

# **Facilities Review**

**For:**

**Alberta SouthWest Regional Alliance Ltd.**

**December 10, 2007**

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## Executive Summary

Publicly used facilities such as recreation areas pose challenges for communities. They are necessary in order to maintain a quality life style in a community, however, they can be capital and labour intensive. To offset both the initial investment as well as ongoing operational costs in facilities, communities rely on strong usage patterns from both residents and visitors.

The Board of Alberta SouthWest acknowledges the benefits of sharing and initiated an investigation focusing on the challenges and opportunities associated with facilities, including usage patterns, scheduling functions, infrastructure needs and issues and, perhaps, regional marketing strategies. In addition to assessing shared usage of facilities, the feasibility on-line application to view schedules and contact information for these facilities was also explored.

Alberta Southwest communities have a variety of publicly used recreation facilities, ranging from community halls and drop-in centres to outdoor sports fields and pools, arenas and rinks. Many of these facilities are aging and communities face a variety of challenges to balance the recreation and leisure needs of residents and visitors with budgetary pressures.

Many factors impact facility use. Timing, that being peak times such as weekends versus off-peak times such as week days, present a challenge and this challenge can only be met with specific community demographics. In addition, while most CAOs and Facility Managers would like to increase usage of existing facilities, a common theme involves balancing resident accessibility with “over booked” external use. That is, before a facility can be made available for external use, administrators are challenged to ensure that the facility is accessible to residents when they require and when it is convenient for them. Therefore, many administrators would be reluctant to implement either programming or scheduling initiatives that compromise their ability to control usage in order to ensure residents’ enjoyment and convenience.

Almost all of the communities indicated that current booking systems were more than adequate, especially when considering cost versus benefit. In addition to liability and potential for being unfair to ratepayers, the financial costs associated with the initial software as well as ongoing maintenance and the cost of training various groups (often volunteers) that operate and schedule facilities within the community were deemed to outweigh any benefits

While most communities have done an admirable job of renovating, upgrading, improving and maintaining facilities, this continues to be of concern to administrators. Several communities face the decision of whether to continue to upgrade and renovate existing facilities or build new ones. Key in the decision is the cost to operate facilities due to increasing utility and energy costs.

Labour for operations and maintenance is an issue. However, the challenge is not only finding qualified labour, but accessing individuals with an appropriate work ethic. CAOs have been creative in trying to meet this challenge and continue to seek assistance in this area.

With the existence of organizations such as Oldman River Regional Services Commission (ORRSC), which can help map out facilities information on the GIS system and Alberta Recreation and Parks Association (ARPA), which can provide benchmark information on infrastructure and usage, Alberta SouthWest’s role can be focused on capacity building. Specifically, Alberta SouthWest can assist in communicating availability of grant funds for facilities, marketing the facilities in the region, and assisting with capacity building in the areas of grants, marketing and planning expertise.

## Background

In 2003, Alberta SouthWest (then known as the Mounties to Mountains Economic Regional Initiative (MMERI)) explored the issues of shared municipal services and discovered that there are few formal models in place in the Regional Economic Development Alliance (REDA). In 2004, Ventus Development Services Inc. was commissioned to conduct a Municipal Services Assessment of the region in order to identify a need for an effective and efficient support system for inter municipal cooperation in the area. This assessment resulted in the recognition that cooperation did exist in the provision of culture, recreation, economic development and other select municipal services.

Based on the research of existing shared services or cooperative agreements outside of the region, it was clear that the most successful arrangements are built upon establishing good communications and trusting relationships. The Board of Alberta SouthWest recognized the benefits of sharing and identified other areas of interest in the region in 2005 and 2006. One of these areas was the possibility of sharing municipal recreation facilities.

Publicly used facilities such as recreation areas pose challenges for communities. They are necessary in order to maintain a quality life style in a community, however, they can be capital and labour intensive. To offset both the initial investment as well as ongoing operational costs in facilities, communities rely on strong usage patterns from both residents and visitors. In fact, at a meeting on November 25, 2005 of the Facilities Management Project Group in the region, shared use of publicly used facilities was discussed. Specifically, it was recognized that:

- The cost of operating public facilities is significant.
- There is a need to identify any underutilization and develop ways to enhance usage.
- There is a need to create opportunities to attract users.
- A regional approach could create efficiencies.

Therefore, it was suggested that there may be a need to **assess and report on challenges and opportunities associated with the facilities**, including usage patterns, scheduling functions, infrastructure needs and issues and, perhaps, regional marketing strategies. In addition to assessing shared usage of facilities, the feasibility could also investigate the on-line application to view schedules and contact information for these facilities.

The vision for this assessment included:

- A continuation of the collaboration process
- Identification of opportunities to increase usage of municipal assets and services
- Increase in capacity building in the region

Project benefits identified at the start of the assessment included:

- Increased efficiencies and maximized use of resources
- Stronger relationships and increased trust
- Collaborative problem solving procedures and sharing of knowledge and information
- New approaches to managing facilities
- Improved risk management
- Leveraging expertise, information and technological improvements
- Focus on continuous improvements

In essence, the project was initiated in order to investigate the challenge that many municipalities face, that being, balancing the need to provide facilities that contribute to a quality life style and ensuring that costs to operate the facility are being recovered without prohibiting use of facilities.

## Recreation Facilities in Alberta

In order to gain an understanding of recreation facility operations, a scan of trends in municipal recreation was conducted. A key organization in this area is the Alberta Recreation & Parks Association (ARPA), which is a provincial not-for-profit organization that promotes recreation and parks in Alberta. Membership consists of students, municipalities, businesses, educational institutions, non-profit associations and government groups as well as individuals who have an interest in parks and recreation.

A committee within ARPA is the Infrastructure and Utilities Committee, which was formed to address community recreation infrastructure maintenance and development issues. One of its key projects is to research and investigate the current status of Alberta's community recreation infrastructure, and provide relevant information in relation to community recreation facility lifecycle planning, facility assessments and other infrastructure issues.

In 2001, ARPA partnered with Alberta Association of Recreation Facility Personnel, Alberta Association of Agricultural Societies, regional recreation associations, Hockey Alberta, Alberta Infrastructure, Alberta Community Development, Alberta Gaming and various communities in order to assess community recreation facilities (pools, arenas, curling rinks). By May 2006, 133 facilities in Alberta with an average age of 37 years had been assessed with a general recognition that limited capital maintenance was resulting in rapidly aging infrastructure. As part of the assessment, date of construction, location and total square footage, and lifecycle information was collected. Alberta Southwest member community facilities in Fort Macleod, Cardston, Pincher Creek, and Blairmore were included in the assessment.

Complementing the Community Recreation Infrastructure Assessment Program was an analysis of how recreation facilities and operators generate revenues and expenses as well as how facilities are scheduled and utilized. A sample of fifteen Alberta community facility operators was surveyed, with responses received from ten communities totaling 19 facilities. The facilities included 10 arenas, 3 outdoor pools, 3 indoor pools, and 3 curling rinks. Key findings based on this small sample were:

- **Operations:**
  - Arenas in larger and mid-sized centers provided ice between 39 and 41 weeks per year, averaging 16 to 17 hours per day.
  - Arenas in smaller centers provided ice between 19 and 24 weeks per year, averaging 9 to 12 hours per day.
  - Indoor pools operated about 50 weeks per year, 14 to 17.5 hours per day.
  - Outdoor pools operated about 13 weeks per year, 12 hours a day.
- **Operational Budgets:**
  - Facilities in general were not operating on a cost-recovery basis. In fact, average recovery on facility operations ranged from 57% to 85% depending on the type of facility. Aquatic facilities in general required more subsidy in operations than arenas and curling rinks.
  - Revenue sources on average for these facilities were as follows:
    - Ice Arenas - 10% cost sharing agreements, 11% other funding, 79% ice rentals.

- Ice Arenas with Curling Rinks - 16% cost sharing agreements, 12% other, 21% grants, 10% curling club, 1% other facility rental, 40% ice rental.
- Outdoor Aquatic Centres - 41% cost sharing from adjacent municipalities, 3% rentals, 19% passes, 21% lessons/programs, and 16% admissions.
- Indoor Aquatic Centres - 8% rentals, 8% passes, 29% lessons/programs, 6% other, and 49% admissions.
- Expense breakdowns on average for these facilities were as follows:
  - Ice Arenas - 46% salaries/wages, 12% benefits, 6% contracted maintenance, 1% purchases, 11% natural gas, 23% power, and 1% supplies.
  - Ice Arenas with Curling Rinks - 34% salaries/wages, 2% benefits, 3% insurance, 13% contracted maintenance, 11% natural gas, 16% power, 3% supplies, and 18% other.
  - Outdoor Aquatic Centres -56% salaries/wages, 7% benefits, 1% contracts, 5% power, 12% natural gas, 5% supplies, 9% chemicals, and 5% repairs and maintenance.
  - Indoor Aquatic Centres -52% salaries/wages, 24% contracts, 22% equipment, 2% other.
- **Lifecycle Budgeting:**
  - 43% of respondents have a life cycle capital plan for their facilities and half of the facility operators indicated that major renovations/upgrades were planned in the near future.
- **Facility Usage:**
  - Facilities in small-sized communities have between 15,000 and 26,000 users per year, whereas mid-sized communities saw an average of 70,000 users and large-sized communities saw an average of 150,000 users per annum.
  - Pools experienced more usage from seniors; arena users tended to be youth.

Currently, ARPA is encouraging the use of its Community Recreation Facility Inventory Tracking System whereby recreation facilities, park amenities, sports fields, community halls, trails and pathways are inputted into the system by municipalities. Specifically, communities are asked to submit data such as demographic information, user fee structures, user fee comparisons, wage and salary data, utility and operational costs using an online system ([www.alberta.facilityinventory.ca](http://www.alberta.facilityinventory.ca)). The intent of the system is to provide benchmark as well as comparison data to those who submit the information.

## Alberta SouthWest Facilities Data

### Oldman River Regional Services Commission

An organization that has been working closely with many Alberta SouthWest communities to gather various types of data is the Oldman River Regional Services Commission (ORRSC). As a start to this phase of the project, a meeting with ORRSC representatives was held in order to understand what facility data has been collected pertaining to recreation facilities in Alberta SouthWest communities so that duplication in data collection could be avoided.

ORRSC is a municipal cooperative professional planning organization that provides urban and rural municipal planning advice to most (about 38) municipalities in southwestern Alberta. ORRSC essentially provides planning and development advice in relation to the planning responsibilities outlined by the Municipal Government Act. Services provided by ORRSC include:

- Subdivision assistance and processing.
- Preparation and other assistance in relation to Municipal Development Plans, Land Use Bylaws, Area Structure Plans, and Intermunicipal Development Plans.
- General planning advice.
- Mapping services including legal base maps, registered plan inventory maps, land use districts maps, land ownership maps, subdivision design, and plotting.
- Research services such as population projections.
- Subdivision and Development Appeal Board advice.
- Provincial department and agency liaison.

In 2002, ORRSC received an Alberta Municipal Sponsorship grant in order to develop a centralized geographic information system (GIS) for 25 urban municipalities in southern Alberta. *The GIS project is not a service offered as part of the ORRSC contract for planning services.* Instead, it is a special project. The GIS system's objective has been to help municipalities to manage various municipal data, including land use and zoning, ownership and infrastructure. Since 2002, the following has taken place as part of the GIS project:

- Tax roll databases were acquired and used as a base for the information required and paper maps of each community were linked to tax roll databases. Tax roll information update protocols were developed and zoning information was added.
- Cadastral base mapping and title mapping were used and linked to the tax roll database.
- The GIS information was made accessible to member communities via the web.
- In cases where communities had infrastructure data available, it was collected.
- A Global Positioning System (GPS) was purchased and visible infrastructure data was collected.
- Roads, Water, Sanitary Sewer and Storm Sewer data was collected as an initial priority.
- Digital aerial photography of member communities was taken in May of 2005.
- Four additional layers were incorporated into the system: assessment, registered plans, cemeteries and enhanced infrastructure.

Moving forward, the project has received a new grant and the works schedule will include four new layers of information: Assessment, Registered Plans, Cemeteries and Enhanced Infrastructure.

Recreation facilities have not been inventoried and therefore other than in relation to assessment or road, water, sanitary sewer or storm sewer information, **recreation facilities do not comprise a "layer" of information in the system at this time.** ORRSC representatives,

however, made it clear that the system is capable of incorporating the data if the municipalities were interested in providing the data or hiring ORRS to gather the data and to integrate it into the system.

### **Facilities in Alberta SouthWest**

Given that specific facilities data for all Alberta Southwest communities was not readily available, one-on-one meetings were held with Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs) and if appropriate, the Recreation/Facilities Management people during the month of October and November. Specifically, project objectives and deliverables were discussed. Information was gathered pertaining to public recreation facilities, including maintenance, scheduling, labour and other issues. Challenges as well as opportunities were discussed, including as they pertain to shared usage as well as online scheduling. Specific infrastructure data such as that being collected by ARPA was not requested. Rather, information pertaining to current operations and issues faced in relation to operations was gathered in this investigation. Detail of the information gathered by community follows.

**Cardston County**

Cardston County has no recreation facilities that are owned or operated by the County. An annual grant is paid by the County to the Town of Cardston so that residents may use facilities with the same benefits as town residents.

**Town of Cardston**

Facility	Details	User Arrangement	Scheduling	Challenges/ Opportunities
Tanner Centennial Seniors Centre	The building is town-owned, but it is operated by the Seniors Centre. The town is not involved at all in operations.	User makes arrangements directly with the Seniors Centre.	Scheduling is done through the Seniors Centre directly.	
Rotary Reunion Centre	This facility is ten years old and was built and donated by the Rotary Club. The facility consists of a Hall with kitchen facilities as well as camping stalls. The town staff is contracted for bookings and cleanings.	Any one can use it from June to September.	The facility does not need to be scheduled. Camping stalls are available on a first come, first serve basis.	The facility is utilized well during the summer weekends and under utilized during the week.
Cardston Lee Creek Valley Golf Course	The golf course was recently expanded to an 18-hole golf course. The grand opening was in 2005. The golf course is in the process of finalizing expansion (sand traps, club house building, etc.). The golf course is not operated by the town.	Users can golf from April or May until October, depending on weather. Green fees are set by the golf club.	Users can book tee times directly through the Pro Shop.	Staffing is a concern at the Pro Shop.  Revenues are increasing, with the majority due to Club House sales.
Charlie Cheeseman Ice Centre	The ice centre was built in 1963.	Minor Hockey and Figure Skating Club utilize the facility.  Figure Skating Club has not hosted a competition for quite some time.	Scheduling is done at each site.	The ice centre is in need of major repairs. \$90,000 is needed to repair the roof.  Council is looking at the feasibility of a multi-use facility that may house multi sports.

Facility	Details	User Arrangement	Scheduling	Challenges/ Opportunities
		<p>Minor Hockey is running fewer tournaments as well. Sundays are a challenge since the facilities are not open on this day.</p> <p>County provides a recreation grant of \$20,000 per year so that all of the rate payers in the Town as well as the County are able to utilize the facility through one user fee system.</p>		<p>Staffing is an issue.</p> <p>External booking is difficult due to Sunday closing.</p> <p>Ice centre is underutilized on weekends and during the daytime. During the weekends (Friday/ Saturday), six teams utilize the facility.</p>
Swimming Pool (outdoor)	The swimming pool was built in 1978 and needs upgrades.	County provides a recreation grant of \$20,000 per year so that all of the rate payers in the Town as well as the County are able to utilize the facility through one user fee system.	Scheduling is done at the site.	<p>The swimming pool needs upgrades.</p> <p>The use of the pool is dependent on weather as it is an outdoor pool.</p>
Tennis Courts	Three tennis courts were built in 1950. They have recently been upgraded and are in good shape. The town maintains	Use of the tennis courts is not fee based.	Scheduling is not required. The use of the tennis courts are on a first-come, first-	

Facility	Details	User Arrangement	Scheduling	Challenges/ Opportunities
	the tennis courts.		serve basis.	
Redford Softball Park	The Redford Softball Park was built in the late 1980s. It is in fairly good condition.	Individuals can use the park if it is available.  Teams pay to use the softball park. There is a mixed softball league. Some tournaments are held at the park.	Scheduling is done through the town and is fee based.	Staffing (maintenance) has been an issue.  Use is seasonal and weather dependent.
Town Square Softball	The Town Square Softball Park was built in 1967. It is in fairly good condition.	Individuals can use the park if it is available.  Teams pay to use the softball park. There is a mixed softball league. Some tournaments are held at the park.	Scheduling is done through the town and is fee based.	Staffing (maintenance) has been an issue.  Use is seasonal and weather dependent.
Lions Park	The Lions Park includes baseball diamonds, playground, football field, and a sand volleyball court.	Individuals can use the park if it is available. Teams pay to use the facilities.	Scheduling is done through the town and is fee based.	Staffing (maintenance) has been an issue.  Use is seasonal and weather dependent.
Community Skateboard Park	The Skateboard Park is five years old.	Residents can use the park. The town maintains it.	Scheduling is not required.	Staffing (maintenance) has been an issue.  Vandalism of the park is also a concern.
Agridome	The Agridome is owned by the town and operated by the Ag Society. The Ag Society maintains is	Users book the Agridome directly through the Ag Society.	The Ag Society schedules the use of the facility.	

Facility	Details	User Arrangement	Scheduling	Challenges/ Opportunities
	and ensures repairs are completed as needed.			
Cardston Civic Centre	The Civic Centre includes a gymnasium as well as a meeting room that is used by the public. It was an old church that was given to the town in 1985. It is renovated, but it needs to be upgraded.	The Gymnastics program utilizes the gymnasium.  The community holds live theatre programs in the gymnasium.  The Chamber of Commerce uses the meeting room free of charge once a month.	Scheduling is done through the town.	The building needs to be upgraded.
Various Tot Lots in neighborhoods	Various tot lots are located throughout the community.	Residents can use these areas free of charge.	Scheduling in order to use the tot lots is not required.	

General Comments:

- Online scheduling is not believed to be a solution. In fact, current scheduling arrangements seem to be working well.
- Alberta SouthWest can help with lobbying for funding (capital dollars).
- The region needs to attract something big like the Alberta Summer Games. The facilities are underutilized but rather than scheduling, diversified usage within the community is required or attraction of tournaments.
- Assistance with accessing capital grants to develop or upgrade facilities would be helpful.

Town of Claresholm

Facility	Details	User Arrangement	Scheduling	Challenges/ Opportunities
Claresholm Community Centre	The Claresholm Community Centre is operated by the Community Centre Board. They have a small operating grant each year that enables them to cover the cost of utilities annually. The Board staffs it and maintains the facility.	Users can make specific arrangements through the Community Centre Board.	The Community Centre Board develops the schedule.	
Claresholm Aquatic Centre	The Claresholm Aquatic Centre comprises of an indoor pool as well as the Claresholm Centre for Mental Health and Addictions. It was built in the early 1990s. The Town staffs the Centre and the Mental Health and Addictions staff does the pool maintenance. There is an agreement that Mental Health and Addictions will cover repairs and maintenance.	The Centre is open from 6:00 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday. Public swimming, lessons, and rentals are scheduled during the weekend. Users can utilize the Centre on a fee for use basis. In addition to the residents of Claresholm, residents of Stavely, Nanton and Fort Macleod use it as well.	Pool Supervisor is on site and schedules it.	It would be nice to increase usage.  Labour is also an issue (e.g. lifeguards).
Skating/ Hockey Rink and Skateboard Park	The Town owns and operates the skating/hockey rink and skateboard park. It is a centennial building (1976) and it was recently upgraded. A new ice plant was installed with 50% grant dollars.	The Town develops programming for the ice arena with input from clubs and other users. Users pay on a fee for use basis.	Scheduling is done through the Town using Microsoft Outlook.	
Curling Rink	Town owns the curling rink but it is run by the curling group.	Users book the lanes on a fee for service	The curling group develops the schedule.	

Facility	Details	User Arrangement	Scheduling	Challenges/ Opportunities
	The group is responsible for all aspects of the operations.	basis. Programming is developed by the curling group.		
Baseball Complex and Moffat Park Baseball Diamonds	The Town owns the complex. The Parks person maintains the area.	Users can simply use the complex. Specific user arrangements can be made through the Minor Ball and Slo Pitch Association.	Minor Ball and Slo Pitch Association develops programs and do all scheduling.	
The Bridges of Claresholm Golf Course	The Golf Course is operated by a Board but is owned by the Town. The Board maintains it. An operating grant of \$50,000 per year helps operations. The Town has provided a loan guarantee.	The Golf Course is responsible for tee times and for establishing green fees.	The Golf Course is responsible for scheduling.	
Claresholm Agriplex	The Agriplex is owned by the Town and maintained by the Ag Society.	Users can make arrangements with the Agriplex Board for specific usage. Overall programming is done by the Board.	Scheduling is done by the Board.	
Tennis Courts	The tennis courts are on school property and therefore the school maintains them.	Users can simply use the tennis courts. Specific user arrangements can be made through the school.	The school schedules use where appropriate.	

General Comments:

- Other facilities include the Royal Canadian Legal Hall, Clear Lake Hall and Centennial Park Campground.
- The Town is building a Spray Park. The Town owns it and the Park Society fund raised in order build it. It will be turned over to the Town with the parks personnel maintaining it.

- The Town of Claresholm was investigating on-line scheduling for the ice arena and found software to be expensive and complex. At a price of about \$3,000 for setup and monthly maintenance fee, the benefits were seen to not warrant the investment. In addition, liability issues associated with missed or inaccurate bookings were also discussed.
- Currently, Microsoft outlook is being utilized for booking purposes and seems to be working well.
- The long-term vision is to build a multi-purpose centre.
- MD of Willow Creek provides a recreation grant to the Town so that its residents could utilize facilities with the same benefits at Town residents.

#### Village of Cowley

Facility	Details	User Arrangement	Scheduling	Challenges/ Opportunities
Ball Diamond	The Village owns and maintains the baseball diamonds. There are outhouses on site. The Town has a sprinkler system on the grounds and provides weed control. The Diamond is 15 years old, but it is well-maintained.	Users can simply use the ball diamond.	Scheduling is not required.	Teenagers mis-use the facility.  There is a need for weed control and the Village is looking for assistance in this area.
Community Hall	The Cowley Lions Club shares in the responsibility of the Hall, including upgrade and maintenance.	Users pay for use of the Hall.	Scheduling is required and can be done through the Village.	The Village would like to increase usage of the Hall through classes being offered or other ideas to bring people in.
Outdoor Rink with Playground and Basketball Court adjacent to the Rink.	The Village owns and maintains the area. This past year, the area was resurfaced.  The Playground will be upgraded in the Spring.	Users can simply use the facilities.	Scheduling is not required.	

**Municipality of Crowsnest Pass**

Facility	Details	User Arrangement	Scheduling	Challenges/ Opportunities
Miner's Path	Miner's Path runs up McGivally Creek. The Lion's Club looks after the path.	Users can utilize the path.	No scheduling is required.	
Fireman's Park	The Municipality owns it and Bellevue Volunteer Fire Department operates it.	Users can simply use the park.	No scheduling is required.	
Hillcrest Ball Diamonds	There are two ball diamonds that are fairly new.	Users can use the ball diamonds but specific arrangements can be made through the Recreation Department.	Scheduling, if appropriate, is done through the Recreation Department.	
Albert Stella Memorial Arena	The Albert Stella Memorial Arena has an indoor climbing wall, ice rink and indoor skate park. It is owned by the Municipality. It is operated and maintained by a Society/Club. The Municipality charges rent for use of the facilities. Society helps with staffing and grants.	Users can use the facilities on a fee-for usage basis.	Scheduling is done through the Society/Club.	Usage of the facilities is seen as a challenge. Recently the community lost the Timberwolves and ringette.
Water Play Park at Flummerfelt Park in Coleman	This Park is owned and maintained by the Municipality. The Lions Club does all upgrades.	People can simply use the park.	Scheduling is not required.	
Crowsnest Sports Complex	The Crowsnest Sports Complex houses the ice arena as well as a six lane curling rink. The Pottery Club is also located at the complex.	Users utilize the curling and ice rink through a fee for use basis.	Scheduling is done through each Club. The Clubs are essentially volunteer societies.	Usage of the facilities is seen as a challenge. Recently the community lost the Timberwolves and ringette.

Facility	Details	User Arrangement	Scheduling	Challenges/ Opportunities
	<p>The ice is leased to the Crowsnest Pass Curling Club and this club then maintains the lounge area. The Municipality is responsible for the ice plant.</p> <p>The Pottery Club area is leased to the Pottery Club.</p>			
Elks Hall	The Elks Hall is owned by the Municipality, with the Elks Club operating it and the Municipality covering some of the expenses.	Users can make arrangements through the Elks Club.	Scheduling is done by the Municipality Recreation office.	
Coleman Union Hall	The Coleman Union Hall is owned by the Municipality, with the Seniors Society operating it.	Users make arrangements through the Seniors Society.	Scheduling is done by the Seniors Society.	
Blairmore Senior Drop In Centre	The Blairmore Senior Drop In Centre is located in the Community Hall and is operated by the Seniors Society.	Users make arrangements through the Seniors Society.	Scheduling is done by the Seniors Society.	
Bellevue Senior Drop In Centre	The Bellevue Senior Drop In Centre is operated by the Seniors Society. The Municipality pays the expenses and the Seniors Society pays \$100 per month rent.	Users make arrangements through the Seniors Society.	Scheduling is done by the Seniors Society.	
Pass Community Swimming Pool	The Pass Community Swimming Pool is located in Blairmore and is owned by the Municipality. It is an outdoor facility and therefore is open from May to September. It is operated by a Pool Society. The Municipality takes	Users utilize the pool on a fee for service basis.	The scheduling is done by the Pool Society.	

Facility	Details	User Arrangement	Scheduling	Challenges/ Opportunities
	care of operating expenses with revenues coming back to the Municipality.			
Pass Powderkeg Ski Hill	The Pass Powderkeg Ski Hill is operated by the Ski Hill Society. There is a full-time manager whose wages are paid by the Municipality but is an employee of the Society.	Users utilize the ski hill on a fee for service basis.	The scheduling is done by the Ski Hill staff.	
Allied Arts Gallery	The Allied Arts Gallery is maintained by the Crowsnest Pass Allied Arts Association. The Allied Arts Gallery is attached to the Hall in Frank.	Users can make arrangements with the Arts Association.	The Arts Gallery Association operates the gallery and schedules accordingly. There are very few bookings at the Gallery.	
Crowsnest Learning Centre	The Centre is maintained by the Learning Centre Society.	Users can make arrangements directly through the Centre.	The Learning Centre Society is responsible for programming and scheduling.	
Isabelle Sellon School facilities: - Soccer Field - Ball Diamonds	The facilities are located on school grounds. The Municipality maintains the grounds even though the lands are owned by the Livingstone Range.	Users are free to use the facilities.	Scheduling done through the Municipality.	
Horace Allen School Soccer Field	The facilities are located on school grounds. The Municipality maintains the grounds even though the lands are owned by the Livingstone Range.	Users are free to use the facilities.	Scheduling done through the Municipality.	
M.D. McEachern School facilities:	The facilities are located on school grounds. The Municipality maintains	Users are free to use the facilities.	Scheduling done through the Municipality.	

Facility	Details	User Arrangement	Scheduling	Challenges/ Opportunities
- Soccer Field - Ball Diamond	the grounds even though the lands are owned by the Livingstone Range.			
Tennis Courts: - Coleman - Blairmore - Hillcrest	The Municipality takes care of the tennis courts.	People can simply use the facilities.	If appropriate, tennis courts can be booked through the Municipality.	Blairmore's tennis courts need to be rejuvenated and will cost about \$100,000.
Bellevue Library	Bellevue library is located in the M.D. McEachern School and is operated by the Crownsnest Pass Library Board. It takes about \$150,000 to operate it annually.	About 800 to 900 people go through it every week.  The Gym gets used by the Boys and Girls Club and the pre school.	Scheduling is done through the Municipality Recreation Office.	
Crownsnest Pass Golf & Country Club	The Crownsnest Pass Golf & Country Club is operated by a non-profit Society. The land is owned by the Society and is operated as a business.	People golf at the Course of a fee for use basis.	People can make tee times directly through the Crownsnest Pass Golf & Country Club.	

General Comments:

- Population in the Municipality is down by 500 over 2001 and the demographics are showing an older population. Many of the people work in the B.C. mines.
- It would be nice to see scheduled bus service for the area so that people can get from facility to facility to use it.
- Crownsnest Pass did investigate online scheduling but felt that real time on-line scheduling may result in liability due to errors (administrative errors). MAXIMUM Software is currently being used only as a scheduling tool. It is not online. One of the ideas that was presented was that perhaps more convention business could be attracted through on-line scheduling, however, this idea has not prompted on-line scheduling at this point.
- The Municipality will not be adding additional recreational facilities in the near future.
- The ice arenas are the real concern regarding usage. The arenas in Blairmore and Coleman are heavily subsidized. To offset these funds, usage needs to be increased. Maintenance costs are increasing. There are a small number of hockey players. The Crownsnest Pass and Pincher Creek had to combine to get team/league together. *The Municipality is interested in a working agreement with Pincher Creek for use of the ice arena in the Municipality if they require facilities.*
- Focus will be on non-scheduled facilities such as walking paths and trails.
- Assistance is required in how to attract more week night usage of ice arenas.
- Community Services Department (FCSS and Recreation) is experiencing challenges with staff in that they typically transfer to Public Works. Therefore, since Community Services is seen as an entry to other departments, the turnover in this area is quite high.

Town of Fort Macleod

Facility	Details	User Arrangement	Scheduling	Challenges/ Opportunities
Fort Macleod District Recreation Centre	<p>Indoor Skating Rink:</p> <p>The skating rink is town-owned and operated.</p>	User pay for use on a fee for service basis.	The Skating Rink is scheduled through the Facilities Manager.	The rink could be used more. The Facilities Manager is working with Minor Hockey, and teams from Lethbridge and Senior A in order increase usage.
	<p>Curling Rink:</p> <p>Town owns the rink and the Curling Club operates it. The Club makes its own ice, operates its own concession and does its own bookings. The Town pays a portion of the utilities.</p>	User pay for use on a fee for service basis.	The Curling Rink is scheduled through the Curling Club.	
	<p>Outdoor Swimming Pool:</p> <p>The swimming pool is 50 years old and is in good condition. The Town owns and operates it from June to end of August.</p>	User pay for use on a fee for service basis.	The Pool is scheduled through the Pool Manager. Programming is consistent from year to year.	Staffing is not an issue at this point.
	<p>Outdoor Skate Park:</p> <p>The Town owns the skate park and operates it.</p>	Users can use the skate park without fee.	Skate Park is outdoor and therefore requires no scheduling.	
Volunteer Park (Westwinds Stadium)	<p>This baseball facility is a full service facility with four slow pitch diamonds and one hardball diamond. The facility also has a concession stand, bleachers and a playground. This facility is home to the Fort Macleod Royals of the Montana Northern District American Legion League. It was</p>	Users can utilize the facilities without fee, unless there is an organized group that requires use. Then it is scheduled and payment is arranged through the Facilities	Scheduling occurs through the Facilities Manager.	This facility is not used that much as there is no longer a slo-pitch association. There have been some ball tournaments.

Facility	Details	User Arrangement	Scheduling	Challenges/ Opportunities
	built in the 1980s by volunteers. It is town owned and maintained by the Facilities Manager.	Manager.		
Little League Ball Park	There are two baseball diamonds. The facility is 14 years old and is well-maintained.	Users can utilize the facilities without fee, unless there is an organized group that requires use. Then it is scheduled and payment is arranged through the Facilities Manager.	Scheduling occurs through the Facilities Manager.	
Fort Macleod Golf Club	This nine hole facility is located in the river valley. It was the first golf club developed in western Canada. It features grass greens and a licensed clubhouse. The land is leased from the Government as it is on Crown Land. The Golf Club is operated by an Executive Board. The Town is not involved in operations or maintenance at all.	Users can make tee times through the Pro Shop and pay green fees.	Users can book tee times and tournaments through the Pro Shop.	
Indoor Riding Arena and Midnight Stadium Rodeo Grounds	The Town owns the Midnight Stadium. The Fort Macleod and District Ag Society owns the Indoor Riding Arena.	Users can schedule use of the riding arena through the Ag Society and make arrangements for payment.	Scheduling occurs through the Ag Society.	
Tennis Courts at F.P. Walshe School	The tennis courts are not very well maintained. The School Division takes care of them.	Users can simply use these, and can make any special arrangements	Scheduling, if required, occurs through the School Division.	

Facility	Details	User Arrangement	Scheduling	Challenges/ Opportunities
		through the School Division.		
Tennis Court at the Skate Park	The tennis court at the Skate Park is owned and maintained by the Town.	Users can simply use these, and can make any special arrangements through the Town, if needed.	Scheduling is not required.	
Track and Field Facilities	Full track and field facilities are available on the public grounds adjacent to the F.P.Walsh High School. The School Division owns and operates these, with the Town paying for water.	Users can simply use these, and can make any special arrangements through the School Division, if needed.	Scheduling is not required.	
Soccer Fields	There are soccer fields in the community.	Users can generally use these free of charge.	Scheduling, if required, can be done through the Soccer Club.	
Fort Macleod and District Community Hall	The Community Hall Society was responsible for fund raising and ensuring that the building is renovated and maintained through grants and fund raising. The Town owns it and does all administration in relation to it, but then turns over all revenues to the Society.	Users can make use of the Hall on a fee for service basis.	Scheduling occurs through the Town.	
Knights of Columbus Hall	This Hall is owned and operated by the Catholic Church.	Users make arrangements through the Church.	Scheduling occurs through the Church.	
BMX Track	This is a new bike park that is owned and operated by the Town. It was built by	Residents can essentially use it free of charge.	Scheduling is not necessary.	

Facility	Details	User Arrangement	Scheduling	Challenges/ Opportunities
	volunteers.			
Airport Recreation Hall	This Hall is old and is owned and operated by the Town. It does require some work. Currently, it houses the cadets and the Pottery Club.	Arrangements for use, including fees can be made through the Town.	Scheduling occurs through the Town.	The Hall is old and no one essentially uses it
Scout Hall	The Scout Hall is owned and operated by the Town. It is mainly used by Scouts, Brownies, and Guides. FCSS also has summer fun program in July and August.	Users can book the hall on a fee for service basis.	Scheduling occurs through the Brownies Coordinator.	
Empress Theatre	The Empress Theatre is a designated Provincial Historic Resource. It was renovated and restored in the late 1980s.	People can use the theatre on a fee basis and rental rates are available.	The not-for-profit Empress Theatre operates the facility.	

**NOTE:**

- MD of Willow Creek provides a recreation grant to the Town so that its residents could utilize facilities with the same benefits at Town residents.
- Schools have a joint use agreement with the Town whereby schools can book facilities for use. Town charges a nominal administration fee of about \$5 per day.
- The Allied Arts Club is raising funds currently for the Allied Arts Centre.
- Staffing in relation to recreation facilities is not an issue at this point.
- The library has expanded in its current location. The Library and Recreation Committee were working on a library and indoor swimming pool facility. They are still in talks.

Village of Glenwood

Facility	Details	User Arrangement	Scheduling	Challenges/ Opportunities
Spring Glen Park	Spring Glen Park is a joint initiative of Hill Spring and Glenwood. It is operated by a Society comprised of members of both communities. The Society hires an individual to maintain the park.	Users pay to use campground facilities.	Scheduling is done through the Village of Glenwood office.	
Outdoor Riding Arena	The outdoor riding arena is owned and operated by its own Society.	Users contact the Society to use the facility.	Scheduling is done through the Society directly.	
Outdoor Skating Rink	The Village maintains the facility. The outdoor rink use is weather dependent, but for the most part is well utilized. The school uses it as well. An individual is contracted to flood the ice and maintain it.	Users do not have to pay to use the rink unless there is a group that would like to reserve it.	Scheduling when needed is done through the Village office.	
Ball Diamonds	The Village foreman maintains the ball diamonds, which are in good condition.	Users do not have to pay to use the ball diamonds unless a group wants to use them.	Scheduling when needed is done through the Village office.	
Village Park	The Village Park has a playground and a green area with a camp kitchen.	Users can use the park as they please.	The camp kitchen can be booked through the Village Office, but it is not utilized that much.	
Pioneer Parlour Museum	This facility is Village owned and is subsidized by the Village. The Village hires people to run the parlour which sells ice cream through a STEP Program. It is	Products such as locally made smokies, ice cream and other food stuffs are sold in the parlour and users can	Staffing is done through the Village Office.	

Facility	Details	User Arrangement	Scheduling	Challenges/ Opportunities
	open from Victoria Day to Labour Day. During this time, it is open from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday to Saturday.	purchase them.		
Community Hall	Community Hall is used quite frequently by seniors and community members for events such as meetings, weddings, bridal showers, etc.	Users make use arrangements with the Village Office.	Scheduling is controlled by the Village Office.	

General Comments:

- Online scheduling of facilities is not required.

Town of Granum

Facility	Details	User Arrangement	Scheduling	Challenges/ Opportunities
Granum Golf and Country Club	The golf course is a Par 3, 9 hole course with artificial green, driving range and a licensed clubhouse and concession. The land is leased from the Town and the golf club is exempt from taxes. It is operated by a non-profit society.	Users can golf at the facility by paying green fees directly to the Pro Shop.	Tee times can be booked through the Pro Shop.	
Granum Drop-In Centre	The Granum Drop In Centre is used for seniors and youth activities. The Drop In Centre is exempt from taxes and is operated by a non-profit society.	The Drop-In Centre has specific programs, with established user fees.	Users can make specific scheduling arrangements through the non-profit society.	
Granum and District Recreation Centre	The Recreation Centre was built in 2000 and has a pool table, ping pong table, tv, computer games and kitchen facilities. After school programs are held in the Centre for children. During	Users can use the Recreation Centre on a fee for service basis established for specific programs.	Users can make specific scheduling arrangements through the Recreational Board.	

Facility	Details	User Arrangement	Scheduling	Challenges/ Opportunities
	the winter time, there are outdoor skating and hockey programs. The facilities are owned and maintained by the Town and managed by the Granum and District Recreational Board of Directors, which has its own staff for operations.			
Blunden Memorial Community Hall	Blunden Memorial Hall has been at its current location since 1972. Although it is CURRENTLY CLOSED, the Hall has been used for dances, receptions and other events. There is a fully equipped kitchen, bar area, stage, and dance floor.			Currently looking at feasibility on what to do with the Hall: (1) renovate (2) construct something else.
Granview Recreation Park and Campground	The Recreation Park an Campground includes camp sites, ¼ mile jogging track, two baseball diamonds, horseshoe pitch, and a beach volley ball area. The land is leased to a non-profit board and they operate it.	Users pay for the use of campground facilities.	Scheduling is taken care of by the non-profit board.	

MD of Willow Creek provides a recreation grant to the Town so that its residents could utilize facilities with the same benefits at Town residents.

**Village of Hill Spring**

Facility	Details	User Arrangement	Scheduling	Challenges/ Opportunities
Recreation Centre/ Meeting Hall	The facility was built in 1995 and is in excellent condition. It has a kitchen and a piano.	Used seven or eight times per month by the Quilting Club, Seniors, etc.	Scheduling is done through the Village office.	
Ball Diamond	The ball diamond is located across from the school.	Residents can use the ball diamond when it is available.	Scheduling is not required.	The ball diamonds have been neglected and the Village is in the process of upgrading them.
Rodeo Grounds (outdoor)	The rodeo grounds are an outdoor facility and in good condition.	Users arrange to use the grounds by contacting the Rodeo Association.	The Rodeo Association controls the scheduling.	

**General Comments:**

- Maintenance/labour is an issue. It is a full-time job and since the Village has a low tax base, it is difficult to compete on the wage front.
- Residents have been asking for a spray park for young tots.
- Online scheduling of facilities is not needed.

**Town of Pincher Creek**

Facility	Details	User Arrangement	Scheduling	Challenges/ Opportunities
The Pincher Creek Multi Purpose Facility	This multi-use facility is 23,000 square foot: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aquatic Centre (6-lane competition swimming pool, with kiddie's pool, children's slide, hot tub, Tarzan rope, diving board).</li> <li>• Library</li> <li>• Conference and Meeting Rooms</li> <li>• Private Gymnasium</li> </ul>	Swimming pool users can sign up for aquafit programs, swimming lessons and training, kayaking and swim club and pay for it on an established user fee basis.  The Gymnasium is privately operated.	Scheduling for the pool takes place through the Recreation Office using a software program called MAXIMUM. It has the ability to book online and while users can request times online, someone in the Recreation Office will review the request and then confirm	Labour is the major issue with the swimming pool. The facilities are utilized adequately and in fact, last year was at 98 percent capacity.  Currently looking at a Green Municipal Grant in order to investigate ways to become more energy efficient.

Facility	Details	User Arrangement	Scheduling	Challenges/ Opportunities
			with the user.	Labour is the major issue with the swimming pool. The facilities are utilized adequately.
The Memorial Community Center Arena	The Memorial Community Centre Arena was opened in 1963 and renovated in 1974 to host events for the Canada Winter Games. The winter Arena season runs from October 1 to March 31 and offers a wide variety of tournaments, games, drop-in opportunities and special events.	Free public and family skating is available due to sponsorship by the Royal Canadian Legion. Private parties and rentals are available.  During the off-season, the facility is available for trade-shows, farmers markets, and concerts.	Scheduling for the ice rink takes place through the Recreation Office using a software program called MAXIMUM. It has the ability to book online and while users can request times online, someone in the Recreation Office will review the request and then confirm with the user.	
Town Hall Facilities	A small gymnasium and meeting rooms are available at the Town Hall for recreational activities, meetings, reunions and other gatherings. A Day Care is also located in the Town Hall.	The Day Care is operated by a society. Council Room is scheduled through the Town Hall with Council meetings taking priority. The Gymnasium is rented to youth groups for \$10 per hour.	Scheduling is done through the Town Hall.	
Pincher Creek Curling Rink	The four lane facility is complete with a meeting and lounge area.  The Town owns the	League play and bonspiels are held during the winter season for all ages	The Curling Society does its own programming and scheduling.	Curling and Golf have partnered together to look at the feasibility of expanding from a nine-hole

Facility	Details	User Arrangement	Scheduling	Challenges/ Opportunities
	property with the Curling Society operating the facilities.	and the upstairs lounge area is available for meetings, receptions, etc. in the off season.		course to an eighteen-hole golf course.
Community Recreation Centre	<p>The Community Recreation Centre features a golf clubhouse, a restaurant, Chinook Lanes Bowling, squash courts, weight training and fitness club.</p> <p>The Golf Course Society operates the Golf Course.</p> <p>The Bowling Alley is operated by a Society.</p> <p>The weight training and fitness club is privately operated as Joe's Gym.</p>	<p>Users can make their own arrangements for tee times through the Golf Course as well as bowling lane and squash court rentals through the Bowling Alley Pro Shop.</p> <p>Joe's Gym is a private business and therefore user arrangements are made directly through the business.</p>	Scheduling for golf is done through the Pro Shop. Bowling lanes and squash courts can be rented through the Bowling Alley. Joe's Gym develops its own schedule.	
Lions Ball Park	Baseball diamonds are located in the park. Maintenance is done through the Town Office.	Baseball diamonds are available for use by residents. Specific user arrangements can be made through the Town Recreation Office. The Recreation Board sets user fees and these are approved by Council.	Scheduling for the ball diamonds takes place through the Recreation Office using a software program called MAXIMUM. It has the ability to book online and while users can request times online, someone in the Recreation Office will review the request and then confirm	Baseball fields are under utilized.

Facility	Details	User Arrangement	Scheduling	Challenges/ Opportunities
			with the user. Priority is given to residents.	
Track Field	The track field is a multi-use outdoor facility that accommodates joggers, soccer players, and track athletes.	The track field is available for use by residents. Specific user arrangements for things like track meets, tournaments and competitions can be made through the Town Recreation Office. The Recreation Board sets user fees and these are approved by Council.	Scheduling for the track field takes place through the Recreation Office using a software program called MAXIMUM. It has the ability to book online and while users can request times online, someone in the Recreation Office will review the request and then confirm with the user. Priority is given to residents.	
Soccer Fields	There are numerous soccer fields throughout the community and they are maintained through the Town Office.	Soccer pitches are available for use by residents. Specific user arrangements can be made through the Town Recreation Office. The Recreation Board sets user fees and these are approved by Council.	Scheduling for soccer pitches takes place through the Recreation Office using a software program called MAXIMUM. It has the ability to book online and while users can request times online, someone in the Recreation Office will review the request and then confirm with the user. Priority is given to residents.	Lacrosse is starting to displace soccer as a sport that is up and coming.

Facility	Details	User Arrangement	Scheduling	Challenges/ Opportunities
Tennis Courts	Pincher Creek has an excellent outdoor tennis court.	The tennis court is available for use by residents. Specific user arrangements can be made through the Town Recreation Office. The Recreation Board sets user fees and these are approved by Council.	Scheduling for tennis courts take place through the Recreation Office using a software program called MAXIMUM. It has the ability to book online and while users can request times online, someone in the Recreation Office will review the request and then confirm with the user. Priority is given to residents.	
Municipal Campground	The campground is municipally operated and maintained.	Users can book stalls by contacting the Recreation Office.	Bookings occur through the Recreation Office.  The campground is utilized to the Town's satisfaction.	Challenges include social issues such as homelessness and campground users and alcohol.
Community Hall	A modern, spacious and air conditioned hall with full kitchen facilities. The maximum occupancy is 700. The Community Hall is managed by the Community Hall Board.	The Community Hall is available for dances, receptions, special events, dinners, auctions and funerals. Users can contact the Community Hall Board to make arrangements for use.	Scheduling is done directly by the Community Hall Board.	
Various	These schools have	Users can	Scheduling is	

Facility	Details	User Arrangement	Scheduling	Challenges/ Opportunities
School Facilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• St. Michael's School</li> <li>• Canyon School</li> <li>• Matthew Halton High School</li> </ul>	facilities such as large gymnasiums, meeting rooms, classrooms and outdoor recreational facilities.	contact the schools directly to make arrangements for the use of these facilities.	done directly through the schools.	

General Comments:

- All facilities are included in an infrastructure master plan, which includes a 20-year capital plan.
- Online scheduling is implemented to the extent that the Town desires and is satisfied with the current arrangement.
- New ideas for marketing recreation facilities are required. Specifically, are there innovative things being done in other communities that can help increase usage or even better meet the needs of residents?
- A marketing professional that can help the group of communities professionally design advertisements or brochures in order to attract visitors to the area would be appreciated.

**MD of Pincher Creek**

There are no MD owned or operated recreation facilities.

**Town of Stavely**

Facility	Details	User Arrangement	Scheduling	Challenges/ Opportunities
Community Hall	The Community Hall is owned and operated by a Community Board. The Community Board fund raised for the facility.	Users can make arrangements for use through the Community Board.	The Community Board schedules programming in the Hall.	
Ice Arena	The Town owns the land and the Ag Society operates the Ice Arena.	User arrangements can be made through the Ag Society.	The Ag Society takes care of scheduling and developing programming in the Rodeo Arena.	
Rodeo Arena	The Rodeo Arena is operated by the Ag Society. They fund raise for their needs.	User arrangements can be made through the Ag Society.	The Ag Society takes care of scheduling and developing programming in the Rodeo Arena.	

Facility	Details	User Arrangement	Scheduling	Challenges/ Opportunities
The Stavely Golf Course	This 9-hole facility is operated by the Stavely Golf Club. The Town supplies water at no charge to the golf course. It is currently in the process of changing sand greens to artificial turf.	Users can book tee times directly through the golf course.	The golf course takes care of its own programming and scheduling.	
Archery Lane	The Town owns the building and leases it to the Archery Club at no charge.	The Archery Club develops its own programming and therefore users can make arrangements with the Club directly.	The Archery Club takes care of its own scheduling.	
Golden Age Centre	The Golden Age Centre is town owned, but is operated by a Board.	Specific user arrangements can be made through the Board.	Scheduling is done by the Board.	
Ball Diamond	The Ball Diamonds are maintained by the town.	Users can simply use the facilities, however, specific arrangements can be made through the Ball Club.	Scheduling and programming is done by the Ball Club.	The ball diamonds are not used heavily.
Track	The town owns the land that the track is on and it maintains the grass and area.	Users can simply use the facilities.	Specific scheduling and program requests can be made through the Track Club.	

General Comments:

- The Town provides water, sewer and garbage for the facilities.
- The MD of Willow Creek provides a grant to the Town of Stavely so that its residents would enjoy the same recreation facility use privileges as the residents the Town.

**ID#4, Waterton Lakes**

<b>Facility</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>User Arrangement</b>	<b>Scheduling</b>	<b>Challenges/ Opportunities</b>
Swimming Pool	The Swimming Pool is located in the Waterton Lakes Lodge and is owned and operated by the Lodge.	Users pay a fee to use the swimming pool.	Scheduling takes place through the Waterton Lakes Lodge.	
Community Centre	The Community Centre consists of the old gymnasium as well as two school rooms. These are used for floor hockey, weddings, reunion, small group meetings, etc.	Users can pay a fee for use to the Waterton Park Community Association.	Scheduling takes place through the Waterton Park Community Association.	
Community Hall	The Community Hall was built in 1940 and is used for weddings, reunions, etc.	Users can pay a fee for use to the Waterton Park Community Association.	Scheduling takes place through the Waterton Park Community Association.	The Community Hall requires renovation. Currently, an architect is investigating various options.
Tennis Courts	Parks Canada owns the four tennis courts and maintains them.	Users can simply use these. Racquets can be rented at Pat's Rentals.	Usage is based on a first come first serve basis with a recommended usage limitation being 30 minutes.	
Waterton Lakes Golf Course	The 18-hole Golf Course is owned by Parks Canada. The Course also includes a Pro Shop and Restaurant. The Waterton Park Community Association was formed in 1993 as a legally incorporated non-profit society. This Association assumed control of Waterton Lakes Golf Course for 25 years.	Users can pay for green fees through the Pro Shop.	Tee times and tournaments can be booked through the Pro Shop.	There is a five-year improvement plan whereby tee box reconstruction will be taking place.

Facility	Details	User Arrangement	Scheduling	Challenges/ Opportunities
Playground	There is a playground in town site. Fundraising is taking place to improve it and include a spray park and bike park. This area would be funded through fundraising and then turned over to Parks Canada.			

**MD of Willow Creek**

Facility	Details	User Arrangement	Scheduling	Challenges/ Opportunities
Clear Lake Hall	Clear Lake Hall is owned by the MD and is used for the 4H Club as well as weddings and similar events. The Hall is maintained by the Park Caretaker.	People can pay for the use of the Hall.	Scheduling is done through the MD Office.	
Playgrounds and park land in Moon River Estates	Park and play areas are maintained by the Park Caretaker.	People can simply use the green space.	Scheduling is not required.	

The MD of Willow Creek provides a grant to the Towns of Claresholm, Stavely, Granum, Fort Macleod and Nanton so that its residents would enjoy the same recreation facility use privileges as the residents the Towns.

## Conclusions

Alberta Southwest communities have a variety of publicly used recreation facilities, ranging from community halls and drop-in centres to outdoor sports fields and pools, arenas and rinks. Many of these facilities are aging and communities face a variety of challenges to balance the recreation and leisure needs of residents and visitors with budgetary pressures.

### 1. Usage:

- a.** Community halls and facilities that are used by residents for social events are vital to communities' identity. While many of these halls are aging and are not used as frequently as other recreation facilities, most communities have worked to keep these halls in good condition and available for public use. Management in most communities recognizes that usage will depend on community needs, which vary.
- b.** Ice arenas, curling rinks and indoor swimming pools are program and club dependent. That is, the more programs and club/associations that can be organized, the better the usage amongst residents and visitors. In many communities, personnel in charge of recreation programming try to coordinate "leagues", lessons, meets, tournaments, etc. to increase use and thereby corresponding revenues in order to offset operational expenses. Most communities would like to see their ice arenas, curling rinks and indoor swimming pools used more often.
- c.** Outdoor facilities such as outdoor swimming pools, outdoor skate parks, bike tracks, outdoor skating rinks, tennis courts, baseball diamonds, etc. are available seasonally and dependent on weather even in season. With the exception of outdoor swimming pools, most administrators accept that the facilities enhance the quality of life in a community and are used free of charge. Outdoor swimming pools place an additional challenge in that not only do users pay for use, but structured programming may be difficult due to weather. Again, increased use is desirable.
- d.** Recreational trends seem to dictate the popularity of facilities. For example, baseball was once very popular and this is slowly being replaced by soccer, requiring communities to now meet the demand for soccer pitches rather than baseball diamonds.
- e.** Golf courses, while seasonal and dependent on weather, rely not only on resident use, but also visitors. In southern Alberta, use is generally a function of weather, marketing, price and facilities. Golf courses in the region recognize that marketing these factors will impact demand and operate accordingly.
- f.** Agridomes and Agriplexes are typically operated by the agricultural society or board in a community and face the same challenges in terms of use as ice arenas, curling rinks and swimming pools. They are heavily dependent on interests, programs and club/association need.
- g.** While most CAOs and Facility Managers would like to increase usage of existing facilities, a common theme involves balancing resident accessibility with "over booked" external use. That is, before a facility can be made available for external use, administrators are challenged to ensure that the facility is accessible to residents when they require and when it is convenient for them. Therefore, many administrators

would be reluctant to implement either programming or scheduling initiatives that compromise their ability to control usage in favour of residents.

- h.** Timing is also an issue in regards to use. Peak times such as weekends are generally well utilized, while off-peak times such as week days and week nights are a challenge and require not only creativity in programming but acknowledgement of the market (demographic) that can utilize facilities during these non-standard times. Community demographics vary and will dictate the extent to which strategies may be successful.

## **2. Operations/Maintenance:**

- a.** Community halls are generally operated by either the municipality or a not-for-profit board or society. These facilities are most often subsidized and rely on either municipality or grant funding for operations and renovations. Involvement of clubs (such as Rotary Club) or boards and societies are critical in order to access funding. Scheduling occurs through the municipality office or the board/society directly. Scheduling processes are simple and traditional. A key challenge with these facilities is the decision to continue to improve or re-build given the age of halls in most communities.
- b.** Ice arenas, curling clubs and swimming pools for the most part are operated by the community, although in some cases, a club or a society may be involved in operations. Challenges faced include maintenance of aging facilities, costly operations, under-utilization, labour shortage, and balancing the needs of residents with visitor groups that help increase usage.
- c.** Tennis courts, ball diamonds, soccer pitches, football fields, spray parks, etc. are typically built through grant funding obtained through a society/board and maintained by the municipality. Typically, scheduling is not required as fees are not associated with use. Of course, in case of large group use, scheduling is required and nominal fees may be attached. The main challenge faced with these facilities is the maintenance and upkeep to ensure safe and proper use.
- d.** Skateboard parks, bike parks, etc. are built using grant funding obtained through a society/board and maintained by the community. Typically, scheduling is not required as fees are not associated with use. The main challenges associated with these facilities are maintenance as well as dealing with vandalism due to the fact that the facilities are typically outdoor.
- e.** Golf courses are generally operated by a club or a board. Scheduling occurs through the Pro Shop at the course and either tee-time booking programs or scheduling books are utilized. Challenges faced include weather as well as labour. Golf courses can be labour intensive, specifically in greens keeping, concession and eating facility operations, and pro shop operations.
- f.** Agriplexes are operated by agricultural societies or boards and rely on these for funding for maintenance and operations. Scheduling is done typically through the society/board or representative at the Agriplex and is typically simple and traditional.

## **3. On-line Scheduling:**

- a.** Several communities have investigated online scheduling software, with two communities having purchased the same software (MAXIMUM). Neither community have implemented the software to the point where “real-time” booking occurs. In fact, one community has expressly indicated that it will not go to real-time booking whereby a

user can request, book and pay for the rental of a facility without an employee reviewing the request. Issues of liability as well as fairness to rate payers were cited as reasons. Specifically, the community wants to ensure the chances of errors linked with booking over the internet are reduced, thereby eliminating the possibility of erroneous bookings that out of town users may be basing their plans on. More importantly, reasonable access to facilities for rate payers before entertaining users from outside of the community was stressed.

- b.** Almost all of the communities indicated that current booking systems were more than adequate, especially when considering cost versus benefit. In addition to liability and potential for being unfair to ratepayers, the financial costs associated with the initial software as well as ongoing maintenance and the cost of training various groups that operate and schedule facilities within the community were deemed to outweigh any benefits. Of note was the fact that with many facilities being operated by boards, societies or clubs, volunteers were responsible for scheduling. Software and systems training would be onerous or limit the use of volunteers.
- c.** Instead of online scheduling, a recommendation that was made numerous times pertained to using websites to provide information on facilities, times available, rental information as well as contact people and numbers.

#### 4. Infrastructure needs and issues:

- a.** It is clear from the preceding discussion on recreation facilities in Alberta and the benchmark information provided based on a sample of communities by ARPA that recreational facilities in the province are aging. Facilities in Alberta Southwest are no different. While most communities have done an admirable job of renovating, upgrading, improving and maintaining facilities, it continues to be of concern to administrators. Recreation facilities are necessary in order to maintain the quality of life in communities, but are capital intensive. Several communities face the decision of whether to continue to upgrade and renovate existing facilities or build new ones. Key in the decision is the cost to operate facilities due to increasing utility and energy costs.
- b.** A common issue pertains to the availability of funding. Most CAOs require information on grant funding availability for new buildings or to renovate existing facilities. In many cases, assistance in accessing grant funds would also be appreciated due to the heavy workloads of CAOs and the escalating requirements of funding agencies.

#### 5. Labour:

Labour for operations and maintenance is an issue. However, the challenge is not only finding qualified labour, but accessing individuals with an appropriate work ethic. CAOs have been creative in trying to meet this challenge and continue to seek assistance in this area.

#### 6. Challenges Unique to Specific Communities

- a.** Cardston facilities are closed Sunday, which limits the degree to which tournaments and other out-of-town activity can be attracted.
- b.** Communities within the Municipality of Crowsnest Pass face the challenge of transportation. That is, while facilities are available and well-maintained, usage by

residents is limited by the availability of transportation. The lack of public transportation makes it difficult for someone, for example in Coleman, to readily access the swimming pool in Blairmore. Therefore, residents may face challenges in using the facilities.

## Recommendations

In reviewing the information provided by administration, some suggestions have surfaced on possible assistance that Alberta SouthWest could provide member communities in relation to publicly used recreation facilities. Given that ORRSC can assist communities “map” recreation facilities if required and ARPA has the systems in place for communities to provide infrastructure information on recreation facilities and therefore receive benchmark information, Alberta SouthWest’s role can be focused on *capacity building*.

1. Grants - Alberta SouthWest can communicate availability of grant information as it becomes aware of it. Grants can cover new facilities, renovations, energy efficiency initiatives, etc.
2. Grant Writing Training - Funding agency information requirements are escalating. CAOs do not have the time and in some cases as much experience in meeting requirements of grant applications. Many now require “business cases” to be submitted. Alberta SouthWest may be able to build capacity in this regard by coordinating training sessions for CAOs and others who are required to complete extensive grant applications.
3. Marketing Information - While it would not be the role of Alberta SouthWest to coordinate regional recreation events that increase usage of facilities, the organization can assist by coordinating information sessions featuring speakers who can provide Facility Managers and CAOs information on how facilities can be utilized to a greater extent. CAOs are often left wondering if more and different things can be done to meet the challenge of under-utilized facilities and if diverse in-community programming can better meet resident needs. Fresh ideas and new perspectives from experts in the industry that can educate administrators would be an ideal way for Alberta SouthWest to build capacity. Related to this would be ideas from experts on how best to market facilities both within the communities and outside of the region using tools such as the website, brochures, etc.
4. Planning Expertise - Many communities are faced with the prospect of aging facilities and the impending decision of whether facilities should be renovated, or new facilities built to replace them. Again, Alberta SouthWest can play a role in coordinating information or training sessions on lifecycle and capital planning. Sessions may even be coordination in conjunction with an organization such as ARPA. Information gathered from these sessions would enable CAOs to prepare a “case”, both for decision makers within the community as well as for grant applications.
5. Marketing - Currently, Alberta SouthWest website has information on activities, accommodations, etc. in the region. In fact, much of this information can be retrieved through a searchable database. With the information on facilities in each community collected as part of this study, Alberta SouthWest can include all recreation facilities on the website along with information on accessibility and contacts for booking. While this would not allow online booking, it would provide another portal of information for those outside of the region that may be interested in utilizing facilities within member communities.

In general, it is clear that recreation facilities are critical to the quality of life in communities. They are typically under-utilized and this is apparent when a cost/benefit analysis is conducted. Alberta SouthWest can assist in communicating availability of grant funds for facilities, marketing the facilities in the region, and assisting with capacity building in the areas of grants, marketing and planning expertise.