

DISCUSSION

The 2008-2018 Plan (attached as Appendix I) preparation process included the following key elements and findings:

Background Research – The start of the process coincided with the release of results of the 2006 Canada Census, which provided valuable information to inform the Plan. In addition, the work included reviewing:

- the City's current inventory of parks, facilities and programs;
- current trends and best practices in Parks, Recreation and Culture services; and
- other City plans and reports.

Public Involvement – Surrey residents participated in the process through a survey that was sent out by mail and was also available on-line through the City's web site. Meetings were held with a large number of community organizations and agencies, and public meeting forums were held in each of the six town centres. Following presentations of the draft Plan to Council, two open houses were held, with residents given the opportunity to provide comments on the draft Plan. The draft Plan was also posted on the City's web site. A compilation of public comments on the draft Plan is attached as Appendix 2 to this report. Approximately, 150 individuals provided comments/input through the two open houses and/or via the City's web site.

Response to Input/Comments – The consultants and staff have reviewed all of the input received and have made some adjustments. Although not all of the suggestions can be satisfied, the Plan is balanced in relation to the needs and interests of the broad array of stakeholders.

Council and Committee Input – All related Committees of Council, such as the Development Advisory Committee, Agriculture Advisory Committee, Parks and Community Services Committee, etc. were given the opportunity to provide input to the Plan. Council was engaged in the Plan development process through two workshops and received a presentation of the draft Plan at a Council in Committee meeting.

Plan Content – The Plan contains the following sections:

1. *Executive Summary*, including recommendations and strategic directions.
2. *Introduction*, outlining the purpose and objectives of the Plan, as well as trends, best practices, and demographic information.
3. *Planning Methods*, documenting the basis on which planning for Parks, Recreation and Culture Services and programs was undertaken.
4. *Specific Findings* for each of the key areas of Parks and Open Space, Cultural Services, Recreation Services, and System-Wide Issues.
5. *Implementation*, including presentation timeframes for initiation of the recommendations along with estimates of related operating and capital costs.

Plan Findings - While the Plan includes a variety of recommendations, it is important to note that the public is generally satisfied with parks, recreation and cultural services, and makes extensive use of recreation and cultural programs, parks and facilities. In comparison to previous surveys of the public, there is a greater awareness today of the importance of personal health and fitness, and of the importance of the natural environment. There has been a significant increase in overall levels of participation in recreation and cultural services over the last 10 years and the use and interest in trail systems continues to be strong.

The proposed 10-year (2008-2018) Strategic Plan was prepared in recognition of the City's expected financial capabilities over time. The Plan also recognizes that partnerships may be appropriate and necessary in relation to the development and delivery of some programs, facilities and services to meet the demands of the community in a cost-effective manner.

Annual Plan Review: Subject to Council approval of the proposed Plan, Parks, Recreation and Culture staff will undertake a review of the Strategic Plan on an annual basis to ensure that it continues to reflect the needs and interests of the City's residents in relation parks, recreation and culture services and emerging opportunities and trends.

CONCLUSION

The final Parks, Recreation and Culture Ten-Year (2008-2018) Strategic Plan is attached to this report as Appendix I and is recommended for adoption by Council as the basis for the delivery of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services to the citizens of Surrey over the next decade.

Laurie Cavan,
General Manager
Parks, Recreation and Culture

Attachments: Appendix I: Parks Recreation and Culture Ten Year (2008-2018) Strategic Plan
Appendix II: Summary of Public Comments/Input on the Draft Plan

APPENDIX I.

Parks, Recreation and Culture Ten-Year (2008-2018) Strategic Plan

APPENDIX II.

Summary of Public Comments/Input on the Draft Plan

PR&C 10-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN RESULTS OF PUBLIC OPEN HOUSES MAY 29 & 31, 2008

1. What aspect(s) of the Plan do you like?
 - Anything to do with sports, keeping children off the street
 - We need a new pool. The over population of the south surrey area demands that the facilities be kept up as well
 - From the overall recommendations, the acquisition and planning of parks, greenway/blueways seem to interest me the most. They will be followed by the recommendations regarding street trees, horticulture, and addition/development of leisure centers
 - Any aspects which provide more “active” facilities which provide youth with engaging and sporting activities. Most of all those aspects which allow youth to engage in these activities in South Surrey
 - It all sounds great but specifics are missing. We badly need a washroom at our Park (Kennedy). When can we expect that to happen? When can we expect improvements? (ie. Playground)
 - That you actually have a plan in effect!! For too long facilities, parks have been created by community demands, shifts in population or increased population
 - Appears generally for public participation only. Some expansion for public use. Believe report largely to improve public use to the detriment to existing actual facilities
 - Rec Centre in Cloverdale. We are in dire need of additional ice in Cloverdale. Specifically for the figure skating group. This ice needs to be a year round facility
 - I am focused on lawn bowling only, so this plan is unsatisfactory to my interest
 - Continued development of Surrey’s trail system. Budgetary partnership with Engineering to expand greenway connections to connect to main road cycling network
 - At least we’re thinking ahead. Hopefully a lot of these plans will come about.
 - The continued development of the city’s trail system. More recreational spots for the youth such as skateboards facilities & indoor facilities
 - 2.4.3 In area behind Fleetwood Community center. As a senior I feel a lawn bowling green would be an asset, excellent exercise, etc. for all ages but esp. for older people. A clubhouse or this could be dual purpose as an amenities bldg for bowlers & as a “seniors” centre

2. Do you have any thoughts or concerns related to Parks, Open Spaces and the Environment that you feel should be more thoroughly addressed in the report?

- Only that if we have to leave catchment to train or play, it is environmentally un friendly/as we drive
 - All the driving to the pools in van costs be good for the environment plus I get nervous walking through parks at night with all the kids drinking
 - My thoughts are related with the acquisition of open spaces. We have to guarantee that every resident have an open space within a close walking distance and preserve natural habitat as well. Large sport complex are good, but we should keep & acquire green spaces (parks) Surrey City of Parks
 - Only that an increase in local facilities means that people will not need to travel as far which cuts down on car caused carbon emissions
 - When will signage be replaced? Folks that live around here don't even know this green space has a name
 - There is definitely a dire need to protect into perpetuity "wild, natural, open spaces" continue the development of cycle paths/trails/dedicated cycle routes. Yes we need to ensure dogs do not roam free on soccer fields, rugby, baseball and playground
 - No comment – no concern
 - N/A
 - Clayton community hall should be relocated and a new Senior's Centre built. Senior's need to keep active to be healthy
 - Bicycle, parking facilities with consideration to placement, for security and shelter
 - We must have a separate acquisition program to acquire another large natural area for future generations & to protect our diminishing natural environment. We need something on the Stanley Park equivalent
 - I would like to see an expansion of the Surrey lawn bowling club, such as the space in Fleetwood, 160th & 83rd. This is a "senior" area and being seen will enable the expansion of this sport. Plus our washroom facilities are inadequate, especially when we have tournaments. Only "1" can use then at a time.
 - Clayton park – no adequate parking – both sides of 70th ave often used when parking lot full – emergency vehicles can not get thru
3. Do you have any thoughts or concerns related to Cultural Services and Facilities that you feel should be more thoroughly addressed in the report?
- We need a new pool
 - The City should limit the amount of banquet halls development in the City. They do not reflect the multicultural trend that this City is experiencing, plus diminishes the opportunity of the City of getting any revenue from facility rental
 - No comment
 - Stewart Farm, a workshop definitely requ'd now to restore farm machinery else it will become junk. Workshop needed to build touring facilities for main museum. Use volunteers under direction of curator to restore & manufacture. I volunteered 20 years at Burnaby Village Museum restoring artifacts and worked with union people for manufacture what was req'd
 - Guildford community requires a pool facility addition to Guildford recreation center. This was the top issue from 2 community surveys, we are all waiting since 1994
 - N/A
 - The event and activities in Surrey are exemplary, particularly the Arts Centre which features impressive cross-cultured exhibitions
 - Should have more community garden & develop a world class arboratium
 - Seniors in the Fleetwood area are not given consideration as their only facility is in the Fleetwood Community Centre. This Fleetwood area is very fast growing, which a

large percentage of people being seniors. This is an area that is in dire need to be addressed

- It seems like these services are already being developed through concerned people
4. Do you have any thoughts or concerns related to Recreation Services and Facilities that you feel should be more thoroughly addressed in the report?
- We need & want a large multi sport (aquatic) facility like Walnut Grove
 - We need more swim related activities for the immediate area
 - I used to live near Tamawanis Park, being minority non-caucasian, I still didn't feel included in a casual floor hockey game where the players were not sharing the area not even including me to the game
 - The pool in south surrey is grossly old and lacks space and features to properly support south surrey's needs. A new pool center is greatly needed
 - It's probably outside the bounds of this report but why isn't Kennedy Park listed in the "Leisure Activities" book?
 - More careful monitoring of who uses public facilities eg> businesses who charge fees for participants should pay to use Parks facilities (Running stores, boot camps, personal trainers, pro-team camps, soccer camps, rugby camps, etc. etc.)
 - Suggest – a full blown blacksmith shop in association with a full workshop
 - The two reports we submitted on behalf of the lawn bowling community of South Surrey was not even mentioned in the Plan
 - SW-6: Develop new recreation facility for seniors (replacing old community center in Clayton) in Surrey. The lawn bowling clubhouse is old and in need of repairs. Signing to the club is also very small. Lighting is poor
 - The need for local squash courts
 - Most other municipalities have municipal squash courts except for Surrey and there are none in the 10-year plan. Even Richmond has several, our multi-cultural, squash-playing mix, I think the lack of squash courts is appalling
 - More energetic services for young people. Golf & curling are NOT energetic activities for young people
 - Lawn bowling club currently in Clayton is out of the way. Suggest using the space in the open field next to Fleetwood Community Centre for a new bowling green. Suggest adding a multi-purpose room, as proposed for the Fleetwood community Centre, for the use of a lawn bowling as well as for other senior activities
 - Just that costs are low to enable our young people to get more involved
5. Do you have any thoughts or concerns related to General Administrative issues that you feel should be more thoroughly addressed in this report?
- No
 - The new activities should be priced where everyone can attend
 - No concerns raised at this point
 - No comment
 - I have a strong feeling that there is a lack of consideration of lawn bowling in Surrey. Surrey contemplates only one facility, while White Rock has two
 - Have a feeling that developers are controlling political decisions
 - I don't have enough knowledge to comment on this question

- Leisure Guide is inadequate – overall advertising of events – esp. at Fleetwood very poor – improving but still fall short. Signage overall – very poor. Clayton park is an example – most people are unaware of it's existence

6. Do you have any other comments regarding Parks, Recreation and Culture services in Surrey?

- Aquatics is the largest participation sport in Canada
- The sooner the better. Gas prices are way too high to be driving that far to swim (which is HEALTHY)
- Yes, I would like more green areas available throughout the City. Build some capital to build a multicultural center and promote more heritage centers, museums & the art gallery (relocate it to Whalley/City Centre?)
- Get a new pool! Big like Walnut Grove
- I am devastated that history has repeated itself, in terms of consideration of lawn bowling in South Surrey. It is an unacceptable omission.
- Will be interested in development of facilities at Kwomais Park. I'm a member of Ocean Park Community Arena
- Fleetwood Community center staff needs to be trained to deal with senior needs. I.e. immature young people cannot relate effectively with Senior needs
- I love our many parks and hope they continue to grow as communities are growing so fast
- I am impressed with Fleetwood Park on 80th ave – well tended (perennial garden) and well used. Picnic and waterpark very well used. – good to see. Also boulevards on many roads look great – many visitors have remarked on this

7. Do you live in Surrey?

- South Surrey
- South Surrey
- Fleetwood
- South Surrey
- South Surrey
- South Surrey
- South Surrey
- Fleetwood/Guildford
- Fleetwood
- Fleetwood
- Fleetwood

/ljr

From Surrey Environmental Partners

Initially, thank you for the opportunity to respond to the draft. However, the exercise for this plan began in at least March 2007. It was not until 27 May 2008 that the draft was available to the public on the city website and the open houses were held 29 & 31 May with the deadline for responses 13 June 2008: 2 weeks and 3 days.

This has not been an adequate time for thorough consideration of the draft. There should have been at least a month provided, particularly given the time it has taken to prepare the draft. The shortage of time has precluded opportunity for arranging discussions, outside the open house events, with staff, during which time explanations of items in the draft could have been obtained. It is a lengthy and detailed document which could not be adequately covered at open houses nor could the open houses be adequately prepared for prior to their occurring. Further, it has proven difficult for some to be able to respond easily with the document on the computer, for note-taking purposes. Printing at home is expensive for volunteers – hard copies should have been made more readily available.

The Comment Sheet, to be adequately completed, requires much more organization than has been possible within the time frame provided. Therefore, this response will deal with the draft as prepared.

Overview

There is no vision, no great plan for parks here. It reflects more a suburban environment rather than that of a city; for example, a Great City with/among great parks and riparian areas for living, working and playing. No city or cities have been provided as examples to show what a great park-city our city could be. Now is the time for foresight, for capital investment in irreplaceable resources, natural area parks as passive parks as well as conservation parks for Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA).

There is no clear statement about the services, to the Public Good, of Natural Areas/ESA and the need, therefore, to expand the percentage of them in the portfolio of Surrey's park system for biodiversity maintenance, enhancement and preservation. The need for a greater percentage of the city budget to invest in increased Natural Capital or an increase. This draft seems to be about the possible/achievable rather than the desirable, essentially the status quo, with increases for sports and the built.

The acquisition of environmentally sensitive areas needs to be seen as at least the equivalent of capital investment in built recreation facilities and the construction of sports fields, and separate from the acquisition of natural areas parks.

No matter how well we may have been doing, we can and must do better. Surrey is rapidly running out of appropriate lands for natural areas parks and ESA conservation locations. If the city would say, Natural Areas and ESA are around which the built environment will be located, it would have it splendidly. Rather than fitting those in where possible as appears to have happened too often.

General

Surrey Environmental Partners (SEP) provided a paper to the strategic plan process. Important items left out of the draft are:

- Surrey is part of the Pacific Flyway and has international responsibilities
- Policies and practices have placed the issue of natural areas, contradictorily, at the forefront of city publicity but at the back of the agenda insofar as allocation of resources to obtain and appropriately manage Surrey's natural resources/Natural Capital
- Trees and natural area parks must be acknowledged to be an additional essential city infrastructure, green infrastructure of equal importance to roads, drains and power transmission.
- Co-ordinator for environmental matters
- Internal citizen committee to speak in favour of natural areas
- 3 massive natural area parks, later identified as Living Legacy Parks

- Classification of Natural Area Park, separate from neighbourhood, community and city, is unclear
- ** No percentage of parks to be designated Natural Area Parks, excluding City Forest Parks from the percentage: SEP believes 60% - 65% suitable
- Sports fields must have natural area components: hedgerows along at least one side and large canopy trees for natural cool shade for players' breaks as well as for viewers' protection
- Assess all city-owned properties for retention as part of Parks' inventory
- **Develop a Natural Areas Acquisition Plan by November 2008 (sic)
- Establish a City Environmental Planner/Co-ordinator senior position
- Develop a Wildlife Protection and Habitat Conservation By-law and supporting policies and Plan by November 2008 (sic)
- Ensure a position on the City Parks, Recreation and Culture Committee be identified for Surrey Environmental Partners to provide an ingoing voice for Surrey's natural areas and urban ecosystem
- Trees and Urban Forest Canopy percentage of 47% - 50 % as reasonable, excluding agricultural lands; and industrial and commercial areas should have a canopy of 25%
- More evergreen trees planted throughout Surrey
- The SNNAP programme to be operationalized and function year 'round

SEP was pleased to see the draft recommend that natural areas in the various category parks be included, expanded parks classification system, natural area corridors for wildlife movement, more staff and resources needed, the "Last Child In the Woods" referenced illustrating the need for natural areas parks experience for children

The Draft

- pge 3, land uses: concern that recreation and natural are 8.5% which is so very far away from the unscientific Brundtland 12% (present scientists say it should be approximately 50%). Agriculture cannot be included in the reckoning.
- Pge 4, population, no reflection of the real possibility in the future of environmental refugees (e.g. Richard Balfour's estimates)
- Pge 5, important to emphasize growth magnitude placing pressures on need for new open spaces and natural area preservation
- Pge 7, error in assuming a single "senior" cohort rather than dividing into more discrete cohorts which would place differing requirements for resources, nor is there consideration for uneven gender spread among seniors
- Pge 8, does not appear to strongly enough emphasize one-person households among the older and seniors
- Pge 8, should more strongly emphasize children living in poverty
- Pge 9, strongly question whether Boomers will produce many volunteers and the episodic aspect will have negative implications for groups in the community – see pge 10 re leadership and gaps in non-profits
- **Pge 14, **** Surrey is reducing its possibilities for birding due to the constant removal of shrubby areas and understory of trees
- **Pge 14,** Climate change, no comment re impact on flora and fauna and the need to have reserves/refuges – this also relates to need for refuges due to development
- **Pge 15,** no specific Natural Areas Acquisition Plan developed and Parks does not attend EAC meetings as a matter of course
- Pge 16, are the 3,000 volunteers separate people who do activities, or the totals of people who do activities, e.g., one person counted each time doing different activities?
- Pge 19, re Benefits Based Approach: Natural Areas Parks are of maximum benefit to the Public Good without use for leisure activities. Also, concern about the emphasis on "least possible cost to the taxpayer" and will this allow achievement of what is desirable versus merely achievable?
- Pge 20, Strongly support "Support Local Groups" and hope that there will be no-cost rooms for environmental groups to use to meet, at the Nature Centre, perhaps
- Pge 20, strongly support "Protect Natural Resources"
- Pge 22, note that stewardship = recreation, in "Foster Individual Volunteerism"
- Pge 24, No. 6, Concur, and would add special investment needed in Natural Capital/Infrastructure acquisition of natural areas and ESAs
- Pge 25, no. 8, use native plants to beautify
- Pge 26, no. 9, encourage greater education
- Pge 26, no 11, we need more and spread out .

- Pge 30, note most used areas
- Pge 31, 2.2.3, Yet, so far it does not appear that the importance to citizens has been reflected accordingly
- **Pge 33**, the question was not, “do we need more?”, which we do, nor was it about the percent needed, which SEP says should be 60% of all parks. Unless there is such a percentage, there will continue to be the feeling and concern that natural area parks are simply sports parks or built rec. facilities locations in waiting. Note, 23% somewhat or very dissatisfied is very significant
- Pge 33, Newton is the largest area of Surrey, it should be divided into several components, e.g., west, east, south
- Pge 38, not for profits usually obtain grants, which is indirectly private sector
- Pge 39. 2.3 What were the spaces “ha don’t curenly exist in the community” in which there was interest?
- Pge 40, Newton, which part of Newton wants a nature preserve? Good idea
- Pge 40, Newton, strongly support not extending 84th to King George Highway
- Pge 41, note Cloverdale’s concern about loss of natural areas denoting lack of fore-planning and acquisition.
- Pge 42, 2.5.1, how is it that “exotic” sports fields = need, whereas 3 Living Legacy parks are not included? Have they somehow been described as “demand”?
- **Pge 42**, 2.5.2, Please note, “heritage assets” include natural areas and ESAs, treed areas with understory, mature trees located along blvds which should be conserved rather than cut down to make straight sidewalks.
- Pge 43, 2.5.2, who will be able to afford the 800 seat theatre?, Bell is 1,000, prohibitive for most community groups
- Pge 44, 2.5.4, strongly support. “additional staff resources in all areas...”
-
- Pge 44, Concern that with Themes, and then compacting into Headings, that the process gets further and further away from what is important. Extending Current Service Levels should encompass the 3 Living Legacy Parks which are intended to provide for an increased population, past 10 years but for which there needs to be provision now
- **Pge 45**, Figure Three, agree with the first 2, but more money is needed than proposed for acquisitions, and this applies to the 3rd item which should include natural areas and ESAs as well as built heritage
- **Pge 46**, strongly disagree with low rating of “more community meeting space” and “more admin space for community groups” and this would seem to be at odds with the Sustainability Charter, Social Scope which addresses “enabling groups”
- Pge 46, Sep has since come out in favour of a Marine education/interpretation center as well as the Nature Centre
- **Pge 47**, comment, huge money goes into synthetic turf surfaces and built facilities and there is not comparable investment in ESA acquisition
- **Pge 48**, 3.2, support Overview; need greater amount of funds to acquire natural areas and ESAs as they are becoming more and more scarce. Wonder what is meant by “new systems to ensure protection of local ecosystems”
- **Pge 49**, 3.3, include children in Fitness/Wellness and that relates to the “Last Child In the Woods” recommendations re involvement in instructured play and contact with natural areas
- **Pge 49**, 3.3, in Changing Interests, Natural areas are called “passive”, therefore, if there is increased pressure, there needs to be more of them due to the nature of the resource and the speed with which those areas can become degraded by too much use.
- **Pge 49, 3.3**, strongly support “Unlimited Access”
- **Pge 50**, 3.4, Lend-A-Hand...we regret that Surrey is no longer to be known as “The City of Parks” for at least that ‘handle/brand’ gave us something to work toward. There is concern that the new branding will not recognize that a city for the future will place paramount importance on the environment and natural features’ conservation and enhancement and assign the built environment to a secondary position.

- Pge 50, re outdoor field allocations, see reference to “under-utilized ball diamonds” and recall the decision to increase the diamonds through a span of natural forest in the south of Surrey to increase the number of ball fields to 5 from 3.
- Pge 50, 3.4, Stakeholders and volunteerism. Concern about the apparent increasing dependence on volunteers. Also, there is a contingent who do not feel well heard by Parks, for example, concerns about the ESA at Blackie Spit and dogs and dogs off leash at parks during nesting and birds’ migration resting, enforcement issues.
- Pge 52, Generally we agree with the new parks classification. Destination Parks. We wonder what exactly “potential developed” might mean. Green Timbers is radically cut up with roads across which it is difficult and dangerous to go, indeed, it seems to need a car to get from one special part to another. How developed would an “Urban Forest” be before it is not a forest? Isn’t Crescent Beach already a destination park? We wonder if Holland Park and Cloverdale (64&176) are City Parks or Town Centre parks. .
- Living Legacy Parks could be either Destination Parks as we see them to be “iconic” or City Parks.
- Confused about the definitions of City Parks. There is the impression that there will be conservation areas/ESAs which would be large, and that Natural Areas would be quite a bit smaller and that that implies that many parks or areas we now refer to as natural area parks would then be developed with “multiple opportunities for recreation” so that there would be a great net loss in natural area parks in Surrey. This has serious implications for the wildlife of Surrey. This section is somewhat unclear.
- Pge 53, Neighbourhood Parks, “small” is inadequate as a measure; perhaps a percentage should be provided such as 25%.
- Pge 54, School Parks”, include “also educational opportunities” along with “recreational”.
- Pge 54, exclude/delete any mention of Campbell Valley Regional Park, it is not adjacent to South Surrey and cannot be considered a “Surrey park”, it is clearly a “Langley Township park.” This fits with the comment at the end of the section. However, we do think that they should be taken into consideration for planning connections for wildlife only.
- Pge 54, Parkland Acquisition. This should read, “Financial opportunities” are declining.... The time to invest/buy is now. We should not be waiting, for the supply of natural areas/ESAs is going to dwindle.
- Pge 55, para 5: does this relate to natural areas? Para 6: does “park purposes” mean “athletic purposes” and does “environmental purposes” also means “ecological purposes”; where are “wildlife purposes”?
- Pge 55, under Parkland Acquisition Strategy, first bullet, are “recreation areas” different from “parks”? Last bullet, would this include former ESAs, increasing potentials, rehabilitation of lost ESAs?
- Pge 56, Greenways and Trails, would this be equivalent of the Galloping goose Trail in Victoria? Agree with this and strongly agree with bullet 4, “separation...”
- Pge 57 Park Infrastructure. Statistics show that the maintenance level of natural area parks is less than 50 % of what it should be and likely it is even less but there is only clear data back to 2000. Pge 57, unclear what “modern CPTED” is.
- Pge 57, strongly support last para re street trees and their maintenance.
- Pge 58, Natural Area Planning. Disagree with statement that there has been “a lack of control when it comes to planning and regulating habitats and areas of ecological significance. Zoning is the method of control and Surrey has not taken advantage of that where it could have to conserve and protect the natural areas and ESAs. It has seemed that Parks has often gotten the “leftovers” of developers. As well, Surrey chose not to establish riparian setbacks of 30 metres everywhere it might be considered to be a riparian area as other municipalities have done.
- SEP strongly agrees with the rest of this section except for the riparian areas; as indicated above, Surrey chose not to keep setbacks at 30 metres and now they can be quite less.. We place extra emphasis on full para 1 on pge 59, “There was clear consensus...” It is very significant that this assessment was agreed with by regional, provincial and federal officials. Also para 4, “A similar issue arises...” and para 5 “Greenbelts, greenways...” for extra emphasis. We would add that there needs to be a Green Infrastructure Assessment in Surey.

- Pge 60, Street and Shade Trees, as above, we believe there should be a percentage attached to the urban forest canopy cover.
- Pge 60, 3.5.8, Park Environmental Guidelines, SEP agrees with this section. Assume that the initial para refers to the costs of re-creating natural processes. Particularly like bullet 3 with “holistic principles”. Would like there to have been a stated frequency for updating Environmental Guidelines. And, add, Natural Areas (sic) Acquisition Policy in Recommendations.
- Pge 62, bottom para, concern about the light pollution factor, especially when these fields are anywhere near natural or conservation areas. As we assume artificial turfs can be established anywhere, it bodes well that important natural areas or patches will be able to be conserved as worst value land can be used for the turfs.
- Pge 63, 3.5.10, Park Infrastructure, see above regarding planting hedgerows and large canopy trees at sports fields. Also, consider alternate picnic table construction to facilitate those who have difficulty getting legs over attached bench-seats at standard picnic tables.
- Pge 64, 3.5.11, Outdoor Programming and Nature Play. Perhaps we need Park Rangers who enforce and are always in the parks. SEP has advocated for SNAP programme to be operationalized and year-round. It would be nice to see hills or mounds for rolling down and areas where the grasses grow high for running through and for chasing flying insects.
- Pge 65, 3.5.13, Dog Walking could also be facilitated on neighbourhood streets for community building. As above, concern about enforcement of dogs off-leash in restricted natural areas.
- Pge 66, Green Timbers, what is/are Biodiversity Action Teams, would they be confined to this park? More detail desired here.
- Pge 72, Environmental Heritage. SEP has long maintained that conservation of ESAs and natural areas and significant road-edge trees are matters of heritage.
- Pge 92, item SW-12, we strongly support this.
- Pge 95, Department Mandate, 6.2.4, we agree with this pertaining to the environment.
- Pge 96, Technology, para 2, agree there should be the correct resources for GIS and Amanda upgrades and current software particularly with the turnover of staff.
- Pge 96, Human Resource Challenges, 6.2.6, agree with this, particularly bullets 1, 2, 3, 4; as well, page 97, first two full paragraphs.
- Pge 97, last bullet, concern that there would need to be staff to monitor properly; it is apparent that developments cannot now be monitored in a timely fashion or by-laws enforced in parks in a timely manner.
- Pge 98, Use of Volunteers, 6.2.8, see above for comments on volunteering; again express concern for groups in the community which are having difficulties attracting volunteers who are prepared to fill administrative/executive positions and/or remain involved over the long haul. Conform Boomers prefer short term projects.
- Pge 100, One Time Capital Costs do not include extra investment for ESAs.
- Pge 102, Private Donations: there are longstanding rumours and rumbles that when there have been offers of land as donations or gifts by citizens and developers, that they have been turned down by Parks because of a lack of resources to manage the properties. This is of great concern if true and puts the obtaining of properties via this route in jeopardy. Can the City really afford not to accept any land donations given the ever rising cost of land. Certainly there is precedent for areas to be more densely “parked” than others, for example, the Semiahmoo Peninsula.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to have been able to respond to the draft. Would that there had been a greater amount of time in which to do so and perhaps more succinctly while more thoroughly.

Deb Jack
Surrey Environmental Partners
(completed 16 June 2008, unedited)

j:\park-recl\wpcentre\corprts\2008\prc ten-year strategic plan.doc
LJR 7/16/10 11:27 AM

-----Original Message-----

From: Zimmerman, Kathleen AL:EX

Sent: June 12, 2008 10:14 AM

To: Parks, Recreation and Culture

Subject: Feedback on Surrey Parks, Recreation & Culture: Ten year strategic plan

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Ten Year Strategic Plan. In compiling my responses, I have followed the outline of the Comment Sheet questions that were distributed at the Public Open Houses. In addition to being a resident of Newton, I am also the Regional Agrologist for the BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands who works with Surrey, and I sit as an ex-officio member of the Surrey Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC).

In general, my comments are intended to encourage the Strategic Plan to take into account agricultural needs and interests when parks or recreational activities are planned to be in or adjacent to the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), and to preferably find locations for these uses outside of the ALR. For the most part, the ALR is not even mentioned in the report, except for a somewhat ambiguous comment on page 52, which is discussed below.

1. What aspect(s) of the Plan do you like?

As both a Surrey resident and a professional agrologist, I particularly like recommendation CS-4 "Commission a study of programs and exhibits for the Stewart Farm Site." The Historic Stewart Farm is a wonderful asset for Surrey, and should be capitalized on. This site could play a great role in increasing awareness of Surrey's agricultural community, both past and present. Once the study has been completed, funding to create the programs and exhibits should also be budgeted for.

2. Do you have any thoughts or concerns related to Parks, Open Spaces and the Environment that you feel should be more thoroughly addressed in the report?

There are a number of places where the report alludes to comments received at the community forums (Section 2.4), that have implications for land use in the ALR.

For example, in section 2.4.2 in the South Surrey forum "the city was also encouraged to continue to work with landowners and others toward the use of dykes along the local rivers." While this sentence is capturing comments received at that forum, it would be important to clarify somewhere in the report (perhaps in Section 3, "Parks and Open Space", or in the Needs Assessment section 2.5.2 which calls for "Improved management of the use of dykes") that the dykes along Surrey's rivers are, for the most part, privately owned, in the ALR, and that the farming community and the Surrey Dyking District have expressed grave concerns about the impacts of trespass and vandalism if the dykes were used as walking trails. Many Surrey residents do not understand that while dykes in other municipalities are publicly owned, the dykes in Surrey are predominantly privately owned.

In section 2.4.3, forum participants "...mentioned a need for additional parks and open space east of Surrey Lake..." I would suggest that the report clarify, again perhaps in Section 3, that the area east of Surrey Lake is in the ALR, and would not be a suitable site for future parks or open space plans. As the ALR allows for all types of agricultural uses, it cannot be guaranteed that that area would remain in open space (e.g. it could be used for non-soil based agriculture).

In section 2.4.4 Cloverdale forum participants "...suggested that the city should give early consideration to the development of Mound Farm Park...", which is reiterated in section 2.5.1 "Clarity of the future of Mound Farm Park." As this park is in the ALR, and the surrounding farmland (46 ha) which is part of the park property is leased to a Surrey farmer, it would be important to note in the report that part of the future planning should involve the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) and the Surrey AAC to ensure that agriculture is not negatively affected.

On the top of page 52, there are three paragraphs that start with the sentence "The issue of parks supply in a community that has significant Agricultural Land Reserves (ALR) and where several large blocks of parkland are restricted by ALR land use designations tends to limit the utility of these parklands for other-than-agricultural purposes." It ends with the sentence "It is the consultant's opinion

that a revised parks system is required that better suits the needs of current residents and those who will move to the community in the coming years."

It is not clear to me what the intent of these three paragraphs are, especially the meaning of the final sentence. If the consultant is pointing out that the ALR and future park development are not necessarily compatible, I would certainly agree with that conclusion and would like to see it more explicitly stated. I would strongly encourage the city to reconsider the strategy of putting parks in the ALR. In the interests of food security, the amount of ALR that is removed from availability for food production should not be expanded. A land use inventory that the Ministry conducted in Surrey in 2004 found that there are already 352 ha of parks within the ALR. In addition, future parks and recreation development should be placed near the existing town centres, to encourage use and to encourage Surrey residents to walk rather than drive to parks and recreational facilities. Putting future parks and recreational facilities in the ALR has negative impacts for agriculture, increases the potential for urban/rural conflicts, and increases vehicle use.

Finally, there are a number of other recommendations that may also have implications for the ALR, which I will list in order:

- P-2 Revise parkland acquisition strategy (hopefully to land outside of the ALR, closer to urban centres?);
- P5a Update and complete the new Greenway/Blueway Master Plan in consultation with the Engineering Department (would any of these proposed cycling/walking paths include land in the ALR?);

- P5b Continue the development of a city-wide trail system in new and existing parks (ALR implications are unclear);

- P-11 Update the Natural Areas Strategic Management Plan (One of the bullets in section 3.5.6 on page 58 states that "Much of Surrey's current and potential biodiversity arises from the preponderance of agricultural lands and yet the primary purpose of those lands is to meet agricultural, rather than environmental needs." Natural areas must be set aside outside of the ALR, as the primary use of the land in the ALR must be for farming. Farming can and often does, provide environmental benefits, but in order for farms to survive they must have the flexibility to respond to market forces and change commodities when needed. This means that the environmental benefits farms can offer may change over time. The ALR cannot be counted on as the sole means of providing biodiversity benefits.);

- P-13 Update a Park Priority Management and Acquisition Plan related to riparian requirements and wildlife corridors in cooperation with the Planning and Engineering Departments. (As much of the city's riparian areas fall within the ALR, and 100% of the ALR is classified as ESA by the City, what are the potential impacts to the ALR from this recommendation?)

It would be helpful to add some explanatory text in each of the sections that the recommendations are located in, as to the extent to which these recommendations would impact the ALR.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide comments. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require clarification on any of these points.

Kathleen Zimmerman

Kathleen Zimmerman, P.Ag.
BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands



Submission by

The Arts Council of Surrey

On behalf of Member Groups

Arts Community Input Into

The Parks Recreation and Culture

Draft Strategic Plan

2008

Final

June 13, 2008

Introduction

This submission is a response to the City of Surrey Parks, Recreation and Culture Strategic Plan Draft Report (5). The following input and expression of priorities is derived from a previous meeting of Arts Council of Surrey members with the Plan's authoring consultants, viewings of information at public Open Houses and a large roundtable discussion with stakeholders and City staff.

For over forty years, the Arts Council of Surrey (ACS) has diligently and effectively worked, as it's mission statement says, "...to promote and foster the arts - literary, performing and visual - in the City of Surrey."

ACS is in a well-grounded position to express the needs, current status and visions of local visual, performing, textile and literary arts organizations. It is the area's main gateway group for the city's artistic community, working on behalf of its 315 individual, business and arts group members, which combined represent over 5,000 direct contacts. The number of local people benefiting from the activities and projects of ACS is in the tens of thousands annually.

The current Parks, Recreation and Culture Strategic Plan may undergo future adjustments to some of its recommendations and action items. But on the whole, the Plan will act as a blueprint for developing long-range capital projects. Therefore, a high priority for the City of Surrey must be to continue to support and build resources that create awareness and appreciation of the artistic achievements of our community.

It is important to note that our current major art facility does an admirable job of being responsive to community requests and identified needs. But just as the economic disparity gap is widening between high and low family incomes, the cultural disparity gap is rapidly widening between the facilities, galleries and cultural amenities available in Surrey compared to nearby cities with much smaller populations.

Artists and performers who are already here in Surrey are seeking venues and resources outside our city, being frustrated with a shortfall of support here.

The members of ACS have identified the four main points they wish to stress:

- 1) the need to create community arts space in Surrey City Centre
- 2) the need to ensure that town centres have accessible and responsive public places for artistic activity
- 3) the need for a cultural and arts inventory to be conducted to determine needs and gaps in service
- 4) the need for increased and steady centralized funding for arts in Surrey through a Civic Cultural Granting Program

Surrey City Centre

Studio spaces to accommodate both traditional and new emerging arts are severely lacking in Surrey. Other than ad hoc showings in lobbies and libraries, there is no community gallery space. There is also extremely limited rehearsal space for the performing arts.

Artist-run spaces are mentioned in the current draft of the Plan, but it suggests that they be added to existing recreation centres, or possibly to other new buildings as they are constructed. Although display of art in recreation centres may be a way for artists to gain exposure and find a base for sales, a freestanding facility would have the distinct advantage of having a specific identity, with better climatic conditions for artworks, expertise available for exhibition purposes, conveniently consolidated resources and knowledgeable staff and volunteers for optimum services.

A Surrey City Centre community facility would have the potential to:

- Become the focal point of an expanding cultural precinct within the city centre, with future related amenities being developed as a result of new artistic activity
- Contribute to urban regeneration in the North Surrey area
- Act as a resource centre to provide information to the arts community, assisting in researching and coordinating grant opportunities
- Establish a permanent community-driven infrastructure with numerous opportunities for public/private partnerships
- Provide affordable, accessible regular meeting space for arts groups
- Create studio spaces, intercultural art areas, and places for non-conforming and new arts (ie. Digital media, electronic music, spoken word)
- Be an effective venue for reaching young artists, encouraging and mentoring them by having experienced artists on hand, thus encouraging the development of local emerging talent in the performing, visual and literary arts
- Generate wider-spread interest in Surrey as a place to visit and model, based on the economic, educational and artistic successes of its central cultural precinct

Such a purpose-built centre should be largely community-run and should accommodate flexible schedules, physical accessibility, transportation issues and offer necessary display and rehearsal space.

Firehall #10 Conversion

To further the cultural development of town centres within Surrey, specific facilities need to be made available. The conversion of Firehall #10 in Newton into an arts and culture centre would temporarily address an immediate need for rehearsal, meeting, teaching, working and community exhibition space. It would serve as a place for artists to display and sell their works, a place for artists of all disciplines to come together to contribute, as the Strategic Plan states, to “fostering the beauty of our city”.

By utilizing an existing Surrey building, the City would be saving capital costs, allowing a currently empty firehall to be refurbished to serve the surrounding community as a public artistic meeting place. Independent artists and groups, whom previously could not find rehearsal and display space in the Newton area could now be accommodated.

With City support, ACS could effectively administer activities at the site and be an enriching presence in that town centre.

Needs and Space Inventory

Numerous artists and performers who demonstrate great excellence already live and work in Surrey. However, they are looking elsewhere and slipping away.

Local existing and emerging talent in the performing, visual and literary arts must be supported in our own community, or this talent will, and often currently does, seek other venues outside Surrey. The adage “Build it and they will come” becomes “Build it and they will stay”.

The Arts Council of Surrey fields several requests a month for information about rehearsal, meeting, studio and performance space. A comprehensive and updated inventory of artist needs and existing space is required to assess our current state.

ACS is a logical partner in undertaking such a study. It has a large member base already and past experience of connections with current resources and shortfalls.

Arts Funding

In the current plan there is a projected budget of nearly \$150 million dollars, with \$3.5 million or barely 2.3% allocated for arts.

There has never been a better time than now for our City to explore a fundamental rethinking of the importance of all genres of the arts to Surrey.

If current allocation ratios are simply maintained, even with future funding increases to all areas, the gap between sports / leisure and arts / culture will continue to exist.

There needs to be an increase in the actual percentage of budget allocation specifically to arts. An exploration of other progressive cities would be a good base of how to affect change here in Surrey.

The Surrey Tourism and Convention Association estimates that each visitor to Surrey spends an average of \$145 per day on accommodation, transportation, meals and retail purchases. Multiplied by the thousands of annual visitors who come to Surrey for such events as the Surrey Festival of Dance, the International Writer's Conference and the Envision Jazz Festival, a significant annual economic contribution directly related to arts activities becomes evident.

A Cultural Grant program set up by the City would go a long way toward ensuring that arts funds annually are distributed responsively to local groups and individual artists. Surrey could model other Canadian cities' successful programs such as the Regina Civic Arts Program or Prince George's Cultural Grants allocations. This funding can be used toward new initiatives, supporting existing proven services, and addressing community requests and needs.

Social Impact of the Arts

Far less quantitative, but undoubtedly very real, are the social effects of fostering arts and culture in a community. Many of the arts cross cultural, language, gender, generational, and experiential barriers. Events such as the recent Children's Festival and the upcoming Fusion Festival are prime examples of projects that help develop community identity and improve understanding of different cultures.

Artists, working alone or collaboratively, play very central roles in Canadian society, as innovators who advance new ideas and creative thinking. They add to the vision of Surrey as a great place to live with a civil society that includes arts.

Conclusion

The arts in Surrey are already here. We would like them to stay here and flourish.

To that end, ACS respectfully but firmly raises the points above and puts them forward for consideration and incorporation into the Cultural Strategic Plan.

These points are based on many years of involvement in and observance of our local dynamic and under-supported artistic community. Creating a city centre arts place, converting Firehall #10, conducting a needs and resource inventory and establishing increased and reliably administered annual arts funding are all necessary to encourage a healthy arts community.

From this base, our young city can develop and expand artistic offerings that are engaging, joyful, thought-provoking, humbling and awe-inspiring. And surely, that will enhance Surrey's community cohesion and its residents' daily lives.