

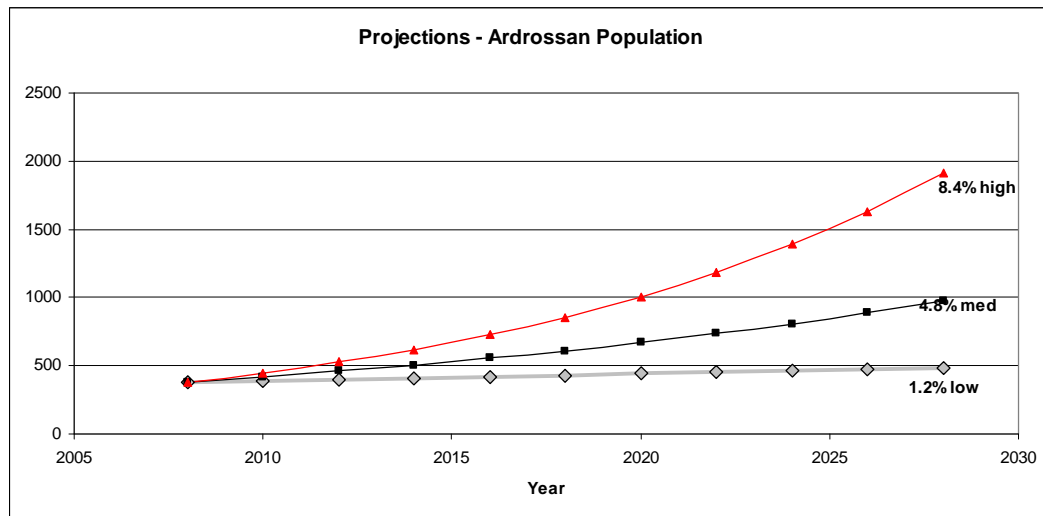


5.0 Trends and Research

5.1. Population and Demographics

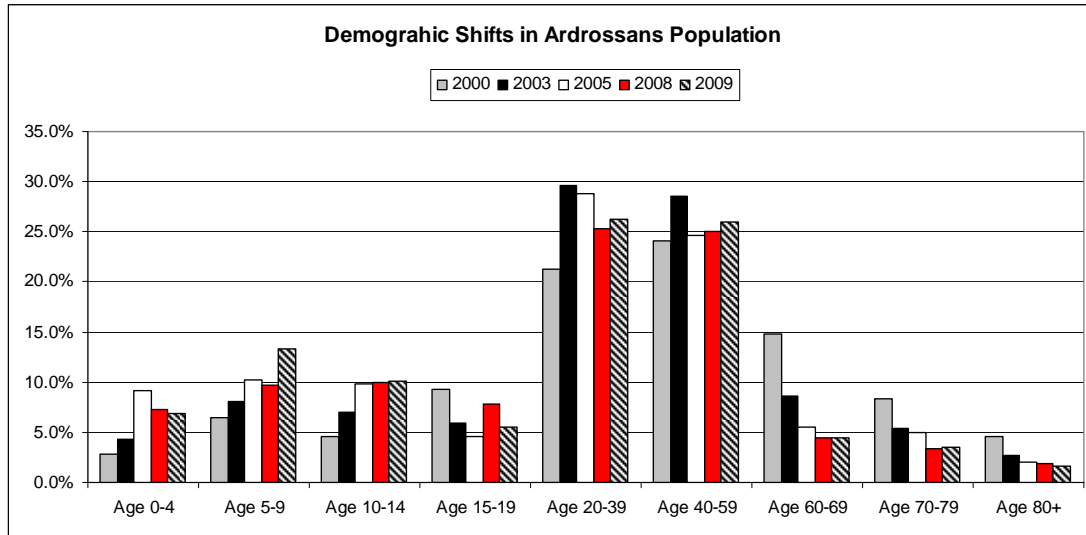
The hamlet of Ardrossan has experienced significant growth over the last number of years. Ardrossan’s population of 382 has more than doubled from the 2003 population of 186. On average, Ardrossan’s population grew by about 21% each year from 2003 to 2008. This growth rate has moderated however more recently. From 2005 to 2008 the average yearly growth rate was 8.4%.

The following graph shows projections for the population of Ardrossan using three different rates of growth. According to these projections, in 2028 Adrossan’s population could range from 485 to 1,917. Growth rates of 1.2%, 4.8%, and 8.4% are used⁴.



The following figure illustrates the changes in the composition of Ardrossan’s population since 2000. The proportion of the population sixty years of age and older has declined dramatically from 28% of the population in 2000 to 9% of the population in 2008. Looking at the proportions of the population 20-39 years and up to 14 years, one could conclude that much of growth in the hamlet is within families with children.

⁴ The low annual growth rate of 1.2% is Strathcona County’s projected growth rate for the rural service area. The high growth rate of 8.4% reflects the annual growth rate of Ardrossan from 2005 to 2008, while the mid rate of 4.8% represents the mid point between the two rates.



5.2. Recreation Trends and Participation

Trends indicate that there are decreases in structured and organized activities such as team sport and increases in spontaneous activity participation such as walking / jogging and fitness / wellness activities. As well, an increasing number of activity choices for all ages suggest there is a need to provide multi-use spaces that accommodate as many different types of activities as possible.

5.2.1. From Structured Participation to Unstructured Pursuits

In a 2005 research document produced by Statistics Canada titled “Sport Participation in Canada, 2005”, between 1992 and 2005 participation rates in organized sport dropped from 45% to 28% of the population. People want more flexibility in timing and activity choice, moving away from structured team sports to spontaneous activities such as fitness / wellness, leisure swimming, walking, and open gymnasiums for spontaneous activities. People are seeking individualized, informal pursuits that can be done alone or in small groups, at flexible times, often near or at home.

5.2.2. Children’s Participation in Sports

In its Summer 2008 edition of Canadian Social Trends, Statistics Canada examines trends in regular sports participation of children aged 5 to 14 from 1992 to 2005. In the article entitled, “Kids’ sports”, 24% of children participated in sports if their parents were not involved in sports in any way. If parents were involved, even just as spectators of amateur sports, children’s participation rates more than doubled (62%).

5.2.3. The Alberta Recreation Survey

The 2008 Alberta Recreation Survey⁵ identifies the top activities undertaken by households:

- Walking for pleasure;
- Gardening;
- Attending a fair or festival;
- Attending a sporting event as a spectator;
- Doing a craft or hobby;
- Bicycling; and
- Swimming (in pools).

Notable Participation Rates Decreasing

The 2008 Alberta Recreation Survey provides some insight as to changing levels of participation in the Province of Alberta over the past 20 years. The most notable decreases since 1988 included:

- Fishing (50% to 28%);
- Softball / baseball (34% to 12%);
- Ice skating (not hockey) (46% to 23%);
- Attending live theatre (65% to 45%); and
- Dancing (47% to 27%).

While some of the decreases are a result of an actual decrease in interest in those activities, some of the reduction is a result of access to a greater variety of activities, in other words there are more choices available.

As well, Albertans felt that they had less time available and switched to those activities which were easier to fit into already busy schedules, or they stopped participating in those activities which required more structured environments, such as court sports, team sports, or special playing areas.

Notable Participation Rates Increasing

Increases in household participation were noted as well in a number of activities from 1988 to 2008. These included:

- Playing video games (37% in 1988 to 54% in 2008);
- Attending a fair or festival (50% to 62%);
- Aerobics / fitness (30% to 45%);
- Weightlifting / body building (27% to 34%); and

⁵ Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation. www.tpr.alberta.ca/recreation.ars/default.aspx

- Day hiking (31% to 38%).

Barriers to Participation

The top barriers to participation in recreational pursuits were (not presented in rank order):

- 1) Economic barriers including entrance or registration fees, and equipment costs;
- 2) Time commitments associated with work, other activities, and family;
- 3) The condition of the recreation facilities – older, poorly maintained facilities limit the amount of participation;
- 4) Overcrowded recreation facilities or areas; and
- 5) No opportunity near their home / cost of transportation.

5.3. Other Trends Impacting Recreation

5.3.1. Aging Society

The provincial population is aging. The next twenty year period will result in a greater number of middle aged and senior adults that will seek recreation activities that will keep them healthy and involved. This may mean providing more adult oriented low impact sports such as walking trails (inc. indoor tracks); low impact fitness / wellness outlets; increased social activities; cultural / performing arts activities; and nature activities.

Strathcona County has been proactive in supporting its “aging” population through the development of the Strathcona County Older Adult Plan (currently underway) as well as through the offering of recreation and leisure programming for older adults.

5.3.2. Forming Community Partnerships

Governments at all levels have been clear that they cannot fund all the demands for constructing and operating recreation resources. Because of this, governments prefer to provide funding when community groups with common interests work together. That helps ensure that government funding helps as many groups and participants as possible. For example, a municipal government would be more likely to provide funding to help develop an activity room if a drama club and a youth organization would share the space compared with a situation in which the drama club and youth organization each asked for funds to develop their own separate room.

5.4. Inventory and Assessment of Existing Facilities

Ardrossan is the focal point for developed recreation facilities in the area east of Sherwood Park. These facilities are identified and described in the following sections. The map following Section 5.4.4 is labelled with each of the existing facilities.

5.4.1. Sports Fields

Ardrossan has a significant number of sports fields. The inventory includes:

- eight (8) soccer fields,
- four (4) baseball diamonds,
- one (1) football field,
- one (1) track,
- four (4) tennis courts,
- four (4) outdoor basketball courts,
- one (1) outdoor skating rink, and
- one (1) lawn bowling green.



The majority of the fields are located near the schools while the remainder are situated near the Ardrossan Recreation Complex. Many of the existing sports fields require repairs and upgrading in order to better accommodate players and spectators. Some fields have inadequate playing surfaces. Only the football field and track are equipped with lighting, bleachers, and a field house/change facility. Through the Sports Field Strategy, the need for artificial, fully serviced sports field throughout the Country is being reviewed. Ardrossan may, or may not, be a potential site for an artificial turf field.

Parking for the sports fields is shared with the school and community theatre lots which are inadequate to serve both functions. Cars are usually parked along Range Road 222 due to the lots being full. There is also a lack of a defined entry to the sports fields behind the school as the access is located between the High School gymnasium and the bottle depot.

5.4.2. Trails

There are two trails located in the municipal reserve lands along the Pointe-aux-pins Creek. The paved trail, which runs along the east side of the creek adjacent to the new residential development, is 600m in length. The granular trail, located on the west side of the creek near the historic community, is 325m in length.



The two trails are not linked and do not connect residents with the schools, sports fields, or recreation complex. As a result, the majority of pedestrian traffic through the community takes place on the shoulders of Range Road 222 and along the streets which creates an unsafe environment for non-motorized transportation through the study area.

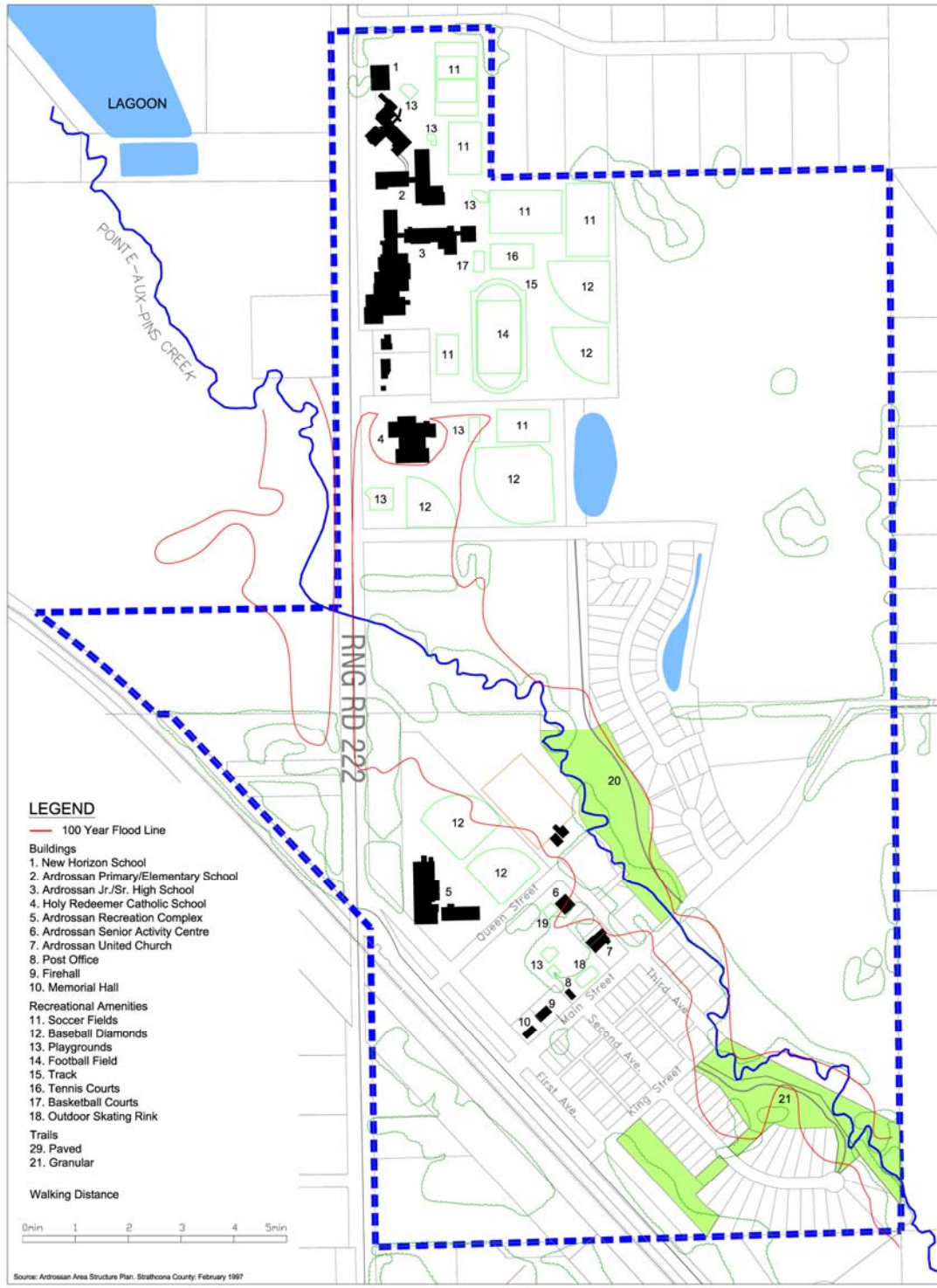
5.4.3. Open Space/Parks

There is a large, level grass area south of the Recreation Complex which currently provides flexible open/event space for the community. During the winter, an outdoor skating rink is created in this area which is used for free skating without sticks and pucks. The open space is centrally located in the community, within a five minute walk of most residents, but it is not linked to the residential areas by trails. It is also in close proximity to the Recreation Complex and can therefore make use of its services. As of right now, this area is not accessible by foot from the schools site. In addition to the open space, there are five playgrounds located at the schools and an additional two located in the central park near the Senior Centre. Snowbank rinks and leisure skating areas are provided at various parks and open spaces within the hamlet. The location of these rinks and leisure ice surfaces is typically determined in the fall and varies from year to year.

5.4.4. Ardrossan Recreation Complex

The Recreation Complex is a significant indoor recreational asset in the community. Located near the hamlet centre, the Complex includes an ice arena, curling rink and lounge, a multipurpose room, and two offices. There is also a full size gymnasium that serves as a large community hall able to accommodate banquet seating for 400 people. The hall comes with a fully equipped kitchen and bar. There are two ball diamonds adjacent to the Recreation Complex as well which will be relocated upon the development of the Ardrossan Recreation Complex Infrastructure Reinvestment Project.





Strathcona
County



EXISTING CONDITIONS
ARDROSSAN COMMUNITY RECREATION MASTER PLAN
ARDROSSAN, AB

Scale: 1:2500
Date: 2009-09-29

L01

5.5. Public Lands Profile (Description & Infrastructure)

The Ardrossan community is experiencing significant growth and as a result, a large portion of the area is zoned for residential development. However, there is a large amount of public land within the study boundary which provides opportunities for recreational amenities.

The large area adjacent to the schools as well as the land surrounding the Recreation Complex provides ample space for recreational opportunities and community gathering/events. Reserve lands created in the proposed developments as well as through Public Utility Lots (PULs), easements and utility Right of Ways (ROWs) can be utilized for trail linkages between residents and recreational amenities.

There is also a significant amount of land within the 1:100 year flood limit of the Pointe-aux-pins Creek which restricts development and will therefore be designated as municipal or environmental reserve. Trails are permitted throughout these areas and can potentially be used to provide opportunities for residents to experience nature and wildlife.

5.6. Site Assessment

As part of the creation of the Community Recreation Master Plan, a physical assessment of the community was undertaken to evaluate the site's developmental opportunities and constraints. The assessment addressed the environmental, spatial, amenities, and circulation related issues of the Ardrossan community. This physical assessment influenced the Master Plan as it highlighted the community's recreational assets as well as issues which needed to be addressed in the development of the Master Plan.

The numerous sports fields within the study area present a great opportunity for recreation for residents of the Ardrossan community. An upgrade to the surface conditions, services, and spectator accommodation would create a premier recreation destination within Strathcona County. Consideration will be given to sports fields in Ardrossan in the overall Strathcona County context through the Sports Field Strategy (currently underway).

The current parking and entry to the sports fields is an issue and needs to be addressed to improve public access to the amenities. Currently, parking is shared between the sports fields and schools which is insufficient as vehicles often park along Range Road 222 when the lots are full. The current capacity of the parking around the schools is 235 stalls. Additional parking should be integrated near the sports fields in order to improve access to the amenities.

Pedestrian circulation throughout the study area is in need of improvement. The existing trail system is insufficient to accommodate non-motorized transportation throughout the community and therefore poses a constraint for access to recreational

amenities. Existing Municipal Reserve and Environmental Reserve lands (MR/ER), PULs, ROWs, and reserve lands set aside in future developments provide opportunities to enhance the connectivity between the recreational facilities, schools, and residents. By improving the trail network, pedestrian traffic could be drawn off Range Road 222 and community streets and directed along a system of paved and granular trails. As a result, a safer and more accessible community could be provided.

The existing environmental reserve lands situated within the 1:100 year flood line of Pointe-aux-pins Creek pose a constraint as development within is restricted. However, these lands can be used for trails development and to provide opportunities for residents to interact with wildlife and nature.

5.7. Facility Usage Assessment

The usage information gathered relates to scheduled use of the rectangular fields in Ardrossan as well as one of the ball diamonds⁶.

Regarding the rectangular fields, the bookings were limited to the late spring / early summer. While Fields E, F, and Vic Chemelyk Field were booked for a single Saturday in late May for football, typically the fields (B, E, F, G, H) were booked during the weekdays – mainly Monday through Thursday by the Soccer Association. As might be expected the Soccer Association had the fields booked during the evenings. Fields E, F and Vic Chemelyk field are all utilized on a spontaneous basis throughout the summer for a variety of field sports and as practice and game venues for football during the fall.

Diamond 1 was booked by Minor Baseball in a similar manner as were the rectangular fields. See the following table.

Rectangular Field	Months	No. Bookings	Time
B	May - June	32	6:30 – 7:30 pm
E	May – July	23	7:30 – 9:00 pm
F	May – July	16	7:30 – 9:00 pm
G	May – June	32	6:30 – 9:00 pm
H	May – June	32	6:30 – 7:30 pm
Diamond	Months	No. Bookings	Time
1	May – June	29	6:00 – 8:00 pm

It is important to note that the Sports Field Strategy will assess usage levels at the various sports fields throughout the County and will recommend upgrades to existing, as well as development of new, sports fields where required. This will have an impact on the use, and future development/upgrade of sports fields in Ardrossan as well as other areas throughout Strathcona County.

⁶ The information relating to sport field usage was provided by Strathcona County's facility bookings service.



The Ardrossan Recreation Complex is utilized by the Strathcona Minor Hockey Association and other ice user groups. It is also used by recreational hockey players. The Ardrossan Strathcona Figures Skating Club provides programming out of the arena weekly throughout the season. Also weekly, the Ardrossan Recreational and Agricultural Society hosts public skating in the arena. The gymnasium in the Recreation Complex is used by the Ardrossan Yatran Dancers. As well it hosts numerous community events and meetings throughout the year.

5.8. Community Engagement

A number of community engagement activities were convened in the development of this Master Plan. Two community visioning sessions were held early in the process in order to help identify the key elements of this Master Plan. These two sessions are described in the following section.

Once a draft Community Recreation Master Plan had been developed, community stakeholders were provided with formal opportunities to provide feedback. This community engagement activity is described in Section 6.5.4 Public Review Open House.

5.8.1. Community Visioning Sessions

Two community visioning session were held to give local volunteers and the general public opportunity to provide valuable direction for the development of this Community Recreation Master Plan. These sessions were held at the Ardrossan Recreation Complex on May 12 and 13, 2009.

Participants started the session by describing their vision of recreation in Ardrossan over the next twenty years. They identified recreation programs and activities that they would like to see in the community in 2029. For the outdoor activities they identified a list of necessary outdoor facilities and amenities that would support these activities and programs. Some of these outdoor facilities and amenities currently exist in the community and participants provided an assessment of their condition and identified any necessary improvements. Descriptions were provided for any new facility or amenity. Finally, participants prioritized the facility development and redevelopment necessary to achieve their vision.

The first session convened on May 12, 2009 included representatives from active community groups. Twenty-two groups were represented at this session are noted as follows:

- Scouts
- Ardrossan Elementary School
- Ardrossan Recreation & Agriculture Society
- Ardrossan Volunteer Fire Fighters Alumni
- Elk Island Catholic Schools
- Outcast Theatre
- Ardrossan 4H Creative Hands
- Strathcona Pony Club
- Bisons High School Football
- Ardrossan French Playschool Association
- Ardrossan Strathcona Figure Skating Club
- Ardrossan Yatran Ukrainian Dance Association
- OverActing Imaginations Youth Theatre
- Strathcona Rein Riders
- Strathcona Curling Club
- Ardrossan Curling Club
- Ardrossan Junior/Senior High School
- Ardrossan Junior/Senior High School Parent Advisory Council
- Ardrossan Youth Park Initiative
- Parent Link
- Strathcona 4H
- Strathcona Minor Hockey Association

The second session was convened on May 13th with members of the Ardrossan community. Affiliation with any community group was unnecessary. Three community members participated in this session.

Community Assets

Participants began the session by discussing and listing the positive attributes of the Ardrossan community. People spoke about those attributes that are often typically associated with a small town: quiet, safe, sense of community, feeling of belonging, and peaceful. Other things mentioned included:

- Proximity to city services,
- Variety of community groups/organizations and activities,
- Schools and their variety of programs,
- Strong volunteerism,
- Accessible facilities both inside and outside, and
- The open space.

Primary Interest Areas for Open Spaces

A number of main themes/priorities emerged from the output of the two sessions.

1) Community Trails: This theme was raised throughout the sessions by participants even when



discussing other outdoor facilities or amenities. Participants spoke of a trail system that was integrated throughout the hamlet connecting community amenities and facilities, schools, and the residential areas. The existing trail system was described by one participant as, "...going nowhere." The existing system relied heavily on the roads and the highway in the community.

The trails would accommodate numerous forms of non motorized transportation including pedestrians, cyclists, roller bladers, and wheel chairs / scooters. **Paved trails were preferred** because they better accommodated wheeled transportation however it was recognized that the development of a connected trail system, even if it was gravel to start, would be a significant addition to Ardrossan.

Interconnected routes were desired to ensure the system was used. This may necessitate bridge crossings over the creek. The availability of benches and garbage/recycling receptacles along the trail system was also suggested.

2) Skateboard Park / Youth Park:

The temporary skateboard ramps situated at the Recreation Complex were deemed unsafe due to their location and their structural integrity. Significant support was expressed

for a permanent park that would provide a safe facility for the community's youth. **A permanent in-ground concrete structure** would also allow the use of BMX bicycles. This initiative has been identified in the community in the recent past and planning for a new skatepark has been initiated by local groups.



3) Sports Fields / Diamonds:

There was general consensus that the community was endowed with a sufficient number of sports fields however the quality of the fields was called into question. The fields were generally seen as in need of repair to address bare spots and gopher holes. While the football field is well equipped with washrooms, change rooms, and lights, participants felt that these amenities would be important additions for field and diamond users as well.



Access to these fields / diamonds was seen as in need of improvement. A number of session participants spoke about few access points through fences to get to the facilities. Fences were described as being pushed over to facilitate access. Ensuring these community facilities are accessible from any trail system is paramount. Throughout the meeting reference was made to the upcoming Sports Field Strategy and how it may impact the provision of sports fields in the community and broader Strathcona County.

4) Social / Event Space: A fair amount of discussion took place about a **central space for the community to convene events**. The field area adjacent to Memorial Hall and the Seniors' Centre was identified as a current area that enables these kinds of activities, however a number of improvements were articulated. For the most part these improvements would see the current field area transform into a more manicured park with more amenities.

Suggested improvements included: benches, picnic tables, a gazebo, amphitheatre, fire pits, landscaping (trees), water and electrical source, garbage and recycling bins, and public art.



5) Spontaneous Use Open Space: While the Social / Event Space would provide for spontaneous use, suggestions were offered that would see spontaneous use open space integrated throughout the community. In particular, tobogganing was mentioned as a specific spontaneous activity that required development of a site. Provision should also be made in any of these areas for observation/supervision opportunities, for example benches.



6) Change Rooms & Washrooms: What ever the facility within the community, a need was expressed that users of a facility have access to suitable change and washroom facilities. This certainly does not imply that each outdoor facility or cluster of facilities would have their own dedicated change rooms and washrooms, but rather that access is available to these amenities be made available in nearby facilities (i.e. the Recreation Complex) where available.

Secondary Interest Areas for Open Spaces

A variety of other areas were addressed in the sessions.

1) Equestrian / Rodeo Facility: Situated on the edge of the hamlet, this facility would have a grand stand, corrals, holding pens, chutes, jumping, and horse trails. There was some suggestion that camping would be available on the site as well. The Green Hectares Business Plan (2008), which was developed based on recommendation from the OSRFS, was mentioned as a current initiative addressing the need for equine/rodeo facilities from a County-wide perspective.

2) Spray Park: A facility with a focus on children. Aside from the playful water elements, change rooms and a concession were necessary elements. The upcoming Aquatics Strategy, originating from the OSRFS, was identified as having an impact on future outdoor spray parks in Ardrossan.



3) Leisure Skating Ice: The outdoor rink is currently available but could be improved with lighting, a concrete floor, and change and washroom access. As well a temporary snow bank rink is constructed during the winter. The addition of some seating and lighting in addition to the change and washroom access was considered sufficient.

5.9. Trends and Research Summary

The priorities identified by session participants, along with broad recreation trends, and the Open Space and Recreation Facility Strategy (OSRFS) present some implications for the planning of outdoor facilities and amenities in Ardrossan. The following table identifies the most requested outdoor recreation facilities. For each facility a check mark indicates if the development of that facility is recognized in the broad recreation trends. A check mark in the last column indicates if the particular facility is recognized in the OSRFS.



Outdoor Facilities, Parks and Open Space Priorities	Visioning Priorities	Industry Trends	OSRFS: Rural
Community Trails	✓	✓	✓
Skateboard Park	✓	✓	✓
Sports Fields / Diamonds	✓	✓	✓
Green Field Spaces	✓	✓	✓
Spray Park	✓	✓	✓
Social / Event Spaces	✓		✓
BMX Bicycle Parks	✓		✓
Leisure Skating	✓	✓	
Equestrian / Rodeo Facility	✓		