



## STAKEHOLDER 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 for 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 summary of the key findings and takeaways from the stakeholder survey. The Mackenzie Municipal Services Agency prepared this report.





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## SURVEY PROCESS AND RESULTS

### Consultation Reach

The stakeholder survey was launched on August 14, 2020 and closed on October 16, 2020<sup>1</sup>. The survey was delivered in both online and paper formats to provide more options to respondents, in hopes of increasing the response rate. The online survey was hosted on Survey Monkey, an online survey development website. Stakeholders who were to invited to complete the survey were identified during the July 8, 2020 project committee meeting. These include municipal staff, school authorities (including both school divisions and individual school administrations), Council members, user groups and registered non profit societies with interest in recreation. The link to the online survey was sent to stakeholders who had an email address. Print copies of the survey were mailed to stakeholders who did not have a known email address, with the option of completing the survey online. Information about the RMP was included in the survey, and also published on the Town and County's websites and in their respective monthly 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.

## SURVEY RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

A total of 35 responses was received for the survey. All of these responses were completed online.

### Who Responded

The first question in the survey is intended to provide an insight into the actual number and range of stakeholders who responded to the survey compared to the stakeholders who were invited to participate in the survey. As Figure 1 shows, majority of stakeholders who completed the survey (approximately 41%) were municipal staff from the Town of High Prairie and Big Lakes County administrative offices. This was followed by Council members from the two municipalities, which together constitute 24% of the responses received. The least number of responses came from individual school administrations. However, the results indicate the breadth of stakeholders within the community who have an interest, or play a part, in the provision of recreation services, and whose engagement in the Recreation Master Plan preparation process is pertinent to identifying and addressing the key issues that are germane to the successful development and implementation of the plan.

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<sup>1</sup> The official closing date for the survey was September 18, 2020. However, the deadline was extended by the Recreation Master Plan steering committee to October 16, 2020. This was to afford more stakeholders the opportunity to respond due to the few responses that had been received by September 18, 2020.

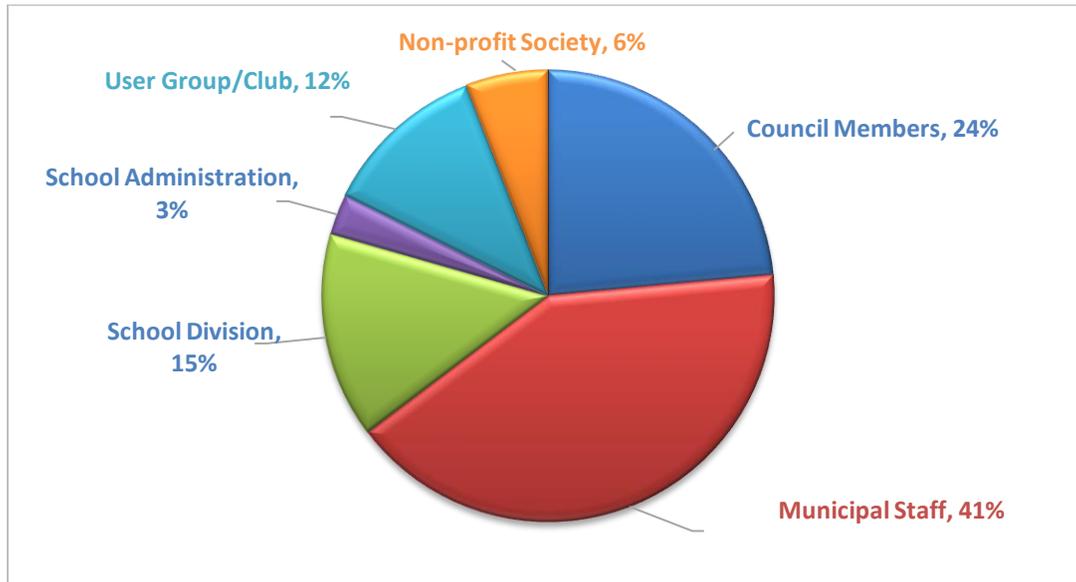


Figure 1 – Stakeholder Composition (34 responses, 1 skipped)

### Assessment of Existing Facilities and Programs

Question 2, 3 and 4 asked stakeholders to provide their assessment of current recreation services in the community. Specifically, question 2 asked for a general rating of the recreation services available in the Town of High Prairie, with options including “very good”, “good”, “fair” and “poor”. As shown in figure 2, majority of the stakeholders (54%) rated current recreation services as being “good”. This was followed by 37%, who assessed current recreation services as being “fair”. By contrast, a small number of stakeholders rated existing recreation services as being either “very good” or “poor”.

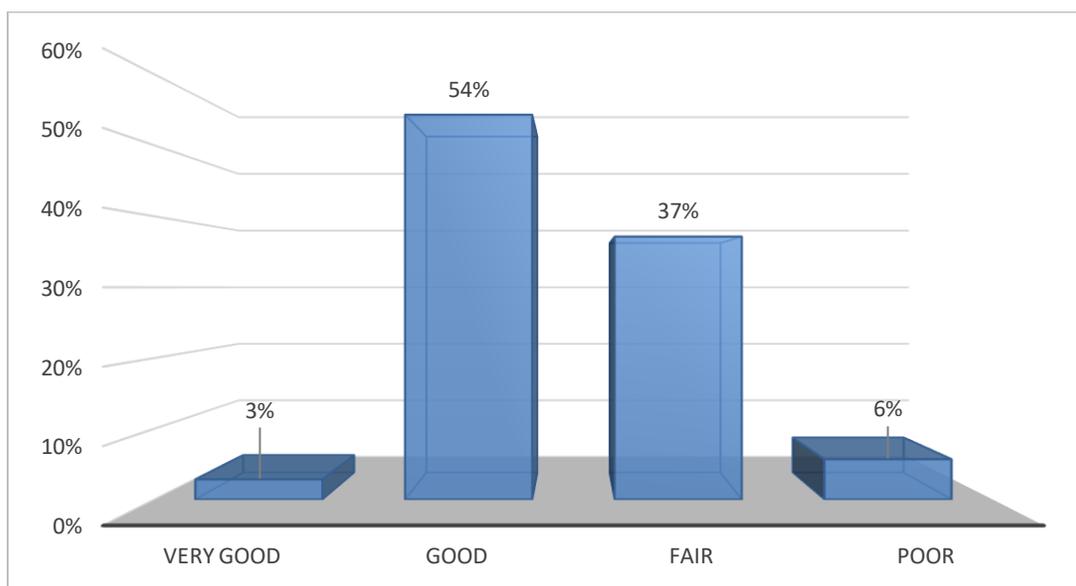


Figure 2 – General Assessment of Current Recreation Services by Stakeholders (35 responses, 0 skipped)



Question 3 asked stakeholders to indicate by a simple “yes” or “no” whether current recreation services met the needs of residents or the group they represent. Evidenced from figure 3, responses to this question were nearly even, with a slight majority 51% indicating “yes” and the remaining 49% indicating “no”. This result varies significantly when compared to that of the community survey, where 55% of the respondents indicated that current recreation facilities do not meet their needs, while 45% indicated that current recreation facilities meet their needs (see community survey snapshot and summary report). The differences in assessment is indicative of the differing perspective residents and stakeholders have about the quality of current services being offered in the community.

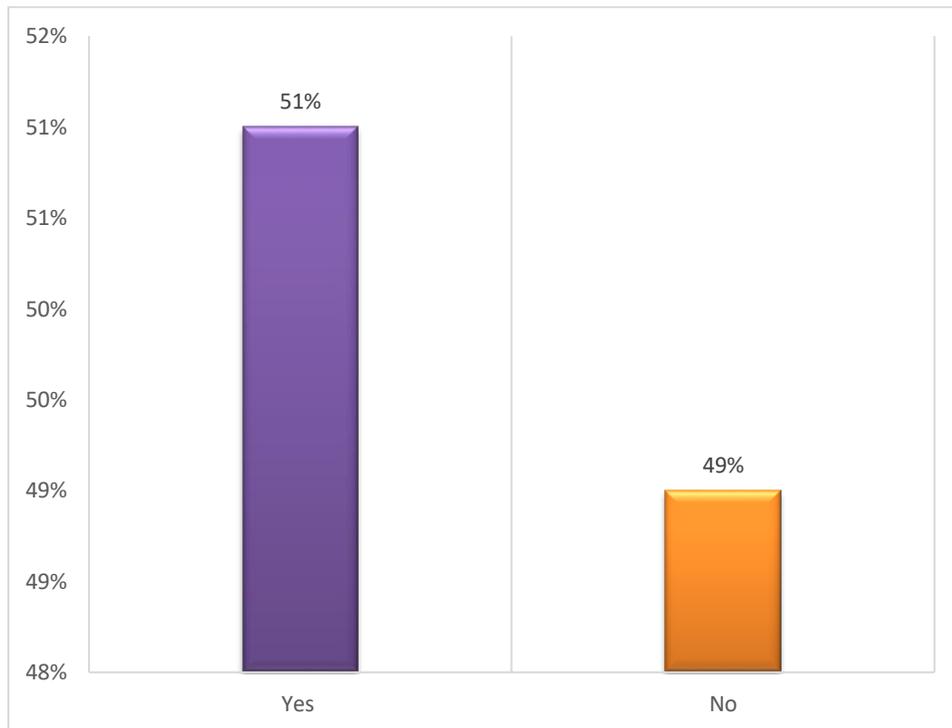


Figure 3 – Stakeholders View on Whether Current Recreation Services Meet Community Needs (35 responses, 0 skipped)

Question 4 asked stakeholders to rate various components of the current recreation services, including specific recreation facilities, programming within facilities, communication and information sharing, and facility operations, maintenance and management, from “excellent” to “poor”. As figure 4 portrays, with exception to communication and marketing, majority of stakeholders assessed various aspects of the recreation services as either being “very good” or “good”, with the ball diamonds receiving the most favourable assessment. Communication and marketing, as mentioned above, received the least favourable assessment. The later result is similar to that of the community survey, where communication and marketing received the least favourable rating. This finding implies that communication and marketing has been identified by both stakeholders and residents as an area that requires significant attention in order to improve satisfaction with recreation services.

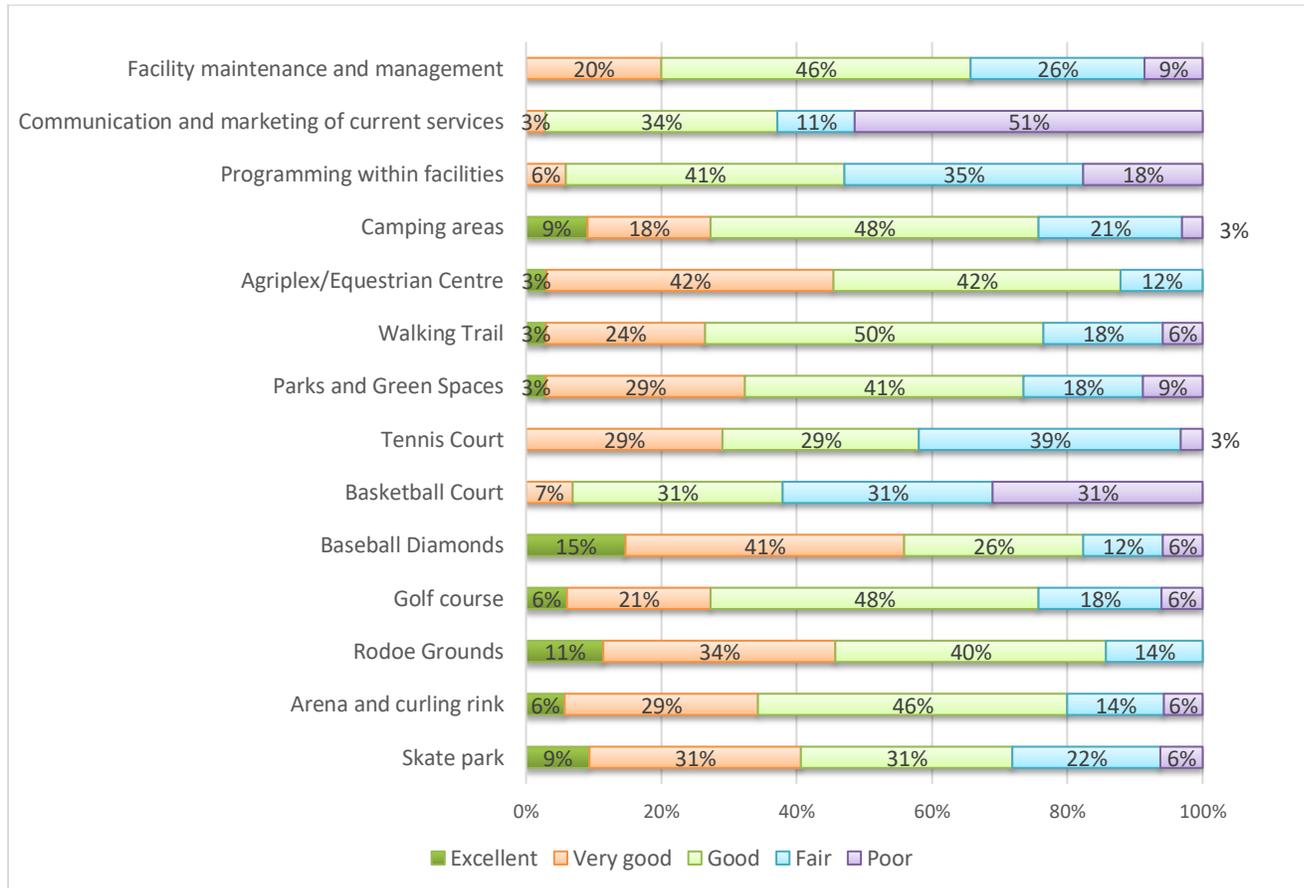


Figure 4 – Assessment of Different Aspects of Recreation Services by Stakeholders (35 responses, 0 skipped)

### Suggestions for Improving Current Recreation Facilities and Programs

Question 5 and 6 asked stakeholders if there were any existing recreation facilities and programs they wanted to see changed or improved, and what type of changes or improvements they wanted to see made. In response to facilities, some of the suggestions offered include:

- Completion of the arena expansion
- Remodeling of Jaycee Park
- Full fencing of baseball fields
- More amenities in the golf course
- Widening, improvement and better maintenance of walking trails
- More walkways and green spaces
- More use of performing arts centre
- Better cleaning and maintenance of arena
- Better use of schools for exercise programs



In terms of programs, some of the suggestions offered include:

- More recreation activities for residents of all ages.
- Better marketing of existing recreation programs.
- Better scheduling to allow more people to participate in programs.
- Introduction of new activities, such as inline and ball hockey at the arena, and indoor soccer for kids.
- Opening pools on holidays.

## **Ideas and Suggestions for New Recreation Facilities**

Question 7 asked respondents if there are any new recreation facilities they wanted to see built in the future and where they would like to see those facilities located. New facilities suggested include:

- Multiplex (amenities mentioned include indoor soccer pitches, kids playground, walking track, squash and racquet courts, etc)
- Spray/Splash park (Old Richard Lumber site near CRC, skatepark at playgrounds, Jaycee Park)
- Fitness centre
- Dog park
- Indoor walking path (Gordon Buchanan Centre)
- Baseball courts
- Outdoor rink (parking lot adjacent to museum)
- Electronic gaming center
- A proper auditorium

## **Challenges Facing Recreational Development**

Question 8 asked stakeholders what they considered as the main challenges facing recreational development within the community. Responses provided included:

- Funding
- Staffing
- Poor management
- Vandalism
- Lack of coordinated efforts and plan
- General lack of knowledge
- Scheduling conflicts

## **Opportunities and Assets for Recreation Development**

Question 9 and 10 asked stakeholders what they considered as assets and opportunities for recreation development in the community. Opportunities identified include:

- Strategic location
- Support of surrounding communities
- Better utilization of current recreation facilities



Assets mentioned include:

- Great community (engaged and active residents)
- Local fundraisers/Good volunteers
- Current recreation facilities
- Land for future recreation development
- Infrastructure to support new projects
- Support and teamwork of all partners involved

## Suggestions for Improving Facility Operations and Maintenance

Question 11 asked stakeholders if they had any suggestions for improving the operations, maintenance and management of current recreation facilities. Suggestions provided include:

- Hiring a full-time recreation manager who will report to the Recreation Committee.
- Having qualified and experienced staff
- Ensuring that facilities are available for year-round use
- Adopting a more thorough and consistent maintenance routine
- Creating volunteer opportunities for youth to work in facilities

## Ideas and Suggestions for Improving Awareness Creation and Information Sharing

Question 12 asked stakeholders if they had any suggestions for improving the operations, maintenance and management of current recreation facilities in the community. Suggestions provided include:

- Hiring a programmer
- Creating a master list of all recreation facilities in town, including their contact information.
- Having a consistent and reliable schedule
- Utilizing both online and traditional information sources
- Centralizing communication around recreation
- Developing a comprehensive marketing and communications plan

## Partnerships for Recreation Development

Question 13 asked stakeholders what type of partnerships could be created, maintained or improved for recreation development in the community. Suggestions provided include:

- Maintaining and strengthening existing relationship between partnership, including Councils, schools, etc
- Corporate sponsorships
- Collaborating with volunteers and user groups.
- Working with surrounding communities, including tri settlements, CRS and youth programs in the community.
- Partnering with special interest groups.



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## Key Considerations for Recreation Planning and Development

Question 14 asked stakeholders what should be the key considerations for recreational planning and development in the community. Suggestions provided include:

- Financial viability of projects
- Costs, including impact on tax payers
- Potential users, user fee
- Ongoing operations and maintenance costs
- Looking at the “Big Picture” when deciding new facilities

## Additional Feedback

Question 15 asked if stakeholders had any additional comments for the proposed Recreation Master Plan. This question received only four (4) responses. These included compliment about current recreation facilities in the Town, a cautionary comment about balancing future aspirations with current realities, spreading attention and resources for recreation wider beyond the arena, and making targeted investments to boost moral, mental and physical wellbeing of the community.