

SOUTH COWICHAN RECREATION



April 21, 2011

Community Survey Results

Prepared by Kim Liddle

South Cowichan Recreation Division

South Cowichan Recreation

COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

Introduction

At the request of the Kerry Park Recreation Commission, the South Cowichan Recreation staff developed, implemented, and analyzed a community survey in order to gather feedback on recreation services in the South Cowichan Area. Residents living in the Cowichan Valley Regional District Electoral Areas of Area A (Mill Bay/Malahat), Area B (Shawnigan Lake), Area C (Cobble Hill), and Area D (Cowichan Bay) were included in the community survey and asked to give their opinions and preferences on current recreation services as well as what they would like to see in the future.

The following report explains the methodology of the project, which is then followed by the results of the survey and future recommendations.

Background

Survey Development

After the defeat of the November 2009 referendum to upgrade Kerry Park and add a pool facility, the Kerry Park Commission discussed what the next steps should look like. In January of 2010 the Commission directed staff to set up a sub-committee meeting to work towards developing a plan in moving forward. The first sub-committee meeting was held Feb 23, 2010 and staff was directed to develop a community survey.

Staff was directed to develop a survey that included questions that would assist in determining:

- How the community currently recreates;
- How the South Cowichan Recreation facilities are currently doing in meeting the needs of the community;
- What the community priorities are for the future outlook of recreation;
- What the community would be willing to pay in tax increases to invest in the future development of recreation services (through tax increases) and;
- Further suggestions, comments, or other input.

A draft survey was presented to the sub-committee in late March, with the final version being approved to go out to the community in late April.

Survey Distribution

A total of 7000 surveys were distributed throughout the community between April 28th and June 29th, 2010. It was requested that surveys be completed by one adult (over the age of 18) within a household. The surveys were distributed in the following manner:

- A total of 6,273 through Canada Post Unaddressed Ad-Mail to the four electoral areas mentioned above

- A total of 112 through Canada Post Direct Mail services to residents living on the North Side of Koksilah River.
- A total of 615 distributed throughout the community including the local recreation centres, library, grocery stores and clinics.
- An on-line survey was also available on the Cowichan Valley Regional District Website.

Survey Data Collection

South Cowichan staff developed a database in Microsoft Excel to input returned survey results. Surveys were collected in the following manner: drop off locations at Kerry Park Recreation Centre and Shawnigan Lake Community Centre, On-Line submissions, and by direct mail. Surveys submitted up to and including July 6th, 2010 were included in the final results. Staff developed a system to ensure submissions were only entered once and the information was correctly inputted. The total number of surveys received was 415, representing 6% of the households within Electoral Areas A, B, C, and D (2006 Census Canada reported a total of 7,992 within the 4 electoral areas).

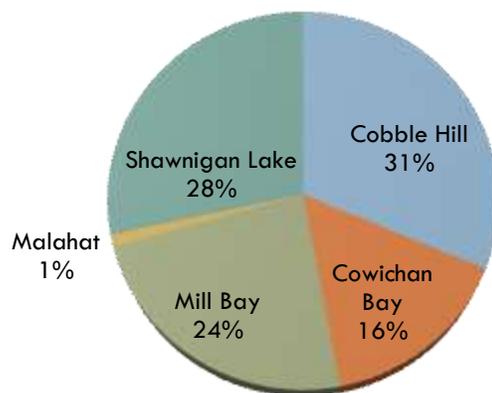
After the completion of data entry, the results were compared area by area to ensure the statistics were correct.

Results

This section presents the final results from the community survey. Throughout the survey residents could submit hand written comments/suggestions that have been included throughout this document.

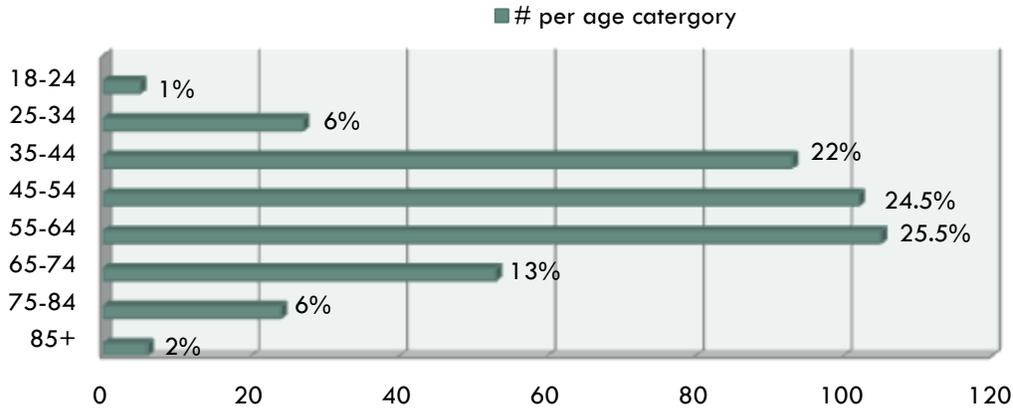
A. Tell us about yourself...

1. I live in (Check one)



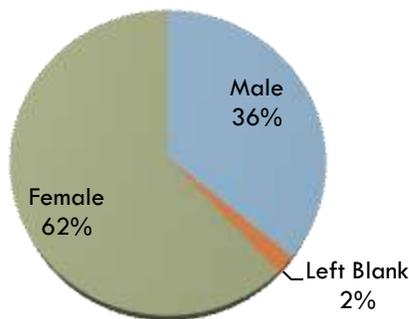
Of the 415 surveys returned a total of 98 were from Mill Bay and 2 were from Malahat (Electoral Area A), 117 were from Shawnigan Lake (Electoral Area B), 133 were from Cobble Hill (Electoral Area C), and 65 were from Cowichan Bay (Electoral Area D).

2. My Age is (Check one)



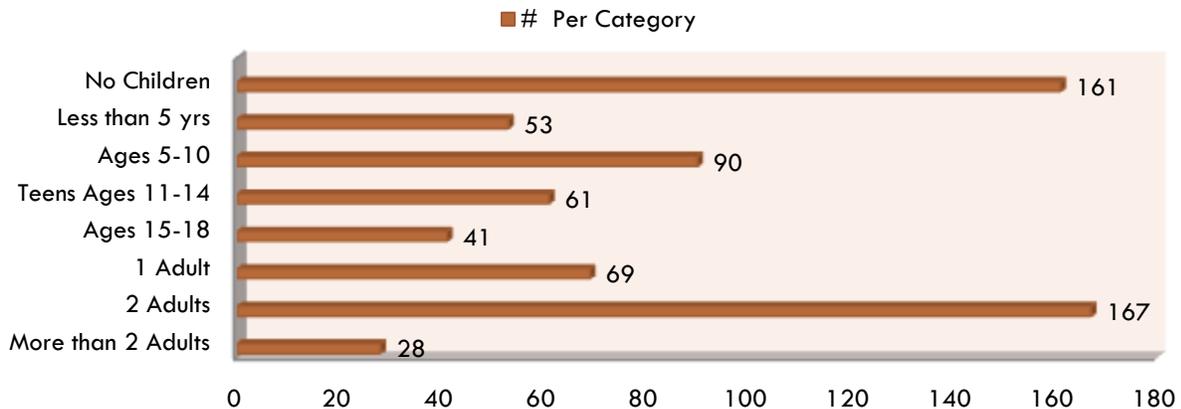
The ages of the survey respondent was relatively higher on the 45+ age grouping. Of the respondents 29% were ages 18-44 and 71% were ages 45 and up. Within the 4 electoral areas only 50% of our population is over the age of 45.

3. Please indicate Gender (Check one)



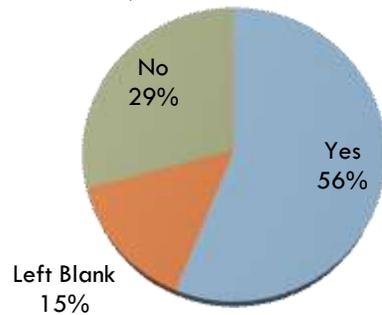
Of the 415 respondents, 147 were male, 263 were female and 5 were left blank.

4. Please tell us who lives in your household and how many under each age group (check and complete all that apply)



Of the 415 respondents, 39% did not have children living in their household.

5. A member of our household participated in a South Cowichan Recreation program or service within the past year (check one)



Of the 415 respondents, 191 responded Yes, 100 responded No, and 124 were left blank.

6. What types of leisure activities do you or your family members participate in, AT SOUTH COWICHAN RECREATION FACILITIES? (Check all that apply)

In order of top selections

- | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Skating 2. Events/festivals 3. Don't participate 4. Drop in activities 5. Swim lessons 6. Yoga 7. Fitness classes 8. Walking/jogging 9. Soccer 10. Hockey | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Certificate courses 12. Base/softball 13. Arts/crafts 14. Curling 15. Dance 16. Gymnastics 17. Preschool Pgms 18. School Age Pgms 19. Other 20. Dog obedience | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 21. Golf 22. Music 23. Toddler Pgms 24. Competitive sports 25. Figure skating 26. Martial arts 27. Tennis lessons 28. Tennis court use 29. Volunteering 30. Senior programs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 31. Youth/Teen Pgm 32. Performing arts 33. Volleyball 34. Basketball 35. Lacrosse 36. Photography 37. Card/board game 38. Floor/Roller Hky 39. Left Blank |
|---|--|--|---|

7. Are there any programs not offered at South Cowichan Recreation Facilities that you would like to see?

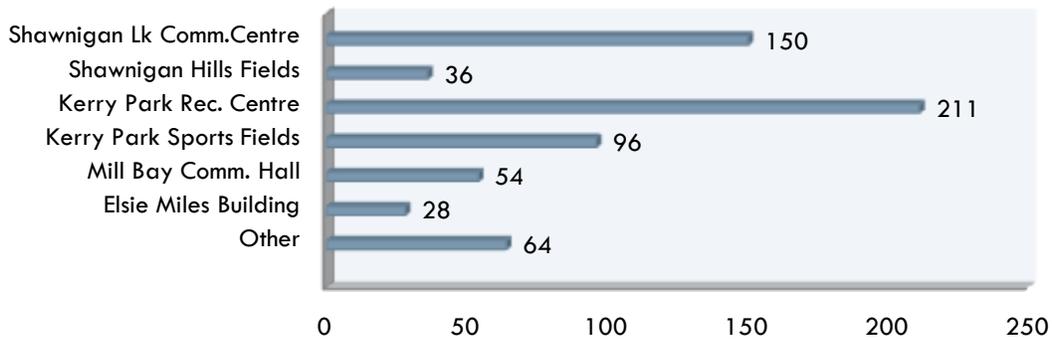
Suggested additional programs that we currently do not offer were soccer for ages 11 and up, youth field hockey, a pool for drop-in swimming and additional programming, tai chi, gardening, elder college activities, affordable taxi services, outdoor fitness park, step aerobics, pole dancing, quilting, and summer softball programs.

8. Please indicate what motivates you or members of your household to participate in recreation programs and activities (check all that apply)

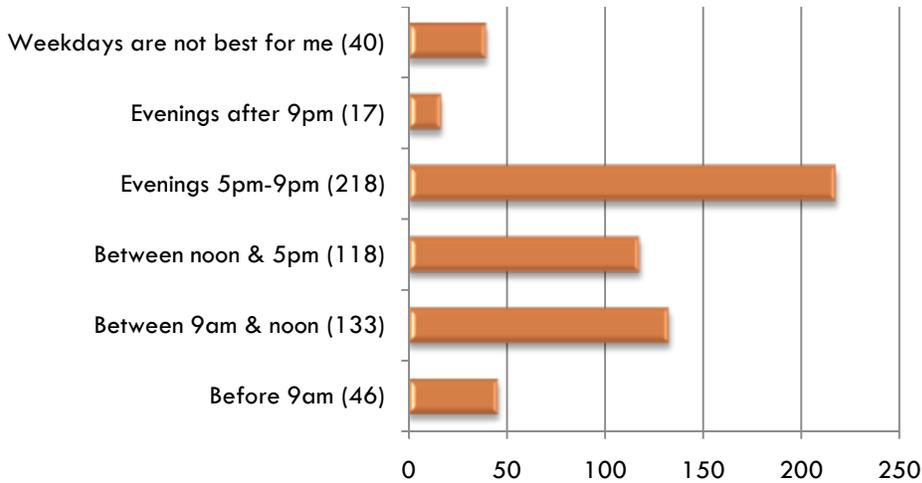
In order of top selections

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Leisure/Social purposes 2. Personal interest 3. Increase fitness level 4. Learn something new 5. Expose child to new skills 6. Reduce stress | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Refine existing skills 8. Competitive reasons 9. Other 10. Art Appreciation 11. Left blank 12. Gain accreditation |
|--|---|

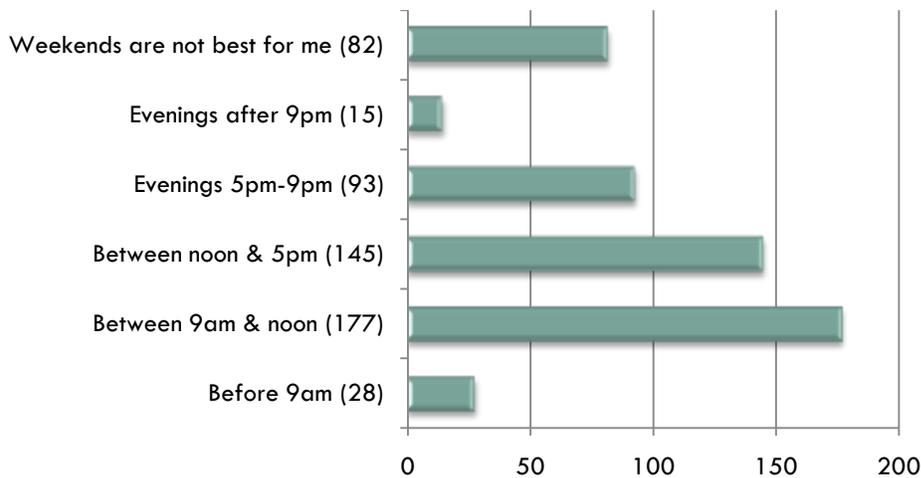
9. Within the past year I or a member of our household have participated in South Cowichan Recreation Program or drop in activity at the following locations (check all that apply)



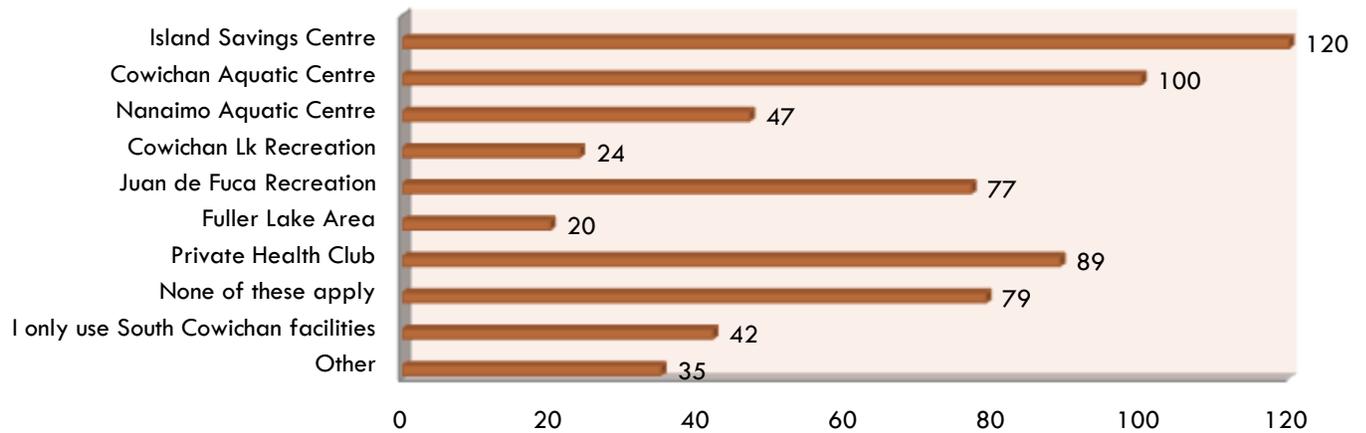
10. During the WEEKDAYS, the time of day members of our household are most likely to participate in South Cowichan Recreation programs or drop in activities are (check all that apply)



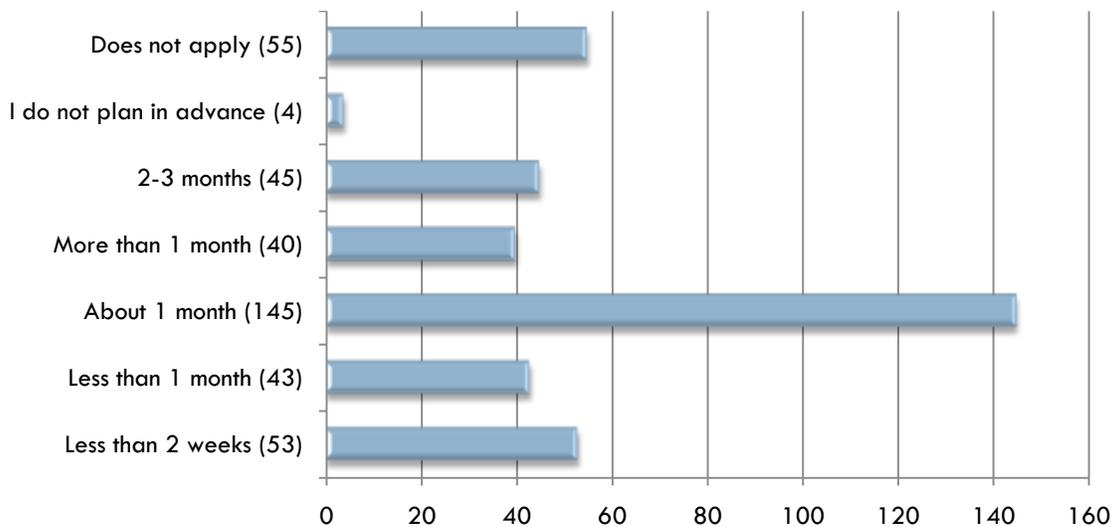
11. During the WEEKENDS, the time of day members of our household are most likely to participate in South Cowichan Recreation programs or drop in activities are (check all that apply)



12. Aside from South Cowichan Recreation Facilities, within the past year members of our household have participated in programs at the following facilities (check all that apply)



13. For planning purposes, I require advance notice and details about South Cowichan Recreation programs, services, and facility schedules within the following time frame (check one)

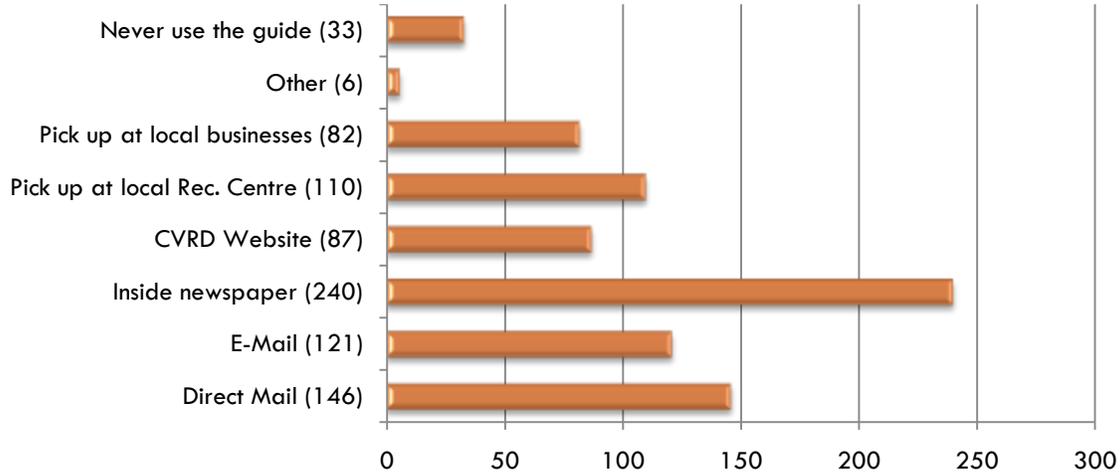


14. The reasons most likely to prevent members of my household or myself from participating in South Cowichan Recreation programs and services are (check all that apply)

1. Activities not scheduled at convenient times
2. Programs don't appeal/interest me
3. Lack of time
4. Cost is too high
5. Facilities need upgrading
6. None apply
7. Am not interested in doing so
8. Other (see below)
9. Equipment inappropriate/needs upgrading
10. Travel distance too far
11. Lack of public transit
12. Prefer Private clubs/facilities
13. Poor cleanliness of facility
14. Quality of instruction is poor
15. Feel uncomfortable/unsafe in facilities

B. How we communicate with you...

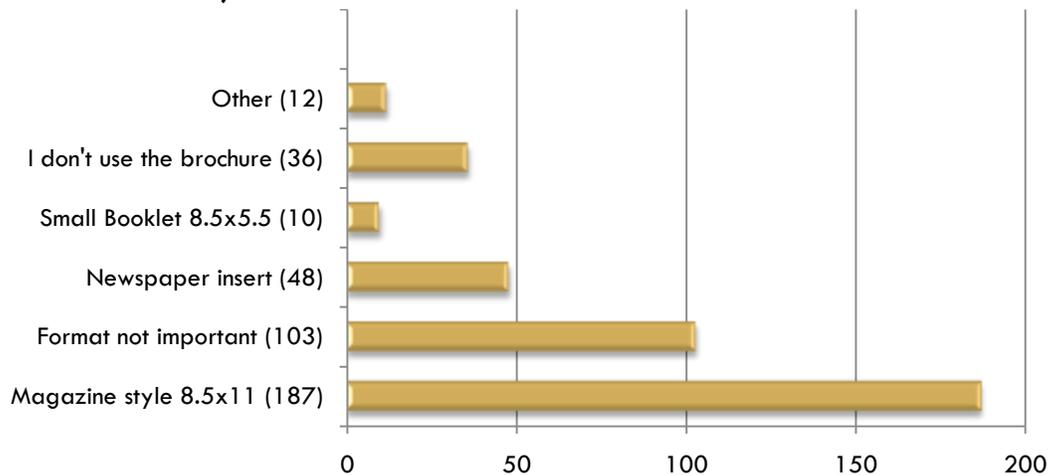
1. The South Cowichan Recreation Activity Guide is our publication that lists our program offerings, facility schedules, and fees. Select the response that indicates the best way for you to receive a copy of our South Cowichan Recreation Activity Guide (check all that apply)



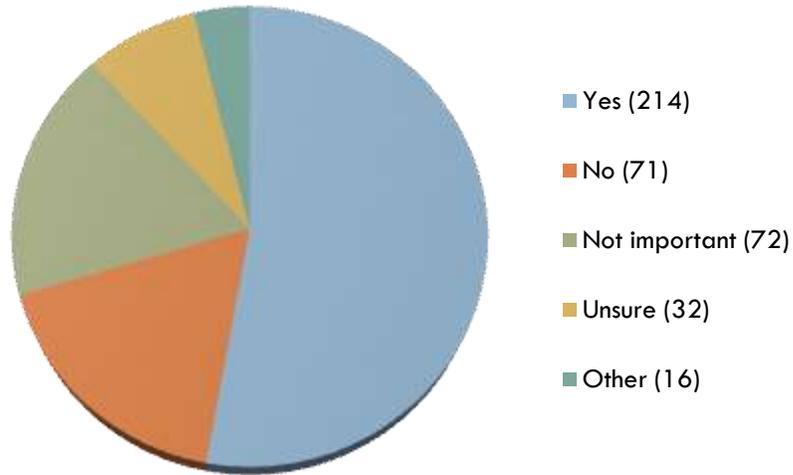
2. Aside from the activity guide, South Cowichan Recreation also conducts other advertising. Help us understand the best way to inform and make you aware of South Cowichan Recreation programs and services (check all that apply)

- | | | |
|------------------------|----------------------------|------------------|
| 1. Newspaper ad | 7. Signage & posters | 13. Other |
| 2. Direct mail | 8. Word of Mouth | 14. Referrals |
| 3. E-mail | 9. Shaw community TV | 15. Yellow Pages |
| 4. Rec. Centre signage | 10. Island Parent Magazine | 16. Twitter |
| 5. CVRD website | 11. Radio Advertising | |
| 6. School newsletter | 12. Facebook | |

3. I prefer the format of the South Cowichan Recreation Activity Guide to be as follows (please select one)

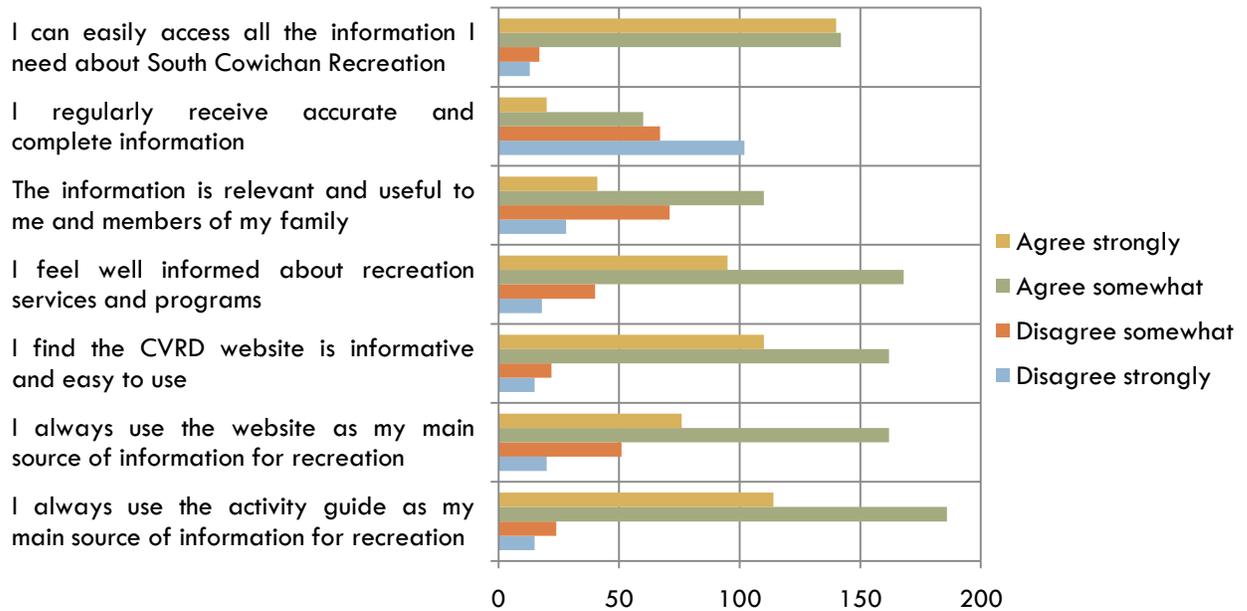


4. All the recreation facilities in the Cowichan Valley Region should jointly publish a guide that contains all recreation facility programs, hours, schedules and fees.



C. How are we doing?

**1. Communication-
From South Cowichan Recreation...**

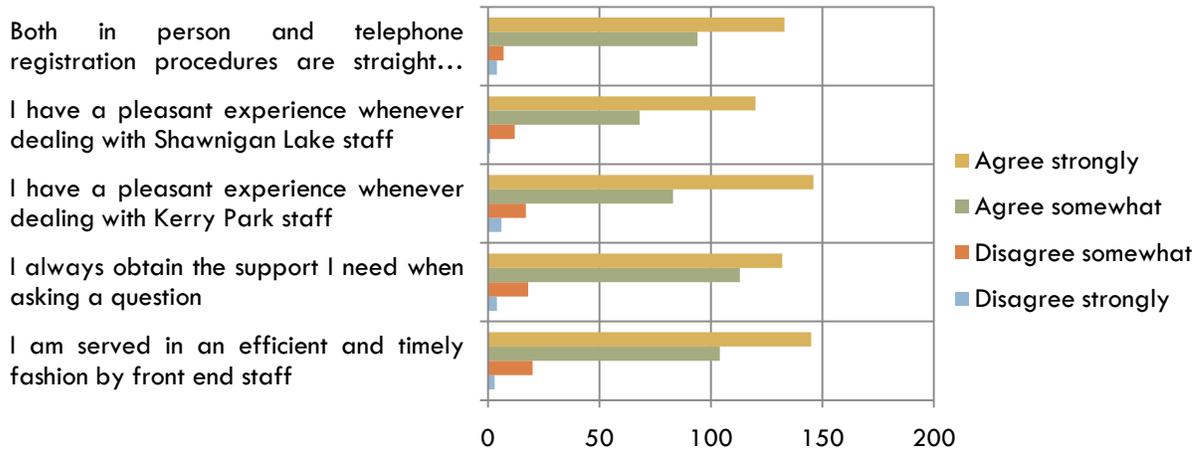


Note: 28% of the responses received for the above questions marked no opinion or left blank for their answer.

Comments on Communications:

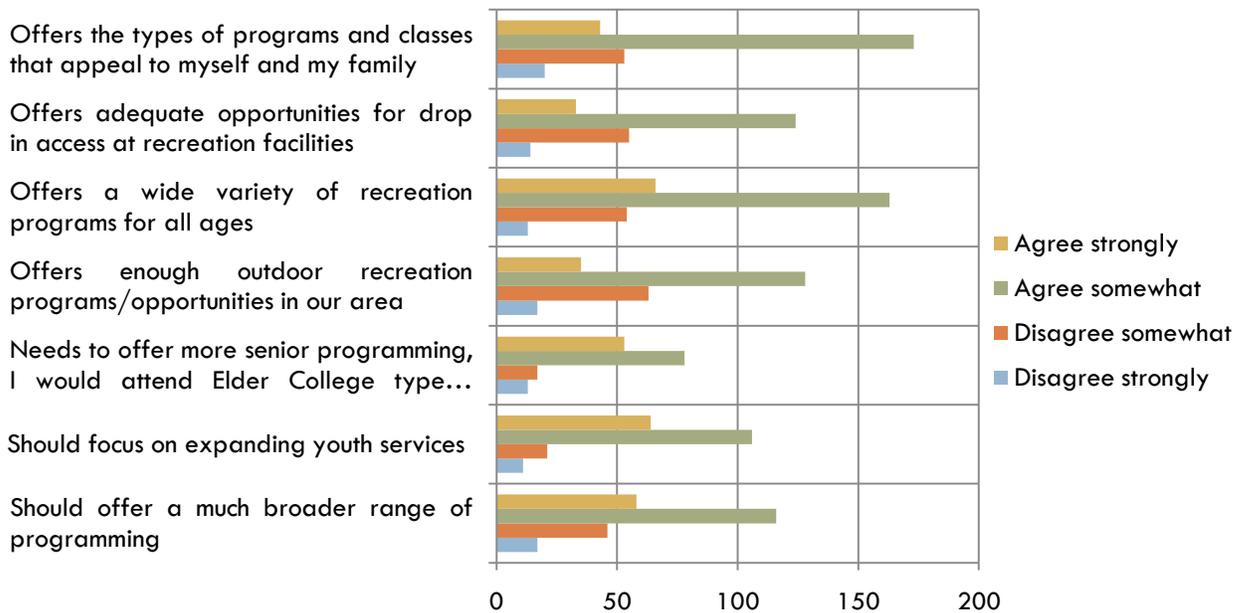
- Website too confusing
- First day of registration can be very frustrating- long line ups, hard to get through on the phone, etc
- Suggestion- utilize the Activity Guide to convey the need for a new facility

**2. Customer Service-
From South Cowichan Recreation...**



Note: 41% of the responses received for the above questions marked no opinion or left blank for their answer.

**3. Programming-
South Cowichan Recreation ...**

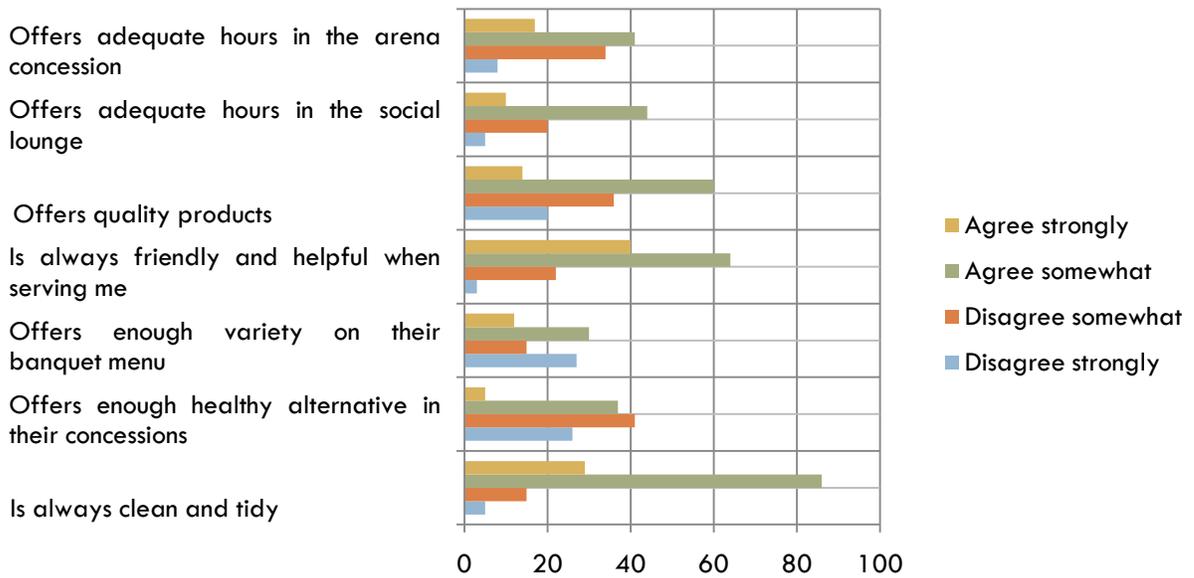


Note: 43% of the responses received for the above questions marked no opinion or left blank for their answer

Comments on Programs:

- Need to expand the following programs- soccer, gymnastics, fitness (more evening classes), baby classes, drop in curling time, elder college, dance/concert events for teens
- Need better times for programs...more evening fitness/yoga classes, etc
- Need a pool so we can expand aquatic programming
- I think you are doing well

4. Food and Beverage Services- South Cowichan Recreation

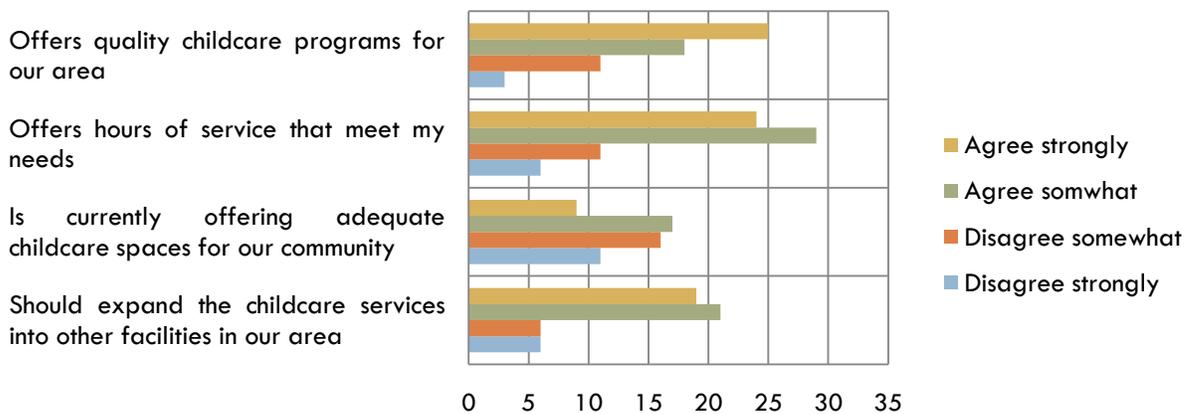


Note: 75% of the responses received for the above questions marked no opinion or left blank for their answer

Comments on Food and Beverage:

- Never use Food and Beverage services
- Limitations are facility related, not staffing
- Not open enough

5. Childcare Services- South Cowichan Recreation ...

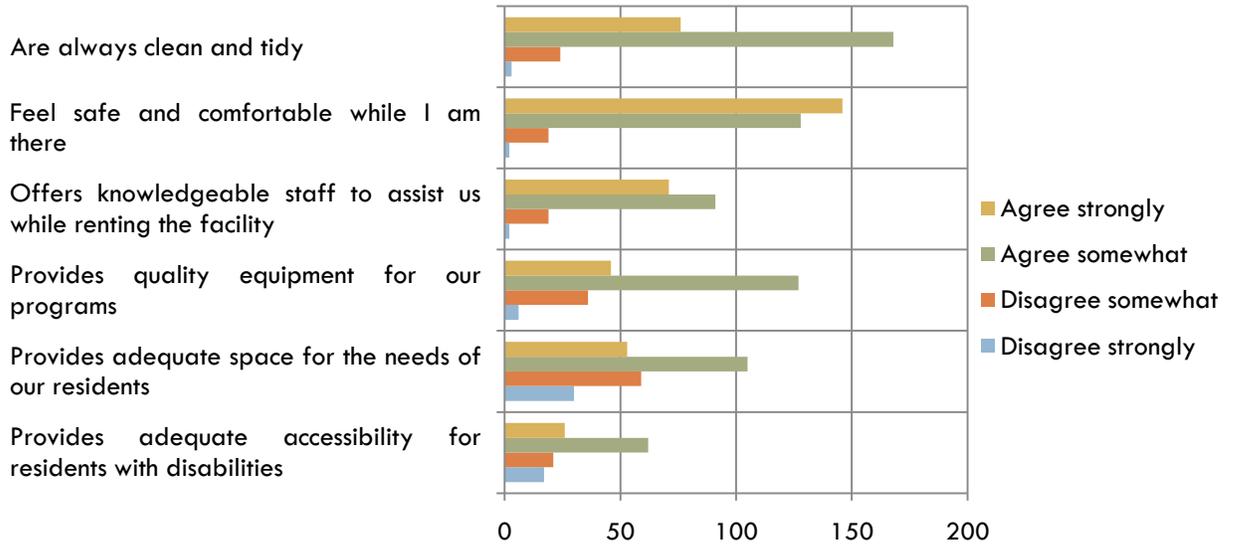


Note: 85% of the responses received for the above questions marked no opinion or left blank for their answer. Of the 15% that completed this section only one said they had been on the waitlist for an extended period of time.

Comments on Childcare:

- Summer camps are great
- Couldn't get into childcare program

6. Facilities-
South Cowichan Recreation Facilities...



Note: 47% of the responses received for the above questions marked no opinion or left blank for their answer

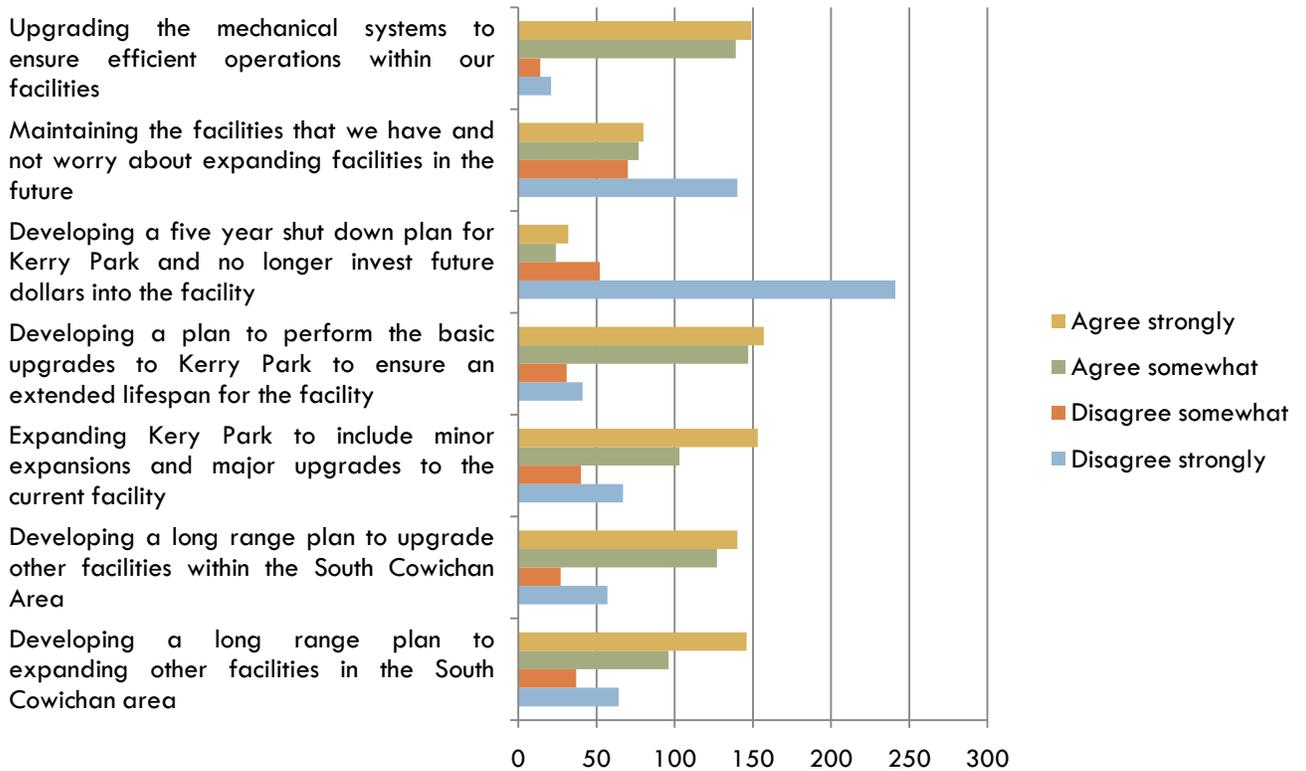
Comments on Facilities:

- Need a pool and second sheet of ice
- SLCC seems to be outgrowing facility
- User groups not always taking the responsibility of cleaning up after themselves

D. The Future Outlook?

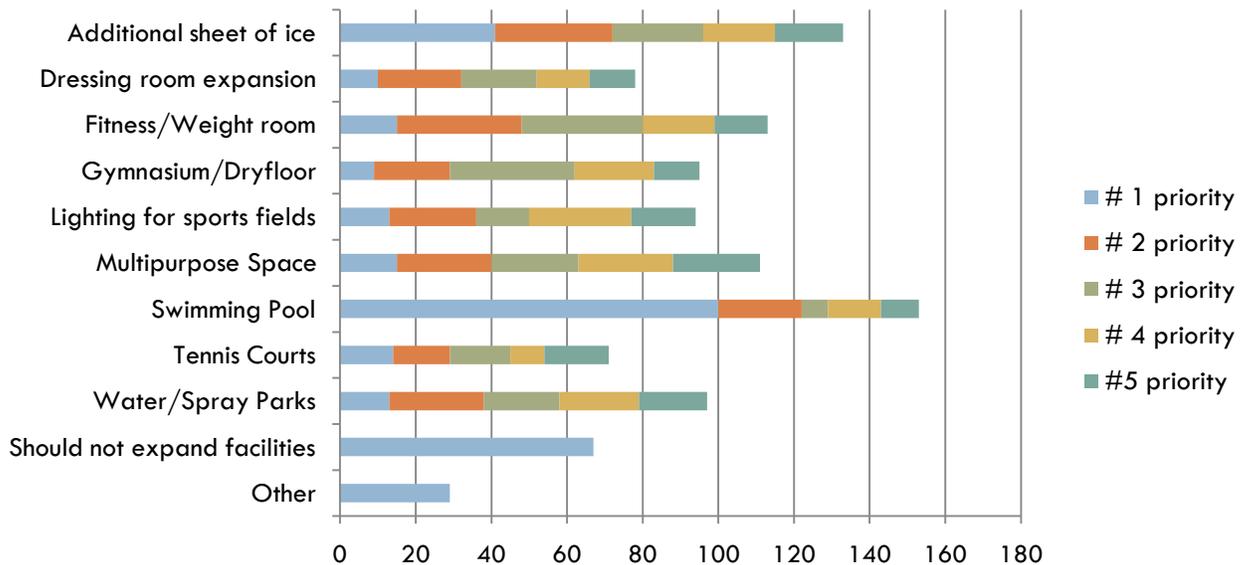
1. Future Outlook-

I believe the South Cowichan Recreation Facilities should consider...

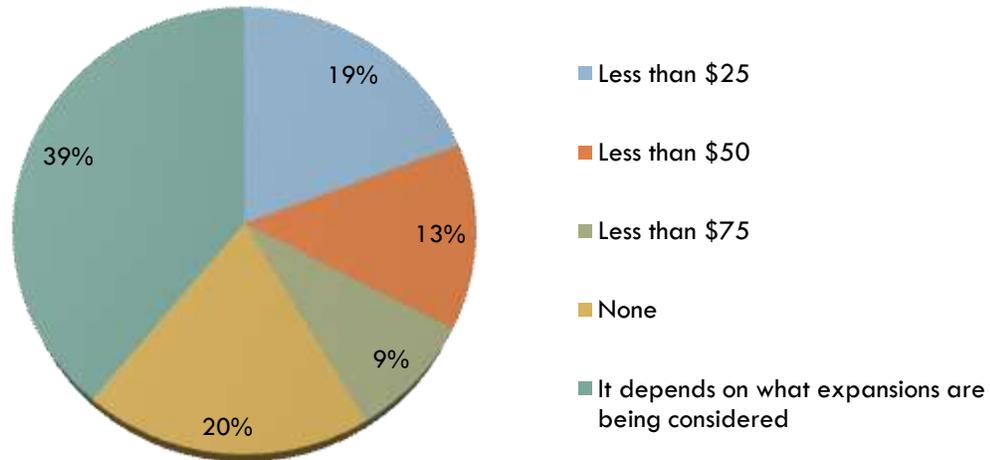


Note: Of the 415 responses, approximately 59 respondents marked no opinion or left the response blank when answering the above questions.

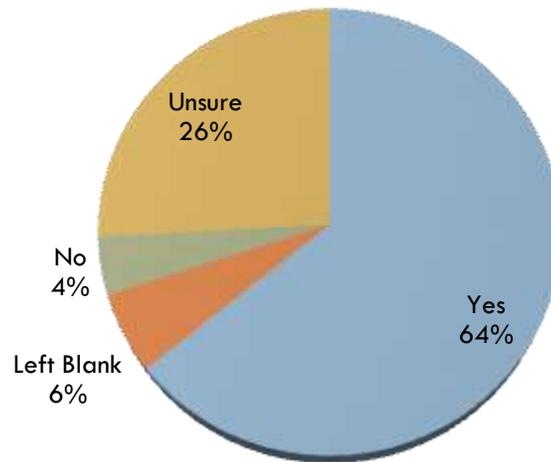
Should the South Cowichan Recreation facilities expand, I would like to see priority placed on (please number in order of priority)



2. Over the next 5 years, I would be willing to increase my taxes by ____/\$100,000 to invest in the future development of our Recreation Facilities (select one)



3. I would be open to naming rights or private sector partnerships in order to offset costs of upgrading facilities



Comments on Future Plans:

- Keep facility the way it is
- Expand facility for future generations
- Go Green- no ice or pool
- Need pool but no more taxes; no more taxes
- Community is expanding, time to stand up for families and not rich summer residents and seniors who do not use the facility
- Regional Recreation (this statement was common throughout the surveys returned)
- More accountability if expansion occurs- cost down, on time, etc

E. Your Suggestions-

Do you have any comments about South Cowichan Recreation that you would like to draw to our attention?

- Keep Kerry Park Recreation Centre and Shawnigan Lake Community Centre alive- they are a crucial part of the community.
- Don't want to travel for recreation; Living in Area E but an Area B taxpayer and too far to drive to utilize facilities out in the south end.
- Do not use South Cowichan Recreation services so survey not important to me.
- All facilities should be open to people who live in the CVRD area.
- Look at other opportunities for funding; Already paying too much in taxes.

Do you have any suggestions or ideas for new programs or services that should be offered at South Cowichan Recreation?

- Need 2 sheets of ice/better ice in both the curling and ice arena
- More focus needs to be put into Senior programming
- We need a pool!
- Don't compete with private sector; plenty of fitness places to go to already; should be utilizing school gyms more.
- Water park a waste of water; create non-smoking parks

Future Outlook Comparison to Ipsos Reid Survey

When looking at the Future Outlook of recreation in the South Cowichan Area, both this survey and the Ipsos Reid survey results were considered. With the questions being worded differently in the two surveys, it is difficult to directly compare the answers but we can compare similarities.

In June of 2009 an Ipsos Reid Survey was conducted to randomly poll citizens living in Area A (Mill Bay/Malahat), Area B (Shawnigan Lake), and Area C (Cobble Hill). Through a random telephone interview process, residents were asked which redevelopment option was most preferable to their household.

Details from the Ipsos Reid Survey:

- 301 citizens over the age of 18 years of age were randomly selected and asked to select their preferred option for enhancements to the Kerry Park Recreation Centre. The options that were given were as follows:
 1. Repair, upgrade, and improve the facility PLUS add a new pool for a total cost of up to \$21.8 million dollars (39%- response in favor of this option).
 2. Repair, upgrade, and improve the facility PLUS add BOTH a second sheet of ice AND a new pool for a total cost of up to \$30.8 million dollars (22%-response in favor of this option).

3. Repair and upgrade the facility PLUS make some improvements such as adding a fitness centre and additional multi-purpose space for a total cost of up to \$11.8 million dollars (9%- response in favor of this option).
4. Repair and upgrade the facility for a total cost of up to \$9 million dollars (9%- responses in favor of this option).
5. Repair, upgrade, and improve the facility PLUS add a second sheet of ice for a total cost of up to \$21.6 million dollars (3% - responses in favor of this option).
6. Do nothing at all (16%- responses in favor of this option).
7. Don't know/Not stated (2%- responses in favor of this option).

Comparison of preferred development options

- The pool continues to be the #1 priority for residents in the South End with 31% selecting this as their first priority in the South Cowichan Recreation Survey and 39% selecting this as their preferred option in the Ipsos Reid survey.
- The second sheet of ice was chosen as the 3rd highest priority with 13% selecting this as their first priority in the South Cowichan Recreation Survey and 3% in the Ipsos Reid.
- It is also important to note that 22% of residents selected building the pool and adding an additional sheet of ice together as their preferred development option in the Ipsos Reid survey.
- There was however an increase in the number of residents that felt we should do nothing at all with 21% from the South Cowichan Recreation Survey versus 16% in the Ipsos Reid survey.
- In comparing whether or not the residents would support the basic repair and upgrades to the facility, 42% of the residents strongly agreed and 39% somewhat agreed with this statement in the South Cowichan Recreation Survey. With the Ipsos Reid study residents were required to only select one option where 9% of the residents selected this as their preferred option.
- When asked do you support basic repairs, upgrades, and major renovations such as multipurpose space 41% of the residents strongly agreed and 28% somewhat agreed with this statement in the South Cowichan Recreation Survey. With the Ipsos Reid study 9% of the residents selected this as their preferred option.

Comparison in tax dollars willing to spend

- In comparing the amount of tax dollars residents were willing to invest into future development of recreation facilities, residents had the following responses in the South Cowichan Recreation Survey- 39% of the residents responded 'It depends on what expansions are being considered', another 41% were willing to increase their taxes a minimum of \$25/\$100,000 over the next five years and 20% were not willing to increase their taxes at all.
- When reviewing the Ipsos Reid survey results 82% of the residents polled were willing to invest into future development at Kerry Park whereas 16% were not willing to pay any and 2% were unsure.

Conclusion

The results of the survey show that respondents have an overall positive impression of the services offered in the South Cowichan Recreation Division. Of the 415 respondents, 56% have participated in a South Cowichan Recreation program or service within the past year. The survey has provided valuable information for all departments and has identified a few areas that will be useful in assisting our coordinators in future planning. The challenges for the programming department will be the ability to meet the needs for improved services in regards to times and programs. With the current facilities already used at a maximum capacity, there is no additional space to add or improve programs and times.

When reviewing the survey results a common concern when looking at future expansion was the cost and its impact on property taxes. When preparing the survey, the question of naming rights was included to see if respondents were open to this option to assist with reducing costs to the taxpayers. Results showed that 64% of the respondents were open to this option with 26% being unsure and only 4% opposed. When reviewing the survey results from both studies, results were similar with an average of 80% of the respondents open to investing dollars into future upgrades to Kerry Park Recreation.

Back in 1999, Professional Environmental Recreation Consultants (PERC) was hired to prepare a strategic plan for Kerry Park Recreation Centre. From that the following recommendations were made:

Phase 1: (2000-2002)

- Improvements to existing facilities including the construction of a new lobby, office space, dressing rooms and additional multipurpose space, construction of a sportsfield complex

Phase 2: (2003-2007)

- Construction of a 25 metre leisure pool and appropriate parking spaces

Phase 3: (2008-2014)

- Construction of a gymnasium, a second sheet of ice, and two additional curling lanes

Since that time, Kerry Park Recreation has conducted three additional surveys to ensure they are still on target with the strategic plan and the results consistently come back with the same message- swimming pool is the number one priority to the community. The top three priorities are consistently the need for repairs/upgrades to the current facility, expansion to include a pool and second sheet of ice, and the possibilities of other community partnerships. The commission is struggling with this direction as it's sending a clear message but the recent referendums do not support these findings.

The challenge in the future will be working towards the first priority that was chosen by residents which was the addition of a swimming pool. The South Cowichan Recreation Division may want to consider looking at repairs, upgrades, and expansion to the Kerry Park Recreation facilities in a phased approach to ensure the facility is still viable in years to come.

Recommendations

The final survey results were reviewed at the Kerry Park Recreation Commission Meeting held August 17, 2010 and a motion was passed to *“host a community focus group meeting in year fall of 2010 to determine next steps”*

In early October of 2010, Sequoia Management Group Inc. was hired to assist with hosting a Community Focus Group Meeting regarding the future of Kerry Park Recreation Centre. Letters of invitation were sent out to a number of interest groups in the South Cowichan Area, some of which represent current Kerry Park users, to participate in a Focus Group discussion about the future of Kerry Park. Two sessions were held from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm on October 14 and 28, 2010. These sessions were chaired by Patrick Hrushowy, of Sequoia Management Group Inc with the Division Manager of South Cowichan Recreation and General Manager of Parks, Rec and Culture each sitting in as observers.

Each session began with a review of results from public surveys completed over the past two years with particular emphasis placed on the work done in this survey. Conversations were wide ranging, including discussions over why the recent pool referendum was defeated so clearly even though scientific polling seemed to show solid support for community approval. The focus group participants also agreed that despite surveys continuing to show support for a pool at Kerry Park, the notion of providing aquatic facilities should be removed from the public agenda for the foreseeable future. The group also firmly rejected the option of a planned shutdown of the Kerry Park Recreation Centre.

The community direction, as expressed by community and stakeholder group representatives, called for a phased approach to be implemented in steps over a period of time. The focus group also offered approaches to reducing the direct impact of increases in taxation on property owners. The phases or steps are recommended as follows:

Executive Summary

The community direction, as expressed by community and stakeholder group representatives over two evening sessions, called for a phased approach to be implemented in steps over a period of time. The focus groups also offered approaches to reducing the direct impact of increases in taxation on property owners. The phases or steps are recommended as follows:

Phase 1

Go to the voters in a referendum to approve borrowing to cover basic refurbishing of the physical plant at Kerry Park, along with a set of dry-floor enhancements that would include: change room improvements and expansions, improved diversity of meeting room size and space, storage facilities and user group office space. There was also a strong expression for the provision of dedicated seniors' activity space. Planning would also include the possibility of adding a regional library location in the future.

At the same time voters should be asked to approve a basic tax levy that would go towards building a reserve fund dedicated to future facility improvements and replacement of aging physical plant.

Phase 2

The Kerry Park Recreation Commission implement a formal planning process, in consultation with the community, directed to creating a vision for a second ice surface to meet the growing needs of stakeholders involved in figure skating and ice hockey – minor and junior hockey leagues as well as male and female recreational hockey. The public would be thoroughly involved in the planning process, which could ultimately lead to the Kerry Park Commission recommending to CVRD directors that the plans go to the public, sometime in the future, in the form of a borrowing referendum.

Phase 3

The Kerry Park Recreation Commission adopt a long term planning process taking into account the likely 40-year life cycle of the recreation facility, should voters approve the basic refurbishments and upgrades called for in the Phase 1 recommendation. The demographics of the South Cowichan area are likely to change over time with increasing numbers of people wishing to retire to the area. The long term plan would also recognize the need for ongoing funding to pay for appropriate maintenance and replacement of physical facilities.

Funding

Focus group participants were open to considering the sale of naming rights in order to support funding for upgraded facilities at Kerry Park as has been done with Island Savings Centre. This is consistent with what CVRD staff found when the community was surveyed during the summer of 2010.

In both focus group sessions participants raised the issue of gaining support for recreation facilities funding from developers; either as direct contributions or through some form of development cost charges. A participant forwarded to CVRD staff a recent legal opinion relative to development cost charges as they relate to regional districts.