



COMMUNITY SURVEY REPORT

SURVEY OBJECTIVE

The High Prairie and District Recreation Board has initiated the development of a Recreation Master Plan (RMP) for its service region. The purpose of the RMP is to establish a shared community vision and guiding framework for recreation planning and development. The project planning committee identifies public consultation as a cornerstone of the RMP development process. Between August and October 2020, two surveys were conducted—one for residents and the other targeting stakeholders—in order to better understand the needs, priorities, concerns and preferences of residents and stakeholders (including user groups) to assist in developing the RMP. This report provides a snapshot of the key findings and takeaways from the public or community survey. The Mackenzie Municipal Services Agency prepared this report.





SURVEY PROCESS AND COMPONENTS

Consultation Reach

The community survey was launched on August 14, 2020 and closed on September 19, 2020. The survey was delivered in both online and paper formats to provide more options to residents, in hopes of increasing the response rate. The online survey was hosted on Survey Monkey, an online survey development website. Print copies of the survey were made available at the Town and County Offices as well as the seniors drop-in-centre in High Prairie. The link to the online survey was posted on the Town and County's websites, Facebook pages and also included in the Town and County's monthly newsletters for August and September, respectively. Information about the Recreation Master Plan was also published on the Town and County's websites and in the aforementioned newsletters. The survey was managed by the Mackenzie Municipal Services Agency, a company that provides land use planning services to the Town of High Prairie. This report was prepared by the Mackenzie Municipal Services Agency.

SURVEY RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The community survey received a total of two hundred and sixty-nine (269) responses. This represents 4% of the combined total population High Prairie and Big Lakes County¹. Of the 269 responses, 265 were completed online and 4 completed in print.

Who Responded

The demographic questions in the survey provide the planning committee with an insight into the characteristics of the respondents, including their location, age, gender and household structure. As Figure 1 shows, majority of those who completed the survey (255 people, approximately 95%) were residents of the town of High Prairie and Big Lakes County, with Town residents (52%) being slightly more than County residents (42%). However, about 3% of the respondents were residents of nearby Metis and First Nations communities located within the County. On the other hand, a small number of the respondents (2%) were from communities outside High Prairie and Big Lakes County, majority of whom resided in the MD of Smoky River No. 130. These responses indicate that even though majority of the respondents are Town and County residents, there are some residents from outside the two municipalities who have an interest in, and potentially utilize, some of the recreation facilities located in the town. The use of recreation facilities by non-residents could point towards the regional role played by these facilities, an opportunity that could be leveraged for developing partnerships for future recreation development.

¹ 2019 Municipal Affairs Population List

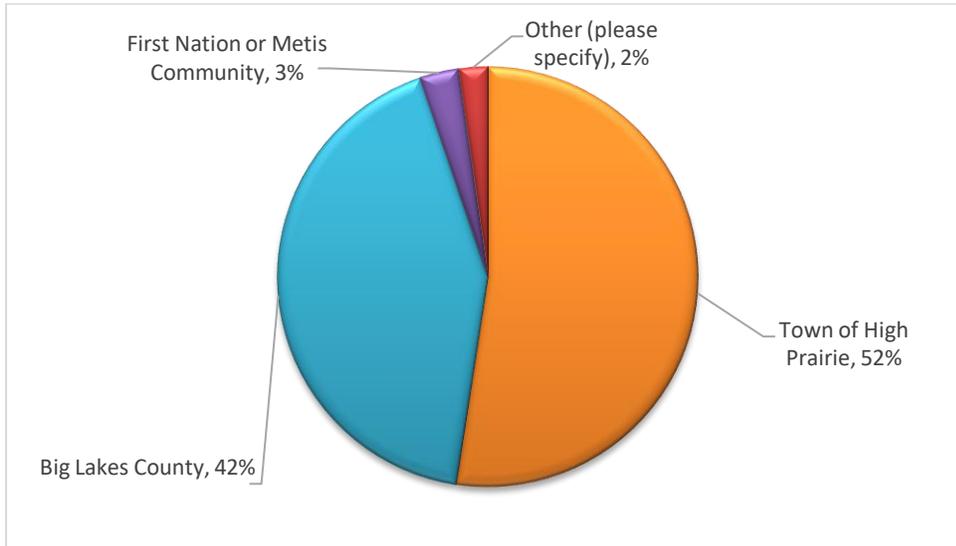


Figure 1 – Location of Respondents (269 responses, 0 skipped)

Figure 2 shows the age range of the survey responses. The majority of respondents were middle aged adults between 35 and 64 years. By contrast, seniors (65+), young adults (15-34) and children (0-14) were small in comparison.

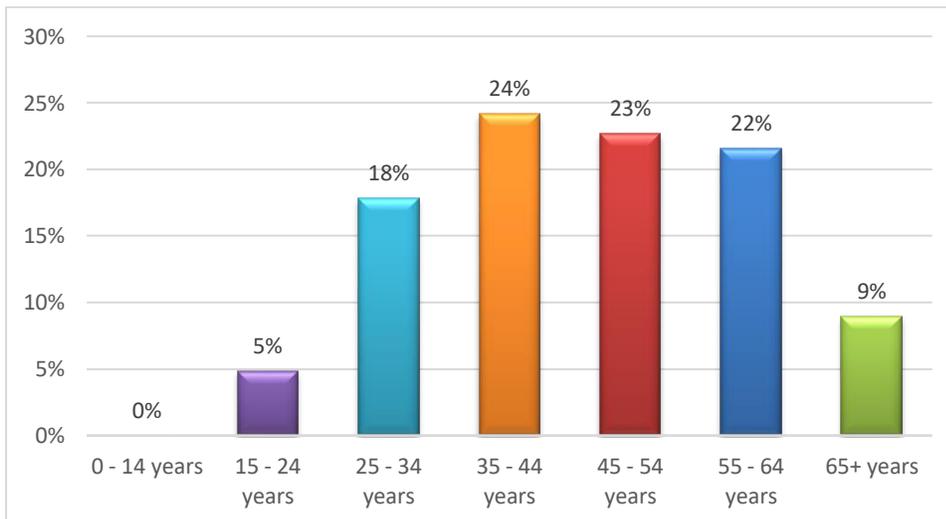


Figure 2 – Age range of Respondents (269 responses, 0 skipped)

Figure 3 shows the gender composition of the survey responses. The majority of respondents were females (74%) compared to males (24%). However, a small number of respondents preferred not to disclose their gender identity.

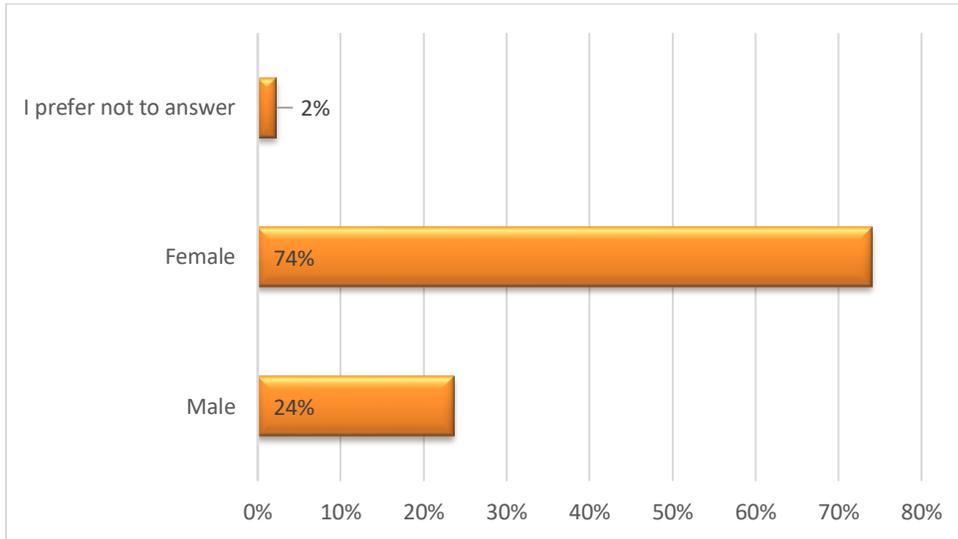


Figure 3 – Response to “Please indicate your age range:” (266 responses, 3 skipped)

Figure 4 shows the household structure of respondents. The majority of respondents belong to households with children (52%), followed by couples without children (25%). On the other hand, singles and senior households comprised a relatively smaller number of respondents.

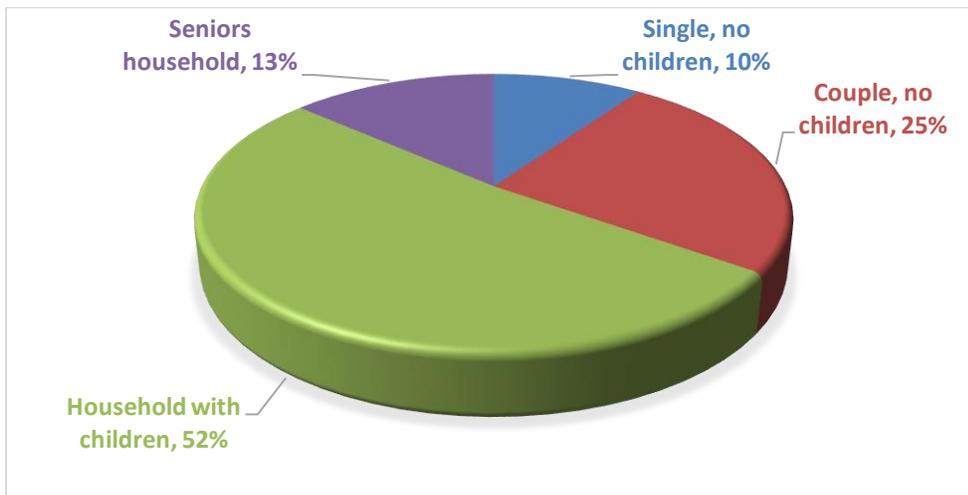


Figure 4 – Household Makeup of Respondents (269 responses, 0 skipped)

The large share of households with children implies that recreation planning must be family-oriented, but also diverse enough to meet the wide-ranging recreational needs of residents.



Use of Existing Facilities and Programs

Question 5 asked respondents if they have visited or used any recreation facility located in town within the past one year, while question 6 asked respondents whether they have participated in an organized recreation activity or event in town within the past one year. As shown by figure 5 and 6, majority of respondents used an existing recreation facility and/or participated in an organized recreation event within the past one year, although more people visited a facility than did participate in an event. Overall, however, the results suggest a high level of use of, or participation in, existing recreation services in town.

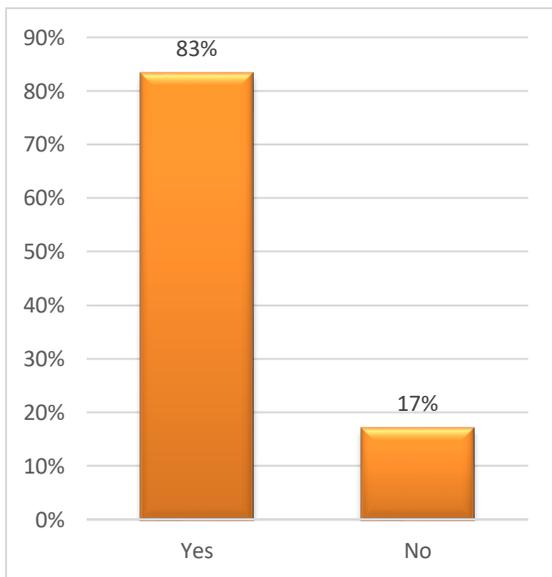


Figure 5 – Use of Existing Recreation Facilities in the Past Year (267 responses, 2 skipped)

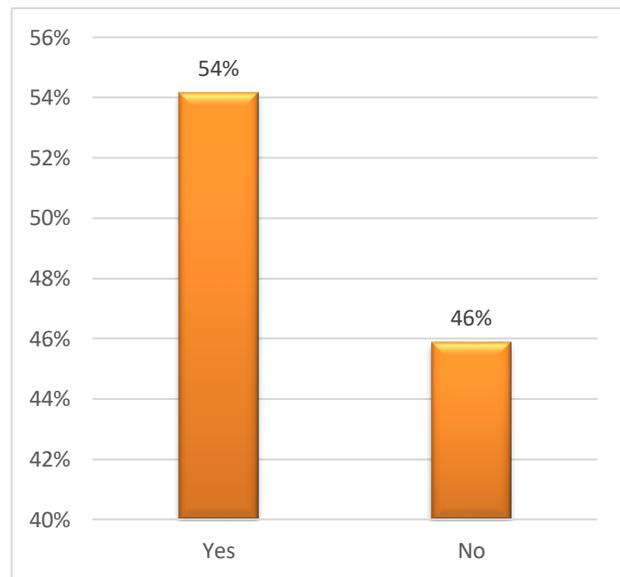


Figure 6 – Participation in Organized Recreation Activity in the Past Year (266 responses, 3 skipped)

Level of Satisfaction with Current Services

Question 7 and 10 sought to ascertain residents’ level of satisfaction with current recreations services offered in town. Specifically, question 7 asked if current recreation services in town meet their needs, while question 10 asked respondents to rate different aspects of current recreation services, including specific facilities, programming within facilities, communication and marketing of existing recreation services, and facility operations, maintenance and management. As figure 7 shows, 55% of the respondents indicated that current recreation facilities and programs within the town do not meet their needs, whilst the remaining 45% indicated that current recreation services meet their needs.

In terms of the level of satisfaction with different aspects of the current recreation services, respondents indicated varying levels of satisfaction with regards to specific recreation facilities, communication and information sharing, and facility operations, maintenance and management, as figure 8 shows. On the whole, however, majority of respondents indicated that they were either “ok” or “satisfied” with the various aspects of the existing recreation services. In terms of “being very satisfied”, the golf course (16%),



skate park (15%) and baseball diamonds (15%) were the top three. In terms of being “very unsatisfied”, communication and marketing of recreation services (12%), programming within facilities (11%), walking trails (11%) and basketball court (11%) were the top three. The latter implies that communications, programming and improvements to certain facilities must be prioritized in order to improve residents’ level of satisfaction with the current recreation services in the community.

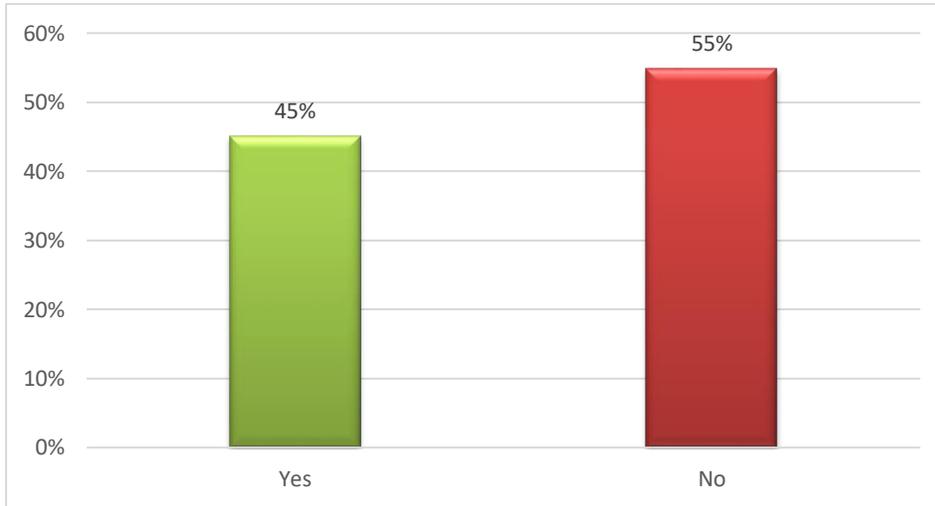


Figure 7 – General Satisfaction with Current Recreation Services in Town (266 responses, 3 skipped)

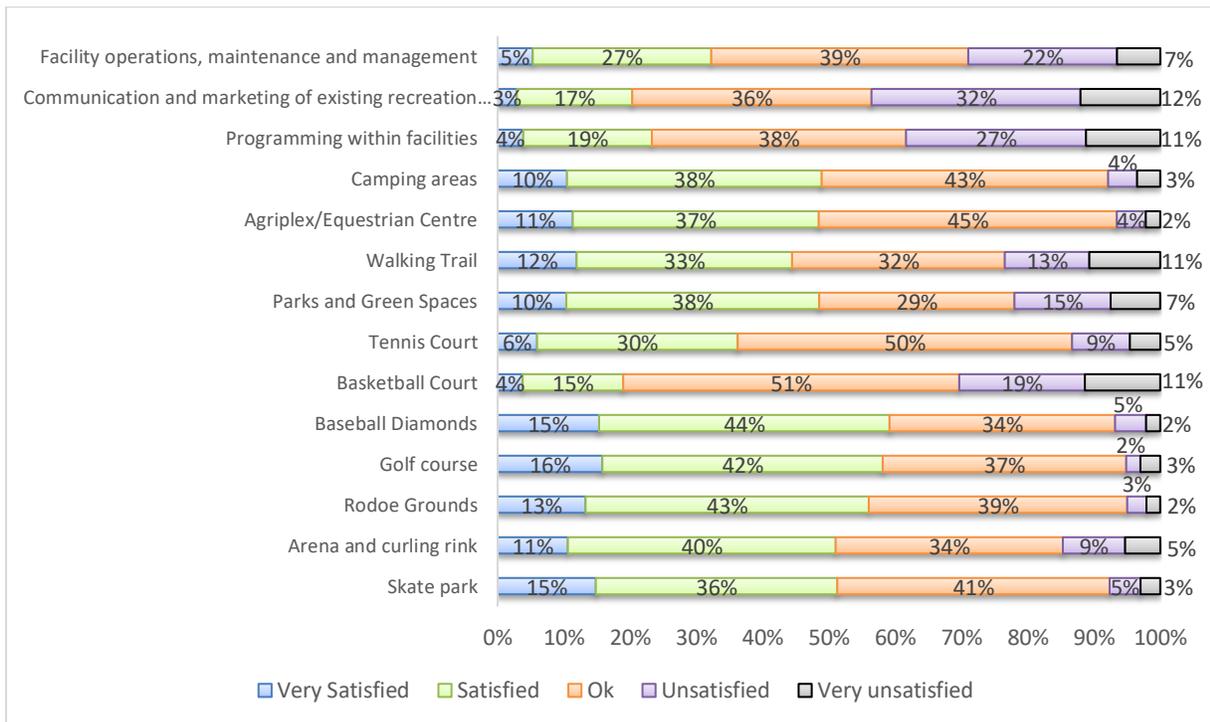


Figure 8 – Satisfaction with Different Components of Recreation Services (258 responses, 11 skipped)



Information Sources and Means of Access

Question 8 asked respondents to indicate how they currently obtain information regarding recreation services in the community, whilst question 9 asked residents how they physically access these services. Majority of the respondents indicated that they acquire information on recreation through the Town (73%) and County Facebook (33%) pages. Others also obtain recreation information from the Town (23%) and County websites (15%) as well as newsletters (20%). Other sources of information acquisition mentioned in the survey include “word of mouth” (see figure 9).

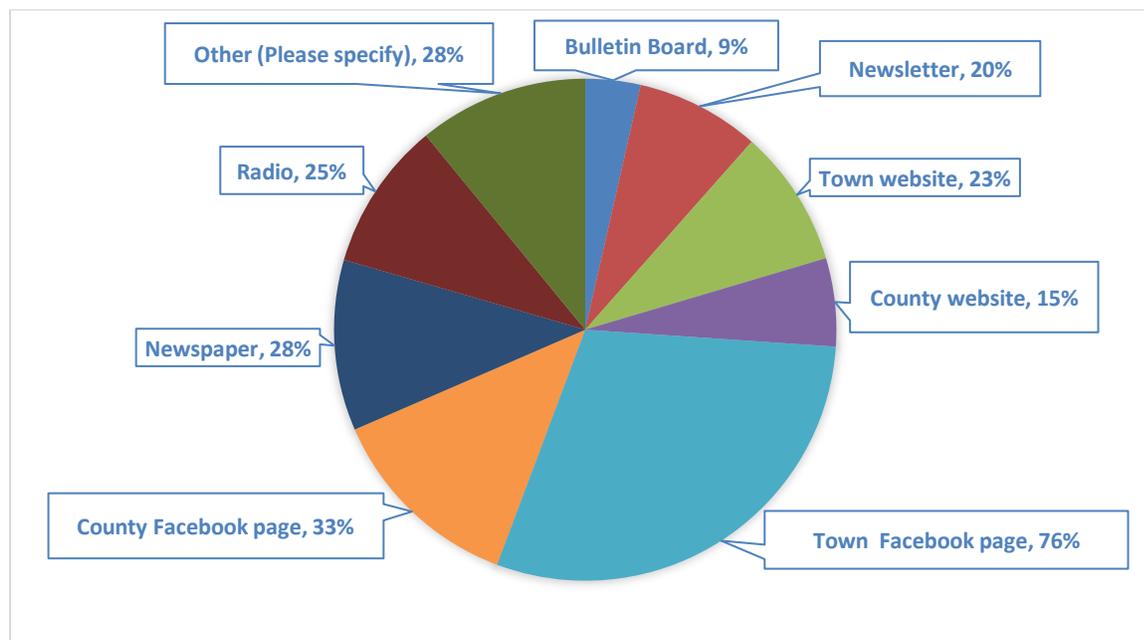


Figure 9 – Sources of Recreation Information (220 responses, 49 skipped)

Regarding the means of accessing existing recreation facilities, majority of the respondents (71%) indicated that they drive in order to access existing facilities, as figure 10 reveals. The next commonly used mode of transport is walking, which accounts for 18% of the respondents. Only a small number of residents (1%) indicated using biking as a means of accessing current recreation facilities.

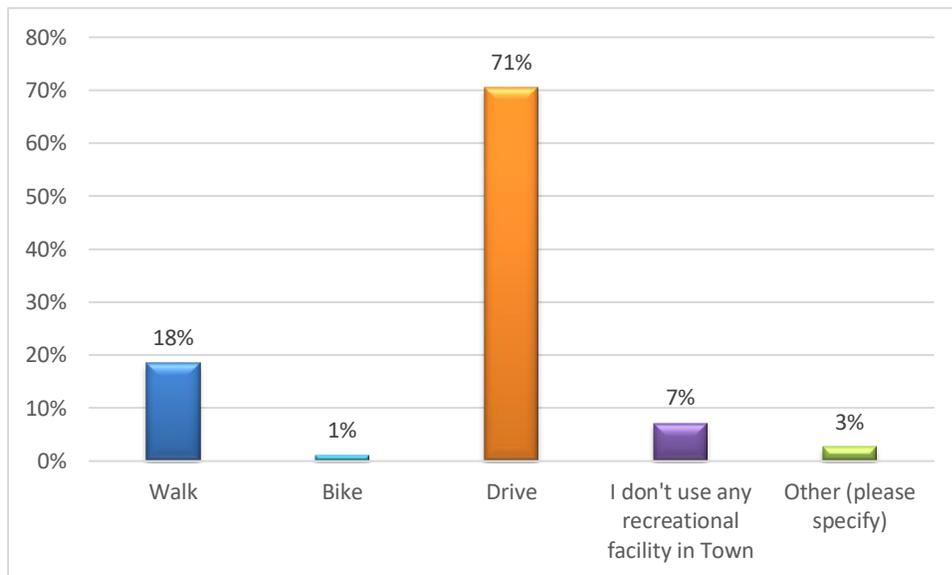


Figure 10 – Mode of Transportation to Recreation Facilities (265 responses, 4 skipped)

Ideas and Suggestions for New Recreation Programs and Facilities

Question 11 asked respondents if there were any new recreation programs they would like to see introduced. 126 responses were received. The ideas and suggestions mentioned were vast and include the following:

- Yoga
- Tai Chi
- Adult fitness in swimming pool
- Martial arts
- More after-school drop in activities
- Youth summer camps
- Indoor basketball in winter
- Nature-based programs such as gardening
- Family type activities
- Crafting sessions,
- Boxing
- Fine arts
- Bowling
- Leagues for softball



Question 12 asked respondents if there were any new recreation facilities they would like to see built in the community, in addition to the current inventory of facilities. 166 responses were received. As with question 11, the number of ideas and suggestions offered were numerous and include the following top 5 facilities:

- Multiplex
- Splash park
- Indoor walking/running path
- Community gym
- Dog park

Ideas and Suggestions for Location of New Recreation Facilities

Question 13 asked respondents to indicate where they would like to see new recreation facilities built. 127 responses were received. Some of the suggestions were:

- Old hospital site
- In/near JC park
- Behind/ add to Gordon Buchanan centre splash park
- Close to other facilities
- Close to schools/daycare
- County

Ideas and Suggestions for Improving Facility Operations and Maintenance

Question 14 asked respondents if they had any suggestions for improving the operations, maintenance and management of current recreation facilities. 115 responses were received. Some of the suggestions include:

- Hire more staff
- Avoid duplication of work
- Increased collaboration between community groups and Rec Director
- Enact/enforce cleanliness/littering bylaws
- Maintain/improve trails/walkways
- Consolidate all facilities into one

Ideas and Suggestions for Improving Awareness Creation and Information Sharing

Question 15 asked respondents if they had any suggestions for improving the operations, maintenance and management of current recreation facilities in the community. 85 responses were received. Some of the suggestions made include:

- Hire communication director
- Newspaper advertising
- More social media awareness (Facebook, plus Instagram and Snap Chat)
- Centralize all events on 1 schedule and post on social media



- Open house
- Newsletter
- Increased signage

Major Themes/Principles for Recreation Planning

Question 16 asked respondents what in their opinion should be the overarching themes and principles that should be considered for recreation planning and development within the community. Figure 11, which presents the breakdown of the 196 responses to this question, shows that ensuring that recreation facilities and programs are multi-seasonal constitutes the main theme or principle respondents think should be prioritized when planning for recreation services within the community. Another important theme is family-oriented services, which is perhaps reflective of the dominant household composition of the population, which are households with children. Other themes include accessibility, inclusiveness and diversity.

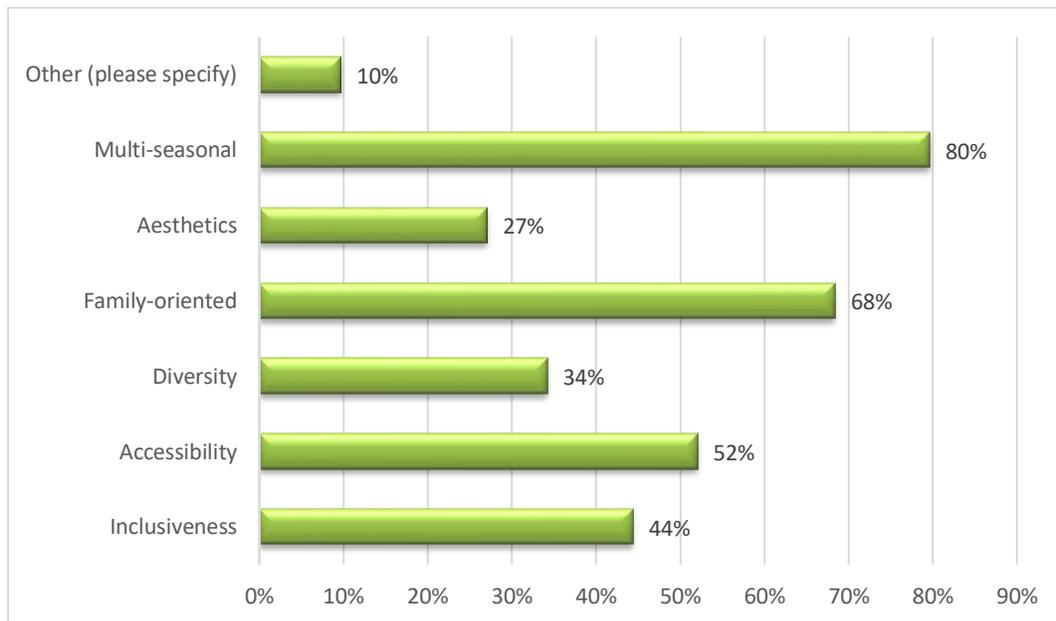


Figure 11 – Major themes/principles to Consider for Recreation Planning and Development (196 responses, 73 skipped)

Additional Feedback

Question 17 asked respondents if they have additional feedback or comments for the proposed Recreation Master Plan. This question received sixty-six (66) comments. However, some of the responses reflected ideas and comments expressed in response to some of the previous questions, particularly 11 to 15. These include redevelopment of the Jaycee Park, indoor walking space and hiring additional staff. Others include the need to have more green spaces within the community. Other comments reflect personal concerns about certain facilities in light of COVID-19 and other issues.