

LEDUC COUNTY

RECREATION FACILITIES STUDY FINAL REPORT

September 4, 2012



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STUDY SUMMARY

This Recreation Facility Study has been built upon thorough research, diligent public engagement and the input of many regional recreation facility stakeholders. The research gathered suggests that the County's current approach to providing recreation facilities is justified and effective. Residents are satisfied with the availability of recreation facilities in the region and with the County's current approach to providing recreation facilities (largely indirect providing funding through cost sharing arrangements with partner municipalities and groups).

Although the County is doing a good job of fostering partnerships in the delivery of recreation facilities to its residents, this Study outlines a variety of ways this provision can be enhanced and / or structured to make the development and operations of recreation facilities more standardized and transparent. There are a number of frameworks, philosophy's and process outlined herein that will guide the County and its partners in making sure that future decisions regarding recreation facility provision are made with the best information possible and ultimately lead to the optimum use of public funding.

Furthermore, this study provides a toolkit for County planners to understand recreation facility requirements in new urban growth areas as they are developed, thus ensuring that the groundwork for recreation facilities is laid prior to major urban growth.

The following recommendations are the product of this Recreation Facilities Study:

Recommendation #1: The County implement the recreation facility classification system in contemplating future recreation facility provision.

Recommendation #2: The County develop a group support handbook to outline all the services available to partner groups, potentially to be further categorized by stage of group evolution.

Recommendation #3: The County require partner organizations to complete a simple strategic planning template to achieve cost sharing assistance.

Recommendation #4: The County continue to provide municipal cost sharing for recreation facilities under the agreements already in place with consideration to potentially establishing a overall capitation on funding allocated to recreation facility costs share on an overall basis or by recreation district. Perceived inequity in a base level of service to each provided in each recreation district may remain based on the choices of each independently partner municipality as to the level of service they respectively provide.



Recommendation #5: Continue to cost share with non-profit partner groups utilizing the same method currently administered with consideration to annual increases to reflect inflation for each category.

Recommendation #6: The County strive to achieve the steps outlined in the facility development framework wherever possible when contemplating recreation facility development with its partners.

Recommendation #7: The County consider the funding framework provided when assessing the funding models for future recreation facility projects.

Recommendation #8: The County strive to utilize the Regional Collaboration Framework in organizing and facilitating regional collaboration with recreation facility partners.

Recommendation #9: The County strive to achieve the aforementioned target allocations of municipal reserve dedicated to recreation while considering the site selection criteria prescribed for major recreation facilities where applicable.

Recommendation #10: The County utilize the framework presented in accepting municipal reserves for recreation purposes for each respective type of land development.

Recommendation #11: The County develop a strategy on how to utilize cash from the proceeds of selling municipal reserve for recreation purposes considering recreation districts and local, regional and district level requirements.

Recommendation #12: The County continue to utilize partnerships in the provision of recreation facilities and wherever possible avoid independently owning and operating recreation facilities.

Recommendation #13: The County strive to target recreation facility provision, primarily through partnerships, to the levels indicated in new urban growth areas.

Recommendation #14: The County strive to partner in recreation facility delivery in urban areas with the realization that the County's level of involvement in planning, development and operations will be beyond what is currently practiced.



1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

Leduc County is a major stakeholder in the delivery of recreation facilities in the South Edmonton region. The funding and administrative support offered by the County to its delivery partners is vital to recreation provision and the abundance of associated benefits achieved regionally. The County realizes the benefits of recreation facilities, the necessity of municipalities to help provide recreation opportunities, and the ability to lever recreation delivery through inter-municipal and non-profit partnerships as well as direct facility operations.

The County is also evolving as part of the broader capital region. With major “urban” or “rurban” growth planned within the County new residents are, and will continue to, demand services more like some of the County’s urban partners as opposed to traditional rural and industrial interests. With this in mind, although the County’s predominant approach to recreation facility provision through a combination of partnerships and cost sharing

arrangements has been effective in the past (and will likely continue) County decision makers may need to begin to consider future growth areas as larger urban centres / hamlets. If expected growth does materialize, recreation infrastructure provision in these new urban centres of the County, as well as other services, may warrant an approach unfamiliar to a rural municipality.

This study is about looking at existing regional needs for recreation facilities and assessing the current approach to recreation facility provision by the County and suggesting improvements where appropriate.

Also included in the scope of this project is an exciting visionary process where the “recreation facility groundwork” for major urban growth centres within the County can be provided easing the transition of the County to more of a specialized municipality when, or if, major urban growth occurs in the future.



2. METHODOLOGY

The following chart outlines the tasks associated with the development of this state of recreation facilities report. It is important to note that this Study includes strategic direction related to future recreation facility provision in the Leduc County region and is based upon research collected in the State of Recreation Facilities in 2012 report (under separate cover). The following methodology explains the five phases undertaken in achieving the strategic direction contained herein.



Phase 1: Review existing regional recreation facility context
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project background • Communications strategy • Leduc County profile • Planning review • Regional recreation facility inventory and assessment • Recreation facility delivery model • Trends analysis • Comparative analysis
Phase 2: Stakeholder engagement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder interviews • Community association survey • Household survey • Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee (PRAC) input session • Inter-municipal workshop
Phase 3: Strategic visioning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council / stakeholder visioning session
Phase 4: Draft recreation facilities study
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data analysis • Draft Study development
Phase 5: Final recreation facilities study
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council / stakeholder review workshop • Inter-municipal review session • Study finalization • Final Study Council presentation

3. THE STATE OF RECREATION FACILITIES IN LEDUC COUNTY IN 2012

The following bullets summarize the state of recreation facilities in the Leduc County Region in 2012. For further detail, please refer to the State of Recreation Facilities report (2012) under separate cover.

Regional Population

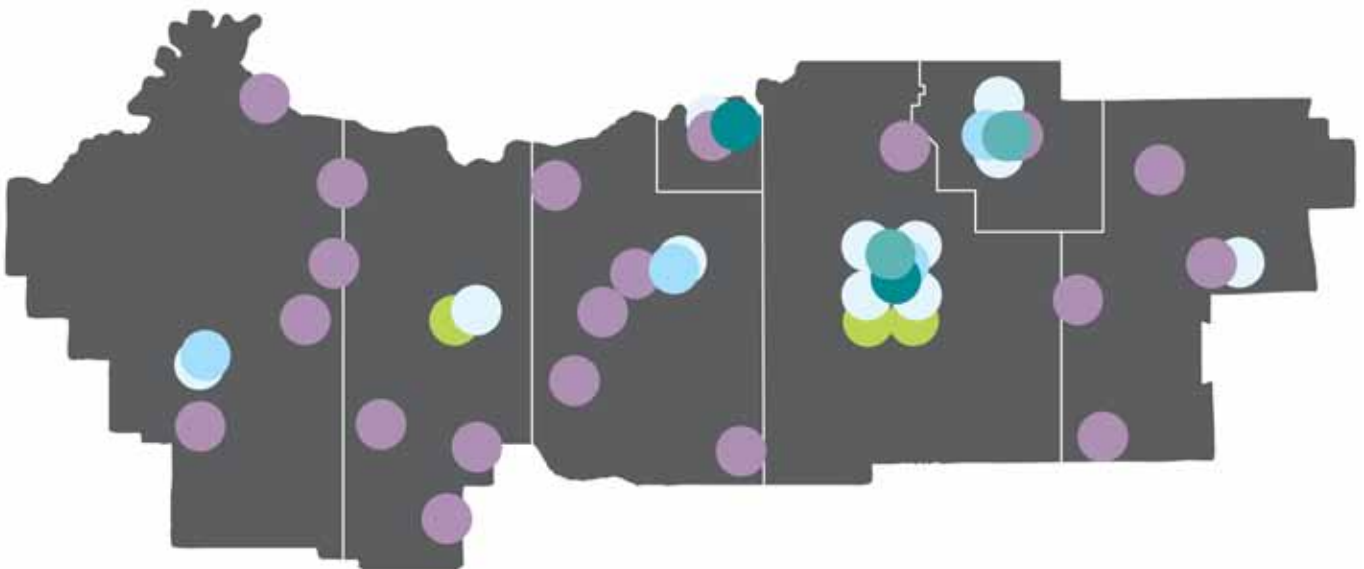
- The County has a population of 13,541 and has experienced 3.1% growth since 2006.
- The entire region has a population of 61,170 and has experienced a 25.2% growth rate since 2006 (excluding the City of Edmonton).
- The average age of the County population is 41 versus the provincial average of 36.
- It is likely that growth will occur.

Current Regional Recreation Facilities

- The region has 11 arenas, 4 curling rinks, 2 indoor pools, 2 outdoor pools, 3 field houses (1 small) and 20 community halls.
- Total estimated replacement value is estimated at \$340 million.
- At 1% of capital value, \$3.4 million is required annually for life cycle budgeting.
- To maintain existing provision ratios for facilities, future development will be required in lockstep with growth.

Potential Future Regional Recreation Facilities

- Future potential recreation facility projects in the region include (not all formally endorsed):
- 6 enhanced arena projects
- 2 new arenas
- 2 new indoor pools
- 3 new field houses (1 small)
- 2 enhanced community hall projects
- 1 new community hall project
- The estimated value of potential projects is \$120 million (2012)



Current Regional Recreation Facility Cost Sharing

- The County currently provides recreation facility cost sharing to partner municipalities based on resident populations in associated recreation areas and upon the level of service provided by the partner.
- The intent of this approach is to provide cost sharing on a per capita basis for resident use of “primary” recreation facilities.
- Although there is recognition that residents in one area may use recreation facilities in other areas as well, the only facility that receives an allocation based on expected “regional use” is the Leduc Recreation Centre.
- This approach leads to perceived imbalance in some cases but any discrepancy in overall recreation facility cost share allocations and overall County resident population in each recreation area is due to differing service levels offered by partner municipalities.
- The County has invested an average of \$344,500 annually in capital cost sharing and \$1.1M in operational cost sharing over the past four years.

Provision of Recreation Facilities in Comparable Rural Municipalities

- When compared to the Sturgeon, Parkland and Red Deer regions, the Leduc County region has a higher provision rate of ice arenas, curling rinks, outdoor pools and field houses while it provides community halls at a lower rate.
- When compared to all other M.D.’s and County’s with a population over 10,000 (excluding specialized municipalities) Leduc County spends the same proportion of its overall budget on recreation and parks (5%). However the per capita spending is higher than the average (\$318 / capita versus an average of \$150 / capita)¹.

1. Note: Leduc County has a high number of partner municipalities (7) as compared to many other rural municipalities (2–4).

Household Survey Results

- 88% of households agree that Leduc County residents benefits “a great deal” or “somewhat” from the provision of recreation facilities.
- 79% agree that recreation participation is a contributor to household quality of life.
- 63% of households are “completely” or “somewhat” satisfied with the regional recreation facilities (24% neither are satisfied nor dissatisfied while 13 % are “somewhat” or “completely” dissatisfied.
- 72% of households use regional recreation facilities.
- In terms of regional facility usage:
 - 63% of County residents use the Leduc Recreation Centre in Leduc
 - 30% use community halls throughout rural Leduc County
 - 28% use the Leduc Public Library
 - 26% use Millennium Place in Sherwood Park
 - 23% use the S&D Aqua-fit Centre in Beaumont
 - 20% use the Thorsby Recreation Complex
 - 19% use the Agriplex in New Sarepta
 - 18% use the Ken Nichol Recreation Centre in Beaumont
 - 13% use the Mike Karabonik Arena in Calmar
 - 12% use the Trans Alta Tri Leisure Centre in Spruce Grove
 - 9% use the Warburg community hall and ice arena
 - 8% use the Dale Fisher Arena in Devon
- 51% of households indicate “travel” is a barrier to participation with 46% indicating that a 15–30 minute drive is maximum acceptable travel time to a recreation facility (29% indicated up to 15 minutes was the maximum).
- 44% of households indicated that the County should maintain its current level of involvement in recreation facility provision while 27% were unsure and 22% indicated it should increase its level of involvement.
- 85% of survey respondents indicated that the County should continue to partner in the provision of recreation facilities (98% indicated the same in 2002).
- 56% indicated that the availability of recreation facilities in the region is not limited (29% said it is limited).
- 60% of households are not willing to pay increased property taxes to support recreation facility development (19% are, 21% are unsure).

- 58% of households have someone who volunteers, mostly for sport and recreation (50%), community associations (48%) and church / place of worship (45%).
- 60% of responding households resided in the County for over 20 years.
- Respondents profile is similar in terms of actual population in each recreation district.

Community Association Survey Results

- 9 of 10 indicated that their facilities require upgrades in the near future.
- All agreed Leduc County should continue to partner in the provision of recreation facilities.
- 8 of 10 indicated that the availability of recreation facilities is not limited in the region.
- Primary challenges for groups include:
 - Raising funds (4 of 10)
 - Recruiting and retaining volunteers (4 of 10)
- 9 of 10 are satisfied with their relationship to Leduc County.

Recreation Facility Trends

- Recreation is valuable to Albertans.
- Municipalities are having to invest more in recreation.
- Volunteerism is vital to recreation delivery and is evolving.
- Spontaneous and structured recreation are both important.
- Youth need to be more active, and outdoors, more often.
- Recreation is important for all ages.
- Multi-use, efficient facility design is key.
- Indoor — outdoor integration is being considered in facility design.
- “Rurban” development is occurring.

3.1. Key Themes

Based on the findings of the research conducted, the following key themes have been identified.

- Residents and groups are satisfied with the provision and availability of recreation facilities.
- Residents and groups believe the County is taking the correct approach to recreation facility provision (partnerships).
- The County is investing in recreation facilities at a level acceptable to the majority of stakeholders.
- The amount of recreation facilities available to County residents is comparable to, and in many cases better than, those available in comparable rural Alberta municipalities (without considering facilities in the City of Edmonton).
- Major investment has already been made in recreation facilities in the region, to which a significant amount of investment will have to be made to sustain existing facilities.
- There are a number of regional recreation facilities being contemplated in the next 10–15 years which the County will be looked upon to support (to some level).
- The County’s current approach to costs sharing is based upon population and service level decisions made by partner municipalities.

4. FUTURE RECREATION FACILITY PROVISION IN THE LEDUC COUNTY REGION

When contemplating the future provision of recreation facilities by the County there are a number of strategic areas that need to be considered. Firstly, there are a number of recreation facilities currently offered throughout the County, all servicing different markets (size and location) and garnering different levels of County involvement in operations. Organizing the different facilities into a **regional recreation facility classification system** will help the County better understand recreation facility provision from a regional perspective.

The County's overall approach to recreation facilities is primarily indirect, so review and recommendations the current level of support (both non-financial through **community development** and financial through **cost sharing**) needs to occur. In addition to enhancing the current delivery of recreation facilities in the region, a **framework for the planning and operations of recreation facilities** will outline how the County can best approach recreation

facility delivery in the future. Furthermore, the County is facilitating urban development in some County areas requiring a shift in philosophy from solely traditional rural governance and service provision to include urban perspectives as well. This shift will force the County to provide a different level of municipal service (including but not limited to recreation facilities) and this is the ideal time (prior to major development occurring) to decipher how best to achieve this new level of **County resident expectation for more "urban" services**. Finally an expected course of **recreation facility development over the next 10 years**, based upon information available today, will help the County understand future funding requirements for recreation facilities.

The following sections outline background information, options (where applicable), and recommended courses of action regarding the aforementioned aspects of future recreation facility provision.



5. A RECREATION FACILITY CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

For the sake of this Study, recreation facilities include a wide range of publicly accessible spaces servicing a variety of social, cultural and physical activities. **The recreation facilities considered “in scope” for the purposes of this study include community halls, curling rinks, ice arenas, indoor swimming pools, outdoor swimming pools, fields houses / gymnasiums and sports fields.**

Currently there are 11 ice arenas, 4 curling rinks, 2 indoor pools, 2 outdoor pools, 3 field houses (1 small) and 20 community halls in the region, some of which are planned for major enhancement projects in the near future. There is also preliminary indication that an additional 2 ice arenas, 2 indoor pools, 3 field houses (1 small) and 1 community hall are being contemplated by regional partners.

Historically, recreation facilities within (or located in a community adjacent to) Leduc County were developed to meet the more specific needs of the communities of interest that they served. Community halls were built primarily for social programming, but also supported limited multi-use activities like children’s programs, arts and crafts and, sometimes, local presentations. As time went on, greater demands for ice sports prompted the need for ice arenas that most often supported attached social areas, curling rinks and larger foyers.

Over time, the recognition that combining activities into complex multi-use designs rendered facilities like the Leduc Recreation Centre in Leduc and the S&D Aquafit Centre in Beaumont served

broader markets and lead to operational economies of scale for both revenue generation and cost control. The “Multiplex Approach” incorporates rentable and programmable indoor sports venues, but also included spontaneous access elements like leisure skating, wellness, indoor walking and jogging, aquatics, indoor play and even indoor child minding.

The approach to combining needed recreation venues under one roof is indeed an efficient, effective and equitable way to invest public capital. It is also a worthy launch point to begin thinking about the next twenty years and how the County can build upon these successes to an even greater level.

The following proposed classification system for overall service delivery has been developed to help the County define how recreation facilities are offered to residents now and in the future. It closely resembles the classification system already utilized by the County for the management and planning of parks and open spaces (refer to the 2006 Parks and Open Spaces Master Plan under separate cover). It is important to note that although the County does not directly operate facilities, the requirement for an indoor facility classification system will be key in helping the County understand how residents needs are being met in different areas in the County and as such where County investment in the provision of facilities with urban partners is warranted and / or effective.

5.1. Type 1: Regional Recreation Facilities

<p>Facilities or facility clusters, that serve a County wide market and are key leisure destinations for both indoor and outdoor activities, community services, institutional services and commerce.</p> <p>They are located within or adjacent to specialized zoning districts like “urban villages” supported by parking, public transit and common energy sources.</p> <p>They evolve and are funded as a result of partnerships, where capital funding for leisure development is supported through lease revenue, sale of high density properties, condominium fees, involved recreation user groups and private operators.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Leduc Recreation Centre</i> 	<p>Indoor Venue examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wellness centres (including indoor walking / jogging tracks) • Ice arenas / pads (regulation and leisure) • Aquatics (program tanks and leisure) • Culture (studios, exhibits, performing arts) • Social (banquet, dance) • Meeting / multi-use programs • Multi-use / court sports • Indoor field activities • Community resource center • Retail • Food / beverage • Leisure amusements
	<p>Outdoor Venue examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plazas / squares • Fountains • Passive gardens • Water parks • Skateboard parks • Village gardens • Multi-use play space • Pathways • Outdoor Skating
	<p>Land / Space Requirement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum 40 acres • 75 acres ideal for full service regional hub

5.2. Type 2: District Recreation Facilities

<p>These are facilities that serve Recreation District Level market populations of 100 to 4,100 residents and most often associate with a community park and / or school ground. They incorporate both indoor and outdoor recreation amenities, but are not typically designed to incorporate broad level community services, commercial, and / or professional services.</p> <p>They can be located within rural hamlets or rural centres within the County, but are best situated on collector roads with ease of access to the site and parking.</p> <p>Connections to pathway systems and safe bicycle routes are most desired, particularly within rural hamlets.</p> <p>Leisure development is supported primarily with public investment and user group contributions with less reliance upon sponsorships and private sector donations.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>New Sarepta Agriplex</i> • <i>Dale Fisher Arena (Devon)</i> 	<p>Indoor Venue examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indoor ice arena • Curling • Field house • Banquet / social • Meeting rooms • Wellness facilities • Arts and crafts • Active play space (e.g. gymnasium space) • Concession services • Social foyers incorporating culture and heritage displays • Multi-use meeting / program rooms
	<p>Outdoor Venue examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreational sports fields / event areas • Skating • Social plaza • Water feature (e.g. spray deck) • Passive gardens • Community gardens • Pathways • Parking • Multi-use play space • Skateboard area
	<p>Land / Space Requirement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum 20 to 25 acres

5.3. Type 3: Local Recreation Facilities

<p>Facilities that serve market populations of up to 500 with more localized access to social venues and multi-use program space.</p> <p>They may or may not incorporate outdoor parks areas, but are ideally located adjacent to neighborhood park / school facilities.</p> <p>These facilities are typically operated by local community associations, agricultural societies or seniors groups with programming and event assistance provided by the County.</p> <p>They function primarily of social programming but often accommodate programs of interest for local residents. They are designed to be rentable for wedding and group affairs, As such, they provide for either on site, or catered food preparation, parking and necessary hosting amenities.</p> <p>Leisure development is supported primarily with public investment and user group contributions both through fundraising and grants that they are eligible for.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Community Halls</i> • <i>Nisku Recreation Centre</i> 	<p>Indoor Venue examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-use program / banquet space (with or without stage) • Kitchen • Storage • Possible separate meeting / arts and crafts room • Possible games room • Group administration space
	<p>Outdoor Venue examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ball diamond • Skating rink or outdoor arena • Rectangular field • Playgrounds • Horseshoe pits • Parking
	<p>Land / Space Requirement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 to 3 acres

5.4. Special Purpose or Themed Resources (Types 1, 2 or 3)

Special purpose, or themed facilities are those that serve County wide populations with services and opportunities that are centered around a core theme or activity. While the types of programs and services provided could be part of Type 1 or Type 2 facilities, these facilities specialize in core services that require specified, more focused program services and most often rely upon proximity to surrounding environments.

Wilderness facilities, sports parks, golf courses, gymnastics facilities, arts and crafts, heritage museums, interpretive centres and performing arts theatres are examples.

Sometimes they are more outdoor focused in design but require public service or program facilities for support.

Leisure investment can be public, or a mix of public and private, depending upon the special type of venue and the services offered.

Examples:

- *Thorsby Haymaker Centre*
- *Leduc #1 Discovery Centre*
- *Leduc West Antique Society Facility*

Recommendation #1:

The County implement the recreation facility classification system in contemplating future recreation facility provision.



6. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND RECREATION FACILITY PROVISION

Key Strategic Questions

- How will the County continue to employ “community development” within community associations?
 - Residents and groups believe the County is taking the correct approach to recreation facility provision (partnerships)
 - The County is investing in recreation facilities at a level acceptable to the majority of stakeholders
 - 85% of households indicated that the County should continue to partner in the provision of recreation facilities (98% indicated the same in 2002)
 - All responding community associations agreed Leduc County should continue to partner in the provision of recreation facilities
 - 9 of 10 community associations are satisfied with their relationship to Leduc County
- How will the County continue to employ “community development” within smaller partner municipalities (excluding Beaumont, Devon and Leduc)?
 - Residents and groups believe the County is taking the correct approach to recreation facility provision (partnerships)
 - The County is investing in recreation facilities at a level acceptable to the majority of stakeholders
 - 85% of households indicated that the County should continue to partner in the provision of recreation facilities (98% indicated the same in 2002)
 - All responding community associations agreed Leduc County should continue to partner in the provision of recreation facilities

Community Development Assistance	Provided to Partner Municipalities ¹	Provided to Non-profit Groups ²
Financial support: Operating	Via cost sharing agreement based on population and service level provided	Via cost sharing agreement based on type of facility (Level I–III)
Financial support: Capital	Via cost sharing agreement based on population and service level provided	Via cost sharing provided to each Recreation Board (4) and limited ad hoc basis
Insurance assistance (ANI: additional named insured)	Can achieve similar rates to the County as independent municipalities	Groups can access lower insurance rates as a rider to overall County insurance policies
Strategic business planning	*not required for cost sharing	Facilitation and assistance as needed
Preparation of grant applications	Assistance as needed	Assistance as needed
Conflict resolution services	n / a	Assistance as needed
Facility operational planning	Assistance as needed	Assistance as needed
Facility and service needs assessment	Assistance as needed	Assistance as needed

Leduc County has already embraced a community development philosophy in assisting non-profit and municipal partners in the provision of recreation facilities as well as programs. This assistance includes both financial and non-financial assistance and is summarized as follows:

- Primarily offered to smaller partner municipalities: Warburg, Thorsby, Calmar
- Primarily offered to Community Associations and Agricultural Societies

As can be determined the County already offers a number of services to both partner municipalities and non-profit groups. As the County does not offer direct programming (with the exception of summer programming) and has only recently begun to operate recreation facilities independently (Nisku Recreation Centre), the partnerships employed by the County and the support given to partners is vital to residents accessing recreation facilities. The key to a community development approach in service provision lies in the strength of partner non-profit volunteer groups and municipalities. The evolution of a non-profit group involved in recreation service provision is explained at the bottom of the page. Through working with and assisting local community groups, the County fosters and sustains partnerships that create buy-in and engagement within the community, optimizes the use of public funds and provide a diverse spectrum of quality facilities and services for all County residents.

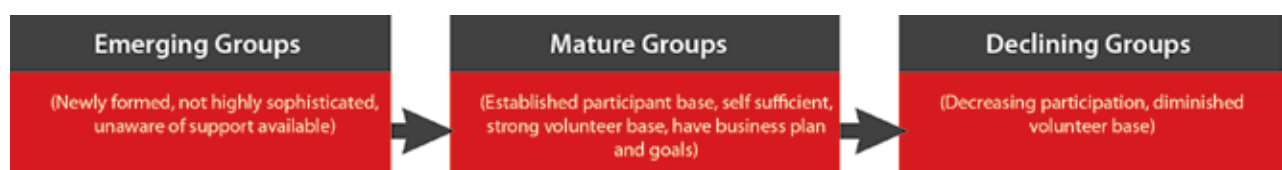
The adoption of a “group evolution model” can help explain roles and responsibilities for the County and partner organizations, address apparent inequalities in existing support for groups and outline a transparent and equitable process on how groups can engage and partner with the County. Although services are already made available to County partners, there may be some situations where differing levels of support are required for groups to meet program goals. It is important that the County aim to optimize the use of public funding in the provision of services and facilities thereby only providing funding assistance to those groups that absolutely need and that are provided valuable services to County residents. To this end, the County will have to determine whether or not to support declining groups. A **decision making process regarding providing support to “declining” groups** is prescribed in the appendix. A key success factor in employing a community development approach to recreation service provision is in the equitable treatment of potential partners and groups. Although tradition has dictated apparent inequity in some of the existing agreements the County has in place with groups, the discrepancy is in fact a product of societal values,

and the differing levels of maturity between partner groups. That being said, moving forward a **transparent protocol for dealing with potential groups** outlining roles and responsibilities and the expectation placed on public investment should be developed. For the most part, the County is offering necessary assistance where required however developing a **“group support handbook”** would allow all groups to understand the services offered by the County to groups in all stages of evolution. Conducting ongoing analysis to identify what tasks and functions partner groups are most challenged with and how the County can potentially assist is paramount.

By communicating on a consistent basis with recreation delivery partner groups, the County will be able to identify areas where volunteer groups require support. This will afford the County the ability to assist groups regardless of their evolution, leading to sustained program provision in for residents and visitors. Communications is not only important to understand the issues groups are facing but also to understand the future strategic vision each group or organization has in terms of recreation facility provision. By facilitating the development of strategic business planning (already offered by County staff) and ultimately requiring annual submission of a simple strategic planning template (see appendix for a sample template), all delivery partners will be “on the same page” when it comes to future service provision, facility expansion and future funding and support requests of the County.

Recommendation #2: The County develop a group support handbook to outline all the services available to partner groups, potentially to be further categorized by stage of group evolution.

Recommendation #3: The County require partner organizations to complete a simple strategic planning template to achieve cost sharing assistance.



7. APPROACH TO RECREATION FACILITY COST SHARING

3. Does the County need to dramatically change how it approaches cost sharing?
 - The County is investing in recreation facilities at a level acceptable to the majority of stakeholders
 - Major investment has already been made in recreation facilities in the region, to which a significant amount of investment will have to be made to sustain existing facilities
 - There are a number of regional recreation facilities being contemplated in the next 10–15 years which the County will be looked upon to support (to some level)
 - 79% of households agree that recreation participation is a contributor to household quality of life
 - 63% of households are “completely” or “somewhat” satisfied with the regional recreation facilities (24% neither are satisfied nor dissatisfied while 13 % are “somewhat” or “completely” dissatisfied
 - 44% of households indicated that the County should maintain its current level of involvement in recreation facility provision while 27% were unsure and 22% indicated it should increase its level of involvement
 - All responding community associations agreed Leduc County should continue to partner in the provision of recreation facilities
 4. Should Leduc County attempt to ensure that similar service levels are offered in all municipalities, regardless of the levels of commitment of its urban partners?
 - 63% of households are “completely” or “somewhat” satisfied with the regional recreation facilities (24% neither are satisfied nor dissatisfied while 13 % are “somewhat” or “completely” dissatisfied
 - 56% of households indicated that the availability of recreation facilities in the region is not limited (29% said it is limited)
 - 60% of households are not willing to pay increased property taxes to support recreation facility development (19% are, 21% are unsure)
- 8 of 10 community associations indicated that the availability of recreation facilities is not limited in the region
 - The County’s current approach to costs sharing is based upon population and service level decisions made by partner municipalities
 - Currently there are discrepancies in service levels amongst different recreation areas due to the strategic decision making of partner municipalities

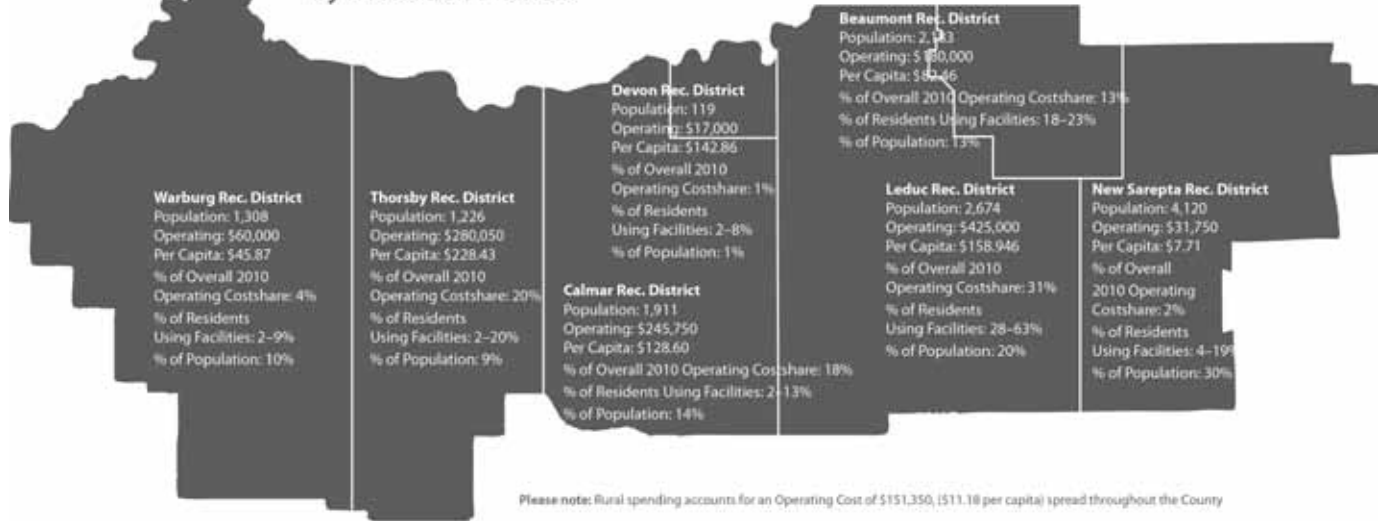
The County currently cost shares with partner groups and municipalities for both operating and capital costs associated with recreation facility provision. Although the approach to how funding is allocated to partner municipalities and non-profit groups, cost sharing is the primary role of the County in the provision of recreation facilities in the region. In fact, only one recreation facility in the region, the Nisku Recreation Centre, is actually operated by the County directly¹.

7.1. Municipal Cost Sharing

The County currently provides cost sharing to partner municipalities under the auspices of cost sharing agreements with the City of Leduc, towns of Beaumont, Devon and Calmar and villages of Warburg and Thorsby . The premise of the cost sharing agreements (under separate cover) is that allocated amounts are based on resident populations in associated recreation areas and upon the level of service provided by the partner municipality. This approach ensures that all municipal partners are treated equally based upon the County population in a given market area and expected levels of recreation facility use. The following image explains the County’s current approach to municipal cost sharing based on 2010 allocations:

1. As at May, 2012

Leduc County 2010 Operating Cost Share by Recreation Districts



Recreation District	Population	Operating Cost Share	% of Overall Cost Share	% of Overall Population	% of Overall Usage By County Residents ¹
Warburg	1,308	\$60,000 (\$45.87 / pop)	4%	10%	2–9%
Thorsby	1,226	\$280,050 (\$228.43 / pop)	20%	9%	2–20%
Devon	119	\$17,000 (\$142.86 / pop)	1%	1%	2–8%
Calmar	1,911	\$245,750 (\$128.60 / pop)	18%	14%	2–13%
Beaumont	2,183	\$180,000 (\$82.46 / pop)	13%	13%	18–23%
Leduc	2,674	\$425,000 (\$158.95 / pop)	31%	20%	28–63%
New Sarepta	4,120	\$31,750 (\$7.71 / pop)	2%	30%	4–19%
Rural	n / a	\$151,350 (\$11.18 / pop)	11%	n / a	30%
Total	13,541	\$1,390,900 (\$102.72 / pop)	100%	100%	n / a

*Note: In 2010 New Sarepta was an independent village. In 2012 the community is part of the Rural Leduc County population and is no longer an independent village thereby receiving direct financial support from the County outside the cost sharing agreement.

1. As per household survey results

As can be seen, although the amounts allocated to each recreation district (and ultimately the partner municipalities in each district) are based upon population, the actual per capita provision amounts differ. This is primarily due to the fact that the level of service provided, and thus the amount invested in recreation facilities, is different in each area the associated amount allocated by the County also differs. This perceived inequity is due to the fact that each partner municipality decides what level of recreation facility service to provide independently from the County. Although this could be considered a flaw to this approach to cost sharing, population allocation is the most equitable way for the County to allocate funds. As well, since the County's contributions are only a part of the overall costs to provide (less than 1 / 3 of overall costs) it is not appropriate for the County to try to establish or dictate a base level of service each partner municipality provides.

One potential risk to this approach to cost sharing is that there is no official capitation on the amount requested by each municipality. Hypothetically speaking, this could equate to a limitless requirement of the County to fund recreation facilities. Although this is not an issue due to the current level of service provided, a level not expected to change dramatically in the near or distant future, the County may want to consider implementing some type of capitation on overall funding allocated to recreation facilities.

Recommendation #4: The County continue to provide municipal cost sharing for recreation facilities under the agreements already in place with consideration to potentially establishing a overall capitation on funding allocated to recreation facility costs share on an overall basis or by recreation district. Perceived inequity in a base level of service to each provided in each recreation district may remain based on the choices of each independently partner municipality as to the level of service they respectively provide.

7.2. Non-profit Group Cost Sharing

The County provides cost sharing to non-profit groups, primarily community associations and agricultural societies, for the provision of recreation facilities accessible to County residents. The current approach includes allocating a certain funding level based on the type of facility offered. The following chart explains:

Type of Facility	Sample Facilities	Annual Operating Grant	Available Capital Grant
Level 1 (Local)	Community halls	\$2,700	\$7,500 per recreation district per year plus potential for one off capital contributions and programs on a case by case basis
Level 2 (District)	Thorsby Haymaker Centre	\$15,800	
Level 3 (District)	New Sarepta Agriplex	\$31,000	

Much of the feedback received from partner non-profit groups was that, although current funding could be increased, the assistance received from the County was enabling groups to provide facilities and programs and is appreciated. That being said, as time passes costs to provide facilities increases and thus ongoing increases to reflect inflation should be considered. This is already practiced by Leduc County.

Recommendation #5: Continue to cost share with non-profit partner groups utilizing the same method currently administered (aligning with the proposed recreation facility classification system) with consideration to annual increases to reflect inflation for each category.

8. A FRAMEWORK FOR PLANNING AND OPERATING RECREATION FACILITIES

As the County is involved in the provision of recreation facilities, the following is meant to provide a diligent framework in which new facilities should be planned for and developed. Although the County preference moving forward is to have partners initiate facility development and ultimately operate facilities with cost sharing assistance from the County, it is still important for the County to adopt a process by which it believes new facilities should be developed.

8.1. Recreation facility development process

More specifically, with regards to the development of recreation facilities, the ideal public decision making process has a number of steps.

The process outlined below can take between 18 and 30 months depending on the ability for decision-making to occur in a timely fashion and the propensity of the general public to engage in constructive feedback.

The process assumes that no major (\$1M+) public investments in recreation facility infrastructure should occur without undertaking

market feasibility analysis and business planning. This applies not only to initiatives championed by partner municipalities (or eventually maybe the County itself), but also to those projects led by not-for-profit groups and associations wherein public funds are required for the capital and / or ongoing operations of facilities.

The market feasibility and business planning process typically pre-empts decisions on investment and sourcing of capital well in advance of development; often up to two years prior. As such, timing for major development initiatives could take between two and four years in the making, recognizing the need for public engagement, concept planning, detailed planning, tendering and construction.

The following discussion relates to guidelines and thresholds determining when, and how, the County will engage in feasibility analysis with its partners and how it can ultimately justify public investment in new and / or enhanced recreation facilities.



It is recommended that the County adopt the following feasibility analysis framework to ensure that the information provided to County Council is complete and appropriate for making decisions regarding public funds:

- There must be **public engagement** in the planning process.
- A **market assessment** for component service delivery functions must be completed.
- A thorough and transparent **site / location analysis** must be completed.
- There must be a **biophysical / environmental impact** statement.
- There must be a **concept development plan** including infrastructure planning, costs and impacts of ongoing operations.
- The project must **conform to broader regional / municipal strategic planning**.
- **Business planning** outlining capital partners, operating partners, sources of capital, capital amortization and projection of operating costs must be completed.
- **Current demands and future demands** (as impacted through expression of needs, as a function of public input, trends and majority impact) and / or market growth can be proven.
- The facility in question and program services proposed provide **equal access** for all residents as a public service.
- Facility type and function **conform to core recreation service functions** of the County.
- Facility type and function are **not currently and adequately provided** through other agencies or private sector services in the Region.
- **Operational or capital partners** of any development proposed are established as registered societies and collectively represent sufficient membership or market members to sustain use of the development for the life of the development (typically set at 40 years for public buildings).
- The external volunteer and / or non-profit group leading a facility development initiative has, or has access to, **significant capital and / or operating resources (external)**.

As part of the framework, the following feasibility planning “triggers” outline when the Region (the County and its recreation facility provision partners) should initiate feasibility analysis and business planning. Market feasibility analysis and business planning could occur when one or more of the following criteria are met.

- Facility spaces currently being offered approach **90% to 100% utilization** on a sustained basis.
- Proposed public investment is contained on **publicly-owned or long-term lease lands** (leases beyond 50 years).
- Facility or facility spaces currently being used have **less than 25% remaining lifecycle** as a functional resource (as determined by ongoing lifecycle planning).

Recommendation #6: The County strive to achieve the steps outlined in the facility development framework wherever possible when contemplating recreation facility development with its partners.

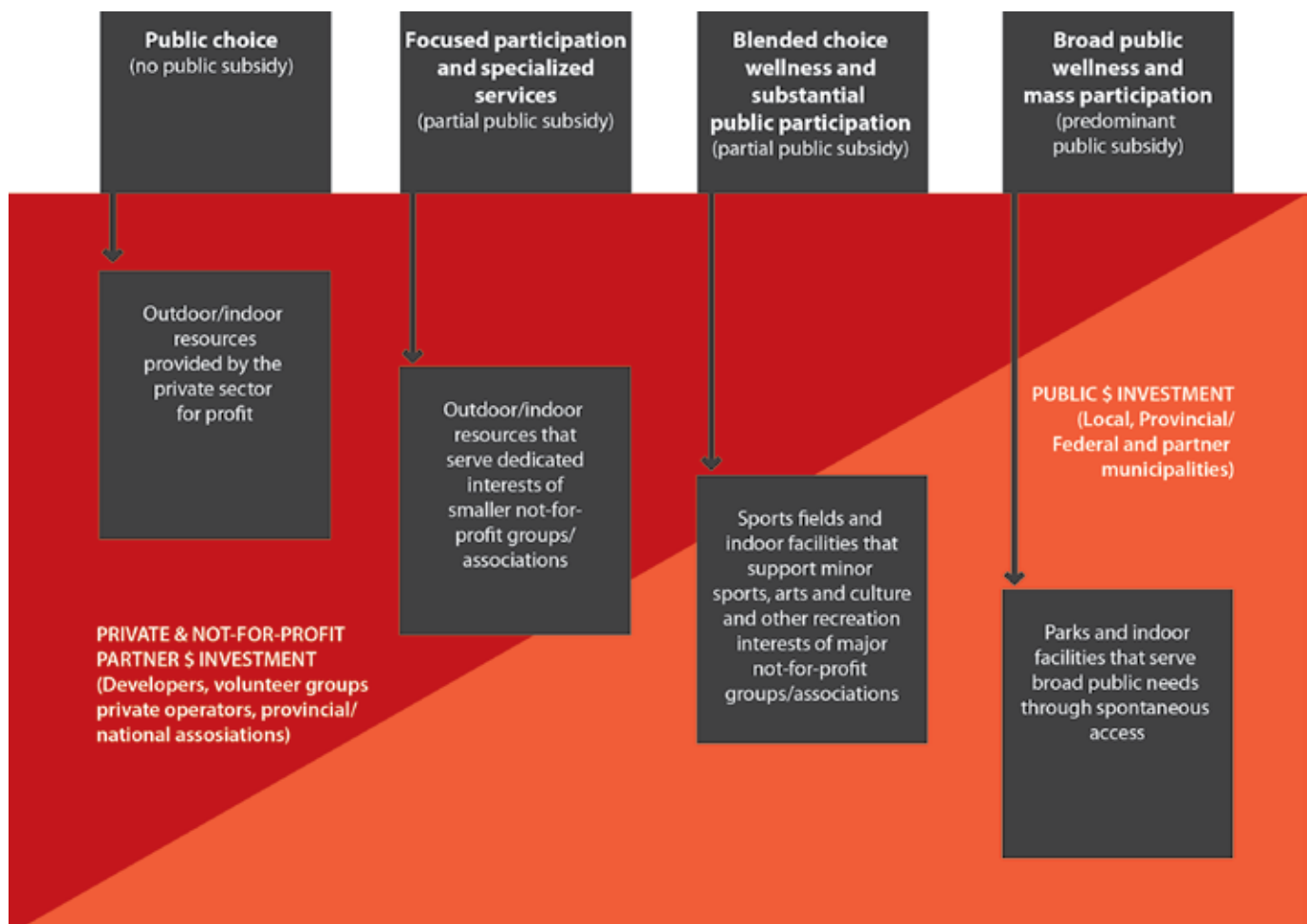


8.2. Recreation Facility Funding Philosophy

The following funding opportunity spectrum is presented to guide future municipal expenditure on recreation facilities. The spectrum explains that facilities accessible by all residents (such as walking trails, park furniture, etc) should be funded solely through public taxes. As recreation facility infrastructure becomes more specialized and less accessible by the general public (i.e. ice arenas, ball diamonds, etc) funding should come from a combination of public taxes, user fees, fundraising and private / non-profit investment.

Further leveraging public resources in the provision of recreation services is important in order to optimize the impact of public funds in the provision of recreation facilities.

Recommendation #7: The County consider the funding framework provided when assessing the funding models for future recreation facility projects.



8.3. Regional Recreation Facility Collaboration Framework

Regional collaboration in regards to recreation facility provision may, or does, occur in Leduc County in a variety of ways. The three major ways regional recreation facility provision collaboration could occur include:

1. Cost Sharing: Through cost sharing agreements with adjacent municipalities and non-profit organizations for the development and operations of recreation facilities and programs (such as sponsorship at the Leduc Recreation Centre). 60% of overall recreation budget in 2011.
2. Partnerships: Through partnering with adjacent municipalities in the ownership and operational responsibilities associated with major regional recreation facilities (currently not practiced). 0% of overall recreation budget in 2011.
3. Grants: Through the administration of operating grants with local non-profit groups (community associations and agricultural societies) for facility and program operations. 6% of overall recreation budget in 2011.
4. Direct operations: Through the direct provision of facilities and programs. 34% of overall recreation budget in 2011.

Due to the level of discrepancy in resource allotment between the three approaches, each approach requires a different level of County involvement in resource planning, development and operations in justifying County spending on recreation facilities.

General requirements for the County to get involved in regional collaboration should include:

1. Recreation facilities must be **accessible to County residents**.
2. Recreation facilities receiving County assistance must demonstrate **use by County residents**.
3. Recreation facilities must **require public funding** support to operate.
4. Recreation facilities requiring funding support must meet the criteria and protocols as outlined in other sections of this Study (i.e. project must undergo thorough feasibility analysis and business planning demonstrating market needs being met and sustainability prior to receiving public funds, etc...).

Realizing that these requirements are being met, and will be met to varying levels, the County should get involved in the planning, development and operations of these resources in different ways. The different levels that the County can get involved in recreation and culture resource development and operations include:

A-Type

The County **owns, operates** and is directly responsible for the recreation facility. The County may request cost sharing from adjacent municipalities if warranted by use. A current example is the Nisku Recreation Centre.

B-Type

The County is a **major ownership and operating partner** in recreation and culture resource development. The partnership model is based on the County having a significant and / or equal stake in ownership and operating responsibility with other partners. There are no examples of this type of collaboration. An example of this type of facility, although not located in the Leduc County region, is the TransAlta Tri Leisure Centre in Spruce Grove which is owned and operated by the Town of Stony Plain, City of Spruce Grove and Parkland County.

C-Type

Although the **County does not directly control**, or have an equal stake in ownership and operations of recreation facilities, **County administrative representatives get involved in recreation facility development and delivery during the needs assessment, feasibility, business planning, design and operating stages**. This also assumes the inclusion of Leduc County residents in public consultation programs and engagement strategies (and associated need is demonstrated from a County resident perspective). Examples of this level of collaboration include the Leduc Recreation Centre, the S&D Aquafit Centre and the 20 community halls.

D-Type

The County **provides funding** for capital and / or operations of recreation facilities with adjacent municipalities with no County administrative representation in recreation facility planning and delivery during the needs assessment, feasibility, business planning, design nor operating stages. Although there is no involvement by County administration representatives, a pre requisite to collaboration at this level is that Leduc County residents are included in public consultation programs and engagement strategies (and associated need is demonstrated from a County resident perspective).

In order to further understand how these different levels of regional collaboration are determined, the following funding thresholds / criteria have been established:

A-Type involvement:

- Direct control (no associated funding threshold)

B-Type involvement:

- Over \$5M in capital contribution and / or \$250,000 in annual operating contribution

C-Type involvement:

- Between \$1M and \$5M in capital contribution and / or between \$75,000 and \$250,000 in annual operating contribution

D-Type involvement:

- Up to \$1M in capital contribution and / or up to \$75,000 in annual operating contribution

The aforementioned thresholds and associated levels of involvement have been identified to help County administration manage the varying degrees of regional collaboration they are currently involved in as well as new initiatives that may arise. These levels are meant to act as guidelines and although some exception may occur, this framework will ensure that public funds will be dispersed in a suitable and diligent fashion with appropriate consideration to the needs of County residents.

Recommendation #8: The County strive to utilize the Regional Collaboration Framework in organizing and facilitating regional collaboration with recreation facility partners.



8.4. Site Acquisition for Recreation Facilities

In order to facilitate the future provision of recreation facilities, the County and its partners are required to acquire sites sufficient for development. The acquisition of site parcels can occur through the dedication of reserve lands through the development process, purchase, donation or transfer. Planning for future siting of recreation facilities is a crucial aspect of municipal strategic planning. The creation of publicly owned parcels of land, appropriate for Regional, District and Local facility development will be key in managing and embracing the growth the region is poised for.

The County's Parks and Open Space Master Plan states that the County may accept reserve dedication in industrial, commercial or residential subdivisions given that certain conditions are met. It also mentions that reserve lands may be sold for other uses in either of the aforementioned instances should the conditions not be met. The current Plan does not include a discussion about how the County should approach land dedication in newly developed urban areas.

In any case, the fundamental aspects of ideal **site selection for recreation facilities** (understanding that not all reserve lands are appropriate for major recreation facility development) are that the site is:

- Adjacent to major collector or arterial roads
- Highly visible to attract sponsorship investment and wayfinding by visitors to the region
- Coordinated with pedestrian routes, leisure trails and existing or planned public transportation
- Sized appropriately and adaptable for a combination of indoor and outdoor recreation amenities
- Adjacent to compatible developments including other community sources (such as libraries, cultural facilities, etc.) retail, hospitality and higher density residential zones
- Geographically located in the County promoting balanced access by all residents

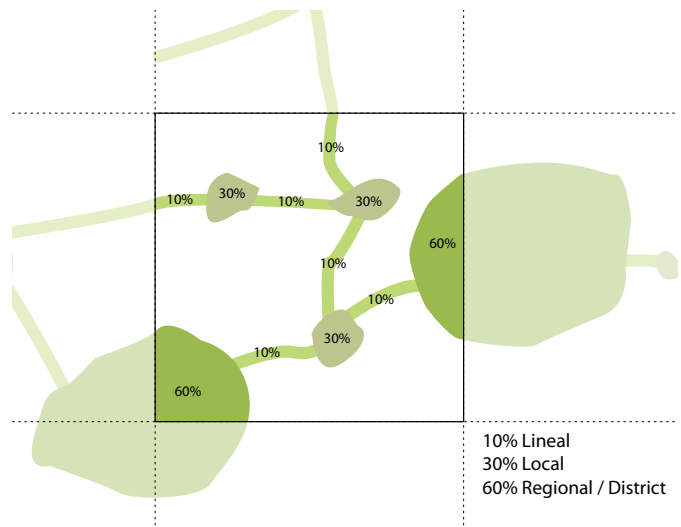
8.5. Municipal Reserve Allocation for Recreation Facilities and Parks

Regardless of the type of development (industrial, commercial, low density country residential, high density country residential or urban) the allocation of municipal reserves for recreation facilities and parks should be further guided by the following.

In areas where the entire 10% municipal reserve dedication is taken, those lands allocated to parks and recreation facilities should target the following allocations:

- 10% should be used to support lineal parks and facilities — portions of the trails network expected to be attained through use of public utility lots and incorporated into broader transportation network
- 30% should be used to support local level parks and facilities
- 60% should be used to support regional / district level parks and facilities

The following graphic explains:



Recommendation #9: The County strive to achieve the aforementioned target allocations of municipal reserve dedicated to recreation while considering the site selection criteria prescribed for major recreation facilities where applicable.

Type of park / facility reserve	Land development type				
	Industrial	Commercial / Business Park (employment area)	Low density country residential (over 2.5 acre lot size)	High density country residential (under 2.5 acre lot size)	Urban
Lineal (10%)	n / a	to provide recreational linkages and active transportation options	to provide recreational linkages and active transportation options	to provide recreational linkages and active transportation options	to provide recreational linkages and active transportation options
Local (30%)	n / a	to provide places for employees to relax and socialize (not active sports fields or playgrounds)	to provide passive outdoor recreation options	to provide recreational amenities such as playgrounds and open spaces	to provide recreational amenities such as playgrounds and open spaces
Regional / district (60%)	to provide recreational amenities such as major sports parks or ohv parks	to provide recreational amenities such as major sports parks or major recreation facilities	n / a	n / a	to provide recreational amenities such as major sports parks, major recreation facilities, community wide park amenities (splash parks, amphitheatres, etc...)
Lands sold for other purposes	to provide funds for land acquisition for recreation purposes and / or recreation facility development	to provide funds for land acquisition for recreation purposes and / or recreation facility development	to provide funds for land acquisition for recreation purposes and / or recreation facility development	to provide funds for land acquisition for recreation purposes and / or recreation facility development	n / a

Further to this strategic approach to accepting municipal reserves for recreation purposes, the above dynamics are proposed for each type of land development:

Recommendation #10: The County utilize the framework presented in accepting municipal reserves for recreation purposes for each respective type of land development.

Recommendation #11: The County develop a strategy on how to utilize cash from the proceeds of selling municipal reserve for recreation purposes considering recreation districts and local, regional and district level requirements.

8.6. Future Recreation Facility Provision Approach

5. Within new urban growth areas of the County, should the County pursue an independent approach to recreation facilities (direct facility provision) or continue the partnership approach (indirect facility provision)?
 - Residents and groups believe the County is taking the correct approach to recreation facility provision (partnerships)
 - The County is investing in recreation facilities at a level acceptable to the majority of stakeholders
 - 85% of households indicated that the County should continue to partner in the provision of recreation facilities (98% indicated the same in 2002)

The County currently provides recreation facilities primarily through partnerships with municipalities and non-profit groups. This approach has proved effective as the level of satisfaction with recreation facilities among residents is high. As well, the County for the most part has avoided having to sustain staff and expertise required to operate facilities.

As the County develops higher density residential areas (high density country residential and urban) it is expected that the respective populations of each will have increasing demand for recreation facilities. Providing access to residents in these higher density areas will have to be looked at differently than traditional approaches to recreation facility provision. That being said the County's current approach to delivery of recreation facilities through partnerships (primarily indirect) is effective both in terms of resident satisfaction and in the leveraging of public funding.

Recommendation #12: The County continue to utilize partnerships in the provision of recreation facilities and wherever possible avoid independently owning and operating recreation facilities.

8.7. Recreation Facilities Targets in New Urban Areas
















When the County is planning and providing higher density, urban areas a major consideration is the level of municipal service provided. The County will be expected to deliver quality of life amenities, such as recreation facilities and others, to a similar level as the cities, towns and villages in the region. This will require a philosophical shift in how the County approaches recreation facility provision.

For example, the County's current stance on recreation facility provision is primarily through the allocation of funding to partners that independently define a level of recreation facility service. If the County is developing its own urban area, it will have to define the level of service it wishes to pursue for its urban residents. It will also have to determine how best to plan, construct and operate recreation facilities accessible to its urban residents, which will preferably be the product of partnerships.

The following chart outlines the basic recreation facilities and parks that Albertans have come to expect in urban communities of up to 25,000 people explained using the County's parks and facilities classification system.

Recreation Amenity	Population				
	up to 2,500	2,500–5,000	5,000–10,000	10,000–15,000	15,000–25,000
Lineal parks (trails)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Local parks and facilities (playgrounds, open spaces)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
District parks and facilities		✓	✓	✓	✓
Regional parks and facilities			✓	✓	✓

More specifically, in regards to the recreation facilities identified in the scope of this study, the ideal provision is explained as follows:

Recreation Facility	Population				
	up to 2,500	2,500–5,000	5,000–10,000	10,000–15,000	15,000–25,000
Community hall	site acquisition	planning	1	1	1
Curling rink		site acquisition	planning	1 if warranted in the recreation district	1 if warranted in the recreation district
Ice arena	site acquisition	planning	1	2–3	3–4
Field house		site acquisition	planning	1	2
Indoor swimming pool		site acquisition	planning	1	1
Sports fields	1–2 (1 / 1,000)	3–5	5–10	10–15	15–25
Ball diamonds	1–2 (1 / 1,500)	3–4	5–6	7–10	10–16
Other (through the development process):					
• Playgrounds					
• Trails					
• Open spaces					

It is important to note that although the aforementioned approach to recreation facility provision is reflective of a typical smaller Alberta community, the development of any of the recreation facilities identified should be precluded by demand analysis and justification (refer to the facility development process). Analysis and justification should include affordability, provision of that type of recreation facility in the recreation district and region, etc.

Recommendation #13: The County strive to target recreation facility provision, primarily through partnerships, to the target levels indicated for new urban growth areas.

As it is the intension of the County to provide recreation facilities to urban residents through partnerships, the County must plan for site acquisition, facility planning and construction and ultimate operations collaboratively with potential partners. The planning must follow the facility development process outlined in this

study, involving County residents and stakeholders as well as those of potential partners. Any partnership or regional collaboration arrangement that involves the County's urban areas will also likely materialize as a "B-Type" arrangement where the County is more securely engaged in the ownership and operations of facilities.

If the County is unable to strike partnership agreements to service urban areas with recreation facilities, it will have own and operate facilities independently (A-Type regional collaboration). Although this would not be preferred it will be required.

Recommendation #14: The County strive to partner in recreation facility delivery in urban areas with the realization that the County's level of involvement in planning, development and operations will be beyond what is currently practiced.

9. EXPECTED FUTURE RECREATION FACILITY DEVELOPMENT

Currently there are 11 arenas, 4 curling rinks, 2 indoor pools, 2 outdoor pools, 3 field houses (1 small) and 20 community halls in the region. The total estimated replacement value of these facilities collectively is estimated at \$340 million.

In order to simply sustain the existing recreation facilities in the region, prudent lifecycle budgeting would suggest that 1% of overall capital value (approximately \$3.4 million) is required annually for capital replacement.

In order to achieve similar recreation facility service levels, as the regional population grows so too will the requirement for new recreation facility development. For example if growth observed in the region between 2006–2011 continues for the next ten years (overall regional population growth from 61,170 to 95,919), population provision ratios would suggest the need for:

- 6 new ice arenas,
- 2 new curling rinks,
- a new indoor pool,
- a new outdoor pool,
- 2 new field houses,
- 11 new community halls,
- 25 new ball diamonds, and
- 34 new sports fields.

This could equate to an incremental region wide investment requirement of \$186 million over the next ten years alone.

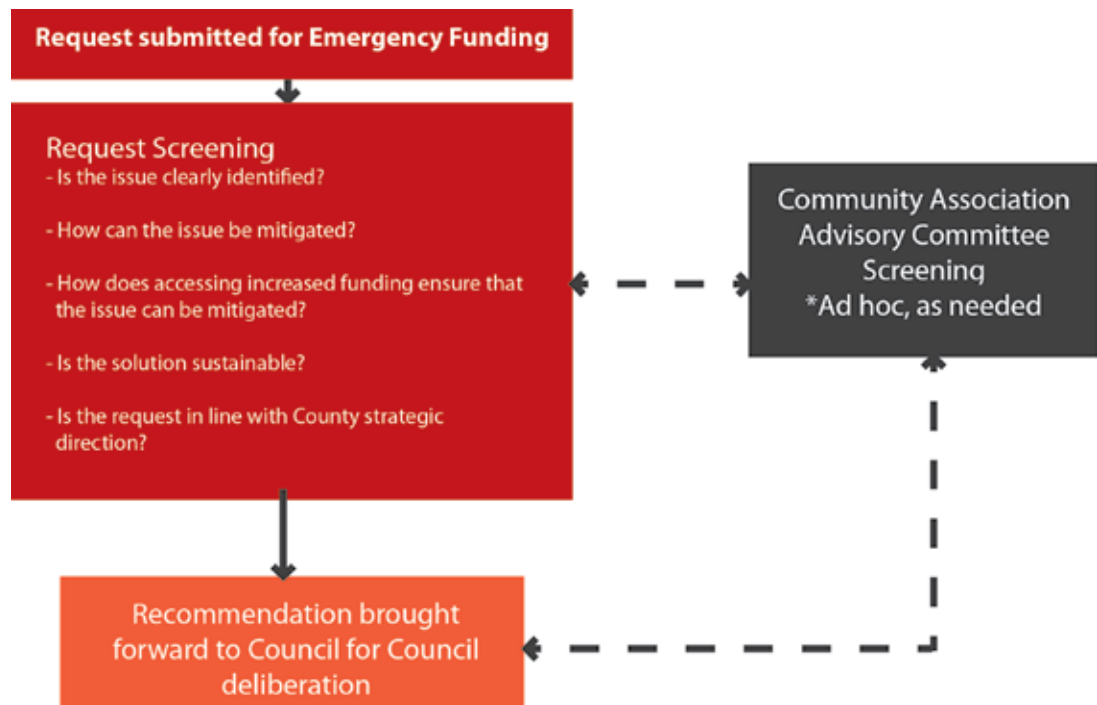
Although population growth will drive the necessity to build new recreation facilities, it is not the only consideration that municipalities will face in contemplating new recreation facility development. Other facility development considerations (such as those outlined in facility development process) accompanied by the County's approach to recreation facility development (allowing partner municipalities to dictate service levels and then providing cost sharing) means that future recreation facility development will be a function of the intent of partner municipalities as opposed to be driven by the County or population growth. That being said, future potential recreation facility projects in the region could include (as identified through the needs assessment process, not all formally endorsed):

- 6 enhanced arena projects
- 2 new arenas
- No enhanced or new curling rinks
- 2 new indoor pools
- No enhanced or new outdoor pools
- 3 new field houses (1 small)
- 2 enhanced community hall projects
- 1 new community hall project

The estimated value of potential projects is \$120 million.

Considering the costs associated with sustaining existing regional recreation facilities and potential new recreation facilities being developed (either based on partner planning or population growth) regional investment in recreation facilities of \$154 million to \$220 million may be required over the next 10 year period.

APPENDIX: DECLINING GROUP SUPPORT DECISION MAKING PROCESS



It has to be recognized that all community associations in the County may not have the critical market mass or resources necessary to be sustainable in the future. That being said, the role of the County in determining the feasibility of partner operated facilities and levels of support required by the County has to be conducted in a transparent, equitable and diligent manner. As the County has limited resources in providing financial aid to community associations (and halls) it must do so in a way that leverages volunteer involvement in operations to meet majority resident needs. For instance, it may not be feasible to assist, with public funds, a hall or association that services 100 residents at the expense of assisting a hall that services 1,000 residents.

The following approach has been developed to pertain directly to community associations that require significant levels of funding beyond allocations outlined in the current group cost sharing system.

The approach outlined includes the creation of a Community Association Advisory Committee (CAAC). This committee would include representatives from random independent Leduc County community associations (number of representative to be determined) and would form on an ad hoc basis when major emergency County support is requested. This committee would give County Council and administration a volunteer perspective. It is recommended that the committee be temporary in nature, composed of a random sample of community association representatives and that a new committee be struck for every major decision making process required. The use of this committee would be at the discretion of County administration and / or Council and would be intended, as mentioned, to provide a volunteer / peer perspective.



It is important to note that the concept of volunteer operated associations and halls is successful in different areas throughout the County. Therefore the role of the County is not to take over and / or support through increased funding the operations of those that are not successful, but rather to help those less successful associations / halls reach a more sustainable level of operations.

If this level of support through organization empowerment, or Community Development, does not alleviate the issues faced by the association / hall in trouble, the operations of a hall in that area of the County may not be feasible and therefore would not warrant public investment to sustain operations (thereby letting the service cease and not be replaced). In such cases, the County would still have a responsibility, through human resource assistance and perhaps accessing increased funding, to help community associations pay for legal and administration costs associated with dissolution.

As discontinuing services is a last resort, the County's intent is to invest in training and assistance in the existing associations and halls throughout the County with the ultimate goal being that all Leduc County community associations are vibrant, sustainable and viable organizations that meet community needs for social recreation programming and facilities.

APPENDIX: STRATEGIC PLANNING TEMPLATE

Organization Name:						
Organization Contact:						
Operational Planning	Current	Year +1	Year +2	Year +3	Year +4	Year +5
Operating revenues:						
Operating expenses:						
Operating net:						
Operational funding requested:						

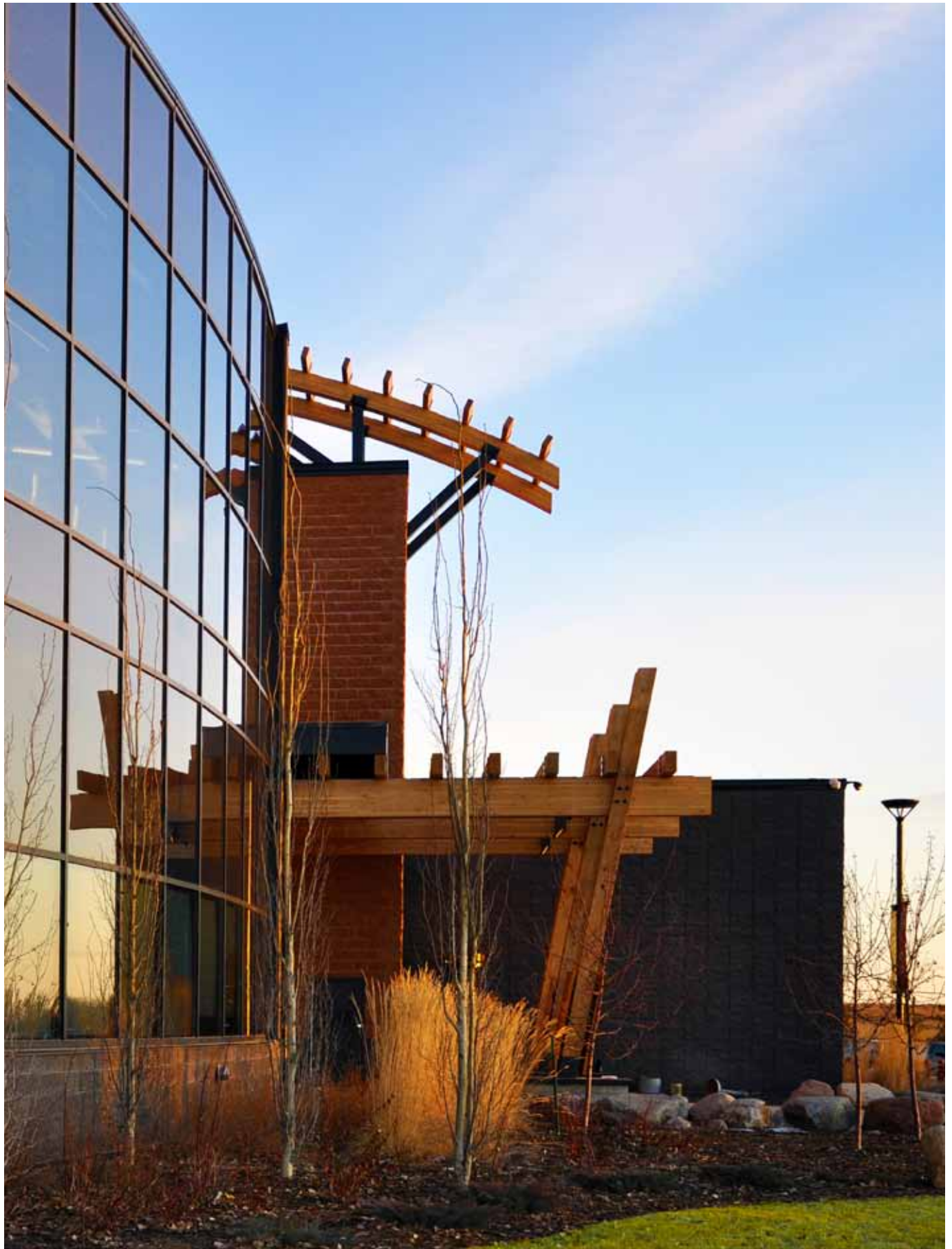
Capital Planning	Current	Year +1	Year +2	Year +3	Year +4	Year +5
Capital budget:						
Capital funding requested:						

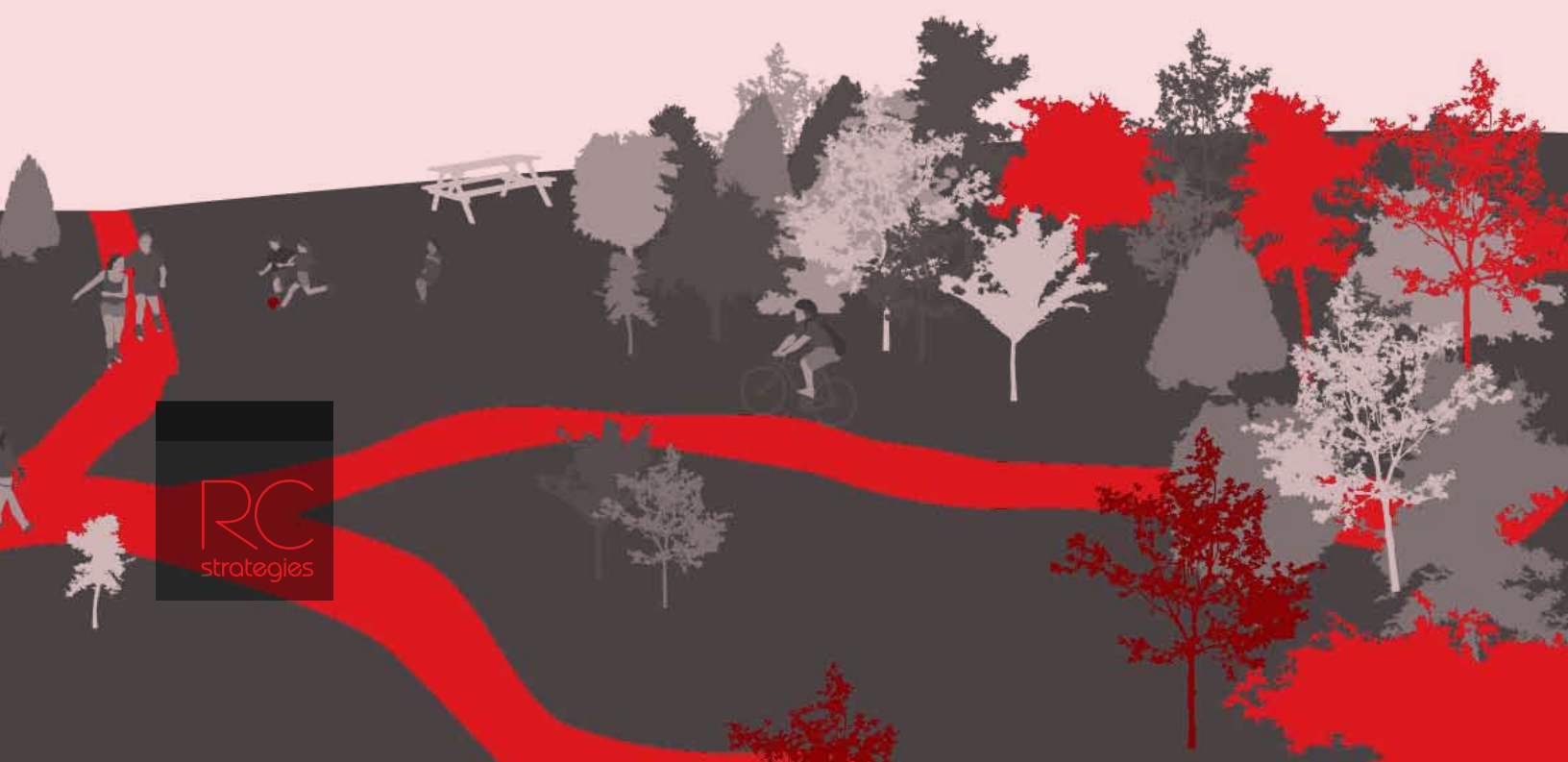
Brief Explanation:

What are the major issues facing your group and its ability to meet its program goals?

How could the County further assist your group in meeting its program goals?







RC
strategies