

6.0 The Future of Recreation in Ardrossan

6.1. Vision

The following vision statement for recreation in Ardrossan involves providing opportunities to enhance the quality of life for all residents, from children to seniors. Healthy lifestyles are encouraged through the provision of spontaneous and structured recreation amenities.

Public recreation opportunities in Ardrossan are safe, accessible, affordable, and interconnected. These opportunities are provided in partnership with active community groups and individuals, so as to optimize the use of public funds, and in such a way that impact upon the natural environment is minimized.

6.2. Goals

The following goals have been prepared as a foundation for the recommendations contained in this Master Plan as well as to provide direction for future Strathcona County decision making in relation to future recreation, parks and open spaces.

- The development of **new outdoor recreation facilities and amenities should leverage existing facilities and community assets** when and where possible. The school site has a myriad of recreation assets as does the hamlet centre (i.e. Recreation Complex, Memorial Hall, Seniors' Centre, etc...). Development should foster the continued use of these hubs as gathering areas in the community.
- The various existing **community hubs in the hamlet should be fostered and should be interconnected**. The school/community theatre hub, hamlet centre, and residential areas should be connected in a manner to both facilitate and encourage non vehicular traffic flow. Community members should be able to travel around the community on an integrated trail system.
- **Safety should be a primary factor** when assessing new outdoor recreation facility development opportunities. Consideration should be given to overall



- visibility of facilities as well as to the separation of vehicular traffic from non motorized traffic (i.e. pedestrian, bicycle, roller blades, scooters, etceteras).
- A **multi-use approach should be taken** whenever possible. This refers to the avoidance of single, dedicated use facilities or amenities in terms of activity type or user. This approach helps leverage the value of the assets to the entire community. This can also be reflected when the community uses school facilities and visa versa.
 - Any development should **respect existing land designation, be it Municipal or Environmental Reserve or Conservation Easement**. This means that development will not encroach upon but will both respect and enhance the reserve lands and natural areas within the community.



6.3. Master Plan Strategic Themes

The Ardrossan Community Recreation Master Plan is presented in four separate themes. These themes have been developed based upon data collected and constraints inherent within the hamlet of Ardrossan (i.e. roadways, environmental reserve, etc...). The four separate themes are:

1. The creation of a walkable community;
2. Places for community gathering;
3. Places for specialized activities and youth: and
4. Teams sports

The following hamlet of Ardrossan Site Master Plan represents the compilation of ideas and components that best meet the needs of the community as a whole.



Ardrossan Community Recreation Master Plan

Walkable Communities • Community Gathering • Specialized Activities for Youth • Play Team Sports



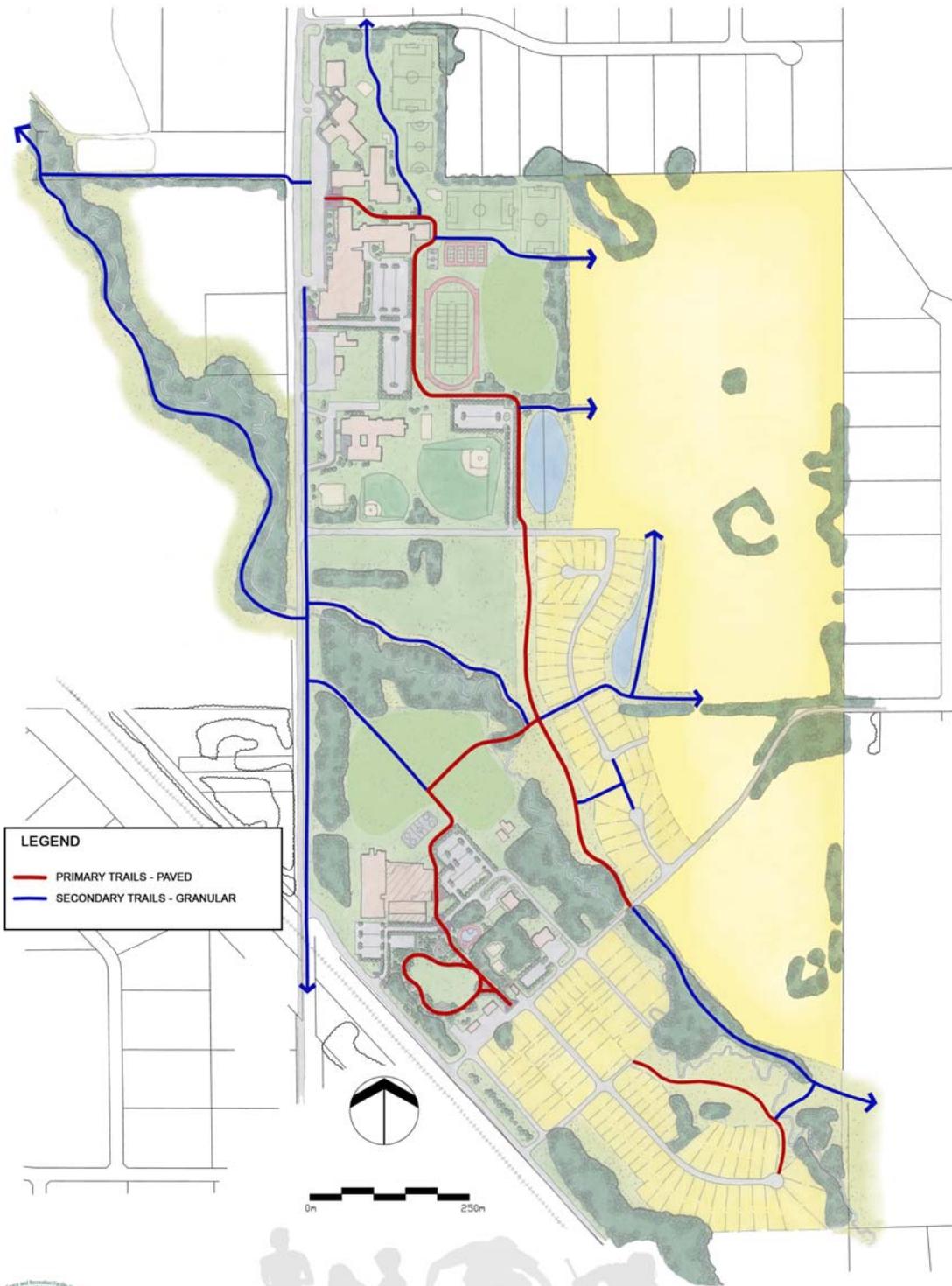
6.3.1. Walkable Community

A primary goal of the Recreation Master Plan is to create a walkable community by connecting residents with community amenities, facilities, and schools. A network of paved and granular trails is used to draw pedestrian traffic off the highways and roads and to provide safe and accessible connections between residents of both existing and future residential areas and the community amenities.

The trails accommodate various forms of non-motorized transportation including pedestrians, cyclists, inline skaters, and wheelchairs/scooters. As development continues, granular trails can be upgraded and paved in order to meet the growing needs of Ardrossan. These trails should be developed not only to provide access and connectivity to community resources but also to divert traffic away from sensitive and/or inappropriate areas (i.e. preventing trails through sports fields, etc...). Asphalt trails will be most appropriate in some areas while granular in others. The decision as to whether or not to have asphalt trails versus granular trails in certain areas should be based upon existing and expected trail use, land designation, expected operational/maintenance impacts and public input. The County's existing Trails Master Plan outlines certain trails standards for different types of uses and land designations. The following proposed trails are indicative of the existing standards as outlined in Strathcona County's Trails Master Plan (1998). Benches and receptacles will be strategically placed along trails to provide places to rest and dispose of litter. As identified in the Strathcona County Older Adult Plan (2009) designing walking trails considering the "Principles of Universal Design" is important as it will ensure that older adults will be able to access and utilize existing and new trail systems. The Ardrossan Community Recreation Master Plan also provides regional Strathcona County trails, as outlined in the Open Space and Recreation Facility Strategy, which run alongside Pointe-Aux-Pins Creek outside the hamlet boundary.



The Creation of a Walkable Community



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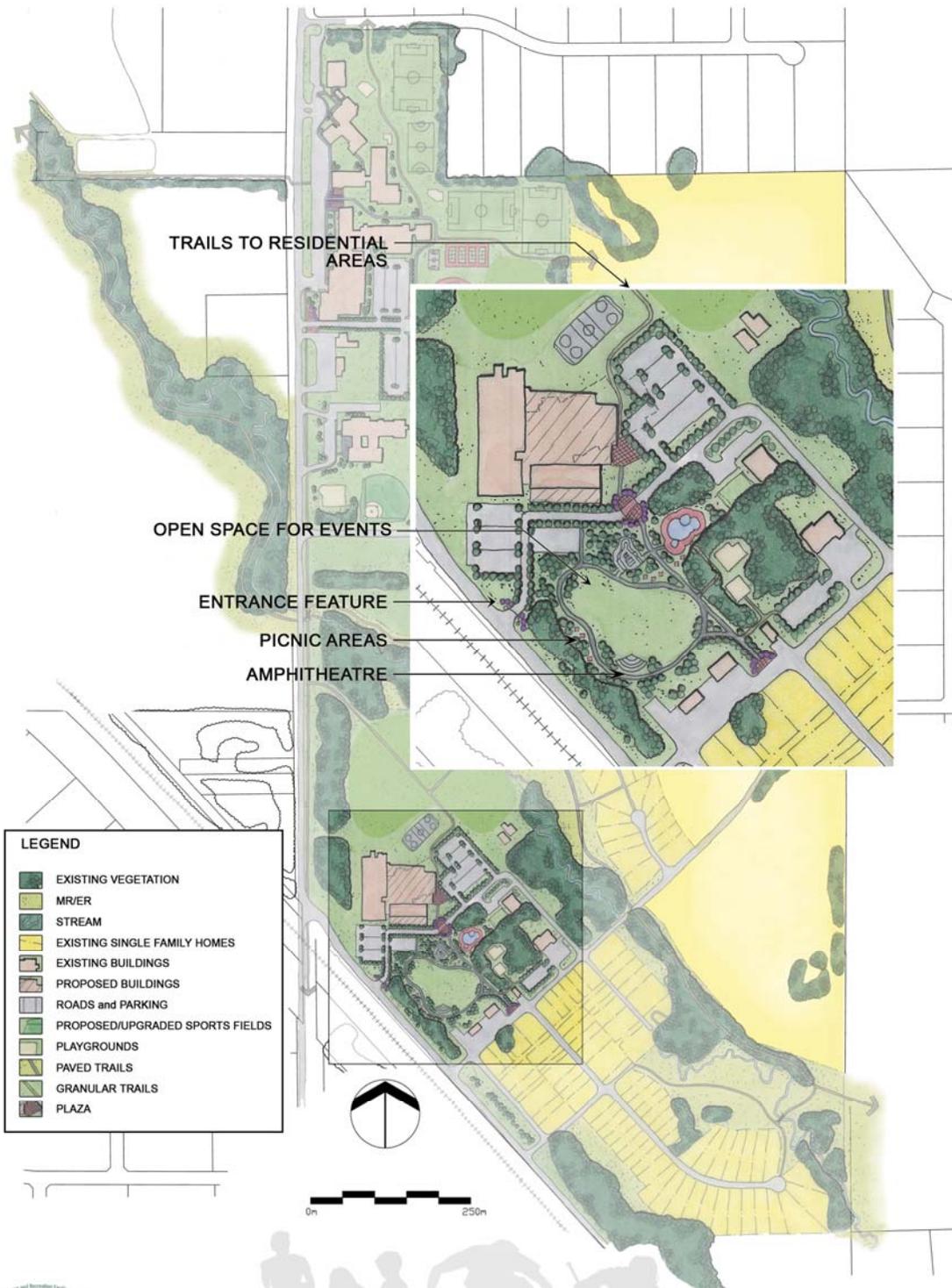


6.3.2. Community Gathering

To accommodate the community's desire for spontaneous use and open space, the existing grounds adjacent to Memorial Hall and the Seniors Centre will continue to be utilized as an area for community gatherings and events. A large open grassed space allows for flexible recreational use as well as an area to set up tents and staging areas to accommodate events. Park amenities such as benches, picnic tables, and an amphitheatre are proposed around the central open space to facilitate passive recreation and day use as well as to provide opportunities for cultural events to be staged. Native vegetation and plantings are incorporated throughout the open space to enhance the aesthetics of the park and to provide a buffer between the adjacent railroad and county roads. A paved trail through the open space would be used to connect to the community trail system and to ensure residents have safe and accessible access to the green space and playgrounds. Community gathering spaces are congruent with recommendations in other plans, including the OSRFS and the Older Adults Plan which identifies the provision of "opportunities for social connection" and a goal.



Places for Community Gathering



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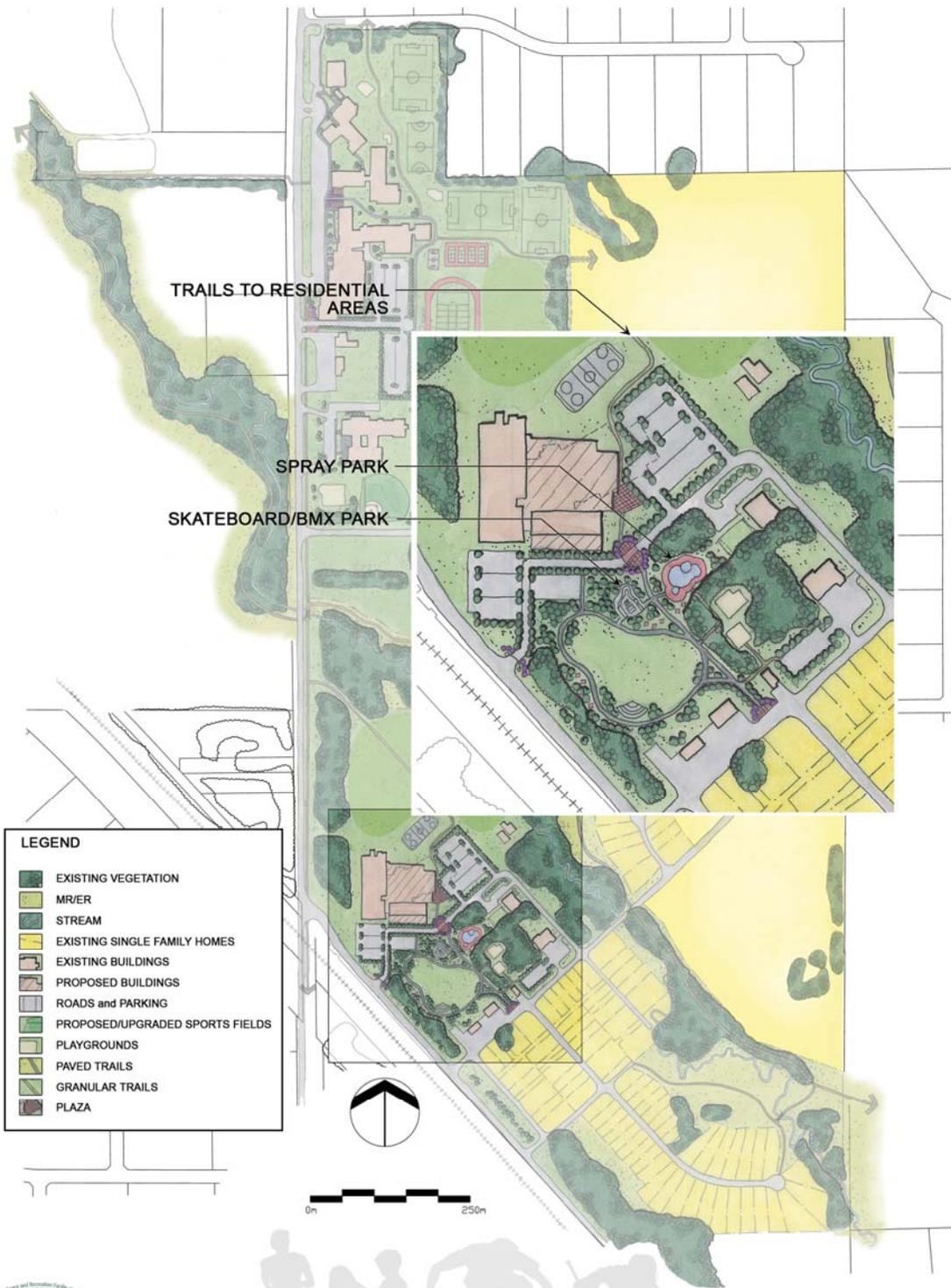


6.3.3. Specialized Activities and Youth

During the visioning sessions, community residents expressed an interest in providing specialized activities for youth. As a result, a permanent skateboard/BMX park and a spray park (to be further discussed in the Aquatics Strategy – 2010) are proposed for the open space adjacent to Memorial Hall and the Seniors Centre. These two parks are located in the community space near the Recreation Complex to make use of its services and to be centrally located in the hamlet with close proximity to other community amenities and youth activities. Together with the playgrounds, the skateboard/BMX and spray parks provide opportunities for active recreation for children of all ages. These parks are also well connected to residential areas by the trail network to ensure children have safe access.



Places for Specialized Activities and Youth



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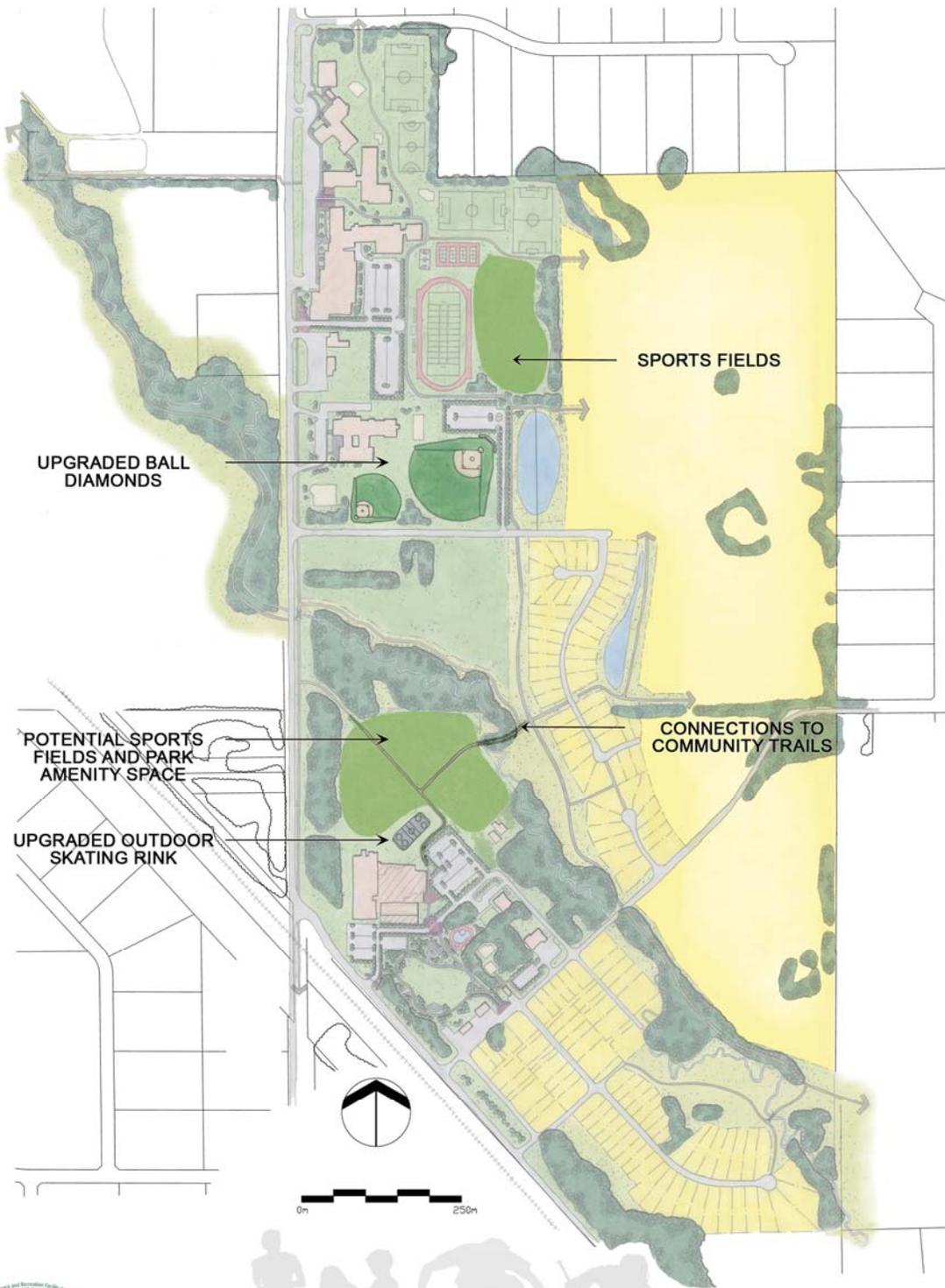


6.3.4. Sports Fields

While Ardrossan has many sports fields, residents and groups felt there is a need for upgrading the quality of the fields and access to services. Access to the sports fields will be improved with entry features and plantings and additional parking will be provided to accommodate the needs of users. The trail system will be integrated throughout the grounds adjacent to the four schools in order to ensure residents have safe and accessible access to the sports fields and school amenities. The two baseball diamonds adjacent to Holy Redeemer Catholic School are proposed to be upgraded to accommodate a greater range of play as well as to provide areas for spectators. The existing outdoor skating rink is proposed to be relocated beside the Recreation Complex to make use of its services. It has also been enlarged to accommodate an increase in use, and lighted to further enable use. The addition of irrigation to some fields may be warranted to improve turf quality however recommendations resulting from the upcoming Sport field Strategy will likely deal with this issue. Snowbank rinks and other outdoor leisure ice surfaces will continue to be provided in the community, although now graphically depicted on the following Master Plan. Additional spaces have been identified as areas for new fields to mitigate the loss of the two baseball diamonds from the upcoming expansion to the Recreation Complex. A vegetated buffer is integrated along the east boundary of the school/sports field grounds to screen future residential development from the sports fields.



Play Team Sports



Ardrossan Community Recreation Master Plan

Walkable Communities • Community Gathering • Specialized Activities for Youth • Play Team Sports



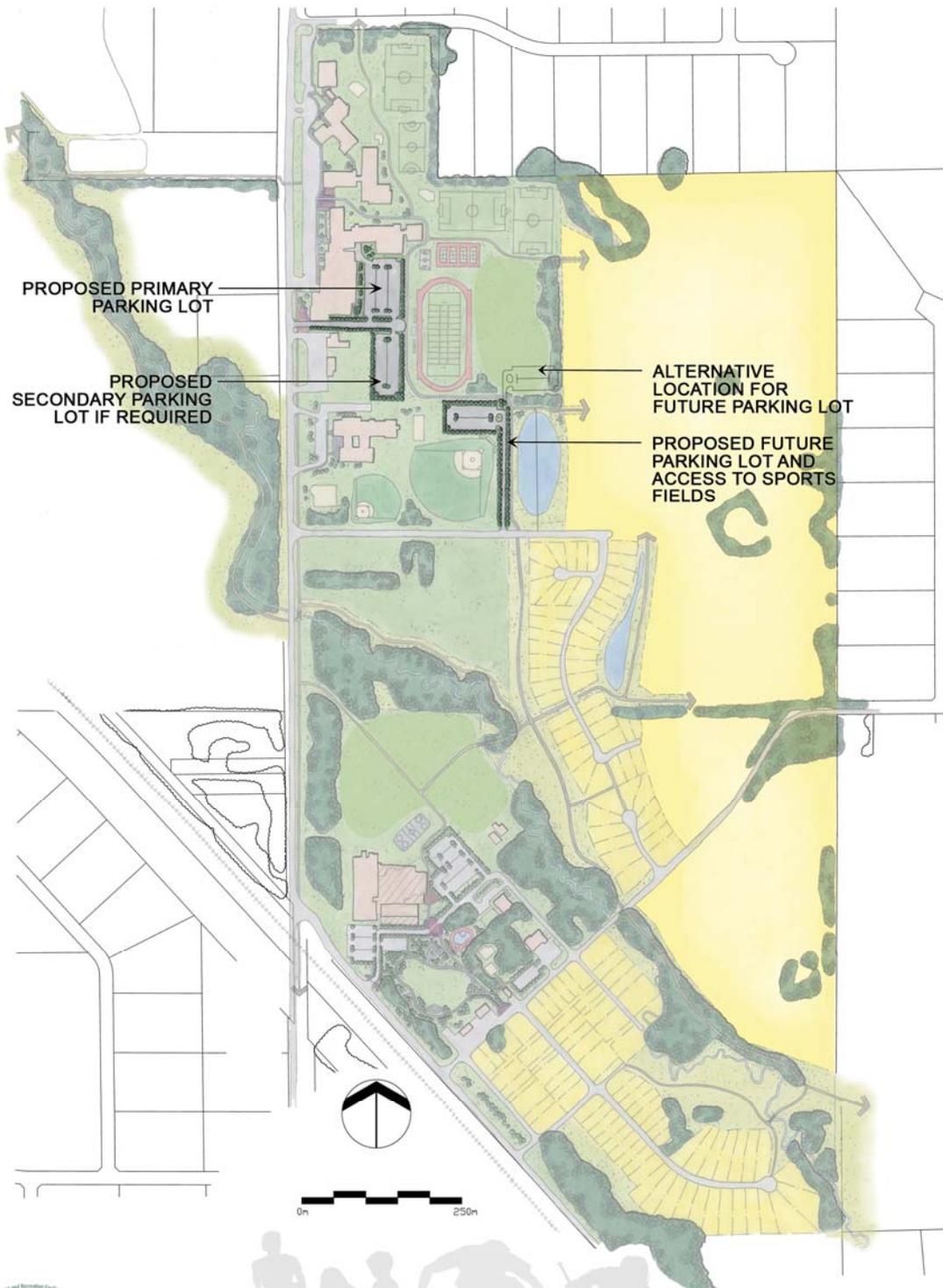
6.4. Parking and Access

Parking and access is an important consideration in the future planning of recreation facilities, parks and open spaces in Ardrossan. This is especially apparent at the schools site and in the areas surrounding the Recreation Complex. The following Plan depicts a phased approach to meeting the needs for parking facilities for these two sites while working within the confines of existing spaces and facilities.

It is important to note that although this Master Plan refers to potential future parking areas, further assessment will be necessary and partnerships with school boards, schools, community groups may ultimately be required to see these spaces designed and implemented. The configuration of parking and access surrounding the Recreation Complex is included in the Master Plan and associated cost estimates but final configuration and funding is dependent on the Ardrossan Recreation Complex Infrastructure Reinvestment project.



Proposed Parking and Access



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6.5. Public Review Open House and Stakeholder Presentation

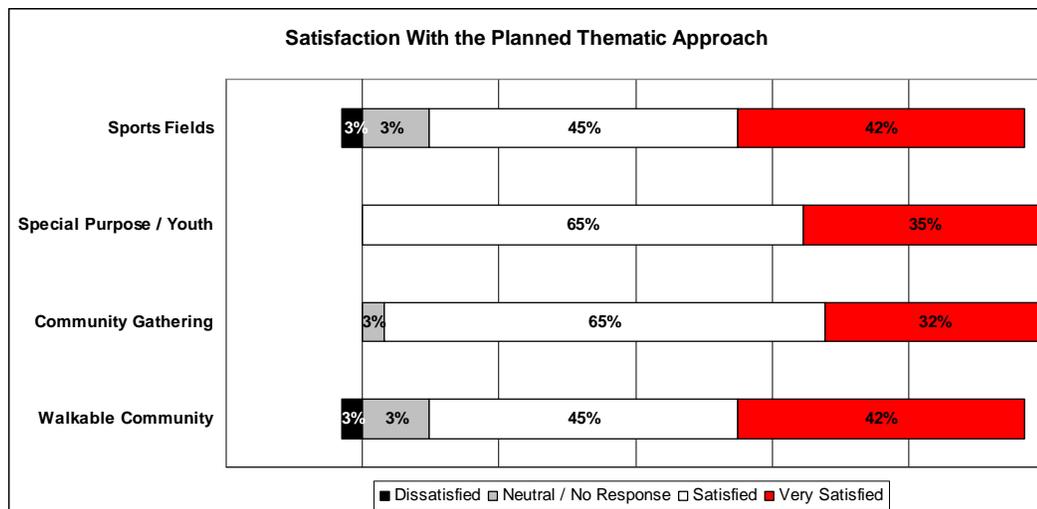
The four draft strategic themes and associated concepts were presented on June 11th, 2009 to the stakeholders who participated in the community visioning sessions. Immediately following this presentation a public review open house was hosted. This open house enabled members of the community to review the strategic themes and discuss them with the consultants and Strathcona County representatives in attendance. The information was also presented at the Ardrossan annual picnic and emailed directly to group representatives.

Seventeen individuals were in attendance for the stakeholder presentation; the open house saw approximately fifty attendees. In both instances, attendees were provided with a form to provide their feedback regarding the draft strategic themes. In total, thirty-one feedback forms were completed; the findings are presented below.

Strategic Themes

In overwhelming fashion (94% or 29 respondents) said that the recreation needs of the community are included within the draft four (4) strategic themes. The remaining respondents did not provide a response. One respondent commented that there are other things that could be included like a camping area in the community to support sport tournaments.

As can be seen in the following figure, there was overwhelming support for the four strategic themes. In fact only one respondent (3%) was dissatisfied with the planned approach for Sports Fields and another respondent dissatisfied with Walkable Community.



1) Sports Fields

There were a number of comments accompanying the respondents' rating of this theme. These included:

- Well designed fields not only provide for the community but can draw in teams from other communities and can host events. It is important however to ensure all fields are maintained properly – perhaps a maintenance plan should be implemented as well.
- The inclusion of extra parking, particularly around the schools, is a very positive element.
- Improvements are needed with the fields including dugouts, washroom access and improved lighting.
- There is a need for additional fields in the community. The use of the “unused” space behind the existing diamonds near the schools is very positive. Some concern was expressed however about the loss of this practice field.
- There were some comments about the outdoor rink element as well. The need for a rink shack was expressed. Improved lighting, washroom access need to be improved for the outdoor rink. The leisure skating surface (snow bank rink) should be developed in close proximity to the outdoor rink to take advantage of lighting, washroom access and maintenance.

The comment accompanying the dissatisfied rating reflected the loss of the ball diamonds behind the recreation complex. This individual suggested that there needs to be a definite plan to replace these diamonds.

2) Special Purpose / Youth

There were a number of comments accompanying the respondents' rating of this theme. These included:

- Very pleased with the skateboard park. There are a lot of youth in the area, and many would come from Sherwood Park, who would utilize this park.
- The skateboard park should be a multi-use facility able to be used for things other than skateboards.
- The community recognition of the importance of providing opportunities for the youth in the community. The development of this theme would help keep the youth in the community “busy”.
- An outdoor swimming pool would be well utilized, by adults in the community as well who would not have to drive to Sherwood Park. It was suggested that the School Board of Ardrossan High School is supportive of a community pool.
- An upgrade of the existing creative playground nearby would be desirable.

There were three respondents who expressed some trepidation with the notion of a spray park. One commented that a wading pool was preferred over a spray park. Another commented a spray park has a limited season and is quite expensive to maintain.

3) Community Gathering

There were a number of comments accompanying the respondents' rating of this theme. These included:

- Some concern about all the elements being able to adequately be accommodated in the available space.
- The use of space is excellent. It is united, flows well, and is aesthetically pleasing and welcoming.
- The space needs to support the arts in the community.

4) Walkable Community

There were a number of comments accompanying the respondents' rating of this theme. These included:

- The desire for the paths to be paved, particularly the one that runs along the highway to the school. Respondents also expressed a need for the trails to be maintained, particularly year round. This would enable their continued use through the winter. The majority of comments provided related to these issues.
- The linkages with the school and the recreation facilities were applauded as was the use of the integration of the trails into the natural areas. One responded requested that there should not be a trail connection on Second Avenue as this is a wildlife corridor.
- Some desire was expressed to see the connections with the trails in the community to the trails in Strathcona County beyond Ardrossan. There was one suggestion that the trails should link specifically to trails that lead to Sherwood Park and /or the Wilderness Centre.

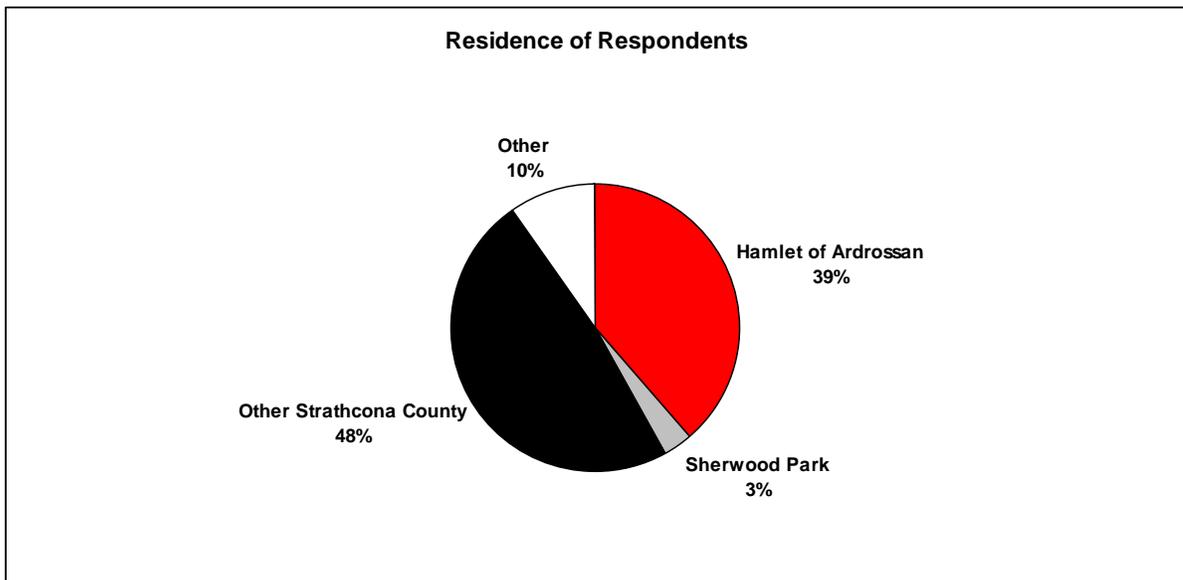
Other Comments

A number of comments were included on the feedback forms by some of the respondents. A few of the comments centred on the issue of timing for the Master Plan. These people encouraged Strathcona County to initiate the implementation of the Master Plan as soon as possible. One respondent expressed some concern that the Master Plan may be shelved. As well a few respondents indicated that the community should be continued to be consulted as the plans are implemented. In fact there was some suggestion that partnerships between Strathcona County and various community organizations could be fostered to aid in the Master Plan's implementation. Other comments included:

- The trail system is central to each of the strategic themes. Because of this the trails should be paved. Paving the trails would, as well, ensure that the trails are better used by a variety of non motorized means and are used throughout the year.
- All parking lots and approaches to the ball diamonds should be paved. As well the approaches should be narrow enough to eliminate people from parking along its edges.
- Commercial space should be included in the Ardrossan Master Plan to provide a store or restaurant to which people could walk.
- Concerns about the impact of the train and its whistle on activity at the amphitheatre. It was suggested that Strathcona County approach CN about stopping this practice, in the same manner that the City of Leduc had.

Respondent Profile

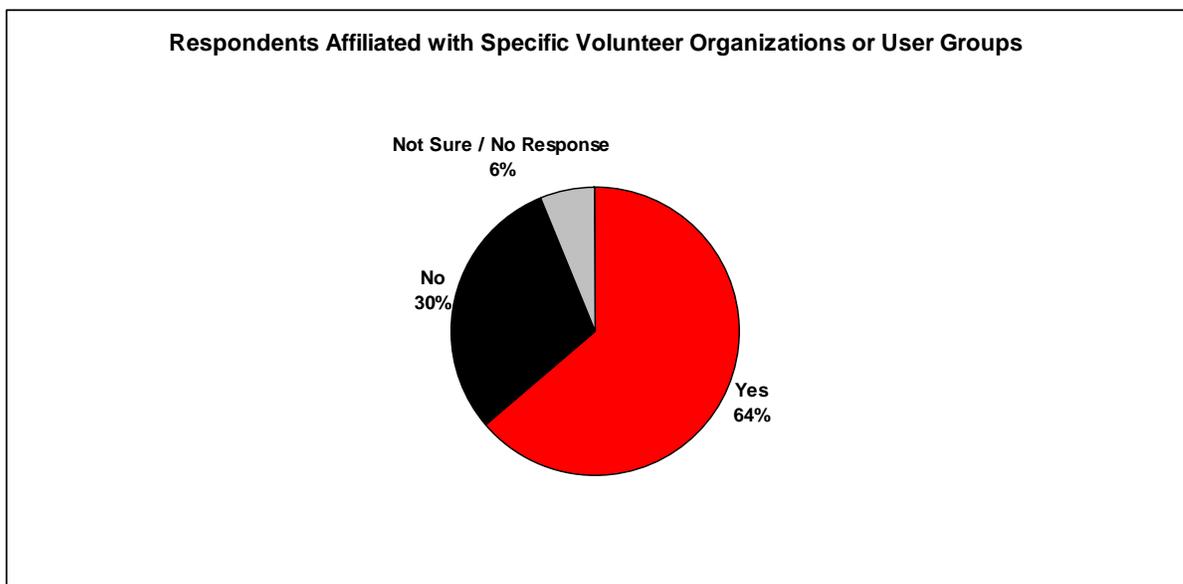
Over one-third (39%) of respondents live in Ardrossan itself, while almost half (48%) live elsewhere in Strathcona County. See the following figure.



Almost two-thirds (64%) of respondents are affiliated with specific volunteer organizations or user groups (following figure). The specific groups which were cited by more than one individual are listed as follows:

- Strathcona Minor Hockey Association,
- Ardrossan Recreation and Agriculture Society,
- Ardrossan Strathcona Minor Hockey Association,
- 4H,
- Ardrossan 55 Plus Club,
- Strathcona Minor Ball,
- Ardrossan Youth Initiative,
- Ardrossan Elementary School and
- Our Little Friends Playschool.

In summary, a broad spectrum of community groups were represented at the review session and in the feedback forms. These groups included educational institutions, sporting groups and arts & culture organizations and represented all ages (youth / adults / seniors).



In general, residents and groups are in agreement with the four strategic themes and associated development concepts. The following section outlines how these development concepts should be implemented as well as the impacts associated with implementation.

6.6. Master Plan Implementation

Each of the four strategic themes is important in the overall implementation and effectiveness of the Ardrossan Community Recreation Master Plan. That being said, there are priorities within each theme that are presented below based upon a logical and optimal approach to achieving the goals outlined herein. The time periods indicated are in line with those referenced in the OSRFS.

Plan Implementation

Theme	Element	Brief Description	Time Period
Walkable Community			
	Paved Trails	Linkages and associated amenities to Schools and Sports Fields	Immediate Phase I (2010-2013)
	Paved Trails	Linkages and associated amenities to Recreation Complex	Immediate Phase I (2010-2013)
	Granular Trails	Linkages and associated amenities to Future Residential Areas	Immediate Phase I (2010-2013)
	Granular Trails	Linkages and associated amenities to Regional Trail System	Emerging Phases II & III (2014-2023)
	Amenities	Further development of amenities such as benches, trash cans, etc.	Emerging Phases II & III (2014-2023)
Community Gathering			
	Paved Trail	Trail throughout open space	Immediate Phase I (2010-2013)
	Landscaping	Native trees and shrubs throughout space	Immediate Phase I (2010-2013)
	Amenities	Benches, picnic tables, lighting, etc.	Immediate Phase I (2010-2013)
	Amphitheatre	Permanent stage and seating structure	Emerging Phases II & III (2014-2023)
	Plazas	Park entrances and trail linkages	Emerging Phases II & III (2014-2023)
Specialized Activities and Youth			
	Skateboard/BMX Park	Permanent in ground concrete structure	Immediate Phase I (2010-2013)
	Spray Park	Interactive water play area	Emerging Phases II & III (2014-2023)
Team Sports			
	Ball Diamonds	Upgrade existing diamonds (fields, bleachers, lighting, etc.)	Immediate Phase I (2010-2013)
	New Fields	Replace fields displaced by Recreation Complex Expansion and proposed parking lots and access	Immediate Phase I (2010-2013)
	Outdoor Skating Rink	Relocate and upgrade existing outdoor skating rink	Immediate Phase I (2010-2013)
	Parking and Access	New parking lots and entrances to accommodate users	Emerging Phases II & III (2014-2023)
	Landscaping	Native trees and shrubs throughout space	Emerging Phases II & III (2014-2023)



6.7. Financial Considerations

6.7.1. Capital Implications

The following table presents the capital implications of the Master Plan more clearly according to year. For example, \$600,000 in capital expenditures is necessary in 2010 to implement the Master Plan's strategic themes.

Immediate Phase I 2010-2013

Theme	Element	Capital Cost
Walkable Community		
	Paved Trails - Schools	\$300,000.00
	Paved Trails - Rec Complex	\$180,000.00
	Amenities	\$60,000.00
Community Gathering		
	Paved Trail	\$120,000.00
	Landscaping	\$480,000.00
	Amenities	\$120,000.00
Specialized Activities and Youth		
	Skateboard/BMX Park	\$600,000.00
Team Sports		
	Ball Diamonds	\$840,000.00
	Outdoor Skating Rink	\$120,000.00

Total Phase I \$2,820,000.00

Emerging Phases II & III 2014-2023

Theme	Element	Capital Cost
Walkable Community		
	Granular Trails - Residential	\$180,000.00
	Granular Trails - Regional	\$300,000.00
Community Gathering		
	Amphitheatre	\$360,000.00
	Plazas	\$300,000.00
Specialized Activities and Youth		
	Spray Park	\$600,000.00
Team Sports		
	New Fields	\$300,000.00
	Parking and Access	\$2,160,000.00
	Landscaping	\$300,000.00

Total Phases II & III \$4,500,000.00

Total Phases I, II & III \$7,320,000.00

***Subject to Council Budget Approval**

6.7.2. Operating Implications

It is estimated that annual operating expenses occurred by the spray park and youth skate park are approximately \$60,000/year and \$30,000/year respectively with a recommendation to budget approximately 1% of capital replacement value annually to ensure resource sustainability. Operating implications for other elements of the Master Plan's strategic themes are yet to be determined and will be estimated internally when detailed design of development project is conducted. Annual operating cost estimates for trails maintenance (snow removal, turf maintenance, grooming), community gathering areas, and sports fields are expected to be applied at the same rate as existing like facilities in Strathcona County.

7.0 Summary

The 2009 Ardrossan Community Recreation Master Plan has been developed to help guide Strathcona County Council and administration in the future provision of community facilities, parks, and open spaces in Ardrossan. It has been developed based upon a community needs assessment that included review and recognition of:

- Numerous municipal planning documents. Some of which included:
 - Strathcona County Strategic Plan;
 - Municipal Development Plan;
 - Ardrossan Area Structure Plan; and
 - The Open Space and Recreation Facilities Strategy.
- A myriad of community projects and initiatives. Some of which included:
 - Ardrossan Recreation Complex Infrastructure Reinvestment;
 - Ardrossan Community Hall Expansion Project;
 - Ardrossan Community Trails Program; and
 - Ardrossan Youth Park.

An analysis of the demographics of the community was undertaken as was research into community service trends and the provision of leisure, recreation, and cultural services.

Stakeholder consultation played a significant role in the development of this Community Recreation Master Plan. Visioning sessions were convened with community stakeholder groups and the public. The output from these sessions was instrumental in the development of the strategic themes that are integral components of this Master Plan.

The Ardrossan Community Recreation Master Plan is presented in four separate themes. These themes have been developed based upon public engagement, data



collected and constraints inherent within the hamlet of Ardrossan (i.e. roadways, environmental reserve, etceteras). The four separate themes are as follows:

1. The creation of a walkable community;
2. Places for community gathering;
3. Places for specialized activities and youth: and
4. Teams sports.

Upon review, community stakeholder groups and residents were very supportive of the aforementioned themes and the development concepts for each.

Implementation of all elements of the four strategic themes will be require estimated capital expenditures in the Immediate Phase (2010-2013) of \$2.82M and Emerging Phases (2014-2023) of \$4.5M.

The four Master Plan themes have been based upon sounds research and community engagement. The implementation and ultimate build out of each theme considers a balanced capital expenditure approach and promotes social, environmental, and economic sustainability. Although the Master Plan implementation schedule and associated costs are presented, it is important to note that actual development in the hamlet with be facilitated through strong and fruitful relationships between Strathcona County and other community stakeholders such as local non-profit program groups, the local school authorities, and other levels of government. By fostering both existing and new relationships in the provision of public recreation opportunities Strathcona County will be able to: optimize the use of public funds; ensure that public investment meets majority community need; and guarantee that all aspects of community sustainability are considered in decision related to recreation and public spaces.