



CITY OF
PRINCE GEORGE

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION STRATEGY

DECEMBER 2016



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



This Community Association Strategy was developed through the cooperation, participation, and guidance from innumerable people and organizations. The contributions from these parties were critical to the successful completion of the Strategy. With apologies to those who may have been missed, thank you to:

- Residents of Prince George;
- Community Associations:
 - Beverly
 - Blackburn
 - College Heights
 - Crescents
 - Hart
 - South Bowl
 - West Bowl
- Volunteer Prince George
- Downtown Prince George
- YMCA
- City of Prince George Administration including members of the project committee:
 - City Manager; General Manager of Community Services; Director of External Relations; Manager of Community Partnerships; Manager of Social Planning; Manager of Service Centre; Park Planner; and Community Coordinator.

Finally, thank you to Cheryl Livingstone-Leman the project manager for her enthusiasm and desire in serving the Community Associations, residents of Prince George, and the City.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Recreation services, including community events, are delivered through a variety of operating models in Prince George. One of these models is the Community Association system. This is a model of community development whereby voluntary organizations provide recreational services to city residents. The delivery of community programming through the seven Community Associations is a cost effective method of service delivery for the City. The seven associations include: Beverly, Blackburn, College Heights, Crescents, Hart, South Bowl, and West Bowl.

The health of this delivery system and its sustainability is of concern to the City as these volunteer organizations are fulfilling an integral role in the system of recreation delivery. As such it is incumbent upon the City of Prince George to consider means to enhance the sustainability of the Community Associations while respecting their independent status as societies.



The Community Recreation Services Plan (October 2014) suggested that an administrative review of the Community Association system and the City's role towards it be conducted. The stated goal of the review was to reduce the administrative burden for volunteers so they can focus on their core activities and ensure that they have the tools to be effective. This strategy is the result of that recommendation.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The City of Prince George provides a variety of supports to the seven Community Associations.

- Active Living Guide
- Community Association ice rinks
- Shared Use Agreement with School District #57
- General liability insurance
- Membership in Volunteer Prince George
- Staff support (~0.4FTE)
- Grant opportunities
- City website
- Online registration

This strategy identifies four recommendations to support the sustainability of the Community Association system.

1. The City of Prince George will offer supports to the Community Associations as they deliver their programs and events.

- These additional supports and resources could include:
- Volunteer recruitment and retention initiatives and strategies.
- Board development initiatives and strategies.
- Resource banks.
- Community needs assessment.
- Communications and promotions.
- Planning assistance.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



2. Develop partnership agreements between the City and Community Associations.

- Individual agreements with each Community Association to define the relationship between the two parties. The agreements should be reviewed annually.
- Elements to include:
 - Access to School District #57 facilities.
 - Supports as identified in recommendation A.
 - Liability insurance.
 - Facilities and operations.
 - Volunteer support.

3. Formally recognize that the Community Associations are the face of the community.

- On an ad hoc basis this has occurred. It should be recognized and included in the partnership agreement.



4. Examine how to best meet the needs of areas of Prince George that are not currently represented by a Community Association.

- A number of options could be explored:
 - Consider adjustment of existing boundaries of current Community Associations.
 - Establish new Community Associations.
 - Maintain the status quo.



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CITY OF
PRINCE GEORGE



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INTRODUCTION



“ I think continued support is critical, as these associations encourage residents to become more community-oriented, and aware of the available facilities. Therefore, we take more pride in where we live, and feel the need to also participate in order to give back.

—Survey Respondent

Prince George has had a system of Community Associations for over forty years. These associations formed a network across the city that was connected to neighbourhood schools. While the system of Community Associations has remained, it has changed. Currently there are seven Community Associations each linked to a broad neighbourhood area. This is a sizable reduction from the twenty-three that used to operate in Prince George.

Each Community Association operates independently as its own society and is run by volunteers. They deliver recreational programs and events to residents in their own community areas although people are able to move around the city to participate in the programming offered by any Community Association.

Recreation services, including community events, are delivered through a variety of operating models in Prince George. The Community Association model is one of community development whereby voluntary organizations provide recreational services to city residents. The City directly provides services (arenas and swimming pools for example) and looks to other entities in Prince George to do the same (e.g. YMCA, private operators, sport groups).

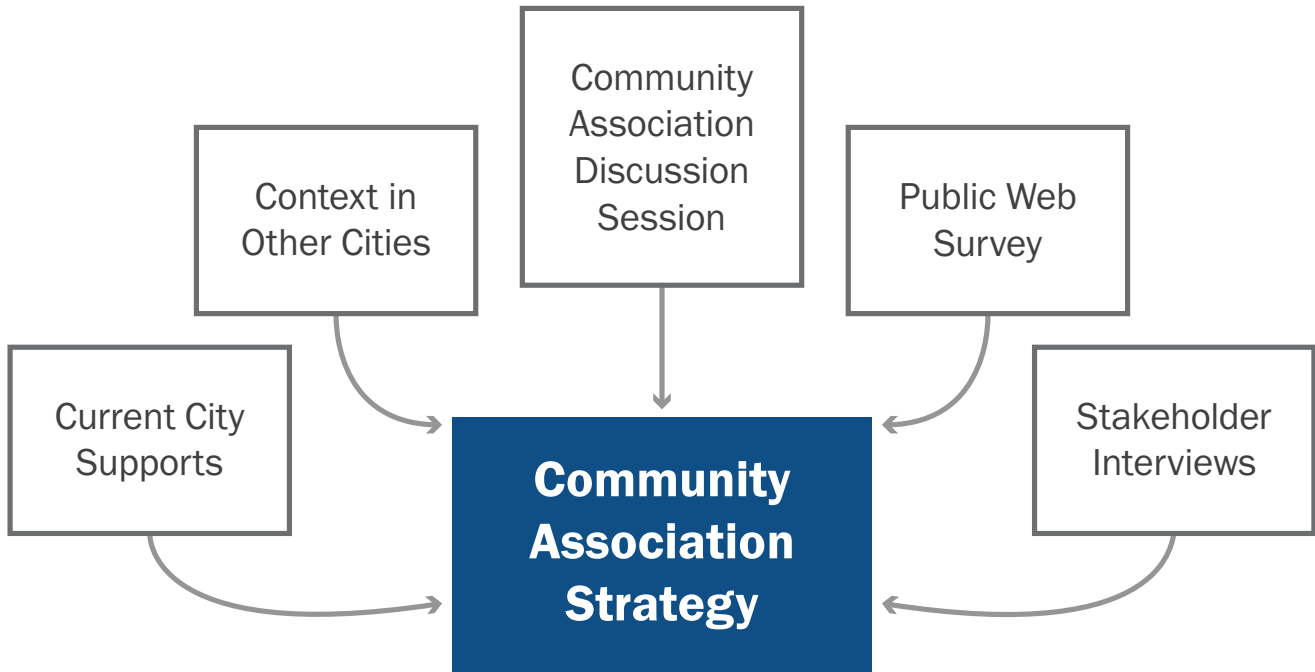
The delivery of community programming through the seven Community Associations is a cost effective method of service delivery for the City. Through several mechanisms including a shared use agreement with School District #57 (which provides access to school gymnasiums for Community Associations) to grant programs and promotional support, the City supports these important volunteer organizations in their delivery of recreational programs and community events. This community development model is an integral cog in the recreation service delivery system in Prince George. However with its reliance on volunteers, this system is not without risk.

While the seven Community Associations are a going concern there are some indications that the system is experiencing some challenges. While certainly not uniform across the Community Associations, some of the challenges that have come to light include recruitment of board members and program leaders as well as issues inherent with running a society (from governance through to communications and promotions). The health of this delivery system and its sustainability is of concern to the City as these volunteer organizations are fulfilling an integral role in the system of recreation delivery. The Community Associations are working hard to enhance the quality of life of residents. As such it is incumbent upon the City of Prince George to consider means to enhance the sustainability of the Community Associations while respecting their independent status as societies.

The Community Recreation Services Plan (October 2014) suggested that an administrative review of the Community Association system and the City's role towards it be conducted. The stated goal of the review was to reduce the administrative burden for volunteers so they can focus on their core activities and ensure that they have the tools to be effective.

This strategy is the result of that recommendation. It recognizes the independence of the Community Associations operating as unique societies. This strategy identifies approaches and a philosophical stance the City should adopt to support and strengthen this important delivery model. It should be noted that this strategy needs to recognize and adhere to other City policies and strategies (e.g. Park Strategy) as it is being implemented.

This Community Association Strategy was developed after implementing a program of research as illustrated.



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CONTEXT



“ For the past 23 years that our family has lived in Prince George, its Community Associations appear to us to have increased the number and variety of the events provided. This... has [raised] our family’s awareness of the city’s Community Associations and the valuable opportunities that they offer for the residents of Prince George.

—Survey Respondent

Incorporated in 1915 and known as BC’s northern capital, Prince George is a bustling city located on the traditional territory of the Lheidli T’enneh. With a population of approximately 72,000¹ it is situated at the crossroads of Highway 97 (north-south) and Highway 16 (east-west), and at the confluence of the Fraser and Nechako Rivers. Prince George serves as a regional hub for commerce and transportation with its position on main transportation corridors, its rail service, and the Prince George Airport.

Prince George is a vibrant, active and diverse community that provides a strong focal point and identity to the north, with a thriving economy that offers full opportunities for housing, employment, health, education, recreation and the cultural life of residents. The University of Northern British Columbia and the College of New Caledonia are two significant institutions in Prince George. Wood drives the local economy, with forestry, plywood manufacture, sawmills and pulp mills as major employers and customers. Prince George is also a staging centre for mining and prospecting, and a major regional transportation, trade and government hub. Several major retailers are expanding into the Prince George market as well.

Community spirit and volunteerism is at the heart of what makes Prince George a great place to live, work, study and play. With over 400 recreation, sport, cultural and community service groups the City buzzes with opportunities and services provided by their volunteers. In 2015 Prince George was proclaimed “The Volunteer City” for having the highest rate of volunteering in BC! The City boasts a recreation and sport delivery system that is run through volunteers. Community Associations are part of the volunteer network that provide quality of life services to the residents of Prince George.



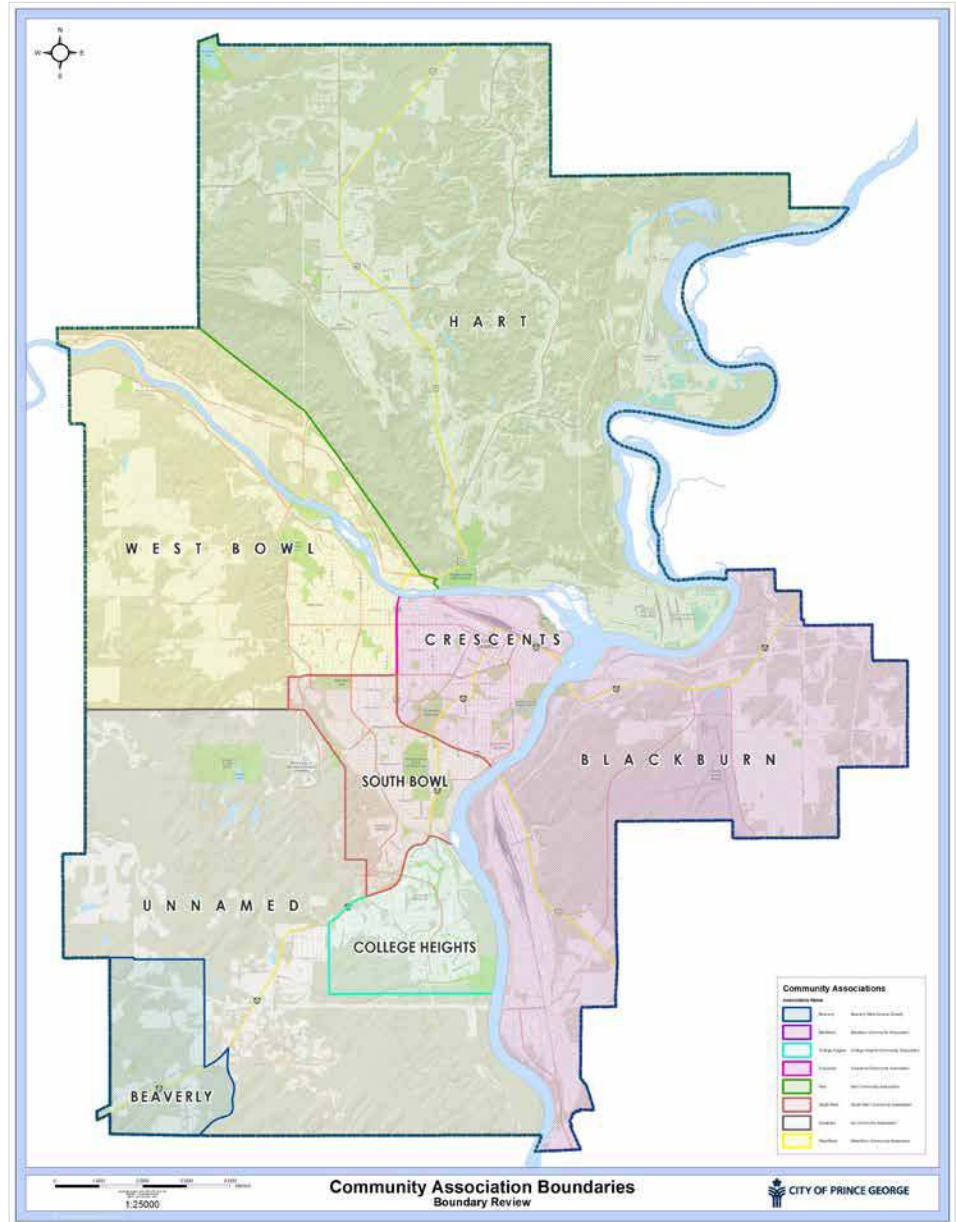
1 Population is 71,974 according to 2011 Census. Statistics Canada.

ABOUT THE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS

The Community Association system was established over 40 years ago. It has evolved from twenty-three to its current seven associations. The Community Associations had been affiliated with individual schools but this dynamic has changed as schools closed and Parent Advisory Councils emerged as fundraising bodies at the schools. Currently the Community Associations serve neighbourhood areas. The seven Community Associations include the following: Beverly, Blackburn, College Heights, Crescents, Hart, South Bowl, and West Bowl. See the accompanying map.

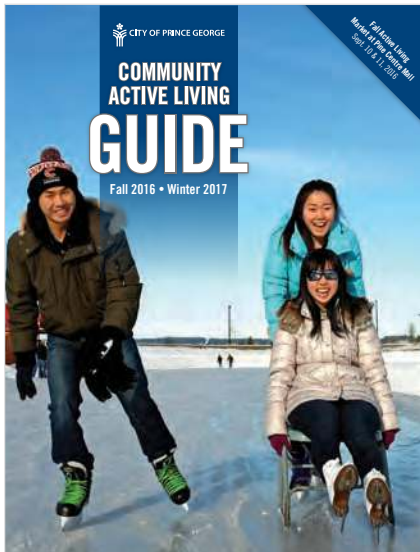
As described previously, the Community Associations:

- Are a central place to formalize neighbourhood spirit and connectedness.
- Are a vehicle for citizen involvement and engagement.
- Help build healthy and safe communities.
- Increase physical activity levels and active living in neighbourhoods.
- Provide an enhanced quality of life for citizens.



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CURRENT CITY SUPPORTS



The City of Prince George provides a variety of supports to the seven Community Associations. These supports are noted below.

ACTIVE LIVING GUIDE

The Active Living Guide identifies each Community Association and for each one provides contact information (program director, phone, email, website) along with the programs offered. It is produced twice per year with approximately 25,000 hard copies produced and delivered to households and various facilities and venues around Prince George. The estimated cost to the City for this service is ~\$15,000 annually.

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION ICE RINKS

The City installs and removes the ice rink boards. While the Community Associations operate the rinks (e.g. flooding and cleaning), the City provides ice making training to the volunteers and provides the Community Associations with a grant of \$225 for each rink maintained.

SHARED USE AGREEMENT WITH SCHOOL DISTRICT #57

The City has an agreement with the School District that provides community groups, including Community Associations, with the ability to deliver programming using school facilities. The City contributes \$200,000 annually to the School District to gain this access.

GENERAL LIABILITY INSURANCE

Volunteers and program leaders are covered by general liability insurance provided by the City as programs and events are delivered.

MEMBERSHIPS IN VOLUNTEER PRINCE GEORGE

The City provides a membership to each Community Association in Volunteer Prince George. Volunteer Prince George promotes volunteering; builds capacity in organizations to engage volunteers; facilitates connections between people with volunteer opportunities; and provides leadership on issues related to volunteering and citizen engagement.



STAFF SUPPORT

Approximately 0.4 FTE of staff time is dedicated to the Community Associations by Community Services Department staff. This staff time includes liaison with the Community Associations for a variety of supports as well as school bookings.

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

There are two primary City grants that Community Associations can access.

Community Enhancement Grants

- To improve neighbourhoods, foster civic pride and grow a proud confident, safe and healthy community. Grants range from \$200 to \$1000
- Categories:
 - Neighbourhood and community events and celebrations
 - Indoor and outdoor recreation
 - Lights and decorations
 - Goodwill programs
 - Beautification and landscape projects
- Matching grants with two intakes per year

myPG Community Grants

- Designed to help local organizations develop and implement innovative activities that contribute to make Prince George a great place
- Activities can be large or small and contribute to ensuring residents are:
 - Proud of their community
 - Safe
 - Socially connected
 - Physically active
 - Involved in arts and culture
 - Able to access community services and opportunities
- Grants are typically \$5000 to \$8000
- Matching grants with two intakes per year

WEBSITE

The City promotes the Community Associations on its website including a description of the Community Associations, their benefits to the community and the individual, as well as promotion of the Community Active Living Guide. In addition, each Community Association has its own page on the website that includes contact information and a link to the Associations' own website.

ONLINE REGISTRATION

The City provides support to the Community Associations for program registration.



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ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS



“ It’s so great for families to be able to experience and try out a wide variety of activities without huge financial or time commitments. My children played t-ball and soccer this year, and I regularly participate in yoga classes. The cost and time to do these through other [leagues, gyms, or organizations] would be much more significant. I love the casual, friendly, low-pressure feel of Community Association programs.

—Survey Respondent

A program of engagement was implemented to better understand the successes and challenges of the current Community Association system. Three initiatives were undertaken.

- A discussion group was convened with representatives from the Community Associations.
- Interviews were held with pertinent City staff and community stakeholders.
- A public web survey was fielded with residents of Prince George.

The findings from each of these engagement mechanisms are presented in this section.

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION DISCUSSION GROUP

A discussion session was convened with representatives from each of the seven Community Associations. The session provided the opportunity for the Community Associations to discuss successes they have experienced and challenges they are experiencing. Additionally, attendees spoke about the supports they have received from the City and offered other thoughts that could enhance their success and sustainability. See Appendix A for session notes. A synopsis of the discussion session follows.

POSITIVES

The Community Association representatives at the session identified a number of positives they have experienced or successes they have achieved. These are summarized as follows. It should be noted that the points presented below and on the following pages do not necessarily represent unanimity or consensus.

Programming

Representatives spoke about successes with their programs including good attendance and participation, and the ability to secure leaders. Some suggested that limiting the program offerings of their Community Association reduced the pressure and stress on the Association of trying to find volunteer leaders and delivering a broad number of programs.

Registration

There was some suggestion that in-person registration enabled the successful recruitment of program leaders. While there are challenges with recruitment, having the ability to speak in-person with potential volunteers was a strength of the approach.

Dedicated Volunteers

While many attendees spoke of the challenges of recruiting volunteers, it was also acknowledged that the volunteers that have stepped forward have been dedicated and have been significant contributors to program and event success.

City Support

A number of City supports were identified as contributing to the success of the Community Associations. These supports included: grant money; the Shared Use Agreement with the schools; the Active Living Guide; liability insurance provided by the City; as well as staff support. Some also identified the profile the Community Associations have with the City, including City Council, as being very positive.

Community Support

From community donations to individual participation in programs and events, session attendees pointed to the support from the community as being an important contribution to the Community Associations' success.

CHALLENGES

The Community Association representatives at the session spoke about the challenges they are dealing with. These are summarized as follows.

Volunteer Recruitment

Representatives talked about the difficulties attracting volunteers to serve on the Community Association boards and to lead programs. Because of this challenge it is not unusual that programs promoted in the Active Living Guide get canceled due to lack of activity leaders.

Administrative Duties

Most people volunteer to be involved in the Community Association for the provision of programming and events. The administration of running the Community Association is becoming a larger part of the job and requires a significant amount of time. Some volunteers do not have personal or professional experience in running an organization. This burden on volunteers contributes to challenges with organizational administrative recruitment and retention.

Visibility

Representatives indicated that the public does not have a great awareness of the Community Associations nor the work that they do. The Community Associations contribute to the quality of life of city residents and some representatives do not feel that this is known or acknowledged by residents to the degree it should.

SUGGESTIONS

During the discussion the Community Association representatives identified some supports they would like to see and shared some final thoughts.

Shared Use Agreement

A number of comments were raised regarding the ability to run programs in the schools. It was suggested that the agreement should include hours on the weekends—current availability is only on week nights. Regardless of the agreement, the degree of accommodation and welcoming varied from school site to site.

Programming Support

Some suggested that there could be a City staff position to support programming. This could help ensure that there is some standardization in programming across the city. Others pointed to the online registration as a support for programming but commented on the collection of program fees online. Should refunds be necessary the Community Associations have to pay the refunds themselves prior to receiving the registration fees from the City. This means the Associations need to finance the refunds themselves.

Other City Supports

Receiving officer/directors insurance was a suggested support that would be appreciated beyond the general liability insurance. There was also a call for some operating grants.

Partnerships

Several other organizations in Prince George were cited as potential partners in programming (e.g. Big Brothers Big Sisters, YMCA). Additionally the notion of the Community Associations themselves collaborate on programming and promotional efforts, equipment, and other areas was considered of benefit. This collaboration should be further explored by the Associations.

STAFF AND STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

A series of interviews were convened with a number of City staff with a unique perspective on the Community Associations and the City's community development approach to recreation service delivery. As well several community stakeholders were solicited for their perspectives¹. These interviews yielded the following points.

- The neighbourhood programming and community focus of the Associations is good. It is important to bring the community together.
- The Community Associations could serve as a voice of the community. Council sometimes utilizes them in that role currently.
- Community needs assessments are not being done but should be undertaken to learn of community wants.
- Some Community Associations have their own facilities but there is no grant program to assist Community Associations with any facility refreshment/refurbishment.
- The intent of the recreation programs offered by Community Associations is introductory/learn to/basic skills. They are low cost programs for children.
- The role of the Community Association needs to be clearly defined. There should be a service level agreement in place.
- Some clarity around the City's vision for recreation is needed. What place do the Community Associations have in the City's delivery system?
 - What is basic recreation?
- The programs being offered currently by the Associations are not of equal quality. They should be supported by good data and research (e.g. child development, Long-Term Athlete Development).
- People like the Active Living Guide. It is good because it has detailed contact information for the Community Associations.
- A one stop place on the City's web page for Community Associations that then link to the individual Community Association websites is a good resource.
- Additional promotion of the Community Associations is needed. People don't know who their Community Association is.
- While the community development program is good, there is some stability with paid staff. A City staff position could be dedicated to work with Community Associations.
- The administrative tasks take a toll on the volunteers operating the Community Associations. To help lessen the work, consideration should be given to templates for job descriptions, lesson plans, etc. Managing the issues around volunteerism (recruitment and retention) is a challenge as well.



¹ Community Stakeholders: Volunteer Prince George; YMCA; Downtown Prince George.
City Staff: City Manager; General Manager of Community Services; Director of External Relations; Manager of Community Partnerships; Manager of Social Planning; Park Planner; Community Coordinators; Facility Scheduling Coordinator.

PUBLIC WEB SURVEY

A web survey was fielded with residents of Prince George. Gathering the perspectives of residents who volunteer for, and are served by, the Community Associations was important. Findings from the survey are presented below.

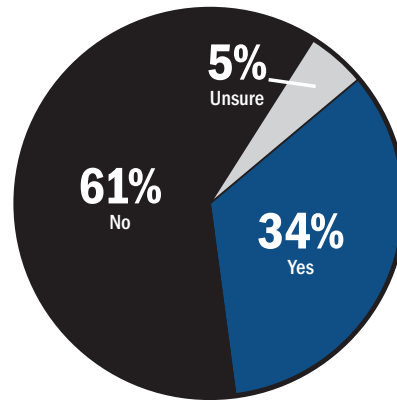
- The web survey was fielded from June 21 through to July 20.
- 514 responses were collected. It should be noted that not all respondents answered all of the survey questions. The findings are presented based on the response to each question.
- The survey was promoted through the City’s web page, Facebook page, various media outlets, promotions by the Community Associations, and some paid advertising

In some instances findings from respondents who live in the College Heights, West Bowl, and Hart areas are presented. The number of respondents from each of these areas was sizeable enough to warrant this subsegment study.

Program Participation

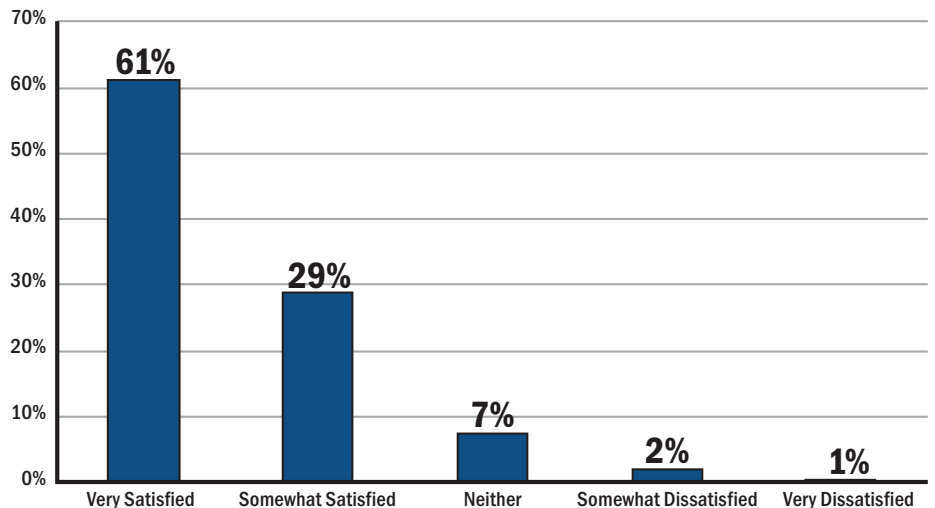
To begin the survey respondents were asked whether any family member in the past two years had participated in a program (e.g. floor hockey, T-ball, basketball, Zumba) offered by a Prince George Community Association. As illustrated in the accompanying graph, approximately one-third (34%) had.

Proportion of Family Members Who Participated in a Community Association Program Within the Past Two Years



Approximately two-thirds (61%) were very satisfied with the programming while only 3% expressed some level of dissatisfaction.

Satisfaction with the Community Association Programming
Subset: Those who participated in programs



Some comments were offered related to the Community Association programming. The most frequently mentioned comments spoke about the good value/affordable programs (12 comments); the well organized programs (12); the fun experience (12); and the good instructors/leaders (10). There were some comments however that felt the entire experience could be organized better (5).

When asked why respondents had not participated in a Community Association program, a number of barriers were identified. The top six (6) barriers with the highest numbers of mentions by respondents included the following.

Communication Barriers

Seventy-four (74) respondents cited insufficient or inconsistent information sharing as a major barrier to Community Association program participation. Respondents mentioned online information was not disseminated in a way that was easily accessible. Respondents could not find schedules for upcoming community programs. Fifteen (15) respondents indicated they had recently moved into the area and were unaware of the community programs available.

"I don't know what programs are offered or where to find the information."

"Just moved here a few months ago... I can't name a single association program that is offered in town."

Needs and Interests Barriers

Seventy-three (73) respondents mentioned they did not participate because the programs did not appeal to their lifestyle or interests. Nine (9) respondents mentioned they did not participate because they had memberships to private gyms or organizations such as the YMCA. Eight (8) respondents indicated they preferred city-run programs or outdoor recreational activities such as biking, hiking, skiing or walking on park trails.

"We have other activities that take up our time and tend to use the trails around the city and outdoor basketball courts."

"I belong to the YMCA so I do not participate in any other programs."

Time Barriers

Sixty (60) respondents identified lack of time as a barrier to program participation. Respondents indicated programs were offered during times that conflicted with their work schedules. Respondents mentioned they were often too busy with family commitments, sports or other programs. Respondents found it difficult to find the time to register in-person or wait in long lines.

"My work hours are such that I cannot participate."

"Difficult to sign-up in-person."

Age Barriers

Thirty-nine (39) respondents indicated they did not participate because the community programs were not appropriate for their age group. Lack of programs for seniors was brought forth twenty-two (22) times compared to teens with five (5) mentions. Nine (9) respondents mentioned there were limited programs offered for adults without children.

"Nothing available of interest to me as a senior."

"I only see programming for children or very limited programs like yoga. Nothing for generally connecting adults."

Accessibility Barriers

Thirty-three (33) respondents did not participate in community programs because of limited accessibility within their neighbourhood. Respondents mentioned they were unable to attend programs because they were unable to drive or find public transportation. A few respondents mentioned they could not participate in programs because they were disabled.

"I don't drive and have kids, so unless it's nearby I cannot go."

"Locations aren't great for bus users."

Financial Barriers

Eleven (11) respondents identified lack of money or limited funds as a barrier to participate in programs. Respondents mentioned programs were often too expensive for people on fixed incomes.

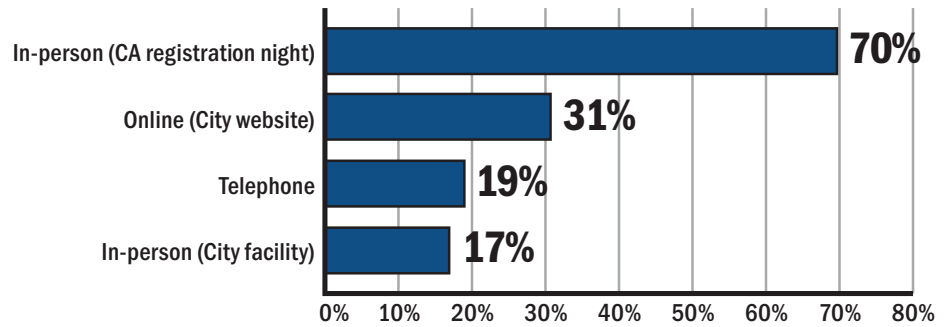
"Have not found one that is affordable, I am a low-income family."

Program Registration

Almost three-quarters (70%) of respondents had registered for a program by attending a Community Association’s in-person registration night. Approximately one-third (31%) had registered online using the City’s website.

Program Registration Method Used

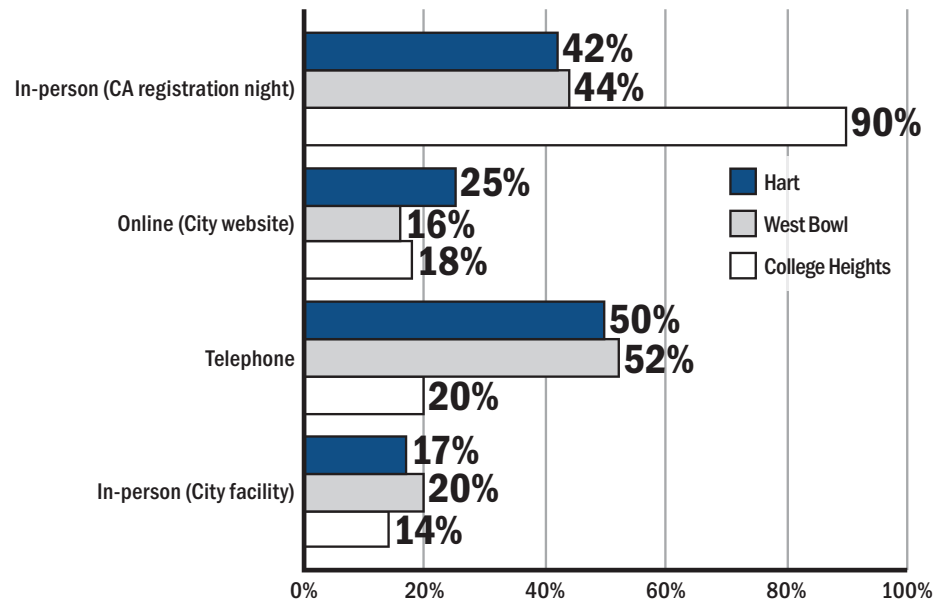
Subset: Those who participated in programs



When examining the registration methods utilized by residents in the College Heights, West Bowl, and Hart areas, some differences exist as illustrated in the accompanying graph. Most notably is that 90% of College Heights respondents registered at an in-person event.

Program Registration Method Used

Subset: Those who participated in programs



Over three-quarters (77%) of respondents are satisfied generally with the registration process while 11% are dissatisfied to some degree.

Satisfaction with the Registration Process

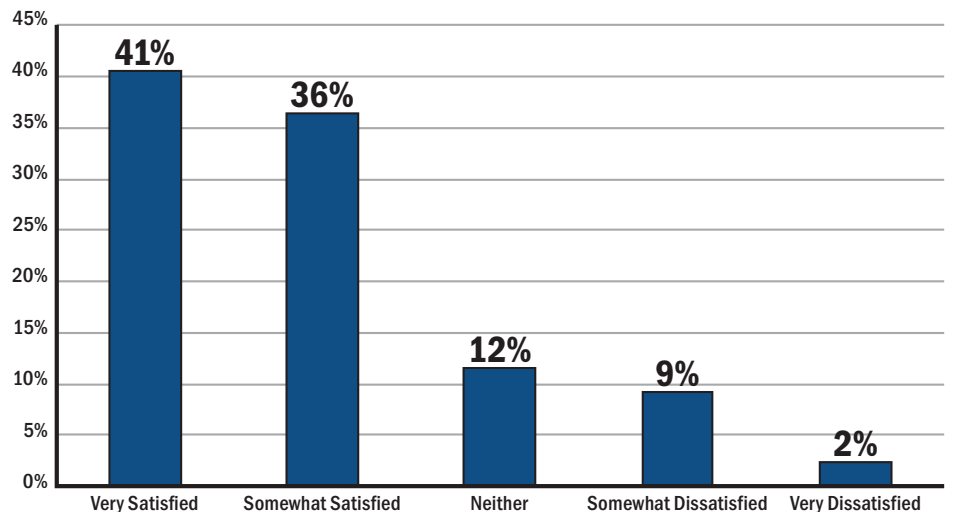
Considering **in-person registration**

(Community Association registration night):

- Very satisfied: 38%
 - Somewhat satisfied: 37%
 - Neither: —%
 - Somewhat dissatisfied: 11%
 - Very dissatisfied: 3%
- 75%

Considering **online registration**

- Very satisfied 61%
 - Somewhat satisfied 31%
 - Neither: —%
 - Somewhat dissatisfied 3%
 - Very dissatisfied: —%
- 92%



When asked how the registration process could be improved, a variety of suggestions were provided. The top three (3) suggestions mentioned by the respondents are noted below.

Consistent Process

Over thirty (31) of the respondents indicated a consistent registration process is needed for all Community Associations. Respondents mentioned they would like shorter registration line-ups, longer registration time periods, the ability to register for multiple programs at once and the option to pay with a credit card.

“There needs to be a consistent registration process for all the Community Associations. There also needs to be consideration that not all people are tech savvy or have access to computers, etc.”

“Registration process involves a long line-up of people wanting to sign-up. If they had a longer registration time period, people might not have to line-up in cold or inclement weather.”

Online Registration

Twenty-six (26) respondents mentioned they would prefer to register for programs and events online, rather than in-person. Respondents indicated improvements to the current online registration system are needed, specifically when registering for multiple programs.

“I like the idea of online registration better rather than standing in a line-up.”

“I find the online process for aquatics difficult.”

Improved Communication

Eighteen (18) respondents indicated the registration process needs to be clearly communicated. Respondents mentioned volunteer support is needed to provide consistent information on program availability and accessibility by telephone or in-person.

“If you call either pool to sign-up for swimming lessons, there is only one employee on duty so that employee has to deal with all walk-ins, calls and anything else that comes up. Sometimes you are on hold for a long time.”

“The people doing the registration need to be fully informed as to what will happen after registration and be specific as to what the registrant is responsible to do to prepare for the event.”

Preferable Programming Times

For different age groups, respondents indicated preferable times to take programming on weekdays and weekends. As illustrated in the following table, approximately two-thirds of respondents stated that children (0-9 yrs) should be able to access their programs from 3:30 – 5:30 p.m. (69%) or 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. (63%). Over three-quarters of respondents (79%) indicated 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. is the appropriate time for youth programming, while 86% indicated that adult programming should be offered after 7:30 p.m. during weekdays.

Weekday (Preferred Program Timing)			
Age Group	3:30 – 5:30 p.m.	5:30 – 7:30 p.m.	7:30 p.m. and later
Children (0 – 9 Years)	69%	63%	5%
Youth (10 – 17 Years)	40%	79%	47%
Adult (18 – 64 Years)	13%	58%	86%
Seniors (65+ Years)	68%	61%	44%

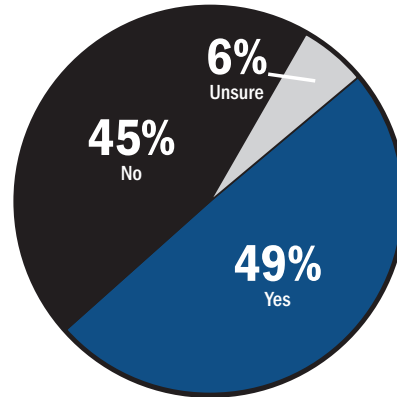
When considering weekend programming, a sizeable majority (85%) felt children’s programming should be offered from 9:00 a.m. to noon. The afternoons were preferred (81%) for youth programming, while evenings (after 5:00 p.m.) was identified by the largest proportion (72%) of respondents for adult programs. Seniors’ programming was preferred during weekend mornings (72%) or afternoons (71%) rather than evenings (48%).

Weekend (Preferred Program Timing)			
Age Group	9:00 a.m. – Noon	Noon – 5:00 p.m.	5:00 p.m. and later
Children (0 – 9 Years)	85%	60%	17%
Youth (10 – 17 Years)	49%	81%	50%
Adult (18 – 64 Years)	52%	63%	72%
Seniors (65+ Years)	72%	71%	48%

Special Events

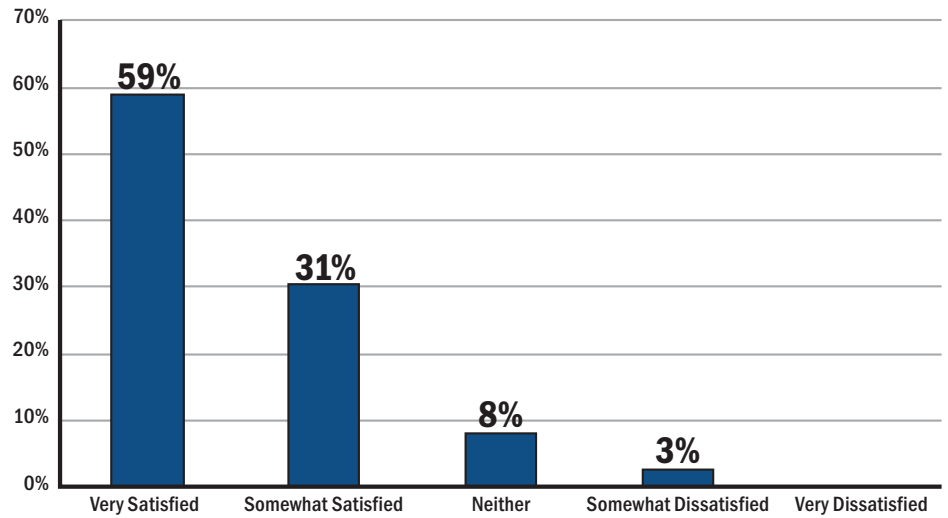
Approximately half (49%) of households attended a special event offered by one of Prince George's Community Associations.

Proportion of Family Members Who Attended a Community Association's Special Event Within the Past Two Years



Over half (59%) were very satisfied with the special events, while only 3% expressed some level of dissatisfaction.

Satisfaction with the Community Association Special Event Subset: Those who attended a special event



Respondents provided some comment after rating their satisfaction levels with the special events. Common themes are noted below.

Seventy-two (72) respondents indicated they had attended a special event and expressed general satisfaction with the events offered in their area.

“Everything that I have attended has been well planned out and executed.”

“Having a fun event to go to so close to home that we can walk to it is really awesome.”

Twenty-three (23) respondents indicated they attended the fireworks in their neighbourhood.

“We attended the Halloween fireworks last Halloween and they were amazing.”

Eight (8) respondents indicated they attended a special event because it was affordable or offered free food.

“Great fun, no cost.”

Five (5) respondents indicated they attended a Christmas event or Skate with Santa.

“Skate with Santa, wonderful event for kids.”

Four (2) respondents indicated they attended a BBQ or the Ferguson Lake Fun Day.

“Great fun at the West Bowl BBQ.”

“The Ferguson Lake fun day was a fun family event.”



Those who had **not attended a special event** offered by a Community Association in the previous two years were asked to provide a reason. A wide range of reasons were provided. The top four (4) reasons for not attending a special event include the following.

Lack of Awareness

Eighty-seven (87) of the respondents indicated they did not attend a special event because they were unaware of the event. Respondents indicated they did not regularly receive information about community events happening in their neighbourhood.

“Never enough advertising or information. Information that we do receive is incomplete or too many steps to get full information. Notices or announcements don’t always include all of the following: Date and Time, Location, Cost, Full Activities.”

Lack of Interest

Thirty-seven (37) respondents mentioned they did not attend a special event because they were not interested. Respondents indicated that events often catered to families with young children. Respondents mentioned they did not attend a special event because they were too old (senior citizens) or single (no children).

“We don’t have children. Most events are geared to families.”

Lack of Time

Twenty-eight (28) respondents mentioned they did not attend a special event because they were too busy. Respondents indicated the hours of operation for special events often conflicted with their schedules.

“Not convenient in the weekday evenings as both parents work full time.”

Lack of Accessibility

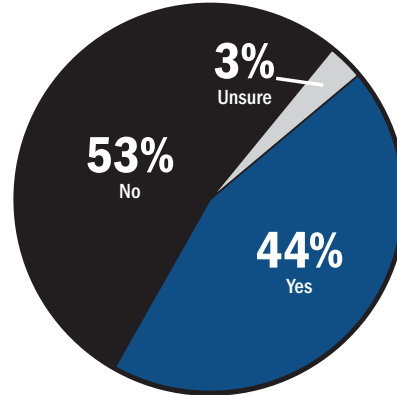
Fifteen (15) respondents indicated they did not attend a special event because the events were not located in their community. Transportation barriers and lack of handicap access were also mentioned by a handful of respondents.

“Most are too far and public transit is terrible.”

Outdoor Rinks

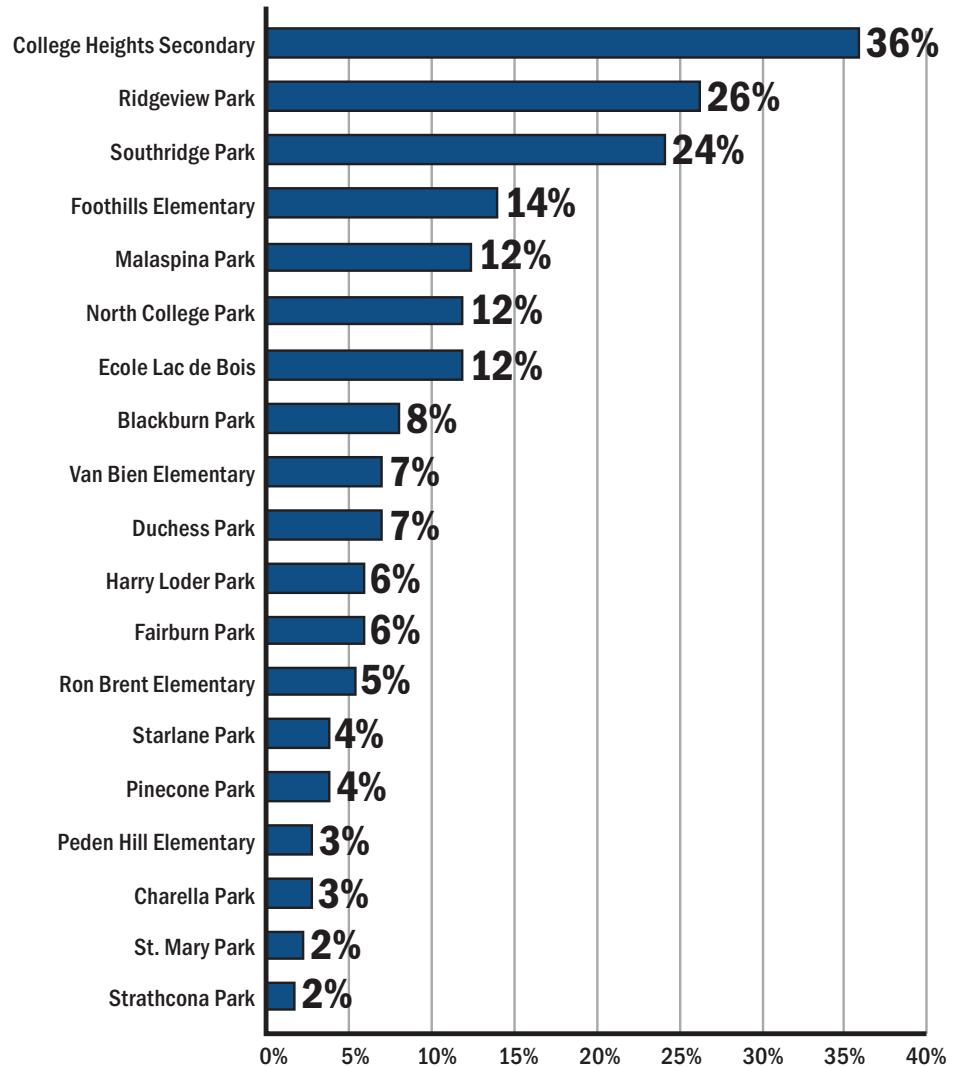
Less than half (44%) of respondent households used an outdoor rink in the previous two years operated by a Community Association.

Proportion of Family Members Who Used a Community Association Outdoor Rink Within the Past Two Years



The outdoor rinks that were used by the greatest number of respondent households were: College Heights Secondary (36%), Ridgeview Park (26%); and Southridge Park (24%). See the graph for the uses of the other outdoor rinks.

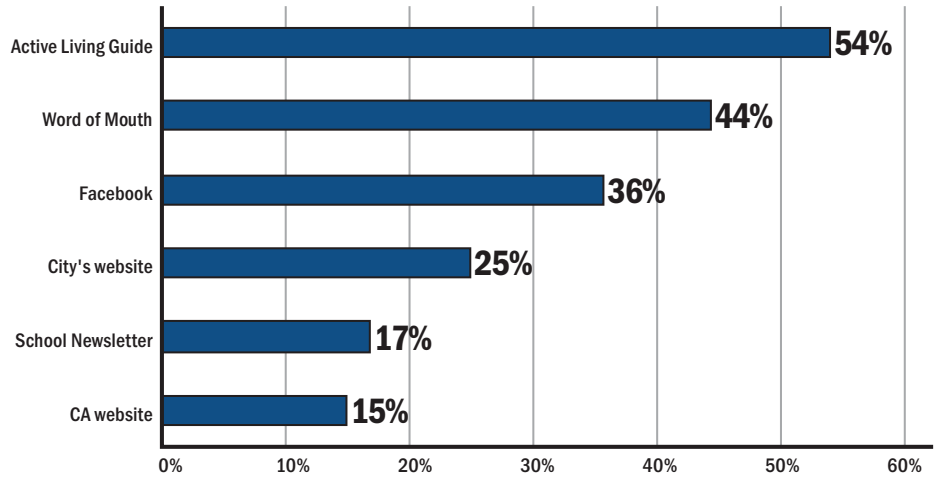
Outdoor Rinks Used Within the Past Two Years



Communications/Promotions

Over half (54%) of respondents learned about Community Association programming through the Active Living Guide. Word of mouth was a source of programming information for 44% of respondents.

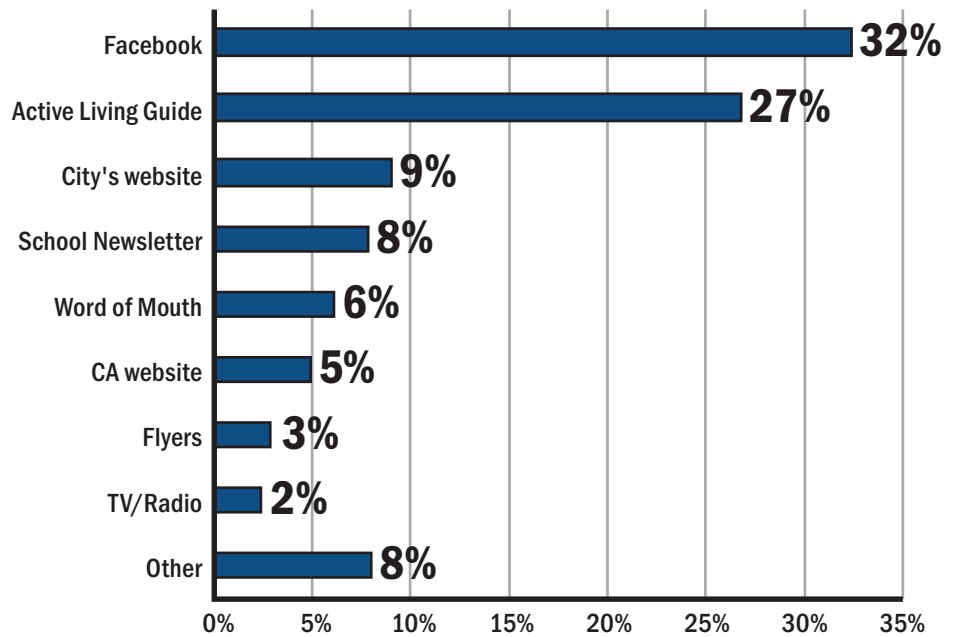
Means by Which People Learn About Community Association Programs



When asked to identify the best way to learn about Community Associations' programs and events, approximately one-third (32%) said Facebook while about one-quarter (27%) stated the Active Living Guide¹.

Note: "Other" is comprised of email, mail, smartphone app, road signs, newspaper, etc.

Best Way to Learn About Community Association Programs



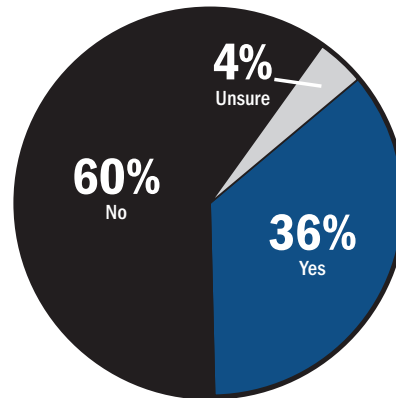
¹ "Other" referred to a variety of mechanisms. In some instances respondents identified multiple communication vehicles rather than a single best one.

Volunteerism

Approximately one-third (36%) of respondents indicated that they have volunteered for a Community Association in Prince George (no timeframe).

Regarding the subsegment analysis: 57% of College Heights respondents, 30% of Hart respondents, and 26% of West Bowl respondents said they had volunteered for a Community Association.

Proportion of Respondents Who Have Volunteered for a Community Association



Of those who have volunteered with a Community Association, approximately one-third (36%) are board members, 23% event helpers, and 18% activity leaders.

Role	Currently Volunteering	Volunteered in the Previous 1 – 2 Years	Volunteered More than 2 Years Ago	Total Responses
Board Member	16 (35.6%)	8 (17.8%)	27 (60.0%)	45
Activity Leader	13 (18.1%)	19 (26.4%)	50 (69.4%)	72
Event Helper	24 (22.6%)	36 (34.0%)	65 (61.3%)	106
Other	11 (20.4%)	13 (24.1%)	31 (57.4%)	54



Respondents were asked to **specify the volunteer roles** they have assumed. The volunteer roles most frequently mentioned by respondents were:

Event Helper

Forty-three (43) respondents indicated they had volunteered to help at special events. Fundraising was the most prevalent event mentioned by respondents. Respondents also mentioned volunteering to help with Family Fun nights, Good as New sales and special event concessions.

“Fundraiser for Canadian Cancer Society for the Relay for Life, as well as the Northern Lights fundraiser for Fort McMurray.”

“I usually help out at the Good as New sale in the spring and the fall.”

Activity Leader

Thirty-seven (37) respondents indicated they had volunteered to lead various activities. Over twenty (20) different activities were mentioned by the respondents. The top three (3) activities with the highest number of mentions included coaching sports, teaching a course, and leading youth.

“Leader for indoor soccer, t-ball, youth softball.”

“Leading cross country skiing, Saturday morning tot programs.”

Board Member

Fifteen (15) respondents indicated they had volunteered as a board member. The top three (3) roles mentioned were board chair, director, and secretary.

“Numerous positions throughout many years.”

“Board chair of one group, facilitator for another, advisor for many more.”

Other

Security, cleaning, communications, and technical volunteer roles were mentioned by thirteen (13) respondents. A handful of respondents indicated they maintained outdoor ice rinks.

“Assisted with setting up and cleaning gym.”

“Presently always shovel on the outdoor rinks when out skating.”

When asked **why respondents volunteered**, a wide range of reasons were provided. The top three (3) reasons are as follows.

Community Involvement

Seventy-three (73) of the respondents indicated they volunteered to be involved, help out and give back to their local community. Respondents mentioned they volunteered to socialize, meet other people in their neighbourhood and help with fundraising events.

“I want to be part of the community and help people who would normally not be able to participate or find the help that they need.”

“I volunteer at events that help raise funds for important causes.”

Interest in Programs or Events

Fifty-eight (58) respondents indicated they volunteered because they were interested in the program or event. Respondents mentioned they often volunteered for programs that catered to the interests of their families and local community.

“To support the programs as I think they are very important to provide something for the youth.”

“Because my children were involved and I enjoyed being able to watch them and other children grow.”

Support for Recreation and Physical Activity

Eighteen (18) respondents indicated they volunteered because they wanted to contribute to local sports and recreation programs. Respondents also mentioned they volunteered to support physical activity.

“We are passionate about ball and live walking distance to the fields. Given the great community programming we thought we should give back.”

“I want to encourage active lifestyles and community involvement to encourage the families in my community to get out and meet their neighbours.”

When asked **why respondents were not currently volunteering**, a variety of reasons were provided. Common themes included the following.

Almost fifty (46) of the respondents indicated they did not volunteer because they were too busy.

"I volunteer for other clubs and societies and I work full time."

"My current employment role is very demanding and I'm already a director with another organization."

Twenty-seven (27) respondents indicated they did not volunteer because they were not interested.

"There isn't programs that my children enjoy."

"I am enjoying more outdoors type activities."

Ten (10) respondents indicated they did not volunteer because they were too old for the programs.

"My kids are too old for this program."

"Getting too old."

Ten (10) respondents indicated they did not volunteer because they were unaware or could not find volunteer information.

"I'm unaware of current opportunities."

"Organization and communication was lacking."

A handful of respondents indicated they did not volunteer because they lacked accessibility to programs.

"The activities keep getting cancelled."

"I moved out of the area I used to live in."

When asked **why respondents have not volunteered**, the top three (3) reasons provided were:

Lack of Time

Over one hundred (129) of the respondents indicated they had not volunteered due to lack of time. Respondents indicated they were too busy or unavailable to volunteer. Respondents mentioned the hours of operations often conflicted with other commitments or work schedules.

"I volunteer for many other boards already and do not have the necessary time to commit to another organization."

"I work full time and have a family to care for."

Lack of Information

Forty-four (44) respondents indicated they had not volunteered due to lack of information. Respondents indicated they were unaware of volunteer opportunities in their neighbourhood. Respondents mentioned they could not easily find volunteer opportunities for community events or programs.

"Not aware of opportunities to volunteer; lack of communication of needs or opportunities."

"Have never been asked and don't know how to get involved."

Lack of Interest

Twenty-eight (28) respondents indicated they had not volunteered due to lack of interest. Respondents indicated volunteer opportunities were not relevant to their interests because they were too old (seniors) or did not have children enrolled in programs.

"Haven't found a program I am interested in volunteering for."

"Most programs are children programs, which I have none and am not interested."



When asked what could be done to **entice respondents to volunteer/volunteer more** within their Community Associations, a variety of suggestions were provided. The top five (5) suggestions are noted below.

Increase Communication and Marketing

Eighty-six (86) respondents indicated they would volunteer if they had more information from Community Associations. Respondents indicated volunteer opportunities need to have a greater social media presence. Respondents suggested Community Associations increase advertising and marketing.

“For people to be better organized and return messages. Update websites, Facebook pages with any changes to hours of operations.”

“Increase the publicity for the events to allow potential volunteers to be aware of their nature, dates, locations, and need for volunteers.”

Offer Programs Relevant to Interests and Needs

Forty-seven (47) respondents indicated they would volunteer if the programs and events were more relevant to their needs and interests. Sixteen (16) respondents indicated they would volunteer if they had more flexibility to have their children attend while volunteering. Programs relating to adults and seniors received a handful of mentions.

“If my kids were involved in the activities, then I would volunteer.”

“I would love to see them offer some adaptive programs for persons with disabilities, such as autism.”

Offer Incentives and Financial Support

Thirty-eight (38) respondents indicated they would volunteer if they received a small incentive or financial support. Respondents indicated they would like access to child care, program discounts, free passes, free food, credit vouchers or tax rebates.

“Free registration if you are volunteering for that program.”

“Offer child minding for volunteers? I’d love to volunteer, but I can’t do that as well as parent.”

Provide Training and Support from the City of Prince George

Twenty-one (21) respondents indicated there needs to be more support offered by the City of Prince George. Respondents suggested paid staff might better manage some of the programs currently offered by Community Associations. Respondents indicated more training and education is needed for volunteers.

“Having it be run professionally, with paid staff at the City providing support and running core programs.”

“More help from city. Or a paid position for some additional support.”

Increase Accessibility

Eleven (11) respondents indicated they would volunteer if the programs or special events were in their local community or neighbourhood. A few respondents suggested events should be easily accessible by public transit.

“Make it relevant to my area (e.g., look for volunteers in the areas that each association represents).”

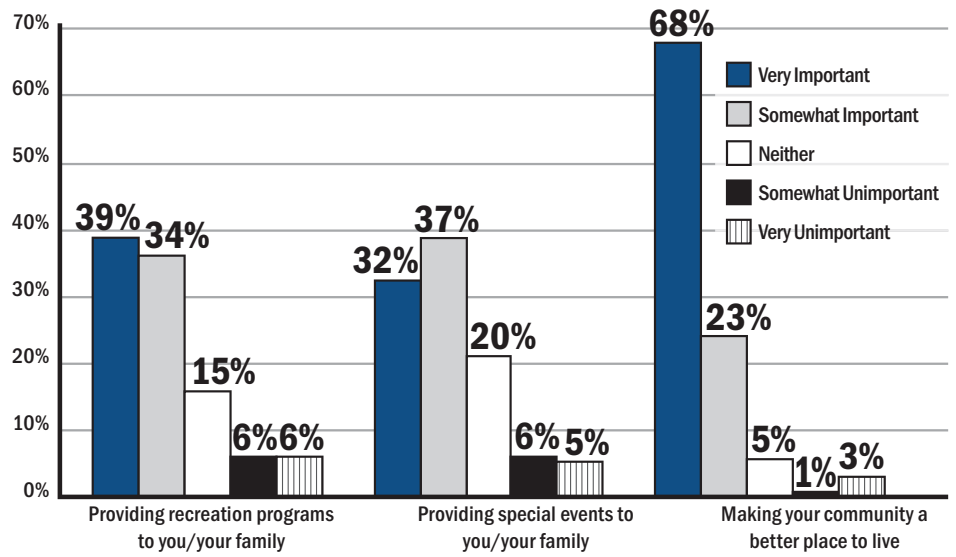
“I would volunteer more if there were activities closer to our neighbourhood.”



Importance of Community Associations

Respondents were asked about the importance of Community Associations vis-à-vis several different functions. While the majority of respondents indicated that Community Associations are important in providing recreation programs (73%) and special events (69%), overwhelmingly respondents see the importance of Community Associations in making the community a better place (91%). See the graph for additional details.

The Importance of Community Associations



	College Heights		West Bowl		Hart	
	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important	Somewhat Important
Providing recreation programs to you/your family.	58%	27%	27%	27%	34%	45%
Providing special events to you/your family.	46%	34%	24%	31%	30%	42%
Making your community a better place to live.	81%	15%	54%	31%	77%	15%



Other Thoughts About the Community Associations

When asked to share any other thoughts respondents had about the Community Association system in Prince George, a wide array of comments were provided. General themes from the comments are detailed below.

Equitable access was the most prevalent comment mentioned by respondents. Forty-eight (48) respondents indicated access to facilities, ice rinks, parks, trails, playgrounds, and bus routes are needed in all communities. A common theme identified was the need for better coordination between Community Associations. College Heights was repeatedly mentioned as an active association with access to a wide-range of programs and special events.

“All events and activities should be accessible to people with disabilities. This means keeping in mind wheelchair access, access for people who are visually impaired, bus service, attitudes about disability, etc.”

“The disparity between associations is frustrating. Only so much can be done on a volunteer basis. They have a place in my opinion for outlying areas but our city has grown to the point where a professional take on rec services is warranted. A multi-use community centre or two could be very well utilized.”

Forty-one (41) respondents indicated Community Associations are **in need of support**. Thirty-two (32) of the respondents suggested paid staff should be provided by the City of Prince George to help manage and support programs currently offered by Community Associations.

“Community Associations are a great idea; they just need way more support from the City of Prince George. Volunteers can only be expected to do so much.”

“Need more support. There should be a paid person in charge of programming. Too much work for volunteers.”

Thirty-seven (37) respondents expressed general **satisfaction with programs and special events** offered in their area. Respondents suggested Community Association programs should continue to evolve to reflect the changing demographics of their communities.

“It’s vitally important to build community connections and provide recreation and athletic programming for kids, youth, and adults in our neighbourhoods.”

“Youth can influence elders in a positive way and youth can learn so much from the seniors. It would be amazing if the Community Association could play a role in revitalizing that - bringing these two groups together in a positive way.”

Thirty-one (31) respondents indicated Community Associations should **improve promotions and marketing**.

“More support in the promotion of the programs: Marketing! A website with all the programs listed and registration options. More Community Association promotion in the media, social media, etc.”

“Promote events and activities so people in the community are aware of them. We join activities provided by sports associations because we are unaware of those put on by the Community Associations.”

Fifteen (15) respondents indicated **increased funding** is needed to sustain affordable programs and events.

“Need to find ways to keep them relevant and sustainable. Low cost rec programming is essential.”

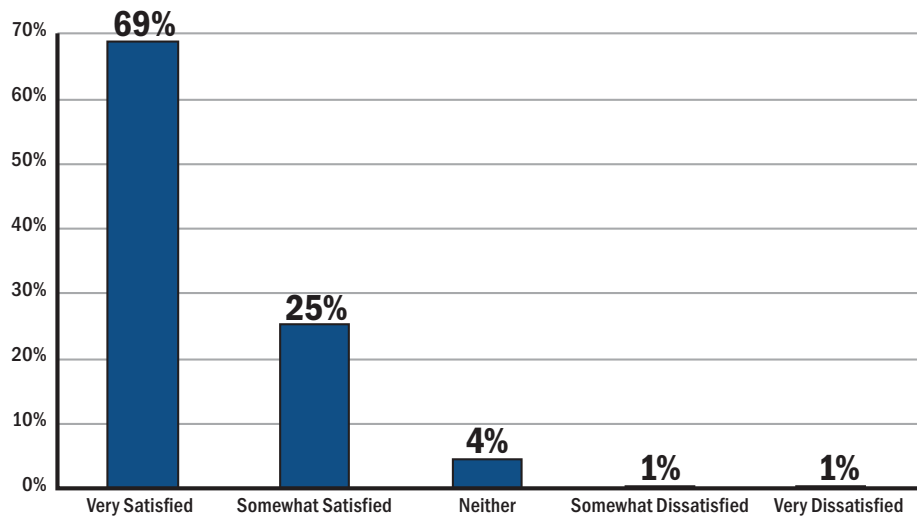
“I would access evening art classes that are affordable.”



Importance of Recreation

Approximately two-thirds (69%) of respondents said that recreation is important to their quality of life. Another quarter (25%) considered recreation as somewhat important.

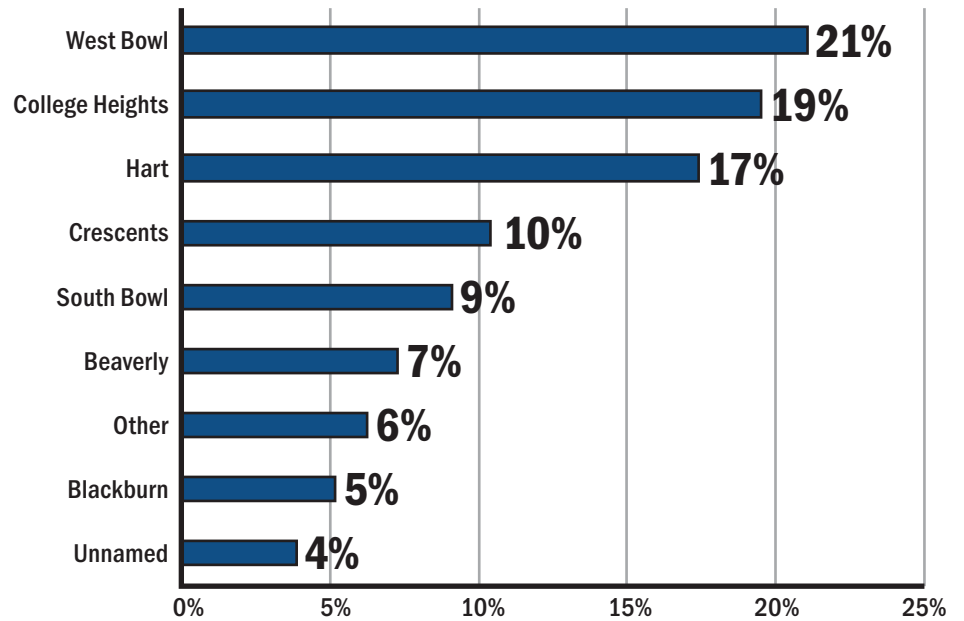
Importance of Recreation to Quality of Life



Residency

The West Bowl, College Heights, and Hart Community Associations were the most represented Association areas in the survey.

Residency of Respondents



5

COMPARABLE PRACTICE RESEARCH



Several cities were contacted throughout western Canada in an effort to learn about their experiences with Community Associations/Leagues. The cities contacted included: Regina, Saskatoon, Edmonton, St. Albert, Lethbridge, Kamloops, and North Vancouver. A summary of the research is included in Appendix B. A synopsis of the research is noted below.

- The administrative burden on community groups is reduced by providing templates and training to the groups.
- Organizational development support is provided to the community groups.
- Associations can be utilized by the city to as the voice of the community and to liaise with the community areas.
- The community development approach is often used. The groups operate as independent organizations but receive some support, particularly around organization development and even grant proposal writing, from City staff.
- Community Associations deliver events and play a key role in community building.
- Often the City delivers recreation programming directly. Community Associations may deliver programming, but it is generally entry-level programs.



6

RECOMMENDATIONS



The recommendations presented herein are actions for the City of Prince George. These actions are intended to bolster the sustainability of the Community Association system as a delivery mechanism for recreation in the city; they are not meant to present an alternative system of delivery. The recommendations identify a direction or strategic approach. The implementation details will be determined after the strategy has been accepted by the City.

It is important to recognize that for the Community Associations the details around implementation of the recommendations are critical. However these recommendations are significant statements by the City that espouse a clear philosophy regarding support for the Community Association delivery system. The Community Associations are independent societies; as such the City offers assistance as described herein as support for the Community Associations.



“ It was a great way to engage with people within my neighbourhood. I thought the events were well organized, and I continue to want to become more involved and am considering volunteering with the association in the future.

—Survey Respondent

RECOMMENDATION #1

The City of Prince George will offer supports to the Community Associations as they deliver their programs and events.

The Community Associations are an important part of the delivery system of community recreation programming and events. The 2014 Community Recreation Services Plan acknowledged the value of the Community Association service delivery system as did the community and City stakeholders. Research with other communities pointed out the value of this type of delivery system as well. Through the public survey, 91% of respondents said Community Associations are important in making their community a better place to live; 73% said Community Associations are important in providing recreation programs for them/their families; and 69% said Community Associations are important in providing special events to them/their families.

The City of Prince George has provided many supports to the Community Associations over the years including:

- The Active Living Guide;
- Assistance, training, and funding related to the provision of outdoor rinks;
- The provision of space in Prince George School District #57 through a shared use agreement;
- General liability insurance to cover programs and events;
- Membership in Volunteer PG;
- Support for online program registration;
- Grant opportunities (Community Enhancement Grant and myPG Community Grant); and
- City staff time (approximately 0.4 FTE).

This recommendation suggests that the aforementioned supports continue. While the supports provided by the City have been very valuable and much appreciated, the Community Associations continue to experience some challenges. Further support from the City would help address these challenges and assist in strengthening the sustainability of the Community Association delivery system. There will still be a reliance on community members to manage and operate the Community Associations as they have been doing. Some Community Associations will be more successful than others.

Other supports offered to the Community Associations may vary over time and across the Community Associations themselves. Additional supports and resources could include the following.

- **Volunteer recruitment and retention initiatives and strategies.** This may include the development and management of a volunteer roster; a volunteer market place; and leader-in-training programs. Recruitment and retention of volunteers, particularly program leaders, can be a challenging task. Providing some assistance with this can help reduce the burden on Community Associations.
- **Board development initiatives and strategies.** This may include job descriptions for board roles; society operations; bylaw development; and effective board training. There have been some initiatives already undertaken. This is a broad topic of governance however and could involve many topics. As well, due to the nature of the Community Associations themselves and any turnover within their organizations, some emergent initiatives may arise and/or some topics may be delivered more than one time.
- **Resource banks.** Providing a central resource can help lessen the administrative burden on the Community Associations and also help the Community Associations build on the strengths of each other. At its essence as a resource bank is utilized and developed the benefit to the Community Associations can grow. This is a mechanism whereby the Community Associations can lessen some of their efforts by not having to “recreate the wheel”. As well the opportunity to enhance their operations and programs exists. Potential components of the resource bank include lesson plans; bylaws; and promotional templates.
- **Community needs assessment.** The programs and events that the Community Associations offer is often based on historical provision or emergent leaders. A community needs assessment is a proactive measure designed to solicit the needs of community members. The information gathered can then be used in the development and provision of programs and events. The needs assessment can be quite grand but need not be. Essentially it is an initiative to engage in a conversation and research with the community. The City may help structure the assessment and support the Community Associations as it is implemented.

- **Communications and promotions.** The resident survey identified a lack of awareness of the Community Associations and its activities as a reason for not participating in programs and events and as a reason for not volunteering. Promotion of the Community Associations, their role in the city, their activities, and opportunities to get involved should be undertaken. This study itself has served as a mechanism for promotion as will the implementation of the recommendations. Consideration is needed of other processes and mechanisms to promote the Community Associations. Certainly some of the resources that may be included in the resource bank will assist in this regard. Additional opportunities may present themselves through the City website.
- **Planning assistance.** Planning is an important activity for the Community Associations to undertake. Strategic plans can help Community Associations set direction and outline their broad intent. A strategic plan helps set a vision and mission for the organization. Some Community Associations may have this in place or have elements in place. Business planning is a more specific level of planning that helps in the implementation of the strategic plan. Planning can provide a focus for a Community Association which in turn helps with the allocation of resources (e.g. time, money). Planning assistance may be generally addressed through board development processes. Alternatively some specific assistance could be directed to individual organizations.

There may be other areas in which the City could support the Community Associations. These will emerge. Some may be ad hoc one off supports while other supports may be ongoing. As the City examines and addresses its own website, for example, opportunities may be available to assist the Community Associations. Likewise a review of City recreational software may identify additional functionality related to program registration that may benefit the Community Associations.



RECOMMENDATION #2

Develop partnership agreements between the City and Community Associations.

Individual partnership agreements should be developed with each Community Association. The partnership agreement describes the roles, responsibilities, and relationships of the Community Associations in terms of program and event delivery. It will define the nature of the relationship between the City and the Community Associations. The agreement would also identify the supports and contributions of the City to the Community Associations.

There is not a shared understanding amongst the Community Associations and the City regarding their respective roles. Implementing an agreement would delineate what each entity could expect from the other. Examples of elements to include in the agreement are:

- Access to School District #57 facilities in accordance to the Shared Use Agreement between the School District and the City of Prince George;
- Supports as identified from the previous recommendation;
- Liability insurance;
- Facilities and operations and
- Volunteer support (e.g. on-boarding, roles and responsibilities, recruitment, and recognition).

There will be a template for the agreement but each will be tailored to the individual Community Association with considerations of their capacity and abilities. There will be an annual review of the agreements. The development of these agreements will involve close interaction and conversation with each Community Association. This exercise will help ensure the needs of each Community Association are understood which, in turn, can help involve the supports the City will provide/offer to the Community Associations. Certainly some Community Associations will require additional supports beyond what others require. The interaction to develop the agreements will ensure these supports are identified annually. Annual revision of the agreements will ensure changing circumstances can be recognized. These regular reviews will also serve to strengthen the partnerships between the Community Associations and the City.

“ It is important to [have] Community Associations because they give people with maybe not as much money to still give their children an option to participate in sports close to home. It’s important for building community and relationships around you.

—Survey Respondent

RECOMMENDATION #3

Formally recognize that the Community Associations are the face of the community.

Currently the Community Associations deliver recreational programming and community events. In some instances, and on an ad hoc basis, they have also been utilized by the City as a voice for the community area. This function for the Community Association should be formally recognized and included in the partnership agreement.

In this capacity the Community Associations could be utilized to gather input from their community area on a variety of matters. They could serve as hosts convening events and town hall meetings whereby the City could communicate face-to-face with residents. Serving this function would provide an established mechanism for two way communication between the City and the community area. Including this function as part of the Community Associations’ role could positively impact the ability of the Community Associations to recruit board members. Recognizing this role could entice some to come forward and volunteer when they were not interested in the programming and events aspect of the Community Association.

Due to the fact that Community Services has existing relationships with the Community Associations, the Department would serve as the lead internally as it relates to this Community Association role. The communication between the City and the Community Associations would flow through the Community Services Department.

Suggested roles for the Community Associations could include the following.

- Recreation programs
- Special events
- Outdoor ice rink provision
- Beautification projects
- Neighbourhood clean-ups
- Fundraising
- Town hall meetings
- A sounding-board for various neighbourhood issues/concerns

This newly recognized role is not intended to add to the burden on the Community Associations. Rather it is to formally recognize a role that has been assumed by some Community Associations on some issues.

The City does work and interacts with residents across Prince George. With this recommendation, the City will continue to do this but the Community Association for that area will simply serve as the host for some of these efforts. The City may want to convene a meeting with area residents about a particular issue. With this recommendation some promotion of this meeting may be facilitated through the Community Association. At the meeting itself the Community Association may simply welcome people and introduce the City representatives. This role can further enhance the profile of the Community Association within the community. It will also establish a channel for communication between the Community Associations and the City beyond the existing one with the Community Services Department.

This relationship could accommodate ad hoc liaisons between the City and the community areas. It could also accommodate regularly scheduled sessions—for example the City may want annual meetings with residents across Prince George.

RECOMMENDATION #4

Examine how to best meet the needs of areas of Prince George that are not currently represented by a Community Association.

Not all areas of Prince George are currently represented by a Community Association. As illustrated in the map presented previously in this strategy, a portion of south west Prince George (between Beverly and West Bowl, South Bowl, and College Heights) does not have a Community Association.

While residents of Prince George are able to register for programs offered by any Community Association, the ability to access programs within their own community area was deemed important. As well, with implementation of the previous recommendation (utilize Community Associations as community area representatives), it will be important to work with all area of the City to determine if new Community Associations are required to allow for coverage City-wide.

There are a number of options to explore:

- Look at existing boundaries of the current Community Associations to determine if they could be adjusted to incorporate areas currently not covered by a Community Association.
- Establish new Community Associations.
- Maintain the status quo—leave the areas without a Community Association if residents deem it unnecessary.

7

IMPLEMENTATION AND RESOURCES

“ When I have been able to enroll my children in various programs—they have enjoyed the opportunity and so I believe that it is my role to give back and support the CA by contributing my time. Also, my family really enjoys skating on the neighborhood ice rink during the winter and it’s not that hard for someone with a snow blower to take a turn at clearing the ice—especially if they are using it regularly. It is important to help out so that we keep it in the neighborhood. It would be a shame to lose it because it is used quite regularly.

—Survey Respondent

A specific plan will need to be developed by the City to implement the strategy. Whatever the specifics of implementation are, interaction and communication between the City and the Community Associations is critical. The suggested supports articulated were put forth based on interaction with the Community Associations. As was stated, these supports may change and the details of the supports may vary as well depending upon the needs of the Community Associations.

Partnerships with other entities in the community will be necessary to implement this strategy. The City has existing partnerships with organizations such as the YMCA, Volunteer Prince George, Prince George School District #57, and many others. These partnerships can be leveraged to provide training, and other services. It is not assumed that the City itself would provide all services and supports directly. As has already occurred community partners can help in this regard.

Some financial resourcing of this strategy is suggested. The purpose of the financial resources would be to enable specific implementation of the strategy. For example, there may be some costs associated with board development initiatives or the development of promotional templates. While neither a specific amount nor a specific allocation has been determined, budgeting an amount in the neighbourhood of \$20,000 is reasonable.

Internal partnering as well will help with the implementation of this strategy. An enhanced working relationship between the Community Services Department, the Service Centre, IT, Corporate Communications, Parks and others should be developed. A more fulsome working relationship can benefit the Community Association system as this strategy is implemented.

Finally the successful implementation will require an increase in staff resources from the 0.4 FTE currently dedicated. The additional staff resources can be sourced through a number of means. It is suggested that the City review its staff roles and responsibilities in order to “find” the staff resources necessary to dedicate to this strategy’s implementation. Certainly continued provision of the existing supports as well as the implementation of the strategy’s recommendations will require staffing attention greater than 0.4 FTE.

APPENDICES



A: Community Association Discussion Group Output

32

B: Comparable Research

34



A

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION DISCUSSION GROUP OUTPUT



Successes

- Relationships with custodian and principal
- Social marketing
- In-person registration 3x/year
 - Helps get volunteers
- Park developed—advocated for a while to get it
- City's liability insurance
- Free access to school gyms
 - Some events run under the Community Association name
- All monies raised through programs and events the Community Association gets to keep
- Programs
 - Community events—family day, skate
 - Builds community and positive recreation
- Donations from community members and Tim Hortons etc
- Low stress/simple programs
- Fewer events than before
- Leader first so there are no cancelled programs
- Multiple leaders for a program
- City's ice grants
- Larger fundraisers—antique show—rent out tables and charge admission
- Leisure guide is good—hard copy is good, online version is good
- The Community Coordinator is a great resource
- Special events
- Fireworks donations—thank them in the flyer
- The Council listens to Community Associations more than some other unestablished groups
- Grant money—City supports
- Volunteers—small numbers but dedicated

Challenges

- It is hard to raise volunteers
- Tough to advertise
- Keep everything going
- Long term volunteers
- Administrative duties
- Philosophical challenge—Community Association and the City—the City says they are doing the Community Associations a favour/service
- The City is putting more on the Community Associations—it seems like I'm doing a job I'm not paid for. I want to help the City
- The public's knowledge of the Community Associations role is low—no visibility
- So much marketing—it is hard to break through the clutter
- Renewal of volunteers
- Paperwork for the City
- Reporting—the City needs to get automated reporting
- Time
- After school programming—tough to find program leaders
- Tough to find facilities
- How do you know what programs to offer?
 - Try it
 - Leaders suggest it
 - Grandfathered

Part of the City

- No, independent
- The Community Coordinator shows up to meetings, but will sometimes leave before meeting is finished
- City gives some funds but say to advertise; City is supportive

What else would you like?

- Officer/director insurance
- Operating funds
- Support for all the programming work
 - That's why there is online registration
 - City collects the funds but the Community Association has to make the refunds immediately
- Maybe have city paid staff as a programmer
 - All Community Associations are doing the same—maybe a programmer per quadrant
- Joint use—only use Monday to Friday, 6:00 – 10:00 p.m.
 - 16 day notice for cancelations
 - Schools have priority
 - Often the custodian doesn't know that programs are running
 - Sometimes the custodian is put in the role of greeter; some don't want the programs there
 - Do the schools understand the agreement
 - Community Associations want to get access on the weekend

Other Thoughts

- Snow removal and grass cutting would be nice help
- The schools aren't doing anything for us
- YMCA—leaders run programs; program leader referral is good
- UNBC—run jump throw programs
- GroundWorks program can supply labour
- Big Brothers Big Sisters—Community Association is becoming landlord for one
- Can the City put out an RFP for all Community Associations
- Parent Advisory Councils at schools aren't working with Community Associations
- Cooperation within Community Associations—get together and hire a programmer
 - Share equipment
 - Share lesson plans, program descriptions, ad templates
 - Set up a Community Association Facebook page. One Community Association has its own Facebook with a back of house part for executive
- An idea: Community Associations support community and special events; the City can do the rec programming. The volunteers do the ads, registrations, etc (College Heights said they like to do the programming)

B

COMPARABLE RESEARCH

City/ Location	Structure	City Staffing	Roles/ Responsibilities	Grant Programs	Other Supports	Other
Saskatoon	47 CAs (one per neighbourhood)	City is divided into 8 areas: City has one Community Consultant per area	In-person registration night only CA have own websites CA offer rec programs that are close to home, low cost, no experience necessary	\$1200/year operational grant \$1000 ice rink grant \$1500 program grant	CA programs go into Leisure Guide Joint use agreement with schools City annually hires a contractor (instructor coordinator) to find instructors/leaders for CA programs) Minor sport organizations help with training of CA leaders	Will undergo its own review of the Community Association system. More reporting back about outcomes from grants. Minor sports groups help train leaders.
Regina	27 CA started in 1970s CA are independent societies	3 Community Consultants	CA run recreation programs	\$1000 annually for newsletters, events, projects High-risk neighbourhoods can get up to \$55,000 annually	School joint use agreement CA programs go into leisure guide twice per year City has neighbourhood support model: provides modules on board governance, strategic planning Annual get together of CA to share ideas	Neighbourhood support modules. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 modules making up 200 pages.

City/ Location	Structure	City Staffing	Roles/ Responsibilities	Grant Programs	Other Supports	Other
Edmonton	Federation of Community Leagues represents 157 individual community leagues Leagues are independently elected boards	City liaison to EFCL 42 Community Recreation Coordinators support the leagues	Operate halls Community leagues are sounding boards for communities: City seeks advice from them Create a sense of place and connectiveness CL run minor soccer across Edmonton City staff run programs out of CL halls Some CL conduct needs assessments CL are responsible for outdoor ice rinks CL have own websites	Annual operating grant Capital grants	Community development approach (CRC) Funding to EFCL EFCL provides training, and templates for CL to use City provides start up funds for new community leagues	Halls are on City land All community leagues have membership fees CL have defined boundaries Some entrenched volunteers are resistant to change. Some agencies use Community League halls for own programming.
St. Albert	1 CA	Community Recreation Coordinators work with community groups and minor sports organizations CRC help with bylaws, projects, etc 3 CRCs (large sport groups; parks, outdoor groups/ small sport groups and clubs) 2 community event coordinators: oversee community events	City has block party program to facilitate neighbourhood building and engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clock party kit; block party bootcamps 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City produces a calendar of events • Event coordinators ensure event organizers have permits, licenses, insurance 	From block parties forms neighbourhood network
Lethbridge	5 CA organizing into Council of Lethbridge Neighbourhoods (registered not for profit)	Neighbourhood support coordinator			Assist CA in organizing; support for community engagement; support for grant proposals; advocacy	Initiative started in 2014 to better support its various communities called Beyond Your Front Door

City/ Location	Structure	City Staffing	Roles/ Responsibilities	Grant Programs	Other Supports	Other
Kamloops	16 CAs	City program coordinator attends meetings at request of CA 0.4 FTE	CAs represent a geographic area CAs organize special events: don't do recreation programming (except for those in outlying areas) City uses CA contact lists to solicit input/ feedback from residents City helps CAs build partnerships with other community organizations	\$8,000 grant funding available; CA must get matching grant	CA forum and thank you dinner City presence at meetings to build relationship	Key is for Community Associations to build capacity City delivers recreation programming Community Associations are sounding boards for neighbourhoods
North Vancouver	Recreation Commission	Volunteer services coordinator	All rec programs are delivered by paid staff		Strict process to screen volunteers	





CITY OF
PRINCE GEORGE