

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

STRATHCONA COUNTY PARK REVITALIZATION PLAN

This master plan responds directly to the Strathcona County Open Space and Recreation Facility Strategy (OSRFS) approved by Council and adopted by the County in June 2008. Phase I is focused on improvements in existing parks. This master plan provides strategic direction on the revitalization of four open spaces in Strathcona County: Brentwood, Kinsmen/Westboro and Heritage Hills, located in Sherwood Park, and South Cooking Lake Park, located in the rural hamlet of South Cooking Lake.

In April 2009, Strathcona County retained EIDOS Consultants Incorporated to undertake this master planning exercise. A key component of the exercise was the direct engagement of residents through a series of community visioning workshops. The workshops, coupled with site reconnaissance and data collection and analysis, led to the articulation of a number of key guiding principles: ensuring the safety of park users; ensuring facilities are accessible by all; providing a full range of recreational and leisure opportunities; ensuring comfort, enjoyment and convenience for users; protecting and celebrating nature; creating vibrant places for community life; encouraging community animation, expression and ownership; and investing wisely.

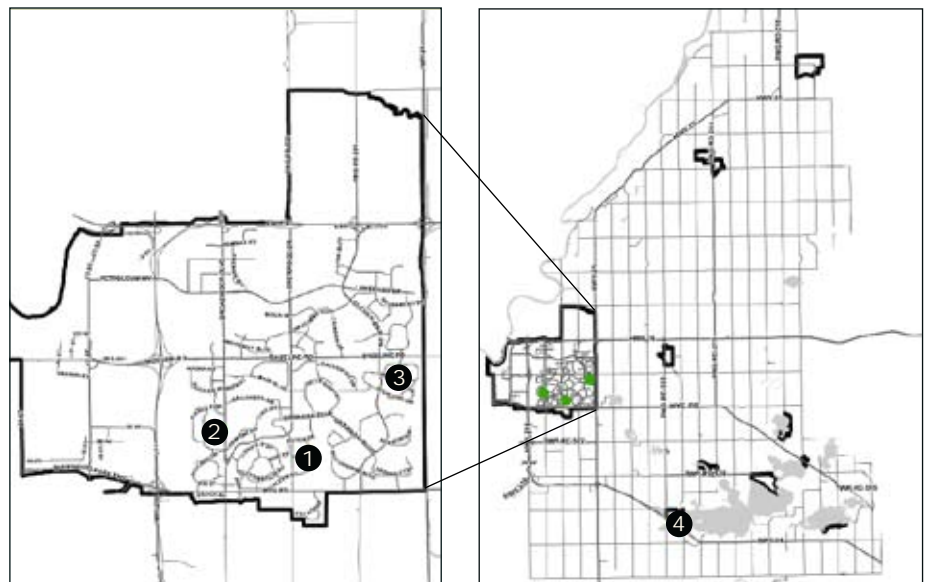
The revitalization strategies for each open space will be accompanied by order of magnitude costing. Strategies are grouped by program (as identified in the OSRFS), and likewise, priority is given to immediate needs - enhancing existing facilities and assets, maintaining service levels, ensuring basic accessibility and safety, and addressing ongoing maintenance issues. While it is expected that the revitalization of the four open spaces will primarily be funded by Strathcona County, other potential sources, including capital grant programs and corporate sponsorship opportunities, should be explored.

The next steps in the revitalization of these four open spaces is the commencement of the detailed design phase, in which the scope of work is further refined, informed by concurrent studies (i.e., Sportsfield and Aquatic Strategies), data collection and ongoing consultation. In the meantime, the County has an opportunity to reach out to affected residents and continue to build relationships which will strengthen community ownership of open spaces and ensure participation in the future revitalization endeavors.

1.0 Introduction

This master plan exercise is the first step in the thoughtful and systematic upgrading and revitalization of parks within Strathcona County, as envisioned and outlined in the Open Space and Recreation Facility Strategy (OSRFS) adopted by the County in 2008. This exercise provides specific direction on the upgrading and revitalization of Brentwood, Kinsmen / Westboro and Heritage Hills Parks, located in Sherwood Park, and South Cooking Lake Park, located in the rural hamlet of South Cooking Lake. These parks are some of the oldest such facilities in the county, and have been identified as most in need of upgrading and revitalization, in order to bring them more in line with the needs and expectations of residents, as well as the service levels and standards of Strathcona County.

Figure 1: Park Locations and Context



Urban Service Area

Rural Service Area

- 1) Brentwood Park
- 2) Kinsmen / Westboro Park
- 3) Heritage Hills Park

- 4) South Cooking Lake Park

1.1 Master Planning Objectives

A master plan is a long term vision, and in the context of this exercise, not a blueprint to construct park and open space facilities. A master plan is the outcome of a process that generates a set of principles that lead to attainable goals and objectives, that in this context, translate into specific revitalization strategies suitable to direct more detailed design and implementation processes.



The master plans for these four parks will become an important tool for Strathcona County decision makers. Whether undertaken as a single initiative or incrementally over many years, these master plans are intended to provide clear direction on detailed revitalization strategies which meet the needs and expectations of residents, and reflect County service levels and standards. Depending on timeframes, these master plans may require regular monitoring and updating to remain in line with these objectives, and align (or realign) with various opportunities for funding and implementation.

1.2 The Strathcona County Open Space and Recreation Facility Strategy (OSRFS)

The four parks in this study were identified by Strathcona County for revitalization as one of the first steps in the implementation of the Open Space and Recreation Facility Strategy (OSRFS).

The County adopted the OSRFS in June 2008 to guide ongoing investment and reinvestment in open spaces and recreation facilities in the County. A key component of this strategy is the revitalization of existing outdoor community gathering spaces.

The OSRFS and other key planning documents are discussed in detail in Section 2.2.

2.0 The Planning Process

In April 2009, Strathcona County retained EIDOS Consultants Incorporated to undertake this master planning exercise. In broad terms, the master planning process included the following strategic steps:

1. Site reconnaissance and inventory
2. Background data collection and analysis
3. Community input – visioning workshops and follow up open houses
4. Stakeholder and key informant consultation
5. Preliminary plan and final Master Plan report preparation

2.1 Site Reconnaissance and Inventory

Each of the four parks were visited in order to record and understand their existing conditions, opportunities and constraints. Existing conditions of each park is discussed in Parts 4.0 -7.0. Opportunities and constraints were considered together with public and stakeholder input to inform the articulation of guiding principles, and ultimately, revitalization strategies.

2.2 Background Data Collection and Analysis

Background data was collected and considered by the Consultant to provide a general frame of reference and benchmark for planning decisions specific to each park setting. Background data collected and considered included relevant Strathcona County planning documents, recreation and leisure trends, as well as demographic data for each affected neighbourhood.

Planning Context

A number of planning documents, described below, have informed this master planning exercise in both a direct and indirect way. Figure 2 illustrates how this master planning exercise (illustrated in dark green) fits within this larger context of Strathcona County planning and decision making.

Strathcona County Strategic Plan (2003)

The Strategic Plan is the highest level plan which guides governance, community development and service delivery within the County. The Strategic Plan contains a number of Capstone Policies of relevance to this master planning

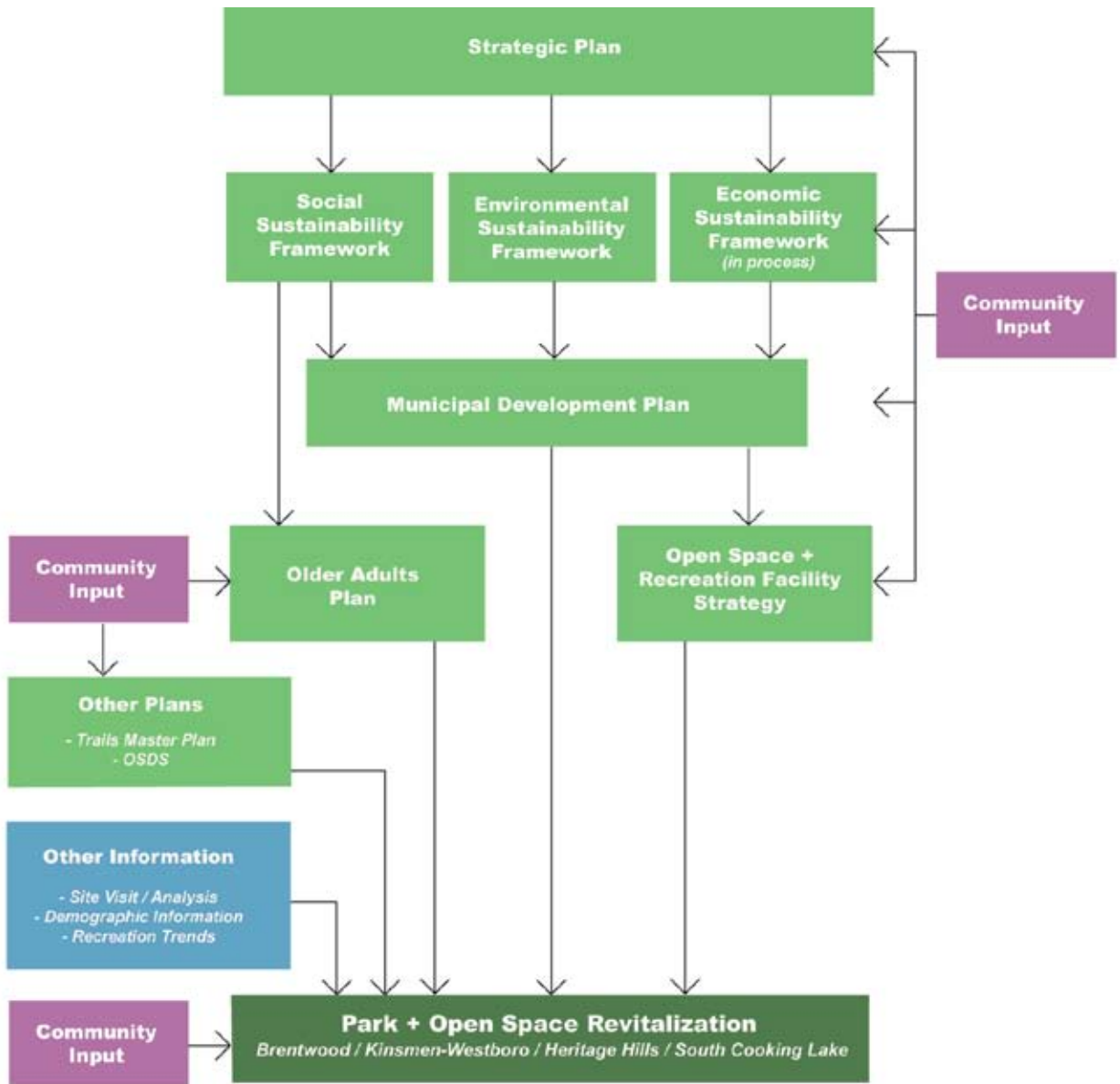


Figure 2: Master Planning Process

exercise, relating to social, environmental and economic sustainability. These Capstone policies directly influence all other County planning endeavors. A more detailed discussion of the relationship between these Capstone Policies and the Open Space and Recreation Facility Strategy is illustrated in Figure 3.

Social Sustainability Framework (2007)

This is one of three framework documents developed as a series of tools to determine the impact of decision making on environmental, social and economic sustainability within Strathcona County.

Of relevance to this master planning assignment, this framework document establishes high level objectives related to social inclusion (including equal access to amenities and consideration of the needs of older adults); community connectedness (including the promotion of community events to avoid cocooning); social responsibility (including collective decision making); and health and well-being (including providing amenities for children and youth, and working together to address crime). These objectives are further addressed in the Guiding Principles (Section 3.0).

A key outcome of the Social Sustainability Framework was the development of an Older Adults Plan (discussed below).

Environmental Sustainability Framework (2009)

This framework document, establishes a number of high level objectives related to environmental sustainability. Of relevance to this master planning assignment, the framework underscores the need to preserve natural landscapes; to develop integrated, multi-modal transportation networks; to conserve water and other resources; and to adopt procurement processes which promote sustainability. These objectives are further addressed in the Guiding Principles (Section 3.0).

Economic Sustainability Framework (2010)

This framework document, currently in draft form, establishes a number of high level objectives related to fostering a healthy, sustainable economy for

residents, business and industry. The Economic Sustainability Framework is anticipated to be complete in 2010.

Strathcona County Municipal Development Plan (2007)

The Municipal Development Plan (MDP) provides strategic direction on the growth and development of the County over a twenty year period. The MDP is intended to be an integrated, community-wide plan for sustainable decision making, and is therefore informed by the social, environmental and economic framework documents.

Part 9.0 of the MDP addresses parks and recreation and contains a number of general objectives of relevance to this master planning exercise: strengthening community pride; contributing to physical fitness and well-being of residents; bringing communities together through sports / arts / cultural activities; conserving and enhancing natural areas; increasing trail connectivity; ensuring safety of park users; and creating multi-purpose park areas. These objectives are further addressed in the Guiding Principles (Section 3.0).

Open Space and Recreation Facility Strategy (2008)

The Open Space and Recreation Facility Strategy (OSRFS) was adopted in 2008 as a tool to guide ongoing investment and reinvestment in open spaces and recreation facilities in the County. The OSRFS builds upon Strathcona County's Strategic and Municipal Development Plan to meet the needs of residents within a framework of community and corporate needs, values and expectations. The OSRFS makes direct reference to a number of the Capstone Policies contained within the Strategic Plan; these policies are highlighted in Figure 3.

The OSRFS addresses the full range of indoor and outdoor facilities and amenities provided and managed by the County. In addition to the acquisition and development of new outdoor community gathering places, the OSRFS articulates three revitalization programs relating to:

- Outdoor community gathering places (eg. parks, natural areas);
- Walkable communities (eg. trails); and
- Streetscapes (eg. landscaping, signage).

In terms of implementation, the OSRFS establishes two phases: Phase 1 -

which addresses immediate needs in years 1 to 5, and Phase 2 - which addresses emerging requirements in years 6 to 1. Phase 1 focuses on protecting existing assets; reinvesting in the oldest facilities and amenities, addressing overcrowding and maintaining service levels in the face of continued growth. Phase 2 focuses on emerging needs that, as identified, will be evaluated against those already articulated in the OSRFS to more fully understand an appropriate course of action.

The revitalization strategies articulated within this master planning exercise, and in particular, the potential funding sources, are based on the programs and implementation framework of the OSRFS.

Trails Master Plan (1998)

The Trails Master Plan was prepared as a 20 - year plan to create an integrated network of multi-use trails within the urban and rural areas of Strathcona County. The only information of interest to this master planning assignment is the identification of a potential year-round, multi-use trail linking Sherwood Park / Boag Lake with South Cooking Lake, Ministik and Hastings Lake via Highway 14. The County has allocated funding to update the Trails Master Plan in 2010.

Older Adults Plan (2009)

The Older Adults Plan is a direct outgrowth of the Social Sustainability Framework, and provides a number of high level objectives of relevance to this master planning exercise, including the creation of intergenerational gathering spaces and the provision of disabled parking areas and application of universal design principles at community facilities. These objectives are further addressed in the Guiding Principles (Section 3.0).

Strathcona County Open Space Development Standards (2006)

The Open Space Development Standards (OSDS) typically guide the development of new park facilities by both the county and private developers, but also serve as a useful benchmark for the work of this master planning assignment. Specifically, the standards provide a guideline for the type of facilities and amenities to be provided within parks and open spaces, which in turn provide direction on estimated capital costs. The County has allocated funds to update the OSDS in 2010.

Figure 3: Strathcona County Capstone Policies / Key OSRFS Strategies.

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Capstone Policy: | Community Wellbeing |
| OSRFS Strategies | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage park usage by providing accessible facilities• Create diverse recreational opportunities for a wide range of users |
| Capstone Policy: | Community Sustainability |
| OSRFS Strategies | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conserving natural and cultural heritage for sustainable community growth• Preserve existing green infrastructure to protect natural lands• Implement new technologies to improve existing facility environmental performance |
| Capstone Policy: | Economic Viability |
| OSRFS Strategies | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reinvesting in existing facilities to meet the ever changing community recreational needs to enhance community quality of life• Integrating parks into the community to enhance property values |
| Capstone Policy: | Service Delivery |
| OSRFS Strategies | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Address community recreational needs with emphasis on flexible, spontaneous uses• Develop park improvement projects through community and local business collaboration and partnerships |
| Capstone Policy: | Community Involvement |
| OSRFS Strategies | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish a community based consultation process• Encourage partnership development with community organizations, interest groups and the public |
| Capstone Policy: | Resource Management |
| OSRFS Strategies | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reinvesting in and revitalizing existing parks to minimize capital funding needs• Establish incremental re-development strategies to bench-mark the community recreational needs before adding new facilities• Formation of community partnerships to identify additional funding sources |

Sportsfield Strategy (2010)

This strategy, currently in progress, is a 15-year plan that will predict future sportsfield requirements and provide a process to quantify current and future sportsfield surpluses or shortfalls. The strategy will also identify amenity requirements and determine future capital costs. The strategy is scheduled to be completed in 2010.

Aquatic Strategy (2010)

This strategy, currently in progress, will include an assessment of both present and future aquatic options to best meet community needs, for both indoor and outdoor aquatic facilities. The strategy is scheduled to be completed in 2010.

Recreation and Leisure Trends

Understanding current recreation and leisure trends provides insight into the provision of facilities and amenities which effectively meet the changing needs and expectations of users. Key trends in sports and recreation of relevance to this master planning exercise include:

- *Adults and older adults embracing an 'active living' lifestyle, with municipalities in turn aligning their programming to in order to respond to their needs;*
- *Continued demand for trails (both natural and paved) for walking, cycling, in-line skating, etc. - both for leisure and active transportation;*
- *With the exception of hockey and soccer, a continued decrease in children and youth participating in organized sports; children are instead choosing to pursue casual activities on their own schedule; and*
- *Continued demand for arena sports (eg. hockey), with shortages in prime time ice hours observed across the province.*

Key trends in the provision of parks and open spaces include:

- *People wanting to live near parks and open spaces, as parks are viewed positively and associated with a higher quality of life;*
- *Parks increasingly viewed as a venue for cultural activities;*
- *Parks increasingly seen as a providing opportunities for non-programmed*

- recreational opportunities (eg. community barbeques); and*
- *Increasing public awareness of environmental issues, and a corresponding alignment of resource management strategies in parks.*

(sources)

Neighbourhood Demographics

Demographic information was obtained for Sherwood Park and each of the three neighbourhood areas, as well as the hamlet of South Cooking Lake.

In Sherwood Park, the population increased to 59,409 in 2008 from 55,063 in 2005 (7.9% increase). The median household size is 3 people, and the average age increased to 36.7 from 36 in the same period.

In South Cooking Lake, the population decreased to 263 in 2008 from 279 in 2005 (5.7% decrease). The median household size is 2 people, and the average age increased to 37.4 from 36.8 in the same period.

Neighbourhood specific demographics are discussed in Parts 4.0 – 7.0.

(Source: 2008 Municipal Census Report)

2.4 Community Input

Opportunities for community input into this master planning process included a series of community visioning workshops prior to the preparation of preliminary park revitalization plans, as well as a series of follow-up open houses to review the preliminary plans and provide input prior to the preparation of the final master plan.



Brentwood Park Visioning Workshop

Community Visioning Workshops were held in the Summer and early Fall of 2009, and provided first hand information of value to both the County and the Consultant. Residents' ideas and comments were documented to serve as a framework for the master plan. In addition, at each workshop residents were provided an opportunity to break into smaller groups, and with the assistance of the Consultants and County staff, record comments and sketch ideas on base drawings provided.

Following the preparation of preliminary revitalization drawings for each park,

residents were invited in the Fall of 2009 to review the submissions and provide input prior to the preparation of the final master plan report.

The results of these Community Visioning Workshops are provided in the Appendix.

2.5 Stakeholder and Key Informant Input

In addition to broad community input, the master planning exercise included opportunities for input from groups with more specific and formalized relationships to park management. These groups included Strathcona County park maintenance and arboriculture staff, Elk Island Public School (eg. Brentwood Park) representatives, as well as volunteers from the football clubs, softball groups and soccer associations which use the parks on a regular basis.

Conversations with these groups yielded valuable information regarding the ongoing use and management of each park, which was given due consideration in light of proposed capital improvements.

2.6 Preliminary and Final Master Plan Preparation

Following the review of the preliminary revitalization drawings by the public in the Fall of 2009, preliminary and final master plan reports were prepared with the continued input of Strathcona County staff.

Master plans are illustrated in Parts 4.0 - 7.0.

Accompanying each master plan is a summary of the proposed capital investments, based on a Class 'D' order of magnitude cost. This summary is provided in a format consistent with the OSRFS, in which specific items are classified by both program (eg. community gathering places / walkable communities / streetscaping) and priority (eg. immediate / emerging need). Consistent with the OSRFS, priority is given to immediate needs - enhancing existing facilities and assets, maintaining service levels, ensuring basic accessibility and safety, and addressing ongoing maintenance issues.

3.0 Guiding Principles

As previously discussed, the Strathcona County OSRFS provides high-level, strategic guidance on the planning of parks and open spaces within the county. At the same time, there is an innate desire to respond directly to stakeholder input and generate responsive planning solutions for the four parks. To provide direction and balance to this planning exercise, and to ensure continuity within the higher level context of the OSRFS, a number of goals and guiding principles have been considered:

Ensure the safety of park users

The safety of users should be of the utmost importance to park designers and managers.

- *To fully understand site specific safety issues and possible solutions, community-based safety audits should be undertaken for each of the four parks. While a safety audit is a useful tool in moving forward to more detailed implementation steps (See 8.1), even in the immediate term an audit can be a valuable exercise in park management and community animation.*
- *Park redevelopment should take into account basic principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), tailored to local realities as identified through a safety audit. Basic principles include improving sightlines and natural surveillance, and eliminating entrapment areas.*
- *More advanced principles of CPTED include maximizing activity generation and increasing community ownership in parks and open spaces (eg. encouraging community involvement in park beautification and maintenance). Both of these principles ensure parks are well used, and that users become active in surveillance and park management.*
- *To support capital reinvestment, the county should strive to respond promptly to resident inquiries and concerns. All park signage should include municipal contact information, and refuse collection, overall park maintenance and graffiti removal should be done in a timely manner.*
- *Ensure appropriate access for emergency and maintenance vehicles.*



Active spaces tend to be safe places

Ensure facilities are accessible by all

Accessibility is a basic right and as such should be a fundamental consideration in park planning and design.



Accessible parks and open spaces are a fundamental priority



Facilities planned for evening use should be lit



Year-round use

- *Ensure a basic network of accessible (eg. paved) trails into and through park facilities. This network should be integrated into the larger community. Because trails should provide access into and through parks during dark winter months, lighting should be considered (subject to a safety audit).*
- *Ensure facilities and amenities (eg. picnic tables) are fully accessible. In conjunction with County standards, parking areas need to include designated spaces for persons with disabilities.*
- *Provide convenient and secure bike racks for cyclists, to support active transportation choices within Strathcona County.*

Provide a full range of recreational and leisure opportunities

Providing a full range of opportunities not only meets the community's recreational and leisure needs, but increasing park activity can contribute to increased safety and community building efforts.

- *Facilities should be provided for a range of users, regardless of age or ability.*
- *Facilities should be provided which allow year-round use. To encourage winter use, a range of activities should be accommodated (eg. hockey, leisure skating and tobogganing), as well as supporting facilities (eg. warming shelters).*
- *Consideration should be given to providing a range of facilities which appeal to families and different generations. Playgrounds should include a wide age range, and facilities should appeal to different family members. For example, while one child is playing soccer, another can be playing on a playground.*

Ensure the comfort, enjoyment and convenience of users

Spaces which are comfortable and pleasant will receive greater use and contribute to a higher degree of community ownership.

- *Careful site planning and landscape treatments (eg. tree planting) can create spaces protected from summer sun and winter winds, and break up / provide scale in larger, undefined areas.*
- *Complementary amenities (eg. benches, picnic tables, garbage receptacles, etc) should be provided to enhance the park experience. For example, providing attractive open areas, picnic tables, etc., adjacent to a spray*



As an element of ‘green infrastructure’, a bioswale mitigates issues related to stormwater rates and quality

deck provides an opportunity for parents to relax and visit with neighbours while their children play.

Protect and celebrate nature

Preserving environmental integrity and ecological function is increasingly becoming a basic requirement of park planning in municipal settings. In addition, there is an opportunity to celebrate nature as part of an experience combining leisure and education.



Whether intended or not, parks and open spaces are a venue in which the life of a community plays out

- *Protect the integrity of existing tree stands, wetlands and other sensitive areas. Limit access to these areas.*
- *Develop interpretive signage and similar features which communicate the value and importance of wildlife, natural systems, etc.*
- *Integrate ‘green’ infrastructure, such as rainwater gardens, permeable paving, etc. Demonstrate leadership in sustainability by supporting Low-Impact Design (LID) and similar initiatives, while at the same time contributing positively to park aesthetics.*
- *Ensure lighting reduces light pollution and trespass, in accordance with ‘dark sky’ principles.*



Public art

Create vibrant places for community life

Parks are can become ‘third places’ within neighbourhoods and contribute to community connectedness.



Community clean-up effort

- *Provide both hard surfaced areas and unencumbered open spaces to allow for both programmed and impromptu community events to occur.*
- *Consolidate functions to maximize activity generation, and incorporate benches, picnic tables and open spaces to provide informal gathering and viewing opportunities.*

Encourage community animation, expression and ownership

An important complement to community gathering spaces (as described above) is the opportunity for residents to become directly involved in, and ultimately become responsible for, ongoing park management.

- *Provide opportunities for public art by directing community programs and funding to support this goal.*



Benches and landscaping make for a pleasant place to watch children and visit with other parents

- *Engage residents in the design of park signage and similar features, and involve residents in ongoing park maintenance.*

Invest wisely

Park planning and management decision making should give due consideration to economic sustainability.

- *Within existing park areas, emphasis should be placed on reinvesting in existing facilities and amenities over new construction.*
- *New park revitalization initiatives should respect established park uses and users.*
- *Incorporate practices and technologies (eg. 'green' infrastructure) that minimize long term management costs.*
- *Seek meaningful and sustainable community partnerships to build and maintain park facilities.*

A summary of these guiding principles, within the continuum of planning decision making, is illustrated in Figure 4.

| STRATEGIC PLAN CAPSTONE POLICIES | RELEVANT OSRFS GOALS | PARK PLANNING PRINCIPLES |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| COMMUNITY WELLBEING | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Provide well connected facilities</i> • <i>Encourage park usage by providing accessible facilities</i> • <i>Create diverse recreational opportunities for a wide range of users</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ensure the safety of park users</i> • <i>Provide a full range of recreational and leisure opportunities</i> • <i>Ensure the comfort, enjoyment and convenience of users</i> • <i>Ensure facilities are accessible by all</i> |
| COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Conserving natural and cultural heritage for sustainable community growth</i> • <i>Preserve existing green infrastructure to protect natural lands</i> • <i>Implement new technologies to improve existing facility environmental performance</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Protect and celebrate nature</i> |
| ECONOMIC VIABILITY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Reinvesting in existing facilities to meet the ever changing community recreational needs to enhance community quality of life</i> • <i>Integrating parks into the community to enhance property values</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Encourage community animation, expression and ownership</i> • <i>Invest wisely</i> |
| SERVICE DELIVERY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Address community recreational needs with emphasis on flexible, spontaneous uses</i> • <i>Develop park improvement projects through community and local business collaboration and partnerships</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Create vibrant places for community life</i> • <i>Encourage community animation, expression and ownership</i> • <i>Invest wisely</i> |
| COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Establish a community based consultation process</i> • <i>Encourage partnership development with community organization, interest groups and the public</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Encourage community animation, expression and ownership</i> |
| RESOURCE MANAGEMENT | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Reinvesting in and revitalizing existing parks to minimize capital funding needs</i> • <i>Establish incremental re-development strategies to bench-mark the community recreational needs before adding new facilities developments</i> • <i>Formation of community partnership to identify additional funding sources</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Protect and celebrate nature</i> • <i>Encourage community animation, expression and ownership</i> • <i>Invest wisely</i> |

Figure 4: Guiding Principles

7.0 South Cooking Lake Park

South Cooking Lake Park is located in the rural hamlet of South Cooking Lake. The 35-year old park consists of two areas - a day use area adjacent to the lakeshore, and a small park space adjacent to the Community Hall. The day use area includes a picnic area, cook shack and vault toilet facilities, and the park space includes two playgrounds, horseshoe pits, basketball nets and picnic tables. Existing conditions are illustrated in Figure 14.

7.1 Key Planning Issues

Key planning issues for South Cooking Lake Park were identified through site reconnaissance and community input. From the Community Visioning Workshop held on June 16th, 2009, a number of issues, needs and opportunities were identified for consideration by the Project Team:

- *Better trail connections within and between the day use area and the community hall. Residents identified a specific concern with the roadway connecting the two park areas and the lack of separated, safe trail connection – particularly for children.*
- *Opportunities for non-motorized trails along the lakeshore which provide leisure and interpretive potential. Residents identified the opportunity to develop such trails as part of a regional network. This opportunity was also identified in the 1998 Trails Plan.*
- *Upgrading and refurbishing facilities (eg. the cookshack) to attract new use. Residents indicated a strong desire to work in partnership with the County to undertake simple enhancement projects to contribute to this objective.*
- *Increased range of all-season recreational opportunities in the park, for a broad range of users.*
- *Replacement of playgrounds within the park area.*
- *Development of a hard surface area for multiple uses, eg. basketball and tennis.*
- *An opportunity to expand the park area adjacent to the Community Hall through roadway closure.*
- *Incorporating gathering places and venues into the park to host community events, informal performances, etc.*
- *Additional parking adjacent to the Community Hall for recreational vehicles.*
- *Better maintenance by the County, and better response to neighbourhood concerns. Residents indicated a strong desire to work in partnership with*

the County to undertake simple, routine maintenance to contribute to this objective.

The complete results of the Community Visioning Workshop, including sketches and diagrams prepared by residents, is provided in the Appendix.

7.2 Revitalization Strategy

The revitalization strategy for South Cooking Lake Park responds to the key planning issues identified through resident input, County feedback and background information analysis. Key elements of the strategy include:

- *Trail development and redevelopment, including designated on-street routes, interpretive signage and seating nodes / outlooks;*
- *Roadway closure and park area expansion / improvement, including new shelters, park amenities, landscaping, etc.*
- *Additional parking for RVs;*
- *New playground;*
- *New multi-purpose pad;*
- *Repairs and upgrades to cook shack;*
- *Tree and shrub planting, entry signage and floral displays; and*
- *Operational improvements - develop snowbank rink for leisure skating.*

The revitalization strategy for South Cooking Lake Park is visualized and described in detail in Figures 15 and 16.

7.3 Next Steps

Implementation in general terms is discussed in Part 8.0; specific requirements related to South Cooking Lake Park include:

- *Monitoring of snowbank rink usage to determine the future suitability of a formal, boarded rink.*



E. Open space and playgrounds. Note Community Hall at far right.



F. Boat launch and lakeshore.



G. Informal trail along lakeshore.



D. 1st Avenue, providing access to the day use area. The road right of way offers limited potential for a safe off-street trail connection.



C. Multi-use play surface and treed picnic area adjacent to Community Hall.



B. Horseshoe pitches adjacent to Community Hall, illustrating lack of maintenance.



A. Existing playground



H. Day use parking area, with cookshack in background.



I. Cookshack and day use entry signage.



J. Typical gravel trail.



K. Amenity space along lakeshore.

Fig. 14 South Cooking Lake Park - Existing Conditions



E. OPEN SPACE
Existing open spaces will be preserved and managed to encourage a range of community uses. There is an opportunity to expand the open space adjacent to the Community Hall through the closure of a local roadway (B)



D. LOOKOUT PLATFORM
Construct a lookout platform with seating to provide a comfortable and attractive vantage point to view the lake. Introducing interpretive signage provides insight into the natural and cultural history of the area.



C. MULTI-USE PLAY SURFACE
Construct a multi-use play surface to provide a wide range of active recreation opportunities for year-round use. Careful tree planting and buffering will be required to minimize land use conflicts with adjacent land owners.



A. PLAYGROUNDS
In consultation with hamlet residents, construct new playgrounds which meet community needs and maximize play value. Benches, garbage receptacles and community notice boards should also be added for the comfort and convenience of children and caregivers.



F. TRAIL SYSTEM
Establish a network of unmotORIZED, paved and unpaved off-street trails that provide safe and convenient access to community amenities, as well as leisure opportunities within the larger region. Trails should incorporate access control and amenities, such as benches and garbage receptacles, and incorporate signage that regulates use and enforces trail etiquette, facilitates wayfinding, and enriches the interpretive experience of users.



G. ON-STREET TRAIL CONNECTIONS
Where the construction of off-street trails is not possible, designate on-street pedestrian zones to ensure safe passage for users.



H. INFORMAL LEISURE SKATING RINK
Establish a snow-banked ice rink east of the cookshack for both leisure skating and hockey. Based on community use, in the future this facility may be upgraded to a boarded structure.



I. ADDITIONAL PARKING
Additional parking is required adjacent to the Community Hall to accommodate recreational vehicles staying for community events and hall rentals.



J. SHELTER
Construct shelters for a range of community uses, including informal gathering, picnics, as well as a stage for performances or meetings.



K. COMMUNITY PLAZA
Introduce a community plaza to provide opportunities for both programmed and impromptu community gatherings to reinforce the community spirit of South Cooking Lake.



L. ENHANCE EXISTING COOK SHACK
The existing cook shack is in poor condition, and as a result is rarely used. There is an opportunity to engage the community in the clean up of this facility.



M. TREE PLANTING
In partnership with hamlet residents, undertake tree planting to enhance existing open spaces and buffer potential land use incompatibilities.



N. PARK ENTRANCES AND FLORAL DISPLAYS
In partnership with hamlet residents, design and construct new park entry signs with attractive yet low maintenance shrub and flower beds. This partnership builds community pride and a sense of ownership in the park and its open spaces.

Fig. 15 South Cooking Lake Park - Master Plan

8.0 Implementation

With the master planning process complete, the next steps in the revitalization of the four parks would typically focus on the detailed design process.

8.1 Detailed Design

The detailed design phase defines a specific scope of work in order to advance towards construction, and would typically involve:

- *Engagement of design and engineering services, and acquisition of topographic, survey and servicing data, etc.*
- *Refinement of work scope, based on additional community and stakeholder consultation, user surveys, etc., as required. The County's upcoming Sportsfield and Aquatic Strategies, and updated Trail Master Plan, will also provide key direction on more detailed project scopes.*
- *Close collaboration with maintenance staff and a review of existing standards as policies as appropriate.*
- *Formal agreements as required with open space partners; eg. Elk Island Public Schools.*
- *Coordination with other departments / initiatives; eg. traffic calming initiatives (as appropriate)*
- *In conjunction with trained County staff (eg. RCMP), the development and delivery of community-based safety audits to identify specific safety issues and possible solutions.*
- *Identification of specific public art processes.*

8.2 Funding

It is expected that the redevelopment of the four parks will primarily be funded by Strathcona County. Other funding sources may include:

- *Capital grant programs funded by the Alberta Lottery Fund through Tourism, Parks, Recreation and Culture; such as the Community Facility Enhancement Program, the Major Community Facilities Program, and the Community Initiative Program.*
- *Grant programs accessible by partners such as the Rams and Northstar Football clubs. These opportunities include the Development Initiative Program coordinated by the Alberta Sport, Recreation, Parks and Wildlife Foundation.*
- *Corporate sponsorship opportunities, logically tied to individual and well*

defined revitalization initiatives.

Current programs such as Adopt-a-Park and Adopt-a-Bench should also be used to contribute to ongoing park redevelopment.

8.3 Other Steps

While the objective of this master planning exercise has primarily focused on the identification of capital improvements, the Community Visioning Workshops identified a strong feeling by residents for improved park maintenance, better communication with the County, and in the case of South Cooking Lake, a desire to work directly with the County to undertake improvements, both small and large.

In terms of maintenance, it is important that the County allocate operating dollars on a yearly basis to ensure that the amenities identified in this strategy are maintained to County standards. The order of magnitude costs provided in Sections 4.0 - 7.0 provide some guidance on the determination of these costs, but ultimately, County maintenance staff should be thoroughly consulted with to determine a reasonable allocation of funds.

In terms of communication, strategies can include the development of appropriate programs and media campaigns, as well as the introduction of modest signage with municipal contact information (eg. 3-1-1).

Finally, there is an opportunity to strengthen and expand existing 'Adopt-a' programs in order to engage residents more directly in the ongoing maintenance, management and improvement of open spaces.