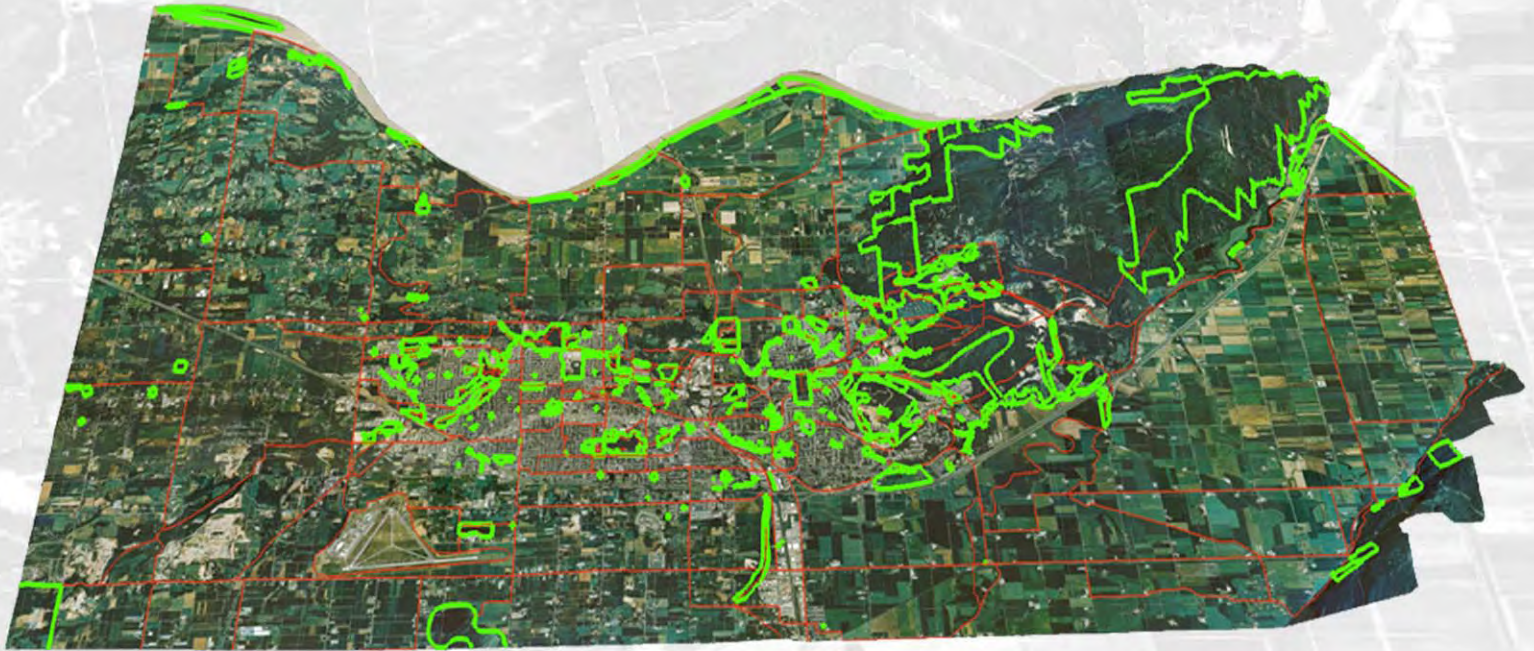




CITY OF  
Abbotsford



# **CITY OF ABBOTSFORD PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN 2005**

## **SUMMARY REPORT**

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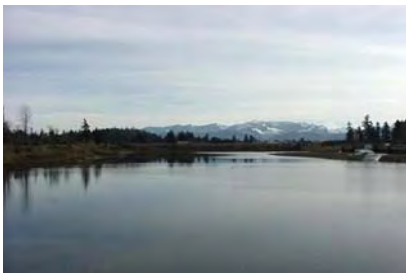
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Parks and Recreation Master Plan  
Core Area Enlargement

# 1. INTRODUCTION

***The basic role of the municipality is to ensure the availability of the broadest range of recreation opportunities for every individual and group consistent with available community resources (National Policy Statement on Recreation, 1987)***



The Abbotsford area has experienced considerable growth since 1981, and continuing population growth is anticipated for many decades. The City of Abbotsford has a significant supply of parks, open space and recreation facilities. With the increasing size and density of the population and societal trends towards greater focus on leisure activities, acquiring and maintaining adequate parks and recreation facilities and programs will be key ingredients to maintaining quality of life in the community.

A number of park and recreation planning activities have been undertaken in Abbotsford within the past 20 years, however a comprehensive analysis of parks and recreation in the current City of Abbotsford has not been conducted. The purpose of this plan is to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of parks and recreation facilities, services and programs, and to prepare an innovative, community-based plan for delivery of parks and recreation within the next ten years. Although the plan focuses primarily on the 10-year horizon, population growth over the next 20 year period is considered in order to facilitate decision-making.

Consultation with the community played a major role in the planning process. Meetings with a Steering Committee composed of City and community representatives were held throughout plan preparation. In addition, there were focus groups, a random telephone survey, a survey of user and interest groups, facility surveys, a survey of recreation programs, and two public sessions.

Once all of the primary consultation was complete, a comprehensive analysis of the information was conducted. This included a spatial analysis (using a computer geographic information system), trend analysis, market analysis, review of trends, analysis of strengths and weaknesses, and cost analysis. From the analyses, draft recommendations were prepared. These were reviewed by city staff, the Steering Committee, Council, Parks and Recreation Commission, and the public before the final report was prepared.

## 2. THE VISION

Through a visioning workshop and extensive discussion, the Steering Committee developed the following vision and objectives for the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

### 2.1 Vision

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**Recreation and parks are essential to QUALITY OF LIFE.**



***The City of Abbotsford is a vibrant community where quality of life is valued. Some of the essential elements of quality of life in Abbotsford are healthy lifestyles, opportunities for play, and respect for the environment. The parks and recreation system plays a vital role in achieving those values.***

***The parks and recreation system is top notch and innovative. It provides diverse physical, social and educational opportunities to the multi-cultural and multi-generational population. The parks and recreation system is a source of community pride, and contributes to identification with communities and neighbourhoods.***

***The parks and open spaces in Abbotsford encompass and protect many of the natural and environmental features that make Abbotsford unique. A strong environmental ethic is central to the functioning of the Parks and Recreation Department. The open space system and recreation opportunities also provide a connection with the agricultural land and culture that is a part of the community.***

***There are also economic benefits. In addition to the everyday facilities and services that help in attracting a growing population, major events in sports and recreation attract tourists to the City.***

***Abbotsford is recognized provincially and nationally as a leader in the field of parks and recreation. Through the parks and recreation system, Abbotsford's residents have opportunities to improve their health, learn and have fun.***

## 2.2 Objectives

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Develop a system of **parks and open space** that is a balance of diverse and interesting parks and natural open spaces. The open space will incorporate some of the natural features of Abbotsford, such as the hills, escarpments, Fraser River, Sumas Mountain, creeks, and flat lands. Major parks will be a focus for diverse activities, and neighbourhood parks will be easily accessible to all residents. Attractive urban plazas will be included in the parks and open space system. Parks and open space will keep up with population growth.

Provide a **network of routes** including multi-use pathways, trails, bicycle lanes and attractive pedestrian streetscapes that link the City's parks, facilities, schools and business areas. Many of these routes will follow greenways and natural features. The City will be known for its cycling opportunities in the urban core and in the surrounding rural areas.

**Recreation and parks build  
STRONG FAMILIES and  
HEALTHY COMMUNITIES.**

Develop new and improved **recreation facilities** to support everyday community leisure needs related to recreation, sports and culture, as well as tournaments and special events that also involve visitors and tourists. Potential new and upgraded facilities include a community arena with large spectator capability, and a large multi-purpose community recreation facility. The community recreation facility may accommodate active and passive programming space for all ages, including dedicated space for seniors and youth. Over time, facilities will be provided to keep up with the growth of the community.



Provide **recreation programming** that offers people opportunities to participate, socialize, develop skills, and build a better sense of community.

Cultivate **partnerships** with community organizations, the private sector, and the public. Work with these partners in the development, operation, programming and maintenance of parks and facilities. Partners will range from large corporations who may be involved in development of a large facility to volunteers who participate in the "adopt a park" program.

Encourage **community development** through the parks and recreation system. Foster a sense of community in neighbourhoods by providing community groups with gathering spaces such as schools, parks and recreation facilities. Continue to cultivate partnerships with community groups and support social opportunities through programs offered in community centres. Ensure that information about parks and recreation is reaching residents.

Employ creative use of partnerships, innovative land use, and phasing of projects to ensure that the parks and recreation system is **cost effective** and **affordable**.

Plan for **inclusivity** in the parks and recreation system, ensuring that there are opportunities for all age groups, including children, youth and seniors; people with disabilities; and those who are economically challenged.



Serve the community as an **environmental leader**. This can be accomplished through means such as:

- efficient use of park land,
- protection of important trees and environmentally sensitive areas,
- use of alternative energy sources and energy and water conservation measures,
- low impact development,
- reduce/reuse/recycle program,
- best management practices for stormwater management, and
- integrated pest management.

Address issues related to **safety** and **security** in the planning, design, construction and operation of parks and recreation facilities.

### 3. DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS



The population of the area encompassed by the current city of Abbotsford (previously Matsqui and Abbotsford) increased by 111% between the 1981 and 2001 census. While the rate of growth has slowed in recent years, the community has continued to be one of the fastest growing in British Columbia and Canada. Abbotsford is expected to experience continued strong population growth throughout the ten-year time frame of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.



Long term estimates from B.C. Stats indicate that Abbotsford's population distribution will remain quite stable, with the relative distributions of age not shifting significantly. This is somewhat different from other Lower Mainland municipalities that expect their populations to age significantly. Abbotsford's continuing high birth and growth rates are major contributors to this trend. The implication is that the City will have to continue providing adequate services and facilities to service a family-oriented community as well as a significant population of seniors.

The various age groups are not distributed equally throughout the City. Generally, there are high proportions of children and low numbers of seniors in the rural and single family areas. Within the core, there are relatively high numbers in the 19-39 year age group and seniors.

Abbotsford has long been a multi-cultural community consisting of people from around the world. This diversity has existed for a number of generations and continues to contribute to the economic and social make-up of the City. It is important that Parks and Recreation provide information in different languages and facilitate activities that are attractive to portions of the community that to this point aren't drawn to city services.

The majority of Abbotsford's future growth will occur in the urban area with the agricultural and rural area population increasing only marginally. With growth limited to the urban area, the City's housing stock is shifting from being predominantly single family to increasingly multi-family. This, combined with a large numbers of suites in single-family neighbourhoods, means that the presence of parks and open space within all communities is important, since many residents will not have access to private, useable open space.

Abbotsford still provides more affordable housing prices compared to municipalities closer to Vancouver. Lower housing costs mean that families may have more disposable income than if they lived closer in to Vancouver. Abbotsford also has a significant population who spend more than 30% of their income on rent or mortgage housing costs (26.8% per the Local Health Area demographic profile). Both of these conditions have implications for Parks and Recreation. Opportunities are required for those with higher disposable income and for those on lower incomes.



## 4. PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

***Parks and open space bring beauty to an area while GIVING PEOPLE SATISFACTION AND IMPROVING THEIR QUALITY OF LIFE.***



The parks and open space system has been divided into categories based on the various functions of each type of park and open space. This section lists and defines the parks and open space categories, along with standards of supply from the previous Parks and Recreation Master Plan and the City's Official Community Plan.

It should be noted that the standards are a guide rather than a definitive requirement. The standards can be applied in a flexible manner to ensure that community needs for a full range of park types and easily accessible parks and open space are available to all city residents.

### **City-Wide Parks**

#### **Standard: 1 ha per 1,000 population**

City-wide parks regularly draw visitors from the entire city. People may visit these parks due to the natural features or the facilities and programs offered. The following are different types of city-wide parks:

- Major Destination Parks are centred around features which are unique in the City, and offer a range of facilities and activities. Major destination parks serve the entire City and draw the general public who specifically travel to spend time "in the park". Park features can be natural, such as in Mill Lake Park or the proposed park at McKee Peak. They can also be built features, such as a potential future park oriented towards viewing aircraft at the airport, or the historic features at Clayburn Park.
- Athletic Parks have major athletic facilities that draw players from the entire City. These parks are also regularly used for tournaments and other sports-related events. Exhibition Park is currently the only city-wide athletic park. Delair Park is proposed for expansion to fall within this category.
- Urban Parks are located in the central area. They provide seating and gathering spaces and features such as ornamental plantings and art that establish a landscape character for the core area. They are distinct from neighbourhood and community parks in that play equipment is not typically included. The Civic Centre is the only existing urban park.

### **Community Parks**

#### **Standard: 1 ha per 1,000 population**

Community Parks (optimal size 4 to 8 ha) generally serve the catchment area of a secondary school, or about three to five neighbourhoods. They typically include sports fields and/or ball diamonds, fieldhouse/washroom building, playground(s), walkways or trails, and parking lot(s). They are meant to form the visual, physical and social focus of the community.





### **Neighbourhood Parks**

#### **Standard: 1.4 ha per 1,000 population**

Neighbourhood Parks (optimal size 2 to 4 ha) generally serve the catchment area of an elementary school, or 2,000 to 4,000 population. Neighbourhood park development will typically include play equipment, hard court, pathways, open grass, and seating. These parks are meant to form the visual, physical and social focus of the neighbourhood. In many cases, portions of secondary or elementary school sites serve as neighbourhood parks.



### **Open Space**

Several types of properties are included in this category of public land:

- Natural features such as streams, bluffs, forests and wetlands,
- Small maintained properties that do not meet the criteria for neighbourhood parks, e.g. small open grass area. These areas may add to the character of the surrounding area, but they do not provide active recreation opportunities.
- Public cemeteries.
- Public golf courses.

No numerical standard is provided for open space.

Another standard in Abbotsford's Park and Open Space Acquisition Strategy is related to land area. It states that a minimum of 6% of the overall land area should be occupied by parks and open space within each urban community.

Section 4.1 of this report analyzes the overall supply of parks and open space in the City. The sections after 4.1 address each of the categories separately. Recommendations are listed in tables, with the priority and proposed timing indicated. Costs are noted as high (over \$1 million), medium (\$500,000 to 1 million) or low (under \$500,000). The primary report that accompanies this plan lists actual cost estimates.

## 4.1 Overall Supply

The overall supply of parks and open space in Abbotsford by category in relation to population is illustrated on the table below:

Park or Open Space Type	Number of Sites	Total Area (ha)	Current Standard / 1000 Pop	Current Supply / 1000 Pop
City-Wide Parks	4	89	1.0	0.7
Community Parks	16	135	1.0	1.1
Neighbourhood Parks	30	42	1.4	0.3
School Site Open Space (approx.)	49	85		0.7
Open Space	119	363		
<b>Total</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>714</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>2.8</b>

**Figure 1: Current Park Supply by Population**

The current overall standard of supply in relation to the 2002 population has not been achieved. The following are the primary concerns:

- The supply is significantly below the standard for city-wide and neighbourhood parks. Even considering school sites, the neighbourhood park supply is low, and many school sites do not meet neighbourhood park needs.
- A summary of parks and open space supply by statistical areas illustrates that the distribution of city park space is not equitable and there are some areas with severe deficiencies in park space.
- A significant amount of new park land will be needed to maintain the standards with population growth.

When considering park and open space supply as a percentage of the land area, regional parks and other public open space types are usually included. Most of the statistical areas in the urban area meet the area-based standard of 6%. However, 5 statistical areas fall well below the standard and will require consideration in terms of parks acquisition.

The following sections provide specific recommendations related to the provision of new parks and open space in areas that are deficient and where parks will be required to accommodate future growth.

## 4.2 City-wide Parks

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The OCP standard for City-wide Parks is 1.0 ha per 1,000 people, and the current supply is 0.7 ha per 1,000 people. The shortfall in relation to the standard is significant: currently 34 ha; 70 ha in 2012, and 107 ha in 2022.

### Major Destination Parks



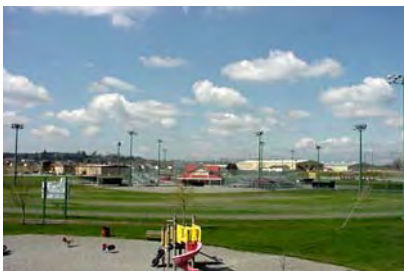
The primary Major Destination Park in Abbotsford is Mill Lake Park. The importance of Mill Lake Park in the community is reflected in the results of the surveys conducted. In the telephone survey and the informal survey, it was by far the most frequently visited park. A plan for Mill Lake Park has been adopted by Council (Mill Lake Action Plan Update, 2003). The plan, developed with a Steering Committee and public input, recommends property acquisition and park improvements in keeping with the importance of this park in the city.

Abbotsford will need a major destination park on the east side of the city, particularly with the population growth planned for that area. McKee Peak has the potential to provide that park. It is an important landscape feature and landmark with high visibility, significant vegetation, and panoramic views.

Clayburn Park has also been classified as a city-wide major destination park. Work will be required in the future to raise this site to an appropriate city-wide standard with design improvements, interpretive facilities, and protection for the historic elements.

Several other locations in Abbotsford also provide opportunities to serve as major destination parks in the future, including: the airport, Albert Dyck Park, and Judson and Laxton Lakes.

### Athletic Parks



Exhibition Park is currently the only city-wide athletic park in Abbotsford. The Exhibition Park Master Plan (2003) makes recommendations for improving the site in keeping with a clear vision for the future.

Abbotsford currently has a deficit of sports fields and ball diamonds and a lack of tournament facilities. A new city-wide athletic park is required in the relatively short term, and Delair Park is ideally suited for that purpose.

## Urban Parks



There is currently only one Urban Park in Abbotsford; the Civic Centre area. This site has significant potential to increase its prominence and use as an urban park.

Both Christmas Tree and Jubilee Parks in downtown Abbotsford are located in the central area, but they do not currently have the characteristics of urban parks. Jubilee Park, or land in the vicinity, is an ideal location for a major urban park. This and the Civic Centre could act as destination points at either end of the South Fraser Way corridor.

Because there is such a long distance between the Civic Centre and the Jubilee Park area, it would be ideal to have two other urban parks along the South Fraser Way corridor. A property on Simon Avenue acquired through the development process currently exists to protect a stand of trees; in the future this site may have urban park potential.

## Recommendations

Recommendation	Prio- Rity	Cur- rent	5 Year	10 Year	> 10 Year	Relative Cost	Primary Funding Source	Pot. Part.
Acquire Mill Lake properties in accordance with the Mill Lake Action Plan Update	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	High	DCC	
Continue Mill Lake Park improvements – play and picnic facilities on south side, slight increase in general improvements	1	✓	✓	✓		Medium	City	Infrastr. Grants
Acquire new major destination park on McKee Peak	1		✓			High	DCC	
Expand Delair Park to city-wide athletic park – first phase to include 2 sportsfields and expanded parking	1	✓				High	DCC	
Develop expanded Delair – more sportsfields, ball diamonds, tennis courts, and parking, with play and wildlife viewing	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	High	City	
Improve the maintenance level of City-wide parks to include minimal horticultural areas and increased mowing	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	Low	City	

## 4.3 Community and Neighbourhood Parks

***These parks are beneficial for everyday quality of life. This type of park promotes daily activities and interaction. Families with children enjoy time away from home in a wholesome play-oriented environment. Seniors enjoy passive recreation opportunities, while all age groups benefit from increased socialization.***



Community and neighbourhood parks are analyzed together, since they serve similar needs, but at different levels. There are currently 16 community parks in Abbotsford and 30 neighbourhood parks. There are also 49 public schools that function to varying degrees as neighbourhood and community parks.

There are many small parks (e.g., under 0.2 ha or 0.5 acre) with low levels of use in Abbotsford that were previously classified as neighbourhood parks. Most of these sites have been classified as open space in this Plan.

The combined standard for community and neighbourhood parks (including public schools) is 2.4 ha/1000 population. Only 5 out of the 22 statistical areas currently meet the standard. Although statistical areas that are over-supplied can serve the needs of adjacent areas, there are still significant deficiencies in community and neighbourhood parks.

An existing guideline is that community parks should be located within 1 km (a slow 20 minute walk) of every resident in urban areas, with closer spacings in higher density areas. The standard for neighbourhood parks is that they should be within 0.5 km (a slow 10 minute walk) of urban residents, with closer spacing in higher density areas. A spatial analysis of the neighbourhood and community parks illustrates that there are areas within the city that do not meet these guidelines.

Through this Master Plan process, the decision was made to retain community and neighbourhood standards as they are and to continue to apply these as a general guideline. The following are principles that the City should use to guide acquisition and development of community and neighbourhood parks:

- Locate community parks adjacent to secondary schools where possible.
- Locate community recreation facilities in or adjacent to community parks where possible.
- Locate community parks near open space corridors or bicycle routes where possible.
- Locate neighbourhood parks adjacent to elementary schools where possible.
- Locate neighbourhood parks central to neighbourhoods with street frontage and access from all four sides if possible.
- Dispose of underutilized park properties smaller than 0.2 ha that have financial value in locations already well served by neighbourhood parks.
- Increase the size of neighbourhood parks smaller than 0.2 ha in locations that are not well served by neighbourhood parks.
- Encourage School District No. 34 and colleges to recognize school grounds and campuses as park areas and to develop or improve them accordingly.

## Recommendations

Recommendation	Prio- Rity	Cur- rent	5 Year	10 Year	> 10 Year	Relative Cost	Primary Funding Source	Pot. Part.
Acquire 4 new community parks: East Abby, Upper McMillan, Atkinson, East Sumas Mountain	1	✓	✓			High	DCC	
Develop 2 community parks - East Abby, Upper McMillan*	1		✓	✓		High	City	
Acquire 10 new neighbourhood parks (1/yr.) - West Abby North, Timberlane/Boley, Hillcrest, Eagle Mountain, South Clearbrook, Bassani Neighbourhood Park, Ledgeview Slopes, East Ledgeview, South Auguston 1 and 2	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	High	DCC	
Develop 10 neighbourhood parks (existing and new sites) - including Dave Kandal, Cassiar, Eagle Mountain, Blueridge, Swensson, West Abby North, Upper Highlands, Prince Charles**	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	High	City	
Encourage School District 34 to improve school grounds to serve park needs	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	Low		School Dist

\* Community park development will typically include sports fields and/or ball diamonds, fieldhouse/washroom building, playgrounds, trails and parking lots.

\*\* Neighbourhood park development will typically include play equipment, hard court, pathways, open grass, and seating.

## 4.4 Open Space

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***Through the provision of parks, open spaces and protected natural environments, recreation can contribute to the ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH of our communities – an essential, life-sustaining role.***



There are currently 435 ha of accessible city land in Abbotsford that is considered open space. This includes: natural features, storm detention areas, small maintained properties that do not meet the criteria for neighbourhood parks, and public cemeteries and golf courses.

Open space is important in the community for a number of reasons. It visually provides relief from the hard surfaces and formal patterns of development, particularly in the urban area. It protects features in the landscape that give form and identity to the City, e.g. river shorelines, bluffs, mountainsides. It can protect environmentally sensitive areas for the benefit of fish and wildlife. It provides opportunities for stormwater management, enabling modification of the water quality and rate of runoff from developed sites. It can also provide corridors that are suitable for trails.

Abbotsford has an active contingent of open space/naturalist groups who work on conservation and education projects. These groups indicated that Abbotsford has some excellent open space areas that are already protected, e.g. Fishtrap Creek, Mill Lake, Willband Creek, and Stoney Creek. There are also many other areas that have been lost to development. There is strong interest in protecting additional open space to protect resource values and to connect the various parcels into corridors that provide links for recreation purposes as well as for fish and wildlife.

Open space is important as a complement to parks in ensuring that there is “green space” distributed throughout the urban area. There is a very wide variation in the amount of open space within the various areas of the city.

There is also variation in the quality of facilities within open space land. For example, many of the older stormwater detention facilities are unattractive and fenced. There are opportunities to provide public open space that is attractive and environmentally sensitive, while accommodating recreation where possible.

### ***Recommendations***



Recommendation	Prio- Rity	Cur- rent	5 Year	10 Year	> 10 Year	Relative Cost	Primary Funding Source	Pot. Part.
Acquire additional open space, including trail routes	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	High	DCC Cash-in-lieu	✓
Encourage an ESA inventory to help in identifying potential open space	1		✓			Low	City	
Recognize the visual, recreational and environmental values of new stormwater management facilities	1	✓	✓	✓	✓		Engineer'g	✓
Make cemeteries more attractive	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	Medium	Cemetery User Fees	✓
Identify and protect heritage features	3	✓	✓	✓	✓	Low	City, Grants	✓
Evaluate current park use and financial value of small underutilized parks. If appropriate, dispose of these.	2	✓	✓			Revenue		

## 4.5 Trails and Streets

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***In most recreation needs surveys conducted within the last ten years, TRAILS are listed as the most needed or desired recreation facility.***



There are several types of trails and streets that are important components of the parks and recreation system. These include:

- Paved off-road multi-use trails with universal accessibility (e.g. including wheelchairs, scooters) that can support cycling, walking, rollerblading, and other related uses,
- Unpaved trails suitable for walking, hiking and jogging (with some potentially designated for equestrian and/or mountain-biking use),
- On-road bicycle routes, usually designed as wider curb lanes, and
- Streets with special sidewalk, boulevard, median and/or other treatments that make them desirable as pedestrian and recreational cycling routes.

There are currently around 83 km off-road trails in Abbotsford, including a portion of the Trans Canada Trail. Most of the trails are included in city parks and open space, or within regional parks. A few of the trails have been established specifically as connecting links between parks, schools, and/or recreation facilities, but many more links could increase pedestrian and bicycle opportunities.

Abbotsford has some avid mountain biking interest groups who meet regularly at Sumas Mountain. They work on trails and conduct group rides for expert bikers, however these trails have not been condoned and are not managed by any government agency.

The Fraser Valley Sector Recreational Greenway Plan identifies existing and potential trails. These include trails within regional and proposed parks, and on-road bicycle corridors. These are the primary regional routes that connect Lower Mainland municipalities, but most have not yet been implemented.

The Engineering Department in the City, with input from recreational and cycling groups, developed a Bicycle Network Plan. This document and map is a plan for on-road cycling oriented primarily toward commuter cyclists. The plan requires review with respect to the Greenways Plan and detailed analysis of the road routes.

Streets are an integral part of the pedestrian and bicycle circulation system. The City has been involved in several initiatives to improve the quality of streets, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists.

The public indicated a strong interest in having more cycling trails in the community. Abbotsford has tremendous potential as a cycling community due to the interesting landscape features and agricultural land, and the relatively low traffic compared to other parts of the Lower Mainland. User groups in Abbotsford and the Steering Committee have noted that cycling in the city is now extremely dangerous. There is a particular lack of an east-west corridor, but in general, it is difficult to find safe routes for

recreational or commuter cycling. There is also a need to formalize, develop and promote opportunities for mountain biking.

In summary, there are significant needs within Abbotsford for all of the types of trails and streets, including:

- Paved off-road multi-use trails,
- Unpaved trails,
- On-road bicycle routes, and
- Streets with special treatments that make them desirable as pedestrian and recreational cycling routes.

The Master Plan proposes 274 km of on-road bicycle routes, some of which have been developed. Proposed trails, including all types of surfaces, extend over 131 km.

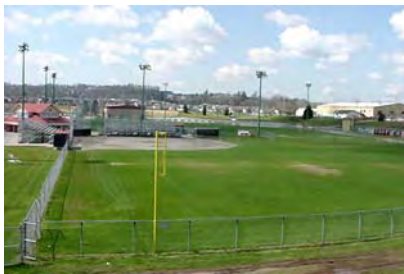
### **Recommendations**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Prio-Rity</b>	<b>Cur-rent</b>	<b>5 Year</b>	<b>10 Year</b>	<b>&gt; 10 Year</b>	<b>Relative Cost</b>	<b>Primary Funding Source</b>	<b>Pot. Part.</b>
Increase the amount of trail construction, including access along more river dykes, and provide associated facilities	1	✓	✓	✓		Medium	City, Private	User groups
Develop more bicycle routes on roads through a city planning process in collaboration with the regional greenways process	1		✓	✓	✓	Medium	City Engineer'g	Safer City Eng RDs
Expand and improve trail maps	1		✓			Low	City	✓
Develop mountain biking plan and trails	2		✓			Low	Private	User Groups RDs
Improve gateways and road landscape	3	✓	✓	✓	✓	High	City Eng	Eng

# 5. OUTDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES

## 5.1 Ball Diamonds

***The benefits of accommodating ball diamond growth are more active healthy adults and tourism development.***



Abbotsford has a total of 58 ball diamonds, of which 13 are for slo-pitch, 37 are fastball, and 8 are baseball (6 youth and 2 adult). There are three separate sports that use ball diamonds in Abbotsford. Slo-pitch is played by adults, fastball (previously called softball) is played mostly by children and youth with some play by adults, and baseball (sometimes called hardball) is played by children and youth (up to 21 years old).

Spring/summer slo-pitch currently has 1,700 members, it has grown 30% over the past 10 years, and it would like to increase further, but growth is limited by the availability of fields. There are currently 13 fields available for adult slo-pitch, of which 6 are lit. The leagues need more fields, more fields with lights, and more fields in clusters. Clustering of fields is important to slo-pitch players, since they like to hold tournaments and social events related to ball games.

The Fastball Association has 1,500 youth players. The league uses many different ball fields, most of which are at schools. All of the school fields that are adequate for use are being scheduled by this group. There is also an adult fastball league with two teams. Fastball lacks a good tournament facility; they can use slo-pitch diamonds, sometimes with the addition of a temporary outfield fence.

The Baseball Leagues have about 850 youth players. The leagues' diamonds are all in city parks and they have no clustered fields for tournaments, which they would like.

An analysis of the participation rates, trends, population projections, and standards in other communities indicates some immediate and long-term needs for ball diamonds to keep up with current needs and growth.

### ***Recommendations***

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Prio-Rity</b>	<b>Cur-rent</b>	<b>5 Year</b>	<b>10 Year</b>	<b>&gt; 10 Year</b>	<b>Relative Cost</b>	<b>Primary Funding Source</b>	<b>Pot. Part.</b>
Develop 8 new slo-pitch fields at Delair Park that can also be used for fastball	1	✓	✓	✓		Within Parks Table	City	User Groups
Change Exhibition Park baseball to slo-pitch	1	✓				Low	City	
Add 2 youth baseball fields to Delair Park	1		✓			Within Parks Table	City	
Include adequate washrooms and parking at new facilities	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	Within Parks Table	City	

## 5.2 Sports Fields

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Abbotsford has a total of 72 sports fields. These are used primarily for soccer, but other uses include football, cricket (across two fields), rugby, lacrosse, and ultimate (frisbee).

There are five primary leagues organizing soccer in Abbotsford. The Abbotsford Soccer Association (ASA) has 2,800 players from children to youth, Fraser Valley Mixed Soccer League is a recreational adult league with 225 players (9 teams). In addition, there is a Men's Soccer League with 275 members, Abbotsford United Soccer with 225 members, and Fraser Valley Summer Soccer Club with 350 players. Participation in all of the leagues is increasing, and it is projected to continue significant increases over the next ten years.

Generally, user groups report that there is a small deficit of low-end, small fields suitable for practices and children's games. There is a larger current deficit of the better fields used by soccer players requiring full-sized fields. The better fields are over-utilized and the ASA limits membership by reducing recruitment. There is a lack of a premier field with large spectator capacity close to the field. The University College of the Fraser Valley is also interested in the use of such a facility.

Soccer has traditionally been a fall and winter activity in the Lower Mainland, and most of the fields in Abbotsford are closed in the summer for maintenance. However summer soccer play is increasing, and there is a demand for fields at a time when many of the fields are now closed. Given the fall and winter use, there is a high demand for fields with lights. Abbotsford has only 2 grass (not regulation size) fields and 2 all-weather (gravel) fields with lights, and the grass fields are a challenge to manage because the increased use causes wear on the fields during the dormant season for grass. In addition, some slo-pitch fields are being used in winter for soccer, and this is very hard on the grass.



There are three other important trends occurring in soccer. One is a move towards artificial turf, which can sustain much higher levels of play year-round, and many Lower Mainland communities now have or are developing such fields. Another is indoor artificial turf practice facilities, e.g., Western Indoor Soccer, Burnaby. These are very popular for training. The third factor is the hiring of full time soccer development coordinators to improve the sport. These factors are leading to a more active soccer community and worn, over-utilized fields.

Other field sports that are popular in Abbotsford include football (about 33 teams in 3 clubs), rugby (7 teams), lacrosse (2 groups), cricket (4 teams), ultimate (growing membership), track and field (100 members, serving 1,200 children), and dog training and racing (4 groups).

An analysis of the participation rates, trends, population projections, and standards in other communities indicates some immediate and long-term needs for sports fields to keep up with current needs and growth.

**Recommendations**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Prio- Rity</b>	<b>Cur- rent</b>	<b>5 Year</b>	<b>10 Year</b>	<b>&gt; 10 Year</b>	<b>Relative Cost</b>	<b>Primary Funding Source</b>	<b>Pot. Part.</b>
Develop 1 or 2 artificial turf fields with lights, funding through user fees, e.g. at Delair Park or Exhibition Park.	1		✓			High	User Fees	User Groups
Develop 9 sports fields (2 with lights) in new and expanded city parks and schools	1		✓	✓		Within Parks Table	City, Private School	User Groups

## 5.3 Other Park Facilities

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***Approximately 4.3 million Canadians have played tennis at least once over the last 12 months. (Tennis Participation in Canada, 1997)***

### Tennis

Abbotsford currently has 46 tennis courts accessible to the public, of which 16 are in public parks, 20 are at public schools (but 4 of these are currently occupied by portables), and 10 are at private schools. Eight of the public courts have lights, and only 8 of the courts are in good condition. All of the others have minor cracks, puddling, warping or fading.

The amount of tennis played on the courts varies significantly. The park and school tennis courts cater primarily to casual recreational players. There is more play on the courts that are clustered together and on those that have lights. Newer courts are generally more popular than older facilities. Many of the single and double tennis courts serve as multi-purpose facilities, with other uses including roller hockey and skateboarding.

Great West Fitness is a private club with 5 outdoor and 4 indoor tennis courts, however it is in a partnership with the City, since the land is owned by the city and leased to the club. Great West has 400 tennis members. Their indoor courts are fully booked during the peak hours.

After a plateau of tennis participation in the last decade, tennis participation is now increasing again with the help of support from industry and tennis organizations. Although Abbotsford has a reasonable number of courts, many of these are of low quality and they are minimally used for tennis. Abbotsford will need a significant number of new courts to meet population growth. These courts should be clustered to serve as community tennis facilities, and half should have lights. As part of the supply, Abbotsford also needs more indoor courts.

### Golf

The City of Abbotsford currently has three golf courses available to the public, which include Ledgeview Golf Course (18 holes) where the land is owned by the City and is leased to the golf club, and Valley Golf Centre (9 hole Par 3) and Fraser Glen (18 hole Executive) courses, which are privately operated.

Within the Fraser Valley Region there are at least a dozen golf courses within a 30 to 45 minute drive for residents of Abbotsford. In addition, approximately six 18-hole golf courses are located in close proximity just across the Sumas Border in the United States. Given all of these golf courses, there is not a need for another full golf course in Abbotsford.

Abbotsford does not have a short Par 3 golf course. A facility like that could serve the casual golfer, families, youth or seniors, all of whom are not as well served by the more expensive or more challenging golf courses.

## Play Areas and Hard Courts

***Recreation is essential to the development of our children and youth – we learn motor skills, social skills, creativity and other life skills through play.***



Most of the neighbourhood and community parks in Abbotsford have some level of play area. There are over 60 play areas in city parks, and additional ones at school grounds. Play areas perform an important function in terms of providing opportunities for children to engage in outdoor recreation on an unscheduled basis, and in providing young families with opportunities to gather and socialize.

The play areas range from very basic facilities with a swing set and teeter totter to a variety of climbing structures, bouncy toys, and other more modern play equipment. Some of the facilities are ageing and do not meet current safety standards and others are quite new. Very few of the facilities enable use by people with disabilities.

Hard surface multi-purpose courts are a type of facility that has become popular in public parks relatively recently. These are paved courts, usually surrounded by fences, with space for roller hockey nets, and basketball hoops. These are useful facilities because of the range of activities that can be accommodated. Other activities that can occur in these courts include ball hockey, hopscotch and other casual ball playing activities. Abbotsford has only four hard courts to date.

## Picnic Facilities

Abbotsford currently has 9 picnic shelters available for rent, and another 3 shelters available on a first come-first serve basis. Most of the shelters have access to running water and washrooms nearby. Only a few have power. The telephone survey indicated that picnicking is a popular activity and that there are not enough picnic facilities for large groups.



## Youth Parks

There are two existing skateboard parks, one located directly north of the Matsqui Recreation Centre and the other located adjacent to the Abbotsford Recreation Centre in McMillan Park. As the population grows, more youth parks will be required within the urban area to accommodate skateboarding, cycling, and other activities that may be of interest to local youth.



## Dog Off-leash Parks

The city currently has three dog off-leash parks. Dog ownership is extremely popular and dogs require exercise to be healthy. As urban areas have become more dense, there is less opportunity for letting dogs off a leash, except in designated areas. In addition to more dog off-leash parks, an interest was expressed in having dog off-leash trails.

## Other Park Facilities



There are many other facilities that can be located in parks. These are best determined in consultation with the surrounding community. The following are some additional needs for park facilities, especially as the population grows: more community gardens, more sand volleyball courts, more spray parks, more card-playing shelters, and appropriate space for outdoor archery, horseshoes, and lawn bowling. Adequate facilities such as washrooms, change rooms and food service need to be located where they are required. The city is also in need of an integrated signage system for parks.

In developing new park facilities, the City should use the following principles in keeping with the City's objectives related to the environment:

- Promote energy conservation and low-impact development in the design of facilities within parks.
- Promote naturalization within parks as appropriate to increase environmental values and reduce maintenance costs.

## Recommendations

Recommendation	Prio-Rity	Cur-rent	5 Year	10 Year	> 10 Year	Relative Cost	Primary Funding Source	Pot. Part.
Add 14 new tennis courts in clusters	1		✓	✓		Low	City	
Encourage doubling of indoor courts at Great West and add another indoor tennis facility	2					N/a	Private	Private
Evaluate existing tennis courts and convert to hard courts if appropriate	2		✓	✓		Low	City	
Develop new play areas (1 per year)	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	Within Parks	City	
Improve existing play areas (2 per year)	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	Medium	City	
Develop new picnic facilities – 6 basic shelters	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	Within Parks	City	
Encourage and support the development of a par 3/pitch and put golf course	2						Private	
Provide space for community gardens near multi-family housing	3		✓	✓		Within Parks	City	User Group
Develop a new integrated sign system for directional, regulatory and interpretive signs	1	✓				Within Parks	City	
Provide more dog off-leash areas, trails, and standards	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	Within Parks	City	

## 6. INDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES

### 6.1 Aquatics

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Abbotsford has two public indoor pools; the Abbotsford Recreation Centre which has a 25 metre pool and Matsqui Recreation Centre which is a 25 metre lap pool with an additional wave-generating leisure pool. The indoor pools are combined with community recreation facilities that include arenas, weight rooms, meeting rooms, and concession /café services.

Abbotsford has two outdoor pools, which are open from early June until the end of September. A contracted facility operator currently manages the Matsqui Village Outdoor Pool and Centennial Outdoor Pool. Matsqui Village Pool was completed in 1963, and Centennial Pool was built in 1967. Both are over thirty-five years old and are in need of capital upgrades and maintenance.

Currently the population of Abbotsford is sufficiently provided with the two indoor and two outdoor aquatic facilities. However, as the population increases over the next twenty years, additional aquatic facilities will be required.

The current trend for aquatic facilities is not only to provide public swimming and learn-to-swim lessons, but to include a variety of choices for family members of all ages. Typical activities include: land fitness, water fitness, weight room workouts, length swimming, swirl/sauna and special events such as theme swims targeted to parents and tots, children, teens, adults, seniors and families.

With the convenient location of Abbotsford's two indoor pools and the opportunity to expand program service delivery and provide excellent customer service, the demand for summer use of outdoor pools has declined. These pools are heavily subsidized, and Matsqui Village Pool is in need of a significant upgrade. Many local residents also enjoy swimming in local and nearby lakes.

As Abbotsford improves its aquatic facilities and programs, it will need to comply with the following principles of service:

- Increase public participation and aquatic programming.
- Provide customer service training and interactive “play leader” coaching for staff.

## **Recommendations**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Prio- Rity</b>	<b>Cur- rent</b>	<b>5 Year</b>	<b>10 Year</b>	<b>&gt; 10 Year</b>	<b>Relative Cost</b>	<b>Primary Funding Source</b>	<b>Pot. Part.</b>
Improve facilities for those with disabilities	1	✓	✓	✓		Low	City	
Purchase a large water feature for ARC	1			✓		Low	City	
Investigate options for an indoor aquatic facility in the east side of Abbotsford	1						Private	Private
Consider a partnership with the YMCA or University for a central aquatic facility	1						Private	YMCA
Renovate and upgrade MRC pool and meeting rooms	2		✓			Medium	City	
Consider the addition of retail shops, gourmet food, and wellness facilities in partnership with a private operator at MRC and ARC	2						Private	Private
Renovate and upgrade ARC	2			✓		Medium	City	

## **6.2 Arenas**



The community of Abbotsford is fortunate to have five ice surfaces available to organized ice user groups and local residents. The City of Abbotsford’s Parks and Recreation Department operates three arenas, and two are privately owned and operated by Centre Ice.

Abbotsford has a surplus of ice time which will be able to accommodate growth in participation over the next ten years. Beyond that time frame, a new ice sheet will be required. A major gap in the community is an arena with large capacity for spectators. This could help to attract tournaments and large community events.

Arenas are designed to accommodate a variety of both dry floor and ice uses including large-scale community special events. All of the city arenas do this, except summer use of MRC arena is limited due to its sand floor.

The current trend for arenas is to include meeting spaces, large dressing rooms, spectator seating, restaurant / lounge services, and tournament facilities. The majority of men’s recreational hockey teams have moved to Centre Ice for these types of additional amenities.

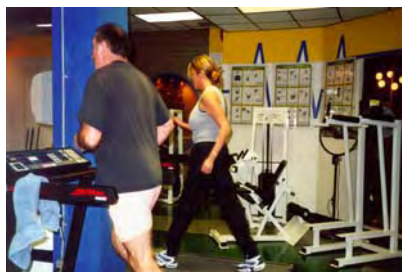
The costs of operating indoor arenas have increased over the past few years, making it more challenging to operate cost effectively, especially for single ice sheets. This is a challenge for the City and it is heavily subsidizing ice time.

**Recommendations**

Recommendation	Prio- Rity	Cur- rent	5 Year	10 Year	> 10 Year	Relative Cost	Primary Funding Source	Pot. Part.
Consider closing Ice Experience	1	✓				Cost Savings		
Investigate options for a large spectator arena (4,000 to 6,000 seats) twinned to MSA Arena or in another location	2		✓			Low	City	✓
Build a large spectator arena (4,000 to 6,000 seats)	2				✓	High		

## 6.3 Fitness/Wellness Facilities

***Strength and cardio training has a profound effect on the longevity and health of individuals. Fitness increases life expectancy, prolongs independent living, reduces the risk of heart disease, reduces chances of osteoporosis and diabetes, reduces stress and depression, and improves performance and productivity.***



Fitness facilities within the community of Abbotsford include numerous privately operated fitness centres in addition to the Abbotsford Recreation Centre and the Matsqui Recreation Centre, which provide weightroom and aerobic facilities.

The baby boom generation is having a large impact on the design and use of fitness, health and wellness facilities, and this is expected to continue during the next ten years. The retirement of this generally well-educated and healthy group will not only change the workforce, but also will create a new large group of active retirees who will expect to take up new challenges in their spare time.

Research has indicated that the majority of Recreation Departments are providing not only fitness programs and weight room facilities but are including health and wellness programs. Fitness facilities located in community centres, which include swimming, skating and recreational programs, encourage families to spend time together participating at “community gathering places”. Many of the Lower Mainland’s fitness facilities which are located in community centres are witnessing increased participation.

Research and comparisons indicate that to operate a profit-generating weight room facility, the weight room space must be at least 5,000 sq. ft. Although there is some risk of competing with the private sector, a segment of the population enjoys participating in fitness activities at their local recreation centre rather than becoming a member of a privately operated fitness facility, which is usually more expensive and requires more commitment.

### ***Recommendations***

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Prio- Rity</b>	<b>Cur- rent</b>	<b>5 Year</b>	<b>10 Year</b>	<b>&gt; 10 Year</b>	<b>Relative Cost</b>	<b>Primary Funding Source</b>	<b>Pot. Part.</b>
Consider a partnership with the YMCA to develop a community facility	1						YMCA	✓
Expand ARC and MRC weight rooms – provide some programs or times for women only	1		✓			Medium	Profit Centred*	✓
Implement a partnership with Auguston Development to develop wellness facilities	2						Private	✓

\* capital paid back in five years

## 6.4 Indoor Sports Facilities

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***Recreation, parks, fitness, sports, art and culture reduce costs of social service intervention and foster care, and reduce crime and social dysfunction.***



The major indoor sport facilities provided by Abbotsford's Parks and Recreation Department for sports programs and team/executive meetings are located at Exhibition Park, ARC, MRC, arenas, and several smaller facilities. In addition, facilities in the community are located in public schools, private schools, churches, and private clubs. Most of the large facilities in Abbotsford are located at Exhibition Park. Unfortunately, due to the current priority of user groups, and lack of a programming mandate, many indoor sport groups are cancelled from regular use due to scheduled trade shows and special events.

Due to the lack of a programming mandate and adequate amenities for indoor sport groups, the use of Exhibition Park facilities in relation to the capacity is extremely low, and there is a high subsidy. The current Exhibition Park subsidy is \$450,000. Approximately \$350,000 is attributed to operating the upper buildings which have participation rates of significantly less than half of their capacity (excluding the Flea Market). Average weekly attendance at community recreation facilities throughout Canada with subsidies of \$400,000 is in excess of 3000, whereas at Exhibition Park it is estimated at about 600.

In most communities, indoor sports activities take place in a community centre or recreation centre. Currently, the City of Abbotsford does not operate a multi-purpose community centre. A multi-purpose community centre is usually considered a "gathering place" for community residents of all ages that accommodates recreation, sports, fitness, cultural, and social activities. In many instances, meeting rooms, day care, arts and crafts, seniors and youth facilities have been included in these centres. Abbotsford is currently under-served as both community recreation centres are lacking multi-purpose activity space. Abbotsford will fall greatly behind with future population growth if a community centre is not planned and constructed within the next ten years.

Abbotsford has a significant number of school gymnasiums, however access to the community has been restricted in some schools, and the space is not actively programmed by the School District or the City.

## **Recommendations**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Prio- Rity</b>	<b>Cur- rent</b>	<b>5 Year</b>	<b>10 Year</b>	<b>&gt; 10 Year</b>	<b>Relative Cost</b>	<b>Primary Funding Source</b>	<b>Pot. Part.</b>
Redevelop Ag Rec into a community recreation complex	1			✓		High	City	Private
Liase with the Abbotsford Seniors Coalition in planning for senior's in the new community recreation centre	1			✓		High		✓
Develop a youth centre at ARC	2		✓			Medium		
Develop a new community centre in Auguston	3			✓		High	City	Private
Continue to work with the School District to increase community access to schools	1	✓				Low		School Dist
Explore opportunities for using Tradex for indoor sports when it is not being used for commercial purposes.	1	✓				Low	City	

## 7. RECREATION PROGRAMS

***Leisure services enrich and complement protective services for latchkey children through after-school and other protective services***

***Children's play is essential to the human development process. Recreation, parks, fitness, sports, art and culture provide adults with exceptional opportunities for life long learning.***

***The opportunity of leisure makes a real difference in an adolescent's life***

***Community recreation reduces alienation, loneliness and anti-social behaviours***

***Leisure opportunities and facilities and the quality of the local environment are the foundation of community pride***

***Leisure provides opportunities for community involvement and shared management/ownership of resources***

The City of Abbotsford is not only witnessing growth in population within the next ten to twenty years, but a change in the community from a rural to an urban base with many single parent families and double working parents. Along with this shift in community focus is the need for recreation programs to provide opportunities for personal growth and development in addition to providing many positive benefits for the community at large.

One of the most challenging issues addressed by the Master Plan was Community Recreation. The history of the provision of community recreation dates back to the 1950's and 60's. As Canada urbanized, a need for creating leisure opportunities for all ages and abilities arose with the goal of improving the quality of life in cities, reducing crime, and promoting healthy lifestyles. One professor in particular (Lloyd Minchal) disagreed with this and felt that urbanizing communities would be better off allowing the community to provide for themselves. A number of communities, including Abbotsford, embraced Mr. Minchal's philosophy.

Forty years later, there are few communities that do not provide challenging, stimulating diverse programming for all taxpayers to enjoy. The assumption that the community was best situated to care for itself in an urban setting did not hold true. Volunteer involvement was sporadic, special interest individuals came and went, and overall no one was identifying the real needs of the community and facilitating solutions.

Programming and providing recreational services in Abbotsford has primarily been the responsibility of volunteer community groups and clubs. The extensive use of volunteers has been very successful in the past. In today's ever-changing society with single parent, dual income families and busy schedules, the level of volunteer dedication and commitment is declining. Of the many community groups interviewed, approximately 80% indicated that reduced funding and the decline in volunteer efforts is a major concern for the future.

A study was conducted comparing recreation programs in Abbotsford with those in Langley and Coquitlam; communities of similar population and growth rates (Enns, Hayes and Tonelli, 2002). The study found that Abbotsford has significantly fewer and less diverse programs (e.g., for 2001 municipal recreation programs other than aquatics and swimming, Abbotsford had one for every 327 people compared to one for every 77 residents in Langley and one for every 35 residents in Coquitlam).

A review of the role of other organizations (e.g. private sector, churches) in all three communities found that they do not come close to filling the gap in provision of recreation programs in Abbotsford, and the private and church programs are not available to all residents. The most significant deficiencies in Abbotsford are in recreation programs for preschool, youth and seniors. Abbotsford has particular needs for affordable programs and neighbourhood-based programs. There may be opportunities to form



**Families that Play Together – Stay Together**

**Recreating together BUILDS STRONG FAMILIES, the foundation of a stronger society**

**Seniors: Regular physical activity is one of the very best methods of health insurance for individuals**



recreational partnerships with the churches due to their location and facilities. In any case, the need for more municipal recreation programming is great, and this can only be accomplished with appropriate staff and facilities. User fees can help to offset costs, however Abbotsford’s current policy of only providing programs that are profitable or self-sustaining severely limits opportunities.

In expanding its recreation programs, the City should use the following principles:

- Liase with and support the Abbotsford Youth Commission.
- Assist with coordinating a centralized approach for all seniors’ groups.
- Partner with community groups to improve and expand recreation programs.
- Partner with the School District to develop public recreation programs in public schools.
- Seek programming advice from neighbourhood community associations.

Further research and direction are also required to properly program for active living and cultural inclusivity.

Abbotsford’s population is increasing in its cultural diversity. In order to ensure that this plan meets the needs of all ethnic backgrounds, the City of Abbotsford requires a cultural inclusivity recreation study.

**Recommendations**

Recommendation	Prio-Rity	Cur-rent	5 Year	10 Year	> 10 Year	Relative Cost	Primary Funding Source	Pot. Part.
Fund two community coordinators to expand recreation programs	1	✓	✓	✓		Low	City and User Fees	
Complete and implement a community Active Living Plan.	2		✓			Low	City	
Complete and implement a cultural diversity recreation programming plan.	2		✓			Low	City	

# 8. IMPLEMENTATION

## *Implementation Methods*

***A community-driven approach to active living is one important way of improving the quality of life of communities and the people who live in them.***

There are four primary topics important to implementation, in addition to procedures already used by the City.

1. Partnerships are an integral component of community development and a way to make limited municipal funds go farther in the development and operation of facilities and services. There are specific partnership opportunities with volunteers, associations and organizations, and the private sector, in addition to ongoing partnerships with the school district and other government agencies.
2. Community development is another important aspect of implementation. Community development is a process of meaningful citizen participation in decision-making, in actively helping to carry out those decisions, and in the evolution of the community. If Abbotsford is to be successful in promoting and expanding community development in the city, available staff with the appropriate skills will be required.
3. Marketing and communication is an important tool for maximizing awareness and use of Abbotsford's services and facilities. Done well, it enhances relationships with citizens and conveys the image and the benefits of the city's parks and recreation system. There are a number of components to marketing, including: advertising, signage, and pricing.
4. Fiscal efficiency and limiting taxes are important to the community, as identified through the Master Plan focus groups and surveys. Respondents felt it was important to maintain services to meet growth. In general it was felt that services are important, however there was a high expectation that services be offered as economically as possible and that new services pursue all manners of alternative funding.

The following recommendations relate to general implementation measures:

- Adopt a definition of community development and develop a common understanding of its implications.
- Communicate the partnership vision consistently and frequently to staff, community groups, businesses and citizens.
- Develop partnership agreements with the private and non-profit sectors.
- Develop policies to ensure that residents have consistent and appropriate opportunities to participate in decision-making.
- Hire staff and allocate resources to promote and support volunteerism and community development.

***Recreation and parks are the attractions that draw tourism – the third largest and one of the fastest growing industries in the world today.***



- Develop and implement a comprehensive marketing plan, including information on partnership and community development opportunities and benefits.
- Develop a departmental image which will be consistent for all recreation facility signage and signage within community parks.
- Develop policies and guidelines related to private or corporate sponsorships and advertising.
- Review the policy for inclusion of low-income families in recreation programs, and communicate to the public about the policy.
- Form an Advisory Group to address recreation program delivery for low-income citizens.
- Develop a financial assistance program to allow people who normally would not participate to experience the benefits of having an active lifestyle.
- Develop a policy on the inclusion of people with disabilities indicating that the Parks and Recreation Department will promote and provide access for persons with disabilities throughout the continuum from participatory to high performance activities.
- Develop a policy on gender equity to ensure that girls and women have opportunities and equity as participants, competitors and leaders.
- Form an Advisory Group of sports field and ball diamond users to provide guidance regarding those facilities.
- Continually evaluate and implement services in a fiscally conservative manner.
- Implement a business planning process to review alternative methods of funding operating and capital costs.

### ***Funding***

The following table provides a summary of the costs associated with implementing the Master Plan and the anticipated sources of funding.

	Cost	DCCs	Taxation Annual	Taxation One Time	Private
Park Acquisition and Development	\$1,500,000 per year	\$1,500,000			
DCC Assist Factor	\$75,000 per year		\$75,000		
Park Operating Costs	\$225,000 per year		\$225,000		
Community Recreation Coordinator	\$60,000		\$30,000		\$30,000 Revenue
Ag Rec Renovations	\$2,000,000			\$2,000,000	
New Community Recreation Complex	\$8,000,000			\$7,000,000	\$1,000,000
Recreation Complex Operating Cost			\$500,000 operating cost in 2010		

Park acquisition and development will be funded through Development Cost Charges (DCCs). The DCC assist factor, increase in operating costs, and recreation coordinator will be funded through a 0.6% tax increase until 2009. An additional 1 % tax increase in 2010 will pay for the operating costs of the new Recreation Complex.

The Ag Rec Renovations proposed for 2007 will cost about \$13.75 per capita. The financing method will be determined at that time. The new Community Recreation Complex proposed for 2010 will cost around \$46.00 per capita. The financing method for that centre will also be determined at that time.

### ***Recommendations for Future Plans***

There were a number of park acquisition and development opportunities identified during the planning process that were beyond the financial scope of this Master Plan. These have been identified here as opportunities that should be considered in the future as resources become available:

#### **City-wide Parks**

- Develop the new park on McKee Peak.
- Raise Clayburn Park to a city-wide major destination park standard with design improvements, interpretive facilities, and protection for the historic elements.
- Upgrade Exhibition Park as identified in the Exhibition Park Master Plan, potentially with contributions from the new site occupants.
- Increase the size of Civic Centre Park, and conduct a major upgrade with large trees, grass, ornamental plantings, special features, and new plazas.
- Develop Airport Park for aircraft viewing.

- Increase the size of Albert Dyck Park. Expand the swimming area, and redesign and upgrade the park.
- Redevelop Jubilee Park to a city-wide urban park, expanding it if possible through the development process.
- Develop some new Urban Parks along or near South Fraser Way with acquisition through dedication if possible.
- Acquire and develop a major destination park in the future at Judson and Laxton Lakes.

### **Community and Neighbourhood Parks**

- Develop community parks at Atkinson and East Sumas Mountain.
- Develop a community park at the Old Valley Landfill.
- Expand Berry Park from a neighbourhood to a community park.
- Redesign and upgrade Ravine Park, including daylighting of the creek.
- Develop a boat launch and camping facility at Barrowtown/Sinclair Park.
- Expand Tenbroek Park and improve facilities there.
- Increase the size of existing parks (including Grant, Nadeau, Oriole).
- Redesign and upgrade Hougen Park to address security and promote naturalization where appropriate.
- Improve viewing and interpretive facilities for astronomers at McDonald Park.
- Continue to upgrade ageing parks and facilities.

### **Trails and Streets**

- Provide washrooms at trail heads.

### **Ball Diamonds**

- Develop 10 additional slo-pitch fields at parks or schools.
- Support the development of minor fastball fields at elementary schools.

### **Sports Fields**

- When resources permit, develop or improve school fields to support safer play and league standards in partnership with the School District, with agreements to address cost sharing of field improvement and maintenance to city standards.
- Develop a premier sports field with seating for around 700, e.g., at Delair, Exhibition, or Bateman Park.

### **Other Park Facilities**



- Add 14 additional new tennis courts in clusters in the next 10 years and improve the quality of existing tennis courts, adding lights on courts with high tennis potential.
- Develop an additional new play area each year.
- Improve the play equipment upgrade schedule from 2 per year to 3 per year. This would result in a 25 year replacement cycle for play equipment.
- Develop 6 premium picnic shelters in addition to the basic picnic shelters planned.
- Provide 3 new spray parks.
- Develop two additional youth parks, possibly with one north of the MSA arena.
- Provide 8 sand volleyball courts.
- If the existing facility needs to be relocated, provide a new site for horseshoes.

### **Aquatics**

- Conduct a major upgrade of Centennial Pool including replacement of the tank (to an 8 lane capacity) and the recirculation/mechanical system.
- Replace the building at Matsqui Village Pool.

