



Sexsmith Recreation, Parks and Culture Facility Community Engagement

Final: December 15, 2021



expedition
MANAGEMENT CONSULTING

expedition

MANAGEMENT CONSULTING

December 15, 2021

Melody Sample
Sexsmith Wellness Coordinator
Town of Sexsmith
9927 – 100 Street Box 420
Sexsmith, AB, T0H 3C0

Dear Ms. Sample,

Please find enclosed the final Sexsmith Recreation, Parks and Culture Facility Community Engagement report. It has been a pleasure working with you to develop this important document.

If you have any questions or require clarification on the attached report, please feel free to contact me at 780-266-7888.

Sincerely,



Justin Rousseau, Managing Director
Expedition Management Consulting Ltd.

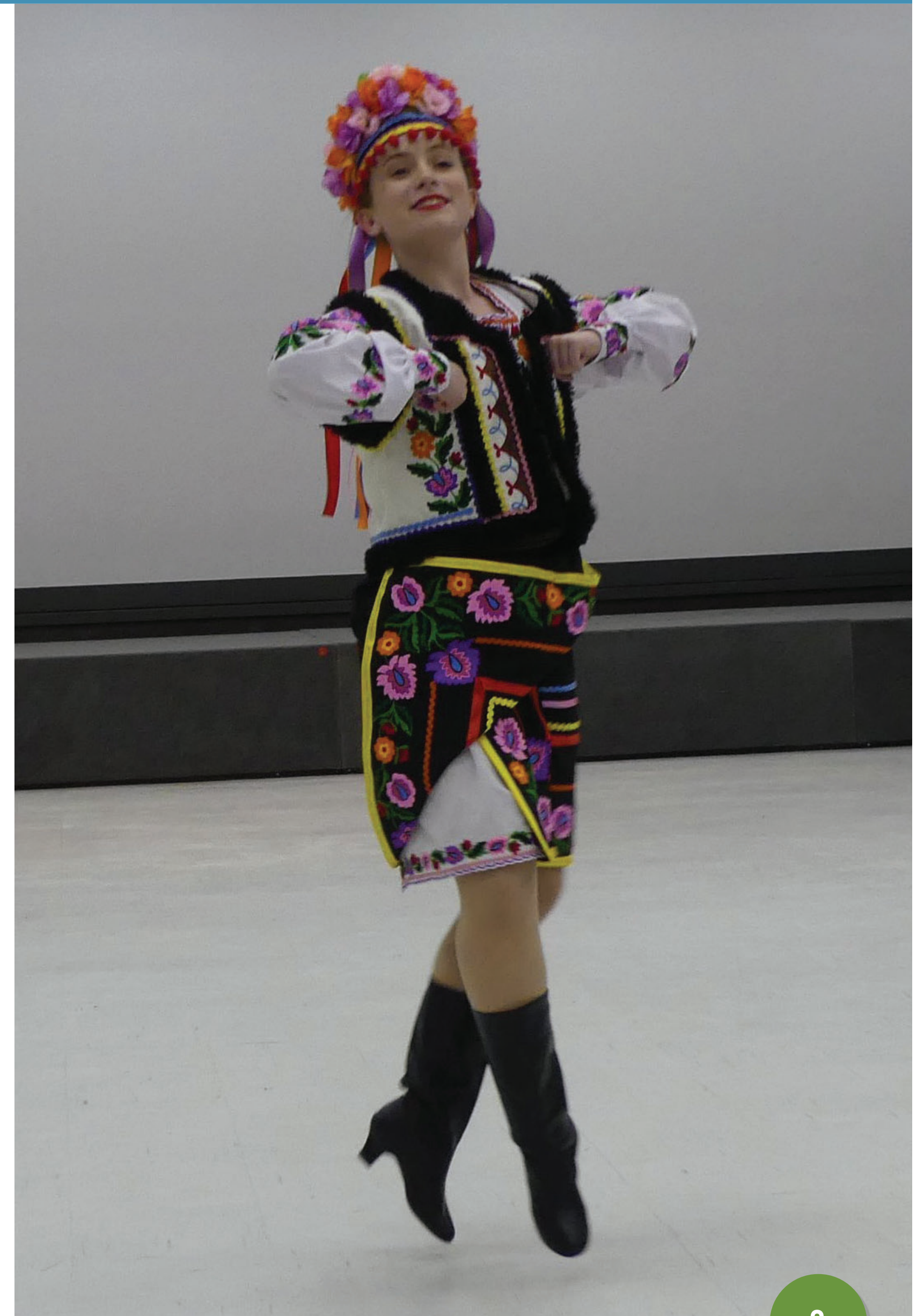




Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 4

01. PROJECT OVERVIEW 8

Introduction 9

Process 9

Overview of Engagement Activities..... 9

02. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT RESULTS.....11

Summary of Engagement Activities12

Resident Survey.....12

Stakeholder Group Survey..... 19

Public/Stakeholder Group Input Sessions22

Council Input Workshop.....22

Youth Input Session23

Key Themes and Observations.....23

03. FACILITY PRIORITIES 25

04. NEXT STEPS AND CONCLUSION32

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The Town of Sexsmith is a community of 2,700 people located in northwestern Alberta. The community has an active population and engaged user groups that participate enthusiastically in recreation, parks and culture. The community is well appointed with several indoor and outdoor facilities, including an ice arena, curling rink, baseball diamonds, tennis courts, horseshoe pits, golf courses, and a destination campground. These recreation facilities and the programs, activities, and events that take place within them provide tangible benefits to the quality of life of residents in the Town of Sexsmith.

Understanding community needs is an important step in ensuring the Town is getting the most out of its investments in recreation, parks and culture facilities. For this reason, the Town commissioned this study. It is envisioned that the findings contained within this report will be considered by the Town as it moves forward with facility development decisions.

Summary of Engagement Activities

A variety of community engagement activities were conducted to develop this report. These activities included two separate surveys (Resident and Stakeholder), facilitated input sessions with members of the public and stakeholder groups, a Council input workshop, a youth input session, and interviews with user groups, staff, and community members. All residents and stakeholders were given the opportunity to speak with the consulting team through an interview and participate in the surveys. In total, the engagement process produced 212 touchpoints with the community. Figure 1 provides a summary of the engagement process.

Figure 1. Summary of Engagement Touchpoints

Engagement Activity	Total Engagement
Resident Survey	145 responses
Stakeholder Survey	17 responses
Public/Stakeholder Group Input Sessions	14 participants
Youth Input Session	26 participants
Council Input Workshop	9 participants
Interviews	1 participant
Total	212 touchpoints

Community Input Opportunities



Facility Priorities

A list of 27 recreation facility priorities for the Town of Sexsmith was developed based on the findings of the community engagement process. These are provided next. Please see Section 3 for expanded descriptions of each facility priority and to review the evaluation matrix.

1. Multiuse Indoor Court and Program Space
2. Fitness Centre
3. Indoor Running/Walking Track
4. Library Expansion
5. Indoor Pool
6. Outdoor Trails and Walking Paths
7. Arena Enhancements
8. Outdoor Court Space
9. Sledding Hill
10. Outdoor Pool/Swimming Area
11. Permanent Space for Gymnastics
12. Outdoor Rink Improvements
13. Expanded Skate Park
14. Dog Park
15. Pump Track/BMX Park
16. Indoor Playground
17. Youth Centre
18. Outdoor Festival/Event Space
19. Outdoor Rectangular Field
20. Enhanced Playgrounds
21. Indoor Ice Surface
22. Martial Arts Space
23. Arts and Culture Space
24. Climbing Wall
25. Nature Parks
26. Beach Volleyball Courts
27. Shade at Spray Park

Key Themes and Observations

The following key themes and observations were developed by the consulting team based on input received through the engagement process. The Town is encouraged to consider these when making future decisions regarding investments into recreation, parks and culture facilities.

Reliance on Third Party Providers – The community relies on third party providers for recreation, parks and culture service provision to a significant extent. There are benefits to this approach, and many of the providers are doing a good job delivering services. However, this situation has led to some negative outcomes, including reduced accessibility for the general public in some cases. In the future, it may be advantageous for the Town to have more control over recreational assets that are supported by the municipality, particularly fitness centre, indoor ice, and gymnasium facilities.

Accessibility – The community felt strongly that more could be done to improve the accessibility of recreation facilities in the community. This included reducing physical barriers for people with reduced mobility, reducing the cost of services for residents, increasing facility access for the general public, and increasing spontaneous use/drop-in activities at facilities to promote more flexible use (e.g. public skating, open gym).

Recreational and Competitive Programs – We heard from the community that competitive programs tend to receive the bulk of available prime times at facilities. Some segments of the community would like to see more of a focus put on recreational programming as opposed to competitive programming.

Multipurpose Space – In general, the community favoured the development of spaces and facilities that could be used for multiple purposes to ensure efficient use of resources and space.

Improving Marketing and Promotions – Respondents to the resident survey and participants of the input sessions indicated that being unaware of opportunities was one of the top barriers to increased participation in recreation activities. The Town may want to consider enhancing its marketing and promotions of recreational opportunities.

Enhancing Recreational Opportunities for Youth and Seniors – Levels of satisfaction for recreational opportunities for youth and seniors was low among respondents to the resident survey. We also heard that more could be done to engage the community's youth in recreation activities. The Town could consider putting more emphasis on youth and seniors' programs moving forward.

Enhancing Maintenance – Participants in the engagement process shared that they would like to see enhanced maintenance of some of the Town's recreational assets. The most frequently identified assets included the outdoor skating rink, trails, parks, and the arena.

Regional Facilities – Some participants in the engagement process identified that there are many excellent facilities available in the region that Town of Sexsmith residents and user groups can access.

Next Steps

In order to move forward with recreation facility development, the following next steps are recommended.

1. Seek approval of the Sexsmith Recreation, Parks and Culture Facility Community Engagement report from Town Council.
2. Administration and Town Council to identify which recreation, parks and culture facility developments are top priorities for further exploration.
3. Determine if proposed facility developments warrant a business case. If so, complete detailed business cases for them.
4. Administration and Town Council to prioritize facility developments based on the results of the business cases and other capital development priorities.

Conclusion

This document summarizes the recreation, parks and culture facility needs of the community based on what was heard through a fulsome engagement process. The Town of Sexsmith can now use this information, combined with other important inputs, to inform the development of sound business cases for new facilities in the future.



1

PROJECT OVERVIEW



Introduction

The Town of Sexsmith is a community of 2,700 people located in northwestern Alberta. The community has an active population and engaged user groups that participate enthusiastically in recreation, parks and culture. The community is well appointed with several indoor and outdoor facilities, including an ice arena, curling rink, baseball diamonds, tennis courts, horseshoe pits, golf courses, and a destination campground. These recreation facilities and the programs, activities, and events that take place within them provide tangible benefits to the quality of life of residents in the Town of Sexsmith.

Understanding community needs is an important step in ensuring the Town is getting the most out of its investments in recreation facilities. For this reason, the Town commissioned this study. It is envisioned that the findings contained within this report will be considered by the Town as it moves forward with facility development decisions.

Process

The project had four phases as described below.



Overview of Engagement Activities

A variety of community engagement activities were conducted to develop this report. These activities included two separate surveys (Resident and Stakeholder), facilitated input sessions with members of the public and stakeholder groups, a Council input workshop, a youth input session, and interviews with user groups, staff, and community members. All residents and stakeholders were given the opportunity to speak with the consulting team through an interview and participate in the surveys. The following list is an overview of the engagement activities.

1. Surveys Administered:

- Sexsmith Resident Survey (145 responses)
- Sexsmith Stakeholder Survey (17 responses)

2. Meetings Conducted:

- Committee Project Meetings
Dates: Sept. 21, Oct. 6, Dec. 2, 2021
Purpose: Project management and staff input.
- Council Input Workshop
Date: Oct. 26, 2021
Purpose: Inform Council of the process and collect input.
- Public/Stakeholder Group Input Sessions (3 separate sessions)
Dates: Oct. 27 and Oct. 28, 2021
Purpose: Inform participants of the process and collect input.
- Youth Input Session
Date: Oct. 29, 2021
Purpose: Inform participants of the process and collect input.

3. Recreation Stakeholder Groups Consulted (through stakeholder survey, input sessions, and interviews):

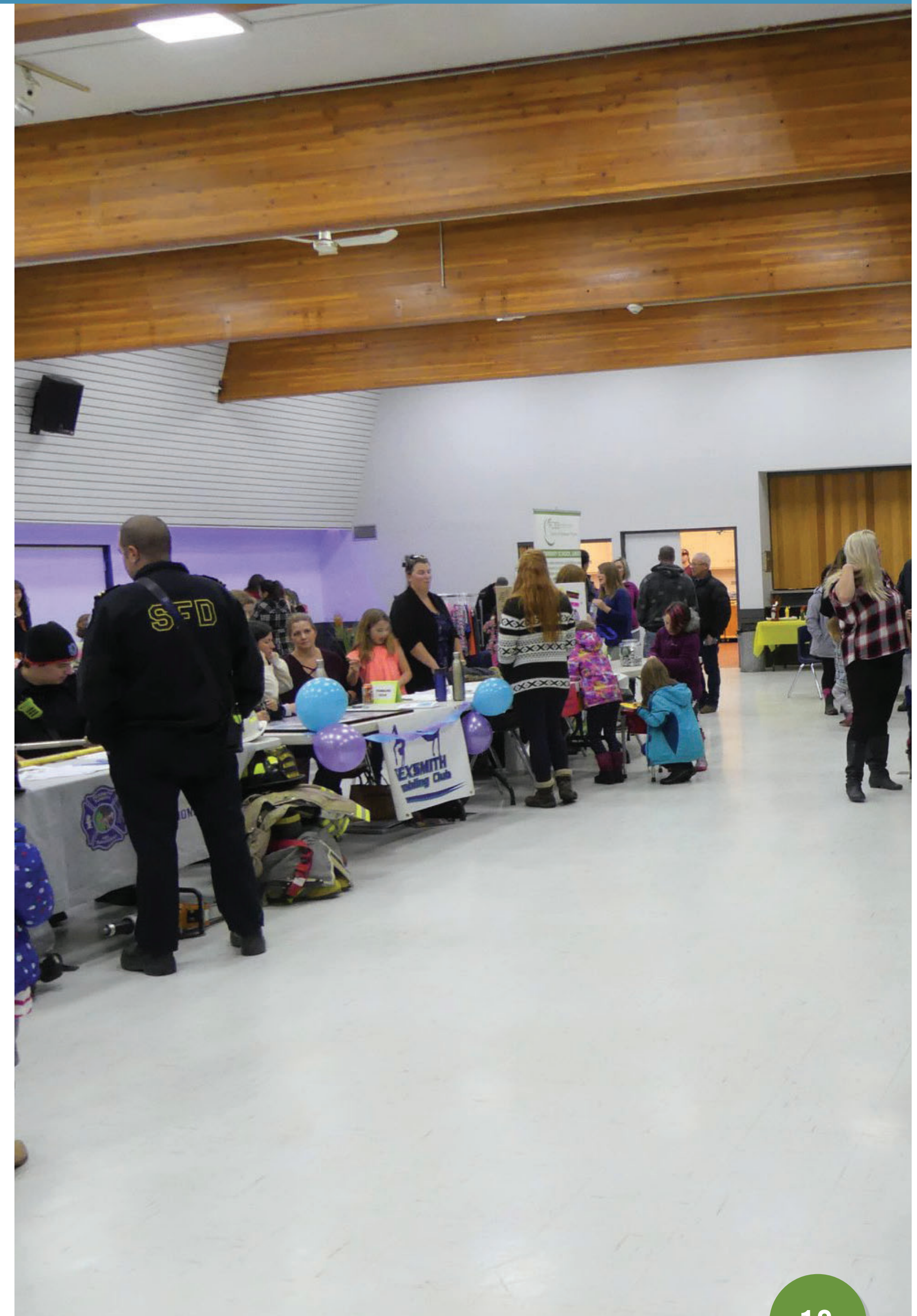
- a. Invites were sent out by the Town to all known recreation stakeholder groups in Sexsmith. 22 groups chose to participate in the engagement process, including representatives of the following organizations:

Local Stakeholder Groups:

1. Sexsmith Minor Hockey
2. Sexsmith Minor Soccer Association
3. Sexsmith Football Club
4. Sexsmith Tumbling Club
5. Sexsmith Child Development Centre
6. Sexsmith 4-H Multi Club
7. Sexsmith FCSS
8. Sexsmith Wellness Coalition
9. Sexsmith Farmers' Market
10. Sexsmith and District Agricultural Society
11. Friends of the Shannon Library Society
12. CNG Sports
13. Babies' Best Start
14. A Wilder Calm
15. Adult Pickleball
16. Adult Volleyball
17. Alberta Health Services
18. Grande Prairie Regional Sport Connection
19. Sexsmith Catholic Church

Local Businesses:

20. Nell's Yoga
21. Embrace It Fitness
22. Sexsmith Physiotherapy



2

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT RESULTS



Summary of Engagement Activities

Input from Sexsmith residents, stakeholder groups, youth, and Town Council was gathered from October 12 to November 9, 2021. In total, the engagement process produced 212 touchpoints with the community. Figure 1 provides a summary of the engagement process.

Figure 1. Summary of Engagement Touchpoints

Engagement Activity	Total Engagement
Resident Survey	145 responses
Stakeholder Survey	17 responses
Public/Stakeholder Group Input Sessions	14 participants
Youth Input Session	26 participants
Council Input Workshop	9 participants
Interviews	1 participant
Total	212 touchpoints

- The main research questions we asked the community for input on were:
1. Are there any indoor and/or outdoor recreation programs that are currently limited or cannot be offered in Sexsmith due to facility limitations?
 2. What are the top recreation facilities needed to meet the needs of your community now and into the future?

The remainder of this section summarizes the key findings from the input received.

Community Input Opportunities



Resident Survey

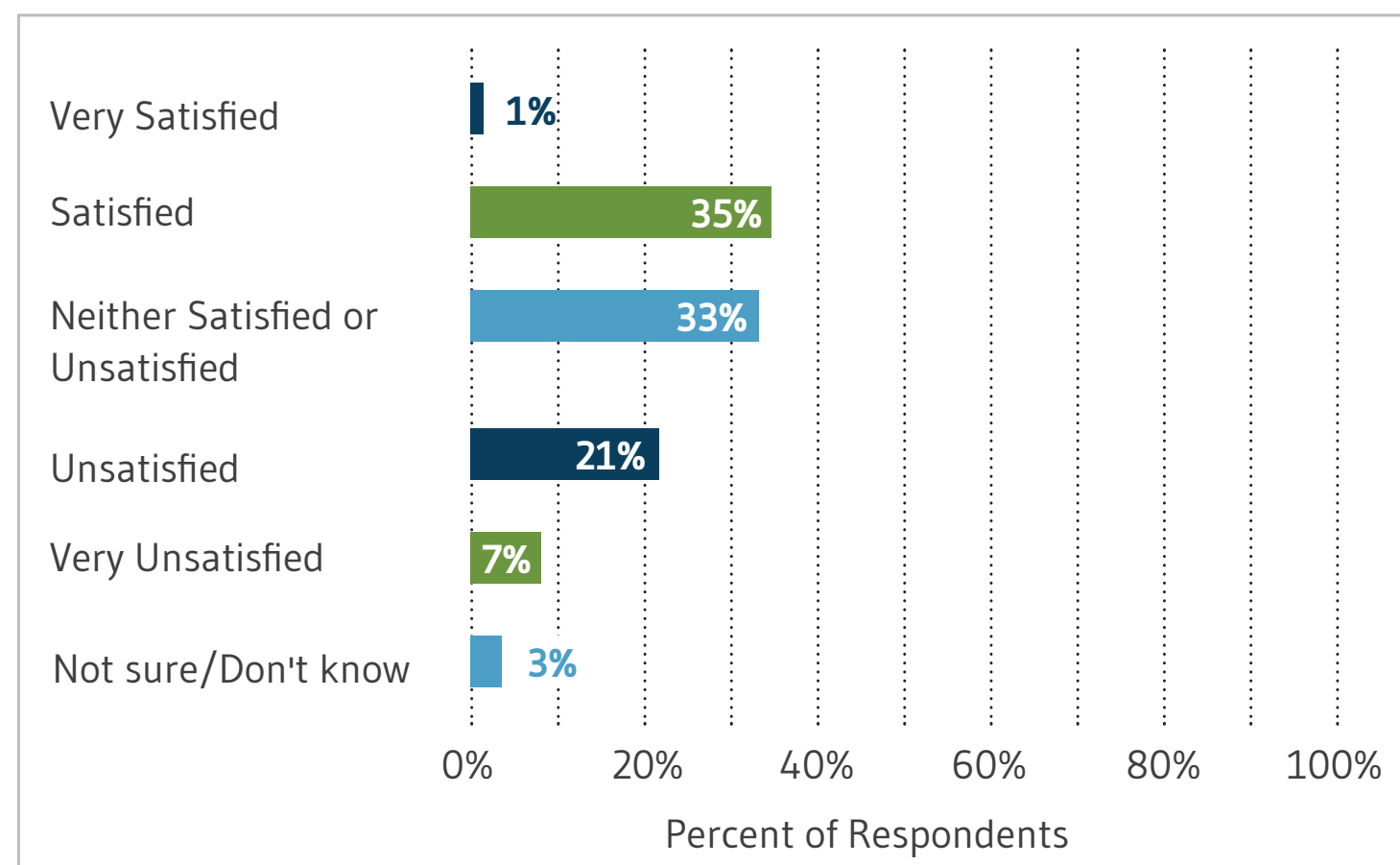
The resident survey was conducted between October 12th and November 9th, 2021. The objective of the resident survey was to gain a deeper understanding of residents' needs for recreation, parks and culture facilities in the Town of Sexsmith. The survey was promoted through the municipal website and event calendar, posters in the community, social media posts, and the local newspaper.

In total, 145 responses were received. 86% of respondents indicated that they reside in the Town of Sexsmith. 12% of respondents said they reside in the County of Grande Prairie. The remaining 2% preferred not to say or selected "Other". 79% of respondents were female, whereas 21% were male. Respondents were primarily between the ages of 30-39 (45%) and 40-49 (25%). The household composition of those who responded indicated a strong response from young families.

Indoor Recreation Facilities

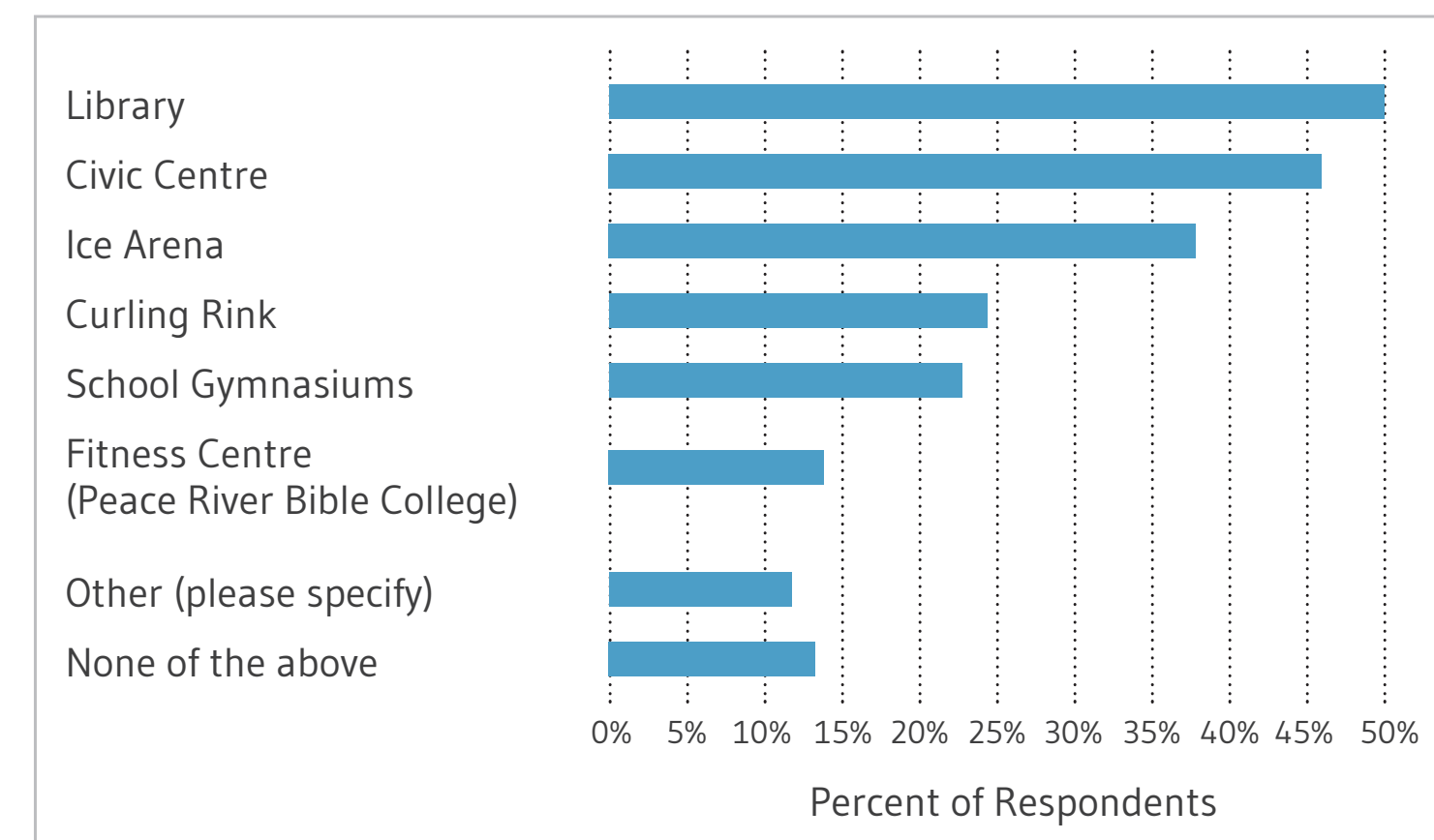
1. Respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with indoor recreation facilities in their community. 35% were satisfied, 33% were neither satisfied or unsatisfied, 21% were unsatisfied, 8% were very unsatisfied, and 1% were very satisfied.

Question: Please rate your level of satisfaction with indoor recreation facilities in your community.



2. Respondents currently use the Library (51%), Civic Centre (46%), Ice Arena (38%), Curling Rink (25%), and School Gymnasiums (22%) most frequently.*

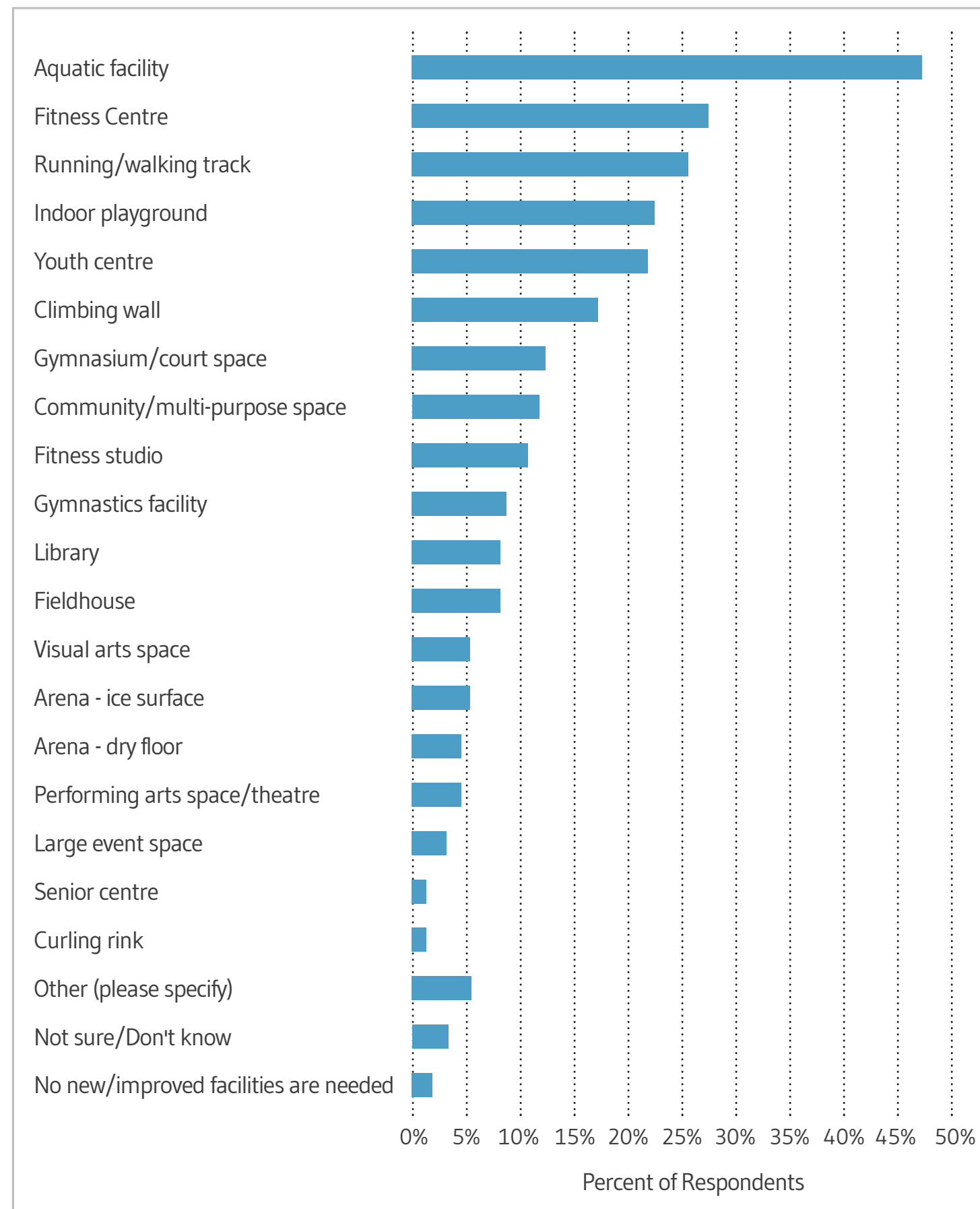
Question: Please indicate which indoor recreation facilities, if any, you currently use in the Town of Sexsmith. Please select all that apply.



3. When asked to identify improvements to existing indoor recreation facilities to better meet the needs of residents, respondents identified the following most often:
 - Providing better public access to fitness centre facilities. Many respondents indicated a lack of access to the PRBI facility.
 - Expanding the library
 - Establishing a permanent space for gymnastics
 - Allowing more public access to facilities
 - Upgrading the arena

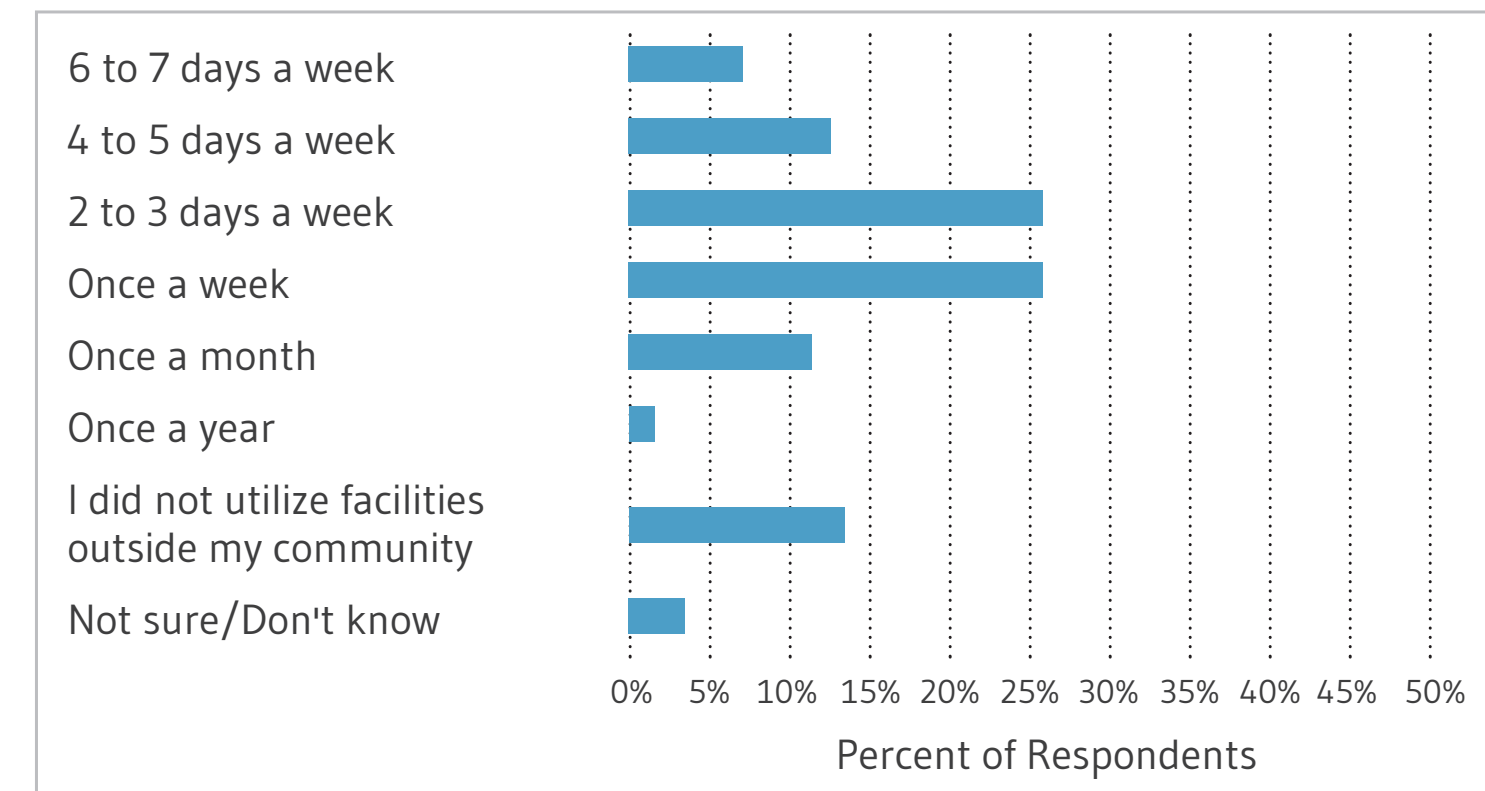
4. In terms of new indoor facilities, respondents were most in favour of an aquatic facility (48%), fitness centre (28%), running/walking track (26%), indoor playground (23%), and a youth centre (22%).*

Question: What, if any, new indoor recreation facilities are most needed to meet the needs of residents in your community? Please select up to three options.



5. Respondents were asked how often they travelled outside the Town of Sexsmith to access indoor recreation facilities. The most common responses included once a week (26%), 2 to 3 days a week (26%), I did not utilize facilities outside my community (13%), and 4 to 5 days a week (13%).

Question: Pre-COVID, how often did you travel outside the Town of Sexsmith to access indoor recreation facilities?



6. When asked which indoor recreation facilities respondents accessed outside the Town of Sexsmith, respondents identified the following most frequently:

- Eastlink Centre
- Crosslink County Sportsplex
- Swimming pools (Grande Prairie, Beaverlodge, Spirit River)
- Reach Centre
- Fitness centres (private and public)

7. Respondents were asked if there are indoor programs that are currently limited or cannot be offered in Sexsmith due to facility limitations. The most common responses included:

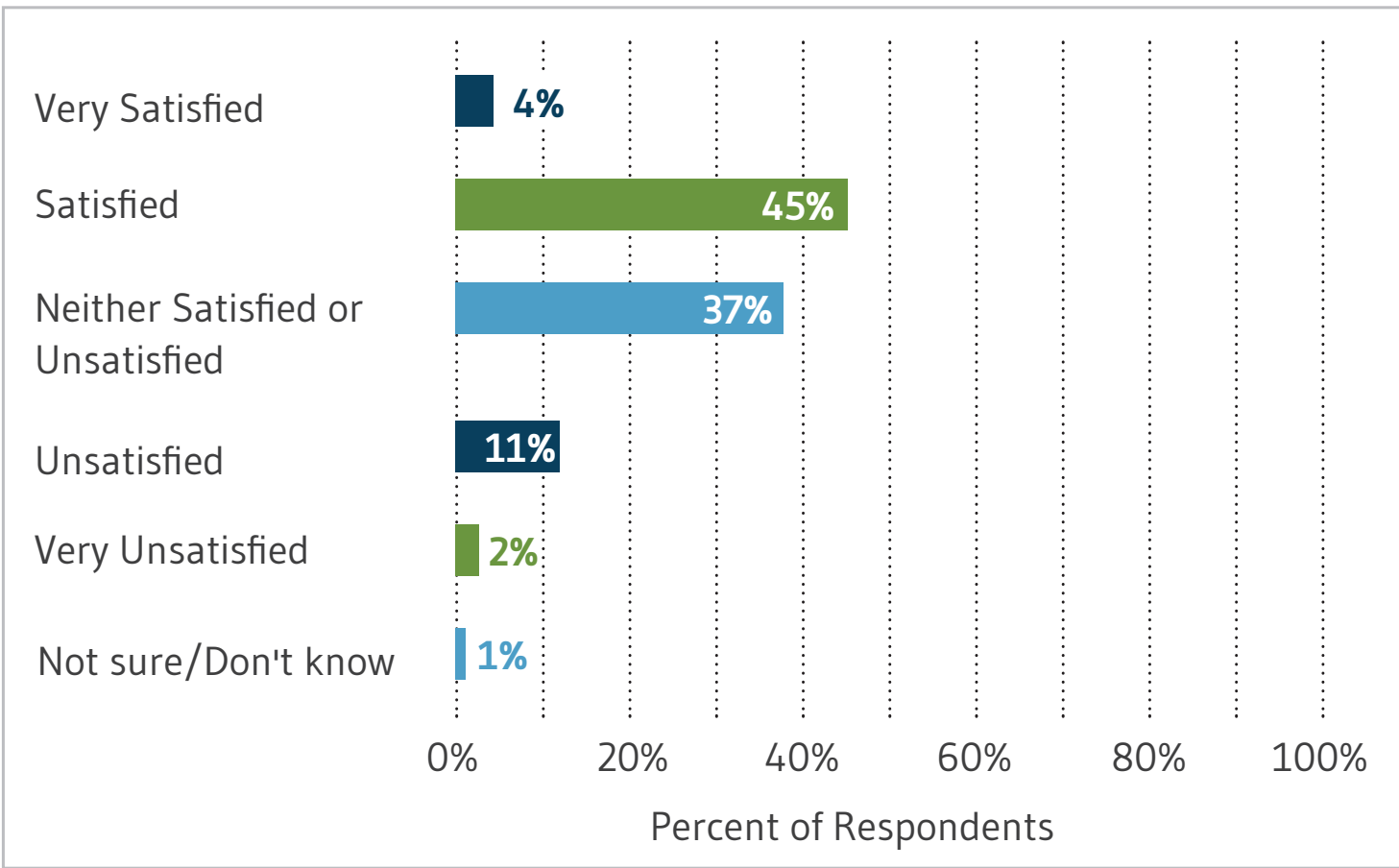
- Swimming programs
- Fitness programs
- Gymnastics programs
- Public gymnasium programs (e.g. basketball, volleyball, badminton, pickleball)

*Multiple responses were accepted for these questions, which is why the totals add up to more than 100%.

Outdoor Recreation Facilities

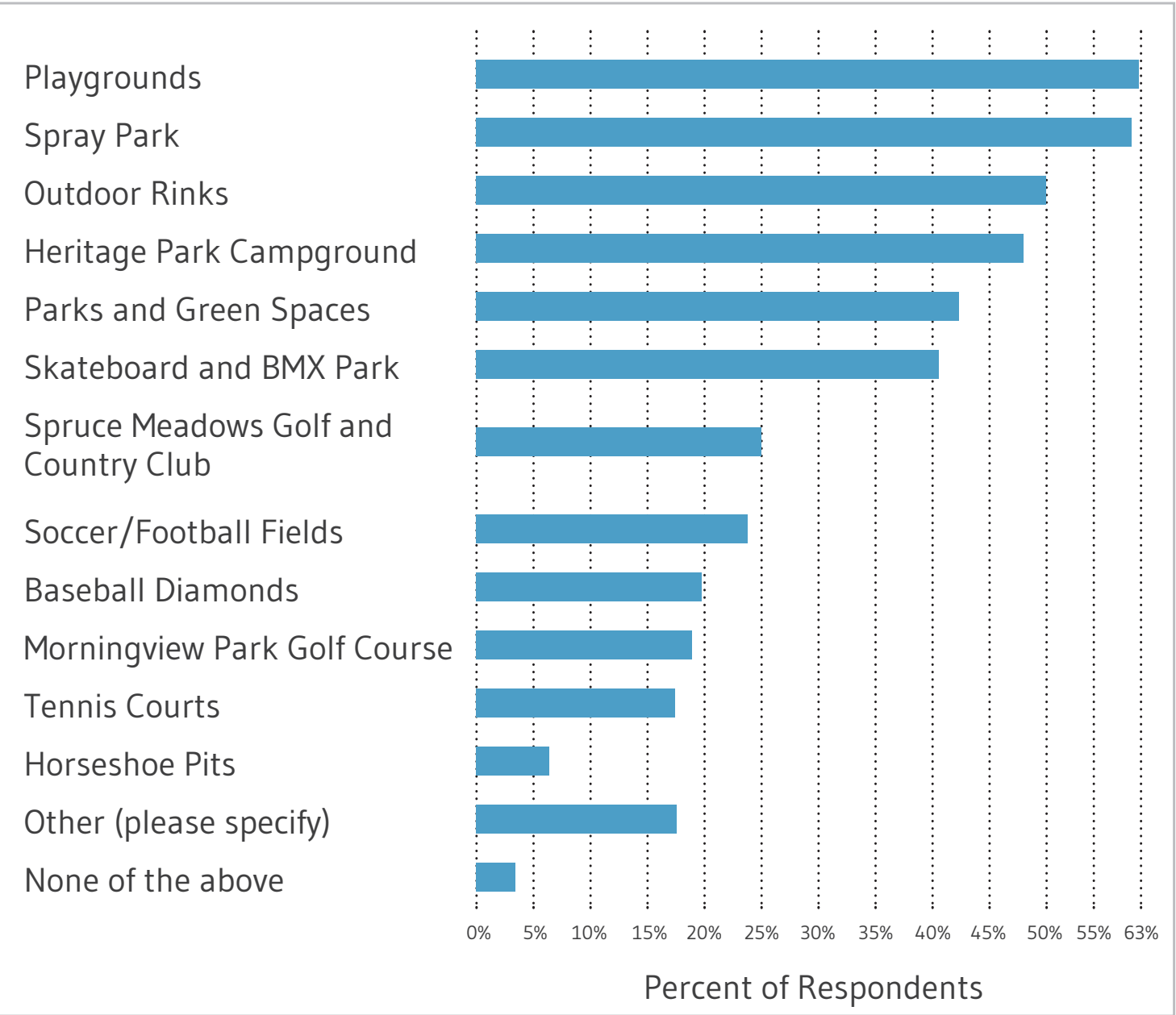
1. Respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with outdoor recreation facilities in their community. 45% were satisfied, 37% were neither satisfied or unsatisfied, 11% were unsatisfied, 4% were very satisfied and 1% were very unsatisfied.

Question: Please rate your level of satisfaction with outdoor recreation facilities in your community.



2. Respondents currently use playgrounds (63%), the spray park (62%), outdoor rinks (51%), Heritage Park Campground (48%), parks and green spaces (43%), and the skateboard and BMX park (40%) most frequently.*

Question: Please indicate which outdoor recreation facilities, if any, you currently use in the Town of Sexsmith. Please select all that apply.

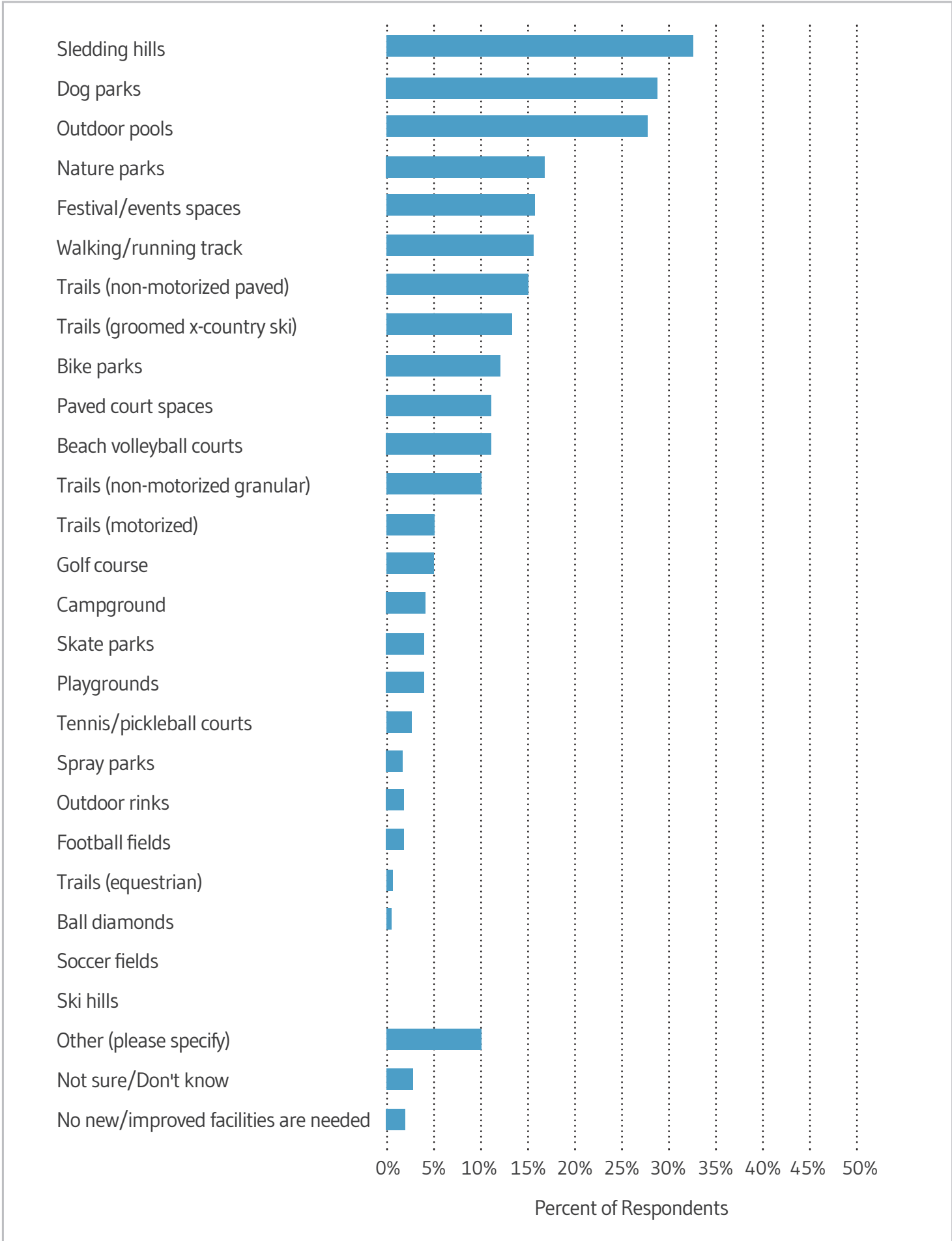


3. When asked to identify improvements to existing outdoor recreation facilities to better meet the needs of residents, respondents identified the following most often:

- Expanded and enhanced walking paths and trails
- Updated and enhanced playgrounds
- Enhancements to the skate park
- Better maintenance of the mini golf course
- Adding a dog park
- Better maintenance of outdoor rinks

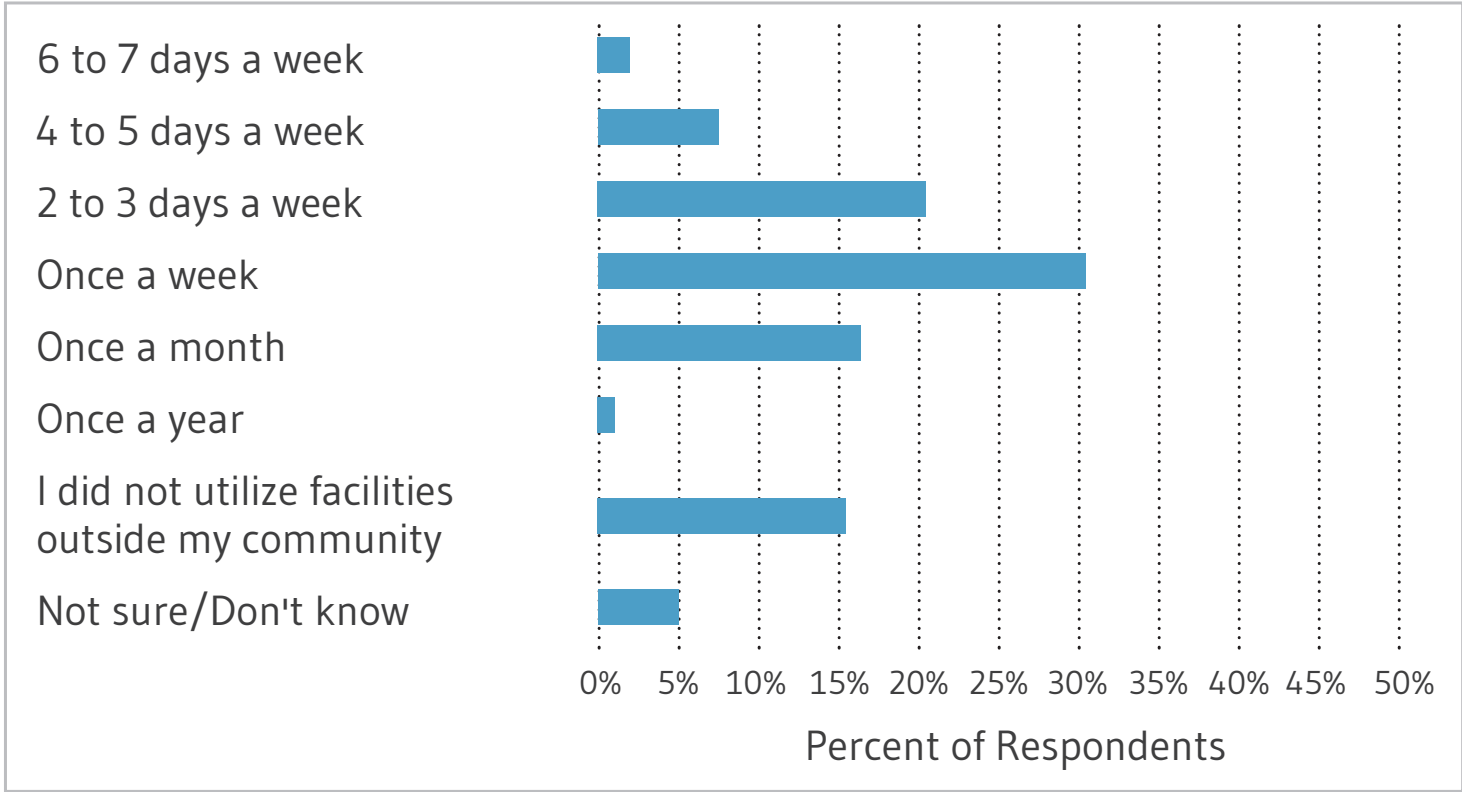
4. In terms of new outdoor facilities, respondents were most in favour of trails (44% combined selection), sledding hills (33%), dog parks (29%), and outdoor pools (28%).*

Question: What, if any, new outdoor recreation facilities are most needed to meet the needs of residents in your community? Please select up to three options.



5. Respondents were asked how often they travelled outside the Town of Sexsmith to access outdoor recreation facilities. The most common responses included once a week (31%), 2 to 3 days a week (21%), once a month (16%), and I did not utilize facilities outside my community (16%).

Question: Pre-COVID, how often did you travel outside the Town of Sexsmith to access outdoor recreation facilities?



6. When asked which outdoor recreation facilities respondents accessed outside the Town of Sexsmith, respondents identified the following most frequently:

- Trails
- Muskoseepi Park
- Outdoor pools and swimming areas
- Parks

7. Respondents were asked if there are outdoor programs that are currently limited or cannot be offered in Sexsmith due to facility limitations. The most common responses included:

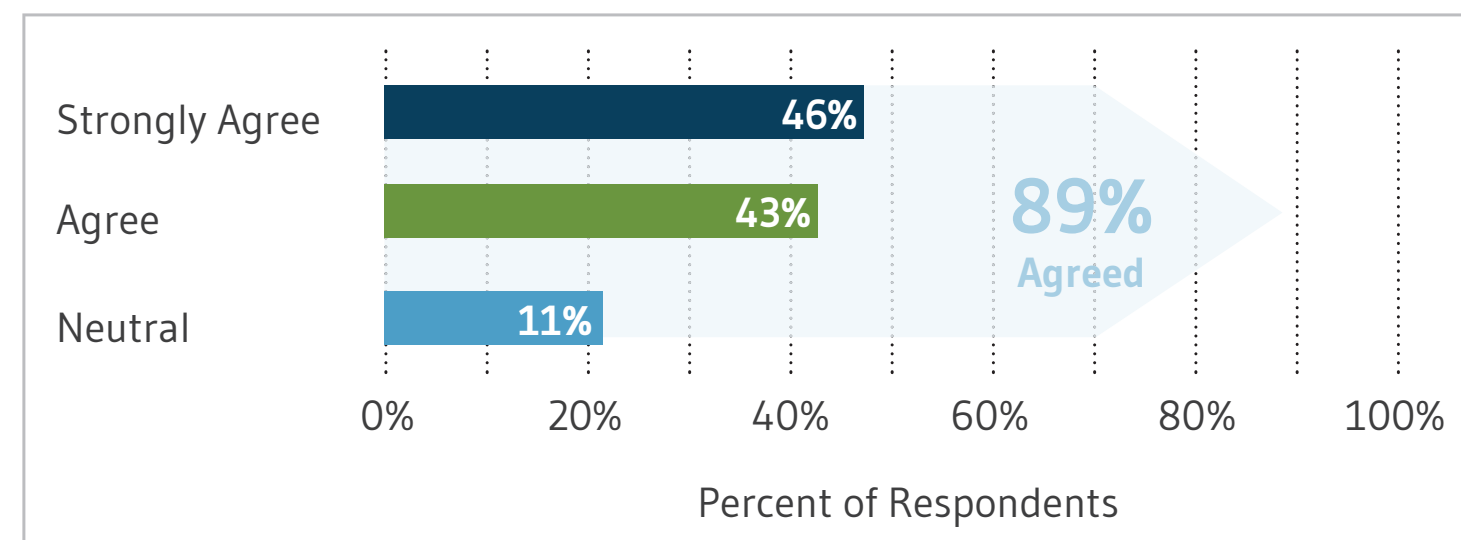
- Swimming programs
- Cross country skiing
- Trail activities
- Sledding activities
- Biking programs (e.g. BMX, trail riding)
- Dog park

**Multiple responses were accepted for these questions, which is why the totals add up to more than 100%.*

Level of Satisfaction, Barriers, and Support for Recreation

1. A majority of respondents agreed that recreation opportunities in their community are important to their quality of life (89%). 11% of respondents were neutral toward the statement and no respondent disagreed.

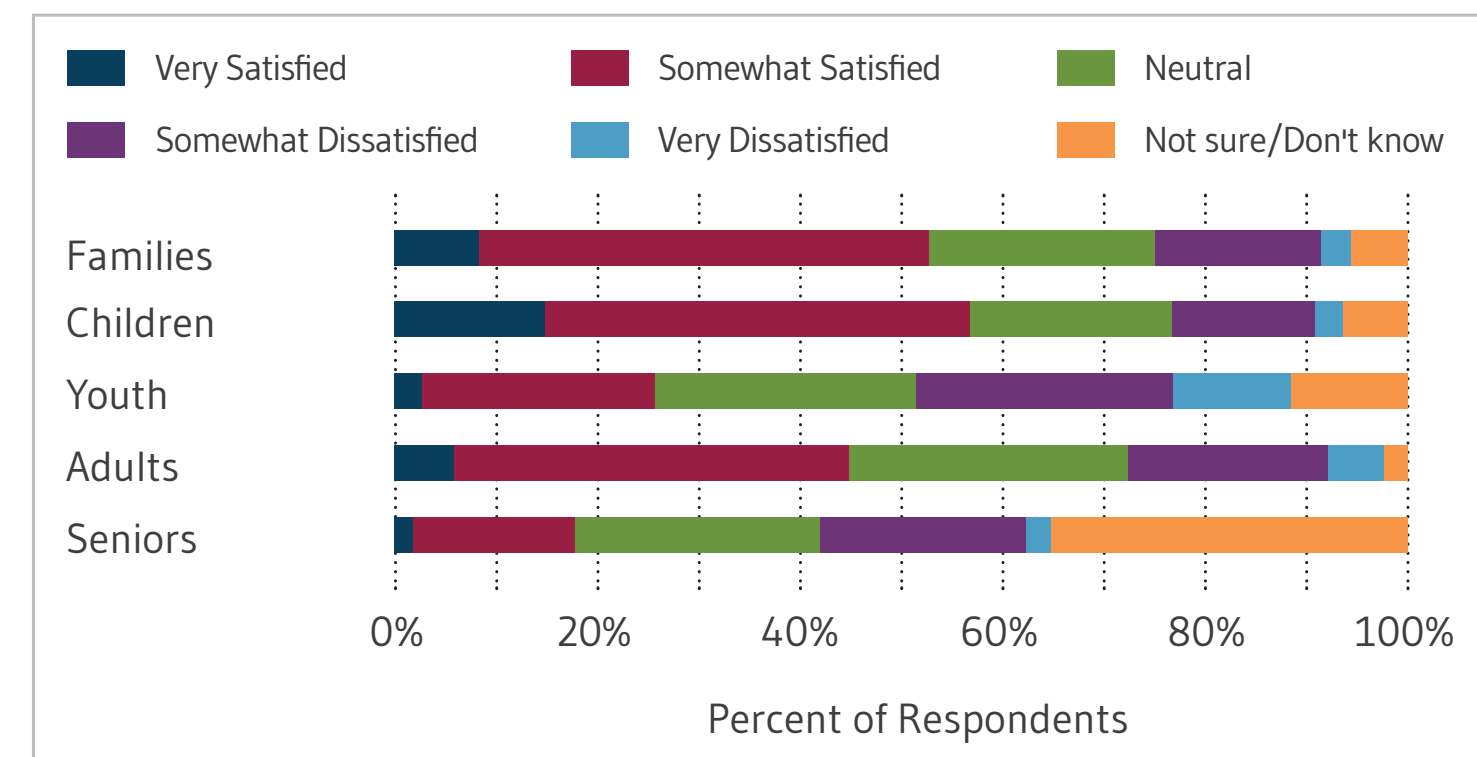
**Question: Please rate your level of agreement with the following statement:
Recreation opportunities in my community are important to my quality of life.**



A majority of respondents agreed that recreation opportunities in their community are important to their quality of life.

2. Respondents were most satisfied with recreational opportunities for children (57%), families (53%), and adults (45%). Respondents were least satisfied with recreational opportunities for youth (38%) and seniors (23%).

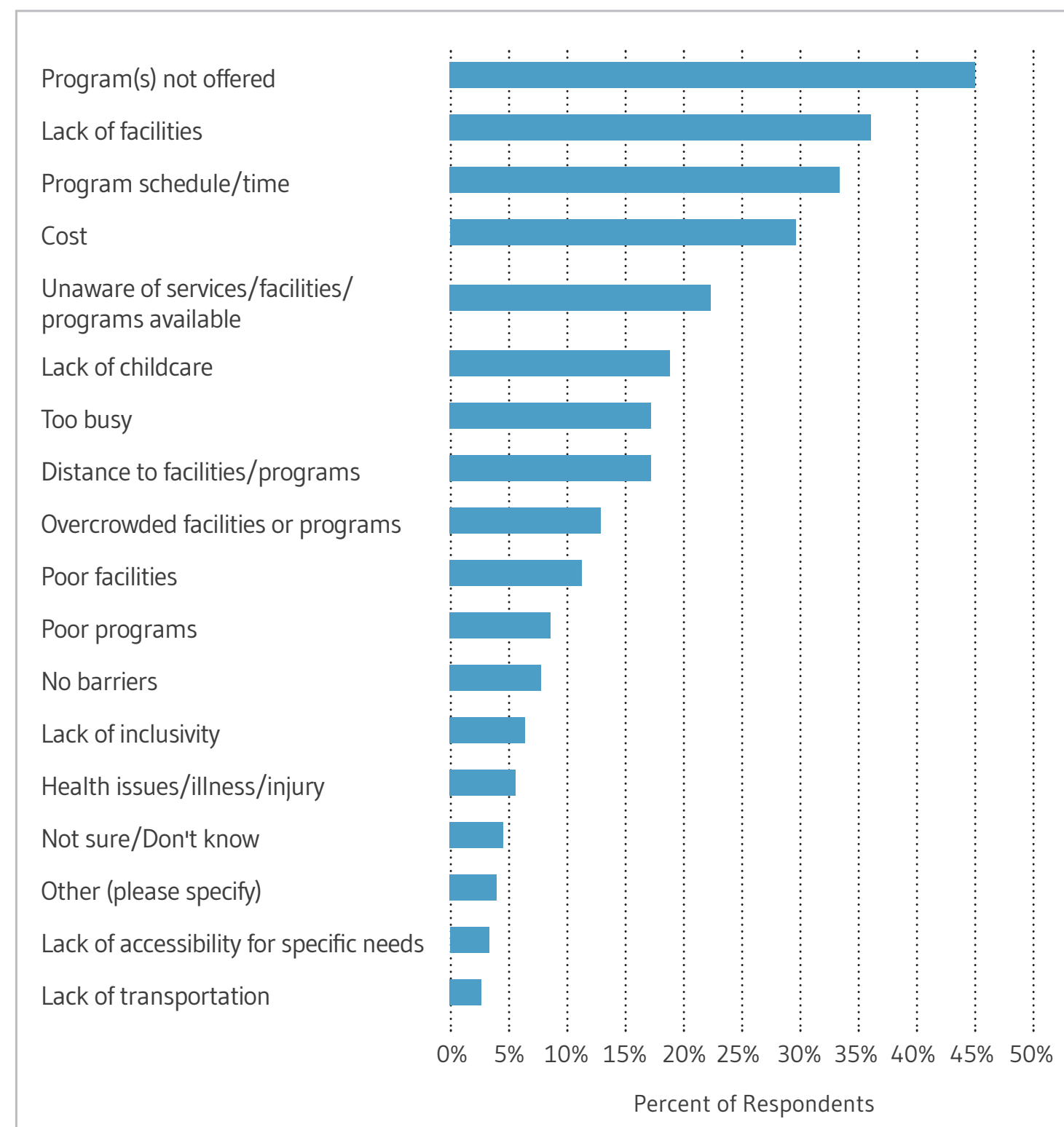
Question: Overall, how satisfied are you with recreation opportunities for the following age categories in your community?



Respondents were least satisfied with recreational opportunities for youth and seniors.

3. The top barriers to participating in recreation activities more often were programs not offered (45%), lack of facilities (36%), program schedule/time (29%), cost (25%), and unaware of services/facilities/programs available (22%).*

Question: What, if anything, prevents you from participating in recreation activities more often? Please select all that apply.



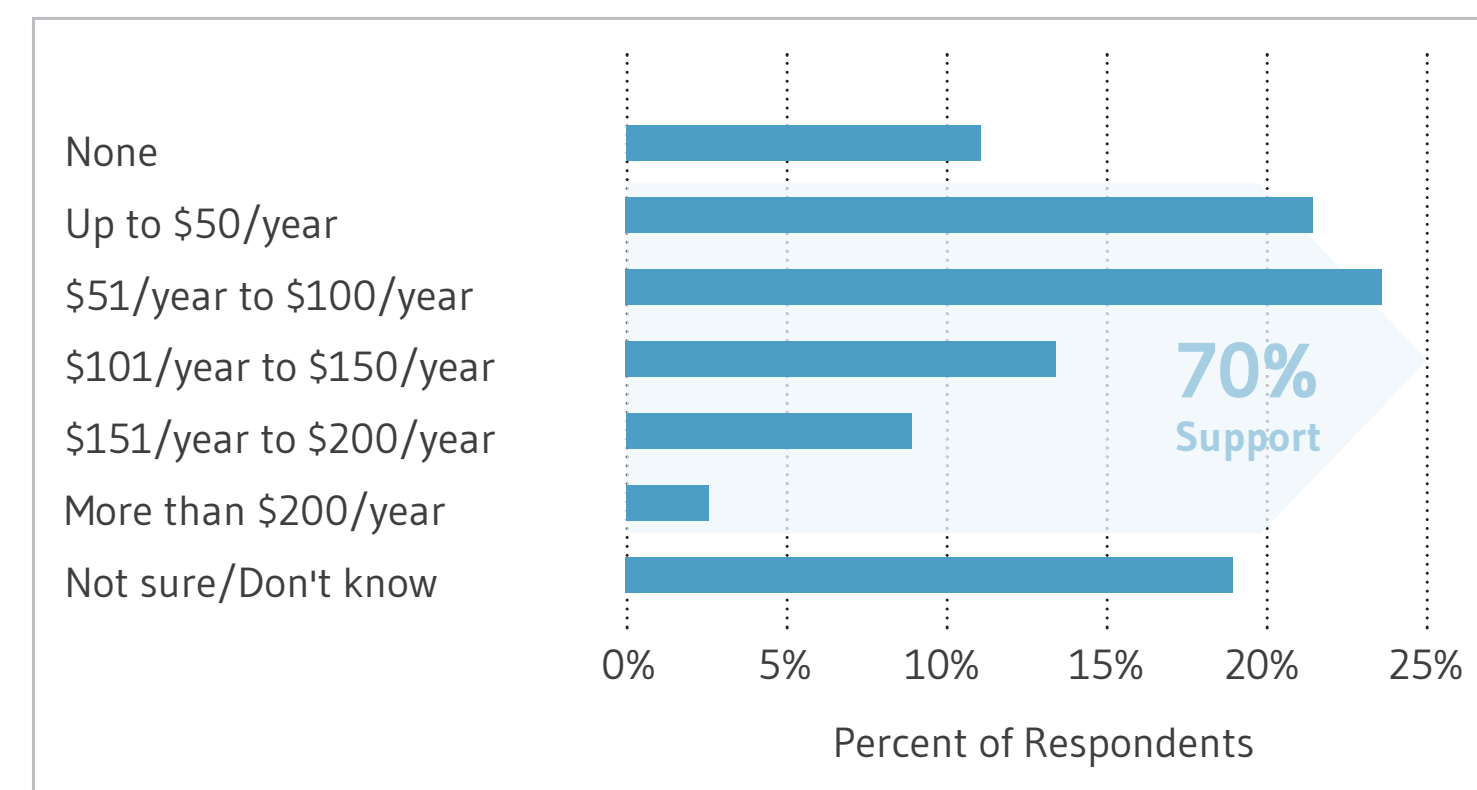
The top barriers to participating in recreation activities more often were programs not offered, lack of facilities, program schedule/time, and cost.

4. Respondents were asked what their top priority would be if only one improvement could be made to indoor and/or outdoor recreation facilities in Sexsmith. The following were the most frequent responses:

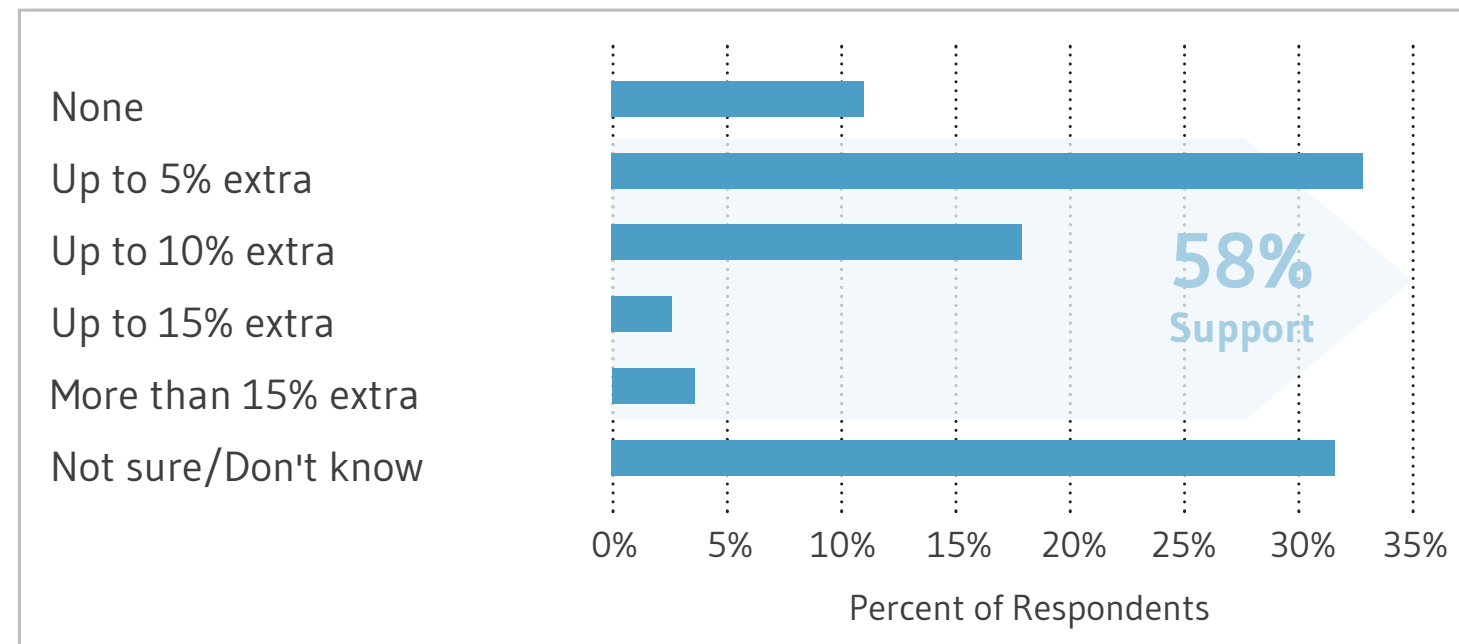
- More trails
- An indoor pool
- A public gymnasium
- Increased programming at facilities
- No improvements are needed
- Dedicated gymnastics space
- Expanded library
- Dog park
- Increased advertising and promotions

5. 70% of respondents indicated that they would support some level of increase to property taxes to better meet recreation facility needs in their community. 58% of respondents indicated support for increased user fees to better meet recreation facility needs.

Question: How much of an increase in property taxes would you support to better meet recreation facility needs in your community?



Question: How much of an increase in user fees would you support to better meet recreation facility needs in your community?



**Multiple responses were accepted for these questions, which is why the totals add up to more than 100%.*

Stakeholder Group Survey

An online survey of stakeholder groups in Sexsmith was conducted between October 12 and November 9, 2021. The objective of the stakeholder group survey was to gain a deeper understanding of stakeholder perspectives in relation to recreation facility needs in the community. The Town promoted the survey through its municipal website, social media accounts, and by emails to known stakeholder contacts. In total, 17 responses were received. One-on-one interviews were also made available to identified stakeholders throughout the engagement process. One interview was completed.

Findings from the Stakeholder Group Survey

1. Respondents described facility related barriers their organizations experience in meeting the needs of their participants. The quotes below describe some of these barriers further.

“During the winter months, we do not have a suitable indoor play space for children.”

“There is not enough indoor space. We need gymnasium space during weekdays, evenings, and weekends to host programs for all ages.”

“There is not a space large enough to house the Christmas Market, so it is run in two different buildings.”

“Ice times are limited at the arena. We have to reach out to other facilities to get enough ice time to run our programs.”

“We are limited in terms of field space because we share the field with other groups, like football.”

“Lack of space at the library means we cannot offer more programs.”

“There are logistical and scheduling issues that arise from sharing the Civic Centre with so many user groups and events.”

2. Respondents also identified new facilities and upgrades to existing facilities that are needed to better serve their organization and their participants. The quotes below describe these further.

“We need a multipurpose facility that has indoor courts, gym equipment, walking space, and multipurpose rooms.”

“A gymnasium and indoor walking track would be good.”

“A space large enough to house the Christmas Market would be absolutely grand.”

“A new indoor field facility would serve us well. As would lighting on outdoor field space.”

“A larger, dedicated field for soccer programs would be good. We need more space to grow our programs.”

“Increased space at the library for programs, storage, and meetings.”

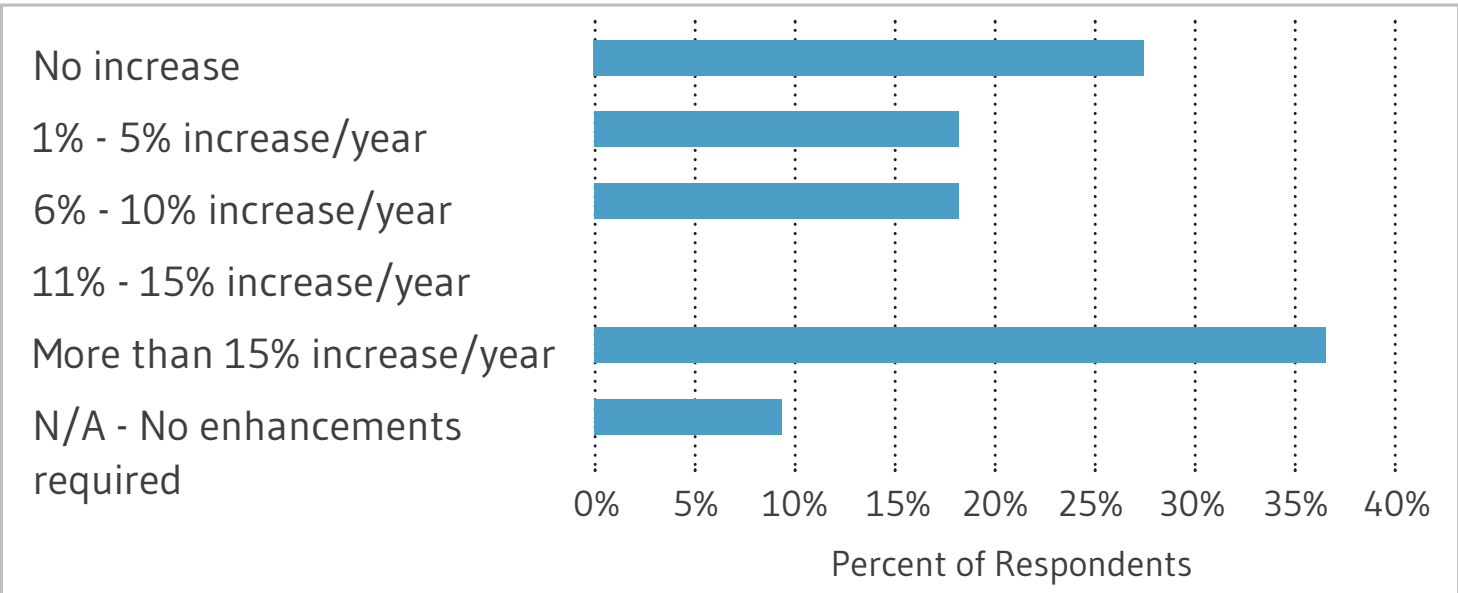
“A sports facility with space for a dedicated gymnasium. Having to move our equipment in and out of storage wears it out faster and taxes the volunteers.”

“A small outdoor event space in a forested area with a gazebo, fire pit, and benches.”

“A second ice surface.”

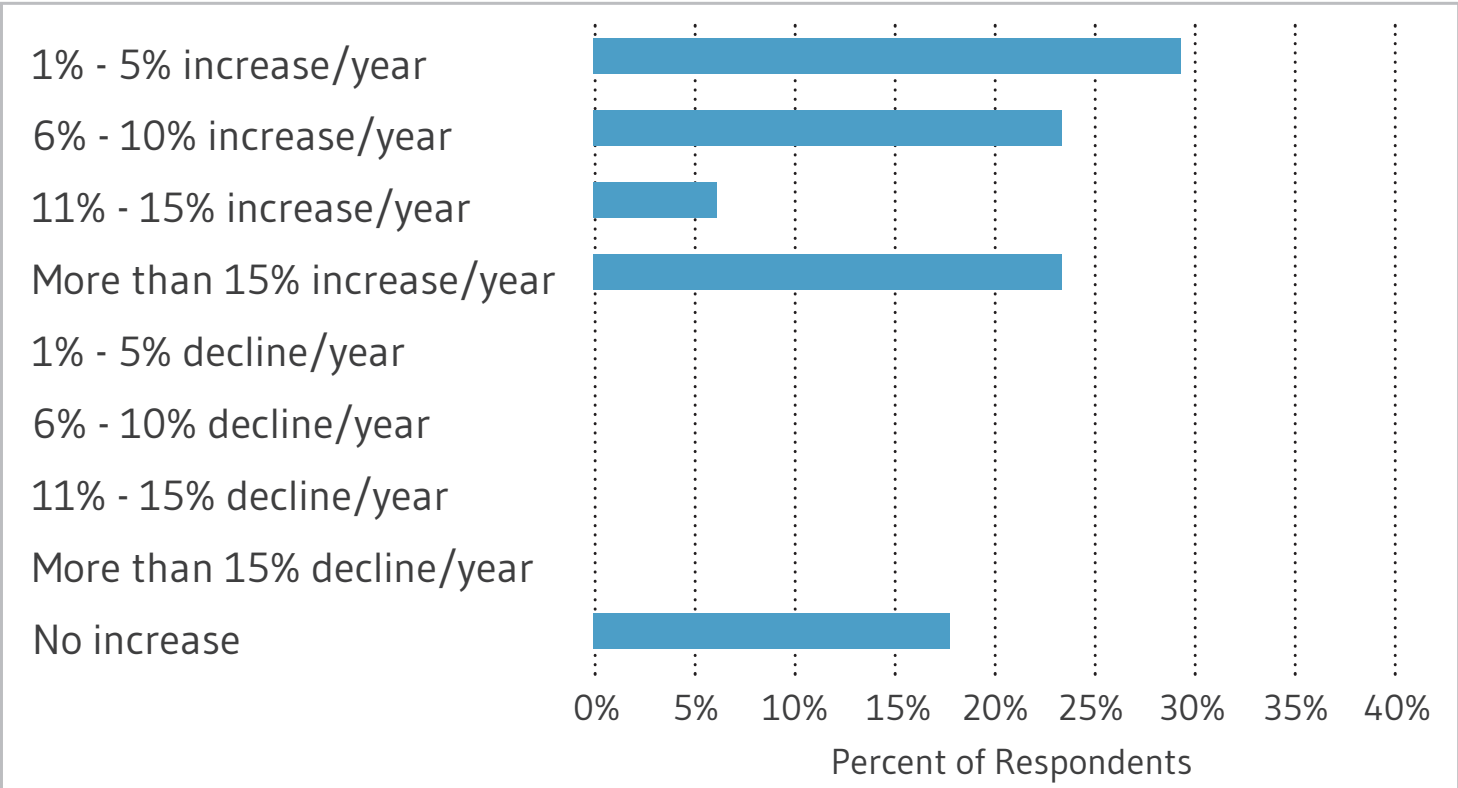
3. Three quarters of organizations that responded to the survey are willing to pay increased user fees for access to enhanced facilities.

Question: Would your organization be willing to pay increased user fees in order to utilize enhanced facilities?



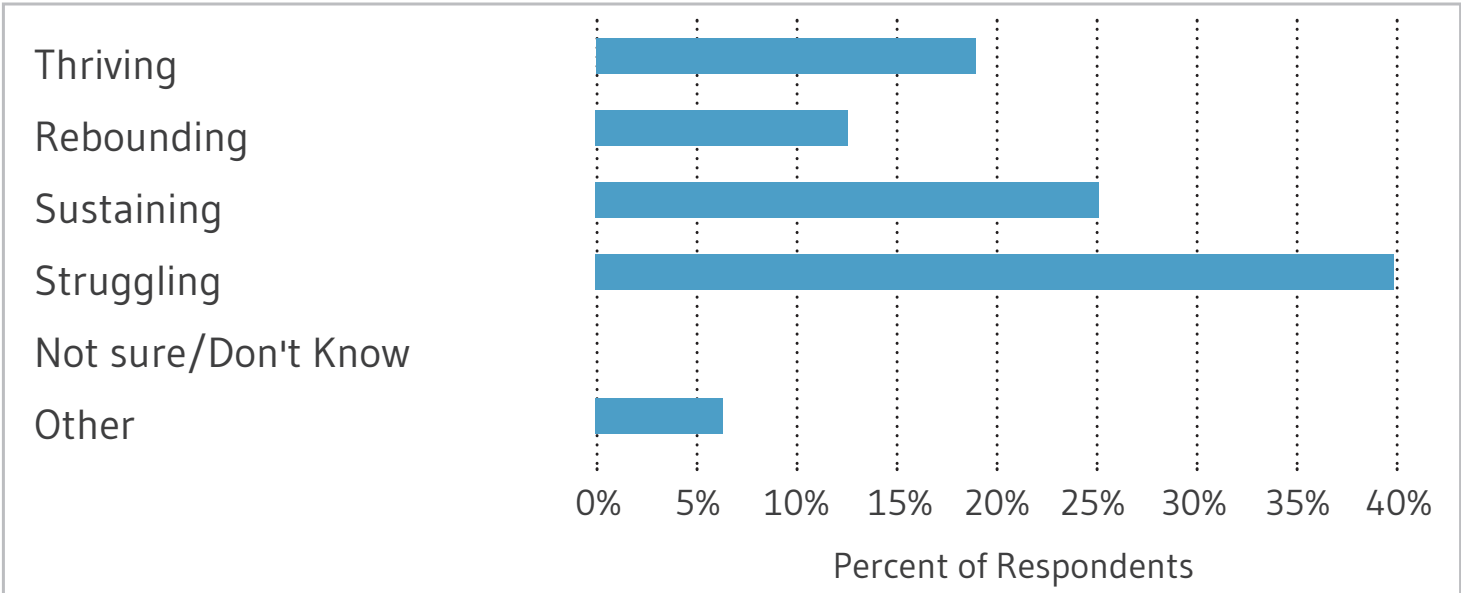
4. 82% of stakeholder groups that responded project their annual participation base to grow over the next 5 years. Three groups anticipate no increase in participation, and none anticipate a decline.

Question: What are your average annual participant base growth projections over the next 5 years?



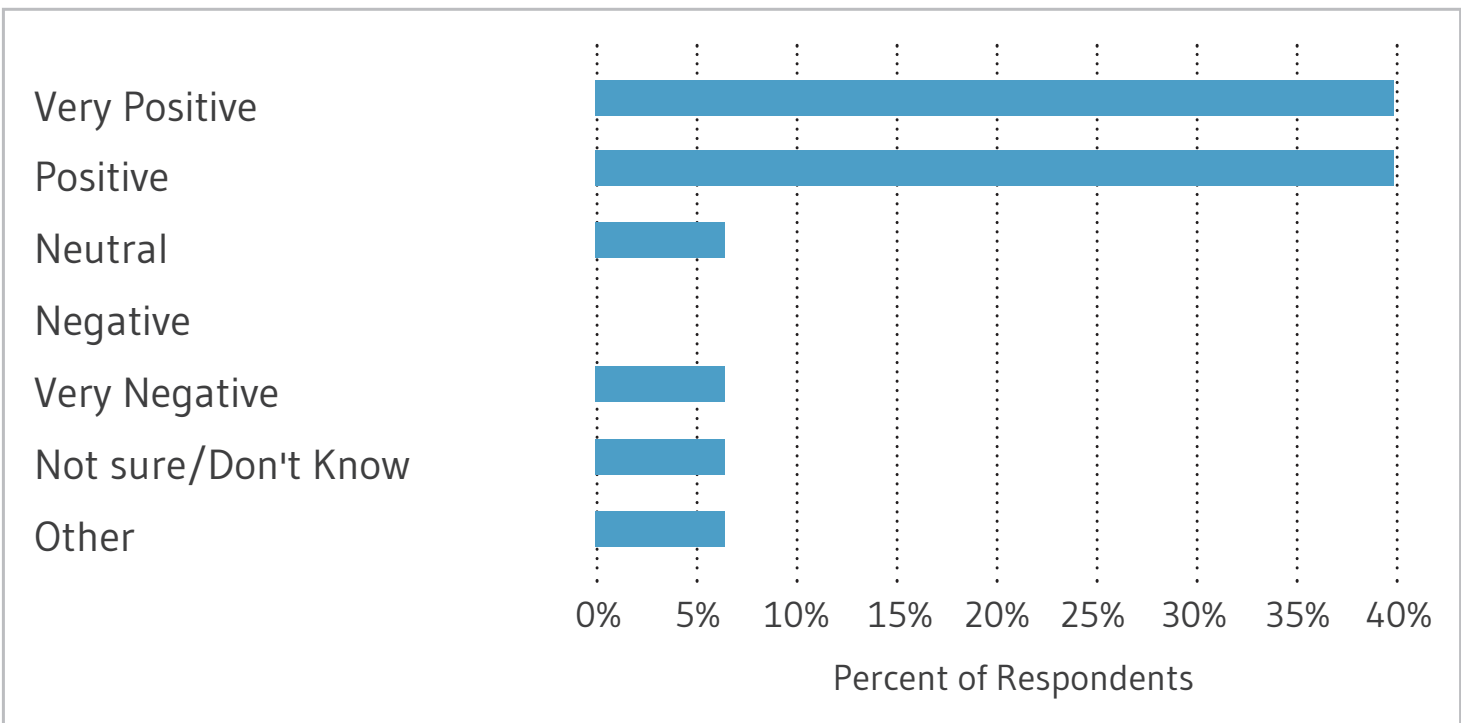
5. 44% of respondents felt that their organization was struggling due to the impacts of COVID-19. 25% felt that they were sustaining, 19% felt they were thriving, and 13% felt that they were rebounding.

Question: Considering the impacts of COVID-19, how do you feel your organization is currently doing?



6. The majority of respondents felt very positive (40%) or positive (40%) about the future outlook of their organizations.

Question: Over the next 12 months, how do you feel about the future outlook of your organization?



Public/Stakeholder Group Input Sessions

Three Public/Stakeholder Group Input Sessions were hosted on October 27 and 28, 2021. 14 participants from the community participated in the sessions.

Facility Limitations

Participants were asked to consider programs that are currently limited or cannot be offered in Sexsmith due to facility limitations. The following summarizes the input received.

Indoor Facility Limitations

- The local tumbling program is limited due to a lack of a dedicated and permanent space.
- Fitness programs and activities are difficult to access due to inconvenient hours at the existing facility. They are also limited by a lack of a walking track and multipurpose activity space.
- Court sports are limited by a lack of space (e.g. basketball, pickleball, racquetball, handball).
- Boxing programs cannot be offered locally due to a lack of a facility.
- Aquatic programs cannot be offered because there is no pool.
- Programs at the Library could be expanded with more space, particularly preschool and after school programming.
- There is a lack of gallery space to showcase local art.

Outdoor Facility Limitations

- The skatepark could be expanded to support more activity.
- Football programs could be improved with enhancements to the football field, including resurfacing (preferably with artificial turf), lighting, and trees to block the wind.
- Court-based activities could be improved with additional basketball courts, lighting, and lining to support multiple activities (e.g. pickleball).
- Trail-based activity could be enhanced with grooming in the winter for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing.

Facility Priorities

Participants were asked to share what they see as the top 3 recreation facility needs in the Town of Sexsmith. The following ranking summarizes the input received.

1. Multipurpose indoor facility (e.g. gymnasium, fitness centre, multipurpose space).
2. Arena upgrades.
3. Library expansion.

Council Input Workshop

A Council Input Workshop was hosted on October 26, 2021. All seven Town Councillors participated in the workshop. The following recreation facility needs were identified.

Facility Needs

Participants were asked to identify facility needs in the Town of Sexsmith. The following summarizes the input received.

- Multipurpose gymnasium/fieldhouse space
- Library expansion
- Fitness centre
- Large indoor event space
- Pump track/BMX track
- Outdoor swimming area (natural)
- Outdoor event space (including amphitheatre)
- Outdoor courts
- Trails
- Sledding hill
- Concrete slab for the outdoor rink
- Additional outdoor rinks
- Shade at the spray park
- Safe places for youth
- Storage
- More public use/drop-in activities at facilities

Youth Input Session

A Youth Input Session was hosted on October 29, 2021. 24 students from grades 10-12 and two teachers from the Sexsmith Secondary School participated in the session.

Facility Limitations

Participants were asked to consider recreation programs that are currently limited or cannot be offered in Sexsmith due to facility limitations. The following summarizes the input received.

Indoor Facility Limitations

- Aquatic programs cannot be offered because there is no pool.
- Fitness programs and activities are difficult to access due to inconvenient hours and a lack of equipment at the existing facility.
- Boxing programs cannot be offered locally due to a lack of a facility.
- The ice arena could be enhanced to improve users' experience. Examples of enhancements included warmer stands, sharper colours on the ice, and larger and enhanced dressing rooms.
- Programs at the Library could be improved with better Wi-Fi and a computer lab.

Outdoor Facility Limitations

- The skatepark could be enhanced to expand the number of activities that are supported (e.g. bowl feature, larger quarter pipe fly-out).
- Participation in basketball is limited by the existing courts which are small and don't have enough hoops.
- The outdoor rink could be enhanced to improve users' experience. Examples of enhancements included upgrading the skate shack with a heater and storage space, better quality boards, raised netting behind the nets, lighting, and a cement pad to improve ice quality.
- Biking is limited by a lack of a pump/BMX track.
- More trail-based activity could take place if there were more trails.
- Aquatic programs and activities cannot be offered because there is no outdoor pool.
- Youth could participate in more winter activities if there was a sledding hill.

Facility Priorities

Participants were asked to share what they see as the top 3 recreation facility needs in the Town of Sexsmith. The following ranking summarizes the input received.

1. Multipurpose indoor facility (e.g. gymnasium, ice arena, running track, pool).
2. Indoor pool.
3. Pump track/BMX park / Skatepark expansion (tied for 3rd).

Key Themes and Observations

The following key themes and observations were developed by the consulting team based on input received through the engagement process. The Town is encouraged to consider these when making future decisions regarding investments into recreation, parks and culture facilities.

Reliance on Third Party Providers – The community relies on third party providers for recreation, parks and culture service provision to a significant extent. There are benefits to this approach, and many of the providers are doing a good job delivering services. However, this situation has led to some negative outcomes, including reduced accessibility for the general public in some cases. In the future, it may be advantageous for the Town to have more control over recreational assets that are supported by the municipality, particularly fitness centre, indoor ice, and gymnasium facilities.

Accessibility – The community felt strongly that more could be done to improve the accessibility of recreation facilities in the community. This included reducing physical barriers for people with reduced mobility, reducing the cost of services for residents, increasing facility access for the general public, and increasing spontaneous use/drop-in activities at facilities to promote more flexible use (e.g. public skating, open gym).

Recreational and Competitive Programs – We heard from the community that competitive programs tend to receive the bulk of available prime times at facilities. Some segments of the community would like to see more of a focus put on recreational programming as opposed to competitive programming.

Multipurpose Space – In general, the community favoured the development of spaces and facilities that could be used for multiple purposes to ensure efficient use of resources and space.

Improving Marketing and Promotions – Respondents to the resident survey and participants of the input sessions indicated that being unaware of opportunities was one of the top barriers to increased participation in recreation activities. The Town may want to consider enhancing its marketing and promotions of recreational opportunities.

Enhancing Recreational Opportunities for Youth and Seniors – Levels of satisfaction for recreational opportunities for youth and seniors was low among respondents to the resident survey. We also heard that more could be done to engage the community's youth in recreation activities. The Town could consider putting more emphasis on youth and seniors' programs moving forward.

Enhancing Maintenance – Participants in the engagement process shared that they would like to see enhanced maintenance of some of the Town's recreational assets. The most frequently identified assets included the outdoor skating rink, trails, parks, and the arena.

Regional Facilities – Some participants in the engagement process identified that there are many excellent facilities available in the region that Town of Sexsmith residents and user groups can access.



3

FACILITY PRIORITIES



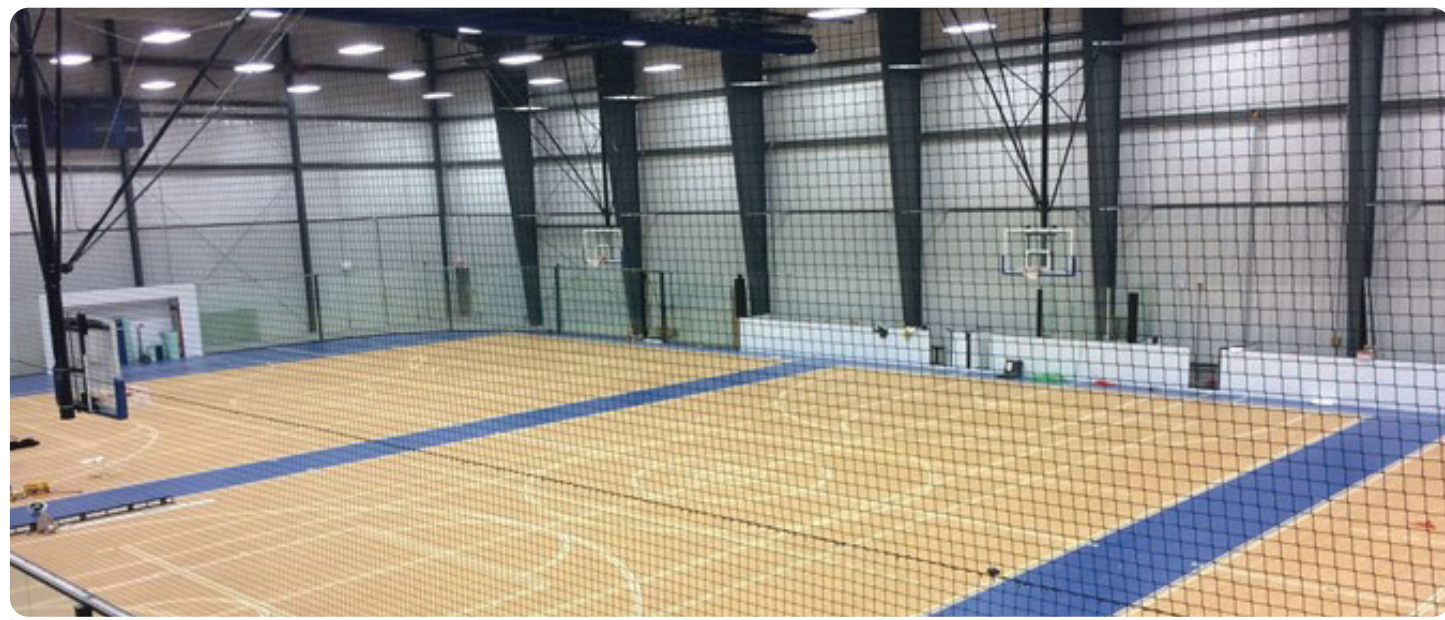
This section provides a summary of the top recreation facility priorities identified for the Town of Sexsmith based on the findings of the community engagement process. In addition to this information, there are several other inputs that the Town may want to consider before making investment decisions. These could include facility utilization, supply, and existing condition, growth projections (population and activity), comparator benchmarks, capital and operational costs, revenue potential, governance and operations, public access, trends, strategic alignments, and overall cost/benefit. It is recommended that prior to undertaking major capital development projects, the Town completes business cases that consider these inputs.

Top Facility Priorities

1. Multiuse Indoor Court and Program Space

The top recreation facility priority expressed by the community was for multiuse indoor court and program space. The primary amenity of such a space would be a large, public gymnasium where activities like basketball, volleyball, badminton, floor hockey, and indoor soccer could take place. Other amenities that the community would like to see incorporated into such a space included smaller, multipurpose spaces/rooms to run programs like fitness classes, a kitchenette to support events, and storage. Some respondents indicated there is a need for an indoor turf field for indoor soccer, football, and other activities. At the time of building the gymnasium, the Town may wish to further determine if there is enough demand in the community for an indoor turf field.

If a new facility is built, and depending on how the facility is designed, there may be opportunities to incorporate several other facility priorities identified in this report.



2. Fitness Centre

A fitness centre that is accessible to the public with convenient hours of operation and reasonably priced was identified as the second priority for the community. Such a facility would include exercise machines and equipment, and space to run fitness programs.



3. Indoor Running/Walking Track

An indoor running/walking track for drop in use and programming.



4. Library Expansion

The community would like to see more programming space, particularly for preschool and after school programs, more room to expand the collection of books, a computer lab, and enhanced Wi-Fi.



5. Indoor Pool

An indoor pool that would be able to offer swimming lessons locally was requested by the community. A lap pool with several lanes and leisure elements, such as slides and water toys, were suggested to be included.





6. Outdoor Trails and Walking Paths

The community would like to see more paved trails in the Town of Sexsmith, unpaved nature trails surrounding the town, and enhanced connectivity throughout the system. There was support for trails being multiuse (i.e. walking, running, biking) and available for year round use, including being groomed in the winter for cross country skiing and snowshoeing.

7. Arena Enhancements

The community shared ideas for enhancements to the ice arena. These included accessibility enhancements for those with mobility impairments, additional spectator seating, better heaters for spectators, refurbishing the exterior of the building, enlarging the dressing rooms, and using more appealing colours throughout the facility.



8. Outdoor Court Space

An outdoor court space with 2 to 3 basketball courts and painted lines to encourage multiple uses (e.g. pickleball and tennis) was a priority for the community. Adding lighting to increase the hours of usability was also suggested.



9. Sledding Hill

The community expressed demand for a designated sledding hill in town. Incorporating longer hills for older children was suggested.



10. Outdoor Pool/Swimming Area

An outdoor pool and/or natural swimming area was identified as a priority through the community engagement process. The facility could be used to deliver swimming lessons and for spontaneous leisure swimming. Play features, such as a slide, were suggested to be included.



11. Permanent Space for Gymnastics

Some members of the community would like to see a permanent space established for gymnastics programming. The ideal space would be larger than the current space utilized at the Civic Centre, have high ceilings, and would be a dedicated space so gymnastic equipment would not need to be set up and taken down between activities.



12. Outdoor Rink Improvements

The community shared ideas for improvements to the outdoor rink that they would like to see. These included, expanding and enhancing the shelter with heaters, storage space, and more seating, adding a concrete slab for better ice quality and summer use, adding lights, putting up new boards, adding raised netting behind the hockey nets to catch pucks, and flooding the surface more frequently to maintain ice quality.



13. Expanded Skate Park

The community identified several opportunities to expand the existing skate park. These included adding a bowl feature, enlarging the flyout on the quarter pipe, increasing the amount of skateable area to accommodate more users, and adding seating, washrooms, and lighting.



14. Dog Park

A fenced area for people to walk their dogs. It is envisioned a dog park would include an off-leash area and garbage bins.

15. Pump Track/BMX Park

The park would be dirt tracked and include a variety of jumps, berms, and other features for users to enjoy.



16. Indoor Playground

An indoor playground for children was requested to give young families more opportunities for activity in the winter.

17. Youth Centre

This space would be a place for youth in the community to go to hang out and participate in planned and/or spontaneous activities.

18. Outdoor Festival/Event Space

The space would include an amphitheatre and amenities, such as washrooms and utility connections, to support a variety of community festivals, events, and gatherings.

19. Outdoor Rectangular Field

An additional and enhanced field space for soccer and football programs was identified. A dedicated field for soccer was requested, along with putting in an artificial turf field, lighting, and trees to block wind at the existing football field.

20. Enhanced Playgrounds

Add covered spaces, picnic tables, and fire pits to existing playgrounds. Additional baby swings were also requested.

21. Indoor Ice Surface

Some user groups and members of the community requested an additional indoor ice surface to accommodate more hockey and skating programs during prime time, as well as public skating opportunities.

22. Martial Arts Space

A boxing gym and spaces suitable for martial arts.

23. Arts and Culture Space

Space to showcase local art and participate in cultural programming.

24. Climbing Wall

An indoor climbing wall.

25. Nature Parks

Public parks that have a strong connection to nature and limited development.

26. Beach Volleyball Courts

Outdoor beach volleyball courts.

27. Shade at the Spray Park

Covered shelters or features that provide shade at the spray park.



Evaluation Matrix

The following evaluation matrix was established to develop the list of facility priorities.

Scoring Chart

0 = not specifically identified as a priority

1 = somewhat supports

2 = clearly supports

3 = exceedingly supports*

*The Resident Survey was weighted x2.

EVALUATION INDICATORS						
	Resident Survey	Stakeholder Survey	Public/Stakeholder Input Sessions	Council Engagement	Youth Engagement	Total Score
1. Multiuse Indoor Court and Program Space	4	3	3	3	3	16
2. Fitness Centre	6	1	2	3	2	14
3. Indoor Running/Walking Track	6	2	1	3	1	13
4. Library Expansion	4	2	3	2	2	13
5. Indoor Pool	6	0	2	0	3	11
6. Outdoor Trails and Walking Paths	6	1	2	1	1	11
7. Arena Enhancements	4	2	3	0	2	11
8. Outdoor Court Space	2	2	2	2	2	10
9. Sledding Hill	6	0	0	2	1	9
10. Outdoor Pool/Swimming Area	6	0	0	2	1	9
11. Permanent Space for Gymnastics	4	2	2	0	0	8
12. Outdoor Rink Improvements	4	0	0	2	2	8
13. Expanded Skate Park	4	0	1	0	2	7
14. Dog Park	6	0	0	0	0	6
15. Pump Track/BMX Park	2	0	0	2	2	6
16. Indoor Playground	4	1	0	0	0	5
17. Youth Centre	4	0	0	1	0	5
18. Outdoor Festival/Event Space	2	0	1	2	0	5
19. Outdoor Rectangular Field	0	2	2	0	1	5
20. Enhanced Playgrounds	4	0	0	0	0	4
21. Indoor Ice Surface	2	2	0	0	0	4
22. Martial Arts Space	2	0	1	0	1	4
23. Arts and Culture Space	2	0	1	0	0	3
24. Climbing Wall	2	0	0	0	1	3
25. Nature Parks	2	0	0	0	0	2
26. Beach Volleyball Courts	2	0	0	0	0	2
27. Shade at Spray Park	0	0	1	1	0	2

Methodology Notes:

- 1. When ties occurred in the scoring, the facility priority with the higher score on the resident survey was listed first.
- 2. A score of 0 means the facility priority was not specifically identified during the particular engagement tactic. It does not necessarily indicate opposition to the facility priority.

Evaluation Indicators

Descriptions of the evaluation indicators are shown next.

Indicator	Description
Public Survey	Resident support for the facility priority based on the resident survey.
Stakeholder Survey	Stakeholder support for the facility priority based on the stakeholder survey and interviews.
Public/Stakeholder Input Sessions	Support for the facility priority from the Public/Stakeholder Input Sessions.
Council Engagement	Town Council support for the facility priority from the Council Input Workshop.
Youth Engagement	Youth support for the facility priority from the Youth Input Session.





4

NEXT STEPS AND CONCLUSION



Next Steps

In order to move forward with recreation facility development, the following next steps are recommended.

1. Seek approval of the Sexsmith Recreation, Parks and Culture Facility Community Engagement report from Town Council.
2. Administration and Town Council to identify which recreation, parks and culture facility developments are top priorities for further exploration.
3. Determine if proposed facility developments warrant a business case. If so, complete detailed business cases for them.
4. Administration and Town Council to prioritize facility developments based on the results of the business cases and other capital development priorities.

Conclusion

This document summarizes the recreation, parks and culture facility needs of the community based on what was heard through a fulsome engagement process. The Town of Sexsmith can now use this information, combined with other important inputs, to inform the development of sound business cases for new facilities in the future.