figure 9 outlines the utilization of these key community facilities.

Figure 9. Facility Hours of Operation in Norman Wells

Facility	Months	Days	Hours of Operation	Peak Hours
Ray Persson Memorial Arena	Jan. - Apr.	Tues - Sun	1:00 - 10:00 PM	6:00 - 9:00 PM
Penguin Palace (Pool)*	June - Sept.	Mon - Fri	12:00 - 7:30 PM	6:00 - 7:30 PM
Curling Club	Jan. - Apr.	Thur - Sat	6:00 - 10:00 PM	6:00 - 10:00 PM
Community Hall	All	All	Available for rental	
Youth & Elder Centre	All	Mon - Fri	3:00 - 8:00 PM	3:00 - 5:00 PM
Fitness Centre	All	All	24 hours	6:00 - 8:00 AM 5:00 - 8:00 PM

\*Penguin Palace operating hours and peak times estimated from July 2018 schedule.

### Community and Partner Programs

Norman Wells residents participate in a number of recreation, parks, and culture programs, including:

- Hockey Development Programs
- Open Hockey
- Figure Skating
- Speed Skating
- Public Skate
- Family Skate
- Disco Skates
- Cross Country
- Skiing
- Softball
- Public Swims
- Swimming Lessons
- Day Camps
- Flex Start Program
- Friday Night Sports
- Music Lessons
- Cooking Lessons
- Karaoke
- Homework Club
- Arts and Crafts
- Zumba
- Yoga
- After School Fitness
- After School programs
- Soccer
- Tennis

The Town works in partnership with the following local organizations to offer programs:

- Health and Social Services
- The Royal Canadian Legion
- Norman Wells Land Corporation
- Sahtu Business Development
- Mackenzie Mountain School
- Imperial Oil

### Community Events

The Town plays host to a series of annual and one-time events that welcome residents and visitors from the Town and many nearby communities. These events take place throughout the year and include:

- Canada Day (in partnership with the Yamouri Inn)
- Spring Fling (in partnership with Sahtu Business Development, Royal Canadian Legion, Mackenzie Mountain School, and the Norman Wells Curling Club)
- Winterfest
- Black Bear Jamboree (in partnership with Sahtu Business Development, Royal Canadian Legion, Yamouri Inn, and Imperial Oil)
- Swim Meet
- Holiday Events
- Halloween
- Valentine's Day
- Christmas Events
- Suicide Prevention Day
- Family Violence Awareness Week
- Movember
- Sahtu Cup
- Family Fun Day





## APPENDIX C: Comparative Service Level Analysis

Figures 11 and 12 identify relative service level provisions among comparator municipalities. Inventories were developed for each comparator’s indoor and outdoor recreation, parks, and culture facilities through an online review and interviews with municipal staff. Ratios were then calculated to demonstrate facility-to-population service levels. It should also be noted that only municipally owned and/or operated facilities were included in the comparative analysis (except arts/culture facilities, campgrounds, and golf courses). Therefore, communities may have additional facilities run by the private or not-for-profit sector that contribute to their service level provision. Currently, the Town offers 1 indoor natural ice surface while most comparator communities offer an artificial ice surface. In order to meet benchmark standards, the Town of Norman Wells would need to add an indoor artificial ice surface (shown in red in Figure 11). Figures shown in black indicate the Town is within an acceptable service level.

Figure 10. Comparator Service Populations

Community	Province/Territory	2016 Population
Fort Chipewyan	Alberta	852
Dawson City	Yukon	1,375
Fort Simpson	NWT	1,202
Watson Lake	Yukon	790

### Comparative Service Level Analysis Key Findings

The following key findings were derived from the comparative analysis:

- Norman Wells meets comparative service levels for indoor natural ice surfaces, curling sheets, small indoor pools (seasonal), fitness centres, arts/culture facilities, programmable centres/halls, gymnasiums, libraries, outdoor paved courts, ball diamonds, golf courses, and parks/playgrounds.
- To meet current benchmark standards, Norman Wells would need to add an indoor artificial ice sheet, skatepark, rectangular field, dog park, and campground.
- It is important to note the condition of facilities when comparing to benchmarks. For example, although Norman Wells may meet benchmark standards for a pool, we know that some pools in comparator communities have enhanced buildings (i.e. size and operating season).

Figure 11. Indoor Recreation, Parks, and Culture Facility Service Level Provision Comparison

Indoor Recreation Facilities	Service Levels by Population (Count)					
	Norman Wells	Average Across Comparators*	Fort Chipewyan	Dawson City	Fort Simpson	Watson Lake
Ice Surfaces (natural)	778 (1)				1202 (1)	
Ice Surfaces (artificial)	0	1006	852 (1)	1375 (1)		790 (1)
Curling Sheets	389 (2)	691		688 (2)	601 (2)	790 (1)
Pools (year-round)	0		852 (1)			
Pools (seasonal) – 4x25m	0			1375 (1)		790 (1)
Pools (seasonal) - small	778 (1)				1202 (1)	
Fitness Centres	778 (1)	1055	852 (1)	1375 (1)	1202 (1)	790 (1)
Centre/Hall	778 (1)	883	852 (1)	688 (2)	1202 (1)	790 (1)
Gymnasiums	778 (1)	956	852 (1)	1375 (1)	1202 (1)	395 (2)
Libraries	778 (1)	883	852 (1)	688 (2)	1202 (1)	790 (1)
Art/Culture Facilities	389 (2)	675	852 (1)	458 (3)	601 (2)	790 (1)
Indoor Playgrounds						

\*Averages exclude comparator communities that do not provide the services. Certain averages were calculated using data from two or less comparators. These results should be interpreted with caution.

Figure 12. Outdoor Recreation, Parks, and Culture Facility Service Level Provision Comparison

Outdoor Recreation Facilities	Service Levels by Population (Count)					
	Norman Wells	Average Across Comparators	Fort Chipewyan	Dawson City	Fort Simpson	Watson Lake
Spray Parks						
Skateparks	0	1122		1375 (1)	1202 (1)	790 (1)
Bike Parks						
Rectangular Fields	0	1006	852 (1)	1375 (1)		790 (1)
Ball Diamonds	778 (1)	601	852 (1)	688 (2)	601 (2)	263 (3)
Tennis/Basketball Courts	778 (1)	1006	852 (1)	1375 (1)		790 (1)
Parks/Playgrounds	156 (5)	205	170 (5)	138 (10)	401 (3)	113 (7)
Dog Parks	0	1289		1375 (1)	1202 (1)	
Golf Courses	778 (1)	1122		1375 (1)	1202 (1)	790 (1)
Pools						
Campgrounds	778 (1)	575	426 (2)	275 (5)	1202 (1)	395 (2)
Running Tracks						790 (1)

\*Averages exclude comparator communities that do not provide the services. Certain averages were calculated using data from two or less comparators. These results should be interpreted with caution.

\*\*Watson Lake also has an outdoor water slide at Lucky Lake.



## APPENDIX D: Expanded Strategic Alignment Analysis

The following figure outlines the strategic alignment of the Master Plan with municipal, regional, territorial, and national plans.

Figure 13. Strategic Alignment Summary

<p><b>Town of Norman Wells Strategic Plan (2019)<sup>17</sup></b></p> <p>Outlines the direction Town Council will pursue over the coming years including the following key goals and objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and lead capital infrastructure initiatives that address community needs, reflect sustainable planning practices and future demand considerations, with a commitment to fiscal responsibility.</li> <li>• Deliver accessible, inclusive, and age-friendly services, programs, and facilities.</li> <li>• Support and facilitate community access to services related to health, wellness, personal development, and education.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Town of Norman Wells Community Plan (2021)<sup>18</sup></b></p> <p>Represents a collective community vision for the future of the Town of Norman Wells including the following objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide recreational opportunities and services that promote an active lifestyle for a wide variety of users within the Town.</li> <li>• To support the local community by providing a range of services and programs that allow all residents to fulfill their needs within the local community, rather than accessing these services external to the Town.</li> <li>• To prioritize and plan infrastructure upgrades.</li> <li>• To enhance and expand public institutional facilities where practical.</li> <li>• To honour the local culture and heritage by including cultural/historical elements to programming and developments in Town.</li> </ul>
<p><b>NWT Recreation and Parks Association Strategic Plan (2018-2021)<sup>19</sup></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognizes that recreation is essential to healthy minds, bodies, families, and communities.</li> <li>• Champions community-directed on the land programs.</li> <li>• Supports NWT residents of all ages being able to choose active ways of living because of improvements in the accessibility, diversity, and quality of community-based recreation programs.</li> <li>• Leads recreation training organization in the NWT.</li> </ul>	<p><b>GNWT Sport, Recreation, and Physical Activity Review (2016)<sup>20</sup></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports recreation development through fostering active living, inclusion and access, and connecting people to their environments and culture. Also supports long-term sustainability through recreation leadership and capacity building.</li> <li>• Supports sport development by advancing the Canadian Sport Policy in the five contexts of sport. The strategic direction also supports developing sport leadership and the sector's capacity to plan, develop and implement sport programs and initiatives.</li> </ul>
<p><b>GNWT Culture and Heritage Strategic Framework (2015-2025)<sup>21</sup></b></p> <p>Identifies the GNWT's culture and heritage vision, goals and priorities, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support participation in recreation as a cultural activity.</li> <li>• Support cultural programs for youth.</li> <li>• Make cultural programs hands-on, immersive and on location.</li> <li>• Invest in culture and heritage for a strong economy and sustainable development.</li> <li>• Acknowledge the role of culture and heritage in personal well-being.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Aboriginal Sport Circle NWT Strategic Plan (2020-2025)<sup>22</sup></b></p> <p>Outlines the following goals and objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support youth participation at all levels (community, territorially and nationally).</li> <li>• Build a culture of volunteer and leadership development.</li> <li>• Meet community needs through ongoing collaboration, meaningful programming and capacity building that reflects community interests.</li> <li>• Strive to have a strategic network of partnerships that help the organization fulfill its mission and vision.</li> </ul>

**GNWT Recreational Leasing Management Framework (2017)<sup>23</sup>**

Articulates the GNWT’s goals and priorities with respect to the planning, management, administration, and issuance of leases for recreational uses, including the following goals:

- Support recreation management planning in priority areas.
- Enhance public awareness and understanding of existing land management issues, the GNWT’s approach to addressing them, and the roles and responsibilities of NWT residents as stewards of the land.

**Territorial Regulations**

The Master Plan complies with all relevant Territorial Acts, regulations, plans and policies.

**Canadian Sport for Life: Long-Term Athlete Development (2016)<sup>24</sup>**

- Aims to build quality sport and physical literacy in Canada by addressing overall sport and physical activity from policy to program delivery.

**National Framework for Recreation: Pathways to Wellbeing (2015)<sup>25</sup>**

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



## APPENDIX E: Trends in Recreation, Parks, and Culture

In order to inform the planning process, it is important to review pertinent trends that affect the delivery of recreation, parks, and culture services.

### Recreation, Park, and Culture Trends

#### Increase in Flexible, Unstructured Activities

Two main factors are driving the trend towards more informal activities. First, there are growing pressures for individuals to fit recreation activities into convenient time slots, in the context of a busy schedule. Increased commuting, a move to “two career families,” growing pressures to perform in the workplace and children having multiple extracurricular commitments are some of the contributing factors. Second is the aging population who are gravitating towards flexible, low-intensity activities such as walking and wildlife viewing and away from organized sports. As individuals age and move into retirement, they have more time available for participating in recreation and leisure activities. In order to accommodate this trend, recreation providers are developing more flexible opportunities for participation by providing drop-in activities and flexible day-use areas, building fitness centres and developing trails for biking, cycling, walking and jogging.

#### Rise in Outdoor-Based Activities

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced municipalities to reconsider how they offer recreation and culture services due to limitations around indoor gatherings. Municipalities have responded by offering increased outdoor fitness, health, wellness, and culture opportunities. These opportunities are likely to remain or experience growth in the years following pandemic recovery.

#### Increased Emphasis on Parks for All Seasons

NWT communities experience cold weather conditions as well as long summer days and short winter days. To ensure park systems support outdoor recreation in all seasons, municipalities are developing their parks to offer appropriate climate responses, including rest points, night lighting, warming huts, path clearing, and amenities to support winter recreation and comfortable protection from wind and cold winter weather. Amenities to support activities such as ice skating, hockey and cross-country skiing should be a key component to recreation planning by the Town.

### Importance of Culture

The creation of and participation in culture is important to Canadians:

- The average cultural participation rate of Canadians in small towns is 2.4 times per month.<sup>26</sup>
- A strong connection to one’s culture has been shown to reduce crime, increase well-being, and help to address complex social problems.<sup>27</sup>
- Culture and heritage activities contributed \$53.1 billion to Canada’s gross domestic product in 2017 and created 666,500 Canadian jobs.<sup>28</sup>
- Closer to home, cultural industries in the NWT contributed \$85 million to the NWT gross domestic product in the same time period.<sup>29</sup>

The most popular activities that Canadians participate in share five core principles: purpose, relevance, connection, relationships, and impact. These types of activities bring together audiences with shared interests, provide opportunity for sociability, and often expose participants to new things.<sup>30</sup>

### Playgrounds and Youth Recreation

Current trends in playground design include a focus on increasing children’s connection with the natural environment. “Nature play” areas incorporate natural elements such as boulders, logs, stumps, sand pits, small water features and native plantings. These natural elements enhance the play environment and complement traditional play structures such as swings and slides (which will continue to attract kids). Other amenities like climbing boulders, bicycle/tricycle circuits, seating areas for reading or socializing, skateparks, mountain biking parks, outdoor classrooms, musical elements, mural/art walls, multi-sport courts, and food/flower gardens are gaining popularity across Canada and North America.

There is a growing recognition that providing recreational opportunities and community spaces specifically for youth are critical to positive youth development and engagement in the community. Youth leadership programs and youth-led projects can be especially effective at building confidence and skills that will help them be successful throughout their lives. Recently, some communities have developed “Youth-Friendly Community Plans” to drive a shift in the approach to youth services.

### Increased Focus on Inclusion and Access

In recent years there has been an increasing focus on improving the inclusiveness of recreation activities to reach all citizens and bring people together. In order to accomplish this task, municipalities must strategically address any barriers and constraints that specific populations may face. Affected individuals include the elderly, visible minorities, individuals with lower socioeconomic status, LGBTQ people, people living with disabilities, and many others. These individual factors must be taken into consideration in the planning of facilities, open spaces and recreation programming, to ensure that all citizens can participate.

### Focus on Sustainability and Capacity of Recreation

An appropriate mix of individuals including professional staff and volunteers is needed for delivering high-quality recreation programs and services. In many communities, there is a significant workload placed on volunteers specifically, which can lead to burnout of the volunteer pool. Nationally in 2010, volunteers in recreation and sport accounted for 208,000 full time equivalent jobs, which further exemplifies the importance of this resource.<sup>31</sup> Volunteers must be provided with training and other forms of support to ensure that they feel valued and that they have a reason to continue donating their time and effort to the community.

### Naming Policies and the Growing Cultural Shift

Recently, a growing cultural movement has focused on reconsidering how communities use historical iconography such as statues, memorials, and prominent names. A push has been made to rename many existing facilities and infrastructure with ties to controversial historical figures. Municipalities must ensure that policies around the naming of public spaces and events are clearly outlined and strongly consider the contextual, cultural, and community significance of any current and proposed names.

### Pandemic Planning

The COVID-19 pandemic has had profound impacts on every community, with municipalities facing an unprecedented financial crisis that could last for years. As a result, many difficult decisions will need to be made about staffing, service levels, taxation, and future projects. The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has identified a number of factors that increase the risk that future outbreaks will occur more frequently and spread rapidly, including:<sup>32</sup>

- Increased risk of infectious pathogens “spilling over” from animals to humans.
- Development of antimicrobial resistance.
- Spread of infectious diseases through global travel and trade.
- Acts of bioterrorism.
- Weak public health infrastructures.

Municipalities must be aware of the impact of a pandemic on their own capacity to provide services. All services delivered by municipal governments are likely to be affected by supply chain disruptions, staff absenteeism due to their own illness, to care for ill family members, or to otherwise support family members and children at home, and recommendations or orders issued by the Chief Medical Officer of Health. It is critical in for municipalities to develop pandemic specific plans that support an approved municipal emergency plan and business continuity plans.<sup>33</sup>

### The Evolving Nature of Volunteerism

Volunteers continue to be vitally important to the planning and delivery of recreation, culture, events, and programs. The following are current trends in volunteerism as identified by Volunteer Canada that apply to Norman Wells.<sup>34</sup>

- **Much comes from the few.** While 47% of Canadians volunteer, over one-third (34%) of all volunteer hours were contributed by 5% of total volunteers.
- **Volunteer motivations.** Young people volunteer to gain work related skills (Canadians aged 15 – 24 volunteer more than any other age group). New Canadians also volunteer to develop work experience and to practice language skills. Persons with disabilities may volunteer as a way to more fully participate in community life.
- **Volunteer job design.** Volunteer job design can be the best defense for changing demographics and fluctuations in funding.
- **Volunteering by contract.** The changing volunteer environment is redefining volunteer commitment as a negotiated and mutually beneficial arrangement rather than a one-way sacrifice of time by the volunteer.



## Facility Planning and Development Trends

*A Framework for Recreation in Canada - 2015 - Pathways to Wellbeing*<sup>35</sup> describes current trends related to facility planning and development. Facility administrators should consider these key areas when planning for future development.

### Infrastructure Deficits

Planning for future facilities should balance fiscal and service priorities, with built-in cost efficiencies and as many revenue opportunities as possible. Many centres have faced significant costs associated with aging infrastructure, so capital reserve funds have become more commonplace to ensure that funding is set aside for regular capital maintenance. Securing dedicated funding and forming partnerships with private sector and not-for-profit organizations may be necessary to ensure ongoing renewal of facilities. Furthermore, municipalities must develop assessment tools and evidence-based guidelines to inform decisions to invest in new infrastructure or reinvest in aging infrastructure.

### Multi-purpose Facilities

The use of multipurpose facilities is on the rise. Consolidation of services leads to effective use of resources and increases efficiencies through economies of scale. Multi-purpose facilities become community hubs where a variety of activities including education and recreation can be accessed by families or groups of users. Other trends related to the shift towards multi-purpose facilities include:

- As multi-purpose facilities replace single use facilities, it is important to continue working with partners to utilize existing structures such as schools, churches and vacant land for recreation purposes in addition to their primary function.
- The focus of recreation facilities has shifted from male youth sports to become more inclusive of all ages, genders, interests and abilities.
- Facility designs are changing to facilitate the growing demand of individual activities.
- Fitness rooms are larger and indoor tracks are making use of circulation corridors and activity spaces; indoor synthetic surface running tracks remain popular.
- Aesthetically appealing and welcoming facilities are becoming more popular in an effort to meet the desire for quality experiences.

Many new multi-purpose facilities are built on the outskirts of municipalities where more land is available for purchase and construction. However, this movement away from the core of the community can have a detrimental effect on overall community vitality in some circumstances. Future planning should consider the cost/benefit of centrally locating facilities versus locating them in new development.

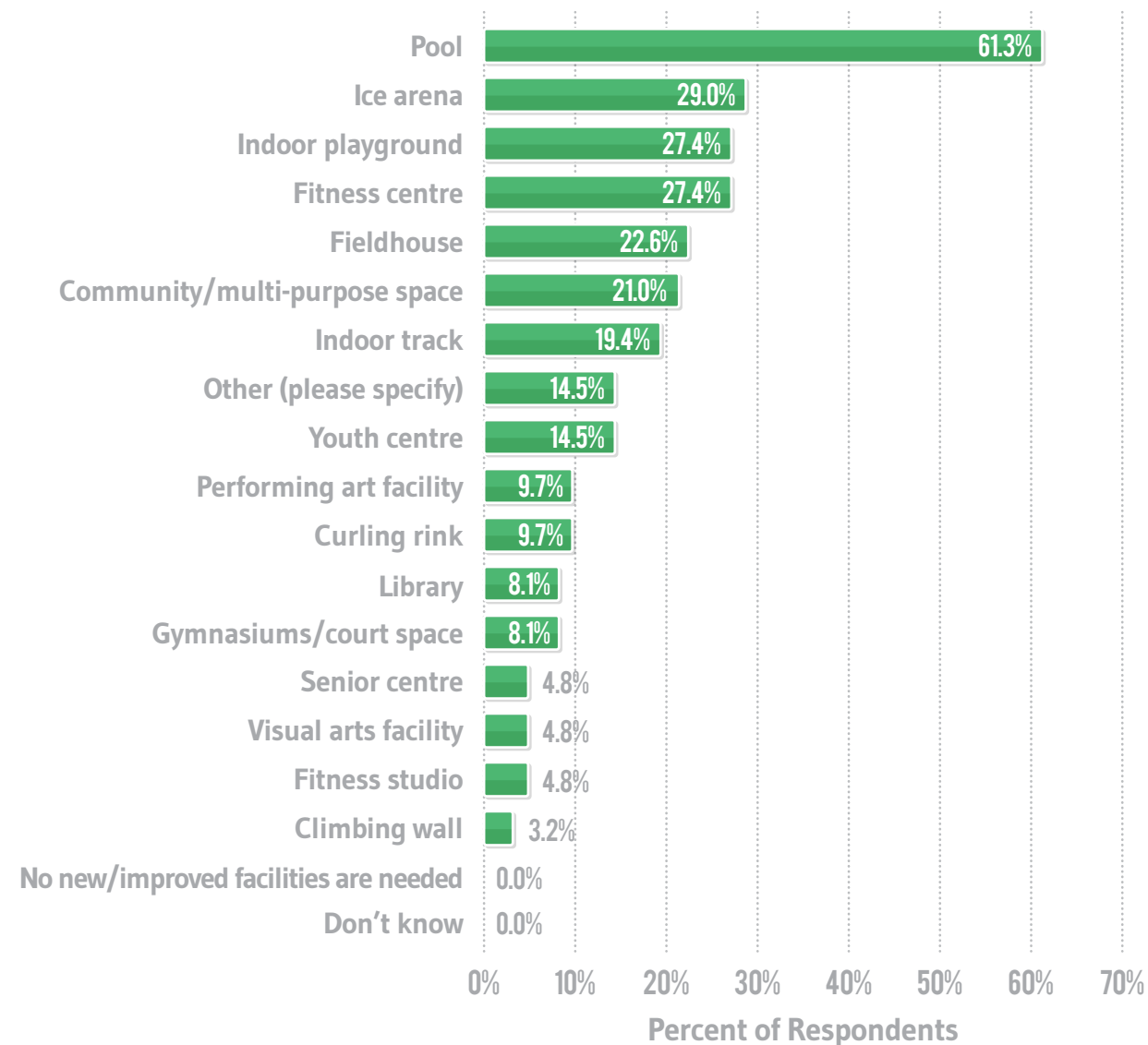
### Embracing New Technology

Recreation facilities benefit from numerous technologies, including bar-coded entry systems, computer and web-based program registration, user tracking systems, improved facility security and enhanced communication with both users and colleagues. Increasing technological complexity, coupled with increasing bandwidth and connectivity, improve facilities' ability to manage and track information, model alternative courses of action and provide customer service. Communities and recreation departments are finding it critical to embrace new technology to meet the changing demographics and needs of their citizens and users. However, these high-tech capacities can complement, but not replace, human contact and personal attention.<sup>36</sup>

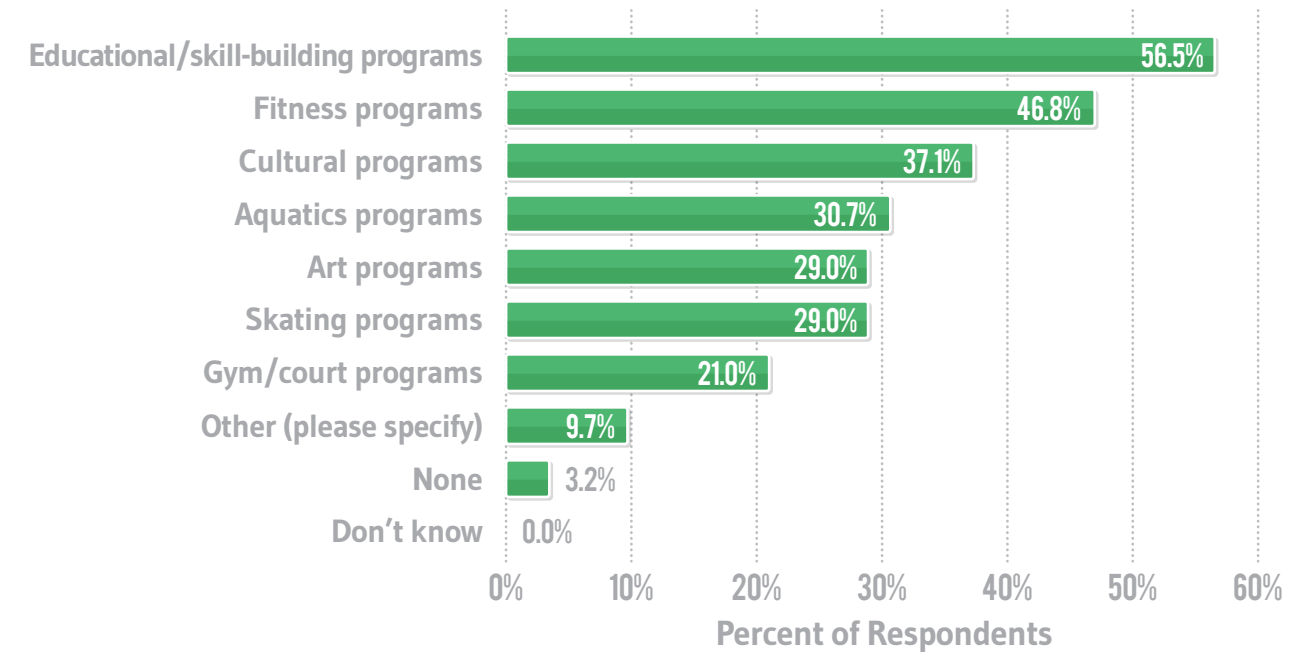
## APPENDIX F: Expanded Resident Survey Results

This section provides expanded visualizations of the resident survey responses.

### Indoor Recreation Facility Needs

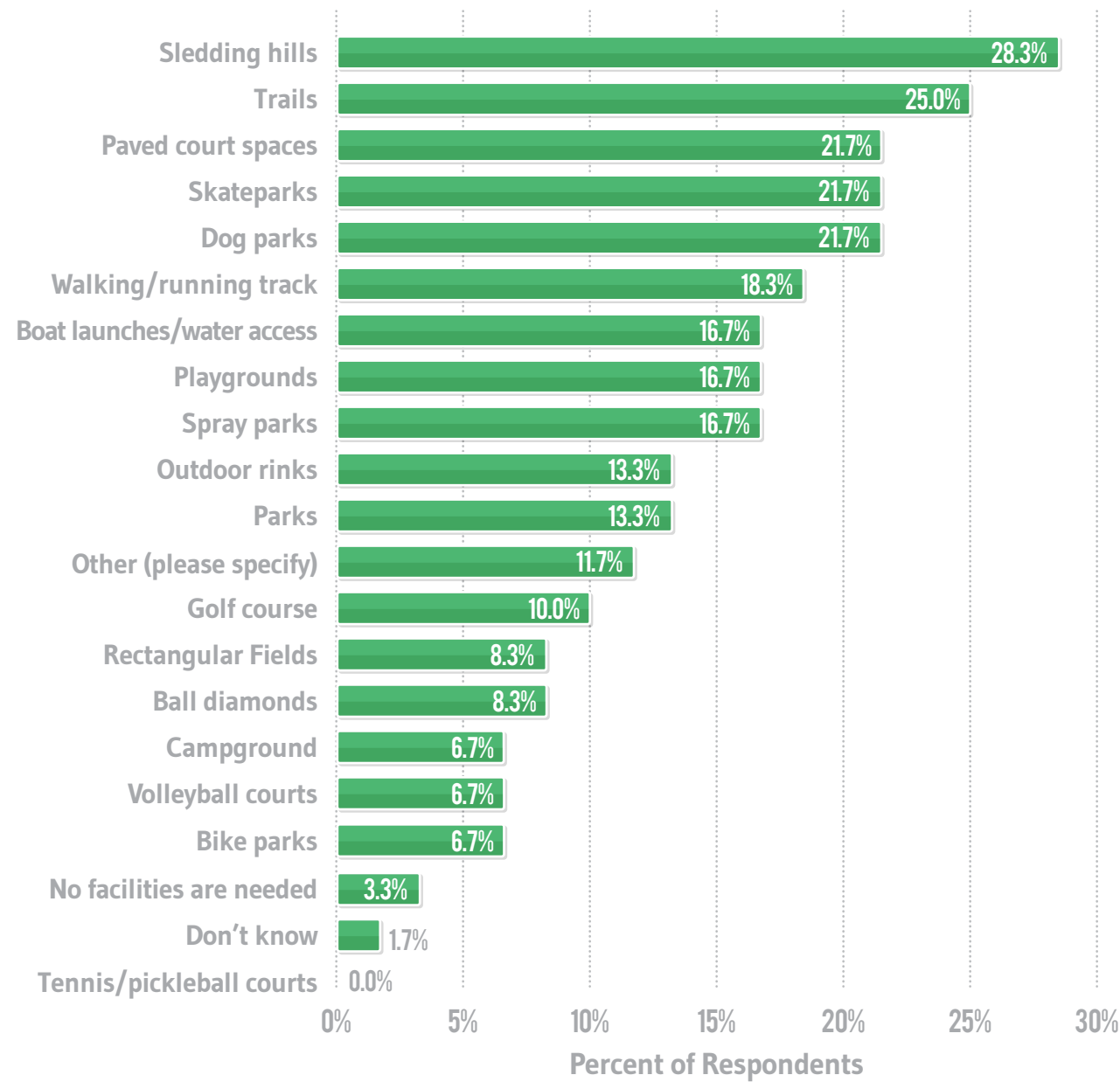


### Indoor Programming Needs

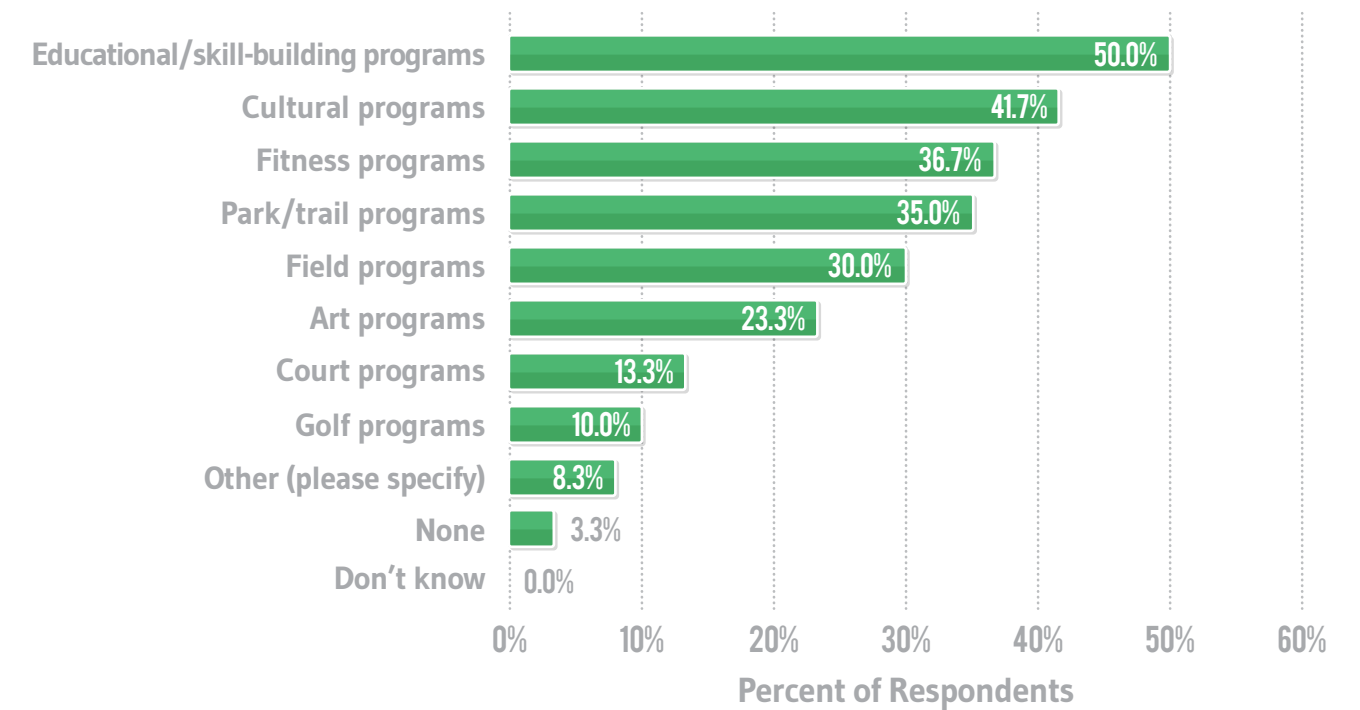




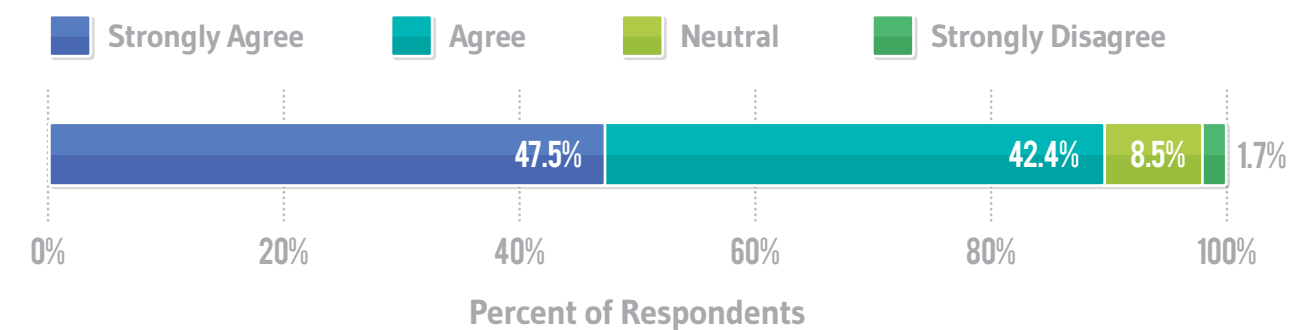
## Outdoor Facility Needs



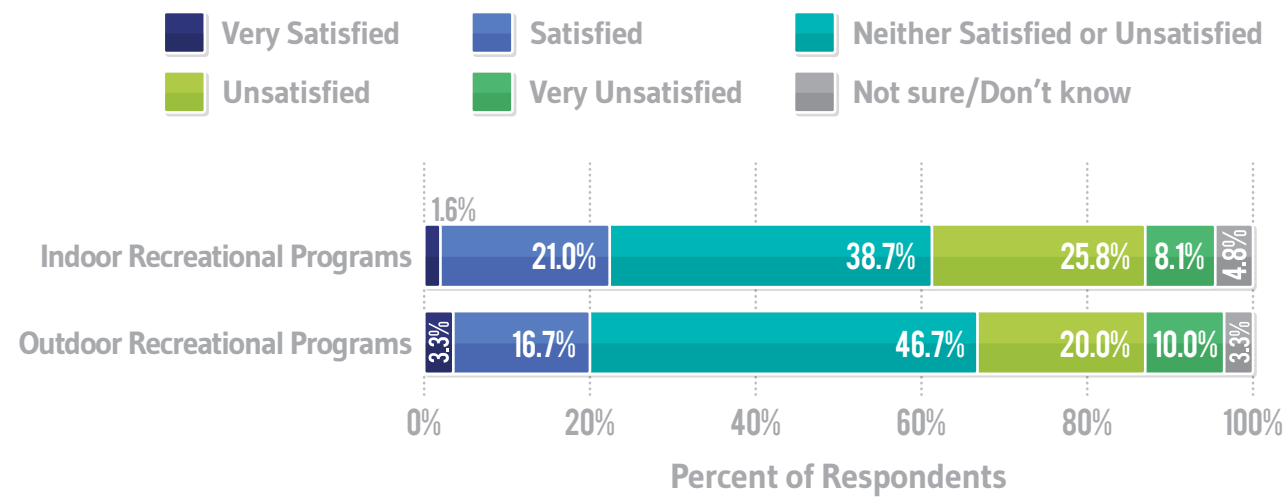
## Outdoor Program Needs



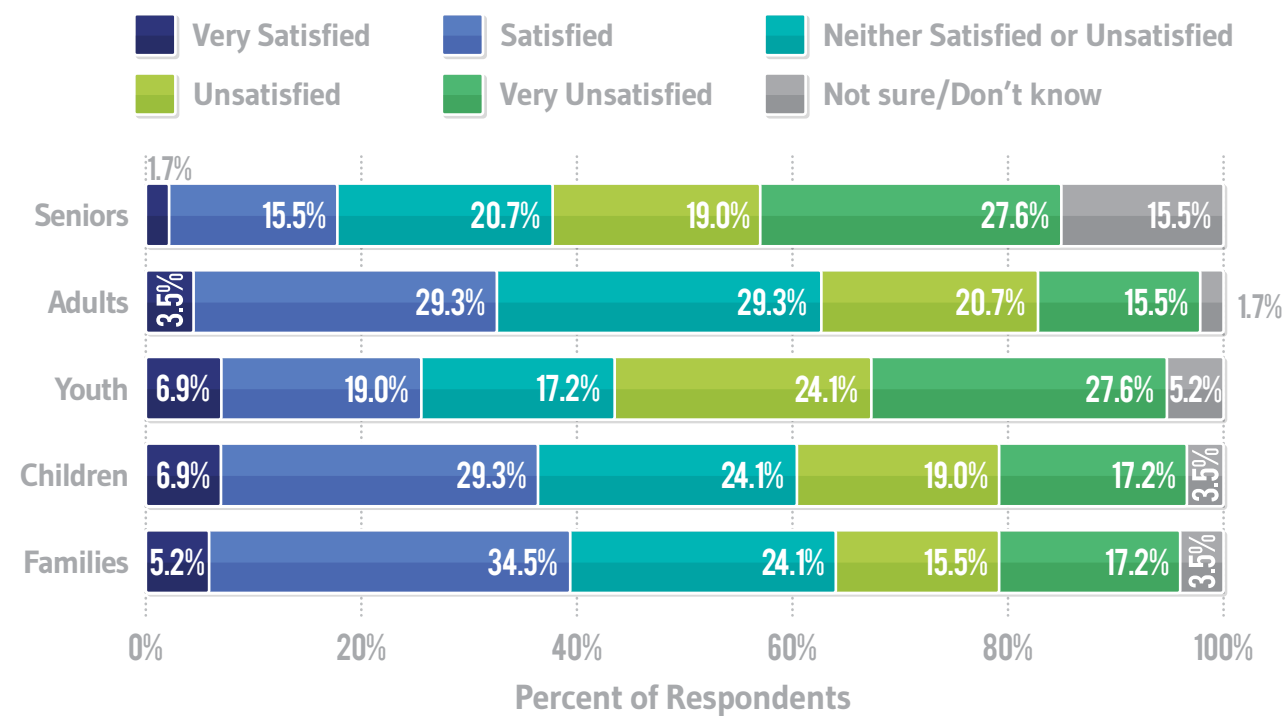
## Recreation, Parks, And Culture Opportunities Are Important to Quality Of Life



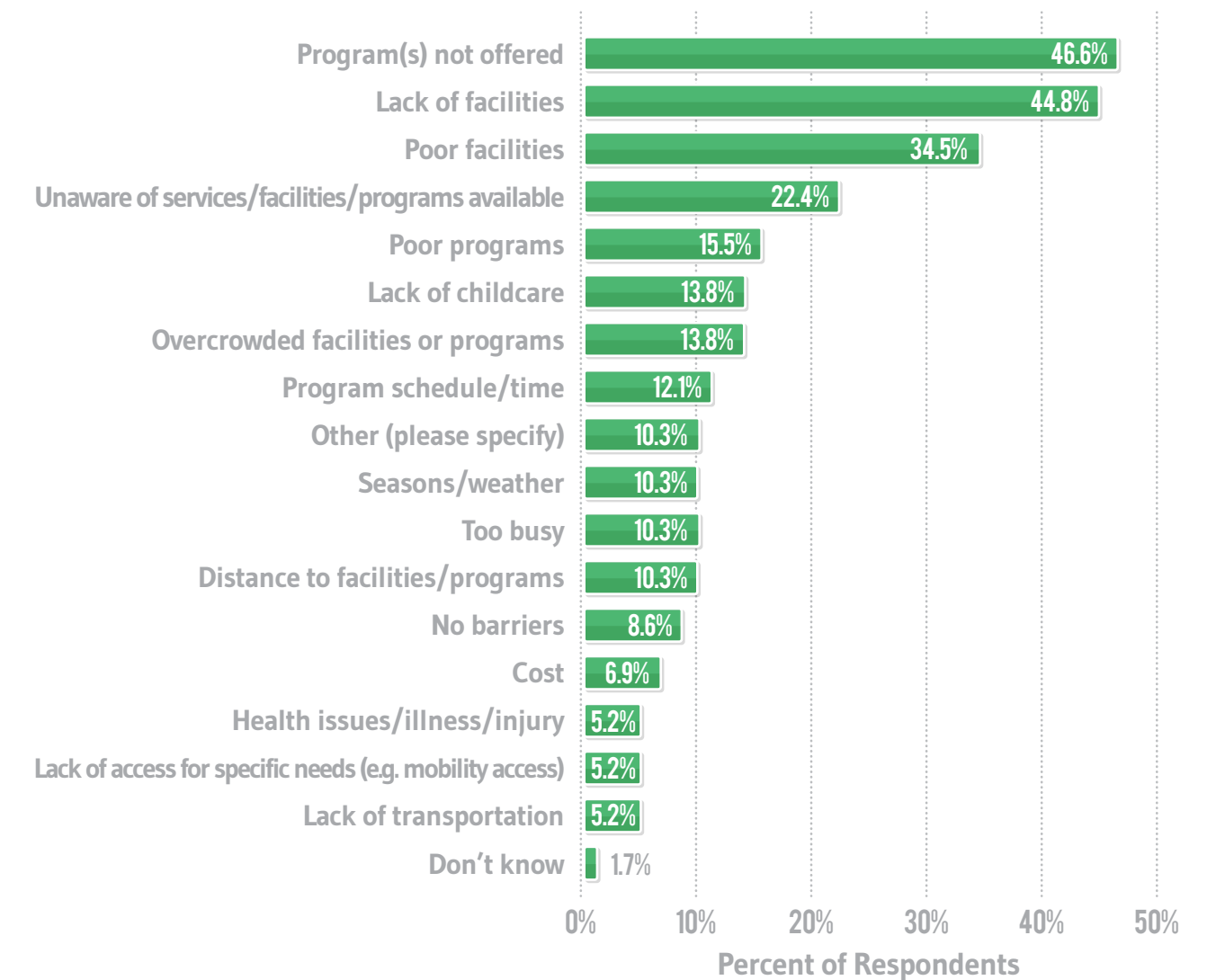
## Level of Satisfaction with Programs



## Level of Satisfaction with Opportunities

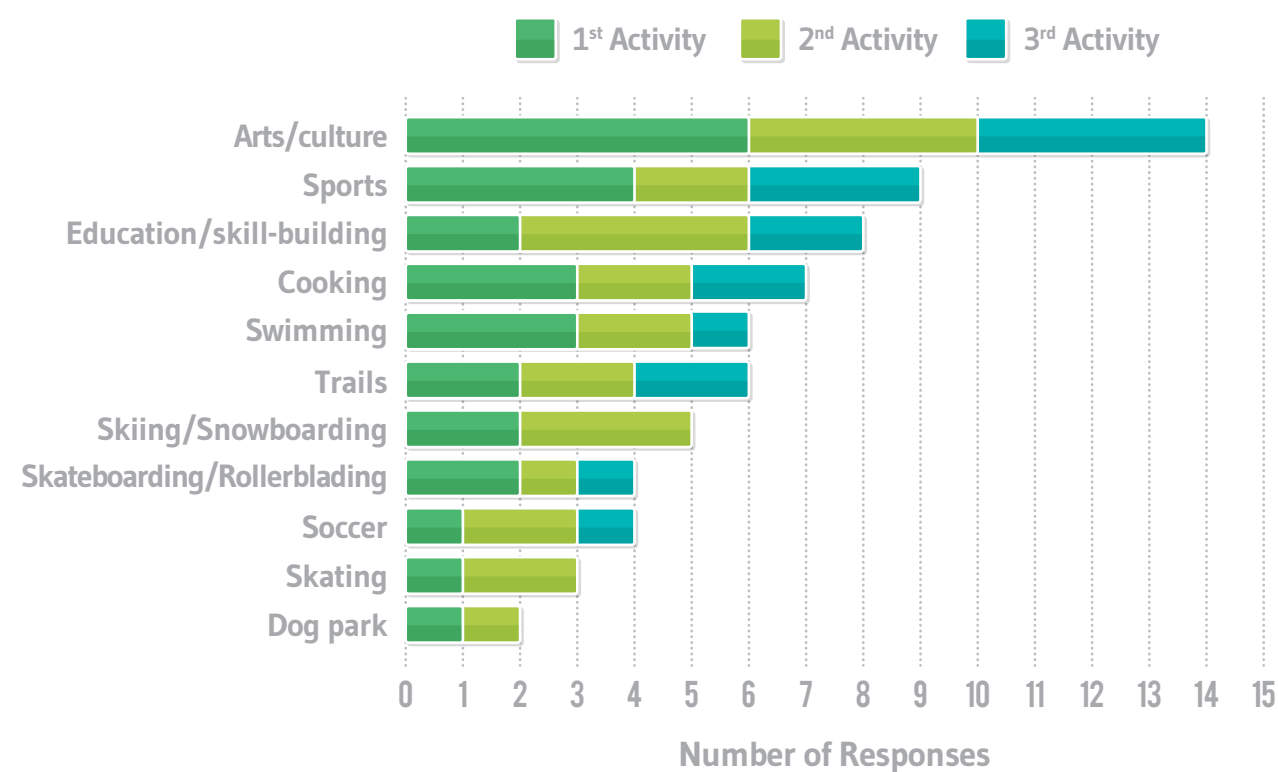


## Barriers to Participation

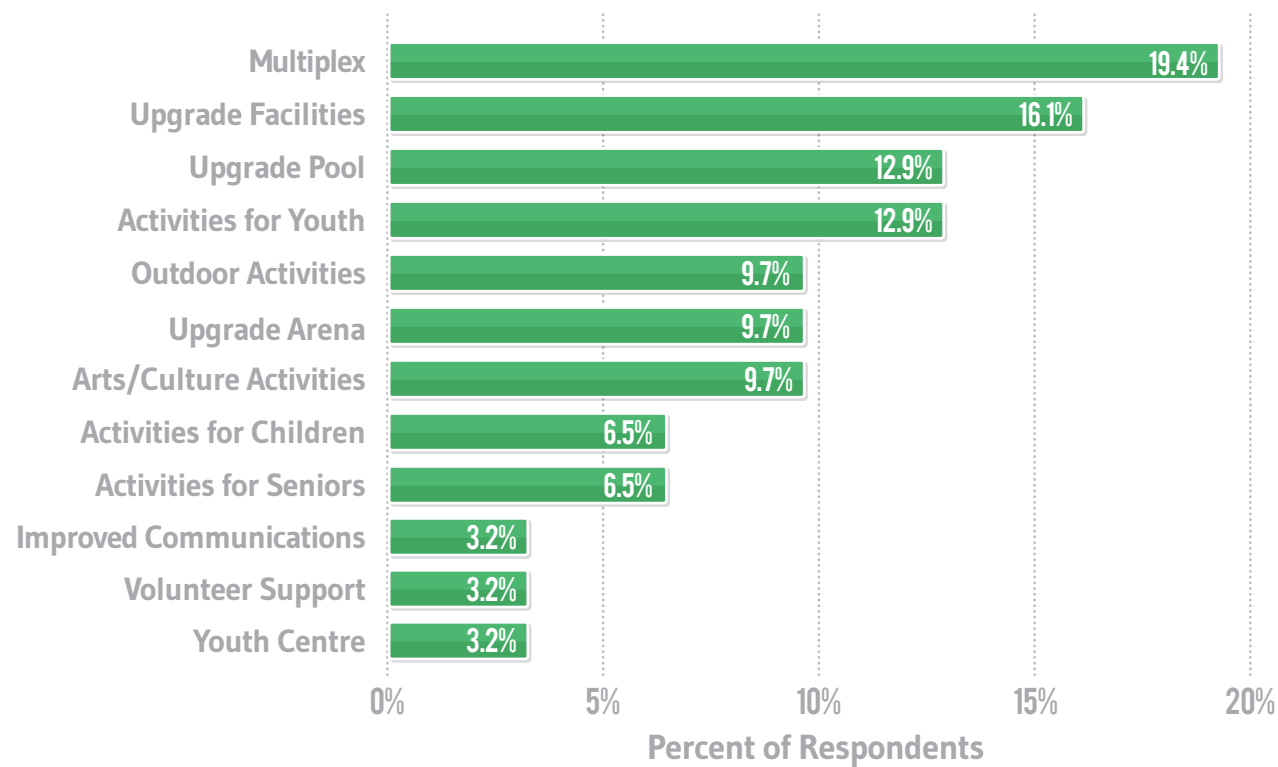




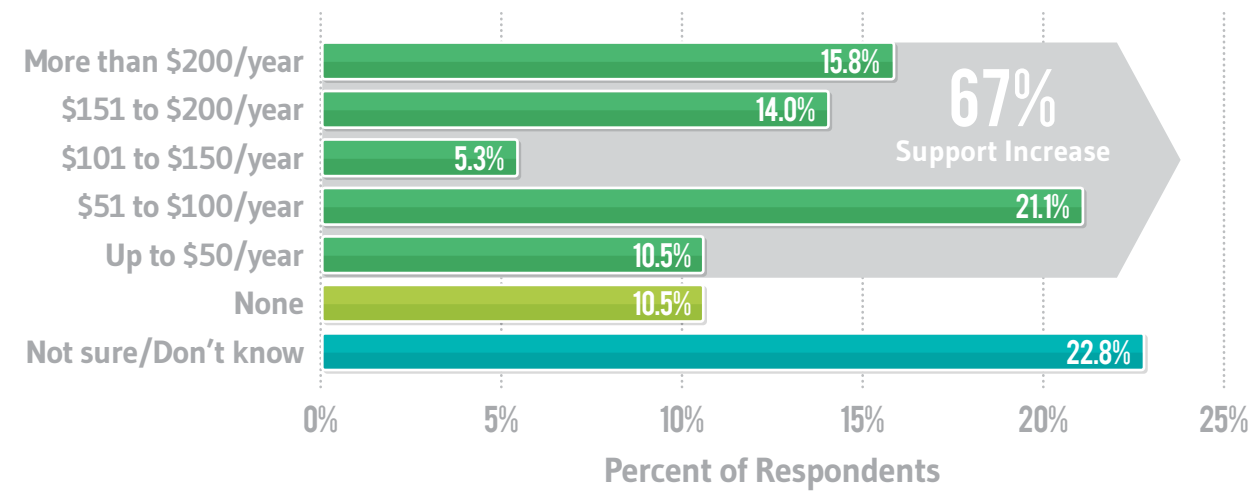
Activities Residents Would Like to Participate in But Are Not Available in the Community



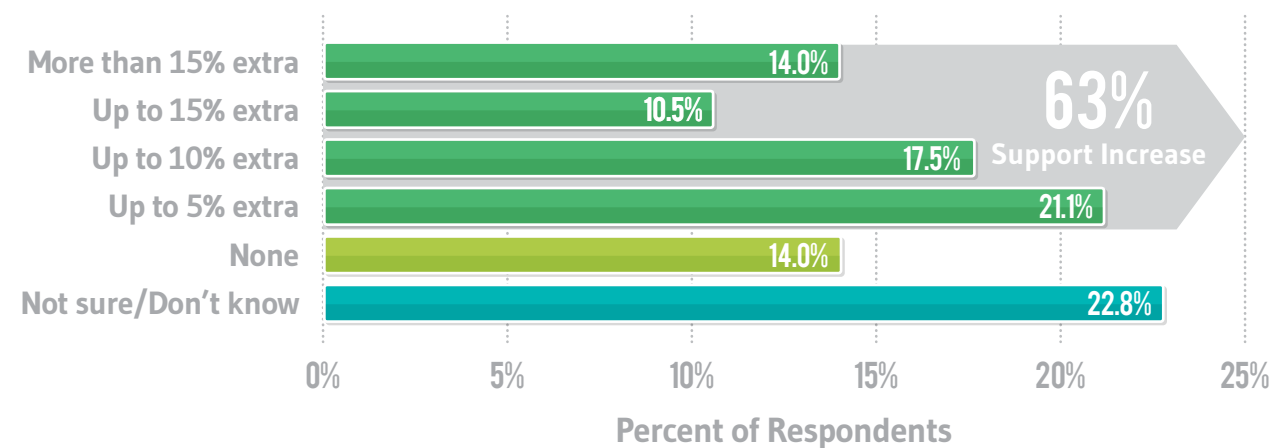
Top Priority for Improvement



## Support for Increased Taxation



## Support for Increased User Fees



## APPENDIX G: Capital Project Evaluation Criteria

### Evaluation Criteria

1. Condition Assessment (if the project is an expansion, renovation or replacement of an existing facility)
  - The project mitigates safety risk to staff and public.
  - The project ensures compliance with all laws and regulation.
  - The project mitigates risk to infrastructure and the environment.
  - The project will enable operational cost savings and efficiencies.
2. Strategic Alignment
  - Demonstrates strategic alignment/compliance with key planning documents, including the Strategic Plan, Recreation Master Plan and other documents produced by the Town.
3. Consultation with Town Council
  - Demonstrates early involvement and consultation with Town Council.
4. Consultation with Town Residents
  - Demonstrates meaningful consultation with residents.
5. Demand
  - Demonstrates demand from residents in the catchment area (indicators may include public input surveys, stakeholder interviews, focus groups, activity trends, population projections, current and projected facility utilization, program statistics etc.);
  - Clearly identifies target markets and how the facility will meet the needs of those markets.
6. Comparative Research
  - Comparison of facility provision to benchmarks from other communities supports the project.



## 7. Supply

- Provides complementary (vs. competitive) services and facilities;
- Demonstrates facility supply does not meet demand in the catchment area;
- Demonstrates effective use of existing assets in the community and has completed a thorough review of all re-purposing options of existing assets.

## 8. Strategic Partners

- Demonstrates a collaborative approach and strong partnerships;
- Demonstrates a plan to work with other organizations to ensure resources are shared, support services are centralized and efficiencies are maximized.

## 9. Public Access and Facility Use

- Demonstrates high level of accessibility to the public and ensures the greatest access to the greatest number of citizens;
- Demonstrates inclusiveness and accommodates people of all ages, cultural backgrounds, income levels and abilities;
- Single use facilities or those facilities that cater mostly to one user group must specifically demonstrate the broad community benefit.

## 10. Capital Financing Plan

- Capital financing plan is realistic and is supported by sound data;
- Capital financing plan demonstrates a clear ability to fund the project;
- The sponsoring organization demonstrates provision of an agreed upon percentage of project costs (e.g. cash in hand, grants, donations, labour in kind, etc.).

## 11. Operational Costs

- Operational revenue/cost assessment is realistic and is supported by sound data;
- Business model demonstrates enhanced opportunities for citizens, while seeking to maximize revenue and minimize tax supported annual operating costs;
- Demonstrates sound lifecycle planning and allocates annual resources for lifecycle costs;
- Clear identification of annual taxpayer support required.

## 12. Operating Plan

- Demonstrates that the facility will operate efficiently and effectively;
- Proposed operating model demonstrates sound management capacity, financial resources, business infrastructure, support services, experience and management controls to support the on-going high quality operation of the facility;
- Implementation plan is clear, logical and realistic;
- Implementation plan identifies clear performance measures.

## 13. Facility Concept and Site

- Sound preliminary design and site assessment that provides maximum benefit for citizens;
- Location ensures the greatest access to the greatest number of citizens;
- Location links new facility with other high value recreation and/or tourism assets;
- Project is high quality and built to last;
- Design encourages multi-use spaces that promote a variety of uses for a variety of interests;
- Design allows for growth in the future as needs change and evolve;
- Design will limit negative impacts on the environment.

## 14. Risks

- Project risks and mitigation measures are adequately identified.

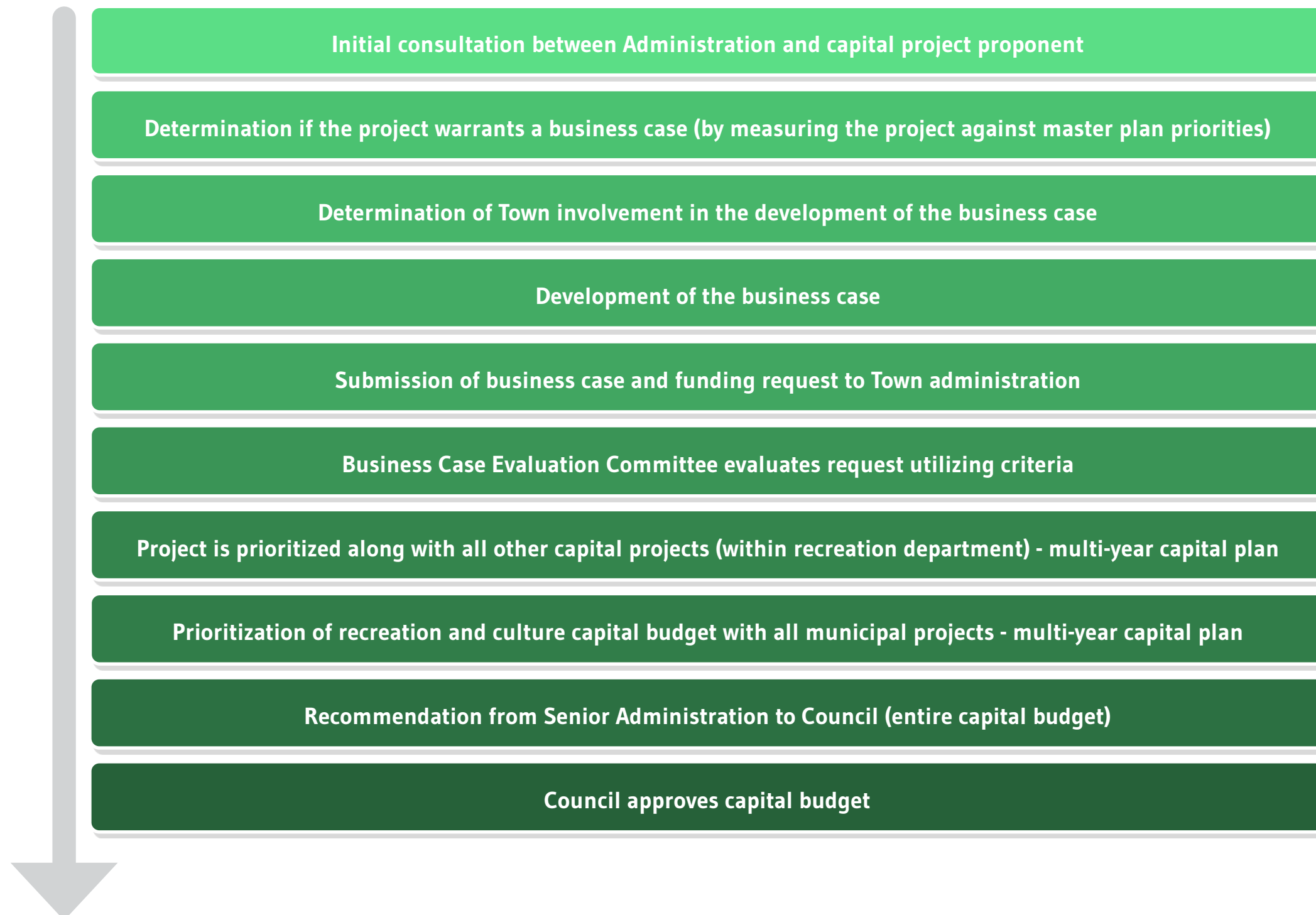
## 15. Relative Priority

- After evaluation of the above criteria, Town Council will measure the need for the project against other Town municipal projects (both recreation and non-recreation).

## Process for Evaluating Major Capital Development Projects

It is recommended that the Town incorporates the evaluation of business cases into its annual budget planning cycle. Figure 14 outlines a process for evaluating major capital projects.

Figure 14. Process for Evaluating Major Capital Development Projects





## APPENDIX H: Service Delivery Approaches

### Delivery Approach Options<sup>37</sup>

The following four service delivery options represent a continuum of service provision that municipalities offer. It is possible for a municipality to fall in between two of the options on the continuum, and this is used as a general guide to monitor and compare changes in service delivery approach.

#### Indirect Provider

Municipalities have limited or no involvement in the provision of recreation facilities and programs. These services are provided by the private sector and/or non-profit associations.

#### Facilitator

Municipalities primarily influence the development and delivery of recreation and culture opportunities through planning, counsel, support and promotion. Municipalities may provide some operational or capital funding to support services and may own some facilities. Facilities owned by the municipality are often leased out for delivery of services. Management of facilities and programs is primarily the responsibility of other sectors.

#### Partner

Municipalities primarily partner with organizations and share responsibility for the provision of recreation facilities and programs with other sectors. Municipalities provide considerable operational and capital funding to support services and may own many facilities. Management of facilities and programs is a shared responsibility.

#### Direct Provider

Municipalities primarily assume the lead responsibility for the direct provision of recreation facilities and programs. Municipalities own facilities and provide all operational and capital funding to support services. Management of facilities and programs is the responsibility of the municipality.



## APPENDIX I: Funding Opportunities

The Town should consider the following funding opportunities in order to achieve objectives identified in this master plan and to mitigate capital and operational budget impacts.

### Review Existing Municipal Budget

The Master Plan has the potential to alter the Town's municipal budgets. Therefore, it would be prudent to examine the budgets as a whole and determine if there are opportunities to reduce costs and increase revenues in order to support the capital and operational budget impacts.

### Enhanced Corporate Sponsorships

There may be opportunity to develop enhanced corporate sponsorships through legacy projects for recreation, parks, and culture services and facilities in the community. Additional sponsorship funds will allow the Town to reduce costs and achieve more with its investment in service delivery.

### Grant Funding from Territorial and Federal Governments and Associations

Municipalities are able to access grant funding from territorial and federal governments and associations for projects related to recreation, parks, and culture. The Recreation & Sport Contributions are an example of a territorial level funding program that provides financial assistance for the development and delivery of sport and recreation activities in the NWT. The Town can seek to secure additional grant funding to help it achieve objectives identified in the Master Plan. Additional grant opportunities include:

- Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (Federal)<sup>38</sup>
- Recreation & Sport Contributions (GNWT)<sup>39</sup>
- After School Physical Activity Program (GNWT)<sup>40</sup>
- Regional Youth Sports Events (GNWT)<sup>41</sup>
- Youth Centres Initiative (GNWT)<sup>42</sup>
- Children and Youth Resiliency Program (GNWT)<sup>43</sup>
- Youth Contributions Program (GNWT)<sup>44</sup>
- Gender Equity in Recreational Sport Community Grants Initiative (Canadian Parks and Recreation Association)<sup>45</sup>

- Get Active Grants (NWT Recreation and Parks Association)<sup>46</sup>
- Active, Resilient, Connected (ARC) Grants (NWT Recreation and Parks Association)<sup>47</sup>
- NWT On the Land Collaborative Grant<sup>48</sup>

### Involvement of the Non-Profit Sector

The non-profit sector can be of assistance in reducing capital development and annual program/project costs in a variety of ways. For example, non-profit societies can access grants that are not available to municipalities or private sector organizations; they can fundraise for new projects or on-going facility operations; and they can volunteer at programs and events, and conduct work-bees to lower project costs. The Town already has some non-profit organizations related to recreation and culture that can be of assistance in similar ways.

### Alternative Operating Models for Facilities and Programs

In certain cases, independent operating boards, non-profit societies, and the private sector have been successful in running facilities and delivering programs. Given the right circumstances, alternative operating models have the potential to reduce costs to the Town. All operating models should be supported by a comprehensive cost/benefit analysis and ongoing operating agreements that ensure services are highly accessible to the community as a whole.



# APPENDIX J: Implementation Plan

This section provides a detailed plan for implementing the priorities identified for recreation, parks, and culture in Norman Wells.

## Categories, Priorities and Action Item Charts

The Action Plan is divided into categories, priorities, and action items. Priorities are divided into the four categories identified in the previous section. Within each priority, specific action items have been established that clearly describe the steps that should be taken to achieve the objective. The action items will also assist the Town in evaluating the success of the plan moving forward. Each action item has been assigned a suggested priority rating, estimated cost, and anticipated timeline for implementation.

### Priority Criteria

- Low Priority (L)

There is considerable community benefit, however; because of phasing considerations, cost, organizational readiness, or relative importance in relation to other initiatives, these initiatives are deemed a lower priority at this time.
- Medium Priority (M)

There is a considerable community benefit, however; because of phasing considerations, cost, organizational readiness, or relative importance in relation to other initiatives, these initiatives are deemed a lower priority than high priority items at this time.
- High Priority (H)

There is a strong community benefit, and because of phasing considerations, cost, organizational readiness, or relative importance in relation to other initiatives, these initiatives are deemed a high priority at this time.

### Cost Criteria

- Low Cost (L)

Less than \$25,000
- Medium Cost (M)

\$25,000 - \$100,000
- High Cost (H)

More than \$100,000

### Implementation Timeline

- Short Term (S)

2021 - 2023
- Medium Term (M)

2024 - 2026
- Long Term (L)

2027 - 2031

### Organizational Lead

Town administration will be responsible for implementing the master plan. It is expected that the Town will provide the resources necessary to implement the action items. The Town is encouraged to seek partnerships with stakeholder groups, neighbouring communities, territorial ministries, and other applicable groups wherever possible to leverage available resources. Residents can also be engaged through task forces and committees to help contribute to implementation.

### Quick Wins



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

### Highest Priority Items



An exclamation mark identifies items that should be considered the highest priority in the short term.

### Future Planning, Evaluation, and Reporting

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

### Implementation Considerations

Attempting to complete all initiatives concurrently will stretch the resources and limit the focus of the Town as the plan is implemented. Therefore, it is recommended that implementation of the plan begin with the highest priority items and quick wins.

# 1. Indoor Facilities and Programming

## Legend:

**Priority/  
Cost** L (Low)  
M (Medium)  
H (High)

**Timeline** S (2021-2023)  
M (2024-2026)  
L (2027-2031)



Quick Win



Highest Priority  
Items

Master Plan Priorities		Action Items	Priority	Timeline	Cost
A. Complete a Feasibility Study to Upgrade or Replace the Pool	!	1.A.1 Complete a detailed facility condition assessment on the pool to identify needed upgrades and clarify the estimated lifespan of the facility.	H	S	M
		1.A.2 Depending on the results of the facility condition assessment, conduct a feasibility study to upgrade the existing pool in the near term to expand its operational season or replace the pool with a new facility that is capable of year-round operation.	H	S – M	M – H
B. Complete a Feasibility Study to Upgrade or Replace the Arena	!	1.B.1 Complete a detailed facility condition assessment on the arena to identify needed upgrades and clarify the estimated lifespan of the facility.	H	S	M
		1.B.2 Depending on the results of the facility condition assessment, conduct a feasibility study to upgrade the existing arena in the near term by installing a concrete floor and ice plant to create artificial ice and extend the operating season of the arena. If required, conduct a feasibility study to replace the arena with a new facility that is capable of year-round operation.	H	S – M	M – H
C. Expand and Enhance Age-Specific Indoor Programming	!	1.C.1 Develop recreation and culture program plans and enhance indoor programming for a wide variety of age groups, including youth, seniors, children, adults, and families using existing programmable space.	H	S	L
D. Expand Indoor Programming for Different Interests	!	1.D.1 Expand the provision of indoor programs for different interests either directly or in partnership with local groups. Priority should be given to programs focused on education/skill-building, arts/culture, fitness, and sports.	H	S	L
E. Add Storage	!	1.E.1 Explore opportunities for additional storage at existing facilities or the development of a standalone storage structure for recreation equipment.	H	S – M	L – H
F. Complete a Feasibility Study to Upgrade or Replace the Curling Rink	!	1.F.1 Complete a detailed facility condition assessment on the curling rink to identify needed upgrades and clarify the estimated lifespan of the facility.	H	S	M
		1.F.2 Depending on the results of the facility condition assessment, conduct a feasibility study to upgrade the existing curling rink in the medium term by installing a concrete floor and ice plant to create artificial ice and extend the operating window. If required, conduct a feasibility study to replace the curling rink with a new facility that is capable of year-round operation.	H	S – M	M – H
G. Develop an Indoor Playground		1.G.1 Explore opportunities to develop an indoor playground at an existing municipal facility or as a standalone facility directly or through partnership with local organizations.	M	S – M	M – H
H. Explore Multiplex Development		1.H.1 Explore the opportunity to phase in new proposed amenities (e.g. pool, arena, curling rink, indoor playground, etc.) in a multiplex facility.	L	M – L	H



## 2. Outdoor Facilities and Programming

### Legend:

**Priority/  
Cost**  
L (Low)  
M (Medium)  
H (High)

**Timeline**  
S (2021-2023)  
M (2024-2026)  
L (2027-2031)



Quick Win



Highest Priority  
Items

Master Plan Priorities		Action Items	Priority	Timeline	Cost
A. Expand and Enhance the Trail System	!	2.A.1 Conduct a community and regional trail assessment and inventory. As part of this inventory, consider assessing the trails for tourism value.	H	S – M	M
	!	2.A.2 Based on the findings from the trail assessment and inventory, expand and enhance the local trail network for non-mechanized and mechanized uses.	H	S – M	H
		2.A.3 Develop a trail map and signage program while considering the incorporation of interpretive elements to enhance user experience.	M	M	M – H
B. Expand Outdoor Programming for Different Interests	!	2.B.1 Develop a set of programs focused on outdoor education and skill-building.	H	S	L
	!	2.B.2 Partner with arts, culture, and heritage groups to enhance the provision of outdoor arts and cultural programs.	H	S	L
	!	2.B.3 Develop year-round registered and drop-in outdoor fitness programs.	H	S	L
		2.B.4 Develop a set of programs focused on parks and trails.	M	M	L
C. Develop a Larger Sledding Hill	!	2.C.1 Develop a larger sledding hill in Town. Consider adding stairs and/or reducing the grade of approaches to enhance accessibility. Safety guidelines should be clearly outlined by adequate signage and Town policy.	H	S – M	M
		2.C.2 Explore the feasibility of developing downhill ski amenities (e.g. tow ropes/T-bars) either nearby the ski cabin outside of town or as part of the sledding hill improvements in town.	L	M – L	H
D. Add Mobile Skatepark	!	2.D.1 Explore purchasing mobile and modular skatepark equipment so that the park can be moved indoors and outdoors, as needed.	H	S – M	M – H
E. Upgrade the Outdoor Court		2.E.1 Upgrade the outdoor paved court through resurfacing and line painting. Consider opportunities to utilize the court for new activities and programming.	M	S – M	M – H
F. Develop a Rectangular Field		2.F.1 Develop a rectangular field to support local sport groups and new opportunities for outdoor programming and events.	M	M – L	H
G. Develop a Dog Park		2.G.1 Create a new, fenced, off-leash dog park.	M	M – L	M – H
		2.G.2 Connect the new dog park to the expanded trail network.	M	M – L	M
H. Assess the Need to Develop a Campground/ RV Park		2.H.1 Explore the development of a campground and RV park once year-round road access has been established.	L	L	H

## 3. Service Delivery and Communication

### Legend:

**Priority/  
Cost**  
L (Low)  
M (Medium)  
H (High)

**Timeline**  
S (2021-2023)  
M (2024-2026)  
L (2027-2031)



Quick Win



Highest Priority  
Items

Master Plan Priorities		Action Items	Priority	Timeline	Cost
A. Capital Project Evaluation	! ★	3.A.1 Implement the process identified in Appendix G for evaluating major capital development projects.	H	S	L
B. Maintain Current Role in Service Delivery	★	3.B.1 Maintain the Town's partner role in recreation, parks, and culture service delivery.	H	S	L
C. Improve Communications	! ★	3.C.1 Improve the provision of recreation information on the Town website landing page to make it easier for different groups to find the information they need.	H	S	L
	★	3.C.2 Consider the development of a printed communication channel for activities, programs, events, and opportunities for community engagement.	M	S – M	L
	★	3.C.3 Host regular recreation, parks, and culture forums for residents and stakeholder groups to improve communication and collaboration.	M	Ongoing	L
	★	3.C.4 Develop a bank of images that showcase local people recreating at local facilities. Utilize these assets in communication materials.	M	S – M	L
D. Regularly Collect Feedback	!	3.D.1 Complete annual community and user surveys and sessions to collect ongoing feedback on programs and services.	H	Ongoing	L
E. Track Amenity Use	! ★	3.E.1 Improve the collection of amenity use data to better understand and anticipate participation trends and opportunities for enhanced utilization.	H	Ongoing	L – M
F. Implement New Policies and Plans		3.F.1 Develop a Municipal Naming Policy that outlines a framework for naming municipal facilities. Consider the creation of a Naming Committee.	M	S – M	L
		3.F.2 Develop a Pandemic Plan that supports an approved municipal emergency plan and business continuity plans with strong consideration for the impact to recreation, parks, and culture services.	M	S	L
		3.F.3 Establish Town grants for recreation and culture to support local stakeholder groups in the development and provision of recreation, parks, and culture opportunities.	M	S – M	L
		3.F.4 Formally update the Recreation Master Plan in 2026.	M	M	M
G. Improve Accessibility		3.G.1 Conduct accessibility audits of existing recreation infrastructure to identify opportunities to improve accessibility. Consider making identified improvements.	M	S – M	L



# 4.Tourism Linkages

Legend:

- Priority/  
Cost

L (Low)  
M (Medium)  
H (High)
- Timeline

S (2021-2023)  
M (2024-2026)  
L (2027-2031)
- ★

Quick Win
- !

Highest Priority  
Items

Master Plan Priorities		Action Items		Priority	Timeline	Cost
A. Develop a Tourism Strategy	!	4.A.1	Develop a tourism strategy to support tourism growth and development.	H	S – M	M
		4.A.2	Develop a tourism strategy to support tourism growth and development.	H	S – M	M
B. Improve Tourism Marketing, Promotion, and Signage		4.B.1	Enhance tourism marketing and promotion through social, digital, and print media.	M	S – M	M – H
		4.B.2	Develop a network of signage and wayfinding for identified areas of visitation. Signage should have a consistent theme that matches the brand of the Town and region.	M	M – L	H

## APPENDIX K: References

- <sup>1</sup> Town of Norman Wells. Life in Norman Wells: A Proud History. Retrieved from: <https://www.normanwells.com/lifestyle/life-norman-wells>
- <sup>2</sup> Town of Norman Wells. Life in Norman Wells: A Proud History. Retrieved from: <https://www.normanwells.com/lifestyle/life-norman-wells>
- <sup>3</sup> Statistics Canada (2016) Norman Wells Census Profile.
- <sup>4</sup> Statistics Canada (2016) Norman Wells Census Profile.
- <sup>5</sup> GNWT Bureau of Statistics (2018) Community Population Projections 2018-2035.
- <sup>6</sup> Haan, M., and D. Odynak. (2009) Measuring Alberta's Shadow Populations: A draft document respectfully submitted to the Alberta Office of Statistics and Information. Edmonton: Population Research Laboratory, University of Alberta. November. Mimeo.
- <sup>7</sup> Cabin Radio: Imperial Oil resumes Norman Wells operations after fire. Retrieved from: <https://cabinradio.ca/46446/news/sahtu/imperial-oil-resumes-norman-wells-operations-after-fire/>
- <sup>8</sup> Statistics Canada (2016) Sahtu Region Census Profile.
- <sup>9</sup> Canadian Recreation and Parks Association (2015) National Framework for Recreation: Pathways to Wellbeing.
- <sup>10</sup> Canadian Parks and Recreation Association. Benefits Hub. Retrieved from: <http://benefitshub.ca/>
- <sup>11</sup> Canadian Parks and Recreation Association (2020) *Canada's Recovery from the Impact of COVID-19: Role of the Parks and Recreation Sector*. Accessed on October 21, 2020. Retrieved from: <https://www.cpra.ca/covid19>
- <sup>12</sup> Curling Canada (2018) National Curling Club Survey.
- <sup>13</sup> Canadian Animal Health Institute (2018) Canadian Pet Population Changes from 2016 – 2018.
- <sup>14</sup> GNWT (2020) Sahtu Community Meetings: Mackenzie Valley Highway.
- <sup>15</sup> Sahtu Renewable Resources Board. An Ancient Heritage. Retrieved from: [https://www.srrb.nt.ca/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=166:an-ancient-heritage&catid=99:the-sahtu&Itemid=0](https://www.srrb.nt.ca/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=166:an-ancient-heritage&catid=99:the-sahtu&Itemid=0)
- <sup>16</sup> Norman Wells Historical Society. History of Norman Wells. Retrieved from: <http://www.normanwellsmuseum.com/norman-well>
- <sup>17</sup> Town of Norman Wells (2019) Strategic Plan.
- <sup>18</sup> Town of Norman Wells (2021) Community Plan.
- <sup>19</sup> NWT Recreation and Parks Association (2018) Strategic Plan 2018-2021.
- <sup>20</sup> GNWT (2016) Sport, Recreation, and Physical Activity Review.
- <sup>21</sup> GNWT (2015) Culture and Heritage Strategic Framework 2015-2025.
- <sup>22</sup> Aboriginal Sport Circle NWT (2020) Strategic Plan 2020-2025.
- <sup>23</sup> GNWT (2017) Recreational Leasing Management Framework.
- <sup>24</sup> Canadian Sport for Life (2016) Long-Term Athlete Development.
- <sup>25</sup> Canadian Recreation and Parks Association (2015) National Framework for Recreation: Pathways to Wellbeing.
- <sup>26</sup> Business for the Arts, *Culture Track Canada Report*, 2018
- <sup>27</sup> GNWT Culture and Heritage Strategic Framework (2015-2025).
- <sup>28</sup> Statistics Canada (2019) Provincial and Territorial Culture Indicators, 2017.
- <sup>29</sup> NWT Bureau of Statistics (2017) Territorial GDP by Sector.
- <sup>30</sup> Business for the Arts, *Culture Track Canada Report*, 2018
- <sup>31</sup> Canadian Parks and Recreation Association/Interprovincial Sport and Recreation Council (February 2015). *A Framework for Recreation in Canada - 2015 - Pathways to Wellbeing*. Ottawa: Canadian Recreation and Parks Association. 40 pages. [www.lin.ca](http://www.lin.ca)
- <sup>32</sup> US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2017) Why It Matters: The Pandemic Threat.
- <sup>33</sup> Government of Alberta (2020) Pandemic Response Planning. A Guide for Alberta Municipalities.
- <sup>34</sup> Volunteer Canada (2013) Data on Giving, Volunteering and Participating in Canada. Accessed on October 21, 2020. Retrieved from: <https://volunteer.ca/index.php?MenuItemID=364>
- <sup>35</sup> Canadian Recreation and Parks Association (2015) National Framework for Recreation: Pathways to Wellbeing.
- <sup>36</sup> Alberta Recreation and Parks Association. (2015). *Foundations for Action: Enhancing the Quality of Life in Alberta*.
- <sup>37</sup> Expedition Management Consulting (2013) *Lac La Biche Recreation, Parks and Open Spaces Master Plan Plamondon Region*. Accessed on August 27, 2018
- <sup>38</sup> Government of Canada. Retrieved from: <https://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/plan/about-invest-apropos-eng.html>
- <sup>39</sup> GNWT (2020) Recreation & Sport Contributions. Retrieved from: <https://www.maca.gov.nt.ca/en/services/recreation-sport-contributions>
- <sup>40</sup> GNWT (2020) After School Physical Activity Program. Retrieved from: <https://www.maca.gov.nt.ca/en/services/after-school-physical-activity-program>
- <sup>41</sup> GNWT (2020) Regional Youth Sports Events. Retrieved from: <https://www.maca.gov.nt.ca/en/services/regional-youth-sports-events>
- <sup>42</sup> GNWT (2020) Youth Centres Initiative. Retrieved from: <https://www.maca.gov.nt.ca/en/services/youth-centres-initiative>
- <sup>43</sup> GNWT (2021) Children and Youth Resiliency Program. Retrieved from: <https://www.maca.gov.nt.ca/en/services/children-and-youth-resiliency-program>



<sup>44</sup> Gnwt (2021) Youth Contributions Program. Retrieved from: <https://www.maca.gov.nt.ca/en/services/youth-contributions-program>

<sup>45</sup> Canadian Parks and Recreation Association (2020) Gender Equity in Recreational Sport Community Grants Initiative. Retrieved from: <https://womenandgirlsinnrecreation.ca/community-grants-2/>

<sup>46</sup> NWT Recreation and Parks Association (2020) Get Active Grants. Retrieved from: <https://www.nwtrpa.org/get-active.htm>

<sup>47</sup> NWT Recreation and Parks Association (2020) Active, Resilient, Connected (ARC) Grants. Retrieved from: <https://www.nwtrpa.org/active-resilient-connected-arc-grants.htm>

<sup>48</sup> NWT On the Land Collaborative (2021). Retrieved from: <http://www.nwtontheland.ca/>