



MOUNT PEARL **RECREATION** MASTER PLAN

FINAL

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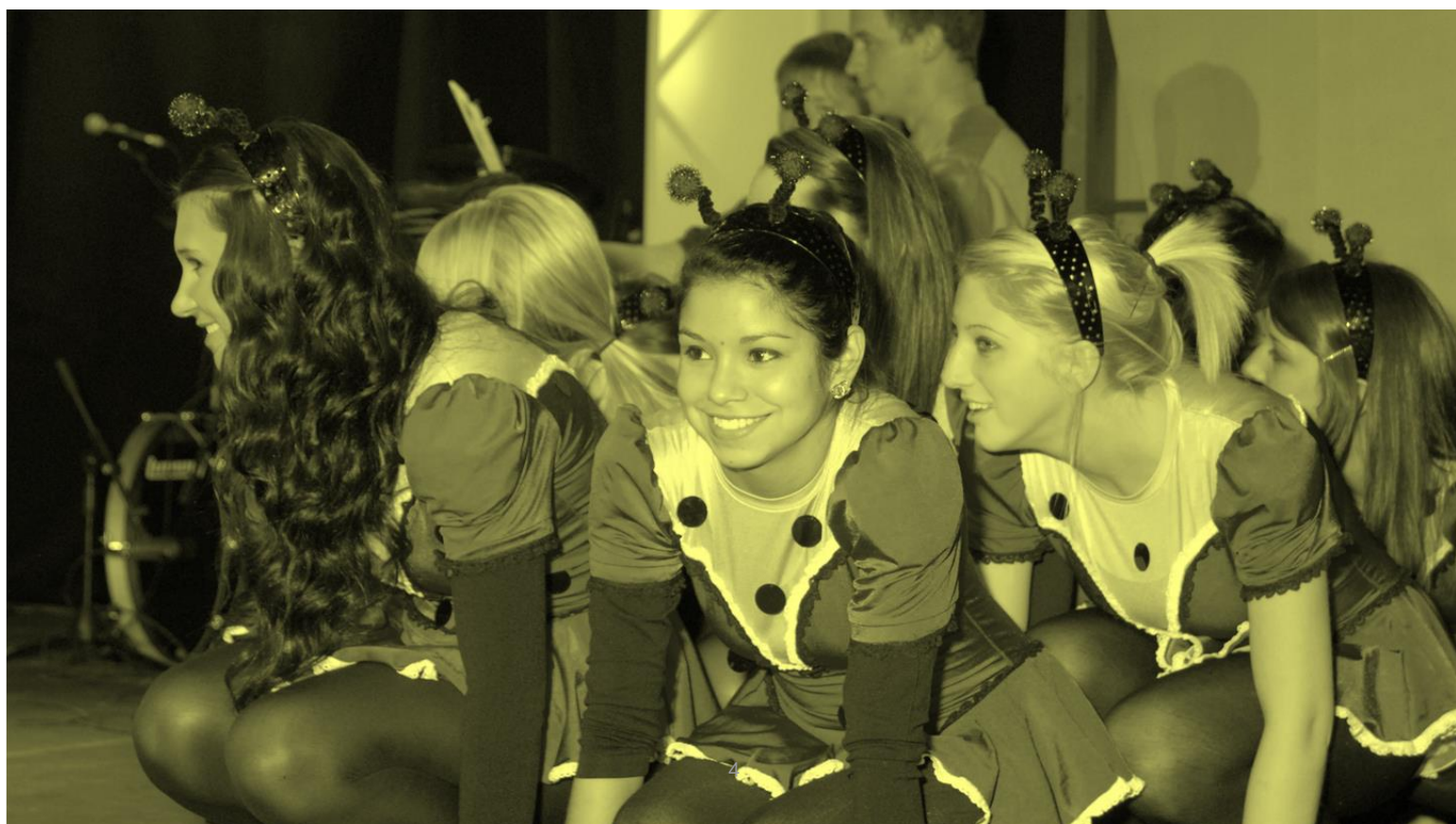
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ABOUT THE RECREATION MASTER PLAN







The Mount Pearl Summit Centre, the result of the City's \$35 million investment, provides high-quality recreation opportunities to residents.

About the Recreation Master Plan

This is Mount Pearl's Recreation Master Plan, the City's 10-year strategy for the delivery of high-quality leisure spaces and programming throughout the City. As a leading community in the province, Mount Pearl provides its residents unparalleled recreation opportunities out of its many parks, trails, and community centres.

The Mount Pearl Summit Centre is the crown jewel of the previous Parks & Recreation Master Plan, a 25,000 square foot expansion to the City's already plentiful leisure space. Now the Recreation Master Plan seeks to build upon the successes that came before.

An ambitious plan, large-scale community input and engagement was required to create and collaborate on a collective vision for the future of recreation and leisure in the City. It sets up goals for future projects

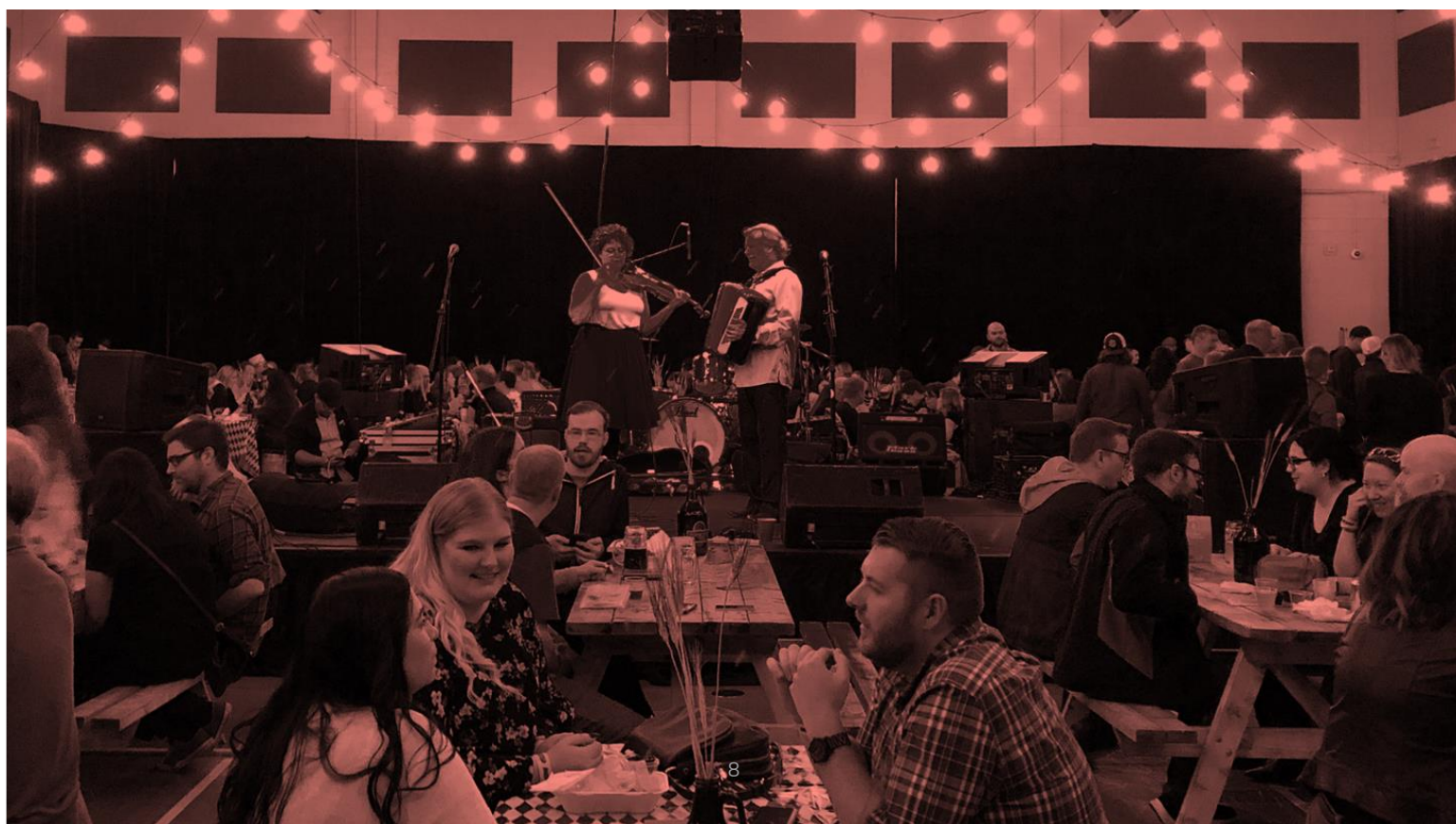
and a broad range of initiatives. These initiatives vary from trail improvements and splash pads to new community centres up and a large nature park encompassing hectares of land. The City looks forward to working with citizens and recreation partners to deliver on this ambition.

We are presented with a grand public challenge only achieved together. Join us for the next 10 years of our civic adventure.





PLANNING MOUNT PEARL'S RECREATION LANDSCAPE



Planning Mount Pearl's Recreation Landscape

What is Recreation and Why is it Important to Us?

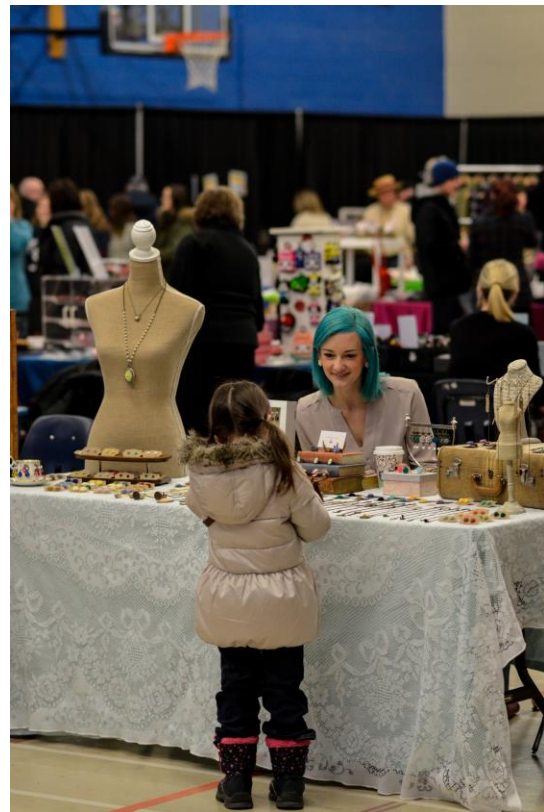
Recreation is a broad topic that includes many spaces and programs provided in the City both privately delivered and through the City. Included in this plan are ideas for: outdoor spaces like parks, trails, and sports fields; indoor areas like community centres, pools, ice rinks and libraries; programming like the City's many events, sports tournaments, camps, classes, lessons, and programs for all ages; and wish list items like winter slopes for tobogganing, skiing, and snowboarding, a theatre, martial arts rooms, curling opportunities, picnic areas, guided tours and more.

Personal & Individual

People participate in recreational activities for several reasons, many of which are health related. Of the five most cited reasons that people engage in recreation, physical health was overwhelmingly highlighted by nine in ten of those surveyed. Social connections with family and friends and general social health was a reason mentioned by 70% of participants. Self-care and mental health dominated the top five with three broad reasons of relaxation, nature enjoyment, and entertainment as relevant motivations for eight out of ten those asked.

Social

An active community with many residents participating in sport, leisure, and recreation also experience communal benefits. Communities experience better health outcomes and improved mental health self-reporting. Frequent activity in sport and exposure to relaxing environments also increase productivity in individuals providing net positives to income and taxation in the community. Groups with access to recreation opportunities also have experienced streamlined social connections and stronger community building from multifaceted social bonds.



Strong social bonds are the basis of strong community. It means we look out for each other.

What Guides the Recreation Master Plan?

Mount Pearl Municipal Plan 2010

The Mount Pearl Municipal Plan is a legal document that guides the general development of the City. It identifies planning and community goals that the City must strive to achieve in its overall projects and operations.

The main goal governing recreation in Mount Pearl states that the City aims:

“To provide a range of community places and recreational uses and facilities in Mount Pearl to meet the needs of its residents and to promote an active and healthy lifestyle.”

Some objectives to meet this goal include:

- Providing facilities for all ages
- Ensuring accessibility to all facilities
- A variety of programs and activities
- Promote volunteering and civic spirit
- Encourage multi-use in city facilities



The Recreation Master Plan aims to promote fun and fitness throughout the City.



Planning the City's Recreation Master Plan involves looking at everything from events, to programs, to buildings, and to people's needs.

On the Horizon: Mount Pearl Strategic Plan 2019-2023

“On the Horizon” is the City's much needed paradigm shift that aims to adapt to our changing world and frequently disrupted lives. The plan addresses areas where the City strives to advance its vision of being an attractive community with well maintained infrastructure and an elevated quality of life.

The vision of the strategic plan is to maximize the City's physical and natural assets and manage sustainable investment in infrastructure and programs. This will require attracting partners from across the country to build and provide for the recreational needs of People.

Planning Context

Community Profile

With a population of 23,000, Mount Pearl is a great place to live in the Northeast Avalon region with easy access to all amenities both within the city and within a short trek into neighbouring communities. Mount Pearl has a reputation of a City with a strong can-do attitude and as a City that takes care of its residents. From punctual and effective snowplowing, to state-of-the-art facilities that serve the region at large, and to fast and quality delivery of City services Mount Pearl is the City where quality of life and work-life balance are no-brainers.

Economic Profile

Mount Pearl is known for being a destination of choice for new business in the Avalon and in Newfoundland more broadly. With the largest business park in the province many unique opportunities are afforded to Mount Pearl residents. Residents enjoy a low unemployment rate of 7.7%, much lower than the Avalon region at 10.5% and almost half the provincial average of 15.6%. Even more impressive is the maintenance of a lower unemployment rate despite a higher participation rate (people working or looking for work); Mount Pearl's participation rate is 64.8%, 6 points higher than the Avalon at 62.7% and the province at 58.7%. Not only do residents have more work opportunities, those opportunities pay better, median after-tax incomes are 4-18% higher across categories like individuals, couples, couples with children, and single-parent households.

Education

Latest Census data indicates that Mount Pearl is more educated than the provincial average. Of over 13,000 Mount Pearl residents aged 25-64, 91.9% achieved a secondary school diploma or higher; compared to the provincial average of 84.3%. Within the same age group, Mount Pearl residents also have more post-secondary education with 67.3% having completed some form of tertiary instruction compared to the provincial average of 61.7%. Overall, the Avalon benefits from a higher quality of life than the rest of the province and Mount Pearl is reflective of that.



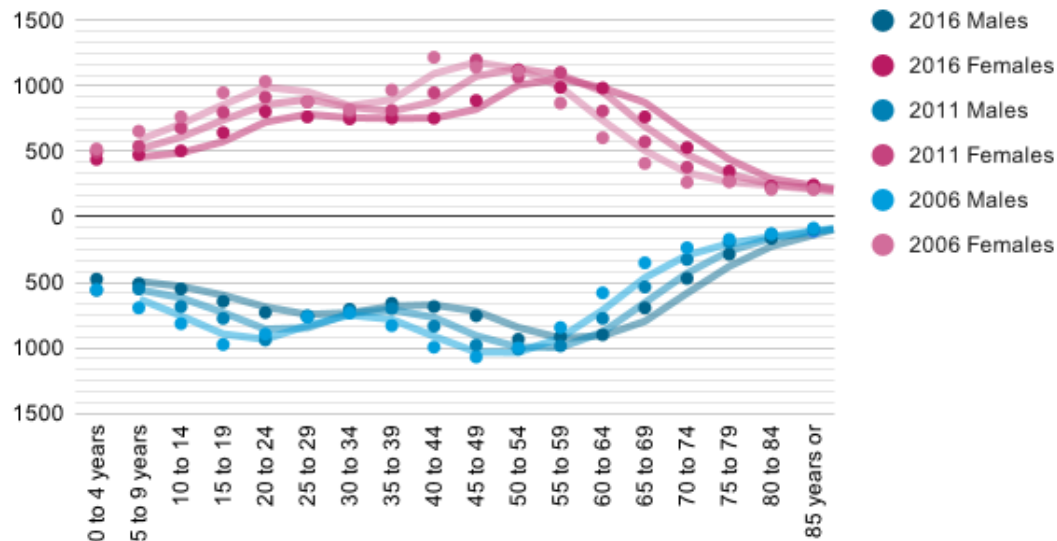
Mount Pearl is one of the most educated cities or towns in the Province.

Photo by [Terrence Thomas](#).

DID YOU KNOW? Newfoundland and Labrador has some of the lowest post-secondary tuition costs in the country. No wonder so many choose to come here and pursue higher education.

Population Trends

Population Distribution of Mount 2006/2011/2016



Population distribution of Mount Pearl over the last three census periods. Two generational humps can be seen, younger generational hump is smaller showing an aging of the community.

Mount Pearl, like most of Newfoundland and Labrador, has an aging population; while still younger than the province, Mount Pearl's median age is 45 up from 39 a decade ago. From the population graph we can see two humps that represent clusters of age groups in Mount Pearl. In one group, the older generation, the largest segment is approaching 70 years old in 2020, and in the younger and slightly smaller group a few people hover around 30 years old in 2020. Both groups, give or take 10 years to either side, represent the two main demographics in the City.

While the trends seem to indicate that many families choose to live and stay in Mount Pearl long term, it also shows the challenge that Mount Pearl and the province, in general, face in terms of an aging population and a difficulty attracting families and young people. From a high of 25,500 residents to present day 23,000, Mount Pearl has lost several its residents and should focus its recreation efforts on buildings programs that can attract new residents looking for a balanced lifestyle that includes a healthy work-life ratio.

When planning recreation and leisure activities and investments, City staff and recreation providers need to be mindful and inclusive of people from all ages and abilities. While the City's population is getting older, programs and new capital projects should be well-designed to also cater to and attract a broad range of people from children, to families, and young adults. New residents will grow the City's population and increase the number of people recreation services are available to.

Recreation and Leisure Trends

Return to the Great Outdoors

Now more than ever there is a desire to be outside and in nature, a return to the great outdoors. Cities around the world are looking for opportunities to grant their residents parks and open spaces; large cities are looking at decking over a railyards and highways for conversion into large downtown city parks and in developing countries master planned cities come with large central parks included in their construction. Newfoundlanders are drawing upon nature to support economic growth through tourism and for personal respite and relaxation with growing attendance at parks, trail, and conservations areas.



Individuals and groups are increasingly heading to outdoor space for relaxation and exercise.

Mental Health



Mindfulness and meditation are being embraced by many. Photo by [Cristian Newman](#).

Today, there is increased awareness of mental health as a distinct and important component to overall health and wellbeing. An increase in reported levels of depression and anxiety amongst the general population and young people specifically represents, not only an existing desire but need for attention to mental health in recreation programming. Communities everywhere are fostering quiet and contemplative spaces for individuals and groups to take refuge from their busy day, centering themselves on their goals and values. Improvements to cityscapes, usually oriented towards bringing nature back to the city are also initiatives communities are taking to improve mental health outcomes. Programs and businesses specializing in meditation and mindfulness have also seen growth.

Accessibility and Inclusion

Society is also growing more and more mindful of the many ways people identify and choose to express themselves. People's many unique needs and abilities; and the diverse cultures, backgrounds, and social outlooks that many people hail from. Community spaces play a unique role as one of the many crossroads of difference and a place where those differences can foster new ideas and relationships. Successful recreation planning involves everyone's individual and collective need from more open and accessible facilities to dedicated spaces for groups in need, like youth leisure rooms and seniors' programming. And when thinking about accessibility, the mind is typically drawn to wheelchair ramps and elevators; it is important to consider issues of access in other places and scenarios like open, outdoor, and digital spaces. Trails can be widened to accommodate all modes of people powered movement from walking and wheelchairs to bikes and skateboards. Access can also be provided physically through new parks closer to residents or improving walkability from one open space to another. Digital accessibility can be achieved with multiformat documents and the use of accessible design principles for online media.

Civic Placemaking

Parks and open spaces have given the residents of Mount Pearl a sense of civic pride. Big cities like New York may have their Central Parks but Mount Pearl residents are the ones that are just a hop away from an amazing trail system that connects the City's many parks and waterbodies. Well-designed parks and open spaces can make residents feel at home and at ease as well as boosting sentiments of civic pride.



What signs, icons, landscapes, or buildings can we use to make an icon of the City?

Social Media

Buzz buzz, everyone has a little computer in their pocket that sends and receives millions of pieces of information and allows people to contact each other from the opposite side of the planet. Parks can play an important role in mediating out social lives and our digital lives; they can help residents reconnect with nature and the outdoors while allowing them to better manage their digital diets.

Consultation

The goals of the Recreation Master Plan are guided by the needs and desires of residents and community stakeholders/groups. These stakeholders include individual residents, sport and activity groups, non-profit and private companies. The success of the Recreation Master Plan is only achieved by the combined and coordinated efforts of all stakeholders to shape an active and comprehensive recreation landscape in the City of Mount Pearl.

Focus Groups

Meeting several times with various organizations, City staff compiled a list of needs, requests, challenges, ideas, and solutions that the many sport, fitness, creative, and inclusion community organizations presented at these meetings. Numerous strengths regarding the City's popularity as a sport and recreation destination as well as the quality of the facilities and programming were highlighted by these organizations. Small improvements to the trails, programming, and new facilities were outlined as wish list items.



Planning recreation collaboratively is key.

Residents

A paper survey was mailed out to all households, the over ten thousand in Mount Pearl, defined by A1N Postal Code; the survey was also made available online, promoted through Facebook and Twitter; and was distributed at an event to the Mount Pearl Seniors Independence Group. Nearly 1,500 responses were received, nearly four times the response rate of the survey conducted for the previous Parks & Recreation Master Plan.

Survey questions varied from frequently preformed activities and facilities, desired improvements and new projects, and popular events.

Idea Boards and Open Houses

An idea board was placed in the Summit Centre with the simple question: "What does the future of recreation look like in Mount Pearl?". Summit Centre users and residents passing by were invited to answer this question by writing on drawing on the white board. The process was meant to capture ideas from casual and frequent users of the Summit Centre, especially those who shied away from answering the longer survey.

Open houses allowed for a public forum for residents to brainstorm and work through several recreation ideas. Open houses across the City presented previous recreation visions and asked similar questions to the surveys. Open format coffee shop style discussions aimed to reduce any discomfort residents might have to voicing concerns and presenting unique ideas or solutions.





THE 2005 PLAN



The 2005 Plan

The goals of the previous plan, the City of Mount Pearl Parks & Recreation Master Plan, have mostly been achieved. The plan called for the establishment of new City parks, trail improvements, and expanded and improved facilities at the Reid Centre and the Team Gushue Sports Complex. It is now a crucial moment to reflect on the Mount Pearl's coming needs and growth since the last plan.

Summit Centre

The Mount Pearl Summit Centre is a state-of-the-art recreation facility. It houses a 25,000 square foot aquatics complex with two swimming pools and a slide, fitness centre (gym, weight room, cardio room, indoor walking track), a gymnasium, and various multi-purpose rooms. The Summit Centre was a key recommendation of the previous plan and greatly expanded the existing facilities at Glacier and Reid Centres. The Summit Centre united many uses under one building and brand.



The Summit Centre was the crown jewel of the last recreation plan and has provided extensive benefits to residents and to sport and activity groups while providing a huge boost to amenities and programming spaces top the City.

Parks

The 2005 Plan called for the establishment and expansion of parks at Powers Pond, Branscombe's Pond, Stapleton Road, St David's Avenue, Kenmount Hill (by Gloria Pearson Community Centre), and the Smallwood Complex (Team Gushue Sports Complex). In the fifteen years since, Powers Pond and Branscombe's Pond have seen trail loops completed, while Team Gushue has seen new fields and a skatepark. The remaining parks have been redeveloped and repurposed, and St David's Park in particular, has become the centre of many events and festivals, from City Days to the Frosty Festival and to music festivals and concerts.

Trails and Cycling

The trail network is crucial to Mount Pearl's reputation. It is an ever-evolving endeavour and various improvements were suggested to facilitate cycling, walkability, and general amenity of the trail system. These improvements have since been implemented and the effort to continuously improve the trails has transformed into its own strategic plan, Mount Pearl Walks, which is a masterplan guiding trail improvements and investments in trail expansions. While now considered its own endeavour, its important that a new recreation master plan be able to complement Mount Pearl walks while setting its own recreation priorities regarding Mount Pearl's stellar trail system.

DID YOU KNOW? Mount Pearl has more than 60 km of walking trails.

Team Gushue Sports Complex

The Smallwood Complex as it was previously known was expanded to include more fields and pitches as well as small improvements to parking, landscaping, and the addition of sporting huts. The Smallwood arena accommodated skating and curling before being converted into an indoor soccer field and eventually demolished at the end of its serviceable life. The expanded sports complex regularly sees sports tournaments and events; it has even hosted travelling circuses and events.



The opening of a new soccer field at the Team Gushue Sports Complex in 2010.





GOALS, NEXT STEPS, PRIORITIES



Goals, Next Steps, Priorities

Through the Recreation Master Plan, Mount Pearl strives to be the epicentre and example of work-life balance in the province. The City already leads with state-of-the-art facilities and over 60 kilometres of trails but always strives to continuously add onto its recreational offerings such as improved trail lighting and signage, outdoor water and ice facilities, and indoor amenities like fields, playgrounds, a seniors' centre, and well-tailored programs. The master plan will foster a leisure culture in Mount Pearl that is enjoyed by residents of all ages, abilities, and desires for growth and learning in fitness, creativity, and physical and mental health.



Local work at the Annex.

Parks for All



Mount Pearl is a leader with an extensive network of parks and trails.

Drawing on the City's extensive park and trail system, the City should adopt and incorporate a "Parks for All" approach to green and outdoor space service delivery. Instilling this mantra in the culture of recreation in the City involves getting back to the basics and understanding parks as tools in four distinct project areas.

Parks need, to first and foremost, honour the indigenous and colonial history of the communities they serve, and collaboratively empower community members to make and advance decisions on their parks

Second, parks facilitate connections by acting as the stage for public gathering and civic programming. Parks should help blur the distinction between outside and inside by encouraging tourism (green storytelling), infrastructure (green roofs/walls, rain gardens), and highlighting the benefits of the outdoors.

Conservation is a key service provided by parks and park spaces. This task not only involves protecting watersheds and animal habitats but also working actively to expand the urban-natural realm by converting underused spaces into parks or green spaces and enhancing existing ones to the benefit native species.

Lastly, a "Parks for All" approach requires that Mount Pearl aim to lead in best environmental and landscaping practices. Park builders must strive beyond what they know they can achieve; doable is no longer acceptable. Sharing and drawing on success is key to continuous improvement and truly park accessibility.

Just Up the Trail

Residents of Mount Pearl have always been proud of their extensive trail system. The system provides a lovely walk from any neighbourhood to any other within the City, many trips don't even require a crossing a single arterial street; you can walk from Power's Pond to St. David's Park to Admiralty House without having to wait for a single crossing light. The extensive system has invited walkers, runners, cyclists, children in wagons, dog-walkers, and people from all walks of life. As the City and its recreation priorities evolve it is important to maintain the inviting nature of the trail system.

Residents are looking at the City's trail system and are adapting the system for new goals and activities. No longer are trails solely used for getting from A to B or for a good run; increasingly the City is seeing people use the trails as social spaces, places to hang out or catch up with a friend. As more residents spend more time in the trail and park network it will be the City's job to accommodate and provide for their needs.

General park and trail improvements were well-requested throughout consultation; however, picnic tables and picnic areas came out as one of the top five requests for outdoor facilities. A relatively straightforward solution requires the City to install more green and urban furniture to allow People to have a social meal in the City's many parks. Urban park furniture can include picnic tables and benches but also recycling and waste receptables, fixed public barbeques (according to appropriate health and fire regulations), water fountains, and shelters like gazebos.

Following provision of picnic areas, general improvements to the trail and park network include interpretive signage, increased wayfinding devices, lighting enhancements, widened trails (to national standards) and ecological improvements (like native bee friendly planting). Many have also requested new trails entirely from a larger Kenmount Hill system to facilitated crossings over Topsail Road and Commonwealth Avenue.



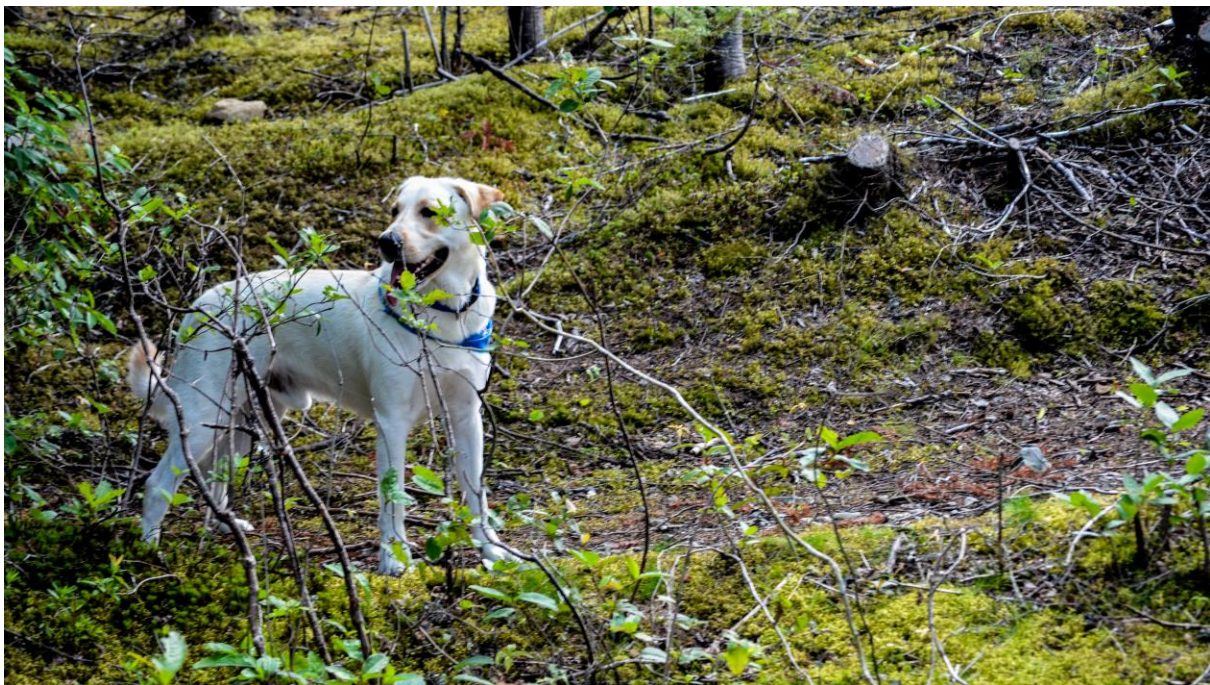
Mount Pearl's trails are used for so many things. Nature hikes, winter runs, and dog walking are just a select few. The City should continue building this broad system

Don't Build Parks, Find Them, Grow Them, Keep Them: A Park for the North

Many of the City's facilities and recreation opportunities lie south of Topsail road, think the Summit Centre and Team Gushue Sports Complex. Consideration should be given to servicing the needs of neighbourhoods and communities north of topsail road. Serving young families and recent downsizers will ensure that Kenmount Hill and Moffatt Road retain the same quality of recreation and natural beauty found in Mount Pearl communities south of Topsail road.

Northwest Mount Pearl, around the water tower, rests the City's most densely forested area. Some development is planned for the area and a large natural heritage park is envisioned to provide for the walking, hiking, and recreation needs of new residents. Residents have consistently requested hiking trails and a conservation style "rustic heritage" park throughout and consultation for the Recreation Master Plan and at the beginning phases of design for many new developments on Kenmount Hill.

A "Water Tower Natural Heritage Park" would serve many functions for the City's large northern communities. The park would exist at the doorstep of many and serve to balance Power's Pond, the Waterford River, and the T'Railway. The nature additionally serves as a strong foundation for the expansion of the City's trail system into the northern areas. A solid trail system north of Topsail Road would confirm the north as an integral part of Mount Pearl on similar footing with the City's south.



An untouched natural landscape, the northern park would be open all friends within the City. It would be the backbone of Mount Pearl's northern trails system and would provide recreation to more families and residents.

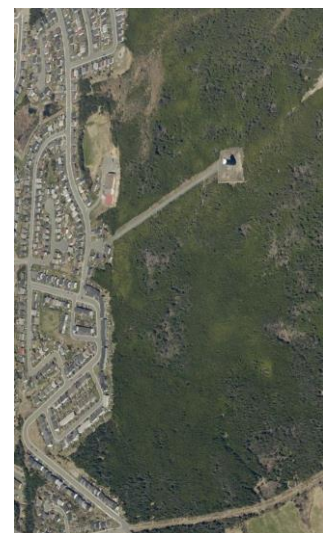
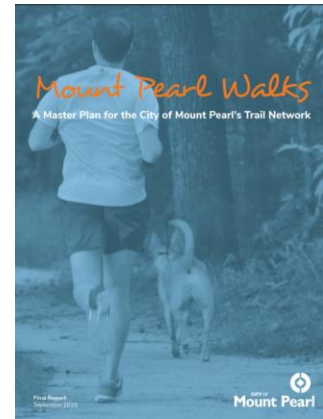
Mount Pearl Walks

Mount Pearl Walks is the City's master plan for the expansion and improvement of Mount Pearl's extensive trail system, including parts of the parts of the T'Railway Provincial Park inside the City. Compiled by staff and landscape architects, the entire trail system was walked and documented for a hands-on understanding of its strengths and a list of possible improvements. As the trail system is the City's largest outdoor recreation facility it is important that it be considered in the City's Recreation Master Plan and that it has its own plan to address its specific goals and challenges.

The trails master plan includes various recommendations for the expansion and amelioration of the trail system including:

- Expanding the City's branding further into the trail system and signing the trails as a comprehensive outdoor recreation facility like a park
- Create a regional or province wide brand image for the T'Railway which can serve as a recreation tourism and ecotourism attraction
- Signing at high traffic intersections, termini, and that signage is continuous on sidewalk portions of the trails
- Installing a safe crossing at Commonwealth and the T'Railway and at a location crossing Topsail Road
- Pedestrian oriented development along the Waterford River and the T'Railway
- Planning and building an orbital trail circling the City
- Continuing work to build trails north of Topsail Road
- Widen trails to standard widths where possible
- Encourage cleanliness of the trails e.g. pet waste signs
- Install additional lighting to allow earlier and later use in the day as well as increase safety in the system
- Using technology to increase access, monitoring, and maintenance (e.g. Street view mapping, CCTV cameras)

The trails master plan advances the City's trail system in a way that is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Recreation Master Plan. Continuing collaboration between the teams involved in fulfilling both plans is paramount.



Mount Pearl Walks discusses the many strengths of the City's trail system. It makes recommendations on how to improve the large outdoor recreation amenity.



While long-time residents might know that registration for activities is always on a certain day, newcomers might not have access to that knowledge. An inclusive city programming information easy to find.

Activities

Communications & Program Guide

With such a wide range of activities in Mount Pearl, each with its own unique providers, it can be disorienting to find detailed information about each activity. Residents have regularly expressed the need for a centralized and authoritative source with the specifics about scheduling, location, demographics, experience required, price, and any other relevant details so that they may use it in planning their lives across public and private recreation providers.

Many municipalities publish a recreation and leisure guide on a seasonal, bi-annual, or annual basis that compiles the classes, programs, and sports offered by the municipality and major or all recreation providers. Mount Pearl formerly published one such guide regularly but has since pivoted to dissemination of that information via social media and its website. Council should consider its current approach and explore reintroducing the guide as a digital publication, available on the City's website and shared on Facebook, with limited print runs. To address the cost of a print runs, those requesting a hard copy could possibly pay into a subscription model.

Programs

While new buildings, facilities, and fields can certainly encourage many to take full advantage of recreation opportunities, other times the right activities and socializing can encourage and guide recreation programming.

Three values must guide the creation of new programming in the City: community driven choices, sustainability, and social benefits. Programs must respond to a community need or desire whether it be for a social club or a skills development course. In consideration of the environment, a program must consider a healthy environment as a public good. Of the same token, the City must ensure that resources for programs are evenly distributed and that no program is unduly supported where the program is not viable or sustainable. Programs must also provide a social benefit such as tech literacy for seniors or leadership building in young people. Achieving this balance is the goal.

Boomers and Zoomers

Increasingly the public is looking for tailored experiences. In the age where we are fed an information and social media diet uniquely tailored to ourselves and ourselves alone the expectation of tailored programming is seeping into physical recreation planning.

Residents are asking for programming unique to their needs. Older generations are requesting seniors' centres and activities for seniors such as walking clubs, courses in tech basics, independence initiatives, and seniors' socials. On the other hand, the upcoming generations of children and teens are looking at STEM labs and makerspaces in their libraries, courses in basic life skills no longer taught in home economics or shop classes, mental health and meditation activities, and programs for their unique interests and identities. Even outside of age, many niche groups are looking for tailored programs. From women entrepreneurs and LGBTQ+ sports teams, to francophone potters and Irish book clubs, the City will have to differentiate programs it can offer, facilitate, or house from programs all too niche or too broad for their capability.



A real example of a unique program: a men's dog walking group was founded to provide men opportunities to discuss mental health and share resources. Would a seniors' dog-walking club be useful in keeping the City's older population active and social? What activities can be provided to younger groups to serve their needs and desires?

Mount Pearl is a place that has something for everyone, from the most experienced cad strategists to our very youngest athletes. Every age group enjoys recreation.



Events / Tourism

As the Northeast Avalon's centre of population moves more westerly, away from St. John's, and into Mount Pearl, Mount Pearl is increasingly considered the place to hold large events like festivals and concerts. The City is easily accessed by neighbouring St. John's, Paradise, and Conception Bay South. It can easily accommodate these events on its large facilities. Circuses and music festivals have been held in Mount Pearl and have at times been the only stop in the Northeast Avalon for tours across the province.

Residents are generally satisfied with the events happening in their City. But not to be outdone, people ask themselves what additional kinds of events can be attracted and hosted to make Mount Pearl the place to hit up. Most requested additional events are concerts and markets while festivals centered on the season like the Frosty Festival seem to be popular. Recreation organizers should continue exploring attracting events and providing venues for music festivals, special markets, and gatherings that make use of open spaces.



The Mount Pearl Frosty Festival is Atlantic Canada's largest winter festival. With over 80 events, tickets are regularly sold out and venues packed with visitors coming from across the province and region to join in on the fun. Activities include something for everyone: snowball fights, family skating, wine tastings, concerts, outdoor yoga, snow races, dinners, bowling, storytelling, night-markets and so much more.

Sports

Earning and guarding the title as the province's sports capital involves not only catering to sports popular across the province but also the activities sought after by residents. Investments in activities like basketball, running, and rock climbing are highly desired by residents. The City's duty will be in determining what they can provide and what they can foster through external organizations to grow locally. Basketball can be accommodated at the municipal level if appropriate facilities exist, while bowling alleys on the other hand are something the City should encourage private enterprise to invest in. The City must determine its approach and priority in terms of activities like climbing; while some municipalities have built climbing walls and fostered climbing culture other have left the fulfilment of those need to firm and independently run climbing gyms. It will be truly exciting to observe and participate in the evolution of the sport scene

in Mount Pearl in the coming years as the landscape diversifies and develops to take on many interests and goals.



What sports do residents want to see? What sports will they be proud to host?



What activities can the City support as a way of expanding its recreation offerings?

Facilities

When it comes to achieving the goals of the Recreation Master Plan residents and recreation providers are split on where investment is needed. Residents are strong advocates of investment in outdoor recreation and leisure spaces while sports providers are adamant about the need for increased square footage of indoor sports and entertainment spaces.

Residents acknowledge and appreciate Mount Pearl's unique position as a City well integrated in its natural surroundings. Our broad trail system stretches from one end of the City to the other; visiting rivers, ponds, parks, shopping, homes, and all attractions in the City along the way. It is on these offerings that residents want to see improvements and investments to truly offer world-class programs in Mount Pearl.

The desire and need for indoor spaces are driven from the popularity of Mount Pearl's existing facilities and a sense that with increased capacity the City will be able to offer more in the way of sports and physical activity without compromising on its current offerings. The Reid Centre is cited as being frequently booked for events and activities meaning sports leagues are unable to use the space as a gym for regular practice. Sport organizations are encouraged by potential developments and City investment that spaces can be freed for increased use as sporting facilities.



A team of City staff exploring the Summit Centre under construction.

Splash and Skate

Seasonality has always made it challenging for Canadian cities to incorporate outdoor recreation amenities that serve the public year-round; pools freeze, rinks melt, and fields become snow covered or muddy. Water and ice features dominated the most requested outdoor facilities with skating loops / rinks and pool / splashpads as four of the five most requested facilities.

As many young families decide to move into new subdivisions on Kenmount Hill, they are increasingly demanding spaces that can accommodate their children's play, fun and entertainment requests. Splashpads, swimming pools, and outdoor skating were all highly requested by residents. Installing a natural rink near the Gloria Pearson Community Centre would greatly benefit these families and provide increased investment in recreation north of Topsail Road.

Some cities have taken these needs a step further

and created multiuse facilities that serve both purposes. Splash and skate areas serve as splash pads in the summer with inground jets and water tipping and spraying installations; in the winter the area is easily flooded forming an ideal skating rink or loop, water furniture can then be used anchors, rest points, or change areas for skaters. The Serafini Family Ice & Splash Pad in Hamilton, Ontario is one such example of a multi-season recreation installation.



Hamilton's Serafini Family Ice and Splash Pad could serve as inspiration to Mount Pearl in terms of combined winter-summer multi-use facilities.

A New "Tin Can"

The Smallwood arena affectionately known as the "Tin Can" served the community both as an ice surface and as an indoor field. As it approached the end of its serviceable life, it was demolished as the Summit Centre rose a mile away. Currently the site is a surface that serves as extra parking for events and tournaments at the many sports fields in the Team Gushue Sports Complex; it has also held events such as circuses and festivals.

Demand for several indoor facilities suggests that a large multiuse building could cater to the variety of needs. Consultation efforts by the City have indicated that such a building should serve at least these primary functions: create sporting fields and courts to alleviate capacity issues found at the City's other facilities, operate a space for seniors programming and community building, build an indoor

running track larger than what currently exists, and to fulfil the long desired need for a purpose built theatrical venue. The former arena site presents a unique opportunity for a rebirth of sorts; allowing the City to give rise to a much-desired investment and allowing the sports complex site to be used in a more year-round manner.



A new indoor facility could serve many needs.



Projects of the Mount Pearl Recreation Master Plan

Outdoor Facilities

Splash Pad

This can include in-ground jets, tipping buckets, and rain mushrooms; likely located near younger families at Gloria Pearson Community Centre.

Skating Facilities (Loop and/or Rink)

A loop would be a track for skating only whereas a rink can include games; both are highly desired and appropriate location(s) should be found.

Picnic Areas

Spread out through the City's many parks picnic tables would satisfy local needs and increase park usage with little investment.

Swimming Pools

Highly sought after by young families an outdoor pool would serve as a local summer recreation activity; it is suggested that this be located near northern subdivisions.

Trail Improvements

General level of service improvements such as trail widenings, wayfinding and signage, lighting and evening considerations, benches, picnic tables, and interpretive boards.

Projects of the Mount Pearl Recreation Master Plan

Indoor Facilities

Running/Walking Track

A larger track than what currently exists would allow more use and higher speeds for those that wish to use the track for running and intensive exercise.

Seniors Centre

To accommodate varying events and programs for seniors (replacing Park Place) for which current facilities are ill-suited (too small/large, used for sports not programming).

Playgrounds / Climbing Spaces (for both adults and children)

The desire for an indoor facility to perform free range and drop-in activity like summer playgrounds and climbing spaces but in the winter.

Arts Theatre / Concert Hall

A historical request that has sustained interest would be a 300+ seat theatre for performances and cultural shows. It may form part of a multi-use facility.

Curling Opportunities

Eliminate the need to perform this activity elsewhere by providing it within the City's facilities either through conversion or new construction.

Projects of the Mount Pearl Recreation Master Plan

Programming

Creation of a Living Guide (or similar recreation guide / consolidated document)

Council should consider the creation of a city guide, which can also include non recreation information but consolidates key civic information.

Focus on tourism, attracting events like festivals, concerts, and markets

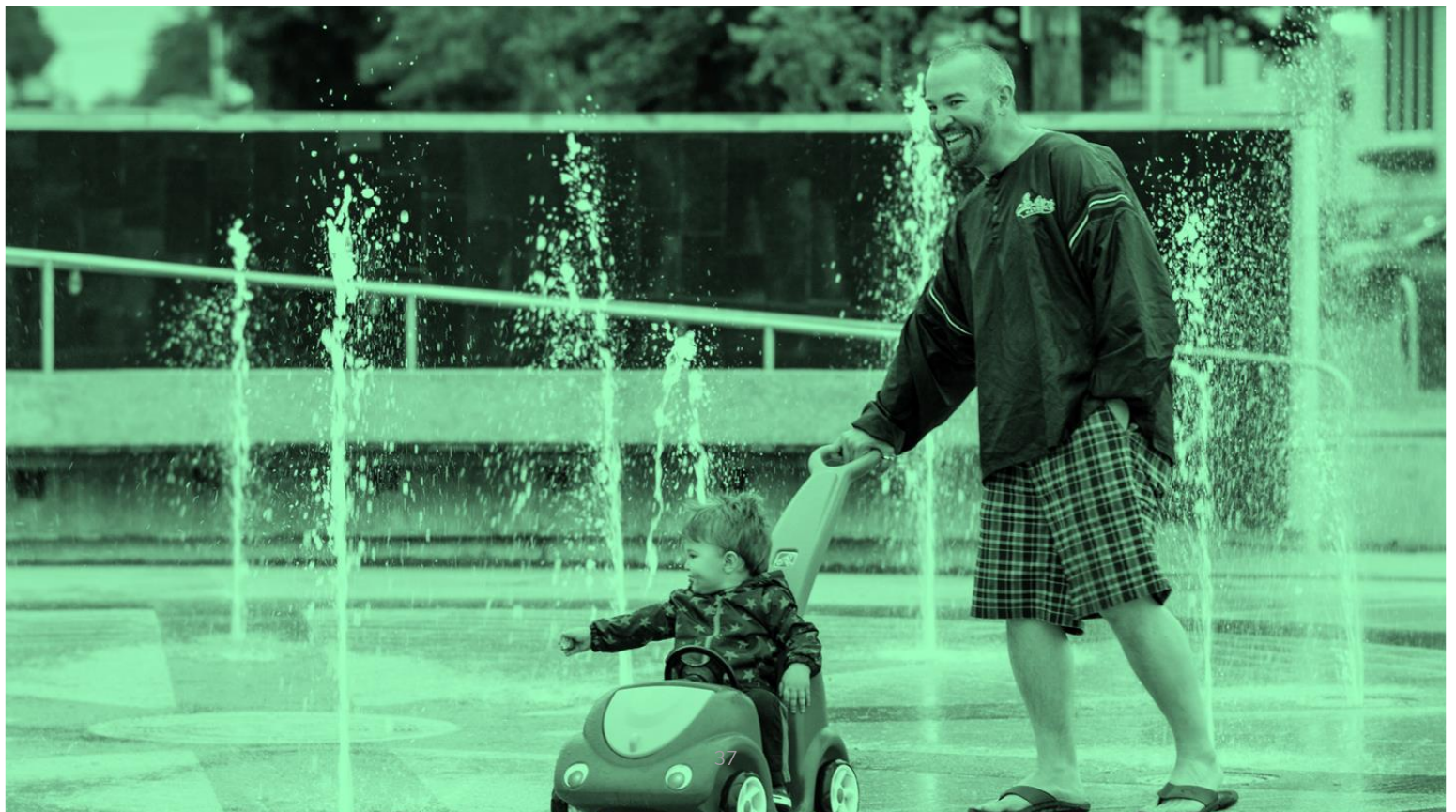
Attracting regional events like circuses provides traffic and tourism spending, current marketing efforts should expand to attract temporary events in addition to businesses.

Explore pathways to facilitate a larger variety of sports from what is already offered

Either by expanding sporting facilities and/or moving non-sport activities to other areas.



IMPLEMENTATION AND BUDGET



Implementation and Budget

Implementation will require the clarification of goals and priorities and an inventory of public and private capabilities to build the recreation vision that Mount Pearl strives to achieve. The City will have to carefully balance fee structures to ensure inclusion and accessibility while also considering that taxpayers have a variety of goals and ambitions regarding where their tax dollars should go, notwithstanding mandatory spending for basic services like road maintenance and snow clearing. The Recreation Master Plan serves as a guide for the yearly decisions guiding the City to a grander recreation future.

Outdoor Facilities

Splash Pad

Skating Facilities (Loop and/or Rink)

Picnic Areas

Swimming Pools

Trail Improvements

Indoor Facilities

Running/Walking Track

Seniors Centre

Playgrounds / Climbing Spaces (for both adults and children)

Arts Theatre / Concert Hall

Curling Opportunities

Programming

Creation of a Living Guide (or similar recreation guide / consolidated document)

Focus on tourism, attracting events like festivals, concerts, and markets

Explore pathways to facilitate a larger variety of sports from what is already offered



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APPENDICES



Appendices

Appendix I – Public Survey Data Summary

Appendix II – Public Survey Data Word Clouds

Appendix III – Idea Board and Open House Summary

Appendix IV – Focus Group Data Summary

Appendix I – Public Survey Data Summary

Response Rate

Total Surveys Mailed Out	10,224
Survey Responses by	
Mail In	1,496
Online	534
Outreach Effort (Seniors)	83
Total Survey Responses	2,113
Response Rate	20.7%

Reason for Participation

Prompt: Tell us why you participate in recreational activities. Select all the apply.

Answer Choices	Count	Percent
Physical health/exercise	1,887	90%
Relax/unwind	1,638	78%
Spend time with family and friends	1,481	71%
Enjoy nature	1,474	70%
Fun/entertainment	1470	70%

(2096 Responses Received)

Satisfaction

Prompt: Overall, how satisfied are you with the availability of public and private recreation opportunities, facilities and services in the City of Mount Pearl?

Answer Choices	Count	Percent
Very Satisfied	1,237	59%
Satisfied	675	32%
Unsure	126	6%
Somewhat Dissatisfied	44	2%
Very Dissatisfied	12	1%

(2094 Responses Received)

Need for Outdoor Facilities

Prompt: Do you think there is a need for new and/or upgraded outdoor recreation amenities to be developed in Mount Pearl?

Answer Choices	Count	Percent
Yes	1,023	49%
No	501	24%
Unsure	565	27%

(2089 Responses Received)

Prompt: Identify up to 5 outdoor facilities that should be more readily available in Mount Pearl.

Answer Choices	Count	Percent
Splashpad/ water spray parks	711	51%
Outdoor skating loop	670	48%
Picnic areas	491	35%
Outdoor swimming	485	34%
Outdoor skating rink	438	31%
Community gardens	396	28%
Walking/cycling trail system	357	25%
Amphitheatre's/concert spaces	342	24%
Nature/interpretive trails	274	19%
Dog off-leash areas	262	19%
Campgrounds	260	18%
Outdoor fitness equipment	208	15%

(1407 Responses Received)

*Only choices selected by 15% or more of respondents are displayed.

Need for Indoor Facilities

Prompt: Do you think there is a need for new and/or upgraded indoor recreation amenities to be developed in Mount Pearl?

Answer Choices	Count	Percent
Yes	808	39%
No	704	34%
Unsure	552	27%

(2064 Responses Received)

Prompt: Identify up to 5 indoor facilities that should be more readily available in Mount Pearl.

Answer Choices	Count	Percent
Bowling alley ¹	561	46%
Walking/running track	500	41%
Seniors centre	335	27%
Indoor child playgrounds	326	27%
Arts theatre/concert hall	318	26%
Indoor climbing gym spaces	291	24%
Curling rinks	271	22%
Indoor multi-purpose field facilities	234	19%
Fitness/wellness facilities	216	18%
Swimming pools/facilities	183	15%

(1228 Responses Received)

* Only choices selected by 15% or more of respondents are displayed.

¹ A bowling alley has been identified as need best provided via private investment rather than through the construction of a City facility.

Programming

Prompt: When you think about both existing and new programs, tell us the top 3 areas that need improvement.

Answer Choices	Count	Percent
Lower costs	980	55%
Greater variety	690	39%
More convenient schedule/longer hours	674	38%
Improved marketing of programs	537	30%
Offered more frequently	444	25%
Different skill levels available	418	23%
Accommodate more participants	400	22%

(1792 Responses Received)

* Only choices selected by 15% or more of respondents are displayed.

Planning Criteria

Prompt: From the below list, select the top three (3) project planning criteria to complete this sentence: A recreation amenity project should be a higher priority if...

Answer Choices	Count	Percent
It responds to demands/requests from the community.	1164	57%
It can be operated in an economically and environmentally sustainable manner.	1030	51%
It provides greater benefit to the community.	966	47%
It will help to attract or retain residents.	503	25%
The amenity is not readily available in the area.	454	22%
It means more recreation amenities are available throughout the community.	405	20%
The cost to operate the amenity is low.	392	19%
It has the potential for bringing non-local spending into the community.	312	15%

(2035 Responses Received)

* Only choices selected by 15% or more of respondents are displayed.

Appendix II – Public Survey Data Word Clouds

Satisfaction

Respondents were asked to explain their reason for responding **‘very satisfied’** or **‘satisfied’** regarding their satisfaction with public and private recreation opportunities, facilities and services in the City of Mount Pearl. The 2094 responses were placed into a word cloud with more frequent words appearing larger.



Community Vision for Programming

A community vision was solicited from respondents regarding programming. Prompt: *Help us learn about what you would like to see (or see more of) by identifying specific programs (e.g. adult beginner programs, nature programs, etc).* The 812 responses were placed into a word cloud with more frequent words appearing larger.



Community Vision for Events

A community vision was solicited from respondents regarding events and single occurrence or non-regular activities happening within the City. Prompt: What additional events should the City consider having? The 570 responses were placed into a word cloud with more frequent words appearing larger.



Appendix III – Idea Board and Open House Summary

Priorities for Indoor Facilities
Seniors Centre
Arts Theatre/Concert Hall
Indoor Child Playgrounds
Indoor Multipurpose Field Facility
Youth Group Building (Cadet Armoury, Scout-Guide Hall)

Priorities for Outdoor Facilities
Splash Pad
Outdoor Skating Loop/Rink
Picnic Areas
Outdoor Swimming
Community Gardens

Priorities for Trail Improvements
Lighting
New Trails
Wayfinding / Signage
Amenities (benches, recycling, etc.)
Interpretive Signage

Priorities for Programming
Outdoor Activities
Walking / Jogging
Cooking / Barbeque
Parent-Tot
Nature / Environment

Best Method of Communication
City Website
Facebook
Email
Community Posters
Summit Centre Outdoor Screen

Appendix IV – Focus Group Data Summary

Three focus groups met in November 2018 to discuss areas of excellence and areas of improvement regarding recreational opportunities in Mount Pearl. The focus groups consisted of City recreation staff, various recreation promoters, advocacy groups (such as seniors independence groups), sporting associations, recreation partners, provincial sports representatives, and recreation providers. The groups discussed several topics regarding recreation in the City:

- Need for collaboration and communication between recreation providers to plan and accommodate around each other
- A community calendar or guide for accessibility and information for the public
- A clarification of social media policy with regards to recreation partners and the use of native content or reposted / shared content is required
- There is a lack of dedicated recreational spaces (many organizations are trying to squeeze into school gyms), indoor sporting facilities (many move to neighbouring communities), and a lack of a medium size spaces (e.g. theatre)
- The library requires modernization (café, maker space, different noise area [some libraries have talking / whisper / silent zones], general appearance renovations)
- A recreation support network as in providing legal, businesses, financing, and human resources advice or referrals to organizations that are looking to grow and expand
- Exceeded the expectations of the last recreation plan
- Improvements to active transportation (cycling and walking) are needed such as a safety guide, motorist education, dedicated spaces, bike parking, increased winter maintenance of sidewalks and trails, and cultural shifts
- Museum is doing well, and the City should continue to encourage and support it
- Current facilities are at capacity, and there is a need for an indoor facility at Team Gushue
- Specific groups seeking accommodation: curling club facility, cadet armory, seniors' hall
- Accessibility of the City's playgrounds as well as lack of benches or rest spaces
- Accessible childcare would allow the attraction of families to the City
- Interactive urbanism / public realm activation (public art, piano keys, leisure spaces)
- Trail improvements (interpretation, wayfinding, trail widening, benches, recycling, etc.)
- An events hall for ceremony space and alleviation of capacity issues at the Reid Centre
- Safety improvements for outdoor sporting venues
- Running track and basketball courts desired at Team Gushue perhaps in a building
- Volunteer attraction and retention initiatives are required
- Recreation facilities should have more single stall and inclusive washrooms
- Consensus for a new multipurpose facility to take pressure off of Reid Centre and address new recreation needs, likely at Team Gushue Sports Complex

