

# Staff Report to Council

Parks, Recreation & Culture

FILE: 15-8160-01/21

REPORT DATE: June 02, 2021

MEETING DATE:

June 08, 2021

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Carleen McDowell, Manager of Recreation and Culture

SUBJECT: Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan Research and  
Engagement Findings

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER REVIEW/APPROVAL:



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RECOMMENDATION(S): THAT Council:

- A. Receive for information the Staff Report titled "Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan Research and Engagement Findings" dated June 2, 2021; OR
- B. Other.

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## PURPOSE

To present Council with the summary documents of the master plan research and engagement. These findings will form the basis of the draft Parks, Recreation and Culture master plan which will be presented to Council and the public in the coming months for feedback.

☒ Information Report

☐ Decision Report

☐ Direction Report

## DISCUSSION

### Background:

The Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan process was approved in the 2020 Business Plan. The Request for proposals was awarded in September 2021 to RC Strategies and background work began during the Fall of 2020.

The City of Pitt Meadows first ever Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan will guide the delivery of parks, recreation and culture services over the next 15 years. More specifically, the Master Plan will:

- Provide Council and administration with a resource that can help inform decision making, ongoing priority setting and resource allocation.
- Set foundations, objectives and focus areas for service delivery and the City's Parks, Recreation and Culture department.
- Guide future planning and policies.
- Provide a point of reference that rationalizes ongoing investment into parks, recreation and culture by articulating the benefits

Consultants reviewed numerous policies, guiding documents, statistical analysis to get an understanding of the community and to develop the public engagement strategy. Early in 2021 the consultants worked with the staff to create an extensive series of workshops and engagement sessions along with a household survey to residents.

### Analysis:

Attached to this report is the Research and Engagement summary document which provides some of the high level findings. The full versions of these documents entitled "Current State" – Research Report and "What We Heard" – Engagement Summary will be available on the City of Pitt Meadows Webpage at <http://www.pittmeadows.ca/prcmasterplan>. These documents represent the Phase 3 engagement and now the project team is focusing on Phase 4 and 5 with completion being targeted in Fall of 2021.



### COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

- ☐ Principled Governance   ☐ Balanced Economic Prosperity   ☐ Corporate Excellence  
☒ Community Spirit & Wellbeing   ☐ Transportation & Infrastructure Initiatives  
☐ Not Applicable
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## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

☒ None      ☐ Budget Previously Approved      ☐ Referral to Business Planning  
☐ Other

There are no financial implications to this report. The project is in the approved 2021 financial plan.

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## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

☒ Inform      ☐ Consult      ☐ Involve      ☐ Collaborate      ☐ Empower

Comment(s):

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## **KATZIE FIRST NATION CONSIDERATIONS**

Referral      ☐ Yes      ☒ No

Katzie First Nation has been invited to provide input into the Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan, and all documents will be shared with them.

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## **SIGN-OFFS**

**Written by:**

Carleen McDowell  
Manager of Recreation and Culture

**Reviewed by:**

Diane Chamberlain  
Director of Parks, Recreation and Culture

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## **ATTACHMENT(S):**

A. Research and Engagement Summary Document



Pitt Meadows Parks, Recreation and Culture

# Research and Engagement Summary



## Community Engagement Overview

-  Resident Questionnaire (889 responses representing 2,268 residents)
-  Youth Survey (120 responses)
-  Community Group Questionnaire (19 participating community organizations)
-  Stakeholder Discussion Sessions (13 facilitated sessions with 24 stakeholder interests represented)

## Research Overview

-  Review of previous planning and existing policies
-  Review and analysis of current service delivery practices
-  Community analysis (review of population and demographics and other health and wellness indicators)
-  Benchmarking (comparison to other communities)
-  Trends and leading practices
-  Functional assessment of key indoor and outdoor facilities

## How will the Engagement and Research Inform the Master Plan?

-  Provides insights into current participation levels, activity preferences and local trends
-  Identifies potential barriers to participation (physical, social, and financial)
-  Identifies potential gaps and opportunities
-  Provides insights into resident values and perspectives on the current state of services
-  Gauges how residents believe future priorities and focus areas should be determined
-  Provides insights into the supply and demand for current types of facilities and spaces in the community

# Key Findings from the Research

- **Partnerships and collaborations are critical aspects of the City's parks, recreation and culture delivery model.** The City uses a combination of direct and indirect delivery methods to provide active living opportunities. Organizations external to the City such as Metro Vancouver Regional Parks, Katzie First Nation, School District 42, and surrounding municipalities are part of a broader network of partners that deliver active living opportunities to Pitt Meadows residents while correspondingly the City of Pitt Meadows supports facilities, programming and events that serve individuals living beyond its municipal borders.
- **The City oversee an asset base of parks, recreation and culture amenities with a replacement value in the hundreds of millions of dollars.** Sustaining existing (and aging) assets while balancing demands for new type of facilities will require a delicate balance. Functional assessments conducted on key indoor and outdoor facilities indicate that the City generally does a good job maintaining assets although opportunities exist to refresh / re-vision a number of spaces in coming years and improve amenity consistency (especially pertaining to community parks).
- **Available utilization data suggests that bookable spaces in the city are relatively well used but no significant capacity challenges were identified.** The Pitt Meadows Arena appears to have the highest level of utilized capacity (84% of prime in 2019), but this figure does not suggest any significant overall capacity challenges. Utilization of other spaces such as the Pitt Meadows Family Recreation Centre and sports fields in Pitt Meadows have remained relatively consistent on a year to year basis.
- **The City continues to make a significant investment in parks, recreation and culture.** The City's investment in these services totals approximately \$3 million dollars per year and accounts for 10-11% of the overall budget. On average, approximately 80% of this investment goes towards operations with approximately 20% allocated to capital expenditures (mostly major repair or enhancements to existing facilities).
- **Opportunities exist to improve data collection and management, and analysis.** Utilization data is not available and/or complete for some types of parks, recreation and culture infrastructure, especially those types of spaces that accommodate multiple types of use and spontaneous activity. The City's budgeting and tracking of actual revenues and expenditures is comprehensive from an overall departmental standpoint, but does enable analysis to be undertaken for many specific facilities or service functions. Enhancing overall utilization and operations data collection and management would enable the City to better understand participation trends, use data to influence decision making and establish performance measurement metrics.
- **Pitt Meadows has experienced steady levels of growth and appears on pace to slightly exceed its projected population of 23,500 residents by 2041 (as identified in the Metro Vancouver Regional Growth Strategy).** Statistics Canada recorded a population of 18,572 residents in 2016 and available Environics Analytics DemoStats estimates a current population of 21,664.
- **Available data suggests that perceived levels of health and wellness, sense of belonging and levels of physical activity are inconsistent across the community.** Available Environics Analytics (EA) data reflects a number of these differences and the relationship between the wellness indicators and demographic characteristics such as income and age. *See Section 5 for additional detail.*



- **Benchmarking suggests that Pitt Meadows provides the majority of parks, recreation and culture facility and amenity types at “similar” levels to comparators.** The benchmarking analysis indicates that Pitt Meadows is generally aligned with comparators in the provision (service levels) of most amenity types. Those facility and amenity types that may be provided at a lesser level of service were: curling ice, indoor aquatics facilities, public performing arts theatres, community arts hubs, splash pads, and community garden sites. However, it is important to note that infrastructure benchmarking is limited in its ability to capture regional supply factors (e.g. the availability of facilities in nearby municipalities), demand, or quality of the spaces provided.



- **Opportunities exist to improve health and wellness levels among youth in the community.** Data from the Middle Years Development Instrument (MDI) assessed an overall wellness classification of “thriving” to 42% of Grade 4 students and 32% of Grade 7 students in School District 42 (Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows). These figures are similar to provincial averages but suggest that ample room for improvement exists. It is also notable that the sub-segment findings reflect lower wellness levels and participation in after school activities among students in Pitt Meadows compared to Maple Ridge, however a higher proportion of the students in Pitt Meadows indicated that there are safe places in their neighbourhood or community that provide programs for kids their age.

- **Parks, recreation and culture trends are continually evolving.** Notable trends in the public sector delivery of these services include a shift in demand from structured to unstructured activities, preference for multi-purpose facilities, partnerships, alignment with provincial and national policy and strategic direction, increasing expectations for programming and facility quality and experiences, the emergence of the cultural sector, and the shifting volunteer landscape.



# Key Findings from the Engagement

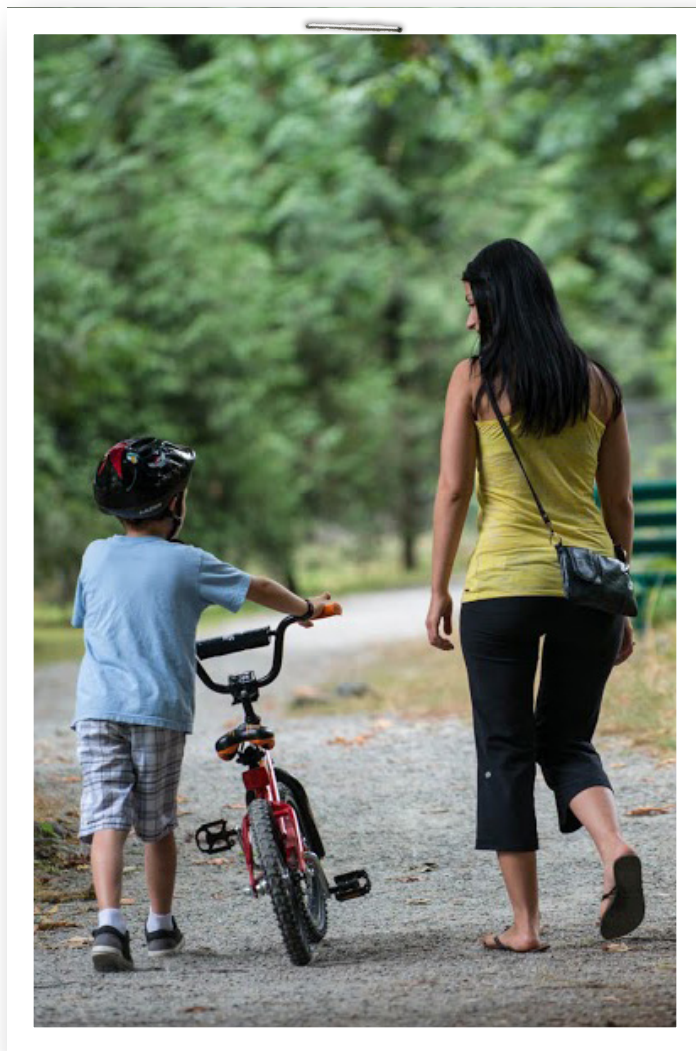
- **Residents, user groups and stakeholders generally believe that Pitt Meadows offers a wide array of opportunities.** While demand for new programs, activities and infrastructure exists, findings from the engagement support that individuals in Pitt Meadows believe there is ample opportunity for most residents to be active. The dike system along the Pitt River Regional Greenway are perceived as extremely valuable regional assets that attract visitors and make the community highly appealing for existing and prospective residents.
- **A number of factors motivate residents to participate in parks, recreation and culture pursuits.** Interpersonal factors such as health, wellness and wellbeing (physical and mental) as well as opportunities to engage socially and be part of the community are key motivators of participation across all age groups.
- **Residents place a high value on parks, recreation and culture.** Findings from the Resident Questionnaire confirm that the majority of residents believe these service are “very important” - not only to their household’s wellbeing but also the broader quality of life and vibrancy of the community. Engagement with stakeholders, user groups and youth in the community also further reiterated the importance of parks, recreation and culture opportunities and the role that the quality provision of these services has on making the community appealing for residents and visitors.
- **Levels of satisfaction with most aspects of parks, recreation and culture services are relatively good but have room for improvement.** 86% of Resident Questionnaire respondents were satisfied (“very” or “somewhat”) with parks, trails and open spaces in Pitt Meadows. Levels of satisfaction for recreation and cultural programs, facilities and opportunities were not as strong, however less than a quarter of respondents identified that they were “dissatisfied” with these service areas (respondents had higher levels of “neither satisfied nor dissatisfied” responses).
- **Demand exists for facility development and enhancement.** Consistent across all of the engagement undertaken was a desire for new and / or enhanced facilities to be developed in the community. 77% of Resident Questionnaire respondents indicated that development is needed and were also asked to select the top facilities that they believed should be overall priorities for investment (either the development of a new amenity type and/or the enhancement of those that already exist). The top 5 indoor priorities among questionnaire respondents were aquatics facilities, walking / running tracks, multi-sport facilities, fitness facilities, and performing arts facilities. The top 5 outdoor priorities among questionnaire respondents were natural surface trails, social park amenities (BBQ / picnic areas / park shelters), paved trails, outdoor pools, and playgrounds. The need for, and benefits of, facility development was also expressed during the community group and stakeholder engagement. However, a number of individuals representing community groups and stakeholder organizations also recognize the capital and operating impacts of undertaking facility development as well as the need to sustain what already exists. The Master Plan will need to further assess the need for these spaces and the associated cost impacts.



- **Opportunity exists to further develop cultural capacity in the community.** Arts and cultural stakeholders believe that infrastructure and community development investment is needed to expand the cultural capacity and vibrancy of the community.

- **Many stakeholders and user groups had difficulty separating strengths, gaps and needs in Pitt Meadows from those that exist more broadly across the region.** Many community organizations operate across the Ridge-Meadows area (and in some cases beyond) and look at space needs from a regional lens. Stakeholders and user groups frequently mentioned the importance of regional collaboration as a way to make the best use of limited resources and avoid duplication.

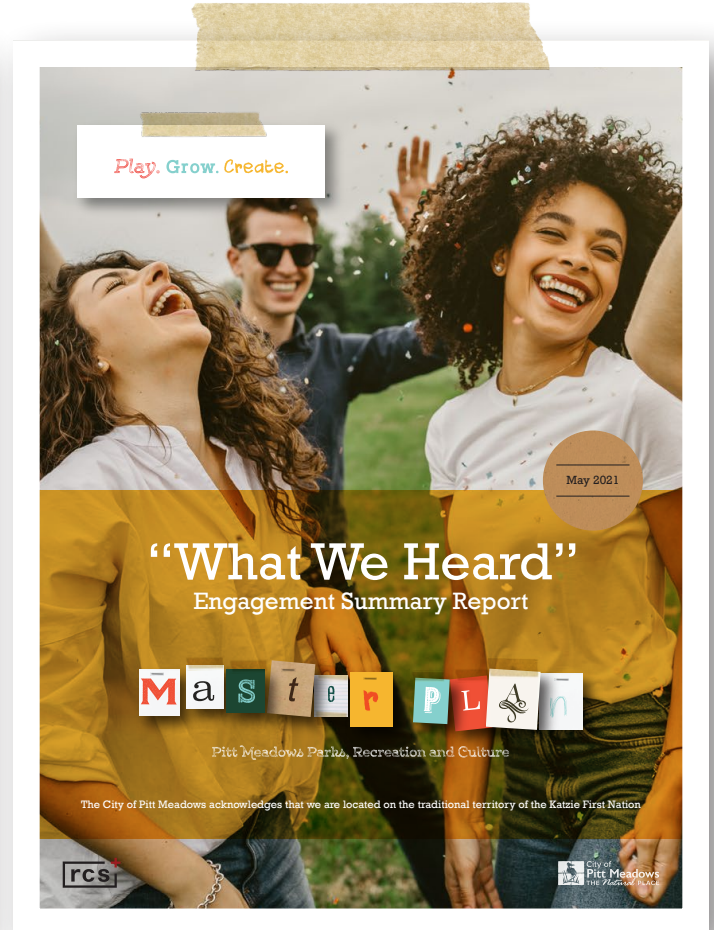
- **Residents, user groups and stakeholders are keen to be engaged.** The level of participation in the Master Plan engagement and feedback provided during the stakeholder discussions and through the User Group Questionnaire indicate that the community is highly engaged and would like to participate in an ongoing conversation on parks, recreation and culture in the community.





# Want to learn more about the research and engagement findings?

The detailed “Current State” Research Report and “What We Heard” Engagement Report are available through the City’s website by visiting [www.pittmeadows.ca/prcmasterplan](http://www.pittmeadows.ca/prcmasterplan)



The Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan is scheduled for completion this fall. A draft of the Master Plan will be shared with the community over the next couple of months. Residents and stakeholders will have an opportunity to provide feedback on the draft Master Plan document before it is finalized.