



Carmacks Recreation



Carmacks Parks and Recreation Master Plan

March 2023



GROUNDSWELL
PLANNING

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1.0 Introduction

1.1. Project and Business Case Context

A Parks and Recreation Master Plan (PRMP) sets the high-level, strategic direction for how a municipality delivers parks and recreation programs and infrastructure. Following the direction of the Village of Carmacks 2021 Official Community Plan, the Village set out to create a PRMP, in so doing re-examining and confirming its approach to parks and recreation.

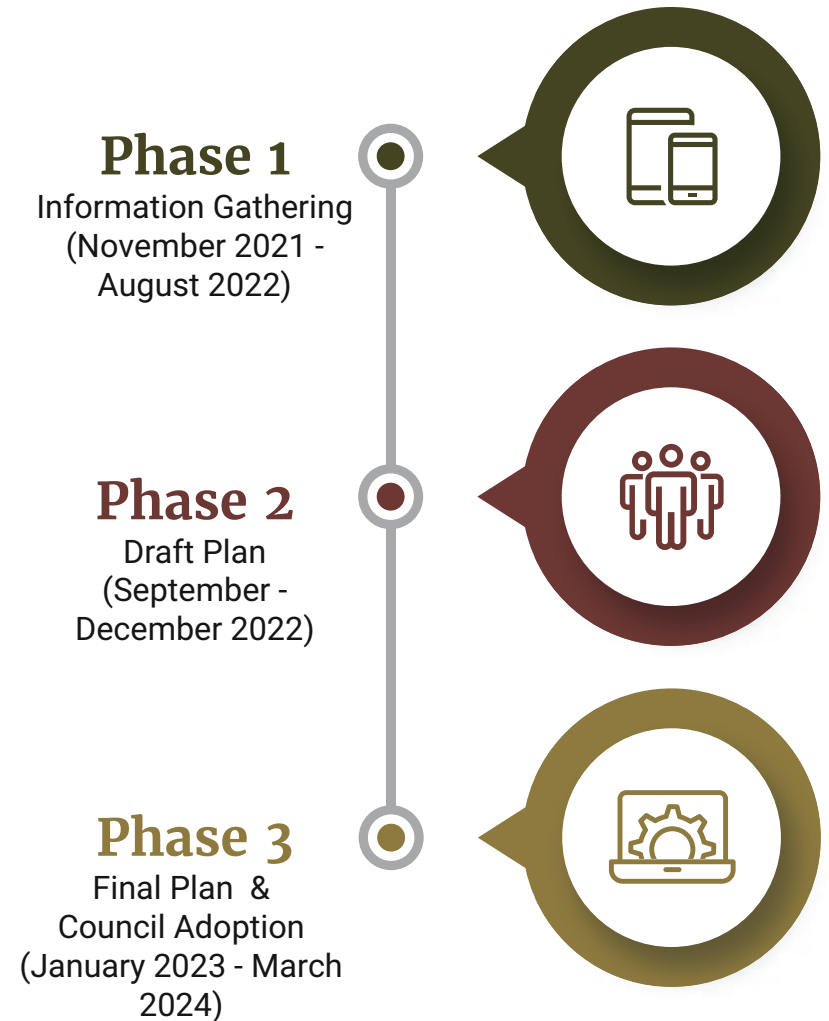
The PRMP creates a 10-year blueprint for the Village of Carmacks that:

- Sets out a vision and guiding principles for parks and recreation consistent with community needs and Council priorities;
- Establishes key goals and objectives for municipal recreation services, programs, facilities and events;
- Considers Village capacity and budget implications; and,
- Sets out a course for implementation and performance evaluation.

The Plan was developed over a x-month timeframe and was developed by a team led by Groundswell Planning in partnership with the Village and Carmacks Recreation Committee. Organized into three distinct phases, the team's planning process involves compiling background research, engaging the community and stakeholders, working with staff and Council to chart direction and strategy, and drafting the plan document.

VOC Council adopted the final plan in March 2024.

Please note that the background and analysis sections of this document are a summary of the planning team's comprehensive background report, entitled "State of Play", which is available from the Village.



2.0

Why Parks and Recreation Matters

Recreation is defined as “the experience that results from freely chosen participation in physical, social, intellectual, creative and spiritual pursuits that enhance individual and community well-being.”¹ Governments have a long history of providing parks and recreation to citizens, stemming from a guiding philosophy that views recreation as a “public good” available to all, akin to schools, roads, drinking water, and law enforcement. This ongoing public investment into recreation has tangible benefits both at an individual and societal level. The graphic below depicts a summary of recreation benefits as compiled by The National Benefits Hub².



¹ Interprovincial Sports and Recreation Council and the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association, 2015. Framework for Recreation in Canada: Pathways to Wellbeing.

² National Benefits Hub. www.benefitshub.ca

3.0

Community Context

Carmacks is an incorporated community of approximately 601 residents situated in the Traditional Territory of the Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation (LSCFN) near the junction of the Yukon and Nordenskiöld rivers. Referred to as the “*Hub of the Yukon*”, Carmacks hosts a range of government and private sector services and infrastructure such as a grocery/general store, year-round recreation centre, Royal Canadian Mounted Police detachment, K-12 school, Yukon University campus, parks and playgrounds, and a riverfront boardwalk.

For millennia, the Carmacks region has been an important traditional fishing, hunting, and trapping area for the Northern Tutchone people, the ethnographic group to which the modern-day LSCFN people belong. The area around Carmacks was also an important trading hub for many generations of other Yukon First Nations preceding contact with European people. Carmacks’ modern settlement history can be traced back to George Carmack’s discovery of coal and establishment of a trading post at Tantalus Butte in 1893. After the Gold Rush, it also became an overnight stop along the winter overland trail between Whitehorse and Dawson.

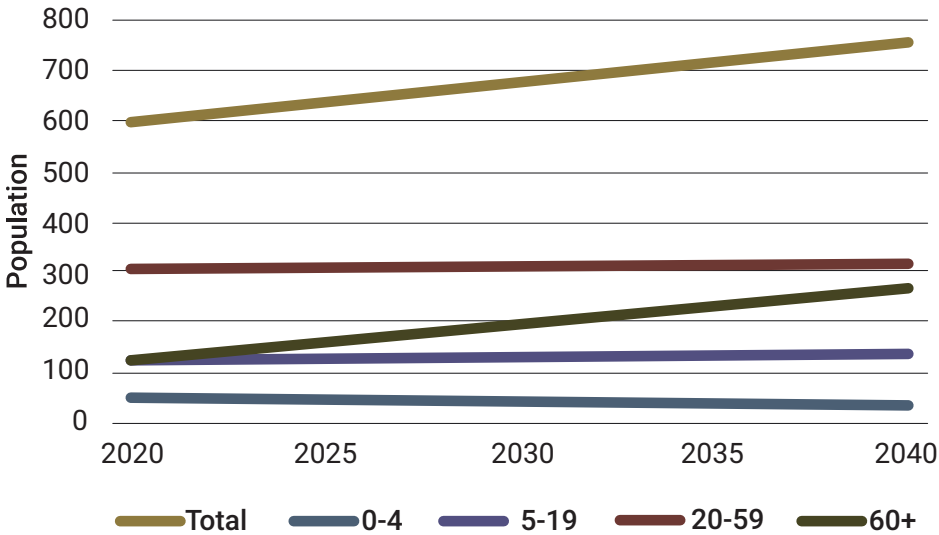
The main economic drivers of Carmacks are public administration, education and health care/social assistance. Construction and accommodation/food services are the largest private sector employers. Its proximity to Whitehorse and small size means that Carmacks is not large enough to support extensive full time employment, the level of competition or the desired range of goods and services.



According to the 2021 census data, Carmacks’ population has grown by over 19% over the last five years, making the community one of the fastest growing in rural Yukon. Men represent 49% of the population and women 49%, and First Nation residents account for almost 71% of the population. According to available 2021 and 2016 census data, the community, compared to the Yukon as a whole, has a:

- Much higher proportion of First Nation residents;
- Lower immigrant population;
- More stable population (i.e., less in-migration);
- Slightly lower average household size (2.2 persons/household);
- Higher growth rate;
- Much lower income; and
- Higher cost of living.

Figure 1. Carmacks Population Projection 2020–2040 (Low Growth Scenario)*



The 2040 low growth population forecast predicts that the population will increase by 179 residents and become increasingly older, with 84% of the population growth happening in the 60 & over demographic and no growth in the preschool-age demographic.

4.0 Service Delivery Overview

The Village of Carmacks delivers a range of direct and indirect parks and recreation services to residents of the community, as illustrated at right. The department’s name is somewhat misleading given its responsibilities around parks and playgrounds.

Department Structure

The Village’s Recreation Department is based out of the Recreation Centre on River Drive and currently consists of five full-time and two part-time staff, in addition to a fluctuating number of volunteers.

The Recreation Director reports to Council and the Chief Administrative Officer on a regular basis about departmental activities.

Pursuant to the Municipal Act and Recreation Committee Bylaw, Council has delegated some of its “powers, duties, and functions related to recreation services” to a Recreation Committee consisting of 5-10 members. The Board is supposed to meet at least six times a year. There is currently a six-member Committee in place that meets on a regular basis.

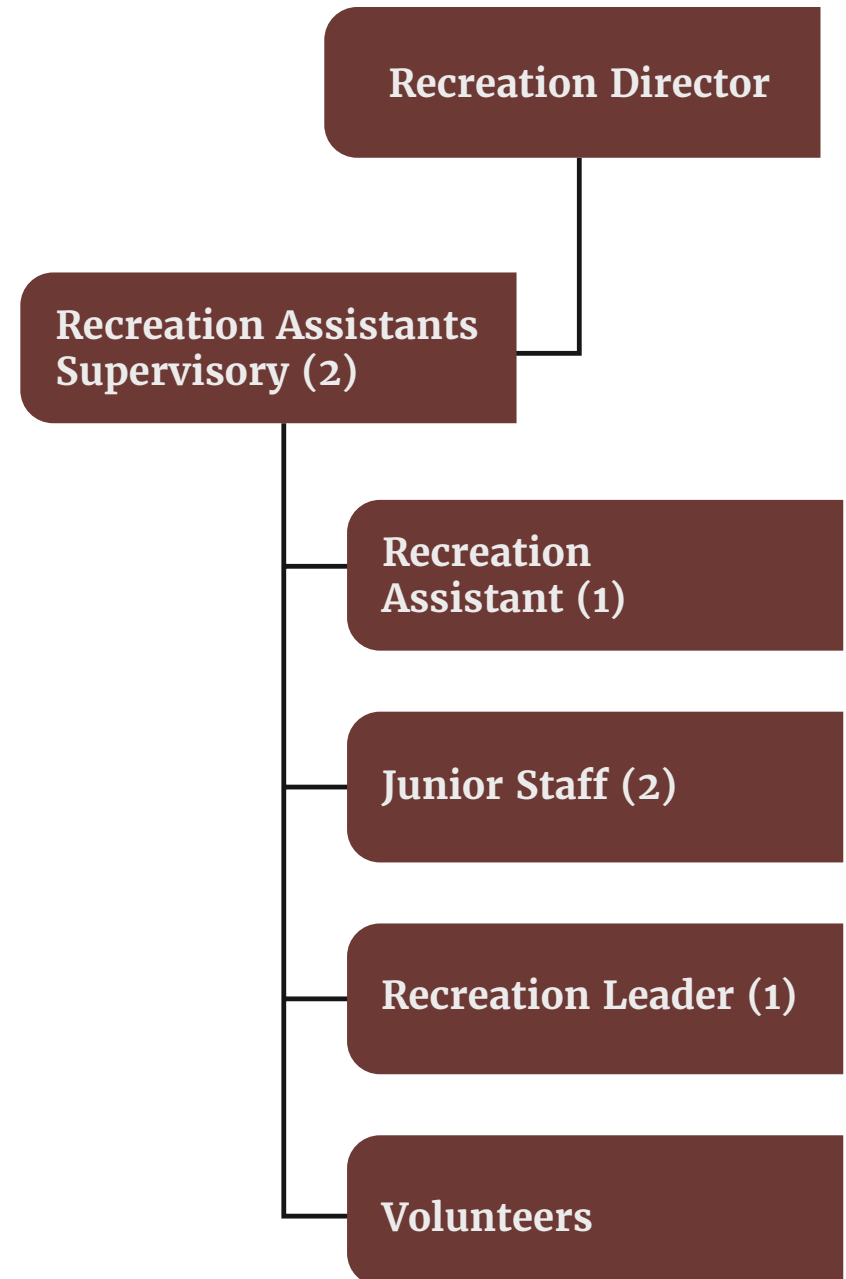
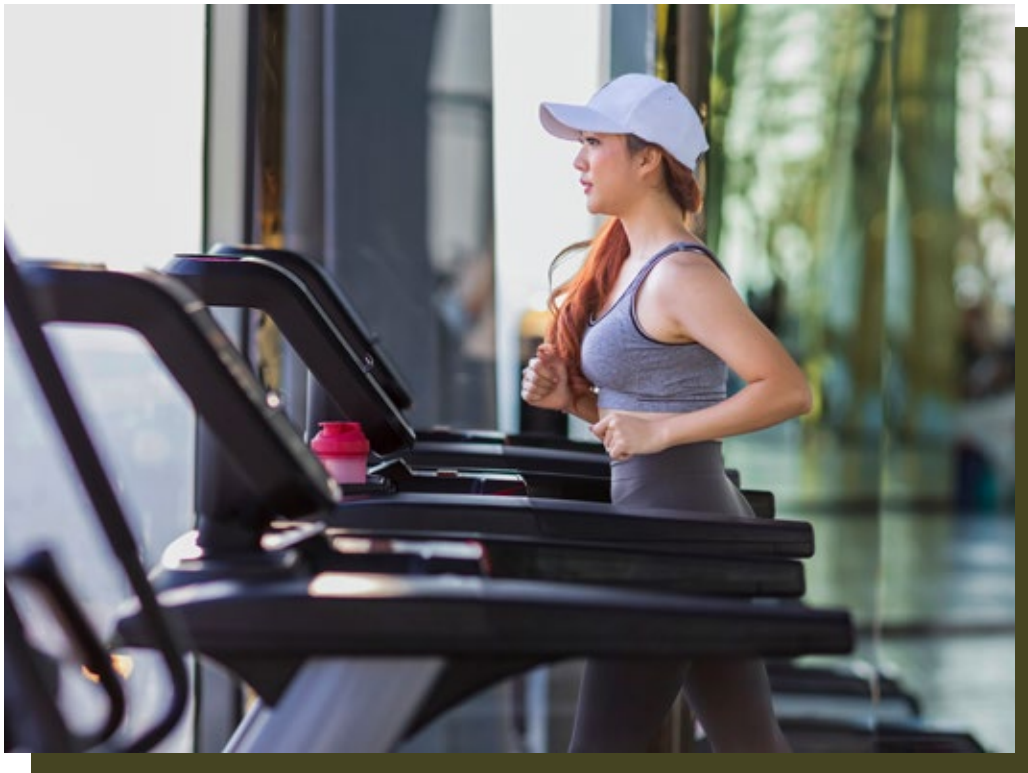


Policy Framework

Numerous municipal and Recreation Department policies guide the delivery of recreation in Carmacks, including:

- Official Community Plan
- Parks and Open Space Bylaw
- Fees and Services Bylaw

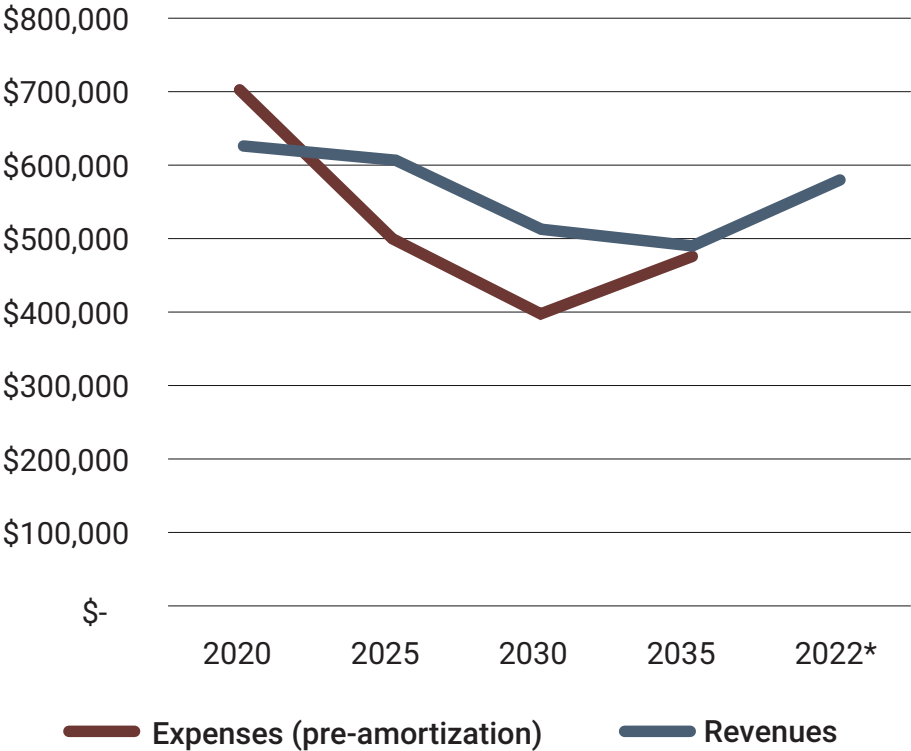
In addition to the Village-level policies governing recreation delivery, the Recreation Department has developed staff policies and an operational manual.



Financial Resources

The Village’s recreation spending has generally declined over the past five years. Expenses dropped from around \$625,000 to about \$494,000 between 2018 and 2021, due in part to the complications of COVID-19 induced Recreation Centre closures and associated impacts on programs and (presumably) the closure of the swimming pool. Spending for 2022 was projected to be just below \$580,000.

Figure 2 Recreation Budget 2017 – 2022



Over half of the 2022 budget was allocated to staffing-related expenses, and one-quarter is spent on utilities and maintenance for the Recreation Centre.

Historically, the Village has only charged for drop-in use of its fitness centre and facility rentals; this was in part due to a lack of capacity (or technology) to collect user fees. Programming and other drop-in use of the Recreation Centre have been offered free-of-charge as well. In late 2022, the Village began rolling out user fees to generate additional revenues, increase its value proposition and retain program participants using the Univaris Recreation Software system. A barcode scanner was installed in the Recreation Centre lobby. The the system will allow for closer oversight of financial transactions and proper application of user subsidies.

In 2021, recreation consumed 23% of the total municipal budget, a sizeable drop from the 30% mark in 2017. (For reference, the City of Whitehorse spends around 18% on recreation and achieves a cost recovery rate of around 31% while the City of Dawson spends around 23% of its budget and achieves a 12% cost recovery¹).

The opening of the new arena will have a significant impact on the Village’s recreation budget. The costs associated with ice plant operation², heating, maintenance, and staffing – among other items – have been estimated at \$661,000 in the draft Arena Business Plan under development by RC Strategies. The Plan is projecting an annual operating deficit of \$577,450. The new facility, combined with the community’s habituation to free program and facility access, pose risks to the financial viability of parks and recreation delivery by the Village and warrant continued and sustained attention.

1 These are 2018 figures
2 The CIMCO ice plant operating costs can range from \$7000 - \$25,000 per month, according to the Recreation Director.

Facilities and Amenities

The Village owns and maintains a variety of indoor and outdoor facilities. The most significant indoor facility assets are the Recreation Centre and about-to-be-open arena.

The Village also owns and maintains a range of outdoor amenities, including playgrounds, parks, and the two-kilometre river boardwalk. These are depicted below.

Other local recreation amenities include the LSCFN Village ball diamond and ice rink, trails, boat launch and nearby lakes such as Coal Mine and “8 Mile”.

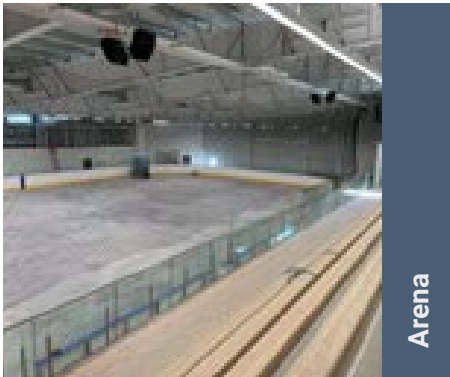
Indoor Facilities/Amenities	Outdoor Facilities
Recreation Centre	Merv Tew Park
Gymnasium	Pocket Park
Fitness centre/weight room	Rowlinson Drive Park
Youth lounge	Heritage buildings (5)
Mezzanine space/upstairs	Nordenskiold Cemetery
Kitchen	Riverfront boardwalk
Arena	



Village Indoor Recreation Facilities and Amenities



Youth Lounge



Arena



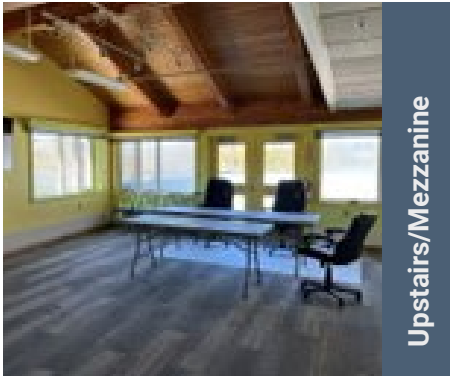
Kitchen



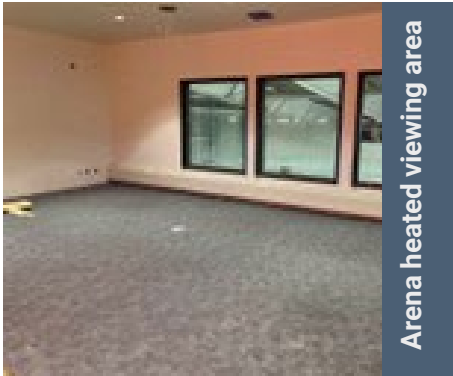
Fitness Centre



Gymnasium



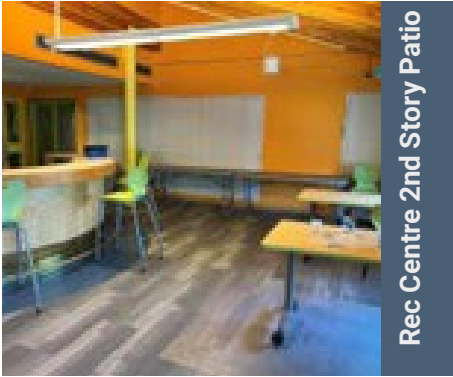
Upstairs/Mezzanine



Arena heated viewing area



Trophy Case



Rec Centre 2nd Story Patio

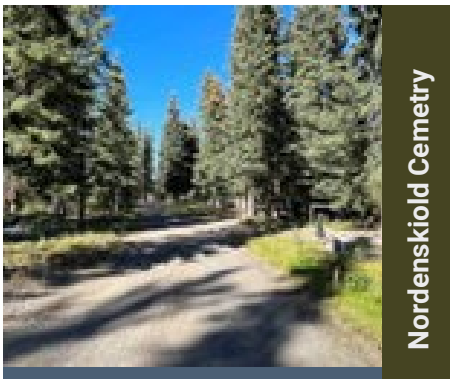
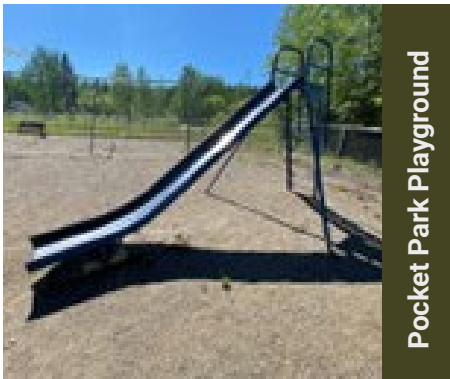
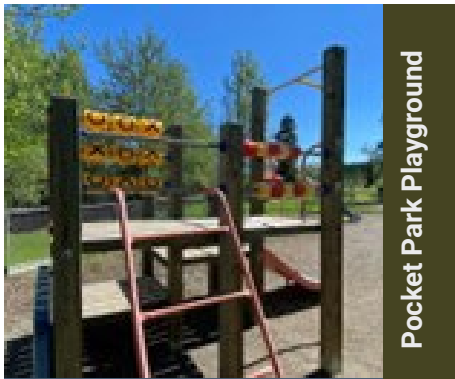


Main Floor Lounge



Kitchen

Village Outdoor Recreation Facilities and Amenities





An analysis of parkland quantity and accessibility showed that Carmacks has about twice the Canadian standard of parkland per 1000 residents; however, parts of some neighbourhoods fall just outside of what is considered a “walkable” distance, specifically the northernmost portion of the Tswanjik, Nordenskiöld, and LSCFN Village subdivisions, as well as the North Klondike.

Generally, summer is the busy season at the Recreation Centre, with drop-in traffic ranging from 75-100 people daily - a high proportion of those being non-residents. Over the past few years, much of the winter recreation activity has taken place at the LSCFN outdoor rink. The Rec Centre is generally open 12 hours a day from Monday to Friday, with more limited hours on the weekends. The Recreation Manager is working on getting the Village’s 12-passenger van operational for picking up participants and for field trips to other communities.

There is no detailed capital plan for recreation facilities at present. Likewise, there is no asset management (AM) system or dedicated record keeping in place. The Village’s Public Works Department is primarily responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the Village’s indoor and outdoor recreation facilities and this function is subsumed under the broader Public Works budget. Both the Recreation and Public Works managers were supportive of a potential organizational re-structuring that would see responsibility for all parks and recreation fall under the Recreation department.

Programming and Events

The Village offers a variety of programs for a broad demographic spectrum of Carmacks residents. The Recreation Manager is trying to provide direct programming for about 60-70% of the schedule, with the remaining 30-40% drop-in/casual in nature. A multitude of factors inform and influence programming decisions, including Council and CAO input, feedback from participant and parents, funding directives, collaborative opportunities, and instinct. Regular community dinners happened pre-COVID. Hosting regular community events, including sport tournaments, are a priority going forward.

Third party recreation delivery has been quite limited in Carmacks in recent years. In the past six months, a hockey and curling organization have formed. A designated recreation lead is in place at Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation as well, which has in turn fostered more collaboration with the Village.

Community Support, Partnerships and Outreach

The Village receives \$15,000 in funding annually through Lotteries Yukon's Community Grants Program, with some remaining at the end of each fiscal year. The Recreation Department's primary communications channels are the Carmacks Recreation Facebook page, electronic billboard outside the Village administration building, posters, and word-of-mouth (with social media and word-of-mouth reportedly being the most effective). Recreation users are asking for a seasonal recreation guide to be available in print and online.

Departmental Capacity and Training

The Recreation Department's staffing situation has fluctuated in recent years. The current Manager is vacating the role but will provide support and oversight to the new Manager from the Chief Administrative Officer seat. There is generally strong retention among other staff in the department. Staff are well equipped to deliver programming but administrative and project management skills and capacity need continued development.

5.0

What We Heard

Carmacks residents participated in the development of the 2023 Parks and Recreation Master Plan via various input opportunities. The following is a summary of survey results, complete with excerpts of respondent comments intended to highlight recurring or insightful themes. The complete results are available in the PRMP Background Report.

Household Survey Findings

Participation and Values

- Most of the survey participants' "Top 10" activities were outdoors based, including (in order of popularity) camping, BBQing/picnicking, hiking/walking, motorized boating, snowmobiling/ATVing, wildlife/nature appreciation, and playing at playgrounds.
- Top indoor activities were (in order of popularity) arts and crafts, fitness training at the gym, music, yoga and fitness class. First Nation cultural activities were participated in by almost half of survey respondents.
- (In order of frequency) inconvenient times, lack of time, lack of awareness, cost of programs, and lack of interest were cited as the Top 5 barriers to participation in recreation by survey respondents.

Facility Utilization, Quantity and Quality

- Parks, trails, and greenspaces received the broadest visitation by households of survey respondents, with the boardwalk and Ridge Run trails receiving the highest level of frequent use of all amenities, followed by parks, campgrounds, and greenspaces outside the townsite. Merv Tew Park was second to the boardwalk/Ridge Run in terms of broad usage.
- Indoor facilities were generally less utilized by Carmacks residents than their outdoor counterparts, with the most broadly used indoor facilities being (in order of frequency) the Recreation Centre's gymnasium, fitness centre, and upstairs space, with the fitness centre receiving the highest level of frequent (21+) usage.
- Survey responses suggest that many community members plan to use the new arena when it opens. Over half of respondents indicated they would use the facility fairly often, while no one predicted they wouldn't use it at all.

Values Around Recreation

- Survey respondents strongly agreed that parks and recreation are important to their own quality of life and the vitality of the community overall.

"It seems a little less interesting living here without the activities that used to happen. It seems the community lost touch with big events and not enough time being put into them either."

"An ATV/skidoo event would provide a safe and fun activity for children and events. Though we have hills to sled and ski on it would be awesome if a designated hill was taken care of specifically for this event because the winters can be so boring here."

"Board games available for families..."

"Having groomed and set tracks for XC ski trails would be excellent. Getting more personal training and fitness classes at various times – early mornings, lunch hour and evenings – would be really great."

"An outdoor facility (preferably adjacent to the arena and swimming pool to be :) where there can be a running track, field for soccer, ball diamond, etc....With adequate space and seating for spectators and participants. Could double for leisure too with a picnic area and benches for viewing near the river. Maybe a fire pit or two so people can use these "

"Love to see a musical stage where artists can come to play in the summer time".

"Pool would be beneficial to everyone".

"Motorized trails to ensure safety of walkers or runners. Ball fields tend to have ruts, holes or huge rocks which can all lead to injury".

Allowing for variety of sport opportunities (allows people to try) new things and have the potentially try out for Arctic Winter Games, Indigenous games, Canada summer or winter games".

"We need more opportunities to keep people in the community and not let the beautiful centre sit idle. Keep it in daily use!"

"Public ice skating, roller skating, concerts"

"Yes definitely swimming. Carmacks had an awesome swim club with numerous children that fell flat with no pool".

"...children here like volleyball need proper outdoor facilities and to actually use the gymnasium for this and other sports. Actually take the effort to set up nets, coach, referee, etc., same could be said for other activities. Host tournaments which drive interest. It is one thing to have the one offs as drop-ins now and then but if people don't know the rules and the games how do you promote interest. There needs to be something more organized".

"Could improve the trails (clear map and mark including distances) and establish some somewhat organized skiing, snow shoeing, etc. Maybe even snowmobiling for the youth/adults?"

"More individual sports are good too, weight training, cardio, meditation, martial arts, wrestling, etc."

"Overall, I think the rec dept is doing a great job! I'm sure there has been many challenges due to COVID but the staff appear to have done a great job considering the challenges."



“A property tax increase to a fraction of the population of Carmacks is not a good idea. A user fee would be the logical thing to have”

“There needs to be more programming that is non sports related particular for young adults who are not into the bar scene. Banning 19 and 20 year olds from the youth is ridiculous”.

“Can’t wait for the new arena, the entire community must have high hopes for this project!”

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or the new arena, the entire community must have high hopes for this project!”

“After the pandemic settles, bring more community type parties and celebrations on.”

“A property tax increase to a fraction of the population of Carmacks is not a good idea. A user fee would be the

Financial Considerations & Investment Criteria

- Most respondents preferred maintaining the current user fees. 17% supported an increase, and another 17% supported a decrease.

Facility Priorities

- Most survey respondents indicated a need for new and/or enhanced facilities within the next decade.
- A swimming pool was the facility suggestion for 63% of respondents who felt that new/enhanced facilities were needed. The next most popular ideas were trails with signage (16%), multi-purpose field (13%), and splash park, curling rink, baseball diamond, skate park, and cross-country ski trails (9% each).

Programming

- The availability and quality of recreation programs for children aged 6-18 was rated most highly. Options for adults and seniors and children 5 & under were rated lowest.
- (In order of frequency) more activities for adults, young kids/families, teen programs, and organized sports for kids were the most common programming suggestions.
- The most frequent suggestions for arena programming were (in order of popularity) public/drop-in/family skating, hockey, curling, tournaments and music/art, skating lessons and community activities.



6.0

Recreation Trends and Best Practices

Health, Fitness and Activity Trends

- Levels of childhood and adult obesity have been steadily increasing over the past few decades, while levels of physical activity have steadily decreased.
- Most Canadian children and youth exceed recommended guidelines for screen time.
- Most Canadian youth and adults prefer spontaneous, unstructured recreation pursuits, with walking, bicycling, and swimming landing in the “Top 5” for both groups.
- Recreation participation varies by age, gender, and socioeconomic status, with men and youth being more likely to play organized sports, women more likely to participate in exercise classes and wellness pursuits such as yoga, and higher income and education correlating strongly with higher participation.

Policy Guidance

Sport and recreation policy is evolving to reflect a growing recognition of the complex, interrelated societal and individual factors linked to participation. The 2015 Framework for Recreation in Canada is the current national guiding document for public recreation providers.

The five pillars of the Framework for Recreation in Canada



Goal 1: Active Living

Foster active living through physical recreation.



Goal 2: Inclusion and Access

Increase inclusion and access to recreation for populations that face constraints to participation.



Goal 3: Connecting People with Nature

Help people connect to nature through recreation.



Goal 4: Supportive Environments

Ensure the provision of supportive physical and social environments that encourage participation in recreation and help to build strong, caring communities.



Goal 5: Building Recreation Capacity

Ensure the continued growth and sustainability of the recreation field.

Recreation Delivery Trends

Social Determinants of Health – shifting the focus from *“how do we get individuals to choose healthier lifestyles”* to *“how can we create the community environments that make the healthier choice the easier choice”*

Physical Literacy and Lifelong Participation - physical literacy is the motivation, confidence, and skills to engage in physical activity and is seen as a pre-condition for lifelong participation; early childhood is the focus

Places and Spaces – evolution of the parks and green space movement to place-making that supports social connections and cohesion with support amenities like Wi-Fi, seating, all ages and abilities design, art, etc.

Multi-Use Functionality and Clustering – continuation of multi-use emphasis for facility investments, accompanied by clustering with complementary services such as community libraries

Revenue Generation – municipal response to fiscal and service delivery pressures through non-traditional revenue streams such as adopt-a-park programs, facility sponsorships, planned giving programs, etc.

Active Transportation - encouraging human-powered travel modes through infrastructure and good design

Changing Volunteerism – overall national decline in volunteerism and shift to shorter commitments that provide participants with work and/or other valued experience

Return to Outdoor, *“Adventurous” Play* – giving children and youth spaces to explore, play and push limits

Integration of Wellness and Community Development – evolution of the recreation field to include broader wellness and community development aims such as reducing barriers, healthy eating/nutrition, mental and physical health, social inclusion, etc.



7.0

SWOT Summary and Planning Considerations

Governance

STRENGTHS (Internal/Village)	WEAKNESSES (Internal/Village)
• Current and past Councils are supportive of recreation • There are some policies and procedures in place • Department has good staff retention • Council's investment in recreation is significant (23% of budget in 2021) • A Recreation Committee is in place to help administration adjudicate funding applications • New recreation booking software will reduce administration time and increase Village capacity to monetize visits from residents and visitors • Village is establishing new and strategic funding sources	• Department and Manager titles do not reflect actual scope of recreation delivery system (i.e. parks, trails, etc.) • Considerable administrative burden on Manager position with associated potential for burn-out • Policy and guidelines are somewhat limited • Arena could require significant new operational funding (i.e., utilities, staffing, etc.) that could jeopardize the Village's financial position or other recreation delivery • Lack of user fees has potentially devalued the Village's recreation offer and eliminating potential cost recovery opportunities
OPPORTUNITIES (External)	THREATS (External)
• Program funding is generally available • Increased resource-based activity could create new opportunities for private sector sponsorship • Policy and governance advice and support is available from other municipalities (particularly City of Whitehorse), online sources, etc. • External project-based funding may allow for short-term project management assistance • Residents highly value recreation and potentially support minor tax/fee increases	• Revenue generating potential of recreation is highly limited with a small population and need to maintain access and affordability • Seasonal worker population and population residing outside of municipal boundaries places pressure on Village resources with lower cost recovery potential • Low incomes and high living costs pose barriers to the amount of disposable income that Carmacks residents can spend on recreation; increases in the senior population will compound this situation • A growing population and new facilities will continue to necessitate new policy development and adaptation

KEY PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- Staff skills and capacity may need to broaden to reflect a potential community development function of the department and to deliver on the expanded programs and events offer;
- Recreation spending increases may need to be curbed and the Village should ensure that operations and maintenance needs of the new arena are sustainable;
- Ensuring clarity on service delivery expectations and models of providing recreation programming (e.g. direct programming by the Village, indirect over time via community groups, etc.);
- The Village could look to diversify funding sources and pursue low-cost approaches that leverage existing capital assets and other amenities through sound policy and partnership development.



Facilities

STRENGTHS (Internal/Village)	WEAKNESSES (Internal/Village)
• There is an impressive mix/variety of outdoor and indoor facilities for a community of Carmacks' size • Parks, trails, and outdoor spaces are highly rated and well used • Facilities are in generally in good condition and many have considerable asset life remaining • Access to funding for larger capital projects is good and equipment replacement needs can be internally funded • Staff generally have capacity/skills to maintain assets • Trails have been evaluated and a detailed recommendation and implementation plan created • Facilities are scheduled with a mix of programmed and spontaneous, drop-in opportunities	• Residents desire a year-round or new pool despite significant recent investments and possibly low likelihood of replacement or funding • Maintenance for parks and greenspaces falls to Public Works but this may not be the best fit for them • Some issues with existing facilities – trail issues, boardwalk flooding, cemetery • Some park spaces may be underperforming • Local costs of construction, operations and maintenance are high • Asset management and capital planning do not receive significant attention • The Rec Centre is underutilized during the daytime hours
OPPORTUNITIES (External)	THREATS (External)
• Potential shared interest in Coal Mine Lake improvements with LSCFN • Future community "hub" site adjacent to the Rec Centre/arena holds potential for new open space amenities and programming • National, territorial, and local data points to a strong preference for participation in unstructured activities that require open spaces (i.e., parks, trails, etc.) with lower operating costs as compared to indoor facilities (i.e., arenas and pools) • Significant open space assets near the community • Diversifying outdoor recreation opportunities to align with trends and maximize appeal (e.g. play opportunities for a wide range of children and youth)	• Flooding and climate change is threatening valued assets such as the boardwalk • Poor connectivity between the Recreation Centre and arena and neighbourhoods north of bridge • Climate change policies such as carbon pricing could raise operating costs of large indoor facilities considerably • Funding for capital reserves, especially as costs escalate

KEY PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- Optimization of current facilities to ensure maximum benefit and stay current with trends, including more activation of park/open spaces, adaptation of amenities to support more uses/users
- With population growth and an aging population, planning for seniors-friendly infrastructure and ensuring convenient access to parks and open spaces for new neighbourhoods
- Prioritization of active transportation and accessible infrastructure for an aging population
- New neighbourhoods will require parks and open space
- Budgeting appropriately for capital facility upgrades, replacements, and renewal



Programming

STRENGTHS (Internal/Village)	WEAKNESSES (Internal/Village)
• The Village is now offering a broad range of programming for all ages and interests • Village is planning for an expanded events calendar • Village programs are free or very low cost • Village successfully adapts to constantly changing circumstances	• Programs for seniors and 5 & under are less available from the Village than those for elementary aged children • Village capacity to administer, design and deliver programming and events are limited • Small base of volunteers and activity “champions” • Programs are vulnerable to low numbers of available participants, conflicting scheduling of other programs or events, availability of instructors, etc. • More specialized programming can be challenging to sustain due to dependence on instructors in a somewhat transient community • Residents cite inconvenient times as a constraint to participation in recreation • Village’s registration system and communications approach may pose barriers to participation/awareness
OPPORTUNITIES (External)	THREATS (External)
• Participation, lifestyle and population trends point to an increased need for wellness, active living facilitation • Service delivery fluctuations and COVID has many Carmacks residents eager for events and programming • Carmacks’ small size conducive to highly visible and “viral” programming ideas • The new arena could spark an increase in volunteer-run programming • More distance, online staff training available • Climate change is bringing warmer winters and more opportunities for outdoor activities • To grow programming capacity through a community development approach that creates new organizations and volunteers	• Residents perceive the availability and quality of programs for 5 & under, adults, and seniors to be low • Growing cohort of seniors will create new programming needs and demands • Time constraints, excessive screen time, and low rates of physical activity are barriers to participation • It can be difficult for Carmacks residents to stay informed of opportunities

KEY PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- Carmacks' aging population and broader societal trends suggest a shift towards an increased focus on wellness and active/ healthy living facilitation and programming
- Limited capacity for hands-on program delivery could be augmented via "how-to" programming geared towards increased use and enjoyment of the outdoors and the Village's open space amenities
- The Village could consider maintaining its emphasis on affordable children's programming delivered directly and facilitating more specialized options; a few more family-friendly recreation options could help bridge gaps
- Use of training supports in areas such as mental health first aid, program development, physical literacy, etc.



Partnerships and Community Development

STRENGTHS (Internal/Village)	WEAKNESSES (Internal/Village)
- Funding for a wide range of needs is readily available to community groups and individuals, usually within a very short time frame - Village has some communications channels established and these are working reasonably well - There is a mechanism for third party usage of Village facilities and rentals are affordable	- Communications capacity and effectiveness is limited - Third party usage of park spaces needs further clarity and policy work
OPPORTUNITIES (External)	THREATS (External)
- The arena could spark new partnerships and organizations - The relatively small number of external groups and partners makes communications easier - A high proportion of Carmacks children are in Village camps; opportunity to reach families through them - Village recreation facilities are well visited and a great venue to share information and seek input - Increased resource-based activity could create new opportunities for private sector sponsorship and partnerships	- There has been a lapse in community recreation groups; the Village has been virtually the sole recreation provider for several years - Aging population may create a diminishing pool of volunteer resources (i.e., less energy, no kids in the house, etc.) - Village policy and organizational framework may not always “mesh” with a non-bureaucratic community culture
KEY PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS	
- Providing support to community members or groups to volunteer and get involved in recreation - Increasing the Village’s positive profile in the community and supporting the efforts of other groups in visible ways - Educating residents about Village recreation spending and its impact on the community - Finding ways to solicit resident input and signal an openness to feedback and learning	

8.0

Vision, Guiding Principles, and Plan Elements

10-Year Vision

“Whether you’re outside or inside, resident or visitor, Carmacks is a great place to play.”

Guiding Principles

Accountability – The Village seeks input of Carmacks residents around recreation delivery and applies facts and best practices to decisions.

Diversity – The Village encourages and accommodates a wide variety of recreational interests and activities in the community.

Accessibility – The Village works to ensure that recreation is available to Carmacks residents, regardless of their age, ethnicity, mobility, gender, orientation, economic status, etc.

Feasibility – The Village recognizes that its recreation delivery is and strives to find practical and innovative ways to meet core needs.

Sustainability – The Village strives to ensure that its current delivery of recreation programming and facilities protects the environmental, financial, and other resources that are needed to ensure the continual operation of recreation and other services the Village provides.





The Four Plan Elements



9.0

Roles and Service Standards

The Village's Roles in Recreation

Steward – The Village cares for the natural and built recreation spaces that are under its jurisdiction and encourage residents to take pride in and care for them.

Funder – The Village provides direct and indirect financial support to individuals and groups to pursue, provide, and promote recreational opportunities.

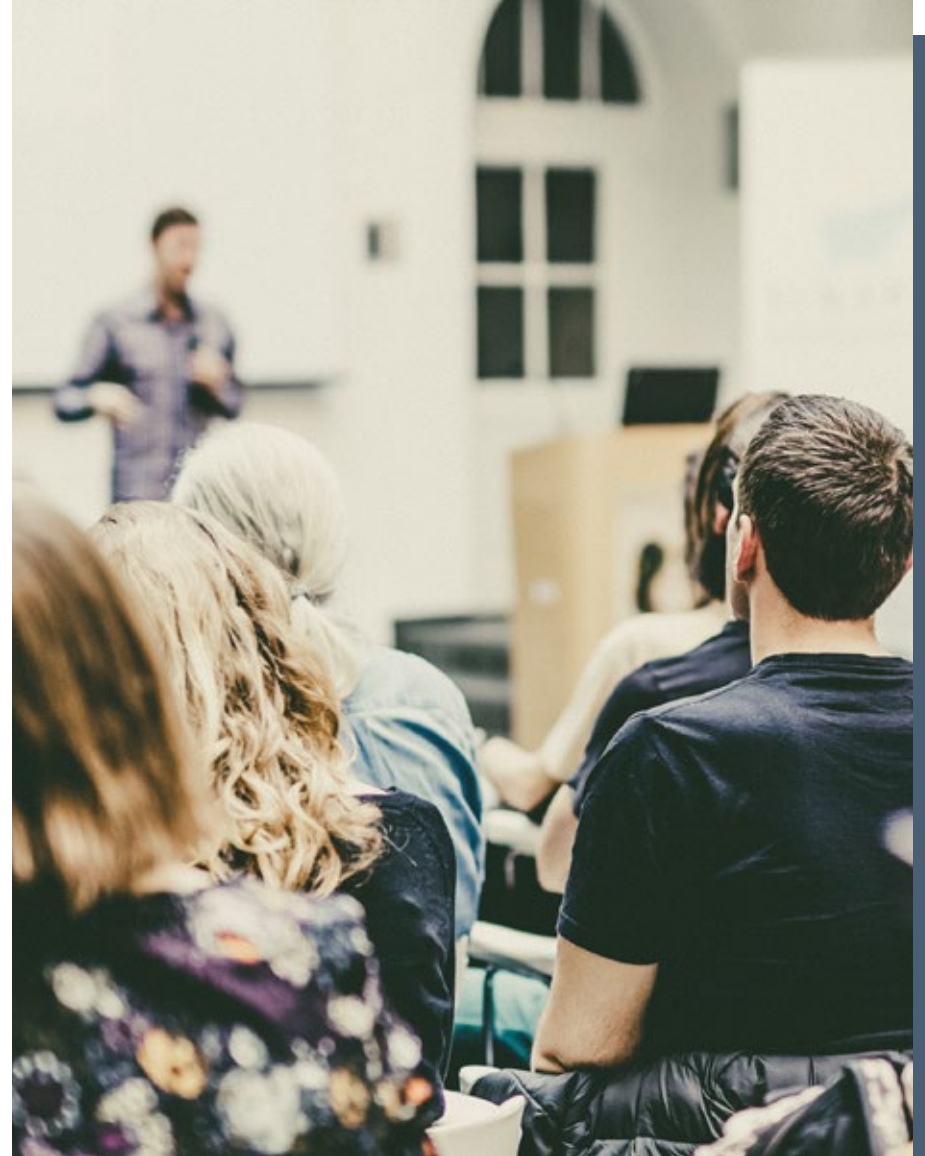
Facility provider – The Village provides safe, functional spaces that accommodate a range of recreational activities for the community and makes these available for both City and other activities.

Facilitator/partner – The Village works with other individuals and groups to facilitate the delivery of recreational opportunities to Carmacks residents.

Program provider – The Village designs and delivers programs that offer leisure and opportunities for individual and community well being.

Listener/learner – The Village strives to listen to and learn from the views of residents, volunteer groups, and the broader community in its approach to planning and delivering recreational opportunities.

Leader – The Village helps to create and foster a local culture in which recreation participation and active living are valued and promoted.



Service Standards

Facilities

Our Service Objective: To provide safe, functional, and enjoyable outdoor and indoor spaces in which Car-macks residents and visitors can spend their leisure time.

Maintenance Priorities

- 1. Safety
- 2. Functionality
- 3. Aesthetics

Maintenance Priority by Spaces

- 1. Highly utilized locations, particularly by vulnerable populations (i.e., children, seniors)
- 2. High maintenance requirements due to specific features or amenities
- 3. Highly visible locations
- 4. Less used and/or visible locations

Programs

Our Service Objective: To provide, facilitate, and support a range of recreation opportunities for Carmacks residents.

Delivery Priorities

- 1. Safety
- 2. Quality
- 3. Diversity

In-House Programming Priority by Recipient Group

- 1. Elementary school age children
- 2. Demographic and/or other groups not well served by third party programs
- 3. Families

10.0

Goals and Actions

Governance

Goal #1 Restructure the department to better reflect its mandate and increase capacity.

- Action 1.1 Rename the department and manager position title to incorporate the parks function.
- Action 1.2 Recruit an arena lead hand position and consider ways to make it a year-round position.
- Action 1.3 Consider formally assuming parks maintenance tasks currently undertaken by the Public Works department, reassigning budget accordingly.
- Action 1.4 Consider the use of external contractors to help manage the Department's administrative workload, particularly around funding proposals and reporting.

Goal #2 Strengthen the policy framework for recreation delivery.

- Action 2.1 Draft a Recreation Committee policy to clarify its role*, decision-making approach, frequency of meetings, and other mandate and operational matters requiring clarification.
- Action 2.2 Conduct a policy review and address gaps as needed to ensure that the Recreation Department can both communicate and operationalize how it delivers key services (e.g., safety, accessibility, facility user conduct, funding grants).

Goal #3 Strengthen the Department's community development function.

- Action 3.1 Pursue staff training in communications, marketing, administration and project management.
- Action 3.2 Create an image library of Village recreation spaces and activities to support communications.

Goal #4 Increase the Village's financial capacity to deliver recreation services.

- Action 4.1 Secure core funding for arena operations from the Government of Yukon as per the arena business plan.
- Action 4.2 Explore potential for core funding support from Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation (see Goal #15).
- Action 4.3 Develop a corporate sponsorship program and commemorative parks program.

**Proposed Recreation Committee role to include advising Council and Village administration on: funding requests; incorporating public input into larger planning/policy initiatives; annual workplans and achievement of Master Plan goals/objectives; and considering concerns and complaints from the public and user groups in regard to recreation service delivery.*

Facilities

Goal #5 Maximize utilization, enjoyment, and sustainability of existing facilities.

- Action 5.1 Complete repairs to the boardwalk and undertake flood-proofing improvements.
- Action 5.2 “Fit out” the arena lobby area to create a comfortable, welcoming community gathering space.
- Action 5.3 Implement the recommendations of the heritage building assessment.
- Action 5.4 Increase maintenance effort for Village park spaces during the summer season.
- Action 5.5 Explore and pilot off-season uses for the arena (e.g., shuffleboard, tennis, pickleball, modular skateboard or bike courses)

Goal #6 Increase and enhance the Village’s open space amenities and opportunities.

- Action 6.1 Enhance and expand the local trail network* (as per Official Community Plan “Big Move #3”) and explore potential opportunities for a winter non-motorized trail network close to the townsite.
- Action 6.2 Implement the trail signage program*.
- Action 6.3 Plan and implement site improvements to 8 Mile Lake to enhance parking, swimming, and picnicking/gathering functions.

Goal #7 Improve active transportation infrastructure.

- Action 7.1 Complete the “*Big Move #3*” active transportation actions in the Official Community Plan (OCP).

Goal #8 Increase capacity to maintain, manage and plan for facilities.

Action 8.1 Create general maintenance guidelines and procedures for parks and open spaces.

Action 8.2 Create a simple asset management plan and record keeping system.

Action 8.3 Develop capital plans for recreation facilities and ensure that a reserve fund for facility upgrades and repairs is maintained.

Goal #9 Plan for future major recreation facilities.

Action 9.1 Work with government partners to plan for a new swimming pool.

Action 9.2 Plan for other community facility priorities and preferences as part of "Village Hub" master planning (OCP Big Move #1).

**A trails assessment was conducted in 2020 and the resulting report included a comprehensive set of recommendations for enhancement of existing key trails and strategic future expansion of the network for local and visitor use. As part of the same project, a trail signage scheme was designed.*



Programming

Goal #10 Continue to facilitate and/or deliver a diversity of recreation for all ages.

Action 10.1 Increase programming focus in the following areas:

- Wellness, healthy living, and active aging;
- Family-oriented events;
- Outdoor skills and safety programs; and,
- One-day or weekend workshops geared towards adults.

Action 10.2 Create a new suite of arena programming for structured and unstructured activities,

Action 10.3 Explore opportunities to partner with the swimming pool in Pelly Crossing to provide swimming instruction to Carmacks youth.

Action 10.4 Provide programming to encourage use of Village's outdoor amenities (e.g., disc golf, volleyball, trail-based scavenger hunts).

Action 10.5 Provide a mix of established and new programs on an ongoing basis.

Goal #11 Host more events to foster community wellness, pride, and visitation.

Action 11.1 Continue to offer family and community gathering opportunities on a regular basis.

Action 11.2 Create a calendar of fun community sport tournaments.

Action 11.3 Attract winter hockey tournaments and camps in partnership with Whitehorse or other Yukon communities.

Goal #12 Reduce barriers to participation in recreation.

Action 12.1 Repair the Recreation Department van and upgrade staff licensing to operate it.

Action 12.2 Plan programming on a seasonal basis and promote in advance to maximize participation.

Action 12.3 Increase community awareness of Village and other recreation opportunities via:

- A seasonal program guide;
- Village electronic billboard; and,
- Via partner channels.

Goal #13 Empower staff to deliver high quality programming and community supports.

Action 13.1 Continue to provide staff training in:

- National/territorial standards and supports (i.e. HIGH FIVE, Yukon Physical Literacy Co-ordinator, safe sport, etc.);
- Program and curriculum development training; and,
- Mental health and wellness support skills.



PARTNERSHIPS & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Goal #14 Facilitate an increase in third party recreation delivery.

Action 14.1 Identify opportunities for third party groups to share delivery (with a priority on sport leagues, tournaments, and events) and help recruit community members to fill volunteer roles.

Action 14.2 Work with recreation groups to reduce the administrative burden of operating a non-profit association. This could include:

- Consolidating organizations (as appropriate) to minimize the number of volunteers needed to fill executive roles (i.e., President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer);
- Use of more event or activity-specific working groups under one or two umbrella organizations; and,
- As needed, providing tools and templates to streamline and simplify administrative tasks such as financial reporting and minute taking.

Action 14.3 Publicly recognize and celebrate community volunteers (e.g., volunteer awards, recognition dinner, profiles in recreation guide).

Goal #15 Establish and maintain strategic partnerships.

Action 15.1 Pursue a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation to establish shared interests, encourage coordination, avoid duplication, and share resources to benefit Carmacks recreation.

Action 15.2 Work with Government of Yukon to secure core operational funding for the arena (Action 4.1).

Action 15.3 Pursue funding and support for sport tourism from Yukon Convention Bureau and Sport Yukon.

Action 15.4 Attend/coordinate inter-agency meetings with other Carmacks community service providers on an ongoing basis.

Goal #16 Increase community awareness of and input into recreation.

Action 16.1 Report annually to community members and local partners on key outcomes and statistics (e.g., financials, programs, participants).

Action 16.2 Provide opportunities for resident ideas and feedback (e.g., suggestion/comment boxes or boards, online).

11.0 Implementation

Action	Implementation Timeframe				Extra Budget
	Short-term (0-2 yrs)	Medium-term (3-6 yrs)	Long-term (7-10 yrs)	Ongoing	
Governance					
Rename the department and manager position title	✓				
Recruit arena lead hand and consider ways to make it a year-round position	✓				
Consider reassigning parks maintenance tasks and budget	✓				
Consider use of external contractors				✓	\$
Draft a Recreation Committee policy	✓				
Conduct policy review and address gaps		✓			
Pursue staff training to support community development function					
Create an image library				✓	
Secure core funding for arena	✓			✓	\$
Explore core funding from LSCFN	✓				
Develop corporate sponsorship and commemorative parks program	✓				\$

Action	Implementation Timeframe				Extra Budget
	Short-term (0-2 yrs)	Medium-term (3-6 yrs)	Long-term (7-10 yrs)	Ongoing	
Facilities and Amenities					
Complete boardwalk repairs and flood-proofing	✓				
Fit out arena lobby	✓				
Implement heritage building protection measures		✓	✓		
Increase summer park maintenance	✓				
Explore/pilot off-season arena uses	✓				
Implement trail signage program	✓				
Enhance/expand local trail network		✓			\$
Plan/implement 8 Mile Lake improvements		✓	✓	✓	\$
Complete active transportation improvements in OCP		✓		✓	
Create parks maintenance procedures				✓	
Develop capital plans and reserve fund			✓		\$
Plan for a new swimming pool			✓		
Plan for facilities as part of “Village Hub” master planning					

Action	Implementation Timeframe				Extra Budget
	Short-term (0-2 yrs)	Medium-term (3-6 yrs)	Long-term (7-10 yrs)	Ongoing	
Programming					
Increase programming focus in strategic areas	✓				
Create new arena programming					
Explore opportunities to partner with Pelly Crossing pool				✓	
Provide outdoor amenity programming	✓			✓	
Provide a mix of new and established programs				✓	
Continue to offer family and community gathering opportunities					\$
Create a calendar of fun tournaments	✓				
Attract winter hockey tournaments and camps	✓			✓	
Repair Recreation Department van	✓			✓	
Plan programming on a seasonal basis					
Increase awareness of recreation opportunities				✓	
Continue to provide staff training in key areas					

Action	Implementation Timeframe				Extra Budget
	Short-term (0-2 yrs)	Medium-term (3-6 yrs)	Long-term (7-10 yrs)	Ongoing	
Partnership & Community Development					
Identify opportunities for third party groups to share delivery and recruit volunteers				✓	
Work with recreation groups to reduce administrative burden				✓	\$
Recognize community volunteers	✓			✓	
Pursue MOU with LSCFN	✓				
Pursue funding and support for sport tourism				✓	
Attend/coordinate inter-agency meetings				✓	
Report annually on recreation outcomes				✓	
Provide opportunities for resident ideas and feedback					



