



COWICHAN SPORTSPLEX
FIELDHOUSE

**REGIONAL
RECREATION
FACILITY NEEDS
ASSESSMENT
REPORT**



TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The CVRD is in the ancestral and unceded territories of First Nations including (but not limited to) the Quw'utsun (Cowichan), MÁLEXEŁ (Malahat), BOKÉĆEN (Pauquachin), ćuubaćsa?tx (Ts'uubaa-asatx), xeláltxw (Halalt), Spune'luxutth (Penelakut), Stz'uminus, Leey'qsun (Lyackson), Diitiid?aa?tx (Ditidaht) and P'a:chi:da?ah (Pacheedaht) Nations. Local First Nations Peoples have lived in reciprocally supportive relationships with the lands, waters, plants and animals of this region since time immemorial.

Executive Summary

Overview

The Cowichan Valley Regional District along with its municipal partners developed this Recreation Needs Assessment to review regional recreation infrastructure priorities in the Cowichan Valley. Currently, 9 'regionally significant' facilities exist that are funded by taxpayers across the CVRD. The Needs Assessment updates priorities identified in the Regional Recreation Strategic Plan (2019) and will be used to inform future facility planning and investment.

The Needs Assessment process included multiple research and engagement methods to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the current and future needs for regional recreation infrastructure.

Section 2 - 6 of the Needs Assessment contain the research and engagement analysis and findings.

Summary of the Needs Assessment Research and Engagement Methods



Feedback from over 1,000 residents through a resident survey and other in-person engagement opportunities.



Feedback from 49 community organizations and interest groups through discussions sessions and a targeted community organization survey.



Analysis of facility utilization and capacity.



Analysis of key population and demographics indicators.



Review of regional, provincial, and national trends and best practices.



Spatial analysis and mapping to assess resident access, proximity, and potential facility gaps.



Service level benchmarking of amenity service levels in the Cowichan Valley with other comparator regions.

Regional Recreation Infrastructure Priorities and Recommendations

Section 7 of the Needs Assessment recommends strategies for 11 different types of recreation amenities. These strategies provide short (2026 – 2031) and medium (2031 – 2040) term guidance for capital investment into regionally provided recreation infrastructure, including those amenities that currently exist at the existing regionally significant facilities or could be considered for regional provision in the future. These strategies ultimately advance the ability of the CVRD and its regional partners to strategically and proactively plan for the future of regional recreation infrastructure.

The recommended strategies were informed by a Prioritization Framework that integrated key inputs from the research, engagement, and analysis while also layering in other practical considerations (e.g. renewal need, co-location and amenity synergies, geographic factors, etc.). Key themes from the strategies are summarized as follows under three 'buckets'.

**Refer to Sections 7.2 and 7.3 for additional detail on the Prioritization Framework and strategies.*

Strategies Aimed at Sustaining Aging Infrastructure

- Sustaining existing regional recreation infrastructure should be an overarching priority for the CVRD and its regional partners.
- Reinvestment into existing arenas, aquatics facilities, community program spaces, the Cowichan Sportsplex (including replacement of the track) and the Cowichan Performing Arts Centre will be needed in both the short and medium term to ensure these spaces remain safe, functional, and aligned with trends and best practices.

Planning Required for Potential Major Facility Development (Strategies to Help Plan the Next Generation of Regional Facilities)

- There is likely to be a need for 1–2 new **ice sheets** by 2040. Future planning should identify approaches for providing a multi-sheet facility at an existing or new arena site. Multi-sheet facilities provide operational, programmatic, and event hosting synergies and presents the most beneficial approach if new ice arena infrastructure is developed.
- Concept planning is recommended to ensure an up to date understanding of the costs (capital and operating) and options to develop a third **regional indoor aquatics** facility to serve the south. While the needs assessment validated that benefits rationale exists for this project, the high cost of providing aquatics services requires viability to be further analyzed.
- Options to develop a **smaller scale performing arts venue** to complement the CPAC should be explored. This venue will provide needed space for community theatre, dance, and other performing arts activities that do not require a venue the size of the CPAC.
- Future major facility projects will present the opportunity to efficiently meet other recreation space needs. Opportunities to incorporate **gymnasiums, indoor walking tracks, and fitness spaces** into these projects should be explored and included as part of future facility planning and design wherever viable.

Strategies Suggesting that Trends Monitoring or Further Need Analysis is Required

- Further exploring options, viability, and potential demand for a major 'hub' pickleball site in the Cowichan Valley is recommended through a feasibility study or regional pickleball strategy. This study or strategy should also provide guidance on whether a pickleball hub warrants consideration as a regionally significant facility or is more appropriately supported locally or through other methods (e.g. private sector).
- Explore the costs and benefits of covering the Weyerhaeuser Thunderbox at the Cowichan Sportsplex to expand winter season use.
- Explore the costs and capacity benefits of investing in the natural surface infield at the Cowichan Sportsplex (potential investments could include surface repairs, drainage improvements, and the addition of lighting).

Overall improvements are needed to data collection, especially for outdoor spaces with a high level of casual / spontaneous use to better understand usage characteristics and trends. This data will help inform future planning and investment decision making.



Implementation

While the strategies identified in the Needs Assessment outline recommended timeframes for several potential recreation infrastructure projects, the viability and funding approaches for these capital investments will require further analysis by staff and decision making at the elected official level. Capital recreation projects will also need to be prioritized with other important non-recreation infrastructure needs that exist regionally and locally.

Several other factors could also impact future recreation infrastructure investment priorities, needs, and timing. These factors include potential partnership opportunities, funding availability through senior levels of government, and unanticipated occurrences and events (e.g. unexpected need to replace critical and costly infrastructure at an existing facility).

The timelines identified in the Needs Assessment should be reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

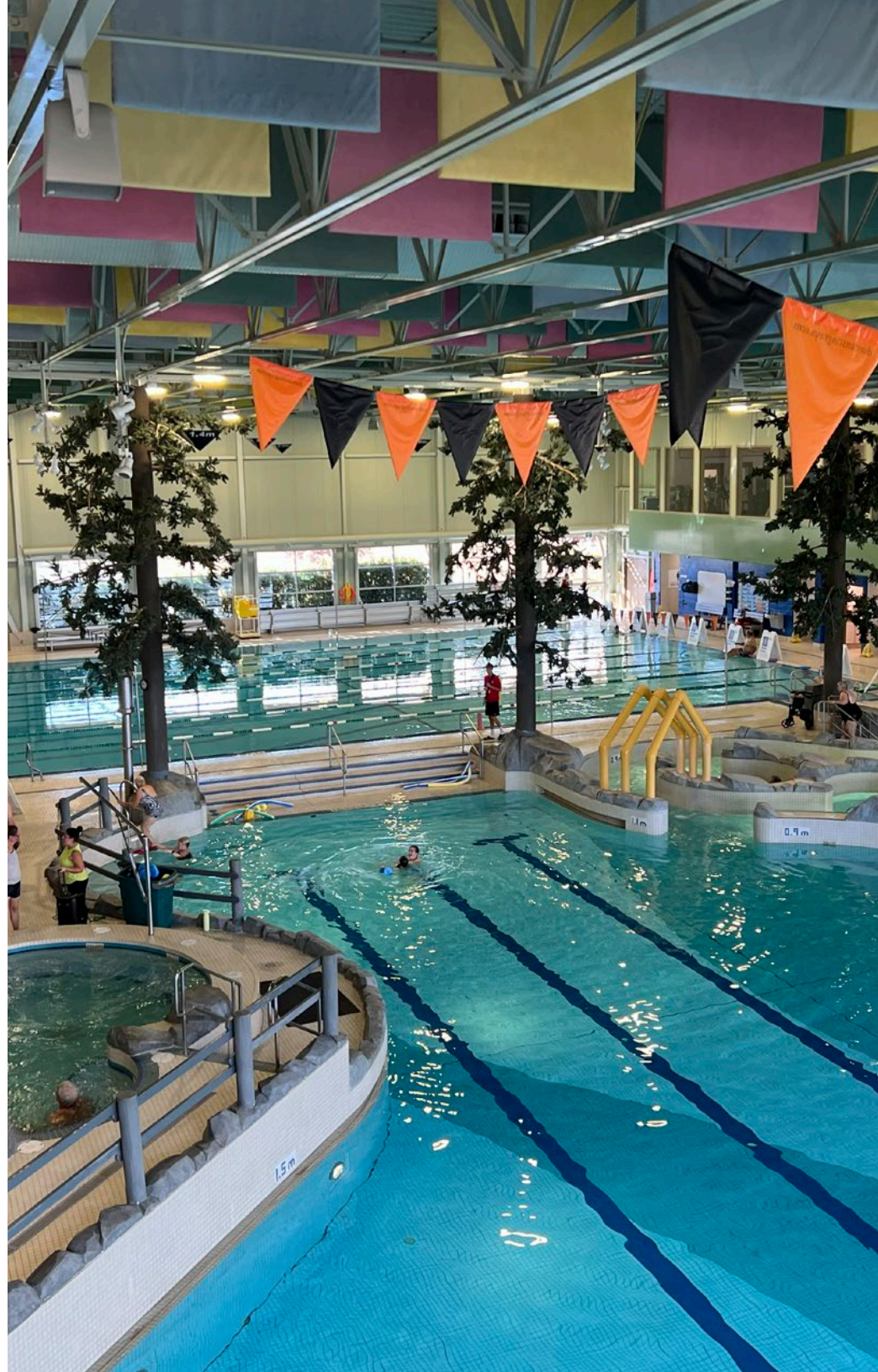


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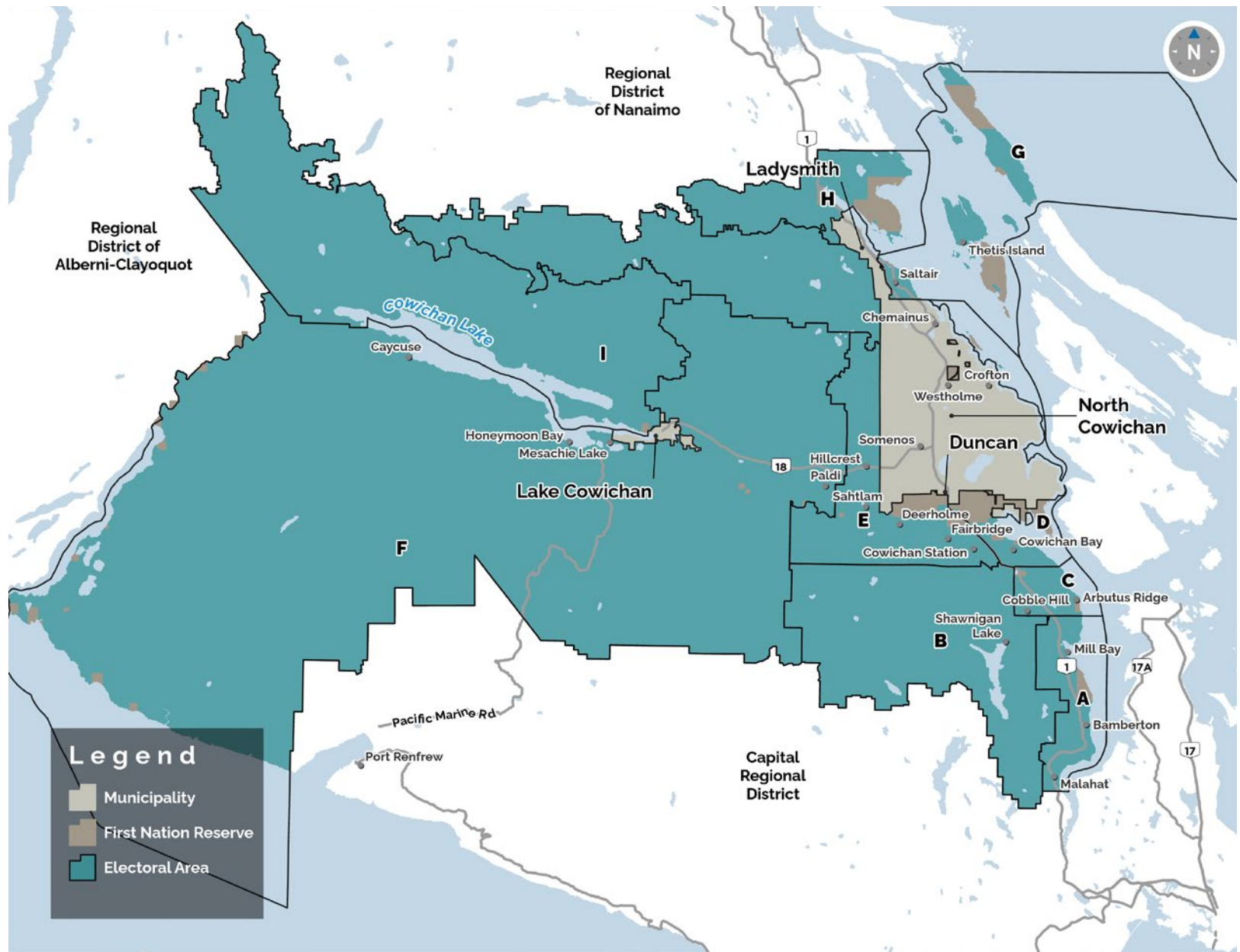


1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Regional Recreation Context in the Cowichan Region

The Cowichan region has a population of approximately 89,013 residents (Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of the Population) and encompasses four municipalities (Town of Ladysmith, Town of Lake Cowichan, City of Duncan, Municipality of North Cowichan) and 9 Electoral Areas. The CVRD operates within the boundaries of several Coast Salish First Nations, including (but not limited to) the Quw'utsun (Cowichan), M'ÁLEXEŁ (Malahat), BŌKEĆEN (Pauquachin), čuubaŋsa?tx̣ (Ts'uubaa-asatx), xeláltxw (Halalt), Spune'luxutth (Penelakut), Stz'uminus, Leey'qsun (Lyackson), Diiitiid?aa?tx̣ (Ditidaht) and P'a:chi:da?aḥt (Pacheedaht) Nations.

Overview of the Cowichan Valley Regional District



Recreation opportunities and services remain a highly valued and important contributor to quality of life for residents across the Cowichan region and attract visitors, generate economic benefits, and help create community identity. The provision of recreation includes an 'ecosystem' of local governments, not for profit organizations, and the private sector.

The delivery of recreation services in the Cowichan Region includes nine 'regionally significant' facilities as listed below. These facilities are deemed as providing a significant regional value and thus warrant funding that extends beyond the local jurisdiction they are located in.

- Cowichan Aquatic Centre (operated by the Municipality of North Cowichan)
- Cowichan Community Centre (operated by the CVRD)
- Cowichan Lake Sports Arena (operated by the CVRD)
- Cowichan Performing Arts Centre (operated by the CVRD)
- Cowichan Sportsplex (Owned by the Municipality of North Cowichan and operated by the non-profit Chesterfield Sports Society)
- Frank Jameson Community Centre (operated by the Town of Ladysmith)
- Fuller Lake Arena (operated by the Municipality of North Cowichan)
- Kerry Park Recreation Centre (operated by the CVRD)
- Shawnigan Lake Community Centre (operated by the CVRD)

The above facilities are supported by all taxpayers across the region based on an assessment of proportional use (e.g. if residents from an electoral area or municipality represent 5% of the proportional use of the facility, they are apportioned 5% of the funding responsibility). This new funding model (Bylaw 4438) was introduced in 2022 and was fully phased in for 2025.

COWICHAN VALLEY REGIONAL DISTRICT

Regional Recreation Strategic Plan

Final Draft
June 2019



1.2. Overview of the 2019 Regional Recreation Strategic Plan

Planning regionally for recreation is important to maximize the effectiveness of services, use of available resources, and set priorities for capital investment based on sound rationale. In 2019 the CVRD developed a Regional Recreation Strategic Plan that outlined Service Delivery Goals, Strategies, Strategic Infrastructure Principles, and Facility and Amenity Strategies.

The Facility and Amenity Strategies provided in the 2019 Strategic Plan emphasized a focus on sustaining existing infrastructure but also identified several potential major projects that could be re-considered in the longer term (2025+), including:

- A multi-sheet arena facility (when/if replacement of existing facilities was deemed as being required).
- Medium sized aquatics facility in the south end of the Cowichan region.
- Increase in the provision of higher quality sports fields.
- Expansion of fitness facilities if paired with other major amenity development (e.g. new aquatics facility).

It is also important to note that the CVRD and its partners have been successful at achieving many of the recommended Facility and Amenity Strategies in the 2019 Strategic Plan, including the increased provision of pickleball courts and significant re-investment initiatives to sustain an optimize existing aquatics facilities, fitness spaces, and gymnasiums.



1.3. Purpose and Process for this Needs Assessment Study

This Recreation Needs Assessment study has been undertaken to review regional recreation infrastructure priorities in the Cowichan Valley. As previously noted, the 2019 Strategic Plan identified several potential infrastructure projects and investments for further analysis and re-consideration in 2025 and beyond. This Needs Assessment presented the opportunity to establish updated priorities based on current and anticipated trends, residents need, demographics, growth patterns, and other data points.

The Needs Assessment will be used by the CVRD and its municipal partners to inform future planning, resource allocation, and future investments into regional recreation infrastructure that could include improvements to existing regionally significant facilities (e.g. enhancements, renovations, or retrofits) or the development of new regionally support facilities.

The following graphic summarizes the process used to develop the Needs Assessment. As illustrated by the graphic, research and engagement was undertaken to ensure a comprehensive understanding of regional recreation in the Cowichan region. This data was then analyzed and used to identify the potential priorities that are reflected in this Needs Assessment.

Overview of this Needs Assessment Document

Section 2 to 6 of the Needs Assessment contain the research and engagement findings and analysis that includes a review of key population and demographics characteristics, current infrastructure characteristics and utilization, benchmarking, trends, and findings from the community engagement.

Section 7 summarizes key findings and contains the recommended future infrastructure strategies and priorities.

Provided in the appendices are profiles of the nine regionally significant facilities.

Figure 1. Needs Assessment Process and Timing Overview



HOW CAN WE DEFINE “RECREATION”?

The term “recreation” is broad with different meanings to different people. The Framework for Recreation in Canada offers the following renewed definition for recreation.

Recreation is the experience that results from freely chosen participation in physical, social, intellectual, creative and spiritual pursuits that enhance individual and community wellbeing.

The recreation field includes stakeholders and providers from the not-for-profit, private and public sectors; including volunteers, paid staff, community groups, educators, researchers, organizations and governments that work collectively to enhance individual and community wellbeing through recreation.

For the purposes of this Needs Assessment, recreation should be considered to include all sport, arts and cultural, and leisure activities that currently take place at the nine regionally significant facilities in the Cowichan Valley.



2. REGIONAL PROFILE

2.1. Current Population and Demographics

Current Population and Historical Growth

According to the Statistics Canada Census of Population (2011, 2016, 2021), the Cowichan region has experienced steady population growth over the past decade, along with a consistent rise in median age across all communities. Table 1 on the following page summarizes population and median age trends for the Cowichan Valley's Electoral Areas and municipalities, highlighting how growth and demographic change vary across the region.

While the Cowichan region grew by 11% between 2011 and 2021, individual municipalities saw different rates of change, with North Cowichan, Ladysmith, and Lake Cowichan expanding more quickly than Duncan. At the same time, every community experienced an increase in median age, reflecting an aging population that will influence future recreation and community facility needs. Across the nine Electoral Areas, growth patterns were similarly varied, with most areas experiencing moderate increases over the decade and several showing notably higher median ages than the region's municipalities.



Table 1: Cowichan Region Municipalities and Electoral Areas - Historical Growth by Census Year (2011-2021)

Area	Population 2011	Population 2016	Population 2021	% Pop. Change 2011-16	% Pop. Change 2016-21	Median Age 2011	Median Age 2016	Median Age 2021
North Cowichan	28,807	29,696	31,990	3%	8%	47.1	50	50.8
Ladysmith	7,921	8,537	8,990	8%	5%	48.3	51.2	52.8
Duncan	4,932	4,994	5,047	1%	1%	52.3	54.4	55.6
Lake Cowichan	2,974	3,226	3,325	8%	3%	46.5	49.5	52
Electoral Area A	4,393	4,733	4,949	8%	5%	48.6	52.2	54
Electoral Area B	8,127	8,558	8,994	5%	5%	41.9	43.1	44.4
Electoral Area C	4,796	5,019	5,046	5%	1%	54.5	56.7	58.8
Electoral Area D	2,971	3,243	3,530	9%	9%	49.4	51	51.6
Electoral Area E	3,854	4,121	4,253	7%	3%	44.8	46.1	46
Electoral Area F	1,649	1,629	1,804	-1%	11%	49.6	52.9	52.8
Electoral Area G	2,221	2,315	2,442	4%	5%	55.2	58.7	59.6
Electoral Area H	2,332	2,446	2,603	5%	6%	52.7	55.3	56
Electoral Area I	1,111	1,206	1,423	9%	18%	51.5	56.4	58
CVRD (Overall)	80,332	83,739	89,013	4%	6%	47.2	49.9	50.8

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021, 2016, 2011 Census of the Population

The age profile of the Cowichan region reflects an older population compared to the provincial average. While the proportion of children and teens is similar to the provincial average, the region has fewer young adults and a significantly higher share of older adults and seniors, including residents aged 85 and over. These demographic patterns highlight the importance of planning recreation and community facilities that support an aging population while continuing to meet the needs of families and youth.

Table 2: Proportion of Population by Age Range (2021)

Age Range (years)	Cowichan Valley	British Columbia
0-14	14%	14%
15-19	5%	5%
20-29	8%	13%
30-39	11%	14%
40-49	11%	13%
50-64	23%	21%
65+	25%	20%
85+	6%	2%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population





Indigenous Peoples

According to 2021 Census data 10,985 Indigenous people live in the Cowichan region, representing 12% of the population. The majority reported a single Indigenous identity, with 73% (7,980) identifying as First Nations, 25% (2,715) as Métis. The Indigenous population is younger than the non-Indigenous population, with a median age of 50.8 years compared to 30.6 years.

Visible Minority and Immigration

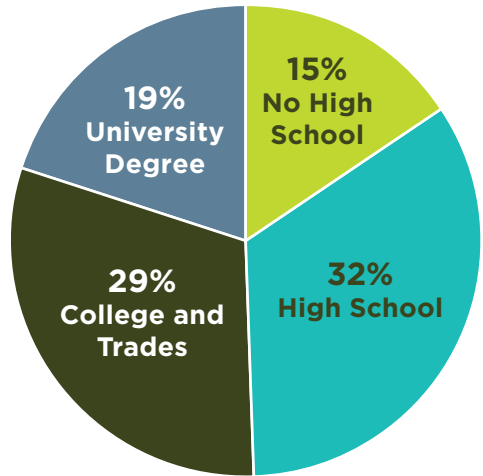
Cowichan region is home to a population that reflects both long-established settler roots and a small but diverse mix of global communities. According to the 2021 Census, the region's population is predominantly Canadian-born, with 76,465 residents (87.6%) born in Canada, alongside 10,435 immigrants (11.9%) and 430 non-permanent residents (0.5%). While the visible minority population is relatively small compared to urban centres, 4,885 residents (5.6%) identify as part of a visible minority group. The largest visible minority communities in CVRD are South Asian, Chinese, and Filipino, together representing the majority of the region's racialized population.

Immigration to the region has occurred steadily over several decades. Most immigrants living in Cowichan region arrived before 1980, reflecting long-term settlement patterns, while more recent immigration remains modest but ongoing. Between 2016 and 2021, 785 newcomers arrived, accounting for 0.9% of the total population and contributing to the region's gradual diversification¹. Recent immigrants most commonly arrived from countries in South Asia, East Asia, and Europe, mirroring the broader composition of the region's immigrant population.

Education, Occupation, and Income

According to Environics demographic data (2025), based on data collected by Statistics Canada for the current Canadian Censusⁱⁱ, educational attainment in the Cowichan region reflects a balanced mix of high school, trades, and post secondary pathways among residents aged 15 and over. The largest share of residents have completed high school (32%), followed by those with college or trades credentials (29%). An additional 19% of residents hold a university degree, while 15% have no high school education. Figure 1 illustrates the full educational attainment distribution for residents aged 15 and over in the Cowichan Valley region.

Graph 1: Educational Attainment Residents Aged 15+ (2025)

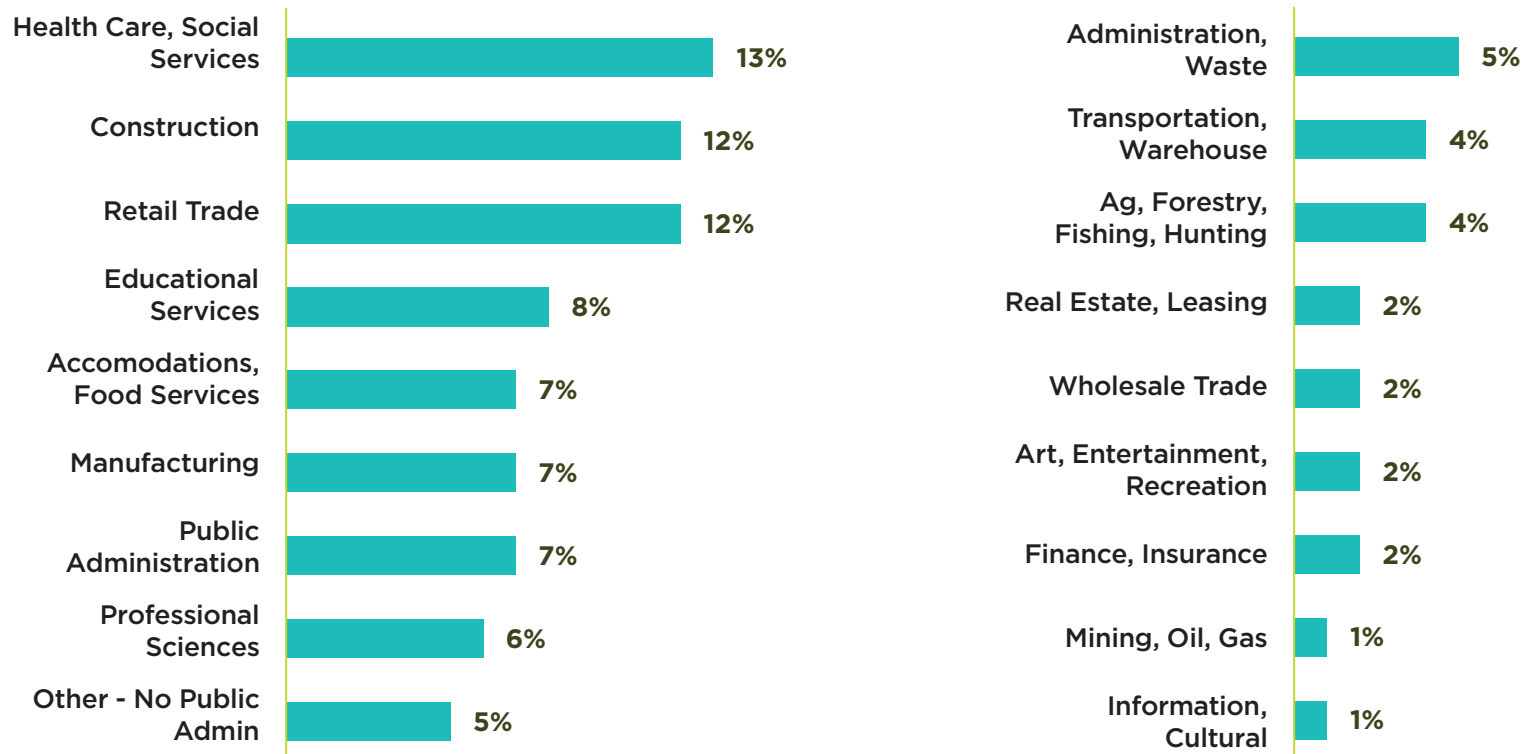


Source: Esri, 2025. Demographic Profile Report



Drawing on information from Esri Environics (2025) demographic data, based on data collected by Statistics Canada for the current Canadian Censusⁱⁱⁱ, the Cowichan region workforce is spread across a wide range of industries, reflecting the region's mix of service, construction, and resource-based economic activity. The largest portions of the labour force are employed in health care and social services (13%), construction (12%), and retail trade (12%), underscoring the region's role as both a growing residential area and a service hub for surrounding communities.

Graph 2: Employment by Industry Classification in the Cowichan Region

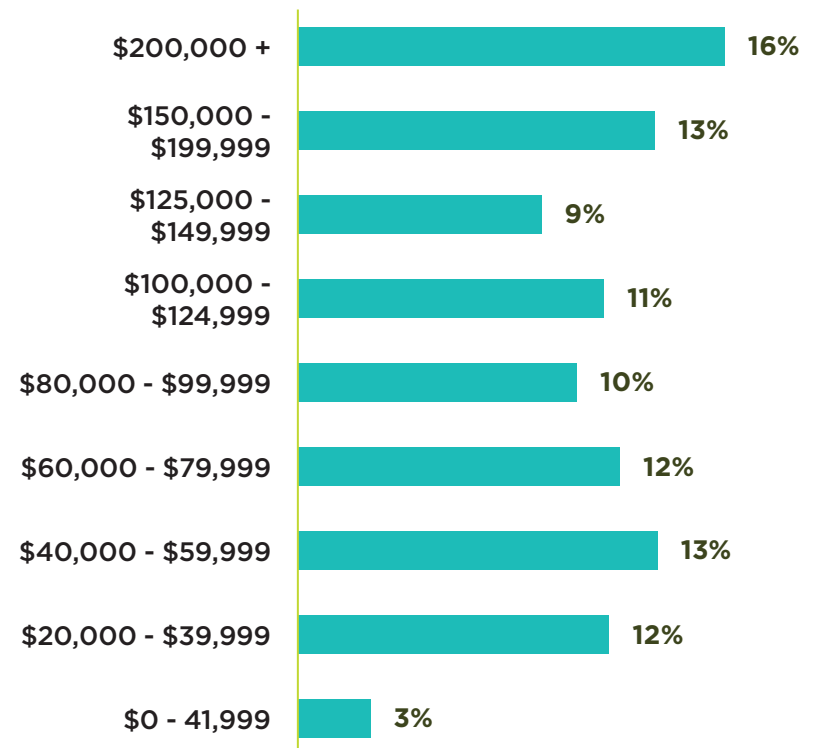


Source: Esri, 2025. Economic Development Summary, Cowichan Valley, BC



Household incomes in the Cowichan region show a wide distribution of income earnings, reflecting the region's mix of occupations and economic conditions. Esri Environics (2025), using data collected by Statistics Canada for the current Canadian Census^{iv}, indicates that a small share of households earns under \$42,000 annually (3%), while larger portions fall within the \$20,000–\$39,999 (12%), \$40,000–\$59,999 (13%), and \$60,000–\$79,999 (12%) ranges. Higher-income households also make up a notable share of the population, with 16% earning \$200,000 or more. The median household income in the Cowichan region is \$99,542, suggesting a community with varied financial capacity and corresponding needs for both affordable and higher-quality recreation and culture amenities.

Graph 3: Household Income (2025)



Source: Esri, 2025. Demographic and Income Profile, Cowichan Valley, BC

Housing and Household Characteristics

Household size in the Cowichan region is expected to remain relatively stable over the coming years, with only modest growth across all household types. Esri (2025), using data collected by Statistics Canada for the current Canadian Census⁹, shows that one- and two-person households continue to make up the majority of homes, together representing nearly 70% of all households in 2020, 2025, and 2030. Two-person households remain the largest group (42%), followed by one-person households at roughly 27%.

Gini Coefficient

The Gini coefficient provides a useful measure of income inequality across the Cowichan region, indicating how evenly or unevenly income is distributed within each community. Statistics Canada's 2021 Census of Population shows that most jurisdictions in the region fall within a relatively narrow range of Gini scores (approximately 0.28 to 0.31), suggesting moderate levels of income inequality consistent with many small and mid-sized Canadian communities. Electoral Area I stands out with a higher score of 0.350, indicating a more uneven distribution of income compared to other areas. Municipalities such as Ladysmith (0.277) and Duncan (0.286) show comparatively lower levels of inequality. These variations highlight the differing socioeconomic profiles across the region, which can influence participation patterns, affordability considerations, and the design of recreation, sport, and cultural services.

Table 3: Gini Index Scores for Selected Jurisdictions, 2021

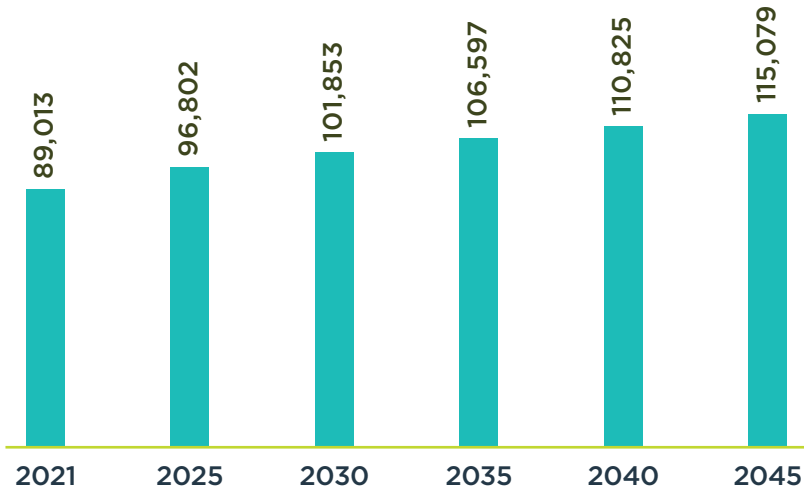
Jurisdiction	Gini Index Score
Cowichan Valley Regional District - Area A	0.308
Cowichan Valley Regional District - Area B	0.294
Cowichan Valley Regional District - Area C	0.302
Cowichan Valley Regional District - Area D	0.309
Cowichan Valley Regional District - Area E	0.306
Cowichan Valley Regional District - Area F	0.301
Cowichan Valley Regional District - Area G	0.304
Cowichan Valley Regional District - Area H	0.306
Cowichan Valley Regional District - Area I	0.350
City of Duncan	0.286
Town of Ladysmith	0.277
Lake Cowichan	0.282
Municipality of North Cowichan	0.304
Cowichan Valley Regional District	0.308

Source: Statistics Canada (2021) Census of the Population.

2.2. Population Projections

According to Esri's 20-Year Population and Household Trends Report (2025)^{vi}, the Cowichan region is projected to experience steady population growth over the next two decades, increasing by approximately 29%, from 89,013 residents in 2021 to 115,079 residents by 2045. The projections show a consistent upward trend without sharp fluctuations, reflecting stable long-term growth across the region. By 2035, the population is expected to reach 106,597, up from 96,802 in 2025, representing a 20% increase over the 2021 baseline.

Graph 4: Projected Population Growth for the Cowichan Valley (2021- 2024)



Source: Esri, 2025, 20 Year Population and Household Trends Report. Cowichan Valley Region (BC).



This regional pattern is mirrored across individual municipalities and Electoral Areas, though the pace of growth varies considerably by community. According to Esri's projections, smaller municipalities such as Lake Cowichan, Duncan, and Ladysmith are expected to grow at a faster rate than the region overall, with increases ranging from 42% to 71% between 2021 and 2045. In contrast, North Cowichan, the largest municipality, is projected to see more moderate growth of 17% over the same period. The Electoral Areas also show diverse trajectories, with most expected to experience sustained population increases.

Table 4: Projected Population Growth by Jurisdiction

Year	2021	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	% Pop. Change 2021 - 2045	Trend Line
Ladysmith	8,990	9,916	10,654	11,389	12,082	12,790	42%	
Duncan	5,047	5,565	6,171	6,678	7,172	7,667	52%	
Lake Cowichan	3,325	3,886	4,320	4,790	5,321	5,687	71%	
North Cowichan	31,990	34,407	35,559	36,415	36,983	37,487	17%	
Electoral Area A	4,949	5,443	5,800	6,143	6,464	6,792	37%	
Electoral Area B	8,994	9,837	10,473	11,053	11,594	12,155	35%	
Electoral Area C	5,046	5,229	5,140	5,070	5,000	4,929	-2%	
Electoral Area D	3,530	3,782	3,958	4,138	4,304	4,475	27%	
Electoral Area E	4,253	4,550	4,707	4,852	4,985	5,120	20%	
Electoral Area F	1,804	1,947	2,096	2,239	2,369	2,507	39%	
Electoral Area G	2,442	2,625	2,772	2,915	3,047	3,185	30%	
Electoral Area H	2,603	2,828	2,939	3,065	3,185	3,301	27%	
Electoral Area I	1,423	1,563	1,727	1,890	2,043	2,201	55%	

Source: Esri, 2025, 20 Year Population and Household Trends Report. Cowichan Valley Region (BC).

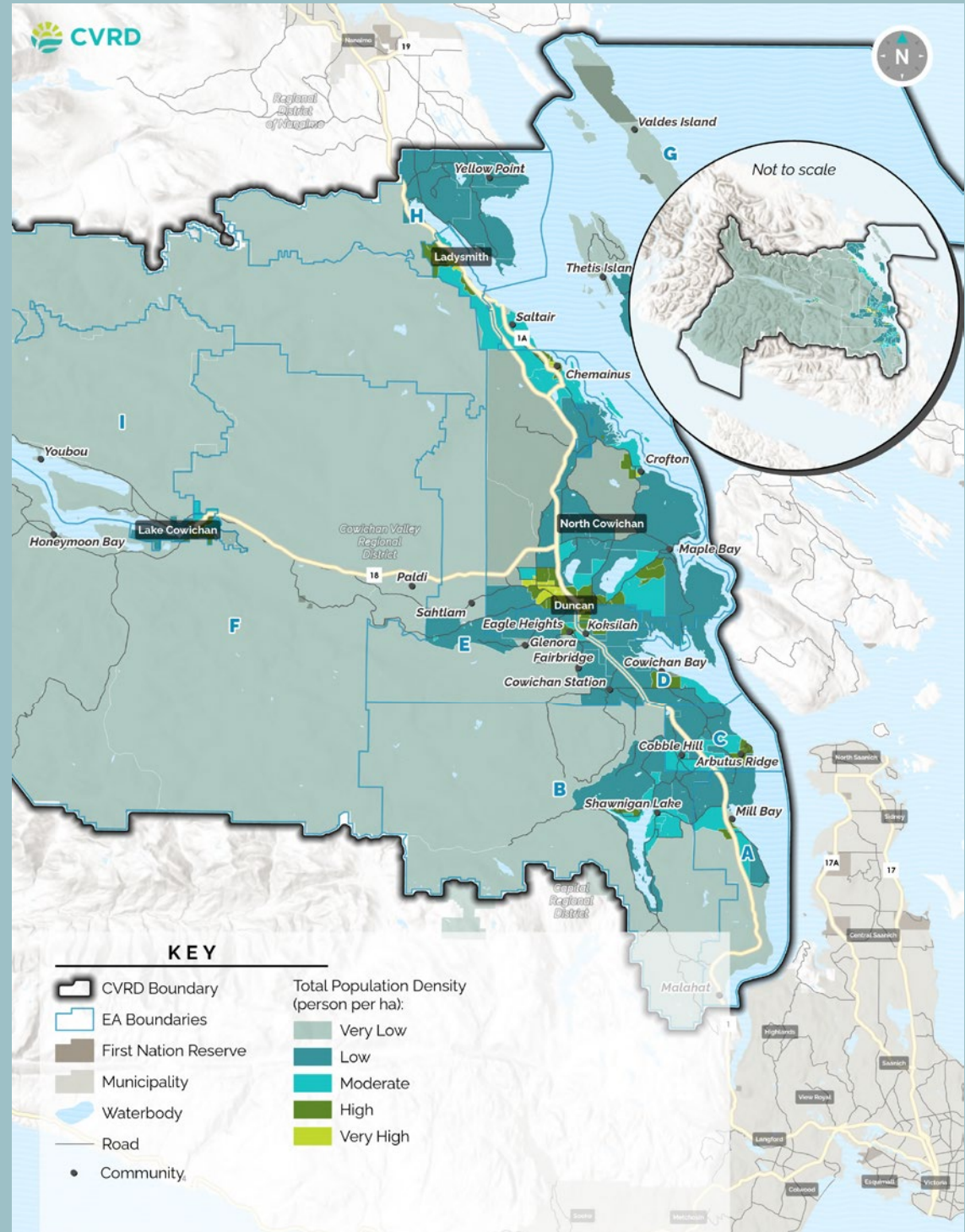
2.3. Spatial Overview of Key Population and Demographic Indicators

The following maps and analysis provide a spatial overview of key population and demographic indicators. Micro data from the 2021 Census of the Population was used to create indicators at the dissemination area (DA) level. A DA is a small, relatively stable geographic unit composed of one or more adjacent dissemination blocks where populations generally range from 400 to 700 persons (Statistics Canada, 2024).

Population Density

The adjacent map illustrates total population density across the Cowichan region using a persons per hectare analysis. This approach highlights areas with higher and lower concentrations of residents, providing important context for understanding service needs, access patterns, and future planning considerations.

The map reflects that the municipalities located along the Highway 1 corridor Duncan, Ladysmith, and North Cowichan (darker colors), have a much higher population density, while the western and interior regions are sparsely populated (light gray).



Multiple Deprivation Index

The map on the following page was created using The Canadian Index of Multiple Deprivation (CIMD). The CIMD utilizes various measures of social well-being, including health, education, and justice to help understand inequalities. Reviewing this analysis can help identify areas where a higher proportion of residents may face social and financial barriers to accessing services like recreation. It is created using microdata from the 2021 Census of Population to derive indicators at the dissemination area (DA) level. The CIMD considers four dimensions of deprivation: ethno-cultural composition, situational vulnerability, economic dependency, and residential instability, characterized by 22 indicators (Statistics Canada, 2024). The following figure outlines the dimensions and their corresponding indicators.

The four dimensions of multiple deprivation and their corresponding indicators, British Columbia, 2021

THE FOUR DIMENSIONS OF MULTIPLE DEPRIVATION AND THEIR CORRESPONDING INDICATORS, BRITISH COLUMBIA, 2021

ETHNOCULTURAL COMPOSITION	ECONOMIC DEPENDENCY	SITUATIONAL VULNERABILITY	RESIDENTIAL INSTABILITY
<p>Proportion of the population self-identified as visible minority</p> <p>Proportion of population that is foreign-born</p> <p>Proportion of population with no knowledge of either official language (linguistic isolation)</p> <p>Average number of persons per room</p> <p>Proportion of population with no religious affiliation</p>	<p>Proportion of population who are aged 65 and older</p> <p>Proportion of population participating in the labour force (aged 15 and older) ¹</p> <p>Ratio of employment to population ¹</p> <p>Dependency ratio (population aged 0-12 and population aged 65 and older divided by population aged 15-64)</p> <p>Proportion of children younger than age 6</p>	<p>Proportion of the population identified as indigenous</p> <p>Proportion of the population aged 25-64 without a high-school diploma</p> <p>Proportion of homes needing major repairs</p> <p>Proportion of single parent families</p> <p>Median income ¹</p> <p>Median dollar value of dwelling ¹</p> <p>Proportion of the population that is self-employed</p>	<p>Proportion of dwellings that are apartment buildings</p> <p>Proportion of persons living alone</p> <p>Proportion of dwellings that are owned ¹</p> <p>Persons per square kilometer</p> <p>Proportion of movers within the past 5 years</p>

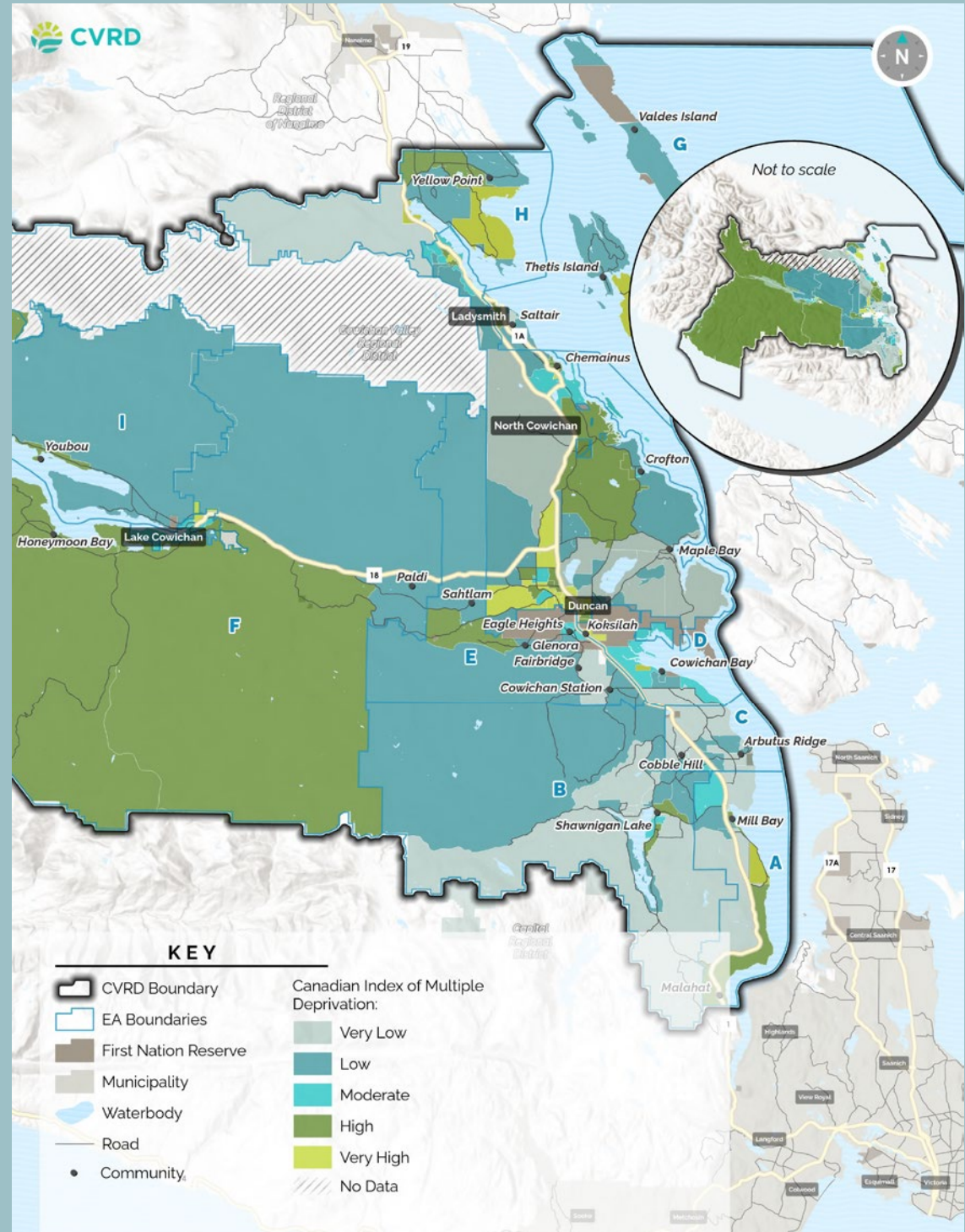
1. This indicator was reverse-coded, meaning it was coded opposite of the measure. For example, proportion of the population that is married or common-law becomes proportion of population that is single, divorced, separated or widowed.

Note: The dimensions are ordered such that the dimension on the left explains the highest percentage of the variance of the data and the dimension on the right explains the lowest percentage.

Source: Canadian Index of Multiple Deprivation 2021, based on the 2021 Census of Population Long-Form.

Multiple Deprivation Index Map of the Cowichan Valley

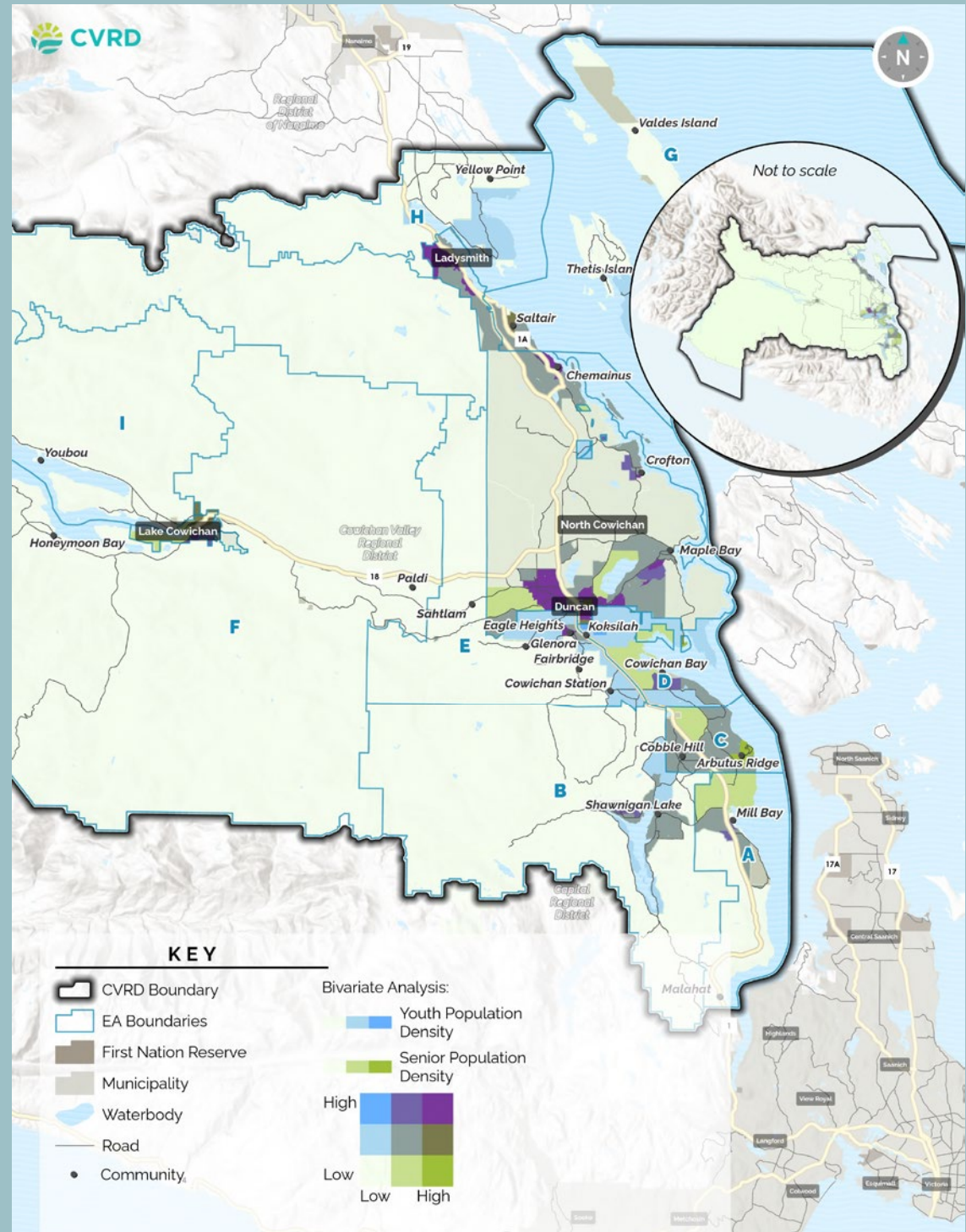
The adjacent map reveals a distinct geographic pattern where higher deprivation levels (green and yellow-green) are concentrated in the northern and interior regions of the Cowichan region, particularly around North Cowichan and inland communities, while coastal areas and southern regions predominantly show low to moderate deprivation (blue shades). This coastal-inland divide suggests that communities farther from the waterfront and main transportation corridors may face greater cumulative barriers across multiple socioeconomic indicators.



Children, Youth and Senior Population Bivariant Analysis

The adjacent map illustrates the distribution of children/youth and older adults across the Cowichan region, highlighting areas with higher or lower proportions of each age group. This analysis identifies areas with a higher concentration of older adults, areas with more children and youth, and areas where both age cohorts are present in relatively high or low proportions.

This bivariate map shows that Duncan, Ladysmith, and North Cowichan have high concentrations of both youth and seniors (dark purple), while most of the region has low densities of both age groups (beige). Some areas like Mill Bay and Cobble Hill show higher senior populations with fewer youth (yellow-green), suggesting retirement-oriented communities.

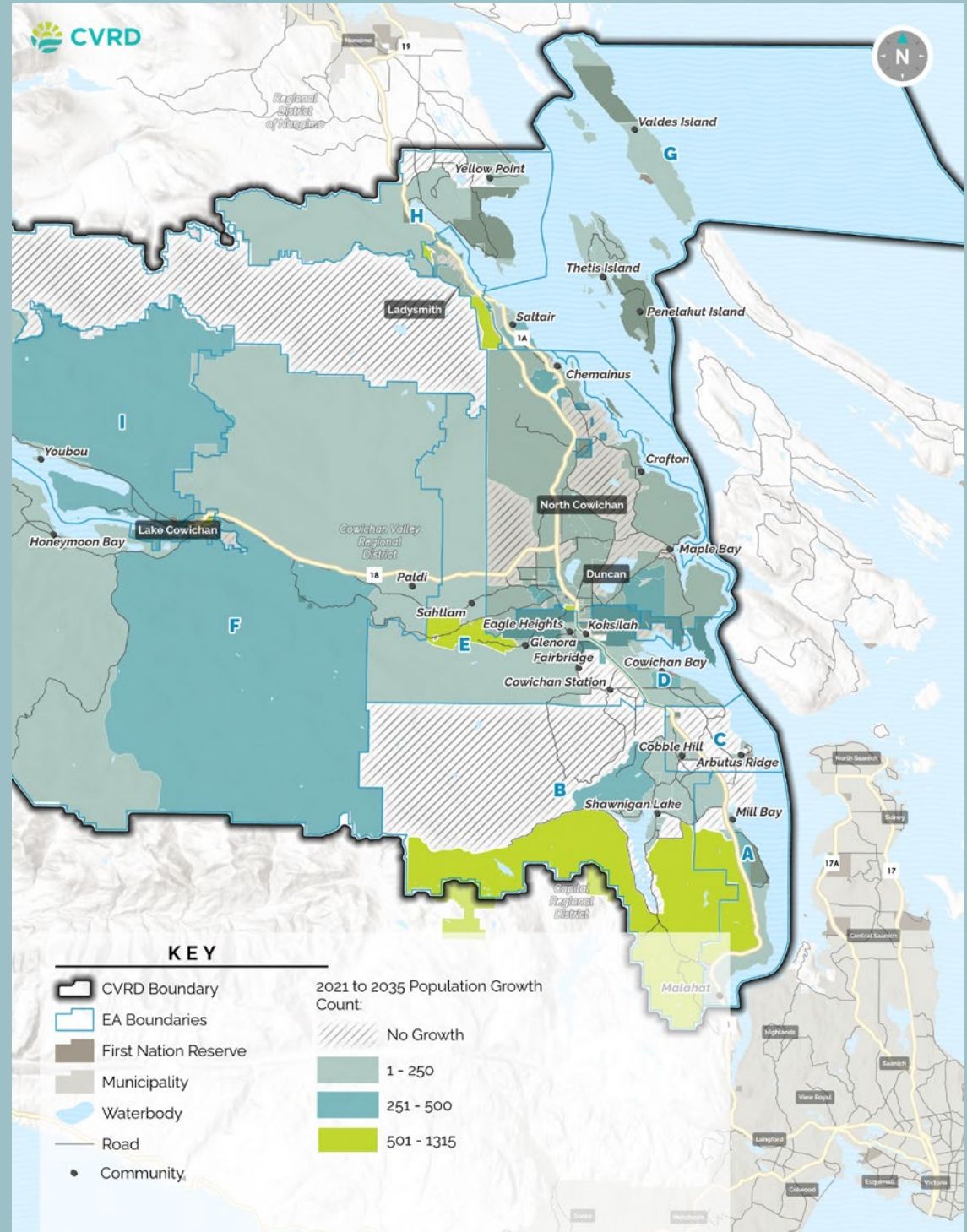


Population Projection Map

The adjacent map illustrates where population growth is expected to occur within Cowichan region and the relative scale of that growth. This map was created based on the population growth projection (2021 to 2035), derived from Esri Envirionics Analytics modeled data.

This analysis was completed at the Dissemination Area (DA) level. Because DA-level data is not as granular as Dissemination Block data, which was not available for this study, some areas may appear to show higher levels of growth than what will occur on the ground, simply because population change is distributed across a larger geographic unit. Additionally, this modeled data may differ from regional planning projections as it does not take into consideration local information such as approved development applications, zoning changes, or municipal growth management strategies.

The map reflects anticipated population counts to 2035, with the highest increases (501 - 1,315 people, shown in bright yellow-green) concentrated in the southern areas around Shawnigan Lake, Mill Bay, and Electoral Area A. Moderate growth (251 - 500 people) is expected in Duncan and surrounding communities.



Section 2 Summary: Key Findings from the Population and Demographics Analysis



The region is expected to experience population growth of 29% by 2045, with the fastest increases in Lake Cowichan, Duncan, Ladysmith, and southern Electoral Areas.



Resident demand for quality of life services such as recreation will continue to be prevalent in growth hotspots, especially Shawnigan Lake, Mill Bay, and Area A.



The Cowichan Valley has an older population than provincial averages, with high proportions of 65+ and 85+ residents. Demand may rise for age friendly, accessible amenities such as walking loops, warm water aquatics, wellness spaces, and social programming.



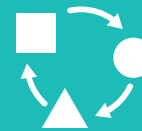
Duncan, Ladysmith, and North Cowichan show higher concentrations of both youth and older adults, while areas such as Mill Bay and Cobble Hill have higher proportions of older adults relative to youth.



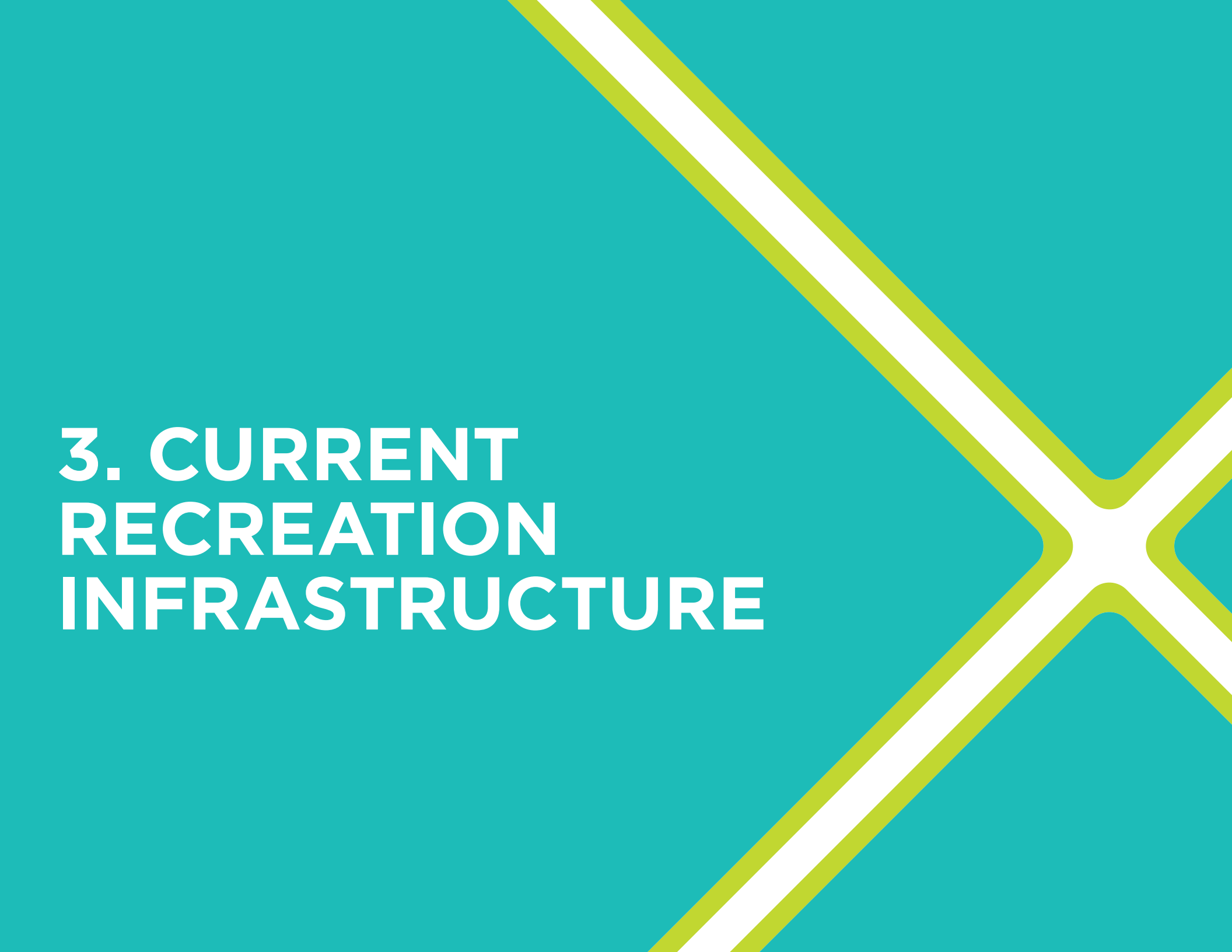
Available tools to measure barriers and potential demographic inequity (e.g. Statistics Canada's Multiple Deprivation Index) suggests that residents in northern and inland communities may face additional societal barriers to participation. These spatial differences indicate that access, affordability, and participation patterns may vary across the region.



Indigenous residents (12% of the population) are younger on average, highlighting the need for culturally relevant, youth focused programming and partnership based facility planning.



With nearly 70% one and two person households, demand will continue for flexible, drop in, individual use recreation options and smaller community spaces. These probable demands will require consideration as future recreation infrastructure priorities are considered.



3. CURRENT RECREATION INFRASTRUCTURE

3.1. Inventory Overview

Regionally Significant Facilities

The Cowichan region is served by nine regionally significant recreation and cultural facilities, all of which are funded through shared regional contributions. Together, these facilities provide a broad mix of amenities that support community recreation, sport, arts, and multipurpose programming. The regional system includes:



3 Fitness Centres



3 Gymnasium Spaces



6 Ball Diamonds



1 Lacrosse Box



2 Aquatic Facilities



1 Performing Arts Venue



1 Artificial Turf Field



6 Pickleball Courts



4 Ice Arenas



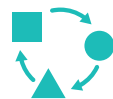
1 Hall Space



1 Athletic Track



2 Curling Rinks (4 ice sheets each)



28 Multi-purpose Program Spaces
(Studio/ Fitness Studios and Meeting Room Spaces included)



2 Natural Surface Field

The table below further summarizes the amenities and spaces within the regionally significant facilities.

Table 5: Regionally Significant Facilities

Facility	Operator	Amenities	
Cowichan Aquatic Centre	Municipality of North Cowichan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 lane, 25 metre program tank • Leisure aquatic amenities (lazy river, play features, twin water slides, steam room, sauna) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fitness centre • Multi-purpose rooms
Cowichan Community Centre	CVRD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ice arena with spectator seating for ~1,400 • Gymnasium space • Hall with commercial kitchen • Multi-purpose rooms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dance and fitness studios • Library <p><i>*The Duncan Dynamics Gymnastics Club also leases space at the facility (former location of the pool).</i></p>
Cowichan Lake Sports Arena	CVRD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ice arena • Curling rink (4 sheets) with lounge • Multi-purpose rooms* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fitness centre <p><i>*Adjacent to outdoor sports fields, skateboard park and the Lake Cowichan Centennial Hall</i></p>
Cowichan Sportsplex	Chesterfield Sports Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 ball diamonds • Artificial turf field • Athletic track • Natural surface field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lacrosse box • Fitness pathway • Outdoor fitness equipment
Cowichan Performing Arts Centre (co-located with the Cowichan Community Centre)	CVRD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 732 seat performing arts venue • Green room • Lobby 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dressing rooms • Rehearsal hall

Facility	Operator	Amenities
Frank Jameson Community Centre	Town of Ladysmith	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 lane, 35 metre program tank • Leisure aquatics amenities (climbing wall, slides, rope) • Fitness centre <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gymnasium space • Multi-purpose program rooms
Fuller Lake Arena	Municipality of North Cowichan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ice arena with spectator capacity of ~600 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-purpose program rooms*
Kerry Park Recreation Centre	CVRD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ice arena with spectator seating for ~750 • Curling rink (4 sheets) with lounge space • Multi-purpose program rooms <p><i>*Adjacent to outdoor sports fields (3 ball diamonds, 1 rectangular field), Mill Bay Skatepark, pickleball courts (6 courts), the Mill Bay Tennis Club (2 courts) and the Mill Bay Community Hall</i></p>
Shawnigan Lake Community Centre	CVRD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dance studio • Gymnasium space <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-purpose program rooms • Lounge/social gathering space with commercial kitchen

**Both the Fuller Lake Arena and Cowichan Lake Sports Arena have fitness rooms with equipment available for public use. These spaces are unstaffed, but the public can use purchase a membership or drop - in pass to access the space and equipment.*



Facilities in the Region

In addition to the regionally significant facilities there are numerous other recreation spaces within the Cowichan Valley. While the focus of this study is the regionally significant facilities, it is important to understand the broader regional supply of amenities that residents have access to. The following charts summarizes the total inventory of indoor and outdoor recreation spaces in the Cowichan Valley (including those regional funded amenities listed in the previous chart of regional facilities).

Note: this inventory includes only those spaces that are considered part of the public inventory (supported by the CVRD, municipalities in the region, or not for profit operated).

Table 6: Indoor Amenities

Amenity Type	Total Count	Locations	
Indoor Aquatics Facilities	2	Cowichan Aquatics Centre	Frank Jameson Community Centre
Ice Arena	4	Cowichan Lake Sports Arena (1 rink) Fuller Lake Arena (1 rink)	Cowichan Community Centre (1 rink) Kerry Park Recreation Centre (1)
Curling	3	Cowichan Lake Sports Arena (4 sheets) Glen Harper Curling Centre (5 sheets)	Kerry Park Recreation Centre (4 sheets)
Fitness Centres	3	Cowichan Aquatic Centre Cowichan Lake Sports Arena	Frank Jameson Community Centre
Gymnasium Spaces	8	Cowichan Community Centre Frank Jameson Community Centre Shawnigan Lake Community Centre The Hub	Honeymoon Bay Community Hall Mesachie Lake Hall Si'em Lelum Gymnasium Youbou Community Hall

Amenity Type	Total Count	Locations	
Multi-purpose Program Spaces	26 (facilities with multi-purpose program rooms)	Regional Indoor Facilities (the 8 indoor facilities identified under regional facilities provide multi-purpose indoor space) Aggie Hall Elsie Miles Annex Mill Bay Community League Hall Youbou Community Hall Lake Cowichan Centennial Hall Mesachie Lake Community Hall Honeymoon Bay Community Hall Saltair Community Centre	Si'em Lelum Gymnasium The Hub Crofton Community Centre Somenos Community Hall Duncan Eagles Hall Forbes Hall Glenora Community Hall Ladysmith Eagles Hall Valley Seniors Activity Centre Duncan Community Lodge
Performing Arts Venues**	4	Ladysmith Little Theatre Cowichan Performing Arts Centre Chemainus Theatre The Hub (Stage) Youbou Community Hall (Stage) Mesachie Lake Hall (Stage)	Mesachie Lake Hall (Stage) Honeymoon Bay Community Hall (Stage) Centennial Hall (Stage) Central Park (Outdoor Stage) Friendship Square - Hiiye'yutul' (Outdoor Stage)
Bowling Alleys	1	Youbou Bowling Alley	

Table 7: Outdoor Amenities

Amenity Type	Total Count	Locations	
Ball Diamonds*	34	Chemainus Ball Park (4) Crofton Ball Park (2) Properties (2) Cowichan Sportsplex (3) Evans Park (7) Aggie Park (2) Holland Creek Park (2) High Street Park (1)	Mesachie Lake Park (1) Youbou Little League Park (1) Shawnigan Hills Athletic Park (1) Saltair Centennial Park (2) Kerry Park (3) Lake Cowichan Apollos Field (1) Lake Cowichan Dawn Coe Jones Field (1)
Rectangular Sport Fields*	15	MacAdam Park (2) Sherman Road (4) Crofton (1) Properties (1) Evans Park (2)	Cowichan Sportsplex (1) Kerry Park (1) Shawnigan Hills (1) Dobie Somerville Field (1)
Artificial Turf Fields	3	Cowichan Sportsplex Forrest Field - Ladysmith	David Williams Field (at Sherman Road Park)
Major Outdoor Sports Field Locations	3	Cowichan Sportsplex Kerry Park Sports Fields	Evans Park Sherman Road Soccer Park
Skateboard Parks	6	Duncan Chemainus Crofton	Lake Cowichan Ladysmith Kerry Park (Mill Bay Skatepark)
Tennis Courts	17	Kerry Park (Mill Bay Tennis Club) (2) Andy Hutchins Park (1) Coverdale Watson Park (1) Rotary Park (1) Centennial Park (Duncan) (2)	Central Park (2) Crofton Outdoor Pool/ Courts (2) Fuller Lake Park (2) Properties Park (2) Saltair Centennial Park (2)

Amenity Type	Total Count	Locations
Pickleball Courts	22	Kerry Park (6) Rotary Park (1) Farnsworth Park (1) Central Park (2) Andy Hutchins Park (4) Coverdale Watson Park (1) Crofton Outdoor Pool/ Courts (2) Fuller Lake Park (6) Properties Park (3) Saltair Centennial Park (2)
Lacrosse Box	2	Cowichan Sportsplex (1) Shawnigan Hills Athletic Park (1)
Outdoor Pool	1	Crofton Outdoor Pool



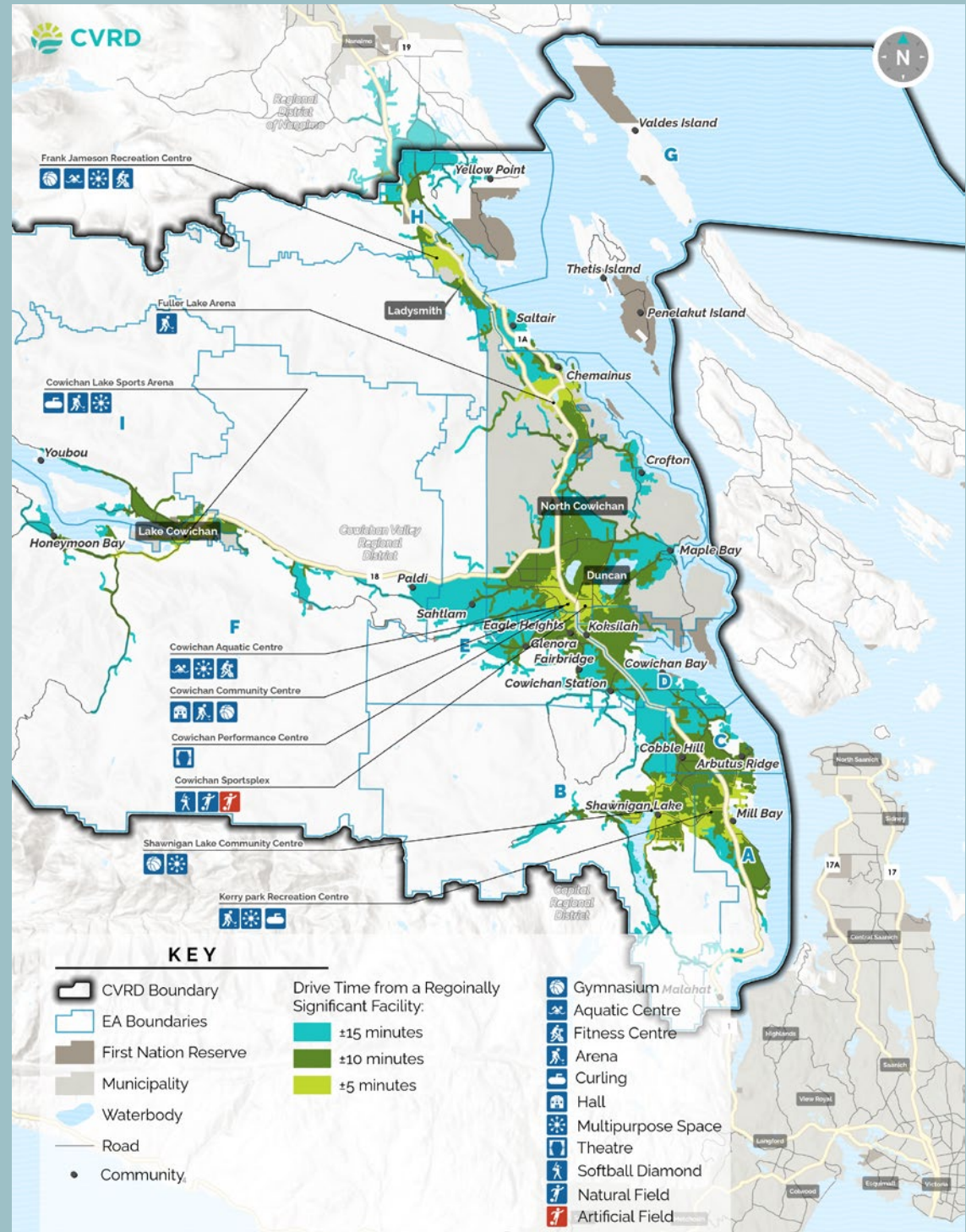
3.2. Facility Access and Equity Analysis

Regionally Significant Facilities Map

The adjacent map illustrates the location of regionally significant facilities across the Cowichan region, along with associated drive-time catchments to key amenities, highlighting how these amenities serve residents throughout the region.

Key Access Indicators:

- 35% of residents can access a regional aquatic facility within a 10-minute drive.
- 49% of residents can access a regional arena within a 10-minute drive.
- 26% of residents can access a regional performing arts centre within a 10-minute drive.
- 25% of residents can access a regional outdoor sports hub (Cowichan Sportsplex) within a 10-minute drive.
- 47% of residents can access a regional gymnasium within a 10-minute drive.
- 26% of residents can access a regional hall space within a 10-minute drive.

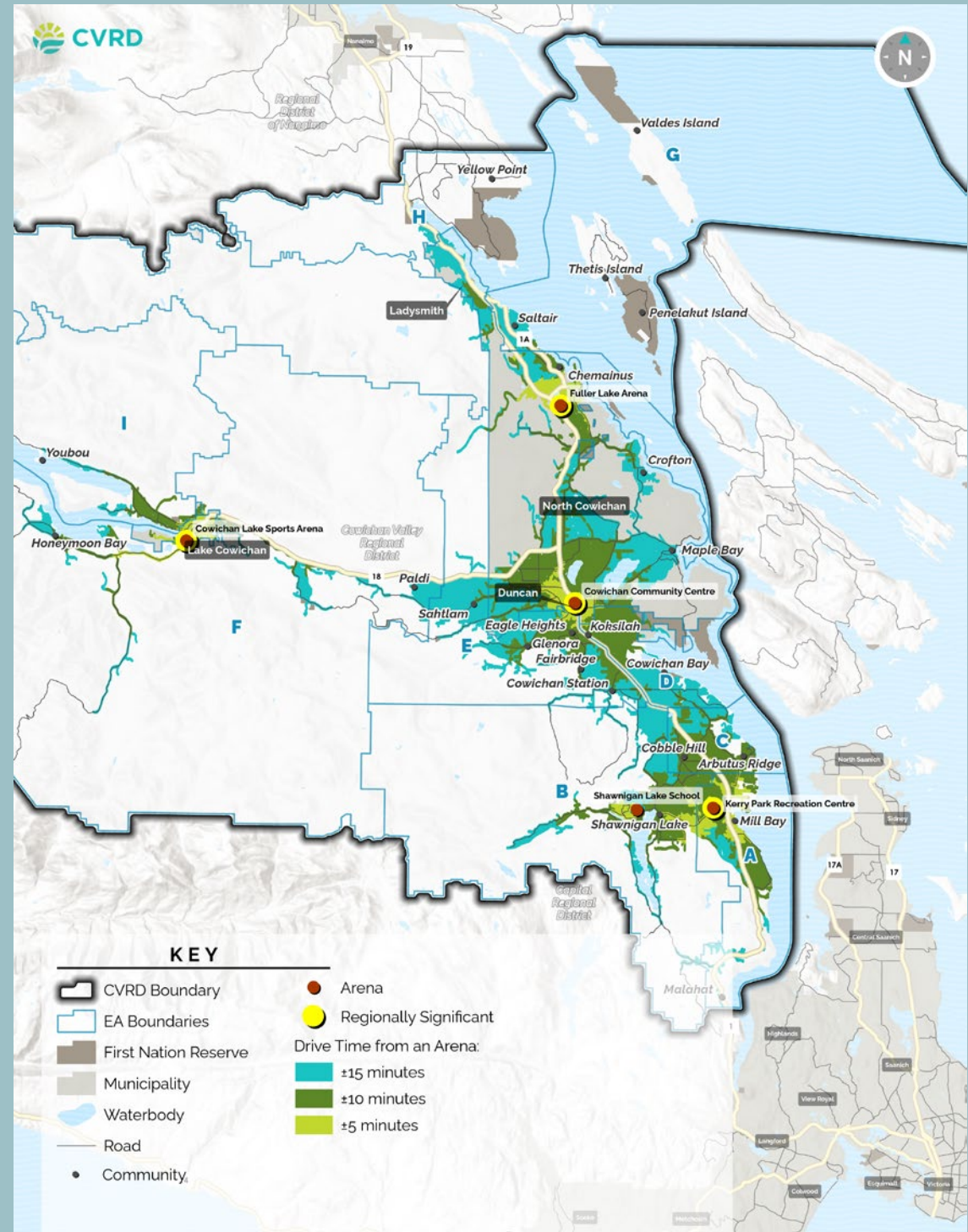


Regionally Significant Arenas

The adjacent map identifies drive-times to regional arenas located within the Cowichan region (all arenas are part of the regionally significant inventory). 49% of Cowichan region residents have access to a regional arena within a 10-minute drive, though ease of access to specific arenas varies by location of residency which may reflect that location of arena programming is an important factor.

Key Access Indicators:

- 49% of residents can access a regional arena within a 10-minute drive and 72% within a 15-minute drive.
- 27% of Cowichan Valley residents can access the Cowichan Community Centre within a 10-minute drive.
- 4% of Cowichan Valley residents can access the Cowichan Lake Sports Arena within a 10-minute drive.
- 7% of Cowichan Valley residents can access the Fuller Lake Arena within a 10-minute drive.
- 7% of Cowichan Valley residents can access the Kerry Park Recreation Centre within a 10-minute drive.

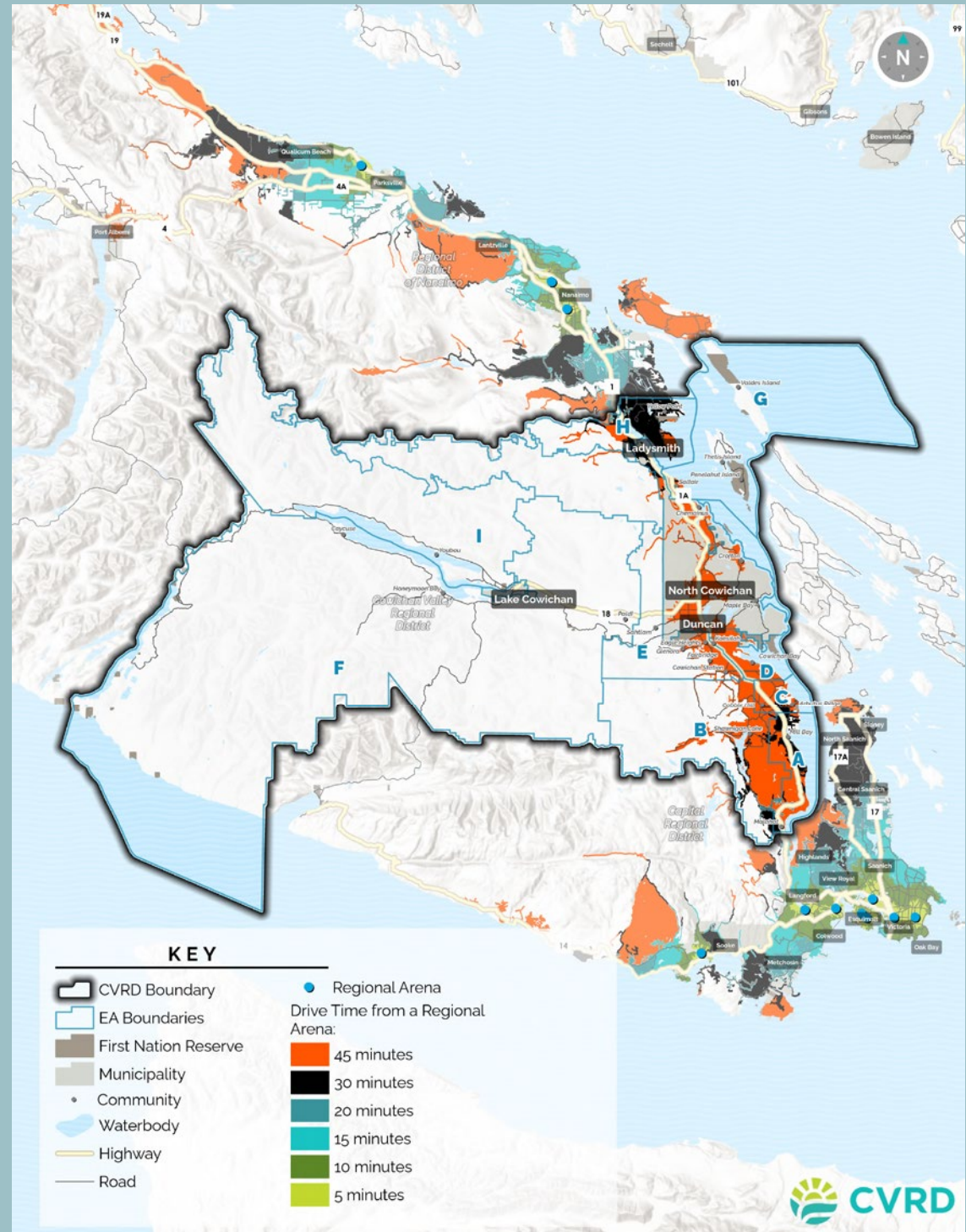


Arenas Outside of the CVRD

This regional map displays drive-time catchments to arenas located outside the Cowichan region. 67% of residents can access an external arena within a 45-minute drive, while 33% face longer travel times. It is important to note that these access metrics are influenced by population concentrations at the north and south end of the Cowichan region.

Key Access Indicators:

- 18% of residents can access an arena outside the Cowichan region within a 30-minute drive.
- 67% of residents can access a regional arena within a 45-minute drive.
- 33% of resident can't access an arena outside of the Cowichan region within 45 minutes.

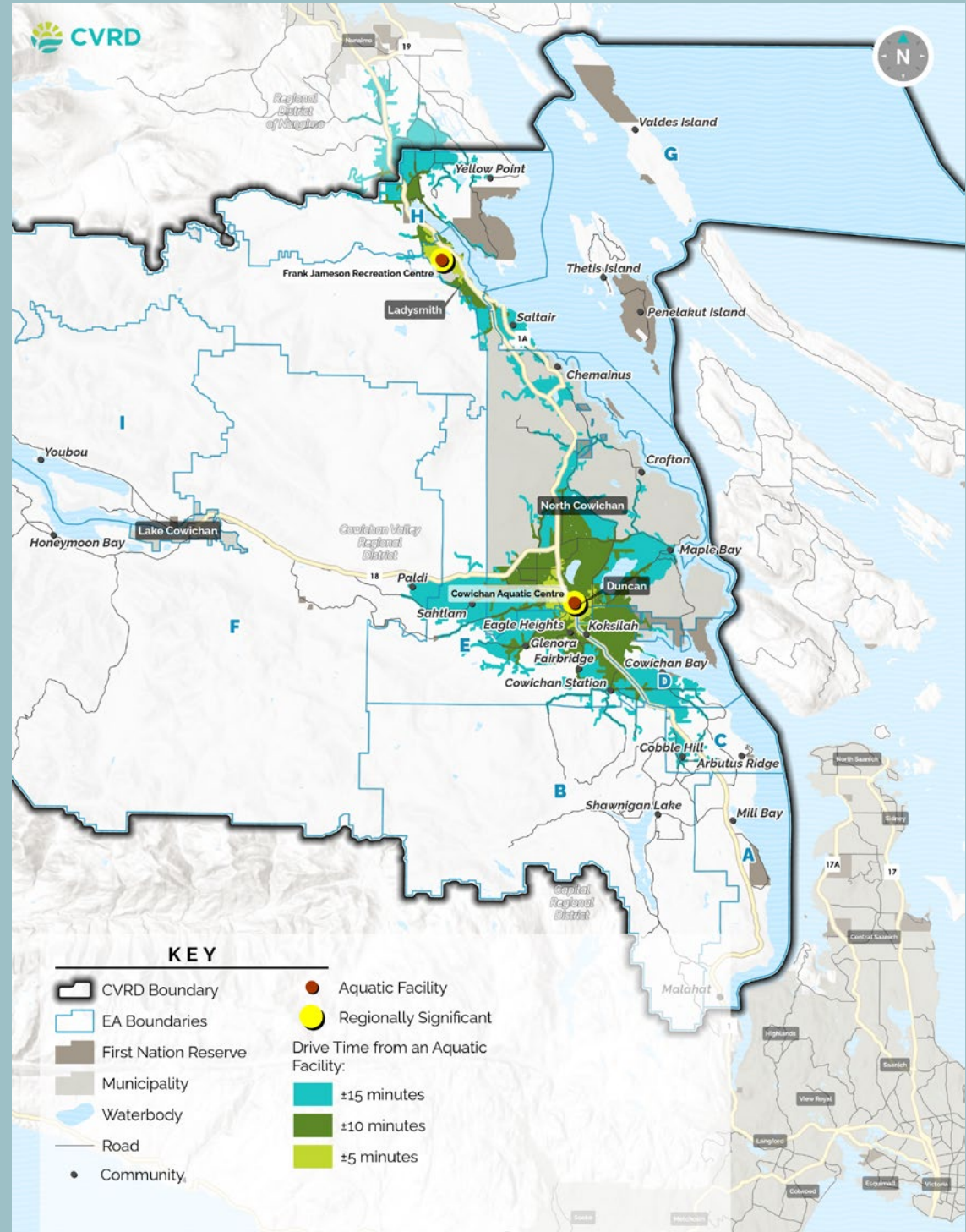


Regionally Significant Aquatics Facilities

The adjacent map displays aquatic facility locations and drive-time catchment areas across the Cowichan region, demonstrating that 35% of residents can access a regional aquatic facility within a 10-minute drive, with the Cowichan Aquatic Centre serving 27% and the Frank Jameson Recreation Centre serving 11% of the population within this timeframe.

Key Access Indicators:

- 35% of residents can access a regional aquatic facility within a 10-minute drive and 53% within a 15-minute drive.
- 27% of Cowichan region residents can access the Cowichan Aquatic Centre within a 10-minute drive and 41% within 15 minutes.
- 11% of Cowichan region residents can access the Frank James Recreation Centre within a 10-minute drive and 15% within 15 minutes.

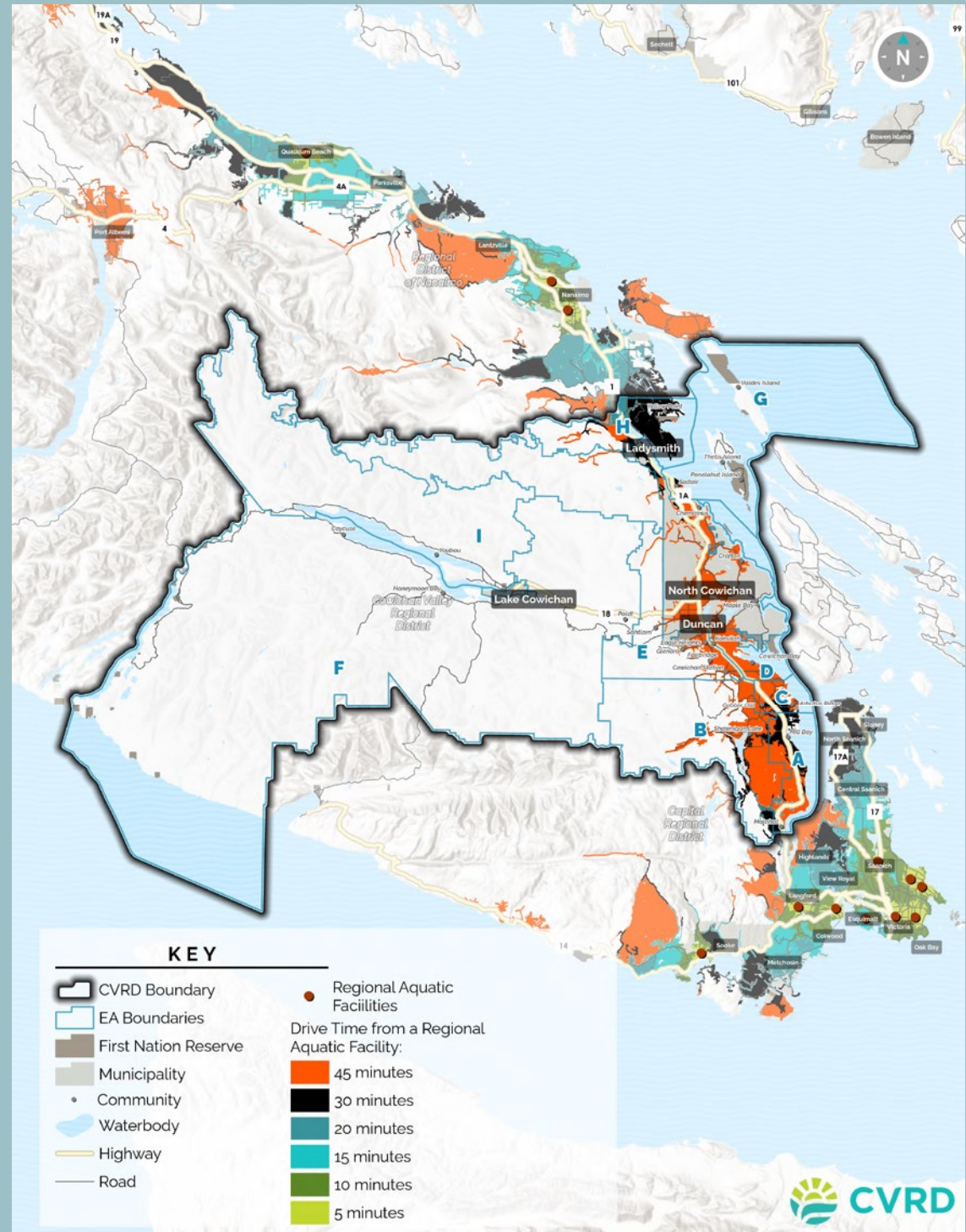


Aquatics Facilities Outside of the CVRD

This regional map displays drive-time catchments to aquatic facilities located outside the Cowichan region, demonstrating that 69% of residents can access an external aquatic facility within a 45-minute drive, while 31% face longer travel times.

Key Access Indicators:

- 22% of residents can access an aquatic facility outside of the Cowichan region within a 30-minute drive.
- 69% of residents can access an aquatic facility outside of the Cowichan region within a 45-minute drive.
- 31% of resident can't access an aquatic facility outside of the Cowichan region within 45 minutes.

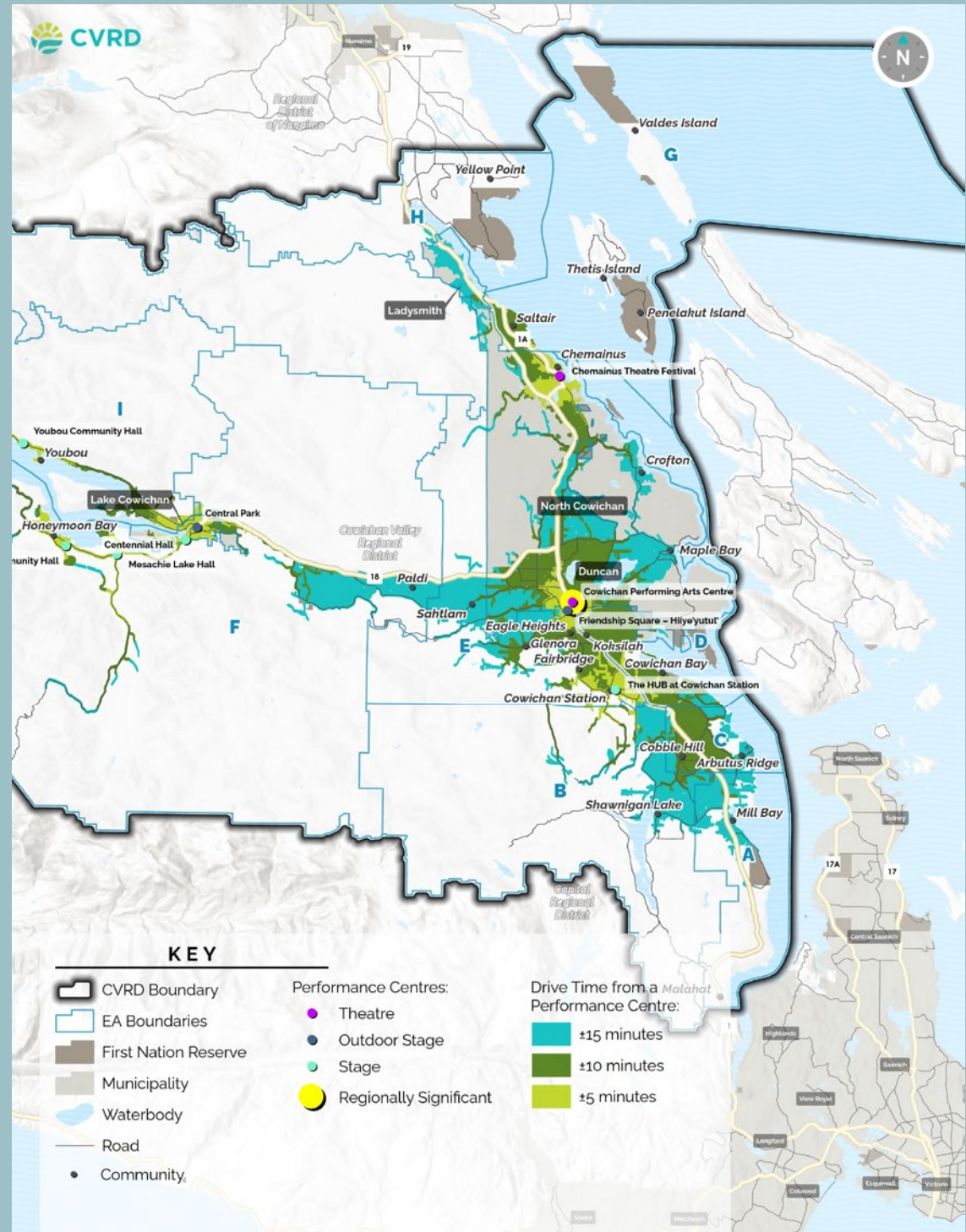


Performing Arts Spaces

The adjacent map displays performance space locations and drive-time catchment areas across the Cowichan region, demonstrating that 47% of residents can access a local performance centre within a 10-minute drive, with the Cowichan Performing Arts Centre specifically serving 26% of the population within this timeframe.

Key Access Indicators:

- 47% of residents can access a performing arts space within a 10-minute drive and 72% within a 15-minute drive.
- 26% of residents can access the Cowichan Performing Arts Centre within a 10-minute drive and 40% within a 15-minute drive.

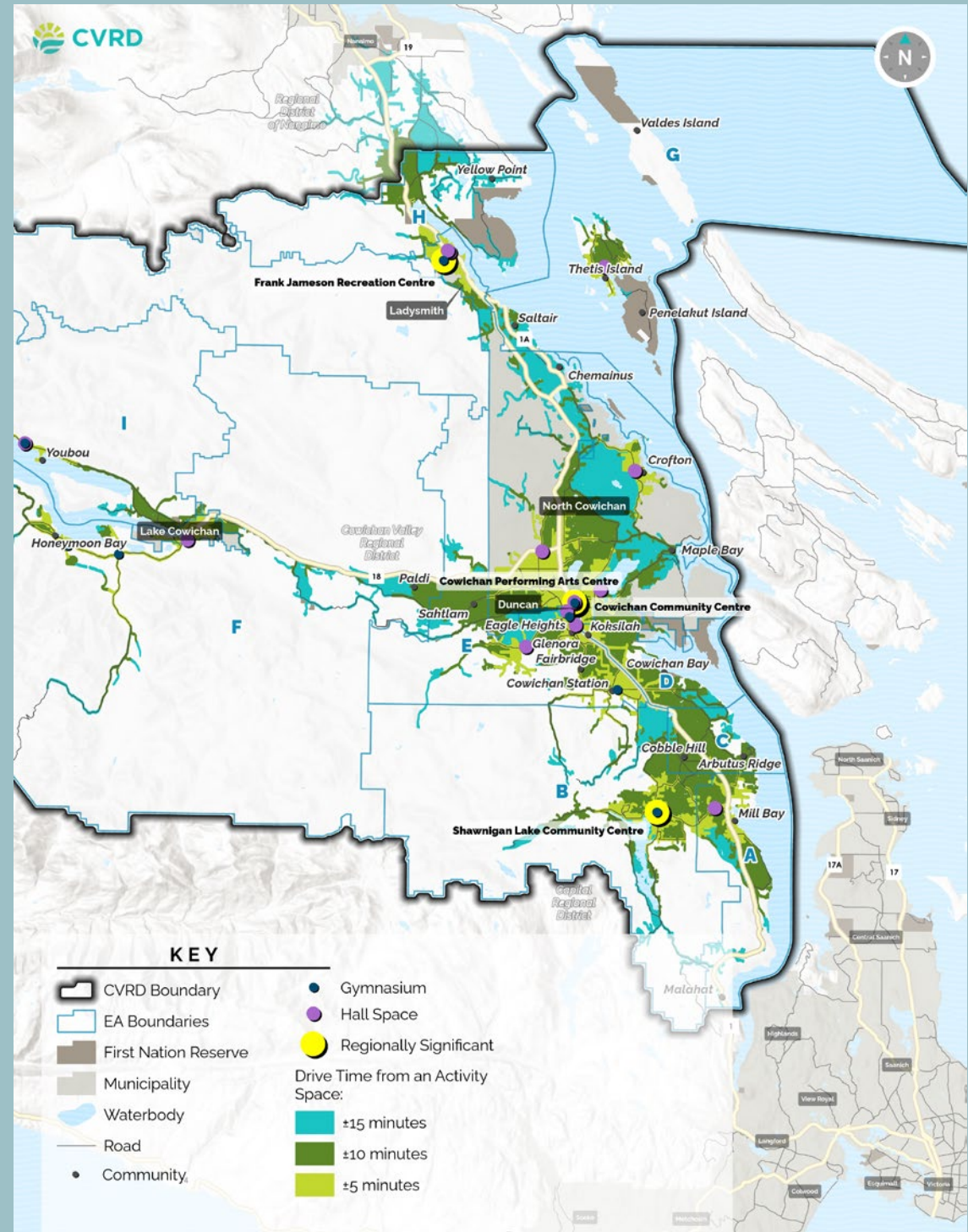


Gymnasium and Hall Spaces

The adjacent map displays activity space locations and drive-time catchment areas across the Cowichan region, demonstrating that 47% of residents can access a local gymnasium within a 10-minute drive (69% within 15 minutes), while 61% can access a local hall within 10 minutes (74% within 15 minutes).

Key Access Indicators:

- 47% of residents can access a gymnasium space within a 10-minute drive and 69% within 15-minutes.
- 61% of residents can access a hall space within a 10-minute drive and 40% within at 15-minute drive.
- 27% of residents can access the Cowichan Community Centre within a 10-minute drive and 40% within 15-minutes.
- 11% of residents can access the Frank Jameson Recreation Centre within a 10-minute drive and 15% within 15-minutes.
- 9% of residents can access the Shawnigan Lake Community Centre within a 10-minute drive and 19% within 15-minutes.

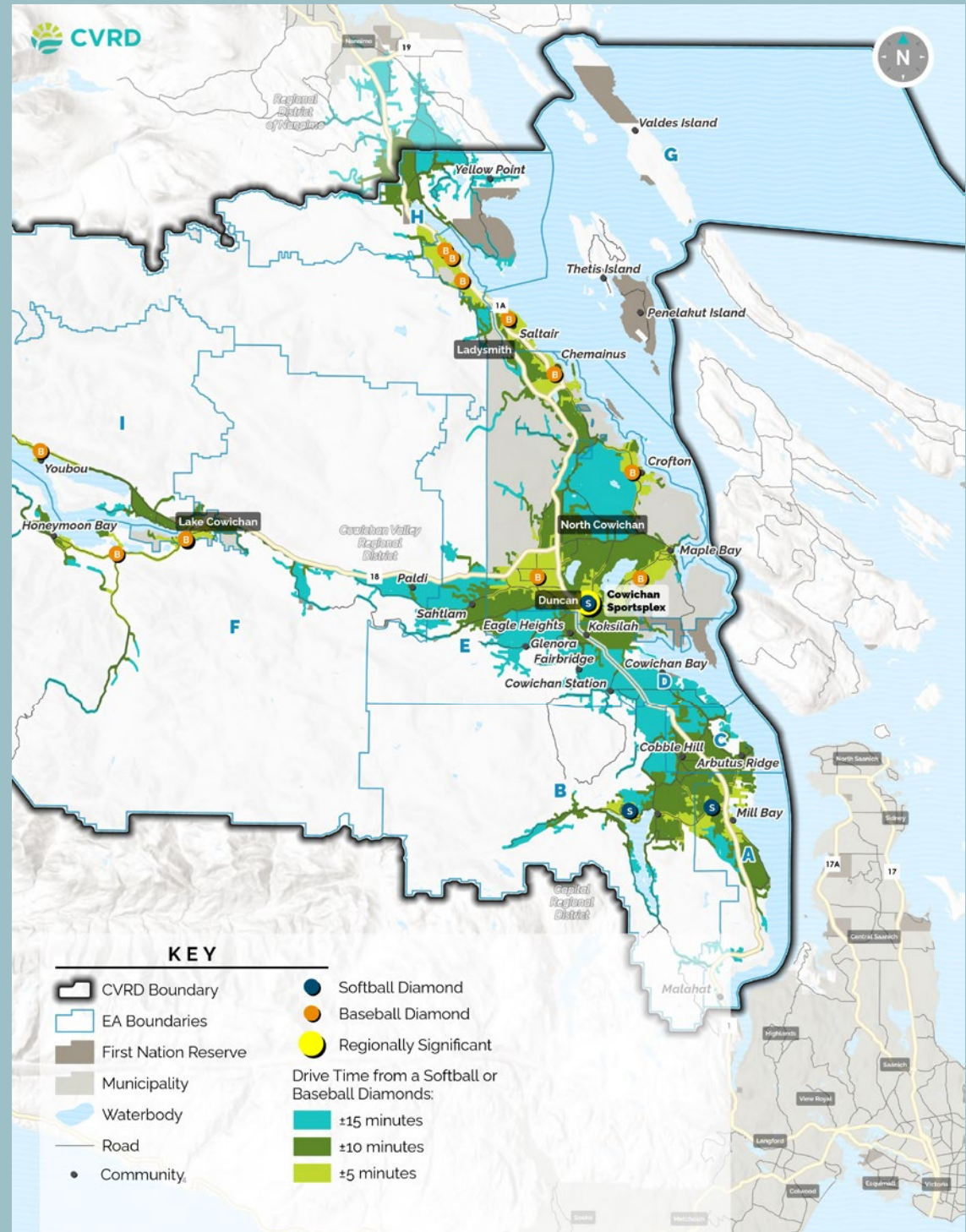


Ball Diamonds

The adjacent map displays softball and baseball diamond locations and drive-time catchment areas across the Cowichan region, demonstrating that 54% of residents can access a baseball diamond within a 10-minute drive (63% within 15 minutes), while 39% can access a softball diamond within 10 minutes (56% within 15 minutes).

Key Access Indicators:

- 39% of residents can access a softball diamond within a 10-minute drive and 56% within 15-minutes.
- 54% of residents can access a baseball diamond within a 10-minute drive and 63% within at 15-minute drive.
- 25% of residents can access the Cowichan Sportsplex within a 10-minute drive and 39% within 15-minutes.

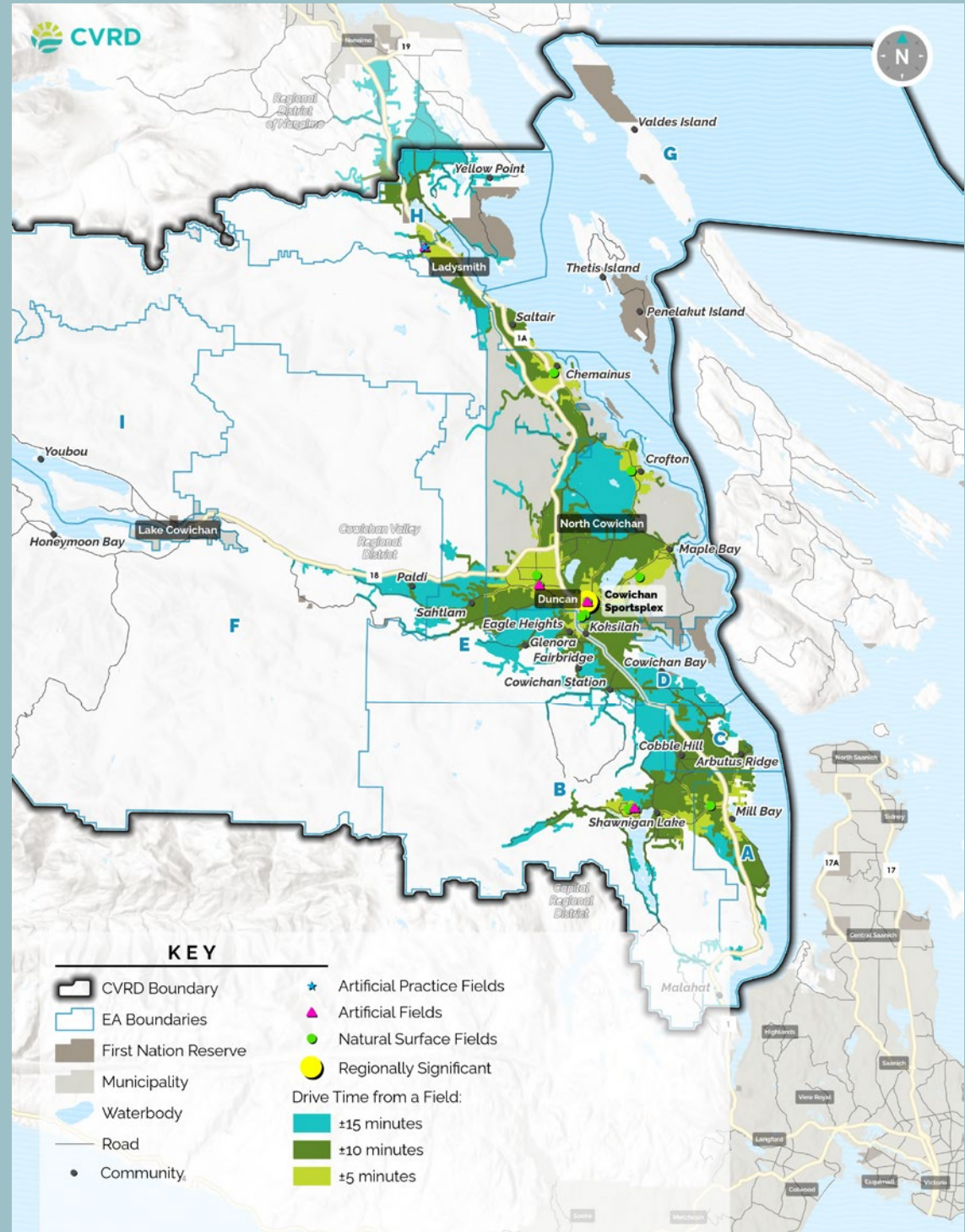


Sport Fields

The adjacent map displays natural grass fields, and artificial fields, locations and drive-time catchment areas across the Cowichan region, demonstrating that 57% of residents can access a natural grass field within a 10-minute drive (73% within 15 minutes), while 43% can access an artificial field within 10 minutes (63% within 15 minutes).

Key Access Indicators:

- 57% of residents can access a natural grass field within a 10-minute drive and 73% within 15-minutes.
- 43% of residents can access a baseball diamond within a 10-minute drive and 63% within at 15-minute drive.
- 25% of residents can access the Cowichan Sportsplex within a 10-minute drive and 39% within 15-minutes.

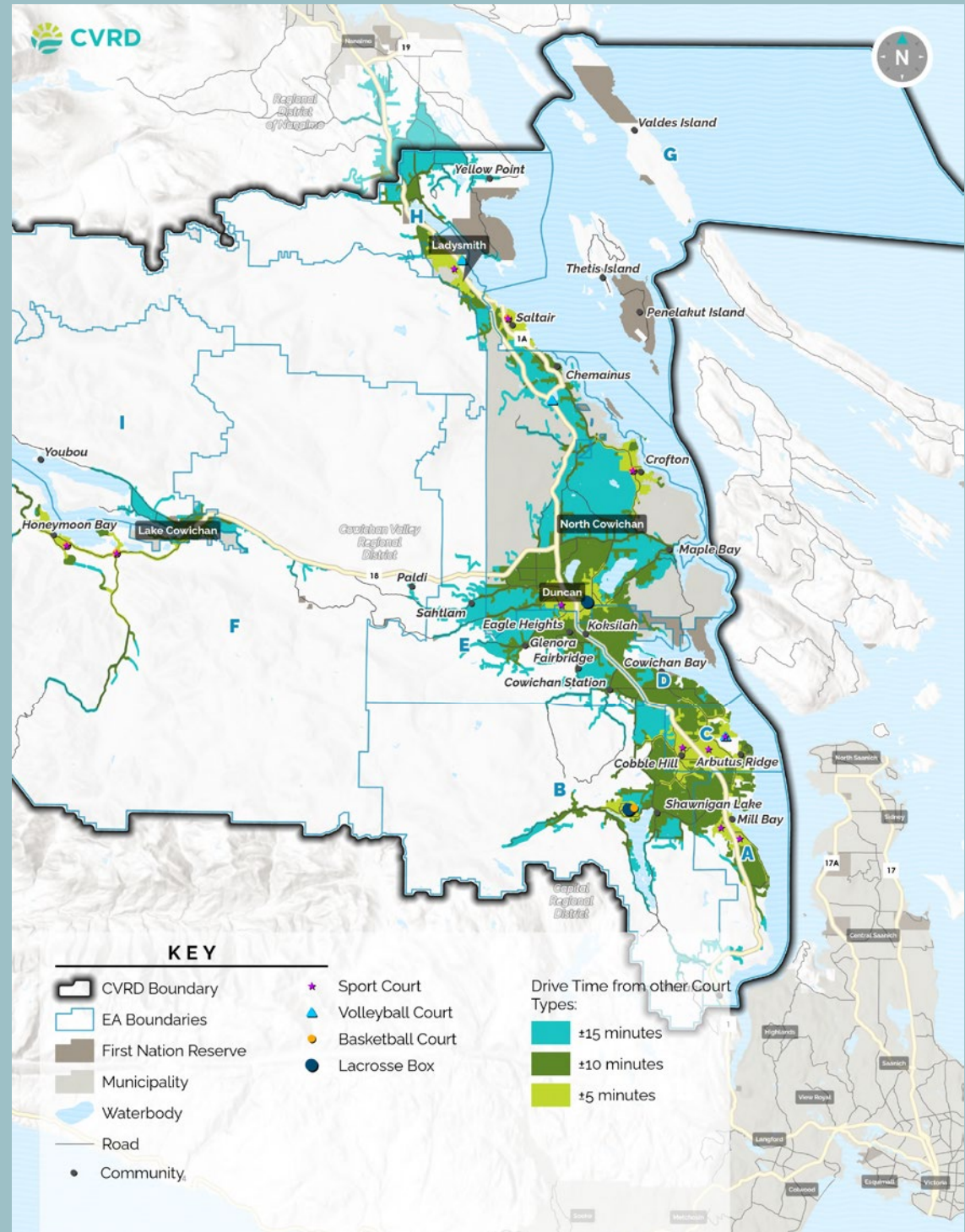


Courts and Other Outdoor Amenities

The adjacent map displays sport court, volleyball court, basketball court, and lacrosse box locations and drive-time catchment areas across the Cowichan region, demonstrating that 61% of residents can access a sport court within a 10-minute drive (79% within 15 minutes), while 26% can access a volleyball court within 10 minutes (45% within 15 minutes), 24% can access a basketball court within 10 minutes (41% within 15 minutes), and 29% can access a lacrosse box within 10 minutes (47% within 15 minutes).

Key Access Indicators:

- 58% of residents can access a pickleball court within a 10-minute drive and 78% within 15-minutes.
- 65% of residents can access a tennis court within a 10-minute drive and 80% within 15-minutes.
- 61% of residents can access a sport court within a 10-minute drive and 79% within 15-minutes.
- 26% of residents can access a volleyball court within a 10-minute drive and 45% within 15-minutes.
- 29% of residents can access a lacrosse box within a 10-minute drive and 47% within 15-minutes.

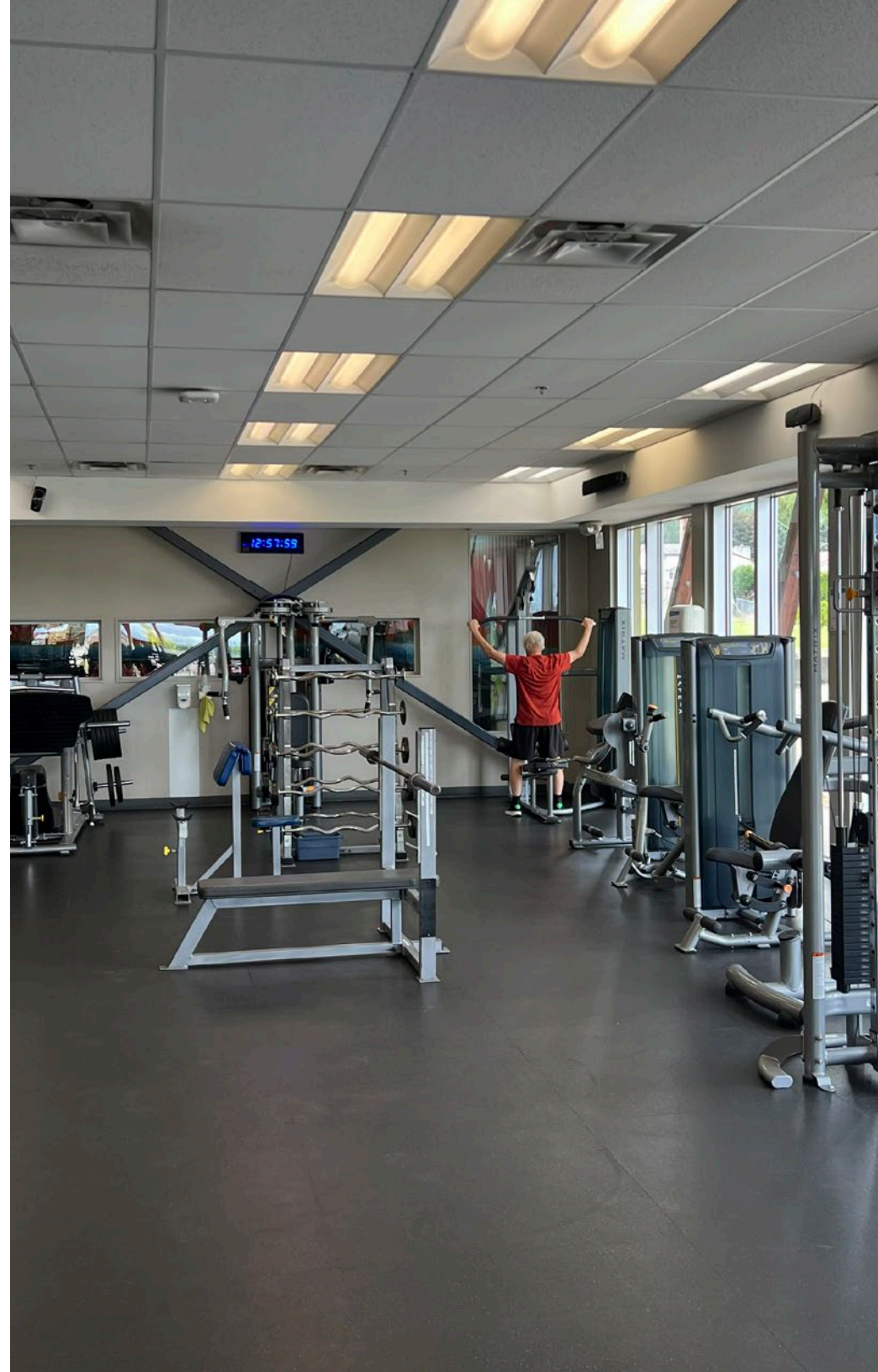


3.3. Utilization Indicators

This section examines how the nine regionally significant recreation facilities are being used, with findings organized by amenity type to provide a clear understanding of system wide pressures and patterns. By reviewing attendance, scheduling, capacity, and operational context for each amenity, the analysis highlights how spaces such as ice, aquatics, fitness, gymnasiums, and multipurpose rooms are performing across the regional network.

Although the focus is on the nine facilities, the analysis also considers how other publicly operated recreation assets within the region may influence demand for specific amenities. These additional public facilities can absorb or redirect participation for certain activities, shaping how heavily particular amenities are used within the regional system.

By concentrating on amenity level performance, this section identifies where demand is consistently high, where capacity exists, and where gaps or emerging pressures may require future enhancements or new development.



Indoor Aquatics

The Cowichan Aquatic Centre (Duncan) and the Frank Jameson Community Centre (Ladysmith) are the two regionally funded aquatic facilities. Utilization is assessed using annual swims per capita, a benchmark that captures all individual visits. For context, 4-6 swims per capita is a benchmark range that indicates that an indoor aquatics facility is being optimally used – at this level of use cost recovery is typically optimized while capacity is not exceeded. Use below this benchmark would suggest that a pool is underutilized or cannot fulfill the service demands of its catchment area due to the perception of being over capacity. Use above this benchmark may suggest that maximum capacity may be reached soon. It is important to note that operational factors influenced annual swim-visit totals in some years; for example, in 2022 the Cowichan Aquatic Centre closed at 3:30 p.m. on Saturdays and operated with reduced summer hours.

Both facilities also operate with shorter hours during the summer season, which limits overall public access and contributes to year-to-year variation in total swim visits.

The following tables summarize annual swim visits and swims per capita for the Cowichan Aquatic Centre and the Frank Jameson Community Centre from 2022 to 2024. Aquatic use is increasing across both facilities which are within the optimal swim per capita range (4 – 6 swim per capita). It is also important to note that aquatics facility utilization can be impacted by other factors, including the availability of program staff to support use (e.g. facilitate lessons, aqua-fit, etc.).

Table 8: Cowichan Aquatic Centre Swims Per Capita

Cowichan Aquatic Centre	2022	2023	2024	Average
Total Annual Swim Visits	222,454	314,957	351,356	296,256
CVRD Total Population* (Does not include Ladysmith and Electoral Areas G & H which are included in the catchment area for the FJCC)	74,978	74,978	74,978	74,978
Swims Per Capita	3	4	5	4

*Statistics Canada population estimates were used

Table 9: Frank Jameson Community Centre Swims Per Capita

Frank Jameson Community Centre	2022	2023	2024	Average
Total Annual Swim Visits	64,225	87,575	96,023	82,608
Ladysmith, Area G & H Population*	14,035	14,035	14,035	14,035
Swims Per Capita	5	6	7	6

*Statistics Canada population estimates were used

Table 10 summarizes total annual swim visits across the Cowichan Aquatic Centre and the Frank Jameson Community Centre, providing a combined view of indoor aquatic participation in the Cowichan Valley. Regional indoor aquatic participation is growing and now averages 4 swims per capita, below the industry benchmark but showing strong upward momentum over the past three years.

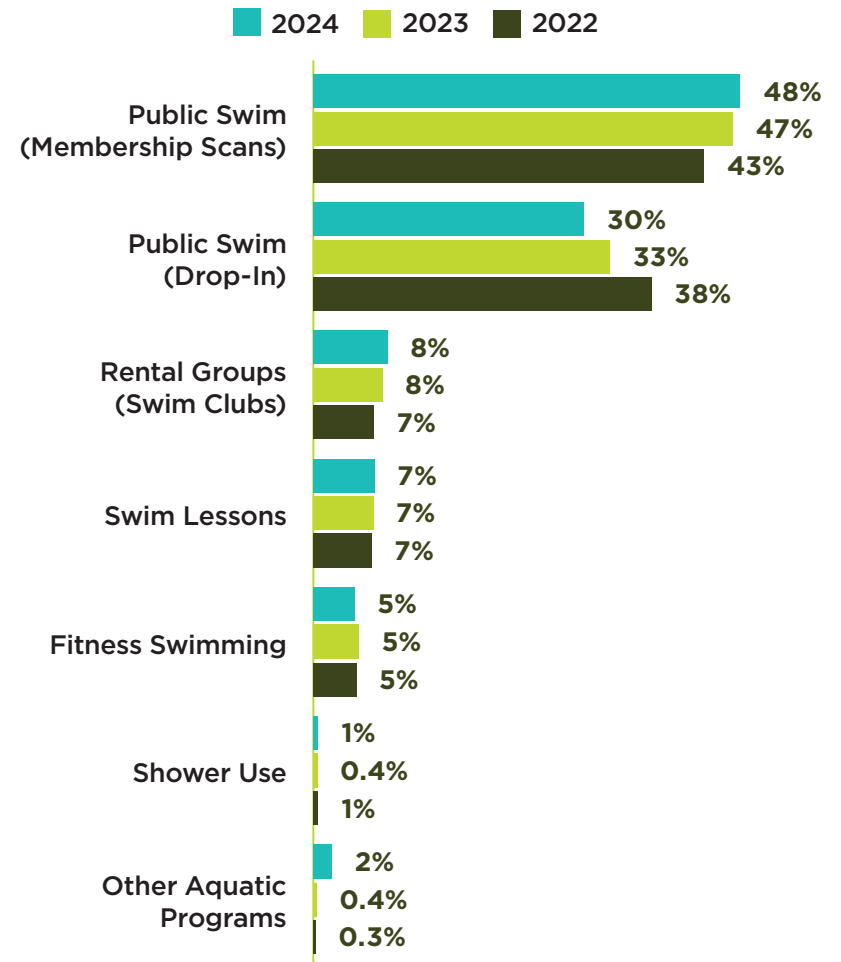
Table 10: Total Swim Visits at Indoor Aquatics in the Cowichan Valley

Cowichan Aquatic Facilities (FJCC & CAC)	2022	2023	2024	Average
Total Swim Visits	286,679	402,532	447,379	378,863
CVRD Total Population*	89,013	89,013	89,013	89,013
Swims per Capita	3	5	5	4

*Statistics Canada population estimates were used

The adjacent graph shows the distribution of swim visits at the Cowichan Aquatic Centre (CAC) from 2022 to 2024. The data illustrates how different types of use contribute to overall aquatic participation and how patterns have shifted over time. Public swimming continues to drive the majority of visits, with membership-based use increasing steadily while drop-in use declines suggesting a shift toward more routine participation.

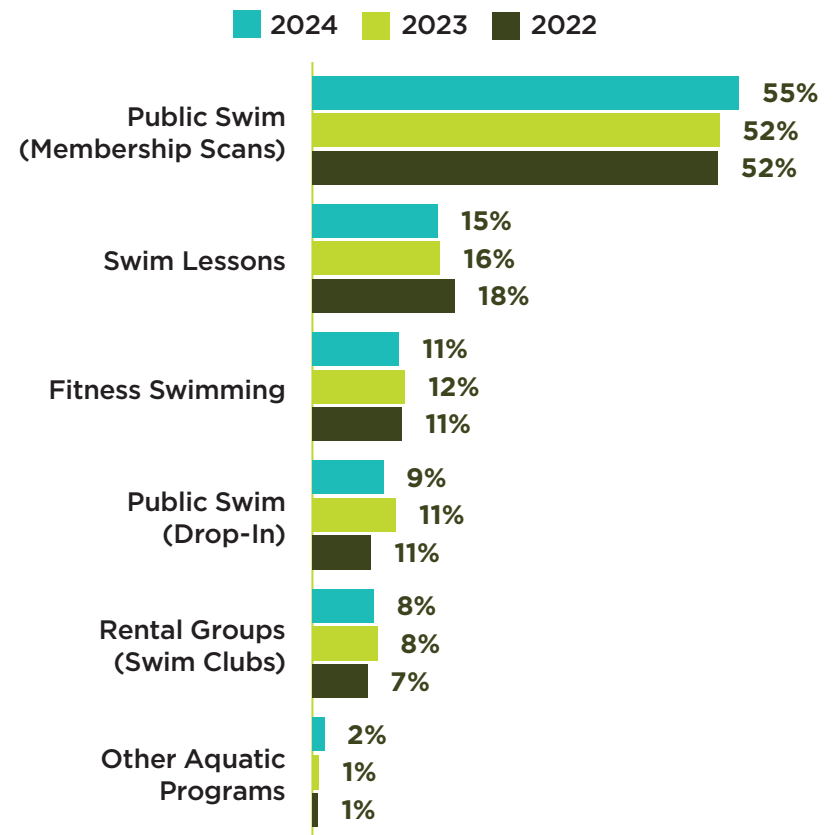
Graph 5: Proportion of Swim Visits at CAC (2022 - 2024)



Graph 6 shows the distribution of swim visits at the Frank Jameson Community Centre (FJCC) from 2022 to 2024. Public swimming, particularly membership-based use, continues to dominate overall activity, with stable participation across most other program areas.

Overall, the comparison between the two facilities reinforces the prominence of public and casual aquatics activities as a proportion of total use. Notably, the proportion of swim visits by aquatics activity types has remained relatively consistent at both facilities which could reflect how pool space is allocated, trends, and staffing capacity (e.g. instructors).

Graph 6: Proportion of Swim Visits at the FJCC (2022- 2024)



Additional Swim Visits: Crofton Outdoor Pool

In addition to the regionally significant indoor aquatic facilities, the Crofton Outdoor Pool provides seasonal access to swimming opportunities within the community. While its scale and operating season differ from the indoor centres, annual swim visits and swims-per-capita offer a useful snapshot of local demand. Use of the Crofton Outdoor Pool is steady, averaging 3-4 swims per capita, consistent with a seasonal amenity.

Table 11: Total Swim Visits at Crofton Outdoor Pool (2022- 2024)

Crofton Outdoor Pool	2022	2023	2024	Average
Total Annual Swim Visits	4,955	6,335	5,332	5,541
Crofton Population*	1,446	1,446	1,446	1,446
Swims per Capita	3	4	4	4

*Statistics Canada population estimates were used



Key Findings from the Aquatics Amenity Use Analysis

- Regional aquatic participation is increasing across all facilities.
- Both indoor aquatics facilities in the region are within the optimal level of use benchmark of 4 – 6 swims per capita. This level of use does not suggest that overall indoor aquatics facility space is limited and that any capacity challenges that exist may be a result of other factors (e.g. program staffing challenges, shutdowns, etc.). A more detailed, specific analysis of aquatics may be required to inform future investment and decision making.
- The CAC facilitates a high proportion of casual use (drop-in visits) while FJCC use is much more membership based.
- The Crofton Outdoor Pool provides consistent seasonal use (3-4 swims per capita).

Ice Arena

There are four ice arenas provided regionally in the Cowichan Valley; Cowichan Community Centre (Duncan), Cowichan Lake Sports Arena (Cowichan Lake), Fuller Lake Ice Arena (Chemainus), Kerry Park Recreation Centre (Mill Bay). These facilities support a wide range of ice activities, including hockey, figure skating, and community rentals. Booked arena use represents a distinct stream of participation beyond general drop in admissions, reflecting the importance of ice programming and rentals in overall facility utilization. **To ensure accuracy, each facility's reported capacity was reduced by 5% to account for scheduling inconsistencies.**

Note: Shawnigan Lake School operates a privately owned arena that is made available to community groups. This facility helps meet local demand for ice time beyond what government owned spaces can accommodate.

Prime Ice Time

Prime ice time is defined as 3:00–10:00 p.m. on weekdays and 8:00 a.m.–11:00 p.m. on weekends. These hours represent the most desirable booking periods, consistently showing the highest demand for organized programs, practices, and community rentals. By contrast, non prime hours fall outside these windows (early mornings, late nights, and weekday daytime), and are generally less utilized, reflecting lower demand and reduced efficiency in facility use.

Seasonal Ice Availability Across Regional Arenas

Seasonal operating schedules vary across the four regional arenas, influencing the total amount of ice available for booking each year. These differences help explain variations in total hours booked, non prime use, and overall capacity utilization. Cowichan Lake Sports Arena consistently provides the longest ice season in the region (over 41 weeks each year).

Table 12: Weeks of Ice Availability by Facility (2022- 2024)

Facility	Weeks Available 2022	Weeks Available 2023	Weeks Available 2024	Average
Cowichan Community Centre	36	36	37	36
Cowichan Lake Sports Arena	42	44	41	42
Fuller Lake Arena	30	31	39	33
Kerry Park Community Centre	33	33	34	33

Arena Utilization

The table below highlights booked hours, available hours, and utilization rates across the four regionally provided ice arenas. Prime time utilization is strong across all four arenas, with Kerry Park operating near full capacity and the other three facilities booking between 77% and 79% of available prime hours.

However, these percentages should be interpreted in the context of each arena's seasonal operating schedule. Arenas with longer annual ice seasons typically experience lower booking levels during the summer months, meaning that additional weeks of ice do not necessarily translate into higher annual prime time utilization. Typically, most demand is concentrated from September onward, where competition for prime hours is strongest. This helps explain why facilities with more weeks of ice available show booking rates similar to, or only slightly higher than, those with shorter seasons.

Table 13: Average Booked Use 2022- 2024 at Regional Arenas

	Kerry Park Recreation Centre	Fuller Lake	Cowichan Lake Sports Arena	Cowichan Community Centre
Total Hours Booked	2,739	2,322	2,529	2,725
Prime Hours Booked	1,917	1,574	1,964	1,700
Non - Prime Hours Booked	822	748	565	1,026
Prime Hours Available	1,960	2,001	2,559	2,201
Total Hours Available	3,887	3,910	4,965	4,321
Non - Prime Hours Available	1,928	1,910	2,405	2,119
% of Prime Capacity Booked	98%	79%	77%	77%
% of Total Capacity Booked	70%	59%	51%	63%
% Non- Prime Booked	43%	39%	23%	48%

Ice Use Distribution

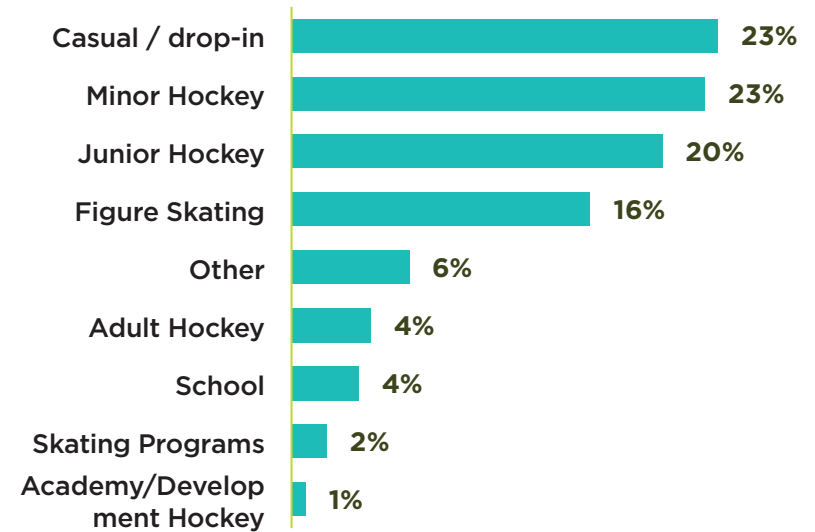
The distribution of ice use across the four arenas highlights a consistent pattern: minor hockey and casual/drop-in skating make up the largest shares of activity system-wide, reflecting strong community demand for both structured sport and accessible public programs.

Beyond these core uses, each facility shows a distinct profile:

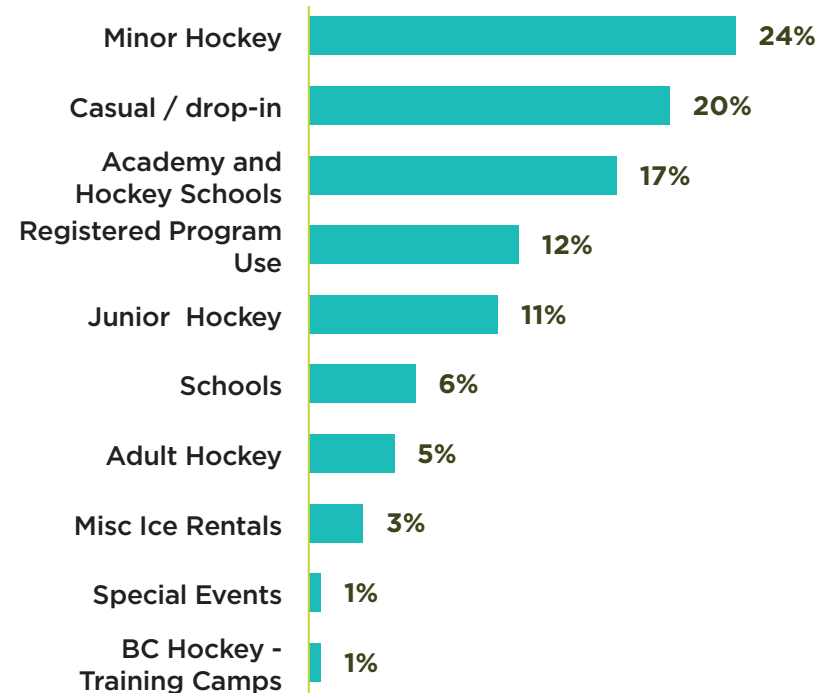
- Cowichan Community Centre and Fuller Lake Arena have higher levels of figure skating.
- Kerry Park Recreation Centre supports a more diversified mix, including schools, programs, and junior hockey.
- Cowichan Lake Sports Arena stands out for its strong share of academy and development hockey, supported by its longer operating season.

Overall, the adjacent graphs illustrate a regional system where each arena serves a different mix of users while collectively supporting broad community participation

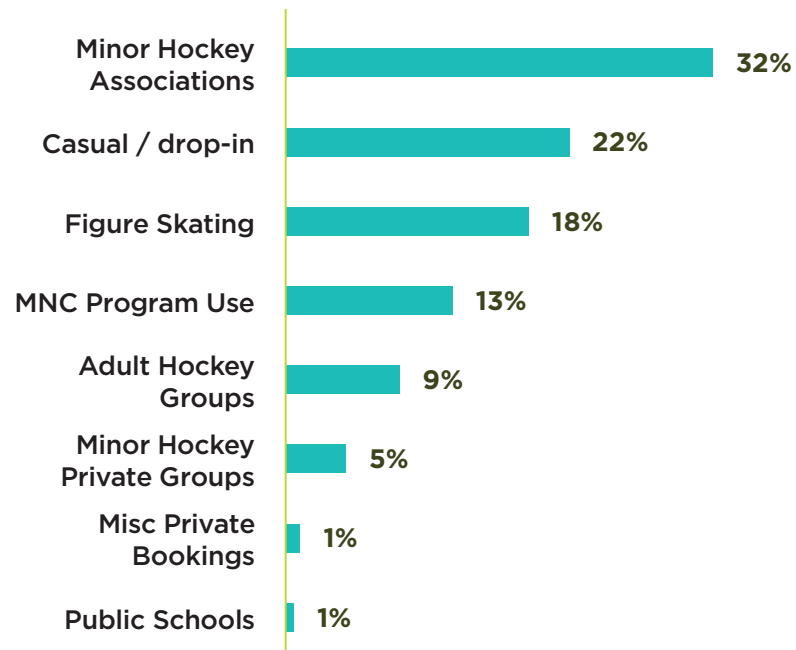
Graph 7: Breakdown of Bookings by Activity Type at Cowichan Community Centre in 2024



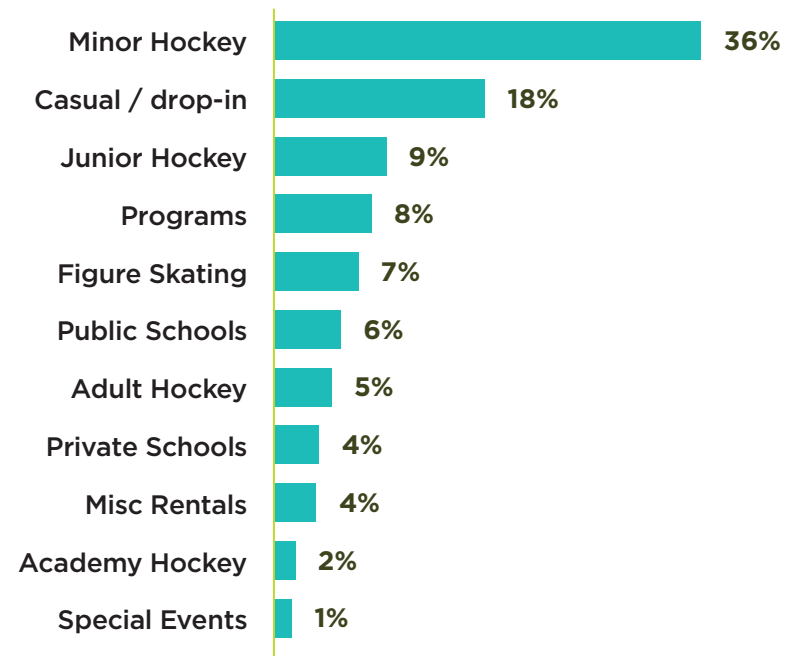
Graph 8: Breakdown of Bookings by Activity Type at Cowichan Lake Sports Arena in 2024



Graph 9: Breakdown of Bookings by Activity Type at Fuller Lake Arena in 2024



Graph 10: Breakdown of Bookings by Activity Type at Kerry Park Recreation Centre in 2024



Key Findings from Arena Use Analysis

- Prime time demand is strong across all arenas, with most facilities booking 77–98% of available prime hours. This level of use can be generally categorized as approaching peak season, prime time capacity.
- Season length varies widely, influencing total capacity and annual utilization; longer seasons do not necessarily lead to higher use due to low summer demand. Most activity is typically, concentrated September–March, when competition for prime hours is highest.
- Minor hockey and casual/drop in skating dominate system wide, reflecting strong community demand for both structured and unstructured use.
- Each arena serves a distinct mix of users, shaped by local programs, club presence, and seasonal schedules.
- Casual / drop-in use as a proportion of the overall total use is strong across the region, reflecting a commitment to providing unstructured and recreational skating and hockey (stick and puck, shinny, etc.) opportunities.

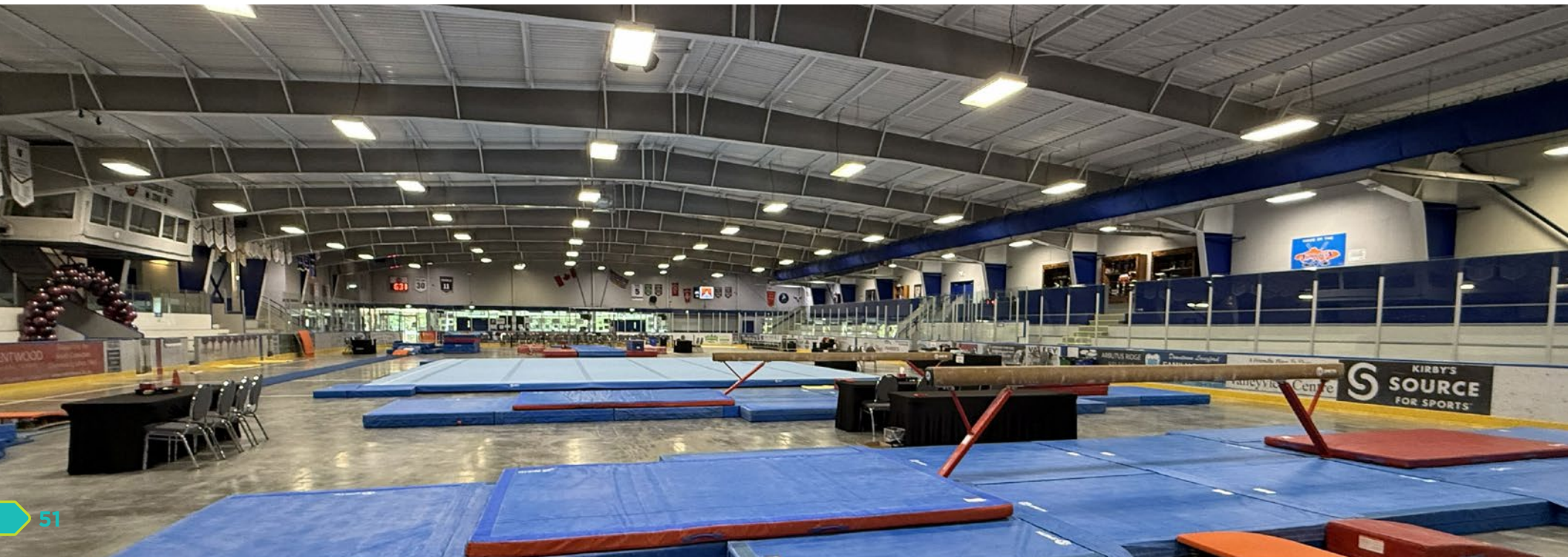
Dry Floor

All four arenas also provide dry floor space during the off-season, expanding opportunities for community events, programs, and rentals; additionally, the curling rinks at Cowichan Lake Sports Arena and Kerry Park Recreation Centre offer dry floor use, further increasing the region's multipurpose capacity. To ensure comparability across arenas, available hours were estimated using a standardized assumption of roughly six hours of daily demand.

The table below summarizes average dry floor use across the four arenas and the curling dry floor from 2022-2024. Dry floor use is concentrated at Kerry Park, the Cowichan Community Centre and the curling rinks with lower utilization at the other facilities despite similar available capacity. Cowichan Lake Sports Arena's extended ice season (over 40 weeks annually) significantly limits the amount of time available for dry floor use, resulting in fewer opportunities for off-season programs and rentals compared to other arenas.

Table 14: Average Hours Booked of Dry Floor Capacity (2022 - 2024)

	Kerry Park Recreation Centre	Fuller Lake	Cowichan Lake Sports Arena	Cowichan Community Centre	Curling Dry Floor
Average Hours Booked	314	63	65	303	584
Hours Available	610	614	316	550	1,100
% Booked of Capacity	52%	10%	21%	55%	53%



Dry Floor Use Distribution

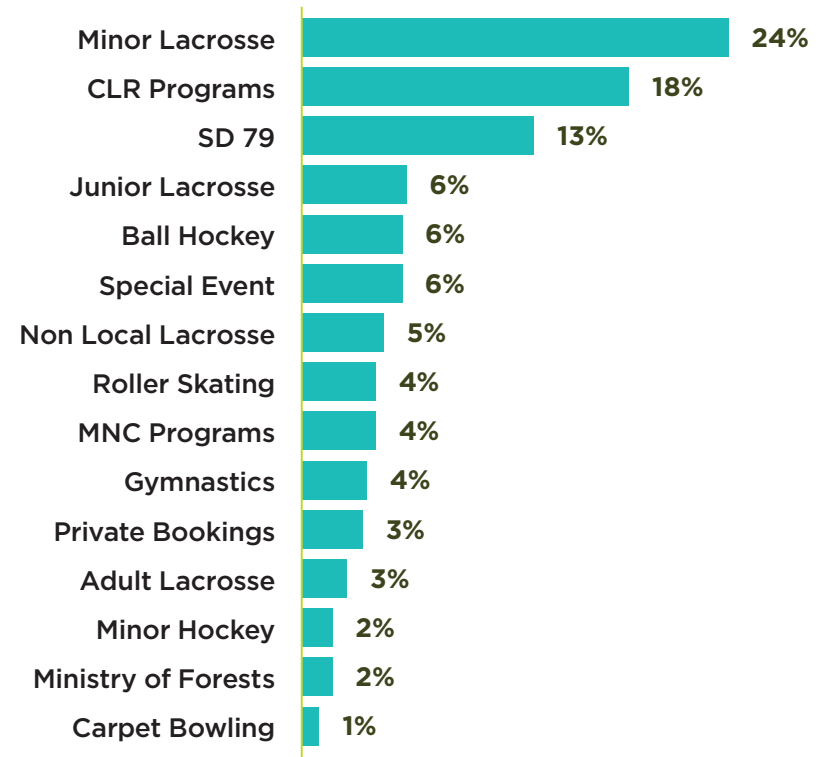
Dry floor bookings are dominated by minor lacrosse, which accounts for nearly one quarter of all use (24%). Cowichan Lake Recreation programs represent the next largest share at 18%, followed by School District 79 at 13%, highlighting strong demand from both organized sport and community programming.



Key Findings from Dry Floor Use Analysis

- Dry floor use is highest at Kerry Park and the Cowichan Community Centre, where more than half of available hours are booked.
- Fuller Lake and Cowichan Lake Sports Arena show lower utilization during the non-ice seasons. Cowichan Lake Sports Arena's long ice season limits dry floor availability, reducing opportunities for off season programs and rentals.
- Dry floor demand is driven primarily by minor lacrosse, Cowichan Lake Recreation programs, and School District 79, which together account for the majority of bookings.

Graph 11: Average Breakdown of Bookings by Activity Type (2022 - 2024)



Gymnasiums

There are three gymnasium spaces within the regional facilities in the Cowichan Valley: Shawnigan Lake Community Centre, Frank Jameson Community Centre, and Cowichan Community Centre. Booked-use capacity was calculated based on each facility’s operating hours, ensuring that the percentage of hours booked reflects the actual time each gymnasium is open and available. Temporary closures or operational changes were not factored into this calculation, meaning the resulting percentages represent typical operating conditions rather than adjusted availability. In-demand capacity was estimated at six hours per day, excluding statutory holidays such as BC Day, Easter, and Christmas.

Gymnasium booking levels should be interpreted with context in-mind, as many activities occur in short blocks, recurring weekly programs limit full day rentals, and setup/takedown time reduces schedulable hours. In addition, no drop in gymnasium hours were allocated or recorded in the data, meaning actual community use is likely higher than what appears in the booking system.

Booked Use of Regional Gymnasiums

The table below summarizes average booked use and available capacity for the region’s three gymnasiums from 2022-2024. Gymnasium use varies across facilities, with the Cowichan Community Centre showing the highest level of booked activity. When measured against total operating hours, utilization ranges from 31% at Shawnigan Lake Community Centre to 56% at Cowichan Community Centre.

However, when compared to in-demand capacity (six hours per day), all three facilities demonstrate strong use, with Cowichan Community Centre exceeding estimated demand (115%). This pattern reflects consistent program activity, recurring weekly bookings, and limited availability for additional rentals during peak periods.

Table 15: Average Booked Use of Gymnasiums (2022- 2024)

	Shawnigan Lake Community Centre	Frank Jameson Community Centre	Cowichan Community Centre
Average Hours Booked	1,444	1,587	2,459
Average Hours Available	4,628	4,276	4,357
Average % Booked of Capacity	31%	37%	56%
In Demand Capacity	2,144	2,144	2,144
Average % Booked of In Demand Capacity	67%	74%	115%

Gymnasium Use Distribution

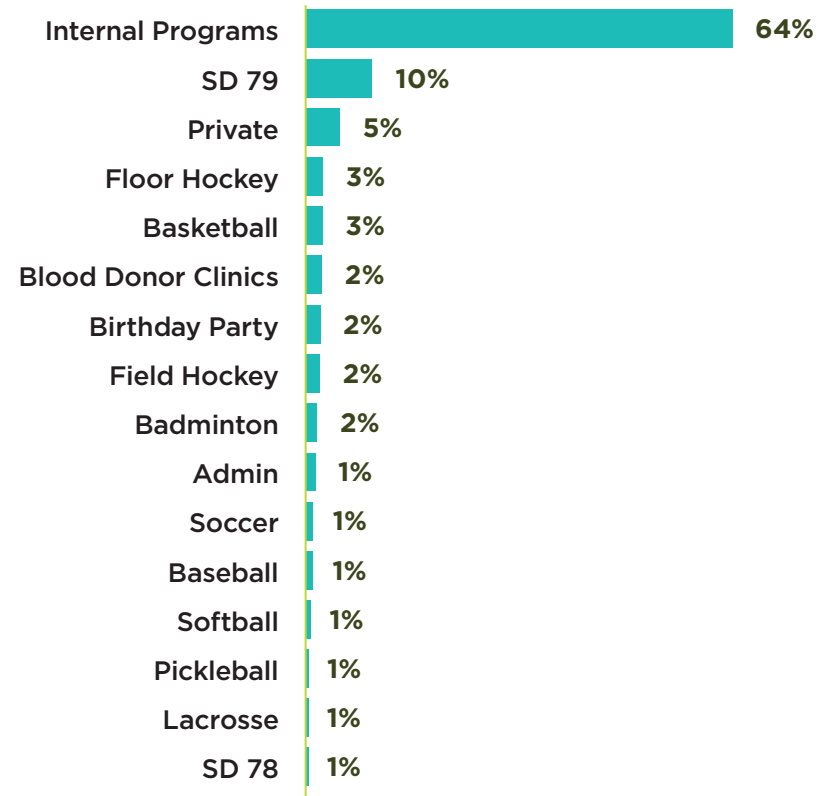
Internal programs make up by far the largest share of gym use, accounting for nearly two-thirds of all booked hours. SD 79 rentals and private bookings form the next largest categories, together representing roughly 15% of total use. Mid-sized contributors include basketball, floor hockey, blood donor clinics, birthday parties, field hockey, and badminton, each representing between 2% and 3% of annual hours. Smaller but steady users, such as soccer, baseball, softball, pickleball, and lacrosse, each account for about 1% of total time. Overall, the data shows that while a wide range of community and sport groups rely on the gym, internal programming remains the dominant driver of annual demand.



Key Findings from Gymnasium Use Analysis

- Internal programs dominate gym use, accounting for 64% of all booked hours across the region.
- SD 79 rentals and private bookings form the next largest categories, together making up about 15% of total use.
- Sport-related bookings collectively make up a small but steady share of gym use, with basketball, floor hockey, field hockey, badminton, soccer, baseball, softball, pickleball, and lacrosse together accounting for roughly 10-12% of total annual hours
- Cowichan Community Centre shows the highest utilization, reaching 56% of operating capacity and 115% of estimated in-demand capacity.
- All three gyms demonstrate strong, recurring use patterns, with limited availability during peak periods due to weekly programs and short-block bookings.

Graph 12: Average Breakdown of Bookings in Regional Gymnasiums (2022 - 2024)



Hall Space

Heritage Hall is located within the Cowichan Community Centre, making it the only hall space provided at the regional level in the Cowichan Valley. Additional hall spaces are offered through municipal governments and by the CVRD, creating a broader network of community accessible facilities.

Booked Use of Heritage Hall

Heritage Hall shows moderate but steady booked use in typical years, with about 1,397 hours booked on average when excluding 2023, when the space operated as an emergency warming centre. Under normal operating conditions, the hall is booked for approximately 30% of its total available hours, reflecting a mix of programs, rentals, and community events.

When compared to estimated in demand capacity (six hours per day), utilization rises to about 65%, indicating strong demand during peak periods even though the hall is not fully booked across all operating hours. The unusually high 2023 utilization, driven by emergency use, highlights the hall's role as a flexible, community serving space during critical events.

Table 16: Heritage Hall Booked Use (2022- 2024)

Heritage Hall	2022	2023	2024	Average*
Hours Booked	1,298	3,529	1,496	1,397
Total Hours Available	4,623	4,511	4,624	4,624
In Demand Hall Capacity	2,144	2,144	2,144	2,144
% Booked of Total Capacity	28%	78%	32%	30%
% Booked of In Demand Capacity	61%	165%	70%	65%

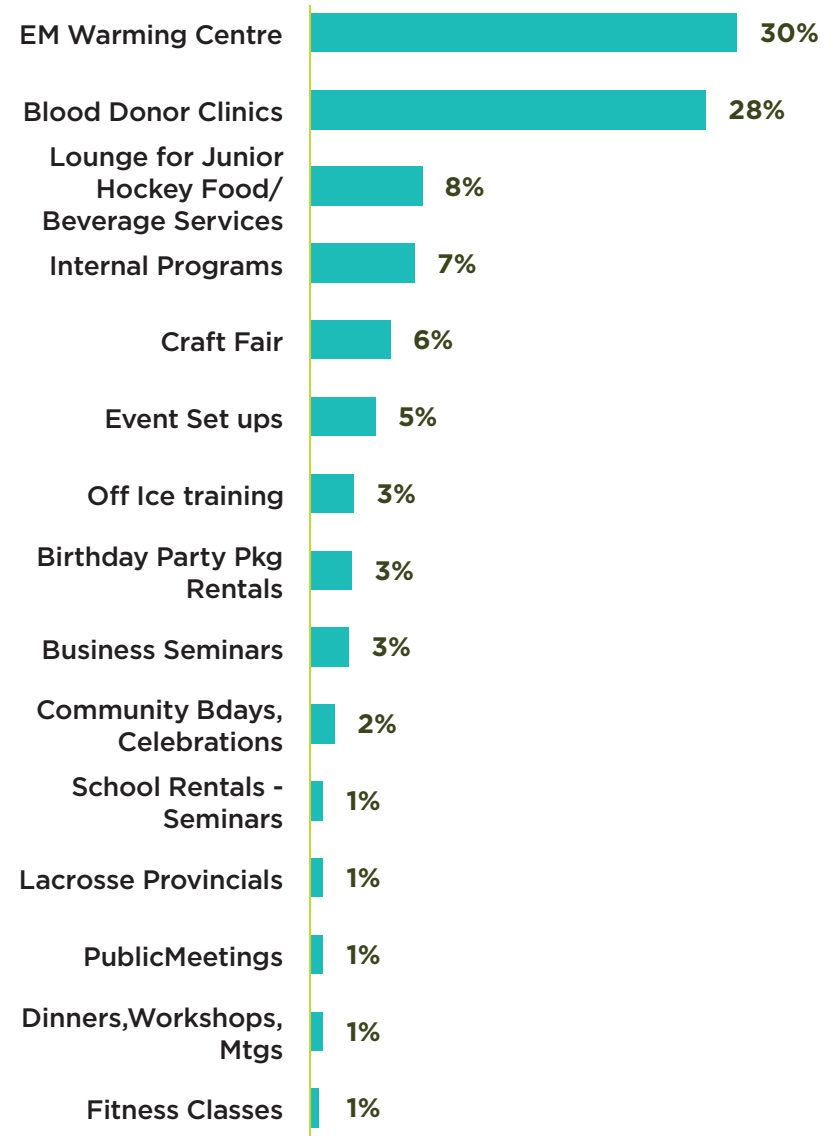
**The average of 2022 & 2024 was used because in 2023 the space was used as an emergency warming centre.*

Hall Use Distribution

Blood donor clinics and the emergency warming centre make up the majority of Heritage Hall use, together accounting for nearly 60% of booked hours. Mid-sized activities, such as internal programs, craft fairs, event setups, off-ice training, business seminars, and birthday party rentals, contribute 3-8%. Smaller uses, including community celebrations, school seminars, public meetings, workshops, and fitness classes, each represent 1-2% of total hours.



Graph 13: Average Proportion of Bookings of Heritage Hall



Other Hall Spaces

As noted earlier in the section there are other hall spaces publicly provided regionally but not part of the regional funding model. Booking data was available for Mill Bay Community Hall (Mill Bay), Aggie Hall (Ladysmith), Youbou Community Hall (Youbou), Honeymoon Bay Hall (Honeymoon Bay), Centennial Hall (Lake Cowichan), Mesachie Lake Hall (Mesachie Lake).

Other Hall Booked Use

Considering that most community halls are not open for general drop in use and typically operate only when a booking is scheduled, a limited capacity assumption of six hours per day was applied. Hall space bookings across the six municipally and regionally provided halls remain consistently strong, with an average of 7,737 hours booked per year from 2022-2024.

When compared to the estimated in demand capacity of 12,864 hours, overall utilization averages 60%, rising gradually from 58% in 2022 to 63% in 2024. This steady upward trend indicates sustained and growing demand for community hall space across the region.

Table 17: Other Hall Booked Use (2022 - 2024)

Hall Space Bookings	2022	2023	2024	Average
Hours Booked	7,400	7,719	8,093	7,737
Hall Spaces	6	6	6	6
In Demand Hall Capacity	12,864	12,864	12,864	12,864
% Booked of In Demand Capacity	58%	60%	63%	60%



Distribution of Other Hall Use

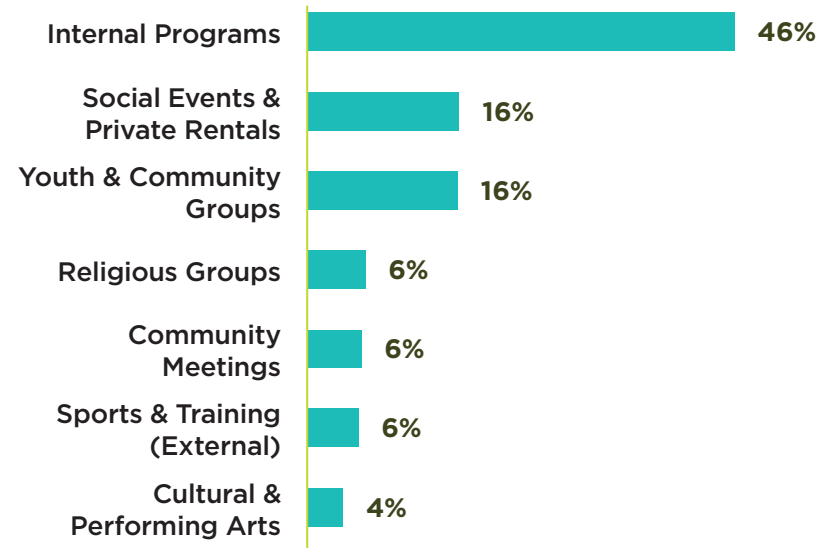
Internal programs (programs by CVRD, Town of Ladysmith, etc.) make up nearly half of all hall use, driven by strong demand for recreation, fitness, pickleball, and bowling. Social events, private rentals, and youth/community groups each contribute about 16%, showing the halls' importance as social and community hubs. Smaller but steady portions of use come from meetings, sports training, religious groups, and cultural events, creating a balanced mix of activities across the year.



Key Findings from the Hall Space Analysis

- Heritage Hall experiences steady demand in typical years, booking about 1,400 hours annually when emergency use is excluded. Utilization reaches 65% of in demand capacity, indicating strong peak period demand.
- Emergency activation in 2023 significantly increased use, demonstrating Heritage Hall's value as a flexible, community serving asset during critical events.
- Most Heritage Hall use is driven by community serving functions, with blood donor clinics and the emergency warming centre accounting for nearly 60% of total hours. Remaining use is distributed across programs, rentals, meetings, and small community events.
- Across the region, other community halls show consistently strong demand, averaging 7,737 booked hours per year and reaching 60% utilization of in demand capacity.
- Internal programs are the largest driver of hall use region wide, representing nearly half of all booked hours. Recreation, fitness, pickleball, and bowling are the most frequent activities.
- Social events, private rentals, and youth/community groups each contribute about 16% of total hall use, underscoring the role of halls as social and community hubs.
- Meetings, sports training, religious groups, and cultural events make up smaller but steady portions of use, resulting in a balanced mix of activities across the year.

Graph 14: Average Proportion of Bookings of Other Hall Spaces (2022 - 2024)



Multi-Purpose Spaces

Multi-purpose spaces come in a wide range of shapes and sizes, often with unique features or quirks that work well for some user groups but not for others. These spaces include meeting rooms, dance studios, and lounge areas, all of which offer varying levels of flexibility depending on their layout and amenities. Their suitability can depend heavily on their location within a facility (e.g., proximity to larger programming spaces, arenas, or pools) and can also be affected by surrounding noise levels, for example, it may be challenging to run a yoga class next to a high-energy Zumba program. Features such as flooring type, built-in sinks, or storage access can further influence how well a room functions for different activities.

With that in mind, the following analysis should be interpreted with some flexibility. Rooms within the regionally significant facilities have been categorized as either small or medium multi-purpose spaces. Larger spaces, including halls, gymnasiums, and dry floor areas, have been analyzed in previous sections. Spaces within the Cowichan Performing Arts Centre will be addressed in subsequent analysis.

Booked Use of Multi-Purpose Space

The tables on the following page summarize total booked hours for small and medium multi purpose rooms from 2022 to 2024. These figures exclude leased hours and reflect only scheduled programs, rentals, and community uses managed through the standard booking system. Across the regionally significant facilities, both small and medium multi-purpose rooms show steady and consistent use, with some year-to-year fluctuation that reflects program demand, rental patterns, and post-pandemic recovery. Medium rooms demonstrate higher per-room utilization than small rooms, reflecting their greater flexibility and suitability for a wider range of programs and rentals.



Note on Capacity Metrics for Multi-Purpose Rooms

Percentage-of-capacity metrics are not used for multi-purpose rooms because their true hourly capacity is highly variable and not operationally meaningful. These spaces require setup and transition time, have noise and adjacency constraints, and are intentionally programmed with gaps to support flexible community use. Unlike arenas or gymnasiums, not every hour is equally viable or intended to be booked.

Table 18: Booked Use of Small Rooms within Regionally Significant Facilities (2022- 2024)

Small Rooms	2022	2023	2024	Average
Total Hours Booked	8,164	7,979	9,645	8,596
Number of Rooms	16	16	16	16
Approx. Hours Booked Per Day	23	22	26	24
Approx. Hours Booked Per Room Annually	510	499	603	537

Table 19: Booked Use of Medium Rooms within Regionally Significant Facilities (2022- 2024)

Medium Rooms	2022	2023	2024	Average
Total Hours Booked	9,316	8,344	9,344	9,016
Number of Rooms	12	12	12	12
Approx. Hours Booked Per Day	26	23	25	25
Approx. Hours Booked Per Room Annually	776	779	779	751

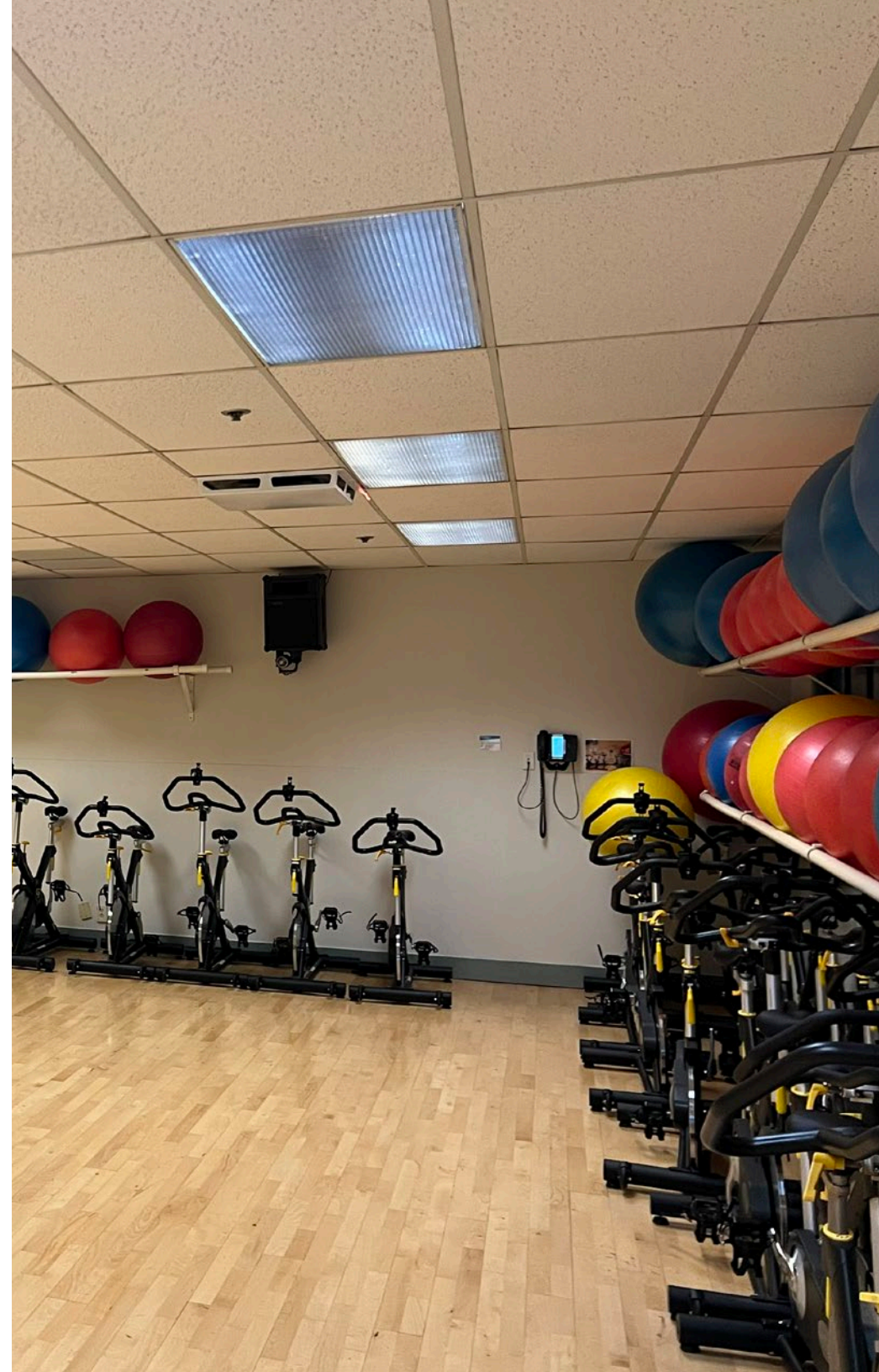
Types of Booked Use

Multi-purpose spaces support an exceptionally wide range of activities, making them some of the most adaptable rooms within recreation and community facilities. These spaces accommodate everything from fitness classes, dance, arts and culture programs, and youth activities to meetings, workshops, social gatherings, and short-notice community rentals.

Their use shifted over the three-year period in response to program demand and evolving community needs. Medium-sized rooms tended to support more active programming, whereas smaller rooms were used primarily for meetings, seminars and birthday parties.

Key Findings from the Multi-Purpose Space Analysis

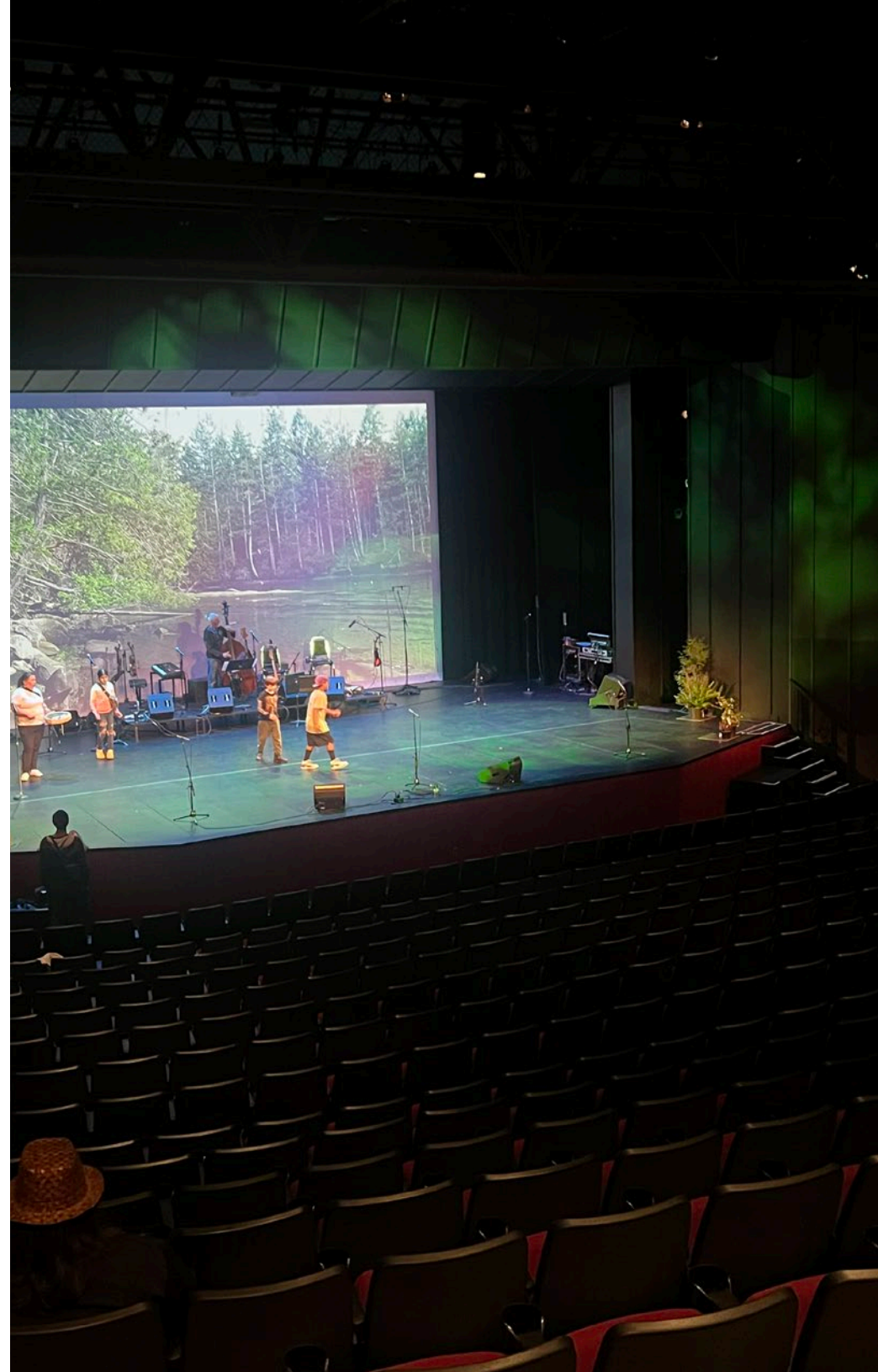
- Multi-purpose spaces vary widely in suitability based on size, layout, and adjacency.
- Medium rooms show higher utilization and support more active programming.
- Small rooms are used more often for meetings, seminars, and small social gatherings.
- Booked use is steady across 2022-2024, with normal fluctuations tied to demand.



Dedicated Performing Arts Space

The Cowichan Performing Arts Centre (CPAC) is the region's only dedicated, regionally significant performing arts facility. While other indoor regional facilities host arts and culture programming within multipurpose rooms, CPAC is the sole venue purpose built to support professional performance, production, and presentation.

The facility includes several distinct bookable spaces that support a wide range of artistic and community uses. These include the main theatre, rehearsal hall, lobby, green room, and four dressing rooms. Each space can be booked independently or combined as part of a full theatre rental, offering flexible options for renters, producers, and community groups.



Booked Use of the CPAC

The following tables summarize annual utilization of the Cowichan Performing Arts Centre's theatre and supporting spaces. To provide a consistent benchmark across all rooms, total available hours were calculated using a standard of 2,088 hours per year, based on 40 hours per week for 52 weeks.

The utilization tables show that the theatre and all supporting spaces at CPAC operate at consistently high levels, often above 80% of annual capacity, with the theatre itself reaching 95% utilization in both 2023 and 2024, indicating sustained demand and limited remaining availability across the facility.

Table 20: Theatre Booked Use(2022- 2024)

Theatre Utilization	2022	2023	2024
Full Theatre Hours	1,428	1,640	1,628
Stage Only	392	344	360
Total Booked Use	1,820	1,984	1,988
Total Available Hours	2,088	2,088	2,088
Utilization Rate	87%	95%	95%

Table 21: Supporting Space Booked Use (2022- 2024)

Supporting Spaces	2022	2023	2024
Hours Booked Rehearsal Hall*	1,475	1,787	1,761
Hours Booked Lobby *	1,541	1,823	1,744
Hours Booked Green Room / Dressing Room Use*	1,593	1,640	1,632
Total Available Hours Per Space	2,088	2,088	2,088
% Booked of Rehearsal Hall Capacity	71%	86%	84%
% Booked of Lobby Capacity	74%	87%	84%
% Booked of Green Room Capacity	76%	79%	78%

*The average of 2022 & 2024 was used because in 2023 the space was used as an emergency warming centre.

Performances

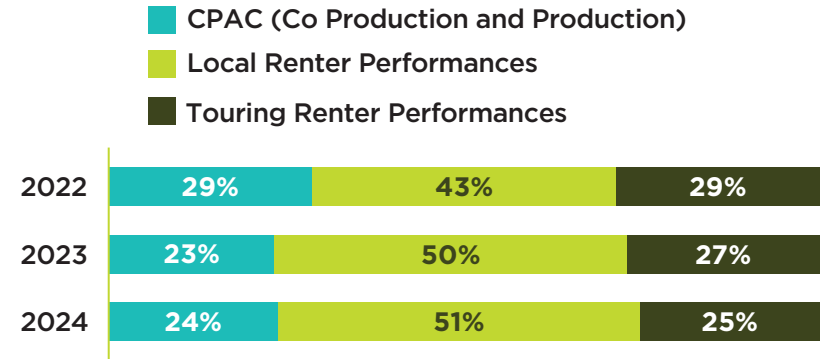
Performance activity at CPAC has increased steadily over the past three years, with total performances rising from 103 in 2022 to 130 in 2024, while attendance peaked in 2023 and average attendance per performance remained consistently strong across all years.

Table 22: Performances and Attendance (2022 - 2024)

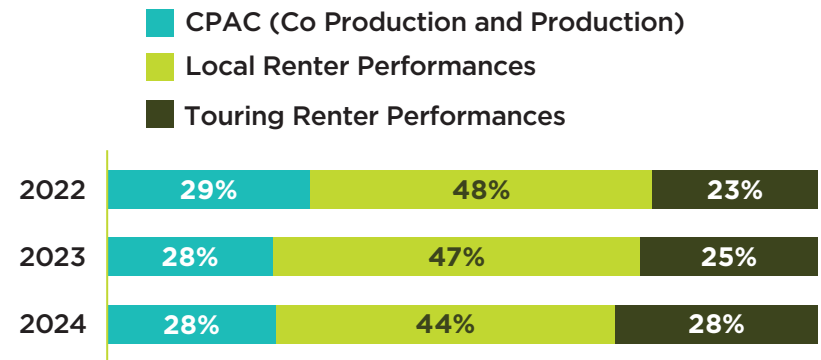
Performance Metrics	2022	2023	2024
Total Performances	103	124	130
Total Attendance	38,927	51,702	49,906
Average Attendance per Performance	378	417	384

The two adjacent graphs illustrate these shifts in performance and attendance mix over time, highlighting the changing balance between CPAC productions, local renters, and touring renters. Together, these trends show a gradual shift in CPAC’s activity mix: local renters continue to anchor overall performance volume and audience attendance, while touring productions are steadily increasing their share of performances, indicating growing regional draw and external interest in the venue.

Graph 15: Proportion of Total Attendance by Performance Type (2022 - 2024)



Graph 16: Proportion of Total Performances by Performance Type (2022- 2024)



Key Findings from the Dedicated Performance Arts Space Use Analysis

- CPAC shows consistently high use across the theatre and supporting spaces, with the theatre booked for 87% of available hours in 2022 and 95% in both 2023 and 2024.
- The rehearsal hall, lobby, and green rooms are also well used, generally ranging between 71% and 87% of annual capacity. Because supporting spaces are automatically booked when the full theatre is reserved, these hours reflect availability blocked rather than confirmed use of each individual space.
- Total performances increased from 103 in 2022 to 130 in 2024, with attendance peaking in 2023 and remaining steady in 2024.
- Local renters continue to make up the largest share of performances and attendance.
- Touring productions have gradually increased their share of performances over the three-year period.

Curling Rink Use

Two regionally significant facilities include dedicated curling rinks: the Cowichan Lake Sports Arena and the Kerry Park Recreation Centre. These rinks support a mix of league play, community programs, and bonspiels. Provided as follows is a brief synopsis of curling trends and utilization at both facilities.

Cowichan Lake Sports Arena

The Cowichan Lake Sports Arena provides a consistent level of curling activity each season, with internal and external groups contributing to a steady mix of league play, events, and community use. As shown in Table 23, total curling rink utilization was 267 hours in 2022, decreased to 199 hours in 2023, then increased to 228 hours in 2024. While league play hours have shown an increase over the period, non-league curling activity has experienced notable decline. In addition to curling sessions, the lounge space is regularly booked alongside each ice booking.

Table 23: Cowichan Lake Sports Arena Curling Utilization (2022- 2024)

Year	Total Hours	League Play Hours	Other Curling Hours	Average Hours Per Day*
2022	267	123	144	2
2023	199	126	73	1
2024	228	171	58	1

**Based on a curling season of approximately 179 days*

Kerry Park Recreation Centre

Curling activity at the Kerry Park Recreation Centre shows more year to year variation, driven largely by the KP Curling Club, which accounts for most annual visits and league activity. As shown in Table 24, total curling utilization was 739 hours in 2022, increased to 783 hours in 2023, and settled at 784 hours in 2024. League play has remained relatively consistent. KPR organized programs and private functions add to overall use, and the lounge continues to support a range of non curling bookings while it is booked alongside each ice booking.

Table 24: Kerry Park Recreation Centre Curling Utilization (2022- 2024)

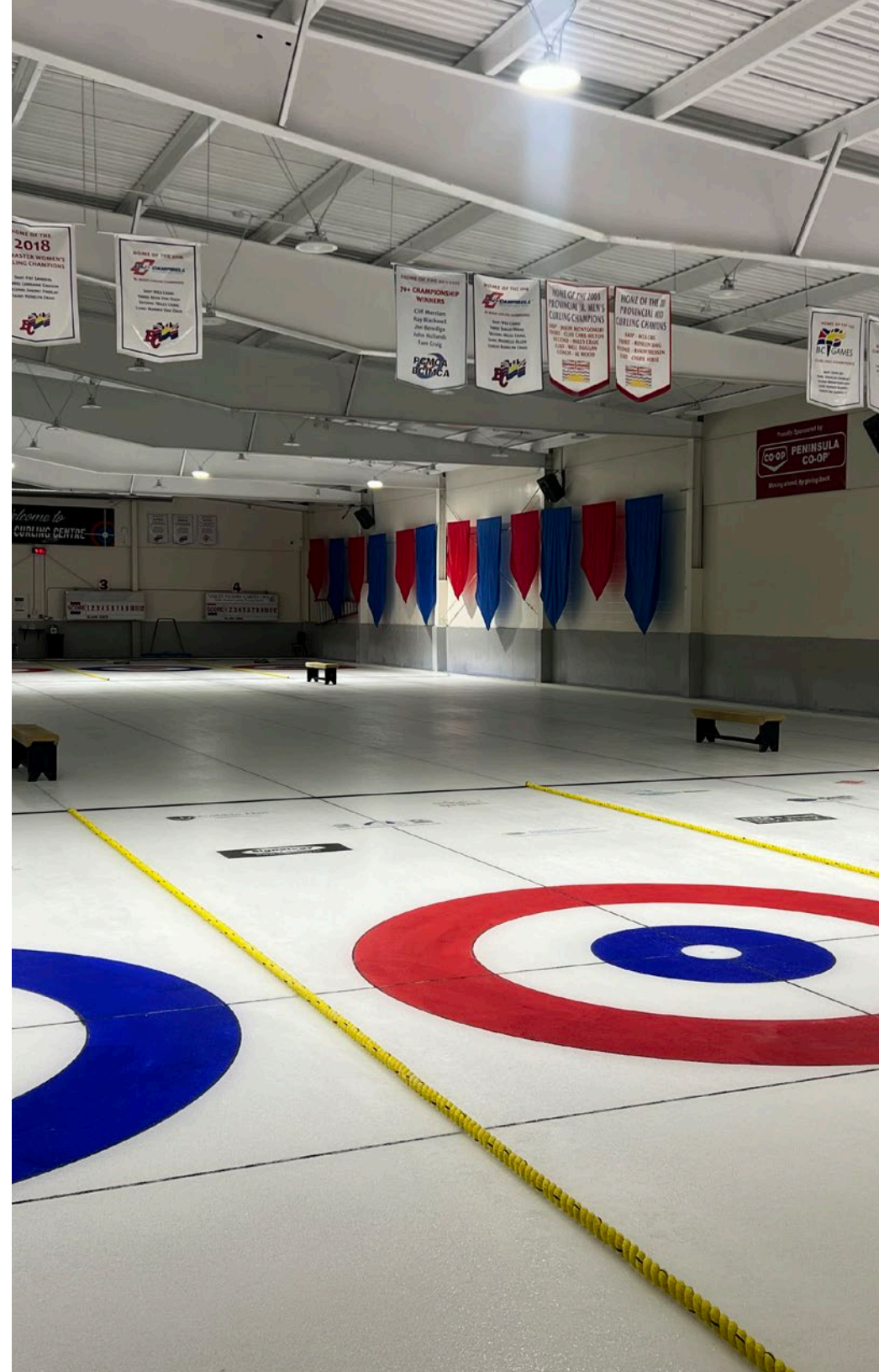
Year	Total Hours	League Play Hours	Other Curling Hours	Average Hours Per Day*
2022	739	661	78	4
2023	783	650	113	7
2024	784	648	136	6

**Based on a curling season of approximately 179 days*



Key Findings from Curling Rink Use Analysis

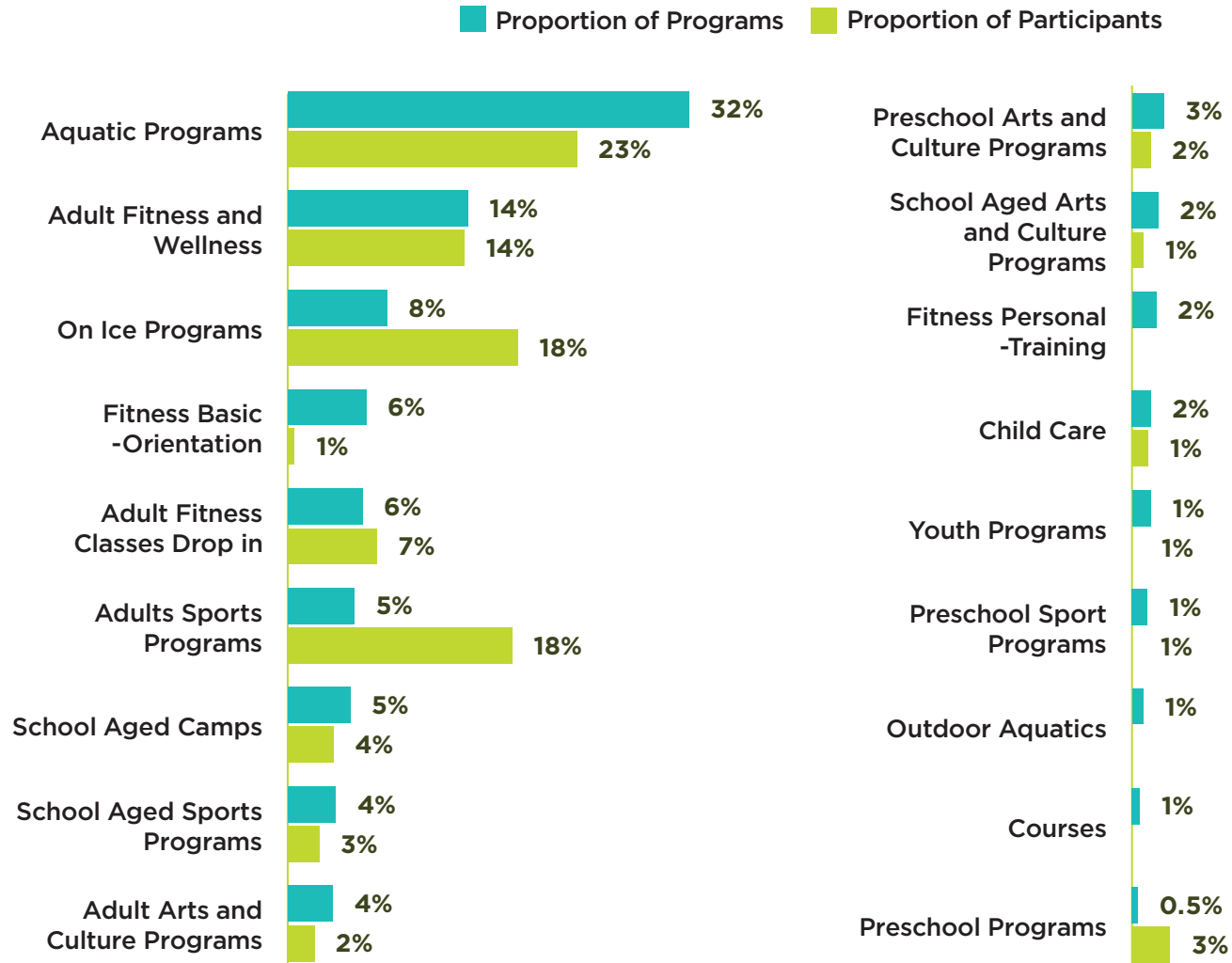
- The KP Curling Club demonstrates higher utilization levels compared to Cowichan Lake, with approximately 5 times more total hours and 5-7 times more league play hours annually.
- Kerry Park curling hours have remained relatively strong over the past three years (averaging 653 hours annually), with league play showing consistency and growth, and averaging 6 hours of use per day during the curling season.
- Cowichan Lake Sports Arena has experienced overall decline in total hours from 2023 to 2024, though league play hours have increased, suggesting a shift toward more dedicated curling use rather than general facility bookings. Average daily use remains low at 1-1.5 hours per day.



Overall Programming in Regionally Significant Facilities

Program participation represents a smaller share of overall facility use compared to general aquatics, fitness, and drop in activity. The largest program areas, Aquatic Programs (23% of all participants), On Ice Programs (18%), Adult Sports Programs (18%) and Adult Fitness and Wellness (14%), align with the facilities that already see the highest visit volumes, reinforcing the central role of aquatics, fitness, and arena based activities in driving overall use. Most other program categories account for a small proportion of participants and offerings, contributing to facility activity at a lower scale. These patterns indicate that while programs add diversity and support community needs, day to day facility use is primarily shaped by core aquatics, fitness, and arena activities.

Graph 17: Proportion of Program Offerings vs Proportion of Total Participation (2024)



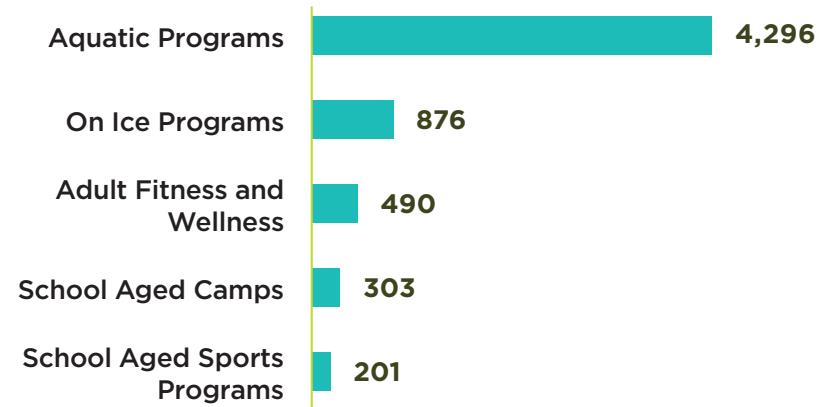
Waitlist totals provide an additional indicator of program demand across the system. The highest waitlists are concentrated in Aquatic Programs (4,296), On Ice Programs (876), and Adult Fitness and Wellness (490), which aligns with the facility areas that already experience the greatest overall use. Mid range waitlists appear in School Aged Camps (303) and School Aged Sports Programs (201), while most other program types show comparatively low waitlist volumes.



Key Findings from Programming Analysis:

- Program participation forms a smaller share of overall facility use, with the largest program areas, Aquatic Programs, On Ice Programs, Adult Sports Programs, and Adult Fitness and Wellness, aligning with the highest use facilities.
- Waitlists reinforce these demand patterns, with the highest waitlist volumes in Aquatic Programs (4,296), On Ice Programs (876), and Adult Fitness and Wellness (490).
- Most other program categories contribute modest participation and waitlist volumes, indicating smaller scale or more specialized activity areas that support community diversity but do not drive overall facility use.

Graph 18: Top Five Program Types with Waitlists (2024)



Outdoor Amenity Booked Use Analysis

The Cowichan Sportsplex hosts the regionally provided outdoor sport amenities and is operated by the Chesterfield Sports Society. Amenities at this facility include three ball diamonds, one water-based artificial turf field, an eight-lane athletic track, one natural grass rectangular field, and a lacrosse box. The following analysis summarizes booked use of these amenities alongside other regionally provided outdoor amenities.

Lacrosse Box Booked Use

Of the two lacrosse boxes in the region, only the Cowichan Sportsplex box is a bookable amenity. Because peak use occurs during the spring and summer months, total annual bookings were averaged across the April–August period (approximately 150 days).

Average booked use remained relatively consistent over the three-year period, ranging from 1.3 to 1.5 hours per day during peak season. The Cowichan Valley Lacrosse Association accounts for the majority of bookings (80–85%), with school bookings making up the remaining 2–18% depending on the year.

Table 25: Lacrosse Box Bookings (2022- 2024)

Lacrosse Box	Hours Booked (2022)	Hours Booked (2023)	Hours Booked (2024)	Average Booked Use
Cowichan Sportsplex	220	194	230	215
Average Hours Booked Per Day (April - August)	1.5	1.3	1.5	1.4

Athletic Track Booked Use

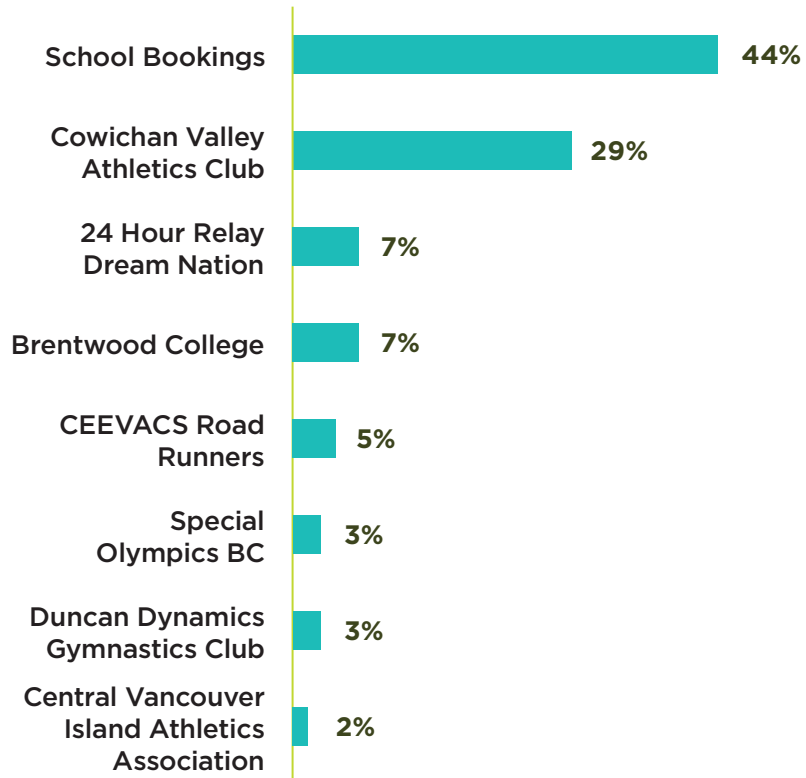
The following table presents annual booked hours for the Cowichan Sportsplex athletic track. As the only publicly provided track in the region outside of school facilities, these bookings offer insight into how community groups, schools, and sport organizations are using this space. It is important to note that a significant amount of track use also occurs outside of formally booked hours by casual walkers and runners.

Table 26: Athletic Track Bookings (2022-2024)

Athletic Track	Hours Booked (2022)	Hours Booked (2023)	Hours Booked (2024)	Average Booked Use
Cowichan Sportsplex	128	259	342	243
Average Hours Booked Per Day (April - August)	0.9	1.7	2.3	1.6

In 2024, booked hours for the track were distributed across a broader mix of user groups. School bookings represented the largest share (44%), reflecting increased use for practices, physical education, and school-based events. The Cowichan Valley Athletics Club accounted for 29% of booked hours, remaining a significant user but no longer the dominant group seen in earlier years. A variety of community and sport organizations made up the remaining share of bookings.

Graph 19: Proportion of Hours Booked by User Group (2024)



Ball Diamond Bookings

There are 32 ball diamonds provided across the region. As noted above, three of these are located at the Cowichan Sportsplex. Two other sites also contain multiple diamonds: Kerry Park, with three, and Evans Park, with seven. These locations represent the largest concentrations of ball diamond amenities in the region.

Ball Diamond Capacity Assumptions

Diamond capacity is typically calculated using an industry standard that estimates the maximum number of annual hours a field can sustain before turf degradation occurs. For ball diamonds, this threshold is generally capped at approximately 600 hours per year per diamond.

Table 27: Ball Diamond Booked Use of Capacity (2022- 2024)

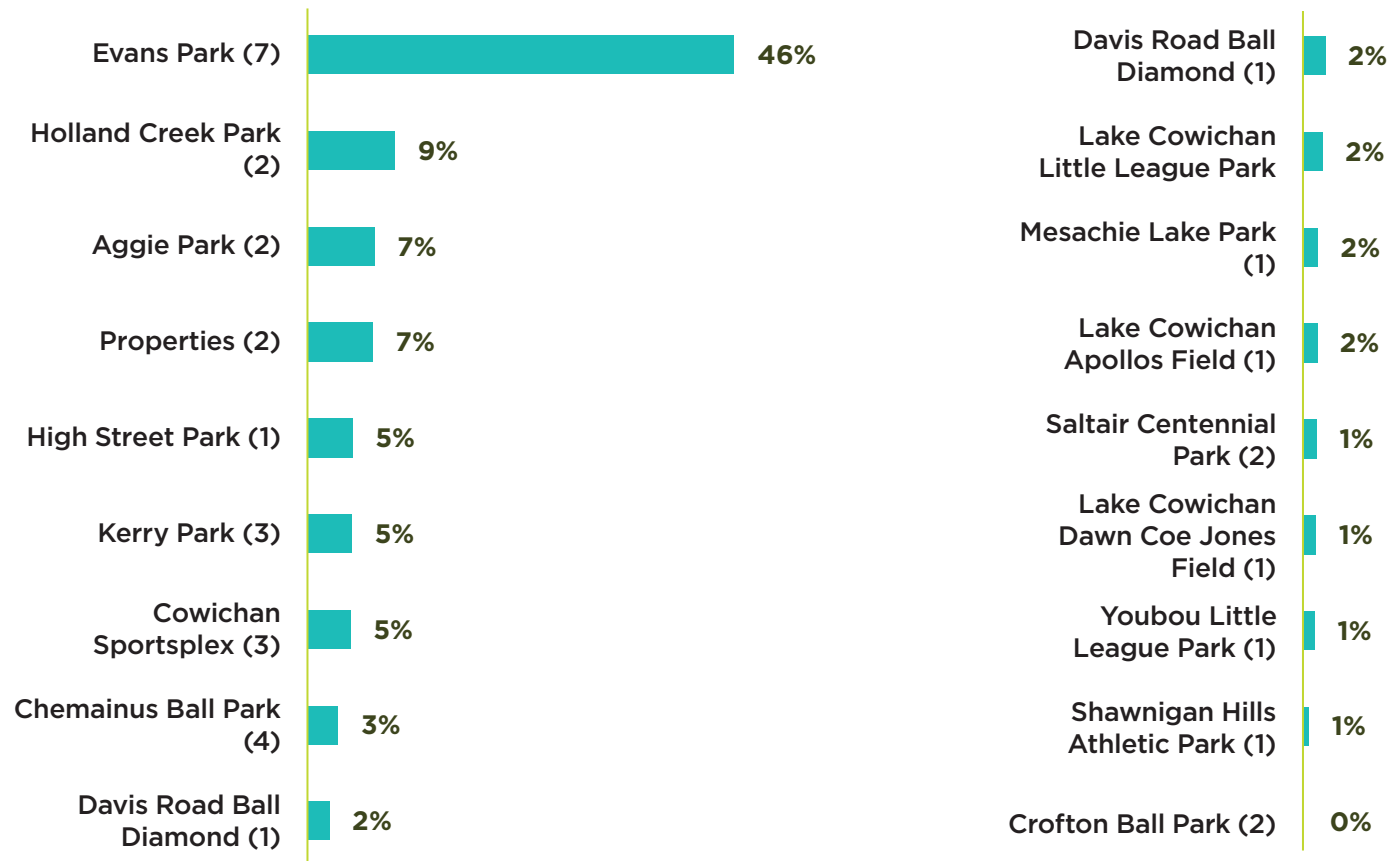
Ball Diamonds	2022	2023	2024	Average
Hours Booked	22,088	17,452	19,773	19,771
Number of Diamonds	34	33	34	34
Hours Available of Capacity	19,200	18,600	19,200	19,000
Percentage Booked of Capacity	108%	88%	97%	98%



Across the three-year period, booked use of ball diamonds is heavily concentrated at a small number of sites. Evans Park, with seven diamonds, accounts for the largest share of bookings on average (46%), reflecting its role as the region’s primary multi-diamond complex. Other multi-diamond locations—Holland Creek Park (9%), Aggie Park (7%), Properties (7%), collectively make up a substantial portion of remaining scheduled use. Single-diamond sites contribute smaller proportions, generally between 1% and 2%.

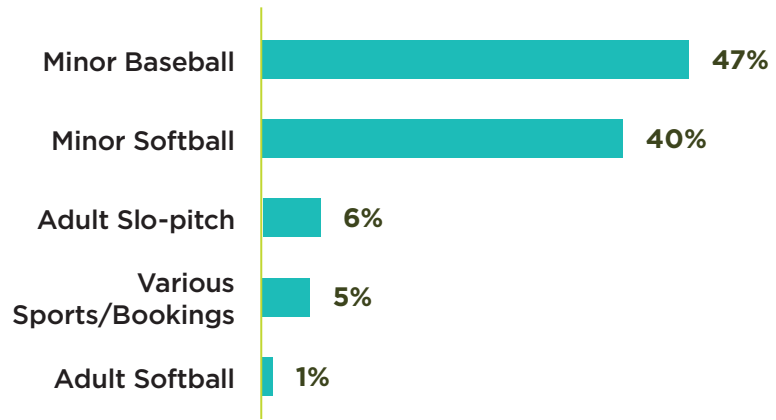
Within this distribution, the Cowichan Sportsplex accounts for approximately 5% of all ball-diamond bookings across the region. Based on the industry standard capacity threshold of roughly 600 hours per diamond per year, the Sportsplex operates at about 55% of its sustainable capacity on average. This indicates moderate booked use relative to its available capacity, particularly when compared with higher-use multi-diamond sites such as Evans Park.

Graph 20: Diamond Location and Proportion of Bookings on Average (2022- 2024)



Booked use of ball diamonds is driven by minor sport, which accounts for the vast majority of scheduled hours. Minor Baseball (47%) and Minor Softball (40%) together represent 87% of all booked use across the regional system. Adult use forms a much smaller share, with Adult Slo pitch (6%) and Adult Softball (1%) contributing modest proportions.

Graph 21: Proportion of Bookings by User Type on Average (2022-2024)



Natural Grass Rectangular Fields

Across the region, natural grass fields show substantial variation in booked use from year to year. The Cowichan Sportsplex accounts for one of the 15 available fields in the region.

Total scheduled hours increased from 4,056 hours in 2022 to more than 8,200 hours in both 2023 and 2024, resulting in an average of 6,935 hours booked annually. With 15 natural grass fields and an estimated sustainable capacity of 9,000 hours per year (based on the industry standard of approximately 600 hours per field), the system operated at an average of 77% of capacity over the three-year period. This reflects moderate to high demand overall, with some sites experiencing significant over-use relative to sustainable thresholds.

Natural Grass Field Capacity Assumptions

Field capacity is typically calculated using an industry standard that estimates the maximum number of annual hours a field can sustain before turf degradation occurs. For sport fields, this threshold is generally capped at approximately 600 hours per year per field.

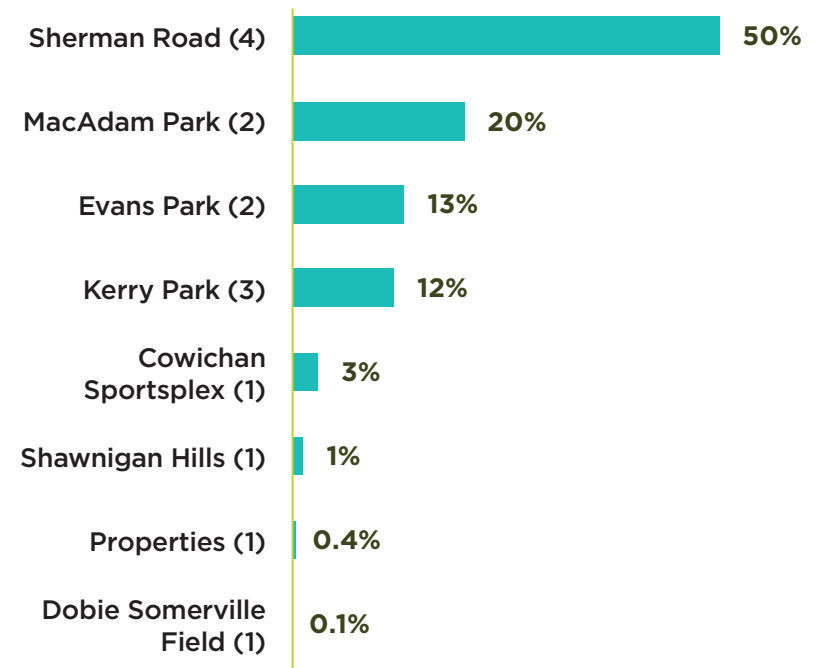
Table 28: Natural Grass Booked Use of Capacity (2022 - 2024)

Natural Grass Fields	2022	2023	2024	Average
Hours Booked	4,056	8,544	8,204	6,935
Number of Fields	15	15	15	15
Capacity	9,000	9,000	9,000	9,000
Percentage Booked of Capacity	45%	95%	91%	77%

Booked use is highly concentrated at a small number of fields, with Sherman Road and MacAdam Park accounting for the majority of scheduled hours.

- Sherman Road (4 fields) represents the largest share of use, averaging 3,472 hours per year, or 50% of all natural grass field bookings. This equates to 579% of its sustainable capacity, indicating extremely high levels of use well beyond typical turf-protection thresholds.
- MacAdam Park (2 fields) accounts for 20% of total use, averaging 1,400 hours per year, or 233% of capacity—also significantly above sustainable levels.
- Evans Park (2 fields) contributes 13% of total use, averaging 908 hours per year, or 151% of capacity, indicating consistent over-use.
- Kerry Park (3 fields), used primarily for youth soccer, accounts for 12% of booked hours, averaging 823 hours per year, or 137% of capacity.
- Cowichan Sportsplex (1 field) averages 210 hours per year (3% of total use, 35% of capacity).

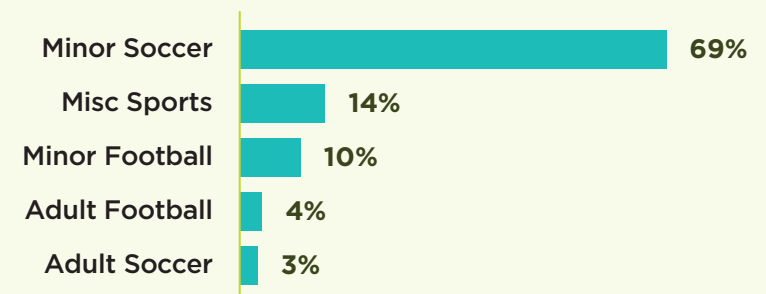
Graph 22: Proportion of Bookings by User Type on Average (2022-2024)



Booked use of natural grass fields is driven by minor soccer, which accounts for 69% of all scheduled hours. Minor football (10%) and miscellaneous sport bookings (14%) also contribute meaningful shares, reflecting a mix of youth field sport practices, games, and general field use.

Adult use represents a smaller portion of total activity, with adult football (4%) and adult soccer (3%) together accounting for 7% of booked hours. All other identified uses, including ultimate frisbee and minor field lacrosse, represent less than 1% of total scheduled time.

Graph 23: Proportion of Bookings on Natural Grass Fields by User Type on Average (2022-2024)



Artificial Turf Fields

There are three artificial turf fields provided in the region. Of these, the Cowichan Sportsplex field is the only water-based artificial turf surface, while the fields at Forrest Field (Ladysmith) and David Williams Field (Sherman Road Park) are standard infill turf systems. This distinction is important, as water-based turf fields are typically designed to support field hockey.

Across the region, artificial turf fields show stable but moderate levels of booked use. Total scheduled hours ranged from 2,963 to 3,692 hours between 2022 and 2024, averaging 3,283 hours per year. With three synthetic turf fields and an estimated sustainable capacity of 9,000 hours per year, the system operated at approximately 36% of capacity on average. This reflects substantial available capacity relative to demand, especially when compared with the over-capacity pressures observed on natural grass fields.

Artificial Turf Field Capacity Assumptions

Artificial turf fields are not constrained by turf wear, allowing for substantially higher annual use. A capacity of 3,000 hours per year is applied to each artificial turf field, based on the estimated number of playable weeks per year and the prime hours available each week.

Table 29: Artificial Turf Fields Booked Use of Capacity (2022 - 2024)

Artificial Turf Fields	2022	2023	2024	Average
Hours Booked	3,194	2,963	3,692	3,283
Number of Fields	3	3	3	3
Capacity	9,000	9,000	9,000	9,000
Percentage Booked of Capacity	35%	33%	41%	36%

The Cowichan Sportsplex synthetic turf field averages 502 booked hours per year, representing 15% of regional artificial turf use. When assessed against the capacity threshold of 3,000 hours per year, the Sportsplex field operates at roughly 17% of its sustainable capacity. David Williams Field had the most booked use of the three fields; its also co-located with four natural grass fields at Sherman Road Park.

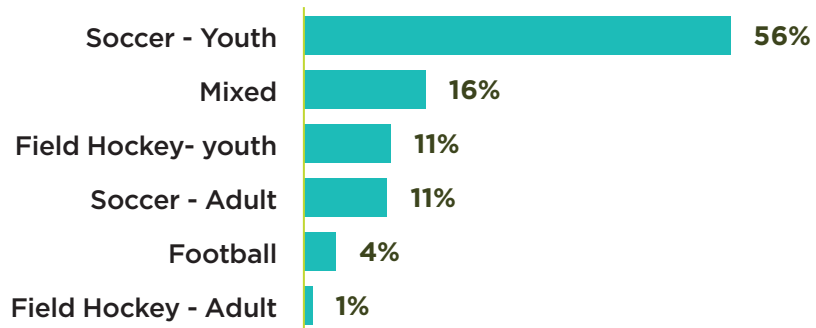
Table 30: Booked use at Artificial Turf Fields 2022- 2024

Field Location	Hours Booked (2022)	Hours Booked (2023)	Hours Booked (2024)	Average	Proportion of Booked Use
Cowichan Sportsplex	479	492	536	502	15%
Forrest Field - Ladysmith	1,239	1,353	1,299	1,297	39%
David Williams Field (at Sherman Road Park)	1,476	1,119	1,858	1,484	45%

Booked use of synthetic turf fields in 2024 was dominated by youth soccer, which accounted for 56% of all scheduled hours. Youth field hockey (11%) and adult soccer (11%) also contributed meaningful shares, reflecting the strong role of both youth and adult field sports in driving demand for artificial turf.

A further 16% of booked hours were categorized as mixed use, representing multi sport bookings, practices, or general field allocations. Smaller proportions of time were allocated to football (4%) and adult field hockey (1%), while frisbee represented less than 1% of total use.

Graph 24: Proportion of Bookings on Artificial Turf Fields by User Group Type on Average (2022- 2024)



Outdoor Courts

Kerry Park operates 6 pickleball courts as part of the regional funding model. Additionally, Properties Park includes two outdoor tennis courts, which are booked through the Municipality of North Cowichan rather than through the regional recreation service.

Across the broader region, there are an additional 22 outdoor pickleball courts and 17 outdoor tennis courts provided by various jurisdictions. The majority of use at these courts is spontaneous, drop-in activity rather than scheduled or permitted use. Because these amenities are outdoors and largely unprogrammed, actual use is difficult to track, and available data likely under-represents total activity levels.

The CVRD permits the South Cowichan Pickleball Club and general public to book four of the six courts at Kerry Park. This arrangement ensures that the remaining two courts remain available for drop in public use on first come first serve basis, supporting both organized club play and spontaneous community access.

Table 31: Booked Use of Courts (2022- 2024)

	Number of Courts	Hours Booked (2022)	Hours Booked (2023)	Hours Booked (2024)	Average Bookings Per Court
Pickleball Courts	6	206	1,622	2,262	227
Tennis Courts	2	52	72	76	33

Booked use of the pickleball courts is primarily driven by the South Cowichan Pickleball Club, which accounts for the majority (58%) of scheduled activity at the Kerry Park courts. In contrast, the tennis courts at Properties Park are booked by the CVRD for program delivery, with all other use occurring on a spontaneous, drop-in basis.



Key Findings from Outdoor Amenity Booked Use Analysis

- Analyzing use for outdoor sport fields and diamonds more challenging than indoor amenities as bookings may not directly relate to actual use (user groups may ‘block book’ amenities to account for whether or hold their preferred time). As such, while the Cowichan Sportsplex shows lower levels of use that could be as a result of more on-site staff to check that booked time is actually being used.
- Ball diamonds and natural grass fields appear to face the highest pressure, with many multi field and multi diamond sites operating above sustainable capacity, driven largely by youth sport demand.
- Artificial turf fields do not appear to be at used to their capacity (36% of capacity is booked). However, they still account for roughly one third of all outdoor field bookings, underscoring their importance within the overall system.
- Outdoor court use is largely spontaneous and untracked. Across the region, there are 22 pickleball courts and 17 tennis courts, but only the six Kerry Park pickleball courts and two Properties Park tennis courts generate booking data. 58% of scheduled pickleball use is driven by the South Cowichan Pickleball Club, which books four of six courts, leaving two for public drop-in.

3.4. Growth Considerations

Maintaining Provision

The tables below present the long-term supply needs for each facility type if the CVRD and its municipal partners were to build new facilities based solely on maintaining current facility service levels in lockstep with population growth. **It is important to note that typically as communities grow it becomes challenging to maintain current service levels. Additionally, facility supply needs must consider a multitude of other factors such as trends, access and geographic distribution, etc. As such, this analysis is simply presenting one point of reference for consideration and will be balanced with other factors in the prioritization of the amenities (see Section 7).** Some facility use may suggest that the current supply does not meet the needs of residents currently, and thus basing provision solely on maintaining provision would be inappropriate.

Table 34: Population Projections 2021- 2045 for the Cowichan Valley Region

	2021*	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
Population Projections	89,013	96,802	101,853	106,597	110,825	115,079
Approximate Growth Rate Over Current		9%	5%	5%	4%	4%

Source: Esri, 2025, 20 Year Population and Household Trends Report. Cowichan Valley Region (BC).

Table 32: Long- Term Outlook for Indoor Facilities to 2045

Long Term Outlook for Indoor Facilities	Current Provision 2025	2025 Facilities	2030 Facilities Required	2035 Facilities Required	2040 Facilities Required	2045 Facilities Required
Aquatics Facilities (indoor)*	1:44,507	2	2	2	2	3 (+1)
Arena Ice Sheets*	1:22,253	4	5 (+1)	5	5	5
Curling Facilities*	1:44,507	2	2	2	2	3 (+1)
Gymnasiums*	1:29,671	3	3	4 (+1)	4	4
Community Hall*	1:12,716	7	8 (+1)	8	9 (+1)	9
Fitness Centres*	1:29,671	3	3	4 (+1)	4	4
Theatre Spaces	1:89, 013	1	1	1	1	1

*This only includes spaces that are government provided.

Table 33: Long- Term Outlook for Outdoor Amenities to 2045

Long Term Outlook for Indoor Facilities	Current Provision 2025	Number in CVRD (2025)	2030 Facilities Required	2035 Facilities Required	2040 Facilities Required	2045 Facilities Required
Artificial Turf Fields	1:29,671	3	3	4(+1)	4	4
Grass Turf Fields	1:5,934	15	17 (+2)	18 (+1)	19(+1)	19
Grass Ball Diamonds	1:2,782	34	39 (+5)	41 (+2)	42 (+1)	44 (+2)
Tennis Courts	1:5,236	17	19 (+2)	20 (+1)	21 (+1)	22 (+1)
Pickleball Courts	1:4,046	22	25 (+3)	26 (+1)	27 (+1)	28 (+1)
Lacrosse Boxes	1:44,507	2	2	2	2	3 (+1)
Skateboard Park	1:14,836	6	7 (+1)	7	7	8 (+1)
Aquatics Facilities (outdoor)	1:89,013	1	1	1	1	1



Projecting Demand Based on Current Use

The following tables illustrate projected demand for arenas, natural grass fields, and ball diamonds based on extrapolating current bookings with expected population increases. This analysis assumes that demand increases at the same rate as population growth, allowing us to estimate future pressure on facility capacity.

Table 35: Projected Arena Prime Time Demand to 2045

	Average Use (2022- 2024)	2030	2035	2040	2045
Anticipated Future Hours Booked (Based on Population Projections)	7,155	7,512	7,888	8,203	8,531
Average Prime Hours Available	8,573	8,573	8,573	8,573	8,573
Anticipated Future % of Prime Time Ice Booked (Based on Growth Projections)	83%	88%	92%	96%	100%

Table 36: Projected Demand and Amenity Equivalents for Natural Grass Fields and Diamonds to 2045

	Average Use 2024	2030	2035	2040	2045
Anticipated Future Sport Field Hours Booked (Based on Growth Projections)	8,204	8,614	9,045	9,407	9,783
Field Equivalents Required	14	14	15	16 (+1)	16
Anticipated Future Diamond Hours Booked (Based on Growth Projections)	19,773	20,762	21,800	22,672	23,579
Diamond Equivalents Required	33	35 (+2)	36 (+1)	38 (+2)	39 (+1)

**The sport field and diamond equivalents are based on an assumption of how many hours a field and diamond can accommodate.*



4. SERVICE LEVEL BENCHMARKING

4.1. Benchmarking Context and Limitations

Benchmarking was undertaken for several selected amenity types. A range of jurisdictions (or groupings of jurisdictions) were used to provide an ample sample size of communities along the south coast and elsewhere throughout the province:

- Nanaimo (including amenities provided by the Regional District of Nanaimo and the City of Nanaimo)
- Campbell River (including amenities provided by the Strathcona Regional District in Campbell River and the City of Campbell River)
- Comox Valley (including amenities provided by the Comox Valley Regional District, Town of Comox, City of Courtenay, and Village of Cumberland)
- City of Kamloops
- City of Abbotsford
- Metro Vancouver (jurisdictions included: North Vancouver District, City of North Vancouver, Port Moody, Port Coquitlam, Coquitlam, Vancouver, Burnaby, New Westminster, Maple Ridge, Richmond, Delta, Surrey, Township and City of Langley)
- City of Victoria
- Capital Regional District (Westshore: Langford, Metchosin, View Royal, Colwood, Highlands)
- Capital Regional District (Peninsula: North Saanich, Central Saanich, Sidney)

While benchmarking service levels provides another valuable point of reference from which to assess recreation infrastructure provision in the Cowichan Valley, a few key limitations are important to consider:

- Benchmarking simply counts the existence of an amenity type and does not factor in quality of the amenity.
- Data is gathered from a variety of sources, including planning documents, jurisdiction websites, and the consultant files. While efforts are made to ensure accuracy, some margin of error likely exists.
- Jurisdictions count amenities in different ways. For example, some jurisdictions may count school infrastructure (e.g. sport fields) within their supply due to the existence of a joint use agreement, while others do not.

It is also important to recognize that there are not any completely 'like for like' communities or regions. Geographic factors such as adjacencies to other urban centres, climate, growth and a host of other factors influence historical facility development.

4.2. Benchmarking Analysis Summary

The following table reflects a service level comparison for the selected amenity types in the Cowichan Valley with the comparators. The service level in the Cowichan Valley (far right column) is colour coded based on a general assessment of how the region compares to the average of the service levels across the comparators.

- **Green** – provided at a higher service level in Cowichan Valley Regional District relative to comparators.
- **Red** – provided at a lesser service level in Cowichan Valley Regional District relative to comparators.
- **Yellow** – provided at a similar service level in Cowichan Valley Regional District relative to comparators.

Average service level comparator provision rates were calculated across all benchmark jurisdictions and rounded to the nearest 1,000 residents for ease of comparison.

Table 37: Service Level Comparison

Amenity Type	Average Service Level in the Comparators	Service Level in the Cowichan Valley
Indoor		
Arenas	1:34,000	1:22,253
Aquatics Facilities	1:53,000	1:44,507
Curling Facilities	1:76,000	1:29,671
Fitness Centres (Publicly Provided)	1:56,000	1:44,507
Gymnasium and Similar Large Space Program Spaces	1:40,000	1:11,127
Performance Theatres	1:70,000	1:89,013
Outdoor		
Lacrosse Boxes	1:69,000	1:44,507
Pickleball Courts	1:8,000	1:4,046
Tennis Courts	1:6,000	1:5,236
Artificial Turf Sport Fields	1:48,000	1:29,671
Natural Surface Sport Fields*	1:9,000	1:5,934
Ball Diamonds*	1:4,000	1:2,618

*The Comox Valley includes School District 71 sport fields and ball diamonds in their inventory.



5. TRENDS AND LEADING PRACTICES

5.1. Trends Context

Scanning regional, provincial, national, and international trends in recreation reflects a commitment to best practice and ensuring the provision of recreation infrastructure is aligned with current user expectations. Additionally, recreation activity and associated facility needs are dynamic and continually evolving. Remaining current on trends helps service providers anticipate what may be coming next, declining, or emerging. This section highlights several key trends and leading practices.

5.2. Indoor Recreation Facility Trends and Leading Practices

Emerging Trends in Indoor Facility Design

Now more than ever, a potential facility users experience is centred when planning and designing facilities. Spaces like convention centres or event spaces are shifting to evolve; meeting rooms are moving away from sterile rooms to more dynamic and unconventional spaces such as open-air venues, spaces that can facilitate enhanced collaboration with the latest technology, and a sense of place within a facility^{vii}.

Emerging trends in indoor facility design include:

- **Creating strategic spaces dedicated to sponsorship and revenue generation.** Created opportunities for revenue generation could look like branded lounges, venue naming rights, retail space, etc.
- **Increasing the availability of natural light.** Including atrium spaces and incorporating lots of windows in the design can go along way in creating in enhancing guest experience.
- **Creating spaces that are encourage socialization and strengthen the sense of community.** This could include welcoming lobby spaces that include ample space for informal interaction, seating spaces, free Wi-Fi, etc.
- **Incorporating public art.** Art pieces can be swapped in and out to create a more dynamic space and celebrate local culture.
- **Indoor outdoor connections.** Integrating indoor and outdoor environments can be as simple as ensuring interiors have good opportunities to view or directly access the outdoors, creating a sense of freshness and connection with nature.

Aquatics

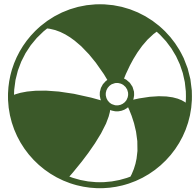
Facility providers, mainly municipalities, are having to juggle increasingly varied needs of aquatic users while balancing community-specific demands and resource constraints across six key segments:



Competitive: High-performance swimmers require facilities that meet governing body standards, including 50-meter tanks, dive tanks, separate warm-up pools, starting blocks, advanced timing systems, scoreboards, and spectator seating areas.



Fitness: Aquatic exercise participants want low-impact workouts in engaging environments through swimming, water-based resistance training, and water aerobics, requiring accessible pools and appropriate space for group activities.



Leisure: Recreational swimmers seek dynamic experiences beyond traditional swimming, including aquatic playgrounds for all ages and abilities, lazy rivers, wave pools, surf machines, waterslides, and dedicated leisure pools.



Rehab/Therapy: This fastest-growing segment, particularly in aging communities, needs warmer water temperatures (approximately 32 degrees Celsius), quiet areas for those with sensory sensitivities, and access to cold water plunge tanks for therapeutic purposes.



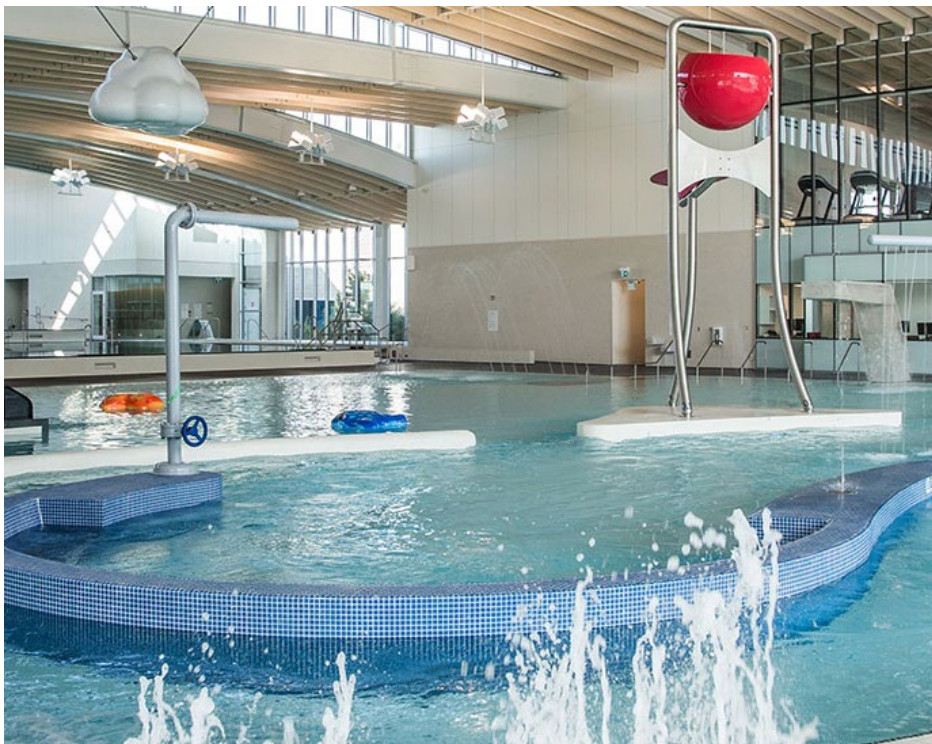
Skill Development: Swimming lessons have surged in popularity for their critical role in physical literacy, skill development, and drowning prevention across all age groups, though municipalities struggle to meet demand due to persistent staffing shortages.



Toddler Orientation: Dedicated shallow, warm-water zones with zero-depth entries and gentle play features introduce young children to aquatic environments. These areas may require separation from other pools to minimize operational disruptions from contamination incidents.

Modern aquatic facilities are responding with multi-zone designs that serve these diverse user groups simultaneously. Larger facilities with substantial budgets have taken a comprehensive approach by incorporating zones for nearly all user segments within a single facility. Smaller communities, constrained by tighter budgets, typically cannot afford to prioritize specific user groups and must design multi-use facilities from the start. These facilities often feature a single 25-meter pool serving multiple functions or two modest pools that accommodate various programming needs simultaneously. This approach reflects practical financial realities rather than a lack of commitment to serving the entire community, though it requires careful scheduling and operational planning to balance competing demands for pool time across different user segments.

The Minoru Centre for Active Living in Richmond, BC, have taken a comprehensive approach by incorporating zones for nearly all user segments within a single facility, including a leisure pool with zero-depth toddler area, a dedicated teaching pool, an eight-lane lap pool with climbing wall and diving features, Canada's largest family hot pool, and a wellness area with adult hot pool, saunas, and cold plunge pool^{viii}.



Minoru Centre, Richmond B.C.
Source: <https://minorucentre.ca/>

Similarly, Vancouver's Hillcrest Aquatic Centre offers 50 metre and 25 metre tanks, a leisure pool with spray features and a lazy river, a seasonal outdoor pool, 1, 3, and 5 metre diving boards, and a hot tub, sauna, and steam room, along with accessible features such as aquatic lifts and wheelchairs^{ix}.



Hillcrest Aquatic Centre, Vancouver, B.C.
Source: <https://hillcrestcommunitycentre.com/our-facilities/aquatic-centre/>

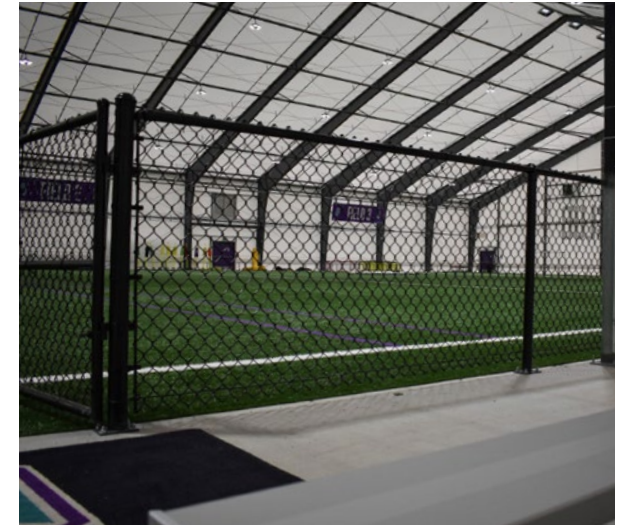
Indoor Turf and Court Spaces

Indoor Court and field house design increasingly reflects community expectations for versatile, multi functional spaces that serve diverse users year round. Operators are prioritizing flexibility to maximize space utilization and support a wider range of activities and programs.

Indoor turf fields have grown in popularity for their versatility and consistent, high quality playing surfaces, accommodating sports such as soccer, football, lacrosse, field hockey, and general training. Their controlled environment enables extended hours and eliminates weather related cancellations.

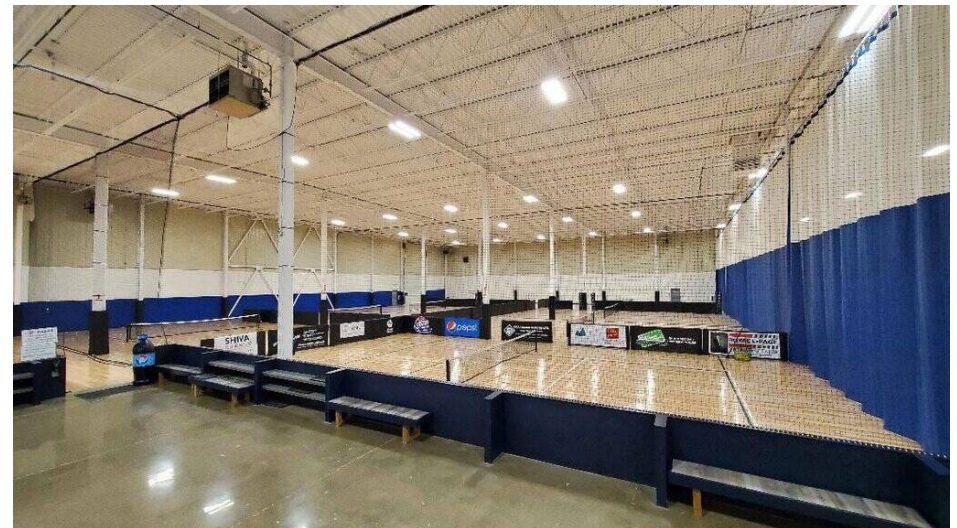
Court design has similarly shifted toward multi sport functionality, with surfaces lined for basketball, volleyball, badminton, pickleball, and indoor soccer. Facilities now rely on flexible tip and roll bleachers, overhead goals, and curtain dividers to create adaptable spaces that reduce costs and respond quickly to changing community needs*.

As demand for these spaces increases, private sector involvement has become an important contributor to expanding access. The Centre Edmonton Volleyball Pickleball Centre (EVP) and the Island Training Centre illustrate this trend, offering dedicated courts, turf fields, and programming that serve local populations. These facilities often fill gaps where public funding is limited, providing high quality spaces for rentals, leagues, tournaments, and skill development. Their business models balance community access with financial sustainability, enabling ongoing investment in modern amenities, qualified instructors, and flexible scheduling.



Island Training Centre, Langford, B.C.

Source: <https://islandtrainingcentre.ca/>



EVP Centre, Edmonton, AB.

Source: <https://www.evpcenter.com/pickleball-staff>

Ice Arenas

Modern arena design increasingly emphasizes versatility and user experience across all aspects of facility operations. Support amenities have also become a growing focus of both new development and renovation, with facilities investing in features that enhance functionality and elevate the overall user experience.

Locker rooms play a central role in this shift, with many new arenas offering dedicated team spaces equipped with whiteboards or screens for pre-game strategy and instruction, recognizing their importance beyond basic changing functions^{xi}. Additionally, the growth in female hockey^{xii} participation represents a particularly significant driver of demand for ice facilities, and specifically highlighting locker room deficiencies in aging facilities.

Demand for multi ice facilities continues to grow due to their ability to meet high ice time needs while functioning as community hubs. These complexes attract events and visitors, improve operational efficiency, and support a wide range of activities. They also contribute to local talent development, integrate sustainable design features, and prioritize accessibility and inclusivity, ensuring they serve diverse users and foster community engagement.

Fitness Spaces

Municipal fitness facilities are evolving from traditional gym models into comprehensive community wellness hubs that prioritize flexibility, accessibility, and holistic health. Several key trends are reshaping how municipalities may approach fitness space design and programming.

- **Strength training expansion:** Many facility providers are replacing portions of their cardio inventory with expanded strength-training zones^{xiii}, recognizing that diverse strength modalities, from traditional weightlifting to functional fitness areas and body-weight training, better serve a broad range of users.
- **Recovery as core programming:** Facilities are increasingly incorporating dedicated recovery studios equipped with tools that support overall health and well-being^{xiv}, reflecting a shift toward viewing recovery as essential programming rather than an optional amenity.
- **Adult recreation and sport clubs:** Adult recreation and sport clubs, highlighted as a top trend in the 2026 ACSM outlook, combine fitness with fun, flexibility, and social connection outside traditional gym settings^{xv}. This trend reflects growing demand for community-based activities such as pickleball leagues, running clubs, and recreational sports.
- **Active aging priority:** With adults aged 65 and older now visiting gyms and studios more often than any other age group^{xvi}, age-friendly design, including accessible equipment, intuitive wayfinding, and tailored programming are key components.

Together, these trends signal a broader shift toward viewing recreation centres as vital “third spaces” where residents build community connections while improving their fitness. The latest generation of community fitness facilities are embracing multi-purpose spaces that can quickly transition from group fitness studios to sport courts, and outdoor fitness infrastructure that extends programming beyond facility walls.

Small – Medium Performance Spaces

Like many public recreation and cultural venues, there is a growing trend toward flexible, adaptable performance spaces that can accommodate a wide range of artistic formats and community uses. The examples below illustrate two approaches: a small, configurable theatre within a major new performing arts centre in Fredericton, and a black box theatre integrated into Kelowna's primary civic theatre.

Fredericton's New Performing Arts Centre

Fredericton's new Performing Arts Centre is being designed with both an 850-seat main hall and a 300-seat theatre with flexible layout designed to meet both regional touring needs and the aspirations of Fredericton's local arts community. The Main Hall will seat 850 people, a number chosen after extensive study to ensure the venue is large enough to attract major commercial productions yet still aligned with comparable theatres in the Maritimes so Fredericton remains part of regional touring circuits^{xvii}. Complementing this is a highly adaptable 300 seat theatre created specifically for local performers, emerging artists, and diverse artistic formats, offering an affordable, right sized space the community has long requested. Together, these two theatres strike the balance between regional ambition and local creativity, ensuring the new facility serves the full spectrum of artistic needs.



Fredericton's New Performing Arts Centre - The Theatre (seats 300).
Source: <https://www.frederictonpac.ca/welcome>

Kelowna Community Theatre - Black Box Theatre

The Kelowna Black Box Theatre is a small, flexible performance space within the Kelowna Community Theatre complex, designed for intimate productions, rehearsals, workshops, and community events. Its minimalist "black box" layout allows artists to configure the room in multiple ways, creating an immersive atmosphere that brings audiences close to the action. With built-in lighting, sound, and adaptable seating for just over 100 people, it serves as an accessible, creative venue for local theatre companies, festivals, and emerging performers across the city^{xviii}.



Kelowna Community Theatre - Black Box Theatre.
Source: <https://theatre.kelowna.ca/rental-information/black-box-theatre>

5.3. Outdoor Recreation Facility Trends and Leading Practices

Sport Halls / Covered Sport Boxes

Covered sport boxes are simple, open air structures that sit between full gymnasiums and outdoor courts. A roof and translucent polycarbonate wall panels protect users from rain and wind while allowing natural light and ventilation^{xx}. Because they avoid HVAC, insulation, and complex mechanical systems, they cost 70–80% less to build than traditional recreation centres^{xx}. Hard surface floors with multi sport lines support lacrosse, ball hockey, basketball, pickleball, badminton, and other court sports with minimal equipment changes.

British Columbia is a North American leader in this typology, with designs that primarily support lacrosse, ball hockey, and emerging court sports. Burnaby’s Sohen Gill Sports Box (2024) uses translucent LEXAN panels and multi use asphalt surfacing to enable year round lacrosse and court sport programming^{xxi}. The Squamish Nation’s *Kw’eshkw’shétsuta’y* (2025) expands the model with a culturally integrated, 28,750 sq ft facility built for lacrosse, pickleball, and other hard court activities^{xxii}.

Internationally, the typology is applied more broadly. Denmark’s “Lightweight Gymnasium” supports street sports such as skateboarding, BMX, and parkour through radical simplification and user maintained operations^{xxiii}. Across Europe, these structures accommodate a wider range of informal, social, and multi generational activities.



Gymnasium for street sports in City of Gentofte.

Source: <https://vandkunsten.com/en/projects/street-sport-all-year-round>



The Squamish Nation's Kw'eshkw'shétsuta'y

Source: <https://www.ctvnews.ca/vancouver/article/squamish-nation-celebrates-lacrosse-legacy-with-new-north-vancouver-sports-facility/>

Sports Hub Facilities

There is a growing trend to develop sports fields as multi-field “hubs” that can host larger events and tournaments. This approach offers benefits like operational efficiencies, increased hosting capacity, and shared amenities (e.g., washrooms, change facilities, concessions). Key design considerations for these sites include minimizing activity conflicts between fields, proximity to arterial routes with transit access, buffering from residential areas, providing sufficient parking, and allowing for future growth and repurposing.

Demand for Synthetic Turf

A significant trend impacting the provision of sport fields is the growing user preference and demand for synthetic turf fields. In many urban centres a broader array of user groups is increasingly looking to access synthetic turf fields in order to expand their season of use, limit rain-outs and field condition related cancellations, and enhance overall participant experience. Advancements in synthetic turf technologies have also fuelled this trend. In several communities, converting gravel or all-weather fields to synthetic turf have become a popular upgrade. While in optimal circumstances many user groups may still prefer premium quality natural surfaces, advances in synthetic grass types of synthetic turf have narrowed the gap between how synthetic and natural surfaces feel when playing sports on.



Support Amenity Considerations

Across recreation and leisure, expectations for high-quality experiences in public facilities and spaces continue to rise. Parks spaces are no exception, particularly when it comes to the support amenities that shape comfort and usability. Safe, functional washrooms in major park spaces, adequate seating, and natural or built shade are all features that significantly influence both perceived experience and overall utilization. Many municipalities are also exploring ways to deliver these amenities in ways that create a stronger sense of place and enhance the character of parks and sport precincts. The importance of these features is so widely recognized that parents now share blogs and reviews highlighting the best parks based on the quality of their amenities.



Self-cleaning public washrooms and change stalls located at Parc des Rapides in Montreal.

Source: Urban Blu (<https://urbenblu.com/en/achievement/parc-des-rapides/>)



Woods inspired hut toilets in Japan created by famous architect Kengo Kuma.

Photo by Satoshi Nagare courtesy of Nippon Foundation of Nabeshima Shoto Park, Tokyo, Japan

Source: <https://tokyocheapo.com/entertainment/sightseeing/tokyo-toilets-when-architecture-calls/>



*Borden Park Pavilion, Edmonton AB. Designed by gh3**

Source: <https://www.gh3.ca/work/borden-park-pavilion>

5.4. Trends and Leading Practices in Service Delivery

Economy and Cost Escalation

Recent economic challenges in Canada, including inflation, supply-chain disruptions, and rising living costs, are placing increased financial pressure on households^{xxiv}. In 2024, 45% of Canadians reported that rising prices significantly affected their ability to meet daily expenses, up 12% from two years earlier^{xxv}. These pressures disproportionately affect young adults, families with children, people with disabilities, and low-income households, and may limit participation in recreation and leisure services due to program fees, transportation costs, and equipment expenses.

These same economic forces are contributing to rising costs for municipal infrastructure, with higher material prices, supply-chain volatility, and skilled-trades shortages driving up capital project budgets. Construction cost indices show sustained escalation across institutional and recreational building types, and municipalities are facing higher borrowing costs and greater uncertainty in tender pricing. As a result, many communities are revisiting project phasing, adjusting scopes, or prioritizing renewal of existing assets.

Canada's labour market shifts reinforce these challenges. While job vacancies returned to pre-pandemic levels in 2024, 61.2% of businesses anticipate continued cost-related obstacles in 2025^{xxvi}, and concerns about inflation and workforce retention persist^{xxvii}. These dynamics continue to elevate both construction and operating costs for municipal recreation infrastructure.

Managing Aging Infrastructure

Managing aging infrastructure is of key concern for Canadian municipalities, including community services and amenities that are vital to the delivery of important community programming. Many municipalities are facing difficult realities related to sustaining current service levels for their residents. The Canadian Infrastructure Report Card (CIRC) assesses the condition of municipally owned infrastructure; the Report Card (a nationally conducted study) was first released in 2016. A follow-up report was completed in 2019. The

Report Card assessed several infrastructure categories, including an analysis of the state of roads, bridges and tunnels, culture and recreation facilities, potable water, wastewater and storm water, public transit, and solid waste infrastructure in Canada^{xxviii}.

It was found that almost 40% of Canada's core public infrastructure was in fair to very poor condition and are aging, underperforming or at risk of failure. The infrastructure in Canada will require significant attention in the coming decades to ensure that communities are able to maintain a high quality of life. Asset management practices are improving; however, there is a lack of consistency across municipalities. Small entities often lack the resources to implement robust systems. It is important to note that funding gaps are a large barrier to maintaining and upgrading municipal infrastructure. As Canadian municipalities face infrastructure challenges and upgrades, it is important that climate resilience and sustainability are integrated into infrastructure planning to mitigate the impact of extreme weather events such as flooding. The Report Card demonstrates that Canada's municipal infrastructure is at risk of rapid deterioration unless there is an immediate investment.

Use of Data

Data is an essential tool that supports the operations of Parks and Recreation providers from master planning and measuring facility usage, to informing programming and supporting funding initiatives^{xxix}. Tracking data and creating the subsequent reports allows the sector to prove its impact^{xxx}. Incorporating data can also be used as a tool to identify improvement and optimize processes allow for management to make informed decisions^{xxxi}. Ultimately, data can assist to demonstrate impact of services, inform decision making processes, and support funding asks, to create a more inclusive, and engaging sport and recreation experience for all.

Artificial Intelligence

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is reshaping how municipalities deliver services to the community, with the aim of creating driving efficiency, responsiveness, and citizen engagement across departments like parks and recreation, transit, utilities, culture, and emergency response. AI supports automated content creation for program descriptions, customer service, public safety and environmental monitoring, analyzes community feedback, and optimizes maintenance schedules using predictive analytics. It also enhances accessibility by identifying areas needing inclusive design and monitors facilities for safety and usage^{xxxii}.

Public transit systems benefit from AI through route optimization, real-time traffic management, and predictive maintenance of vehicles and infrastructure. AI also powers Mobility-as-a-Service platforms, integrating transit with bike-share and ride-hailing, and supports planning for autonomous and electric vehicles. In utilities, AI enables smart grid management, predictive monitoring of water and wastewater systems, and infrastructure planning for energy conservation. It helps municipalities address aging infrastructure and cybersecurity threats while improving operational resilience^{xxxiii}.

Generally, AI can be leveraged to predict service demand, streamline case management, and automate intake processes. It can be used to analyze demographic data to tailor services and support digital transformation through citizen-facing platforms. Across all sectors, AI improves decision-making, reduces administrative burdens, and can even foster transparency when used appropriately.

Climate Change

Climate change refers to the long-term changes in the Earth's temperature and weather patterns. Climate change can naturally occur, however, since the 1800s, human activities, such as the production and use of fossil fuels, have accelerated climate change causing global temperature warming. Community infrastructure and planning are part of the solution when it comes to climate change. For example, trees in public spaces play an important role in managing air pollution and providing shade to cool urban environments, while also providing opportunities for individuals to connect with nature and supporting vibrant and livable communities. While there is no single "correct" parkland provision ratio, comparing provision levels with those of other municipalities can offer a useful benchmark. On average, Canadian cities provide approximately 4.4 ha of parkland per 1,000 residents^{xxxiv}.

Municipalities can contribute to creating climate-resilient communities by providing facilities for emergency response during extreme weather events resulting from climate change, for example, cooling centres, emergency shelters and meeting points for people affected by natural disasters. Community services planning can contribute to the solutions for the challenges associated with climate change; there is a need for the continued adoption and advocacy for policies and practices that reduce climate change impacts across all levels of government.

5.6. Participation Trends

Physical Literacy and Skill Development as Program Drivers

The ability and confidence of an individual is a strong indicator on whether or not that individual will participate in an activity, especially in older adults. Research has shown that individuals who do not feel comfortable, competent, or confident while participating with others will withdraw from physical activity^{xxxv}. Programs that address gaps in an individual's ability and confidence are becoming more prevalent for sports and activities that have gained popularity for older adults. Sports like pickleball have seen success in gaining popularity by offering learn to play programming and clinics to increase skill and attract new players to the sport. Programs that are led by older adults have been especially successful at attracting new participants of that same demographic.

Physical literacy

is the...



Private Sector Impact on Youth Sport System

Recent findings from *The State of Youth Sport in Canada: The Value and Cost of Participation (2025)* highlight clear patterns in why young people participate in sport, why they opt out, and where they play. The top motivations for participation remain consistent, playing with friends, having fun, and learning new skills, while the top barriers continue to be cost, time pressures, and confidence. These patterns closely mirror the 2024 results, though the distribution of where youth play has shifted in ways that signal deeper structural change.

	Top 3 Reasons Youth Like Playing Sports	Top 3 Reasons Youth Do Not Play Sports	Where Kids Play
2025	Playing with friends (56%) Having fun (33%) Learning new skills (32%)	Sports are too expensive (48%) No time to play due to schoolwork (24%) I'm not good enough to play (18%)	Local Clubs (65%) School Teams (45%) Recreation Centres (28%)
2024	Playing with friends (55%) Having fun (38%) Exercising to stay healthy (33%)	Sports are too expensive (47%) No time to play due to schoolwork (28%) I'm not good enough to play (18%)	School Teams (69%) Local Clubs (64%) Recreation Centres (45%)

The data shows that local clubs account for 65% of youth participation in 2025, slightly higher than in 2024. While this is only a two year comparison, it suggests a possible shift toward club based sport as a primary delivery model. This may reflect families seeking more structured programming, specialized coaching, or competitive opportunities. At the same time, the continued prominence of cost as the top barrier indicates that affordability remains a central concern across the system. Given the short timeframe, it is too early to conclude that the youth sport system is undergoing a definitive structural transformation. However, the early signals point to a few areas worth monitoring:

- Club participation appears to be growing modestly, which may influence how families access sport opportunities.
- Recreation centres and school teams show year to year variability, suggesting that participation patterns may be sensitive to local programming, school capacity, or broader social factors.
- Cost remains the most significant barrier, and any growth in fee based models could amplify affordability challenges if not balanced by accessible public or school based options.

Demand for Aquatics

Across British Columbia, there has been overwhelming demand for aquatic programs; almost all municipalities have long waitlists for programs and have had class registration fill up in minutes^{xxxvi}. Despite high participation rates, drowning risk remains a leading public health concern as communities face barriers in delivering adequate water safety instruction^{xxxvii}. Circumstances exacerbated by the COVID 19 pandemic, such as aging infrastructure, rising operational costs and persistent staffing shortages, are front of mind for service providers.

Municipalities are using several targeted approaches to address staffing and facility pressures in aquatic programming. Competitive wages help attract new staff, but research shows positive workplace culture is the strongest factor in retaining lifeguards^{xxxviii}. Communities are also expanding recruitment by engaging younger workers, retirees, and reducing certification barriers (e.g. offering more training opportunities, reducing costs, etc.).

To ease pressure on public swim-lesson waitlists, school partnerships offering in-curriculum lessons have proven effective. Long-term stability also depends on strategic facility planning, supported by national resources such as Swimming Canada's Facility Toolkit.

High Demand for Gymnasium Based Activities

Multi-purpose gymnasiums face unprecedented demand as participation patterns diversify. Pickleball has experienced explosive growth, with Canadian participation nearly tripling between 2020 and 2022 to reach 1.54 million players by 2025, creating intense demand for year-round indoor court space^{xxxix}. This growth occurs alongside persistent participation in traditional sports like basketball (17% of youth) and volleyball, as well as expanding fitness class programming^{xl}. The result is scheduling complexity and capacity constraints as municipalities attempt to accommodate multiple competing activities within limited gymnasium infrastructure.

Pickleball Growth and Considerations

Pickleball continues to be one of the fastest-growing recreation activities in Canada. According to the January 2023 Pickleball in Canada Survey, 11% of Canadian households now report at least one member playing pickleball at least once per month. The survey also shows a broader demographic shift, with more women, younger adults, and competitive players participating than in previous years.

Planning Challenges

As participation grows, municipalities face several key challenges:

- Supply and demand imbalance: Demand is outpacing supply in many communities, leading to overcrowded courts and increased requests for indoor options
- Facility conflicts: Pressure to convert tennis courts creates shared-use conflicts where scheduling or space allocation is unclear
- Accessibility needs: Because the sport is especially popular among older adults, accessible design, including seating, shade, and barrier-free pathways, supports age-friendly participation
- Partnership capacity: Local clubs often shoulder programming and volunteer responsibilities, raising questions about long-term sustainability and partnership models
- Economic opportunities: Municipalities are evaluating opportunities for tournaments and tourism, as well as lifecycle costs associated with high-use outdoor courts
- Noise mitigation: Pickleball produces a sharper, more impulsive sound than many other outdoor sports, with typical levels in the 50-58 dBA range^{xli}. Many communities now incorporate noise-mitigation measures when locating new courts, such as 3-metre acoustic screens, berms, or increased setbacks from residential areas^{xlii}.

Field Sport Participation

Soccer has emerged as Canada's most popular youth sport, surpassing hockey in participation rates despite hockey's cultural dominance. Recent findings from *The State of Youth Sport in Canada: The Value and Cost of Participation (2025)* indicate that soccer is the highest rated activities among youth. Approximately 50% of Canadian youth play soccer, compared to swimming (46%) and basketball (41%). Beyond soccer, Canadian participation trends indicate that field hockey, rugby, and football continue to play a meaningful, though varied, role within the outdoor field sport landscape. National reporting from Field Hockey Canada indicates participation growth of approximately 25% over a recent four-year period, driven largely by expanded school-based programming and introductory youth pathways, particularly in urban and regional centres^{xliii}. Similarly, Rugby Canada reported approximately 11% growth in registered participation in 2024, with increases observed across all provinces, reflecting broader post-pandemic recovery trends in organized sport^{xliiv}. Football participation trends are more format-specific: Football Canada identifies flag football as one of the fastest-growing sports in Canada, with sustained year-over-year increases attributed to its non-contact format, lower barriers to entry, and rapid expansion through school and community league delivery, while tackle football participation remains more stable and regionally variable^{xliv}.

Female Hockey Participation

While overall youth hockey participation has declined, female participation has grown. Women's and girls' hockey participation surged 30% since 2022, with the 2024-25 season setting a new Canadian record of more than 115,000 registered players. Female players now represent 19.9% of all Hockey Canada participants, the highest percentage in Canadian hockey history, with projections suggesting this will reach 170,000 by 2030 under Hockey Canada's Vision 2030 initiative^{xlvi}. However, systemic barriers persist despite this growth. Hockey Canada's "Rise as One" blueprint identified six key barriers obstructing further progress: structure of women's and girls' hockey, equity in resource allocation, policy and governance, education and training, data gaps, and visibility and celebration.





6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS (“WHAT WE HEARD”)

6.1. Engagement Overview

Engagement with the community was a critical aspect of developing the Needs Assessment. Through engagement, the project team was able to complement the other research (as presented in Sections 2 – 5) and explore key topics, including:

- Resident and user group perspectives on current facilities and service levels.
- Trends, changes, and emerging space needs.
- Potential priorities for capital investment (renewed, replaced, and new facility needs).
- The overall benefits and importance of continuing to invest in sport, recreation and culture.

To ensure multiple viewpoints were given voice, multiple engagement tactics were identified at the outset of the project through the development of a detailed Communications and Engagement Plan.

The table below identifies the engagement tactics and levels of response/participation for each. *Please refer to Appendix C for the engagement tools.

Table 38: Engagement Tactics Summary

Tactic	Responses / Participation
Resident Survey (coded) ¹	1,005
Resident Survey (non-coded)	167
User Group and Stakeholder Discussion Sessions	23 participating groups
Community Organization Survey	44 participating groups
Pop-Up Activities and Open House	4 open house events and 3 pop-up (approximately 50 people engaged)

Provided as follows in this section are findings from the community engagement. The findings are organized by engagement tactic with key findings and themes identified throughout.

¹ The methodology used to field the coded version of the resident survey provides a margin of error of +/- 3.1% 19 times out of 20.

6.2. Resident Survey Findings

A survey was fielded with households in the Cowichan region to gather perspective on future recreation infrastructure in the region over the next 10 to 15 years. Participation in the coded access version of the survey required an access code that was unique to each household. The access codes were distributed to households utilizing Canada Post's neighbourhood mail in the form of a postcard. The survey was fielded online; however hard copy versions of the survey were available.

The coded access version of the survey was available for approximately one month (September 2025) and garnered 1,005 responses, equating to a margin of error of +/- 3.1%.¹ A duplicate open access (non-coded) version of the survey was also made available for residents that no longer had their postcard or wanted to have multiple household members provide responses (as only one code was provided per household, respondents to the coded version of the survey were asked to answer questions considering the perspectives of all household members). 167 responses were provided to the open access (non-coded) version of the survey.

A variety of tactics were utilized to promote the survey. Aside from the distributed postcards, other tactics included the following:

- Promotion on the CVRD and partner municipalities websites
- Promotion on the CVRD and partner social media
- Advertising through posters in the nine regionally significant facilities
- QR code and 'call to action' on the pop-up and open house facility panels

Sub-segment analysis was conducted to provide further insights into how participation and perspective may differ based on respondent characteristics. Additionally, a comparison was also undertaken of findings for selected questions from the 2025 survey and a similar survey conducted in 2016 to inform the Regional Recreation Strategic Plan.



The following survey findings reflect those from the Coded sample given the level of response and statistical representation. The Non-Coded responses generally aligned with those gathered through the coded sample.

¹ If the survey was fielded again using the same parameters, responses are deemed to be within +/- 3.1% 19 times out of 20.

6.2.1 Your Recreation Activities

Q: From the list below, please identify your household's favourite activities in each of the following seasons. Select all that apply.

To begin the survey, respondents were asked to indicate their household's favourite **indoor activities** by season. A comparison to the findings from 2016 reflect a continued demand for walking, swimming, fitness classes and training, and hockey during the respective seasons of availability. [Graphs 26 and 27](#) provide additional detail on the findings from the 2025 survey.

Winter

2016

Hockey 98%
Ice skating 97%
Fitness training in a gym 94%
Figure skating 93%
Fitness class 93%

2025

Ice skating 99%
Hockey 98%
Fitness training at a gym 97%
Swimming drop-in 95%
Fitness classes 95%

Spring

2016

Walking 92%
Fitness class 82%
Swimming drop-in 82%
Fitness training 80%
Swimming programs 80%

2025

Walking 92%
Swimming programs 87%
Swimming drop-in 84%
Fitness training at a gym 82%
Fitness classes 82%

Summer

2016

Walking 91%
Social functions 75%
Theatre performances 61%
Swimming pool drop-in 59%
Fitness training at a gym 58%

2025

Walking 84%
Childcare 64%
Fitness training at a gym 62%
Swimming programs 61%
Swimming drop-in 60%

Fall

2016

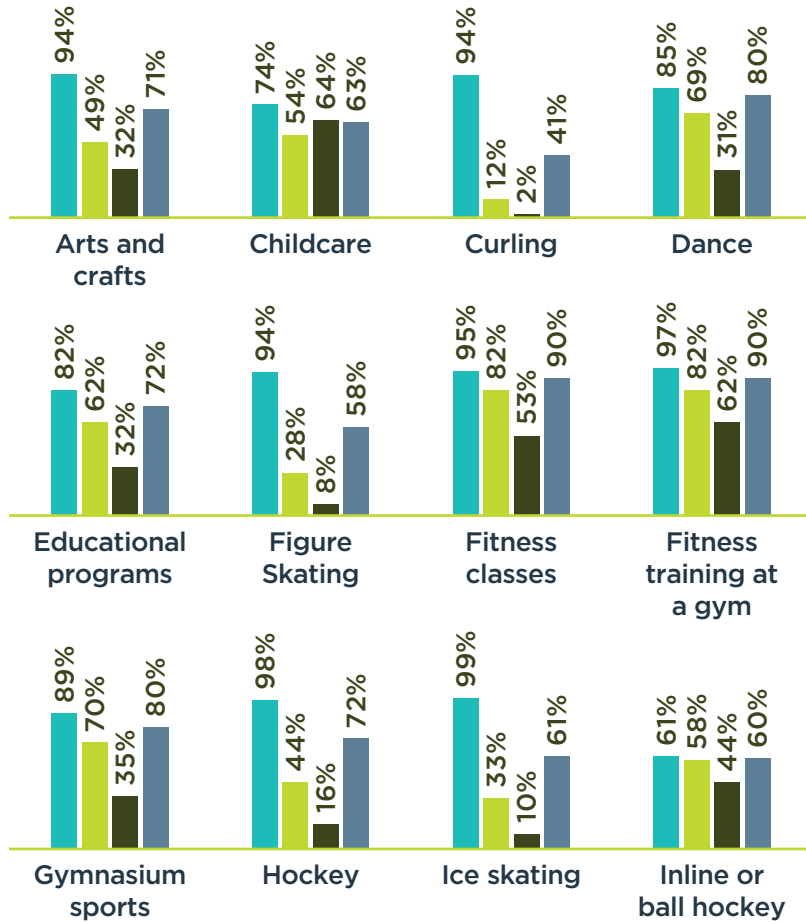
Walking 90%
Theatre performances 86%
Swimming drop-in 84%
Fitness class 84%
Fitness training at the gym 84%

2025

Walking 93%
Swimming programs 91%
Swimming drop-in 91%
Fitness training at a gym 90%
Fitness classes 90%

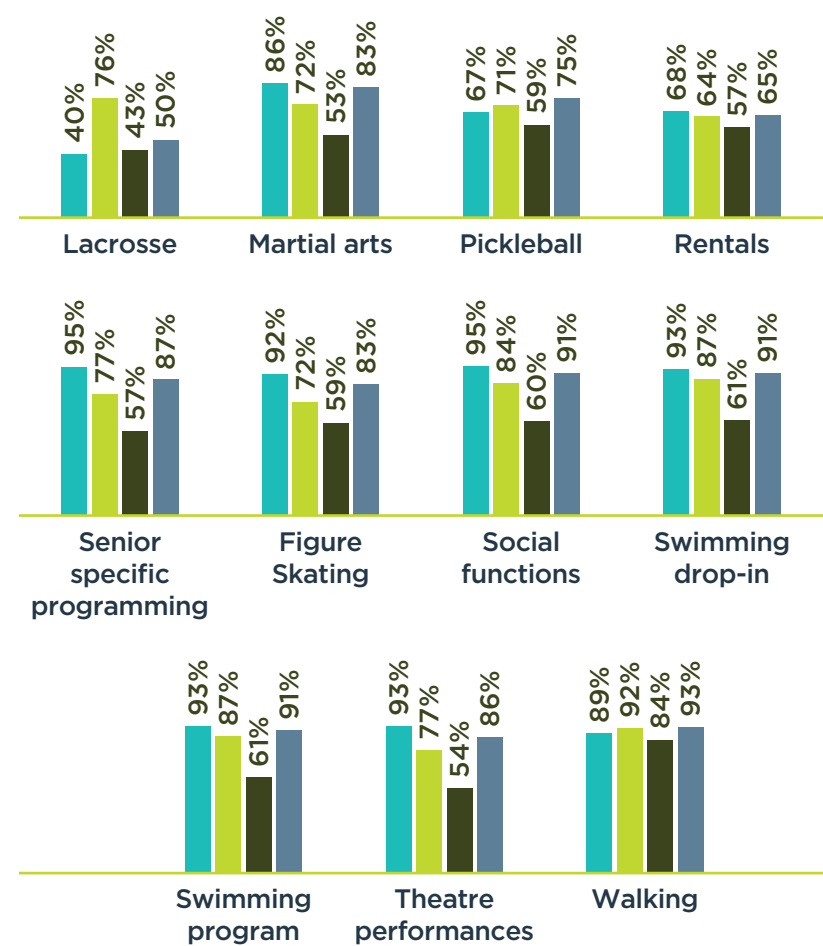
Graph 25: Indoor Activity Preferences by Season

- Winter (December - February)
- Spring (March - May)
- Summer (June - August)
- Fall (September - November)



Graph 26: Indoor Activity Preferences by Season

- Winter (December - February)
- Spring (March - May)
- Summer (June - August)
- Fall (September - November)



When asked about their household's favourite outdoor activities the following appeared as the most popular:

From 2016 to 2025, outdoor activity patterns remained largely consistent, with hiking/walking staying the top choice across all seasons. Minor shifts include slight increases in cycling, gardening, and fall field sports. Summer participation remained almost unchanged, with beach use, picnics, paddling, and performances continuing to see near-universal engagement.

Graphs 28 and 29 provide additional detail on the findings from the 2025 survey.

Winter

2016

Hiking/walking 82%
Community events 69%
Horseback riding 60%
Pickleball 50%
Field sports 44%

2025

Hiking/walking 80%
Community events 64%
Field sports 43%
Horseback riding/equestrian 41%
Cycling/mountain biking 38%

Spring

2016

Hiking/walking 96%
Gardening 95%
Cycling/mountain biking 87%
Golf 85%
Field sports 83%

2025

Hiking/walking 97%
Gardening 96%
Cycling/mountain biking 91%
Field sports 89%
Golf 87%

Summer

2016

Activities at the beach 99%
BBQ/Picnic 98%
Outdoor performances 98%
Skateboarding / scootering 97%

2025

Paddling 99%
Activities at the beach 99%
BBQ/Picnic 98%
Skateboarding / scootering 97%
Outdoor performances 97%

Fall

2016

Hiking/walking 94%
Community events 78%
Horseback riding 76%
Cycling/mountain biking 75%
Gardening 73%

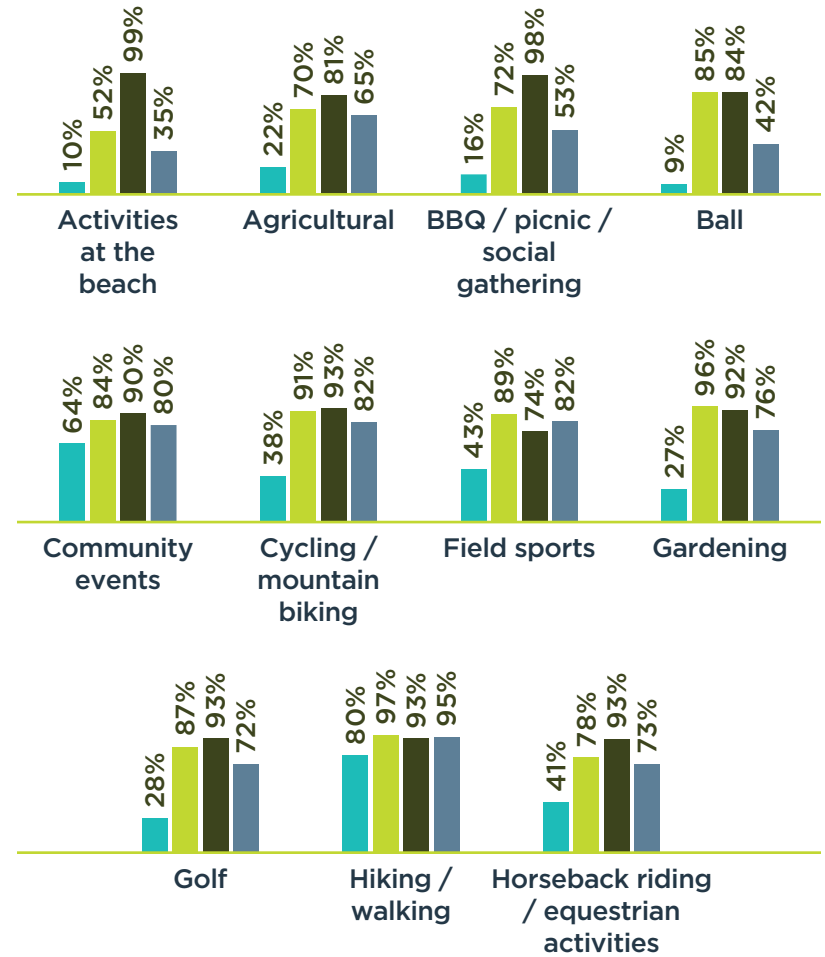
2025

Hiking/walking 95%
Field sports 82%
Cycling/mountain biking 82%
Community events 80%
Gardening 76%

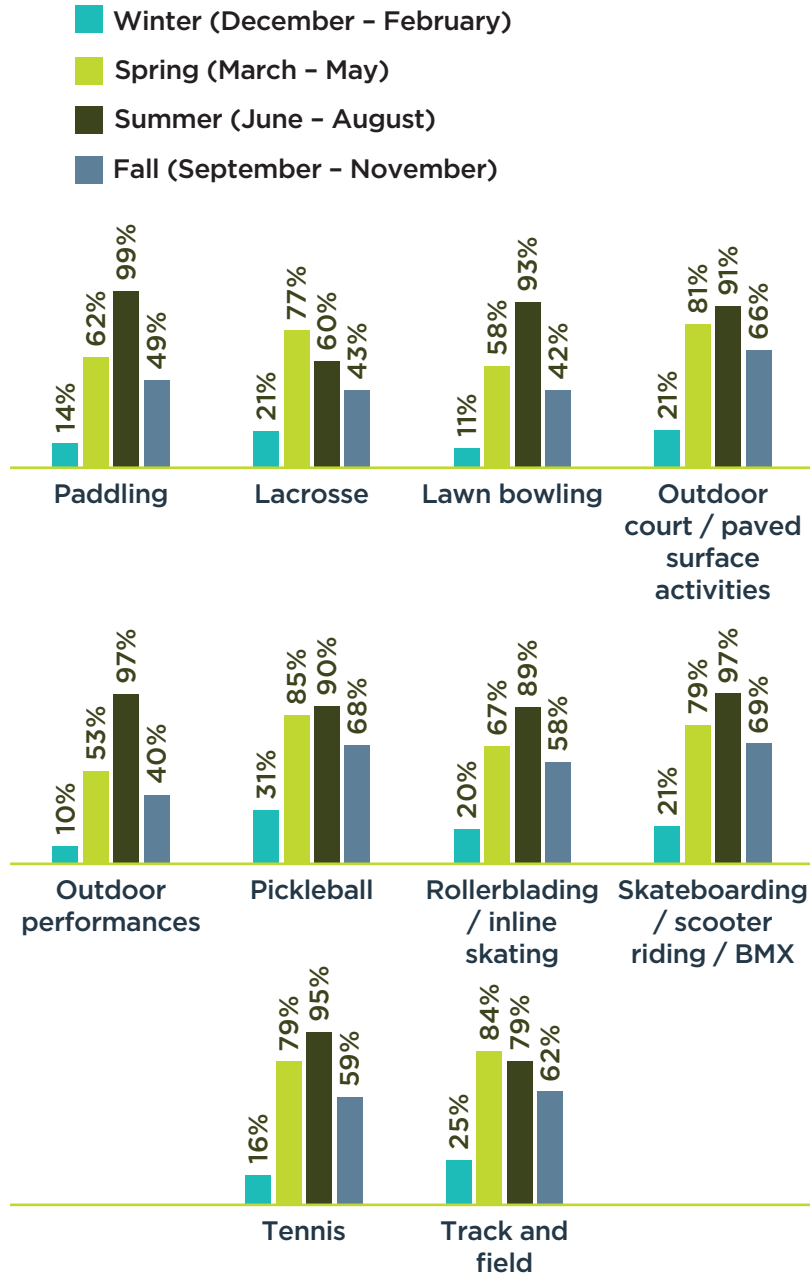


Graph 27: Outdoor Activity Preferences by Season

- Winter (December - February)
- Spring (March - May)
- Summer (June - August)
- Fall (September - November)



Graph 28: Outdoor Activity Preferences by Season



Other Activities Identified by Respondents

- **Indoor:** fitness such as yoga and pilates, indoor sports such as tennis, bowling, squash, billiards, indoor climbing and bouldering, music activities and opportunities, board games, cooking classes, seniors programming, gymnastics, reading programs, roller-skating/roller derby.
- **Outdoor:** walking and hiking (reiterated), dog walking/dog sports, camping, fishing, boating/sailing/kayaking, trail running, road riding/e-biking, disc golf, mountain biking, motor sports, photography, bird watching/nature activities, snowshoeing/winter activities, flag football and orienteering.



Q: Please indicate your household's overall level of satisfaction with...

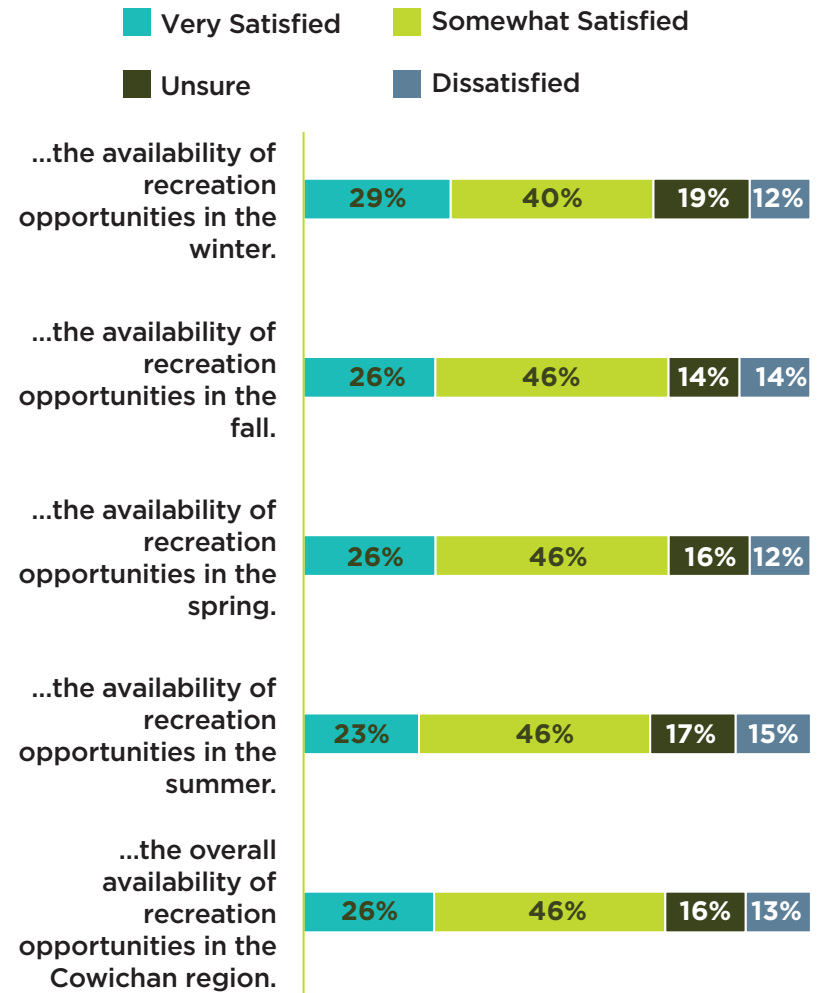
Next, respondents reviewed a series of statements about their satisfaction with various aspects of recreation in the Cowichan region. As shown in the accompanying graph, satisfaction levels are strong across the board with at least 70% of respondents indicating they are satisfied (very satisfied and somewhat satisfied) with every aspect presented. Satisfaction is slightly higher for the overall availability of recreation opportunities, as well as for opportunities available in the spring and fall.



Subsegment Analysis

- Those who live in Areas D, E, Duncan and North Cowichan (39%) were more likely to say they are very satisfied with the availability of recreation opportunities than those in the Town of Ladysmith (28%), Areas H, G and Ladysmith (27%), Areas A, B and C (25%), and Areas I, F and the Town of Lake Cowichan (18%).
- Those who live in Areas I, F and the Town of Lake Cowichan (22%) and Areas A, B and C (19%) were more likely to say they are very dissatisfied with the availability of recreation opportunities than residents of the Town of Ladysmith (12%), Areas H, G and Ladysmith (11%), Areas D, E, Duncan and North Cowichan (8%).
- Households with no children are more likely to say they are very satisfied with the overall availability of recreation opportunities in the Cowichan Region (30%) than households with children (15%).

Graph 29: Level of Satisfaction with...



Respondents were able to explain their level of satisfaction with the different aspects presented. The responses have been analyzed and presented according to prevalent themes:

Access to Aquatics and Swimming Lessons - 140 Comments

Aquatic access is one of the most frequently raised concerns. Respondents described significant challenges obtaining swimming lessons, overcrowded pools during peak times, and limited lane-swim hours. Residents in South Cowichan, Mill Bay, Shawnigan Lake, and Lake Cowichan noted that distance to Duncan limits participation. Respondents expressed interest in an additional aquatic facility to support population growth and improve regional accessibility.

Program Timing and Scheduling - 110 Comments

Respondents reported that program schedules are often concentrated during weekday daytime hours. This limits the ability to participate in fitness classes, arts programs, youth activities, and aquatic opportunities. There is strong interest in expanding evening and weekend offerings to create more equitable access for a wider range of users.

Regional Service Imbalance in South Cowichan - 95 comments

Residents in the South Cowichan region frequently highlighted gaps in facility provision compared to the Duncan/Ladysmith area. Priority needs include an aquatic facility, indoor fitness space, gymnasiums, and multi-use activity areas, as well as improved trail and sidewalk connections.

Capacity Limitations - 90 comments

Respondents reported that many programs including fitness classes, children's activities, and youth sports fill immediately upon registration opening. Long waitlists and limited class sizes result in reduced participation and inconsistent access, especially for younger families and seniors.

Trail, Walking Infrastructure, and Cycling Safety - 85 comments

Respondents value regional trail networks but identify several maintenance issues (e.g., erosion, broken steps, overgrowth) and concerns about cycling safety on roadways. Respondents express a desire for expanded multi-use pathways and improved connections between communities (e.g., Shawnigan-Cobble Hill, Ladysmith-Nanaimo, Duncan-Chemainus).

Insufficient Indoor Recreation Space - 70 comments

Respondents mentioned a shortage of indoor spaces including gyms, fitness studios, walking tracks, and multi-use courts. Existing facilities are described as undersized, outdated, or overcrowded, limiting the ability to meet current and future program demand.

Growing Demand for Pickleball Infrastructure - 60 comments

Respondents noted insufficient indoor and outdoor court availability, scheduling conflicts, concerns about noise, and a need for more structured play times and dedicated space.

Limited Opportunities for Teens and Older Youth - 55 comments

Respondents noted that gaps exist for youth aged 10-16, including a shortage of recreational leagues, non-competitive sport options, arts programming, and accessible drop-in spaces. This gap was mentioned to be linked to broader social and community-wellbeing concerns.

Facility Closures, Maintenance Downtime, and Operating Hours - 45 comments

Respondents highlighted challenges related to extended pool shutdowns, holiday closures, reduced hours, and program cancellations driven by staffing shortages.

Financial Considerations and Concerns About Tax Implications - 40 comments

Respondents expressed concern about the cost of expanding recreational services, noting that taxes are already high. These comments generally prioritized maintaining or optimizing existing assets rather than constructing new facilities.

Need for Expanded Arts, Culture, and Creative Programming - 35 comments

While sports programming is well-represented, respondents identified gaps in cultural and creative activities, including visual arts classes, music/theatre rehearsal space, and mid-sized performance venues.

Program Awareness and Communication Challenges - 30 comments

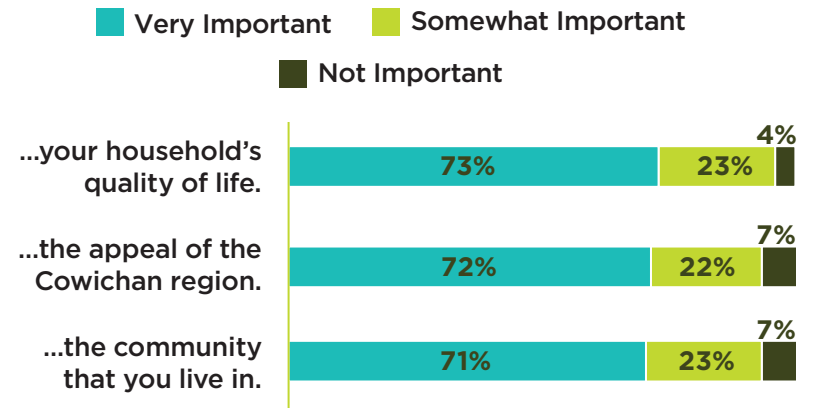
Respondents reported difficulty finding information about available programs, schedules, registration dates, and facility changes. Suggestions included stronger marketing, centralized listings, and improved notification of cancellations or schedule changes.



Q: How important are recreation opportunities to...

When asked how important recreation opportunities are to their community (73%), the region (72%) and their household's quality of life (71%) approximately three-quarters indicated that all three are very important.

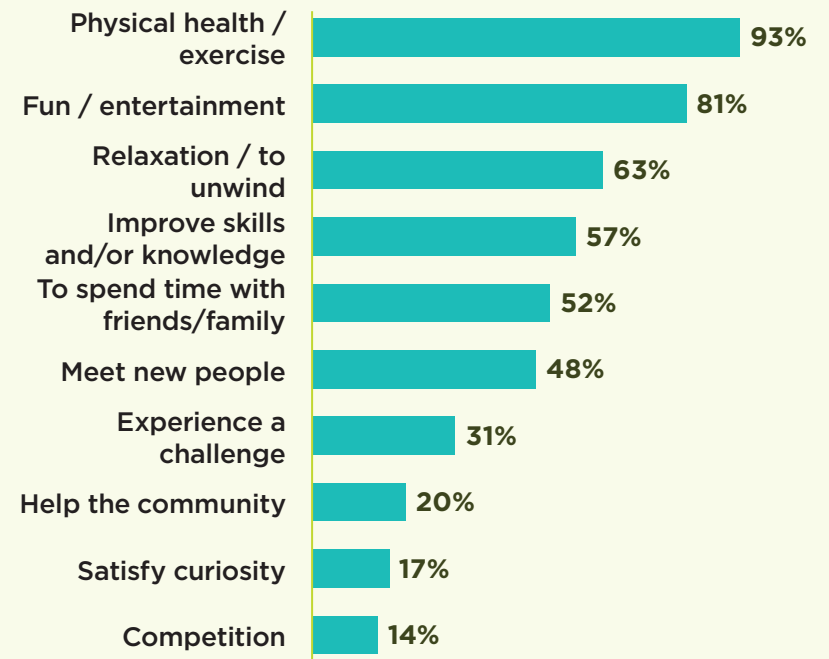
Graph 30: How Important Are Recreation Opportunities to...



Q: What are the main reasons you and/or members of your household participate in recreation and related activities? **Please select all that apply.**

Considering reasons households participate in recreation activities, almost all indicated they do for health and exercise (93%). Additional popular reasons include fun and entertainment (81%), relaxation and to unwind (63%) and to improve skills or knowledge (57%). **Other reasons to participate identified by respondents included: explore nature, social connection, staying young, dog and animal exercise, multigenerational connection, mental health.*

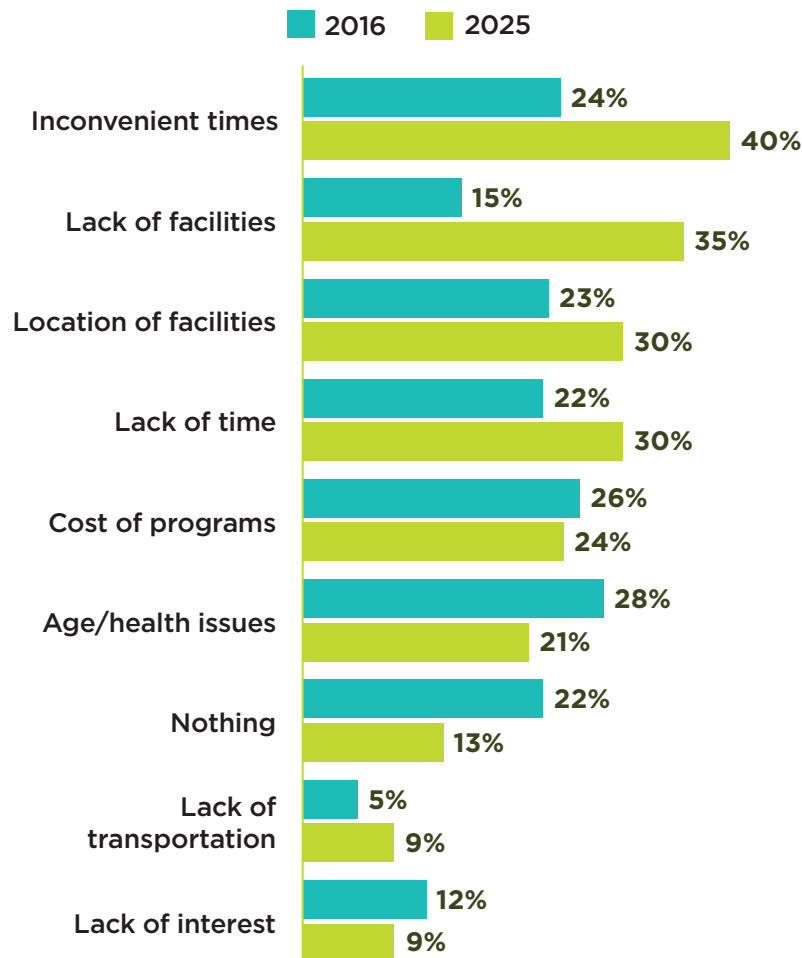
Graph 31: Reasons for Participation in Recreation Activities



Q: What, if anything, limits you and / or members of your household from participating in recreation opportunities? **Please select all that apply.**

Next, respondents were asked to indicate if anything prevents them from participating in recreation opportunities. Overall, several barriers to participation have increased since 2016. Inconvenient program times (40%) and a lack of facilities (35%) are now the two most commonly reported barriers, showing significant increases of 16% and 20%, respectively. Barriers related to location, time, and program cost have also risen by 7-8%. Age or health-related limitations show a slight decrease from 28% to 21%. Notably, fewer respondents in 2025 indicated that **nothing** prevents them from participating compared to 2016 (dropping from 22% in 2016 to 13% in 2025).

Graph 32: Barriers to Participation



Subsegment Analysis

- Those who live in Areas A, B and C (51%) and Areas I, F and the Town of Lake Cowichan (45%) are more likely to say that a lack of facilities limits their participation than those who live in Areas H, G and Ladysmith (35%), the Town of Ladysmith (34%), and Areas D, E, Duncan and North Cowichan (27%).
- Those who live in Areas I, F and the Town of Lake Cowichan (52%) and Areas A, B and C (49%) are more likely to report cost as a barrier than residents of Areas D, E, Duncan and North Cowichan (37%), and the Town of Ladysmith (36%).
- Those who live in the Town of Ladysmith (46%) and Areas H, G and Ladysmith (44%) are more likely to say program times limit their participation than those in Areas D, E, Duncan and North Cowichan (30%).
- Those who live in Areas A, B and C (29%) and Areas I, F and the Town of Lake Cowichan (27%) are more likely to identify transportation as a barrier than Areas D, E, Duncan and North Cowichan (14%).
- Those who live in Areas D, E, Duncan and North Cowichan (18%) are more likely to say nothing limits their participation than those living in Areas A, B and C (8%) and Areas I, F and the Town of Lake Cowichan (8%).
- Those who have lived in the Cowichan region for less than 5 years (50%) are more likely to report inconvenient times as a barrier than those who have lived in the Cowichan region for more than 10 years (33%).
- Households with children are more likely to report that lack of facilities is a barrier they face (55%) than households with no children (29%).
- Households with children are more likely to say that inconvenient times limits their ability to participate in opportunities (59%) than households with no children (32%).
- Households with children are more likely to say that the location of facilities impacts their ability to participate (44%) than households with no children (25%).

Respondents were asked to indicate any other barriers they face when trying to participate in recreation opportunities in the CVRD. The responses are presented according to theme:

Limited Program Availability & Capacity Constraints - 65 comments

Respondents reported that programs are full or fill too quickly, including swimming lessons, fitness classes and camps. Limited class sizes, lack of program variety, and few options for specific age groups (young children, adults, seniors) were recurring mentions.

Lack of Aquatic Access (Facilities, Scheduling, Closures) - 55 comments

Aquatic access challenges were widespread, including pool closures, competition swim club occupying lanes, lack of indoor swimming facilities in South Cowichan and Lake Cowichan, poor scheduling of adult-only swim times, and no indoor pool in multiple communities. Travel to Duncan for swimming is a frequently mentioned barrier.

Geographic Barriers & Travel Distance - 50 comments

Long travel times to facilities, especially from South Cowichan, Lake Cowichan, Crofton, Glenora, and Ladysmith, prevent regular participation. Many noted that their area has fewer facilities or none at all.

Transportation Limitations (Bus Service, Transit Strike, No Handi-Dart) - 45 comments

Respondents are unable to participate due to lack of public transportation, the ongoing transit strike, no service in certain neighbourhoods, lack of Handi-Dart, or inability to drive due to age, disability, or caregiving responsibilities.

Scheduling & Timing Conflicts - 40 comments

Program times often conflict with work schedules, caregiving, shift work, or family responsibilities. Daytime-only programming and lack of evening or weekend options were common issues.

Insufficient Facilities & Infrastructure Gaps - 40 comments

Respondents identified missing or inadequate facilities such as:

- No gym/fitness centre in South Cowichan
- No indoor rollerblading space
- Lack of safe cycling routes
- Insufficient trails, loops, and nature access
- Limited beach access
- This also includes requests for improved infrastructure around parks, cycling, and off-leash dog areas.

Cost, Financial Barriers & Tax Concerns - 35 comments

Respondents indicated that cost, taxes, or limited disposable income prevent participation. Others raised concerns about paying taxes for facilities they do not use or that do not exist in their area.

Lack of Awareness, Communication, & Information - 30 comments

Respondents do not know about available programs, schedules, registration windows, or facility offerings. Comments indicate missed registration due to lack of notification or unclear communication.

Crowding, Overuse & Limited Space in Facilities - 30 comments

Overcrowded gyms/fitness centre, limited equipment availability, congested pools, full trails, and busy parks reduce satisfaction and prevent participation.

Accessibility Challenges (Mobility, Disability, Cleanliness) - 25 comments

Barriers include:

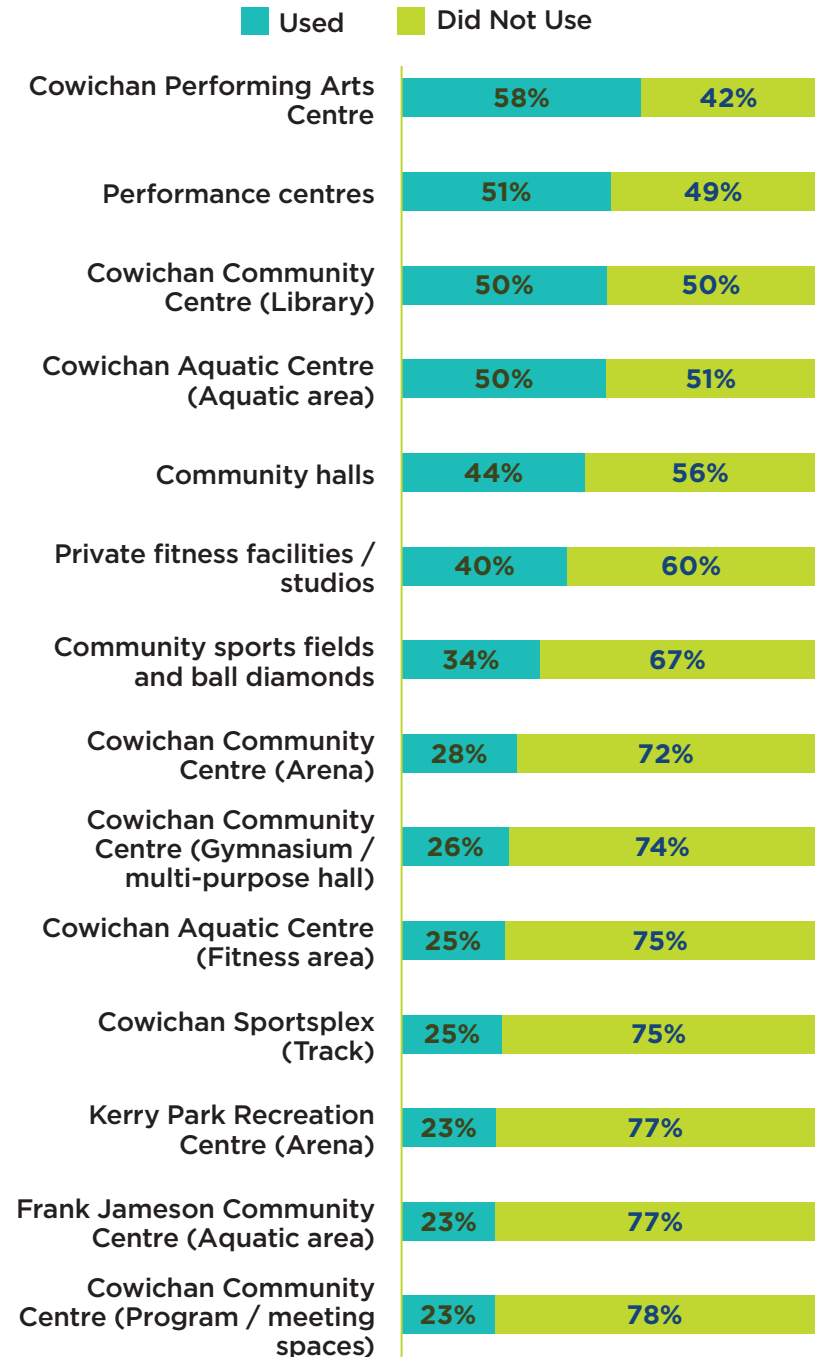
- Non-wheelchair-accessible sites
- Unsafe or poor-quality walking trails
- Lack of clean or well-maintained spaces
- Air quality concerns
- Lack of dedicated disability-friendly programs
- Some residents with disabilities cannot reach or use certain facilities.

6.2.2 Facility Use

Q: From the list of major facilities identified below, please estimate how often members of your household have used each in the previous 12 months (please remember to include all household members in your estimation!).

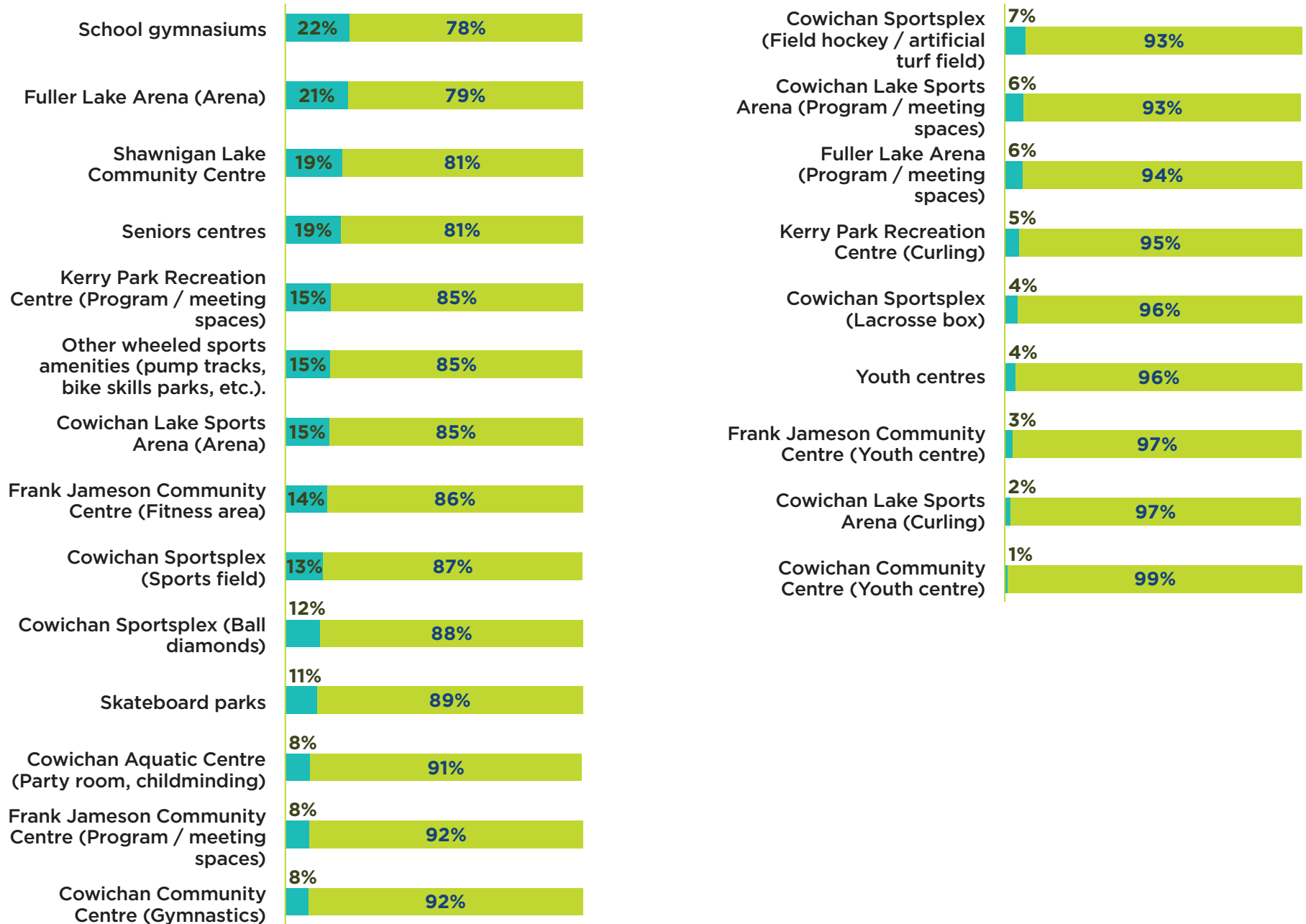
Shifting gears to facility use, respondents were asked to identify how often they have used each facility presented over the previous 12 months. As illustrated in the accompanying graph, approximately half indicated that they have used the Cowichan Performing Arts Centre (58%), performance centres (51%), the Cowichan Community Centre Library (50%) and the Cowichan Aquatic Centre (50%). Refer to the graph for additional findings. Detailed usage can be found in Appendix A.

Graph 33: Facility Frequency of Use



Graph 33 Cont. Facility Frequency of Us

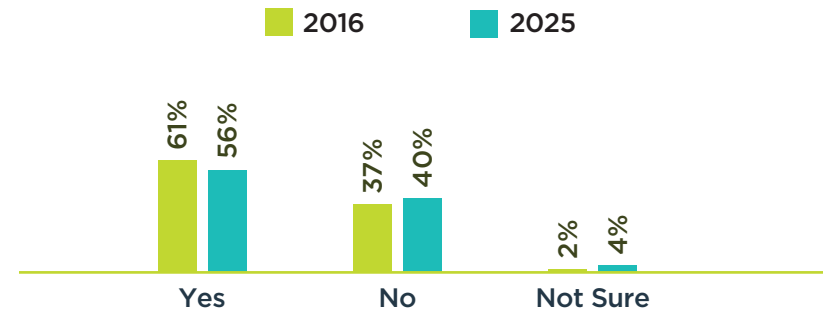
■ Used ■ Did Not Use



Q: Does your household travel outside of the Cowichan region to participate in recreation activities?

Compared to 2016, slightly fewer households reported travelling outside the Cowichan region for recreation (56% in 2025 compared to 61% in 2016). This finding suggests a slight shift in residents saying local for recreation.

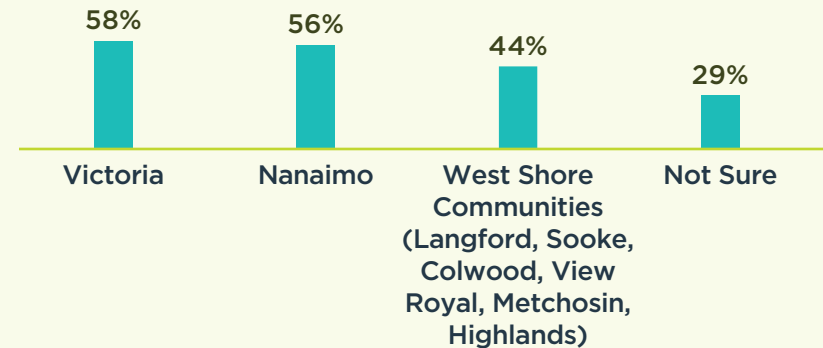
Graph 34: Does Your Household Travel Outside of the Cowichan Region to Participate in Recreation Activities?



Q: Where does your household go outside of the Cowichan region to meet your recreational needs?

Those who indicated they participate in activities outside of the Cowichan region were asked to indicate where they go to meet their recreational needs. Over half indicated they go to Victoria (58%) or Nanaimo (56%) to meet their recreational needs.

Graph 35: Facility Frequency of Use



Subsegment Analysis

- As could be expected, location of residency impacts where residents travel outside the region for recreation. For example, residents in Ladysmith (88%) indicated more travel to Nanaimo for recreation than resident living in southern areas of the region. Conversely, residents living in Duncan, North Cowichan and electoral areas south (A,B, and C) were more likely to travel to Victoria.

Q: Please identify the types of recreation activities that members of your household travel outside of the Cowichan region to participate in. **Select all that apply.**

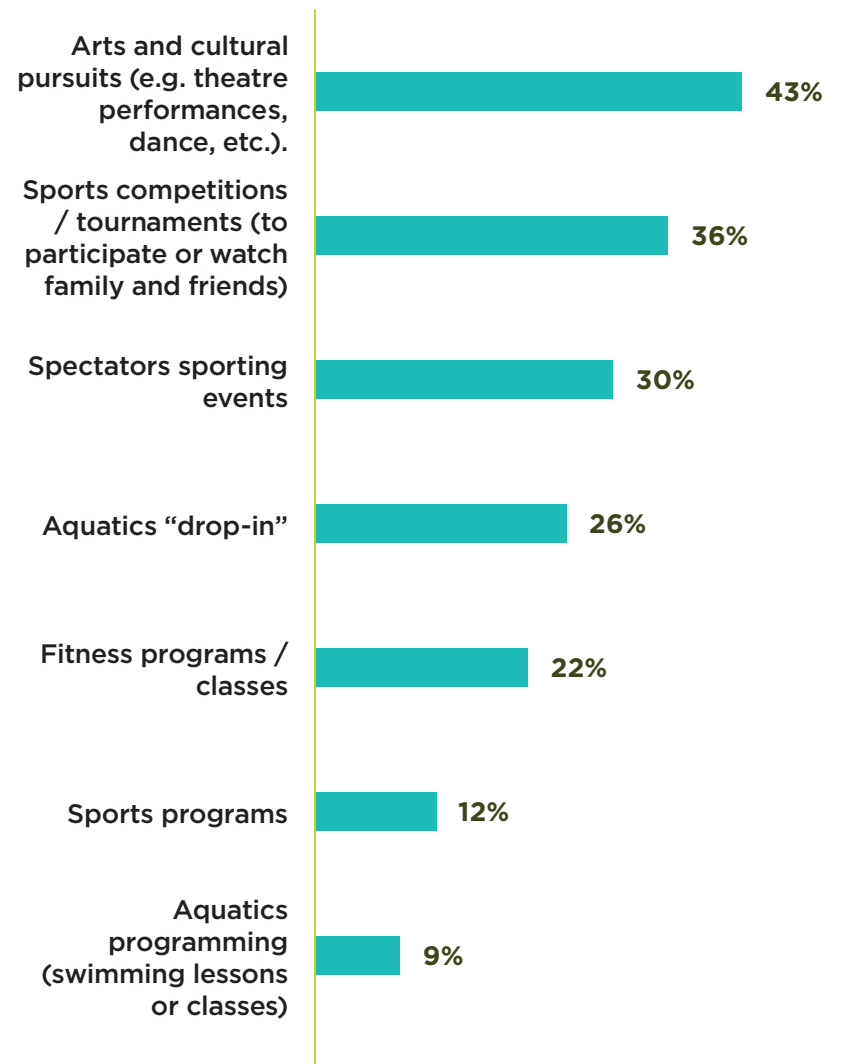
Respondents who leave the Cowichan region for recreation are most commonly travelling for arts and culture activities (43%), sport competitions or tournaments (36%), and spectator sporting events (30%).



Subsegment Analysis

- Those who live in Areas A, B and C (39%) and the Town of Ladysmith (38%) are more likely to travel outside the region for drop-in aquatics than those living in Areas D, E, Duncan and North Cowichan (12%).
- Those who live in Areas A, B and C (32%) are more likely to travel outside the region for fitness programs and classes than those living in Areas D, E, Duncan and North Cowichan (13%).
- Those who live in Areas A, B and C (16%) are more likely to travel outside the region for aquatics lessons and programming than those living in and Areas D, E, Duncan and North Cowichan (5%).
- Those who live in Areas D, E, Duncan and North Cowichan (45%), and the Town of Ladysmith (44%) are more likely to travel outside the region for arts and cultural activities than those living in Areas I, F and the Town of Lake Cowichan (28%).
- Households with children are more likely to say they leave the Cowichan region to participate in aquatic drop-in activities (42%) than households with no children (18%).

Graph 36: Activities Households Participate in Outside of the Cowichan Region



6.2.3. Future Recreation Priorities

The following questions aimed to further explore perceived recreation needs and priorities amongst residents.

Q: Is there a need for new and/or enhanced recreation facilities to be developed in the Cowichan region?

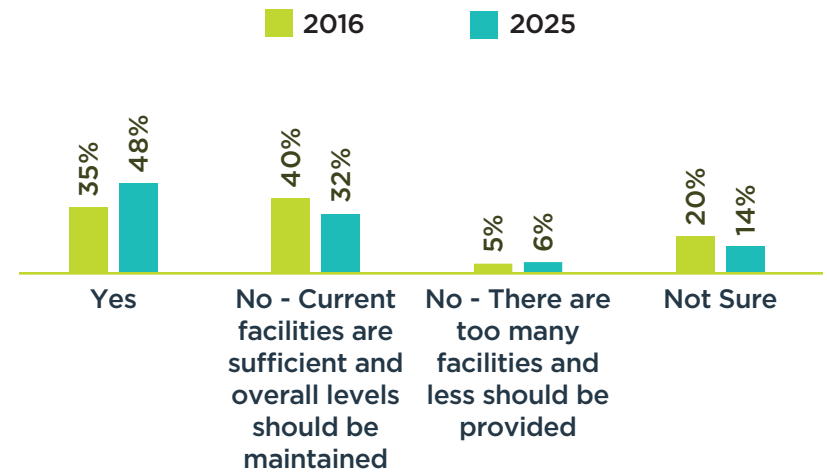
Nearly half of respondents in 2025 (48%) believe additional or improved facilities are required in the Cowichan region, an increase from 35% in 2016. At the same time, fewer respondents feel that current facilities are sufficient, dropping from 40% to 32%.



Subsegment Analysis

- Those who live in Areas A, B and C (64%) and Areas I, F and the Town of Lake Cowichan (62%) were more likely to say new or enhanced recreation facilities are needed than those living in the Town of Ladysmith (41%), and Areas D, E, Duncan and North Cowichan (42%).
- Households with no children were more likely to say that the current facilities are sufficient and that levels should be maintained (37%) than households with children (17%).
- Households with children were more likely to say that there is a need for new or enhanced recreation facilities in the Cowichan region (72%) than households with no children (40%).

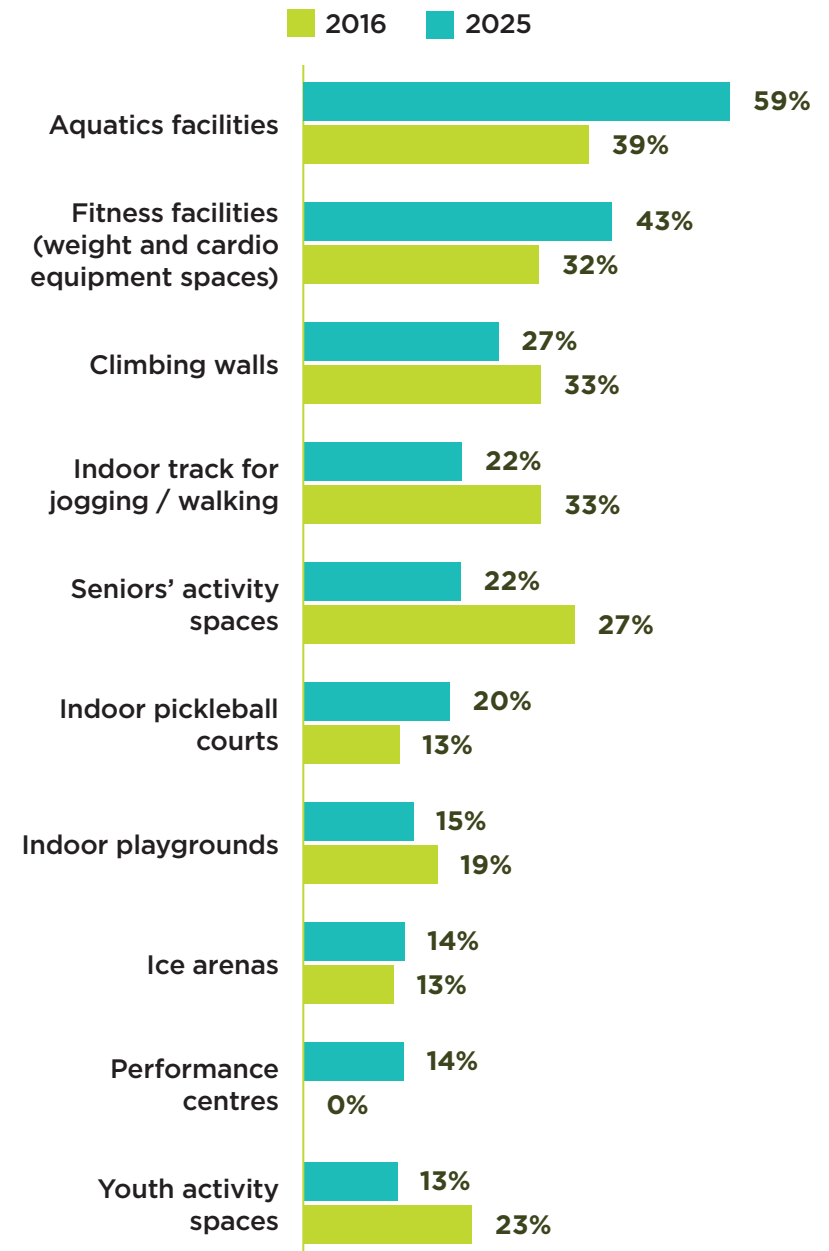
Graph 37: Is there a need for new and or enhanced recreation facilities to be developed in the Cowichan region



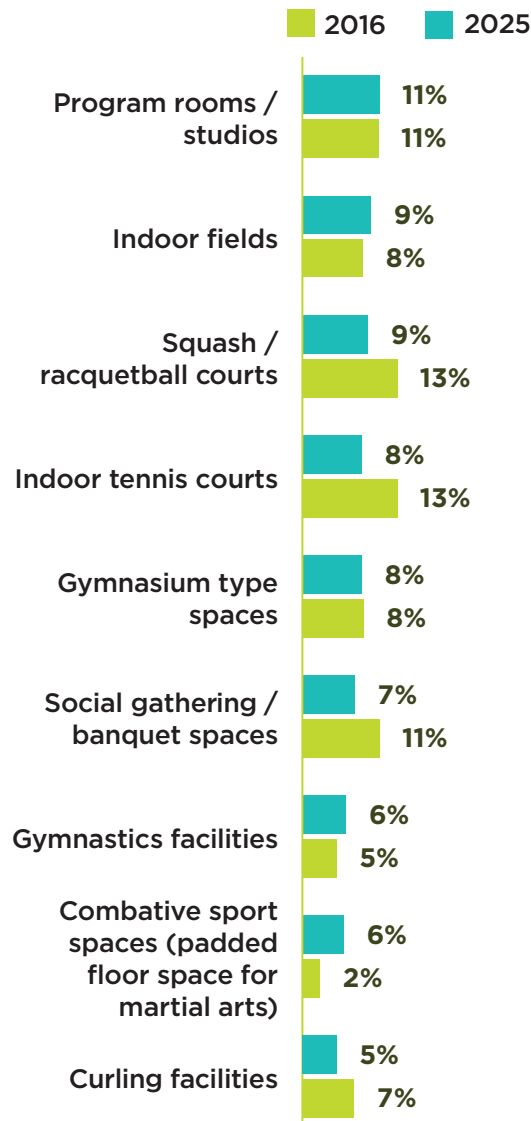
Q: Please identify up to five indoor recreation facility types that you believe should be a priority for enhanced provision in the Cowichan region. **Note: Enhanced provision could occur through new development and/or upgrades to existing facilities.**

Those who indicated a need for new or enhanced facilities in the Cowichan region were presented with a list of indoor facility types and asked to identify which should be prioritized for future investment. Support for aquatics facilities has risen from 39% in 2016 to 59% in 2025 making it the most frequently selected priority. Fitness facilities follow at 43%, up from 32%. Interest has also increased in climbing walls, indoor tracks, seniors' activity spaces, and indoor pickleball courts, each showing notable growth over the past decade.

Graph 38: Indoor Infrastructure for Investment



Graph 14 Cont. Indoor Infrastructure for Investment



Subsegment Analysis

- Those who live in Areas A, B and C (76%) and Areas I, F and the Town of Lake Cowichan (70%) were more likely to say investment is needed in aquatics facilities than those living in Areas D, E, Duncan and North Cowichan (46%).
- Those who live in Areas I, F and the Town of Lake Cowichan (33%) were more likely to say investment is needed in an indoor walking and jogging track than those living in Areas A, B and C (20%), and Areas D, E, Duncan and North Cowichan (21%).
- Those who live in Areas D, E, Duncan and North Cowichan (24%) were more likely to say investment is needed in indoor pickleball courts than those living in the Town of Ladysmith (12%) and Areas I, F and the Town of Lake Cowichan (11%).
- Those who live in Areas A, B and C (46%), Areas I, F and the Town of Lake Cowichan (46%), and Areas H, G and Ladysmith (43%) were more likely to say investment is needed in fitness facilities than those living in the Town of Ladysmith (33%).
- Those who live in the Town of Ladysmith (18%), and Areas D, E, Duncan and North Cowichan (17%) were more likely to say investment is needed in ice arenas than those living in Areas A, B and C (9%) and Areas I, F and the Town of Lake Cowichan (9%).
- Households with no children were more likely to say that investment is needed in seniors activity spaces (29%) than households with children (9%).
- Households with children were more likely to say that investment is needed in indoor playgrounds (32%) than households with no children (5%).

Q: Please identify up to five outdoor recreation facility types that you believe should be a priority for enhanced provision in the Cowichan region. **Note: Enhanced provision could occur through new development and/or upgrades to existing facilities.**

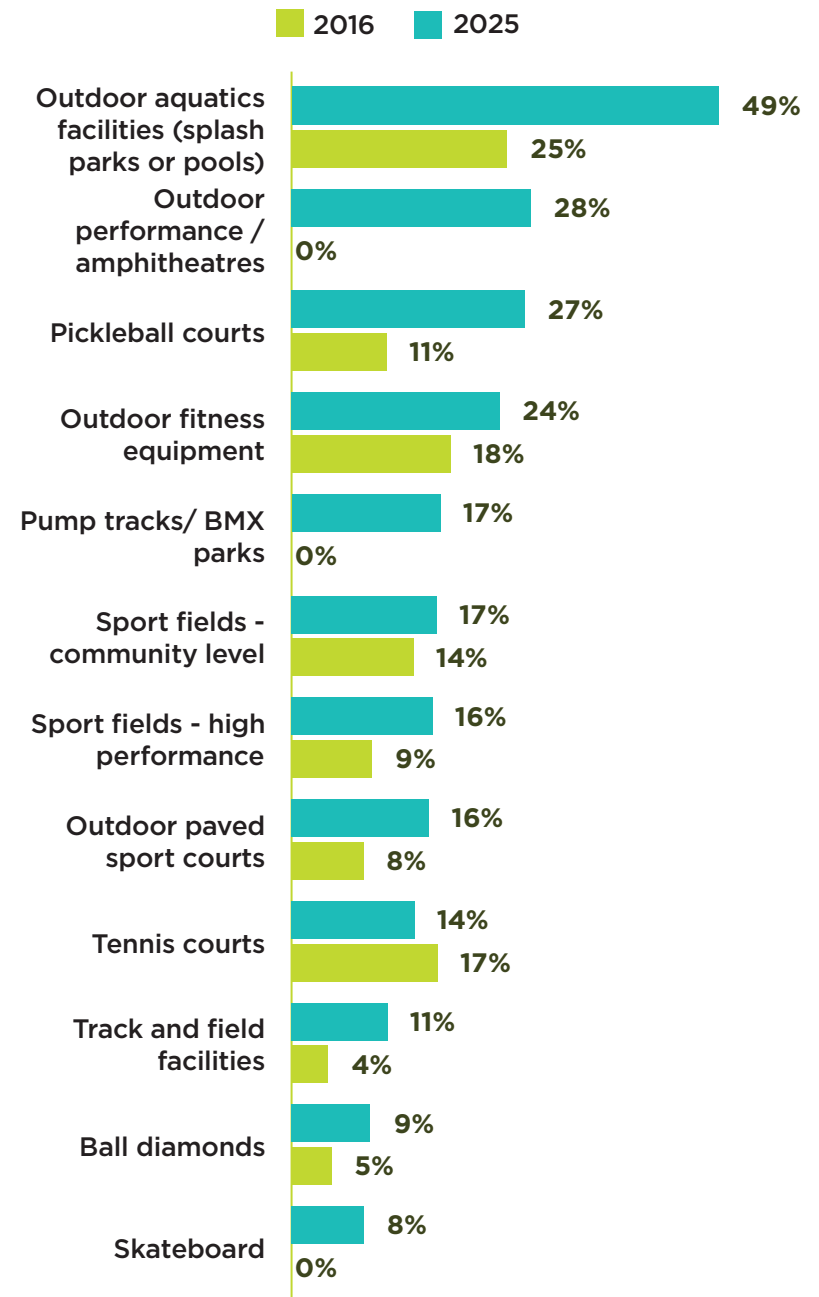
Considering outdoor amenities, respondents indicated several priority areas for future investment. Outdoor aquatics facilities such as splash parks and pools received the highest level of support, increasing from 25% in 2016 to 49% in 2025. Respondents also indicated interest in outdoor performance spaces and amphitheatres (28%), pickleball courts (27%), outdoor fitness equipment (24%), and pump tracks/BMX parks (17%), all showing growth from 2016.



Subsegment Analysis

- Those who live in Areas A, B and C (19%) were more likely to say investment is needed in tennis courts than those living in the Town of Ladysmith (6%) and Areas I, F and the Town of Lake Cowichan (5%).
- Residents of Areas D, E, Duncan and North Cowichan (31%) were more likely say investment is needed in pickleball courts than those living in the Town of Ladysmith (18%) and especially Areas I, F and the Town of Lake Cowichan (10%).
- Those who live in Areas I, F and the Town of Lake Cowichan (35%) and the Town of Ladysmith (33%) were more likely to say investment is needed in outdoor fitness equipment than those living in North Cowichan (18%).
- Those who live in Areas I, F and the Town of Lake Cowichan (69%) were more likely to say investment is needed in outdoor aquatics than those who live in Areas D, E, Duncan and North Cowichan (47%), and the Town of Ladysmith (47%).
- Households with children were more likely to say that investment is needed in outdoor aquatic facilities (63%) than households with no children (42%).
- Households with children were more likely to say that investment is needed in pump tracks / BMX parks (33%) than households with no children (8%).

Graph 39: Outdoor Infrastructure for Investment



Q: Please use the space below to identify any other types of facilities or amenities that you think should be a priority for enhancement (new development or improvement of existing).

Respondents were asked to elaborate on their views regarding expanded recreation provision. Their comments are summarized below by theme, grouped into indoor and outdoor recreation.

Indoor Comments / Themes

Indoor Aquatic Facilities (South End, Lake Cowichan, Mill Bay, Shawnigan) - 85 comments

Respondents identified the need for additional or expanded indoor aquatic facilities outside Duncan. Common points include the desire for year-round access, reduced travel requirements, increased swimming lesson capacity, alternative water treatment options (e.g., saltwater), and fewer closures.

Indoor Multi-Use Recreation Centres (South Cowichan, Mill Bay, Cobble Hill, Shawnigan) - 60 comments

Respondents noted the need for multi-purpose recreation centres incorporating fitness spaces, gymnasiums, indoor walking tracks, childcare areas, arts and culture rooms, and community gathering spaces.

Indoor Children and Youth Spaces - 40 comments

Respondents referenced the need for additional youth-oriented indoor amenities, including indoor play structures, climbing or ninja-type facilities, youth lounges, gymnasium access, and diverse teen programming.

Fitness and Wellness Spaces - 35 comments

Respondents indicated a need for expanded fitness amenities such as additional studios, weight rooms, improved aquafit capacity, saunas/hot rooms, and more flexible or extended program hours (including off-hours access).

Ice Facilities (Arenas) - 30 comments

Respondents identified a need for additional ice surfaces, improved access for youth, and upgraded or new arenas in areas such as North Cowichan and Lake Cowichan.

Arts, Culture and Performance Spaces - 25 comments

Comments highlighted interest in small and mid-sized performance spaces, rehearsal rooms, cultural program areas, and flexible multipurpose arts venues.

Indoor Courts and Specialty Sport Spaces - 20 comments

Respondents expressed interest in facilities such as indoor pickleball courts, badminton courts, sport courts for basketball or roller hockey, indoor turf areas, and field houses.

Facility Upgrades and Accessibility Improvements - 20 comments

Several comments noted the need for improved washrooms and change rooms, cleaner facilities, consistent operating hours, enhanced safety, and better accessibility for users with varying mobility needs.

Outdoor Comments / Themes

Trails, Paths and Cycling Infrastructure - 95 comments

Respondents indicated a need for expanded multi-use trails, off-road cycling networks (including rail trail connections), well-signed hiking routes, inter-community walking connections, accessible and shaded pathways, and improved traffic safety along rural walking routes.

Outdoor Aquatics (Pools, Splash Parks, Lake Access) - 65 comments

Comments included requests for outdoor pools in multiple communities, enhanced splash parks, additional lake and river access points, kayak launch sites, and safer public swimming areas supported by washrooms and parking.

Fields, Courts and Outdoor Sport Spaces - 55 comments

Respondents noted the need for more turf fields, additional lit sports fields, disc golf facilities, beach volleyball courts, outdoor pickleball courts (particularly in specific sub-areas), and multi-sport outdoor pads.

Dog Parks and Off-Leash Areas - 35 comments

Comments indicated interest in additional or improved off-leash dog parks, designated dog-friendly trails, and amenities such as waste bins, water access, and adequate parking.

Natural Area Access and Outdoor Recreation Amenities - 30 comments

Comments included the need for improved access to parks, beaches, rivers, and nature-based recreation areas, along with supporting amenities such as washrooms, picnic shelters, and day-use gathering areas.

Playground and Family Recreation Areas - 25 comments

Respondents identified the need for upgraded playgrounds, shaded play areas, neighbourhood-based family spaces, and multi-age outdoor recreation areas.

Climbing, Adventure and Youth Outdoor Spaces - 20 comments

Comments referenced interest in outdoor climbing walls, pump tracks, bike jump parks, and improved or expanded skateparks.

Boating, Launch Ramps and Waterfront Access - 20 comments

Respondents noted the need for improved boat launches, expanded marine access in Cowichan Bay and Mill Bay, and safer, better-designed parking and loading areas.

6.2.4 Priority Setting Considerations

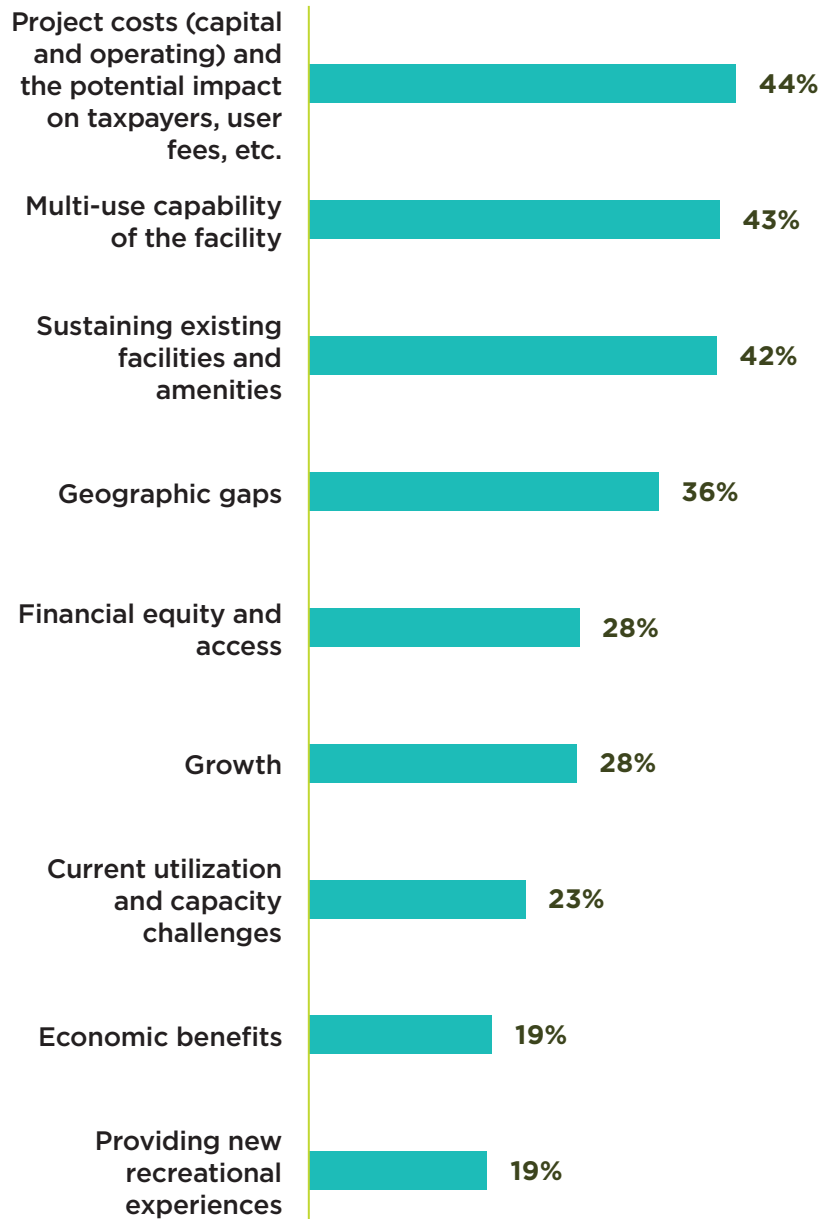
Q: The CVRD and its recreation partners may need to set priorities for future facility projects. To help guide decisions, please choose the three (3) most important factors from the list below that you think should shape where and how investments are made.

With limited resources, the CVRD and its municipal partners must prioritize its recreation investments. Respondents were presented with a list of potential factors and asked to identify their top three. Project costs and the impact on taxpayers (44%), multi-use capacity (43%), and sustaining existing facilities and amenities (42%) emerged as the leading considerations for guiding future investment decisions.

Graph on following page.



Graph 40: Priority Criteria



Subsegment Analysis

- Those who live in Areas A, B and C (53%) and Areas I, F and the Town of Lake Cowichan (53%) were more likely to prioritize addressing geographic gaps in recreation services than those who live in the Town of Ladysmith (31%), and Areas D, E, Duncan and North Cowichan (27%).
- Residents of Areas D, E, Duncan and North Cowichan (48%), and the Town of Ladysmith (47%) were more likely to prioritize sustaining existing facilities than those living in Areas A, B and C (32%) and Areas I, F and the Town of Lake Cowichan (27%).
- Those who live in Areas I, F and the Town of Lake Cowichan (33%) are more likely to prioritize economic and tourism benefits than residents of Areas A, B and C (16%), the Town of Ladysmith (16%), and North Cowichan (19%).
- Those who live in Areas A, B and C (37%) are more likely to prioritize growth-based facility investment than those living in the Town of Ladysmith (19%) and Areas I, F and the Town of Lake Cowichan (27%).
- Households with no children are more likely to prioritize sustaining existing facilities (48%) than households with children (26%).
- Households with children are more likely to prioritize addressing geographic gaps (48%) than households with no children (32%).
- Households with children are more likely to prioritize growth and projects that will help service growing and or projected growth areas (41%) than households with no children (23%).

Respondents were asked to explain their answer regarding the prioritization of recreation investment. The responses are presented according to themes.

Tax Levels, Affordability and Fiscal Restraint - 170 comments

Respondents emphasized that property taxes are already high and that additional increases for recreation are not acceptable. They stressed living-cost pressures, competing priorities (e.g., housing, policing, core infrastructure) and a preference for “must-have” over “nice-to-have” services. Several called for expenditure controls, debt avoidance and a cost-neutral approach to new initiatives.

Maintain, Renew and Optimize Existing Facilities - 140 comments

Comments indicated a preference for maintaining, repairing and upgrading current facilities rather than building new ones. Respondents highlighted the need for regular maintenance, improved cleanliness, better layout and modernization, as well as proactive asset management to avoid deferred-maintenance costs. Respondents felt that optimizing current facilities represents better value for money than new capital projects.

Efficient Use, Programming and Scheduling of Existing Assets - 110 comments

Respondents suggested that current facilities could be used more efficiently through extended hours, more consistent opening schedules, and better program design. Suggestions included off-peak and after-work time slots, expanded program variety (e.g., arts, fitness, youth programs), improved drop-in options and better coordination so families can meet multiple needs in one visit.

Geographic Equity and Underserved Areas - 100 comments

Comments pointed to gaps in indoor and outdoor recreation in specific areas particularly South Cowichan, Shawnigan/Mill Bay/Cobble Hill, Chemainus, Ladysmith and Lake Cowichan. Residents in these communities reported travelling to Duncan or other centres for basic recreation and asked that future investments address geographic imbalances before adding facilities where provision is already considered strong.

Funding Models, User-Pay Expectations and Affordability Supports - 80 comments

There were mixed views on who should pay for recreation. Some respondents advocated for stronger user-pay or cost-recovery models so that those who use facilities shoulder more of the cost, thereby limiting tax impacts. Others identified the importance of keeping user fees low and providing discounts or subsidies for low-income residents, people with disabilities, families and seniors, so that recreation remains financially accessible.

Evidence-Based, Long-Term and Transparent Decision-Making - 70 comments

Respondents requested that major investments be supported by utilization data, capacity analysis and clear business cases. They indicated that new or expanded facilities should only be pursued when existing venues are operating at or near capacity. Others highlighted the need for long-term regional planning (including growth projections), clear communication about budgets and trade-offs, and stronger transparency around project costs and ongoing operating impacts.

Preference for Multi-Use, Flexible and High-Value Facilities - 60 comments

Comments recommended multi-purpose facilities that can serve different age groups and activities (e.g., combined aquatic/fitness/fieldhouse/arts spaces). Respondents indicated that flexible, multi-use designs, shared spaces, and partnerships with schools, non-profits and private operators can improve value for money and adapt more easily to changing trends.

Natural Environment, Trails and Low-Cost Outdoor Infrastructure - 55 comments

Respondents encouraged the Cowichan region to recognize the natural environment as a key recreation asset. They suggested prioritizing trail development (including E&N rail corridor and spine trails), cycling and walking infrastructure, safe shoulders, and access to lakes, rivers and beaches.

Specific Capital Needs (Pools, Arenas, Turf Fields, Arts Spaces) - 50 comments

Although overall sentiment leaned toward fiscal caution, there were recurring requests for specific capital projects in certain areas, including additional or closer aquatic facilities (especially in South Cowichan, Shawnigan/Mill Bay, Lake Cowichan), another arena/ice sheet, more turf fields, and small-scale performing arts venues.

Access, Transportation and Inclusion for Priority Populations - 45 comments

Respondents noted that physical access to recreation can be limited by transit gaps, distance, walkability, and mobility challenges. Comments referenced the need for improved transit, safe cycling and walking routes, and facility designs that are inclusive for seniors, people with disabilities, low-income residents and unhoused individuals. Respondents emphasized that recreation investments should support equitable access across demographic groups.

Governance, Administration and Communication - 40 comments

Comments raised concerns about perceived administrative inefficiencies, growth in bureaucracy, and the design and clarity of engagement processes. Respondents called for better communication about program offerings (e.g., registration timing, pool capacity notices), clearer surveys, and more visible promotion of existing programs especially in smaller communities.



Q: Please share any final thoughts regarding recreation in the Cowichan region.

Lastly, respondents were asked to share any final thought they have regarding recreation in the Cowichan region. The responses are presented according to themes:

Taxes, Affordability & Funding Model

Comments reflected a wide range of views regarding acceptable levels of taxation and preferred funding models. Some respondents support increased taxation to improve services, while others emphasize the need to limit tax growth, reduce spending, or shift toward user-pay or parcel-based models.

Geographic Equity

Respondents highlighted perceived inequities in service distribution, noting that facilities and investments are concentrated in specific areas (e.g., Duncan/North Cowichan), leaving communities such as South Cowichan, Ladysmith, Lake Cowichan, Chemainus, and rural areas underserved relative to their tax contributions.

Aquatic Facilities & Swimming Lessons

There is consistent demand for additional or expanded aquatic facilities, particularly in the south end, Ladysmith, and Lake Cowichan. Many note limited lane-swim availability, overcrowding, and challenges obtaining swimming-lesson registrations.

Facility and Program Gaps

Comments identified needs for expanded indoor recreation spaces, weight rooms, multipurpose community hubs, indoor walking tracks, upgraded arenas, improved arts and culture venues, and additional amenities such as pickleball courts, bike parks, and youth-focused spaces.

Seniors, Disability & Accessibility

Respondents noted gaps in daytime programming, accessible facilities, and transportation supports for older adults and people with disabilities. Improved access, social opportunities, and barrier-free infrastructure are highlighted as key considerations.

Trails, Cycling & Natural Areas

Many respondents emphasized the importance of trail systems, park maintenance, natural-area protection, and improved cycling/walking connections. Some urge additional investment in active transportation, while others feel spending on trails is already sufficient.

Capacity, Crowding & Growth Pressure

Several comments indicated that existing facilities, particularly aquatics and fitness spaces, are crowded or oversubscribed. Respondents note that population growth is straining available capacity and support planning ahead for future demand.

Access, Program Timing & Transportation

Respondents identified barriers related to travel distances, lack of transit, inconvenient program times for working adults, and limited access to safe swimming locations, trails, and indoor spaces in certain communities.

Booking, Registration & Communication

Feedback highlighted challenges with online registration systems, short registration windows, insufficient notice of schedule changes or closures, and difficulty navigating program information across multiple communities and platforms.

Governance, Bureaucracy & Service Efficiency

Some respondents perceive administrative processes as inefficient or overly bureaucratic. Concerns include resource allocation, transparency, and the proportion of funding directed to administration versus direct service delivery.

Overall Satisfaction & Appreciation

Many respondents expressed general satisfaction with the diversity of recreation opportunities and natural amenities in the region. Several comments re-iterate appreciation for current services and the opportunity to participate in engagement activities.

6.2.5 About Your Household

This chart summarizes survey respondent demographics, including area of residence, housing tenure (own or rent), length of time living in the region, household composition, and the age distribution of household members.

Where Respondents Live	
Area A (Malahat and Mill Bay)	11%
Area B (Shawnigan Lake)	10%
Area C (Cobble Hill)	7%
Area D (Cowichan Bay)	6%
Area E (Cowichan Station, Glenora and Sahtlam)	4%
Area F (Cowichan Lake South and Skutz Falls)	2%
Area G (the Gulf Islands and Saltair)	4%
Area H (Diamond and North Oyster)	4%
Area I (Meade Creek and Youbou)	1%
City of Duncan	4%
Municipality of North Cowichan	32%
Town of Ladysmith	10%
Town of Lake Cowichan	3%
I do not live within any of these areas	0%
Home Ownership	
Own	93%
Rent	7%
Tenure in the Cowichan Region	
Less than 5 years	21%
5 - 10 years	20%
More than 10 years	59%

Respondent Household Expectation to Stay in the Cowichan Region for the Next 5 Years	
Yes	93%
No	1%
Unsure	6%
Household Composition	
Single Adult(s) with no Dependent Children	25%
Single Parent with Dependent Children	2%
Couple with no Dependent Children	48%
Couple with Dependent Children	25%
Household Composition by Age*	
Age 0 - 4 Years	4% (5%)
Age 5 - 9 Years	5% (5%)
Age 10 - 19 Years	9% (10%)
Age 20 - 29 Years	5% (8%)
Age 30 - 39 Years	10% (11%)
Age 40 - 49 Years	12% (11%)
Age 50 - 59 Years	12% (14%)
Age 60 - 69 Years	22% (18%)
Age 70 - 79 Years	16% (13%)
Age 80+ Years	5% (6%)

*Numbers in (brackets) reflect data from the 2021 Statistics Canada Census of the Population for comparison purposes.

6.3. Discussion Sessions Findings and Themes

Throughout October 2025 the project team met virtually with 23 community organizations across the Cowichan Valley.

The following key findings synthesize what sports organizations, arts and culture groups, youth services, community event organizers, schools, and recreation users shared throughout these engagement sessions. Together, these insights reflect the region's most pressing recreation needs, facility gaps, operational challenges, and opportunities for future investment.

**Please refer to Appendix D for a list of groups that participated.*

1. Groups said recreation demand is growing faster than facilities can keep up.

Across all sectors, groups described rising participation and limited capacity. They noted:

- Rapid population growth, especially south of Duncan and in Shawnigan Lake
- More children and youth enrolling in soccer, hockey, volleyball, and swimming
- Expanding interest in pickleball, aquatics, and accessible recreation
- A strong rebound in arts, culture, and community events since COVID

Many groups said they feel “stretched” and unable to meet demand with current facilities.

2. Ice user groups said arenas are over capacity and need expansion.

Minor hockey, figure skating, and recreational ice groups consistently said they cannot secure enough ice time. They described:

- Not enough weekday practice slots
- Waitlists for skating programs
- Growing female participation without adequate dressing rooms
- Outdated amenities at Kerry Park and Fuller Lake
- A desire for more stick and puck and development ice

Many groups believe that a second sheet of ice is needed.

3. Aquatic groups said pool space is one of the biggest regional gaps.

Swim clubs, schools, and families described significant challenges accessing pool time.

Groups told us:

- Swim lessons fill instantly
- Schools struggle to book lanes
- Competitive swimmers train in crowded conditions
- AquaFit and seniors' programs are growing
- A 50- metre pool remains a desire

Aquatic groups believe current pool capacity is not meeting community needs.

4. Field based sport groups said outdoor field capacity and quality are major issues.

Field sport groups described:

- Not enough fields to meet current demand
- School fields becoming unusable in winter
- Limited lighting restricting evening play
- A desire for additional turf fields
- Field dimensions that do not always meet sport requirements

Several groups said they are turning youth away due to lack of field space.

5. Pickleball groups said the sport is growing rapidly and facilities are not keeping up.

The Pickleball Club emphasized:

- Their membership cap is due to limited court access
- Only two courts are available for open play
- Booking systems do not reflect pickleball's social, drop in culture
- Summer heat and lack of shade make play difficult
- Additional courts, shade structures, and restrooms are top priorities

Groups said demand is beyond capacity.

6. Arts and culture groups said they feel under recognized and under resourced.

Arts organizations told us they feel overlooked in regional planning.

They described:

- No suitable mid sized performance venue
- Lack of affordable, acoustically appropriate rehearsal and theatre spaces
- Underutilized facilities due to poor acoustics or lack of electricity (outdoor)
- Stagnant funding and limited operational support
- A desire for CVRD to recognize the economic and social value of arts

Arts groups said the region needs a stronger cultural vision and dedicated facilities.

7. Youth serving groups said space, funding, and accessibility barriers limit their impact.

Youth services groups described:

- Very small program spaces that cap participation
- Transportation and financial barriers for youth
- Increased demand for social connection and therapeutic programs
- Pressure created by the closure of other community services

Groups emphasized the need for more free or low cost youth recreation opportunities.

8. Many groups said volunteer capacity is declining.

Across sectors, groups described:

- Difficulty recruiting new volunteers
- Burnout among long term volunteers
- Fewer parents staying to help with youth sports
- Administrative burdens that discourage involvement

Volunteer run groups claim that they are doing more with fewer people.

9. Groups said booking systems and communication gaps create avoidable barriers.

Groups shared challenges such as:

- Long standing bookings being overridden without notice
- Difficulty accessing school gyms and pool lanes
- Limited transparency around availability
- Booking systems that don't reflect sport specific needs (e.g., pickleball)

Many groups said they want clearer, more consistent communication from facility operators.

10. Event groups said community events are growing but limited by infrastructure and regulations.

Event organizers described:

- Restrictive park rules around music, vendor access, and food sales
- Insufficient washrooms and power for large events
- Uncertainty around safety planning requirements
- Attendance of 700-800 people without matching infrastructure

Groups said these barriers make events harder to run despite strong community interest.

11. Groups said funding and grant support are not keeping pace with needs.

Organizations noted:

- CVRD funding has remained flat
- Grant competition is increasing
- Many groups lack grant writing expertise
- Sponsorship depends heavily on volunteer effort

Groups expressed strong interest in CVRD supported grant writing and capacity building workshops.

12. Groups said communication gaps limit awareness of recreation opportunities.

Groups told us that many residents simply don't know what's available.

They noted:

- No centralized source of information
- Past brochures and guides were effective but discontinued
- Strong interest in improved outreach

Better communication was described as “an easy win” for increasing participation.

13. Many groups said recreation is essential for attracting businesses and supporting local economies.

Groups emphasized that:

- Strong recreation systems help attract professionals and families
- Events support local businesses and home based entrepreneurs
- Arts and culture contribute significant economic value

Groups encouraged CVRD to consider recreation as part of economic development strategy.

14. Groups stressed the need for long term, equitable planning across the region.

Across all sessions, groups said:

- Growth south of Duncan needs to be reflected in facility planning
- Rural areas need equitable access to recreation
- Multi use, flexible facilities are preferred
- Planning should anticipate future growth, not just current demand

Groups repeatedly emphasized the importance of regional coordination and long term vision.

6.4. Community Organization Survey Findings

Community organizations were also provided with an opportunity to provide feedback through a web-based Community Organization Questionnaire. The questionnaire explored topics such as anticipated growth trends, facility and amenity needs, and overall access to spaces. In total 44 organizations provided a response. Please refer to Appendix D for a list of participating organizations.

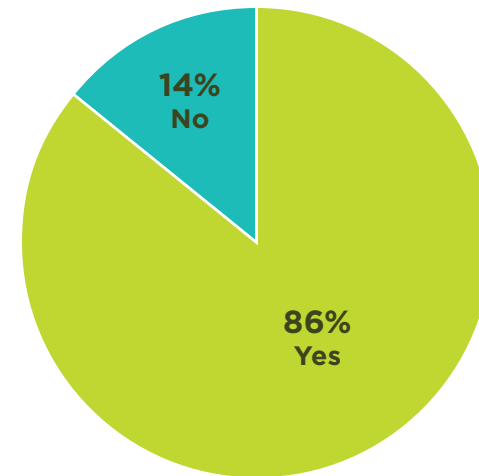
Section 1: About Your Organization

The survey began by gathering basic information about participating organizations. It was completed by a diverse mix of sport, arts, youth-serving, educational, and community groups from across the Cowichan Valley, including minor and competitive sport clubs, performing and visual arts organizations, youth service providers, schools, and community associations. Collectively, these respondents represent programs serving all ages and spanning recreation, culture, social supports, and community development throughout the region.

When asked if organizations directly provide recreation programming, the majority of groups (86%, or 36 organizations) indicated that they directly provide recreation programming, while 14% (6 organizations) do not.

Provided as follows is a summary of the results of the Community Organization Survey. ****The survey link was sent to a main contact person for each group. That individual was asked to ensure responses considered the perspectives of all group members.***

Graph 41: Does your organization directly provide recreation programming?

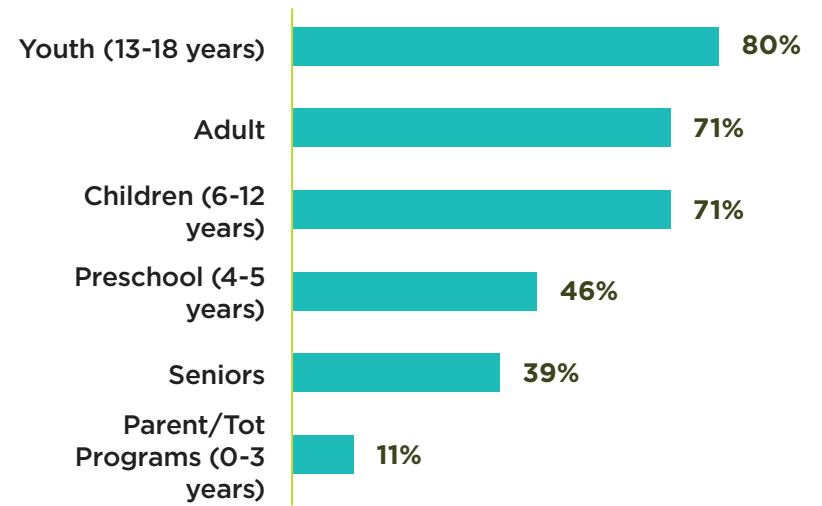


Most organizations serve multiple age groups, with the highest representation in youth (13–18 years) at 80%, followed closely by children (6–12 years) and adults (both at 71%). Preschool-aged participants (46%) and seniors (39%) are also well represented, while programs for parent/tot (0–3 years) were less common at 11%. Overall, the results show that organizations support a broad cross-section of ages, with a strong emphasis on school-aged children, youth, and adults.

Organizations reported wide variation in participants, volunteers, and staff, reflecting the diverse scale of programs across the region.

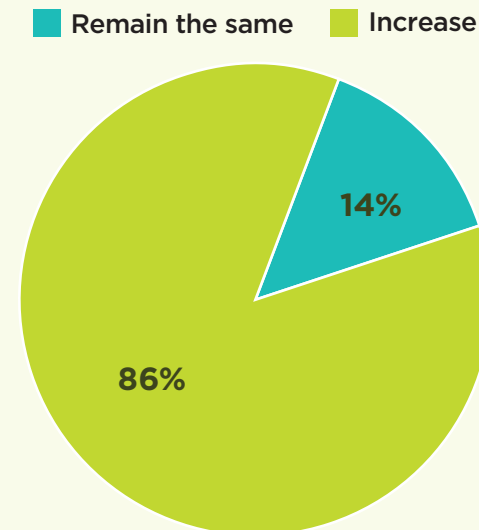
- Participants: Most serve 100–800 people annually, with a few reaching into the thousands.
- Program volunteers: Commonly 10–40, though some rely on much larger teams; a few have none.
- Other volunteers: Typically, 5–20 board or organizing volunteers, with some much higher.
- Staff: Many are fully volunteer-run; others have small teams of 1–10, and a few large organizations employ hundreds.

Graph 42: Age Groups of Participants



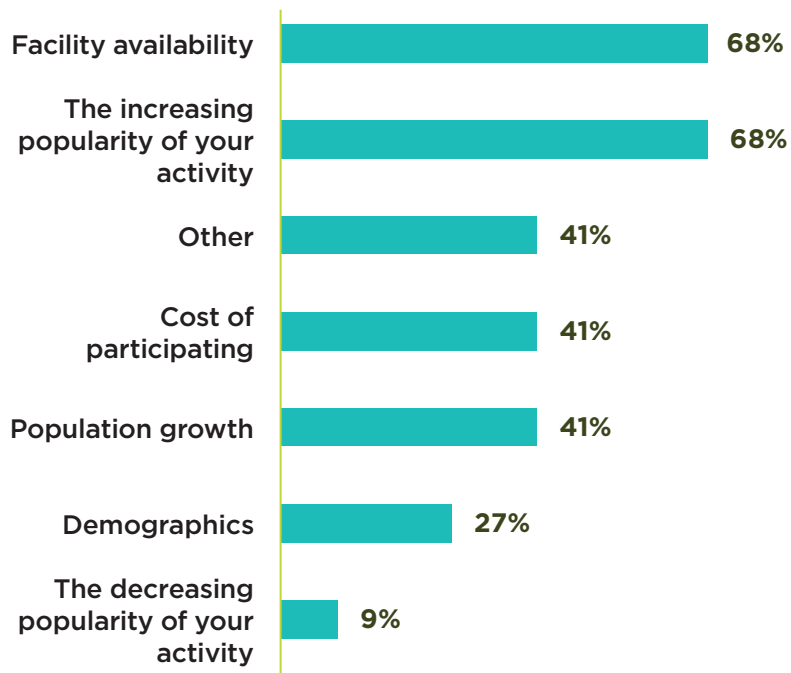
Most organizations expect growth over the next 3–5 years, with 86% (38 organizations) anticipating an increase in participants or members. Only 14% (6 organizations) expect their numbers to remain the same.

Graph 43: Participation Expectations.



Organizations identified several key factors that will influence their ability to grow over the next 3-5 years. The most significant were the increasing popularity of their activity (68%) and facility availability (68%), followed by population growth, cost of participation, and other contextual factors (each at 41%). Demographics were noted by 27% of respondents, while only 9% identified decreasing popularity as a barrier. Among those who selected “Other,” additional factors included coach and volunteer availability, facility suitability and access, funding stability, socioeconomic barriers, school growth, and practical issues such as parking. Several organizations also highlighted the need for more administrative capacity, improved officiating development, and in some cases new or expanded facilities. Others described plans to broaden programming and partnerships, which will depend on sustainable resources and adequate infrastructure.

Graph 44: Factors that Impact Growth



Section 2: Facility Usage and Future Priorities

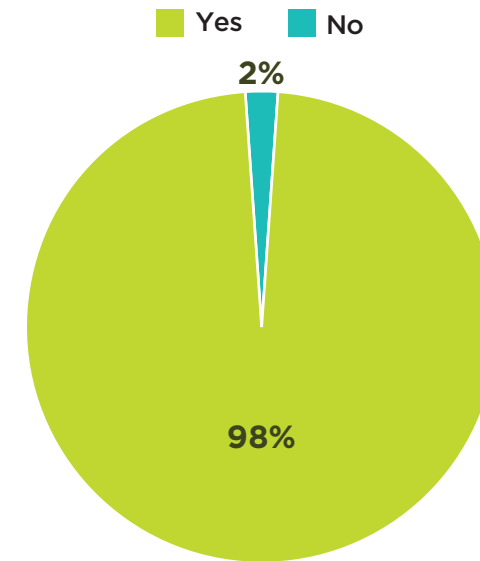
When asked about their use of facilities in the Cowichan region, 98% of organizations reported using local spaces, underscoring how essential community facilities are to delivering programs across the Valley.

Organizations were asked to identify the primary facilities they use in the Cowichan region and estimate their weekly, monthly, and annual hours of use. Responses show that groups rely on a broad mix of arenas, community centres, school gyms and fields, aquatic centres, arts venues, and outdoor spaces, with usage ranging from occasional bookings to intensive, year-round schedules.

Key themes:

- Heavy reliance on major regional facilities such as the Cowichan Community Centre, Fuller Lake Arena, Kerry Park, and the Cowichan Sportsplex.
- Frequent use of school gyms and fields, which serve as essential multi-purpose spaces.
- Frequent use of arts and cultural venues, including galleries, studios, theatres, and community halls, particularly among arts, culture, and performance-based organizations.
- Regular use of outdoor spaces, such as sports fields, parks, and trails.
- Wide variation in hours of use, from a few hours per week to thousands of hours annually.

Graph 45: Does your organization use facilities or spaces in the Cowichan region for your programs or other activities?



Most organizations reported that current recreation facilities only somewhat meet their needs. While 14% said facilities fully meet their requirements, the majority (61%) indicated they are only partially meeting needs, and 16% said facilities are not adequate. A small proportion (9%) do not use recreation facilities in the Cowichan Valley.

When asked to explain their responses, organizations described both positive experiences with certain facilities and a range of challenges that limit program delivery and growth. Many noted increasing pressure on ice, turf, and field spaces; limited availability of suitable rooms; affordability and scheduling barriers; and aging or inadequate infrastructure. Arts and culture groups highlighted ongoing shortages of rehearsal, storage, and mid-sized performance spaces, while rural organizations pointed to the need for upgraded halls and better visibility. Across sectors, facility constraints continue to shape program capacity and community access.

Graph 46: Degree to Which Current Recreation Facilities in the Cowichan Region Meet Groups Needs



Key Themes

- Rising demand and limited availability for ice, turf, and field space
- Suitability issues (flooring, acoustics, lighting, accessibility, aging infrastructure)
- Affordability and scheduling barriers for non-profits
- Gaps in arts and culture spaces
- Rural facility and visibility challenges
- Program and event growth limited by space constraints

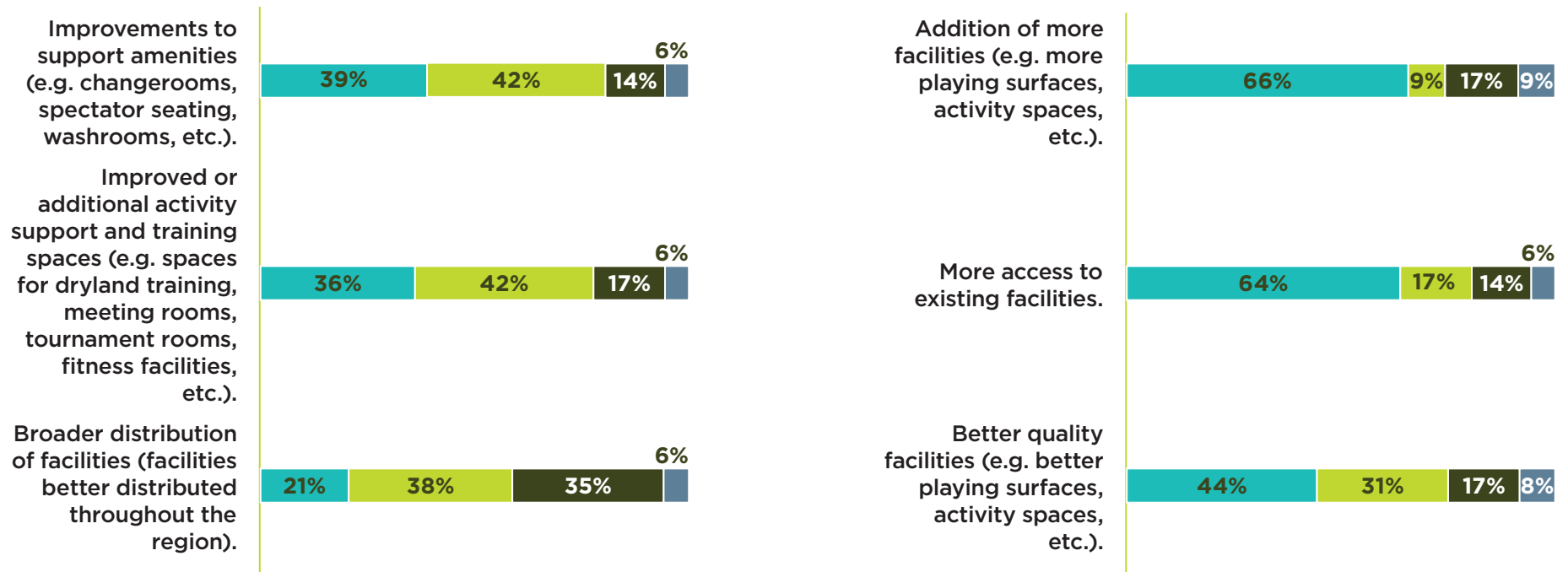


When asked how important different types of facility investments would be, organizations highlighted clear priorities. Adding more facilities (66% very important) and improving access to existing ones (64%) emerged as the strongest needs. Many also emphasized better facility quality (44% very important), upgraded amenities (39%), and expanded training spaces (36%), while a smaller share indicated that some improvements, particularly broader geographic distribution (35% not important), were not priorities for their organization.

When asked to explain their responses, organizations provided additional context about the types of facility investments and improvements that would support their operations. Comments referenced needs such as additional ice surfaces, more indoor training options, and small community oriented performance spaces. Some noted that aging or overlooked facilities could benefit from upgrades, and a few highlighted travel distance or limited access as barriers for certain participants. Others pointed to the importance of affordable, locally available spaces and social recreation areas for different age groups.

Graph 47: Importance of Facility Investments

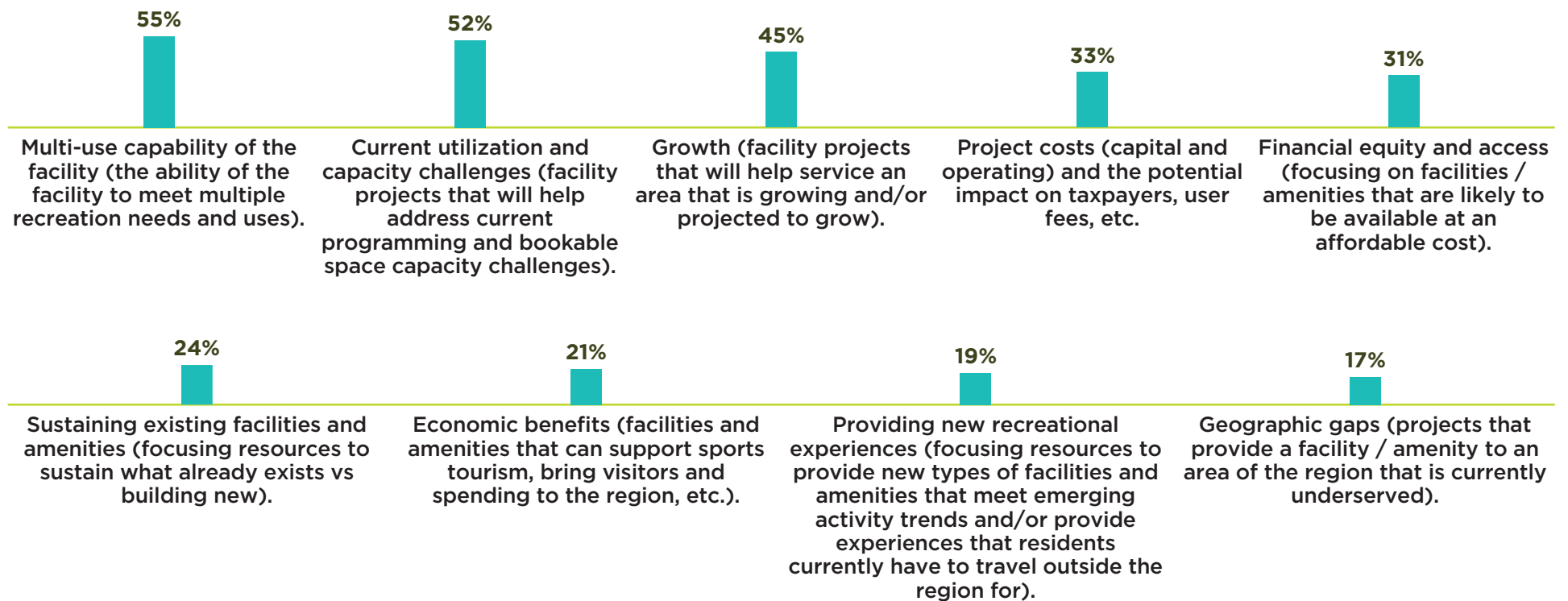
■ Very Important ■ Somewhat Important
■ Not Important ■ Not Sure / Not Applicable



Organizations identified multi-use capability (55%), addressing current utilization and capacity challenges (52%), and supporting growth in expanding areas of the region (45%) as the top considerations for future recreation facility projects. Cost considerations (33%) and financial equity and access (31%) were also commonly selected.

Organizations explained their choices by emphasizing the importance of investing in facilities that address current capacity pressures, support high demand activities, and offer multi use flexibility. Several noted the need to sustain and upgrade existing facilities, ensure financial accessibility, and consider economic benefits tied to tournaments and events. Others highlighted geographic gaps, the need for centrally located or intergenerational community spaces, and planning for growth to keep pace with increasing demand. Overall, comments reflected a balance between maintaining what exists, expanding capacity, and ensuring equitable, affordable access.

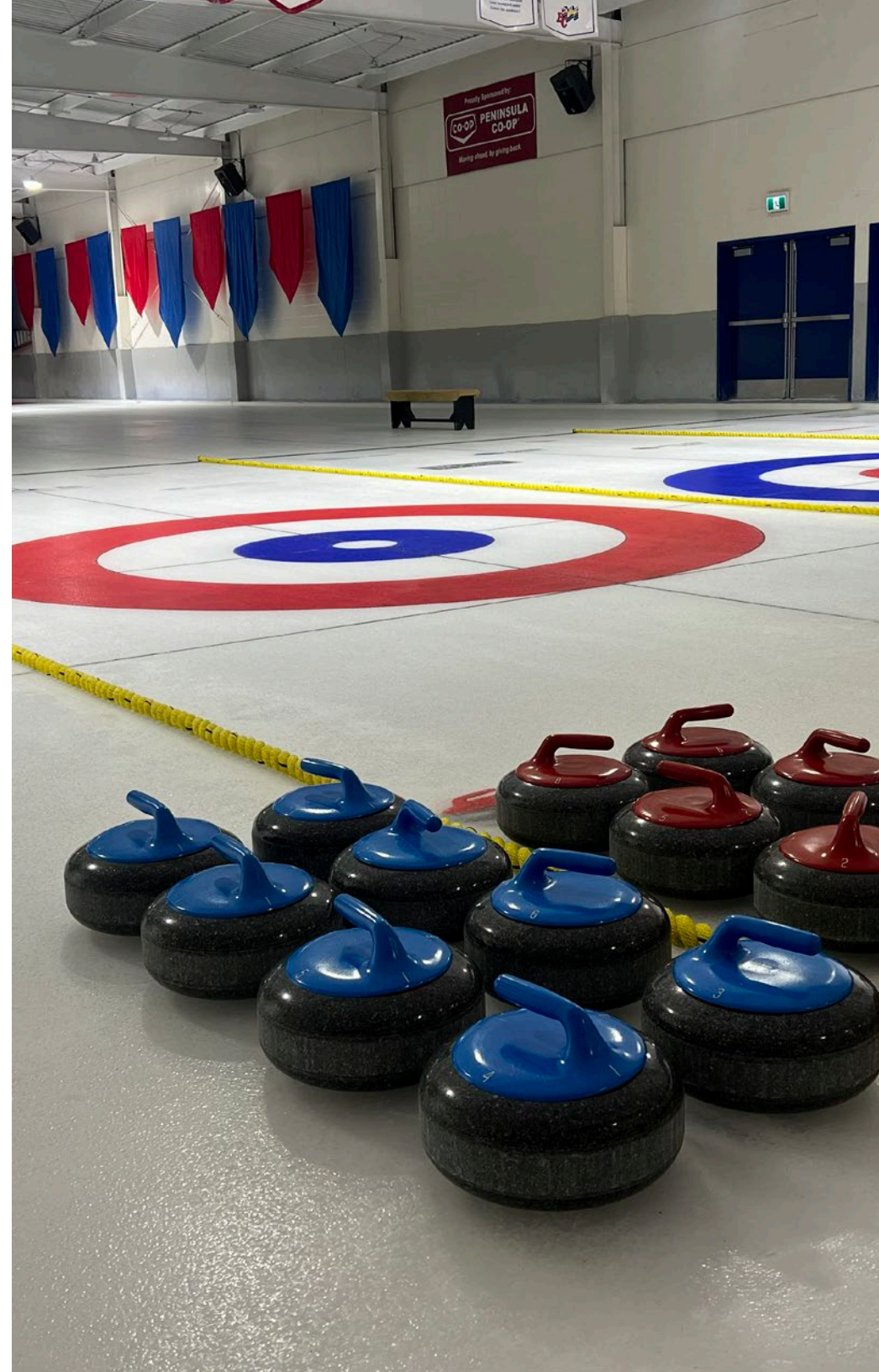
Graph 48: Considerations to Evaluate and Rank Potential Recreation Facility Projects



Section 3: Other Comments

This question invited organizations to share any additional comments about recreation needs and priorities in the Cowichan region. Their responses provided broader context on pressures facing both sport and recreation groups and performing arts organizations, as well as the types of spaces and supports that would most strengthen community access and participation. The key themes that emerged include:

- Growing demand for sport facilities, especially additional ice, turf, and indoor training spaces
- Upgrades and maintenance needs for aging community halls, parks, and indoor venues
- Strong interest in affordable, multi-use community spaces for classes, meetings, arts, and drop-in programs
- Challenges for performing arts groups in accessing suitable, affordable, well-equipped venues
- Concerns about affordability and barriers to participation, particularly for youth, seniors, and lower-income families
- Need for safe, welcoming spaces for preteens and teens
- Importance of proactive planning to keep pace with rapid regional growth
- Recognition of recreation and arts as contributors to community wellbeing, connection, and resident attraction/retention



6.5. Open Houses and “Pop Ups”

4 open houses and 3 “pop-ups” were held in September 2025. In total, an estimated 50 individuals were engaged through conversations about topics related to recreation across the region. The open house and pop-up events also provided an opportunity to share information on how to participate in the Resident Survey and overall Needs Assessment purpose and outcomes.

Summarized as follows are key themes from the conversations and as provided via sticky notes on the comment boards and panels.

- Recreation facilities and opportunities are highly valued and important to quality of life. Individuals engaged at the events strongly supported the CVRD and its partners undertaking future planning.
- Nature based activities (e.g. hiking, trail walking, mountain biking, etc.) are a significant aspect of recreation in the region. While the Needs Assessment is focused more on major facility sites, individuals were keen to express that future planning for recreation needs to encompass all forms of recreation and leisure.
- There remains a strong desire for an aquatics facility in the south part of the Cowichan Valley. However, other individuals also expressed skepticism over whether a new facility was financially viable and suggested that resident expectations (e.g. acceptable drive time to existing facilities) may need to evolve.
- The growth of pickleball requires additional infrastructure (indoor and outdoor courts).

Open House and Pop-Up Locations

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| • Frank Jameson Community Centre | • Kerry Park Recreation Centre |
| • Cowichan Aquatics Centre | • Cowichan Sportsplex |
| • Cowichan Lake Sport Arena | • Cowichan Community Centre |

THE COWICHAN VALLEY RECREATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD), in collaboration with municipal partners, are conducting a Recreation Needs Assessment. This planning project will identify priorities for recreation infrastructure over the next 10-15 years.

The assessment will explore:

- **Facility Enhancements**
Renovations, retrofits, and upgrades to existing regionally significant facilities.
- **New Facility Development**
Recommendations for new recreational spaces to meet the evolving needs of our growing communities.

Your input will help ensure that future recreation infrastructure reflects the values, interests, and priorities of Cowichan Valley residents.

We Need to Hear From You!
You can share your thoughts on recreation facility needs and priorities in the following ways.

- 1. Answer the question presented on the next panel!**
Simply write your ideas directly on the board in the space provided or on a sticky note.
- 2. Complete the Resident Survey**
Look for a postcard in your mailbox that includes a unique access code. By using that code, you can participate in a household survey. A link to the project page from where the survey can be accessed is provided on the other panel. A non-coded version will also be available.
 - The survey is available using this QR code or on the website at planyourcowichan.ca/recneeds
 - Paper copies are also available at most recreation facilities in the region.
 - The survey will be available until **September 30, 2025**.
- 3. Attend An Open House Event**
The open houses will be casual 'mixer' style events. Activity panels will be set-up to gather your thoughts on recreation needs and priorities. Project team members will be available to engage in discussion and hear your perspectives.

Saturday, September 27, 2025

- Frank Jameson Community Centre from **10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.**
- Cowichan Aquatic Centre from **2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

Sunday, September 28, 2025

- Cowichan Lake Sports Arena from **10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.**
- Kerry Park Recreation Centre from **2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

CVRD
COWICHAN SPORTSPLEX
NORTH Cowichan



7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1. Summary of Key Takeaways from the Research and Analysis

The research and engagement contained in Sections 2 – 6 of this Needs Assessment provides a wealth of data that helps better understand the state of recreation infrastructure in the Cowichan Valley. Synthesized as follows are key takeaways that suggest strengths, gaps and identify potential future planning considerations.



Activity levels are high in the Cowichan Valley. Demographics and the availability of opportunities all contribute to a recreation ecosystem that is characterized by a diversity of interests and high expectations for service offerings.



There is likely to be continued demand for fitness and indoor programming space.

Many of the publicly provided fitness spaces and gymnasiums in the Cowichan Valley are highly utilized with indications that capacity at some of these spaces becomes limited during peak times. Increasing demands for sport dry-land training, casual gymnasium use (e.g. drop-in times), and other non-traditional uses (e.g. use of gymnasiums for community events, public health, performances, etc.) are likely to continue driving demand for these flexible types of spaces.



Future major facility investment will need to balance cost with a calculation of benefit.

Arenas, aquatics, and theatre facilities represent the three highest cost amenities to build and operate amongst the regionally significant facilities. All three of these amenities are highly valued, utilized, and face varying degrees of capacity challenges during peak seasons and times. However, increasing the supply of these amenities will need to be balanced with other amenity and facility needs.



Increased data collection is required to better understand supply and demand for outdoor amenities.

Bookings data collected from the project partners reflects that capacity challenges may exist at ball diamonds and some select sport field sites. However, actual vs booked use of ball diamonds and sport fields may not always be aligned given the low cost of booking high volumes of time and groups wanting to mitigate against inclement weather. As many sport courts are used casually (non-booked) data is also limited to understand the degree of actual use. Implementing a more robust spot count program or use of other technologies (counters, purchase of movement data, etc.) could help better understand and inform future court, sport field, and ball diamond investment.



The CVRD and its partners may need to revisit or better define what a “regionally significant” facility is to inform future planning and decision making. Recreation preferences and infrastructure demands are dynamic and continually evolving. The current portfolio of regional significant facilities funded by all taxpayers across the CVRD includes arenas, aquatics facilities, a major sports park, performance theatre, curling rinks, fitness, gymnasium, and a mixed array of other program spaces included in these facilities. While there are no indications that any of the previously noted spaces should not be regionally funded, future demands and trends may require the CVRD and its partners to consider other amenity projects that meet a reasonable threshold for being regionally provided (e.g. major pickleball hub facility).



Equity, inclusion, and access are important values and key considerations for future recreation facility planning. The regional recreation model has enabled a well-balanced provision of recreation infrastructure across the region, including in smaller communities that may not be able to viably support major facility and amenity types without drawing from a broader funding area. Spatial analysis also reflects that individuals with access to a motorized vehicle have relatively strong access to most types of recreational opportunities. However, recreation leverages the maximum possible benefit when it is accessible to all residents, including those that may face financial, transportation, physical or other barriers to accessing facilities and programs. Future recreation planning will need to consider geographic distribution of facilities (e.g. recreation hubs vs smaller sites/facilities) and continue to identify ways to expand the benefits of recreation to all.



7.2. Establishing Potential Priorities (Framework)

The Needs Assessment was tasked with recommending priorities for regionally significant facility investment over the next 10-15 years. To achieve these recommendations in a data-driven, transparent and logic-based manner, a Prioritization Framework was developed and used to score and rank several different types of recreation amenities. The Framework translates the research and engagement findings into inputs (criteria) that helps provide a relative ranking of which amenities may warrant a higher or lower level of future investment. **This ranking is not meant to be absolute but rather a reference point – Step 3 of the Framework (as contained in the following Section 7.3.) considers the rankings but also integrates or further factors in other practical considerations such as potential amenity synergies, co-location opportunities, financial resourcing, land supply, renewal need of existing infrastructure, planning pre-requisites, growth areas, etc.**

Figure 2. Regional Recreation Amenity Prioritization Framework Overview



Table 39 (see the following two pages) summarizes the Criteria and Weighting Value applied to each. The Weighting Value applied to each Criteria reflects that while all of the Criteria are important, some should be elevated in their importance when scoring and ranking the amenity types. **The detailed scoring metric and results are provided in Appendix E.*

Table 39: Criteria and Weighting Overview

Criteria	Rationale for this Criteria and Its Relative Weighting	How was it scored?	Weighting Value
Community Demand	Service provision of any type ultimately needs to consider what the residents it serves deem to be most important. Conversely, the provision of recreation must also not solely be based on demand and recognize cost, equity, and benefit. As such, an amenity can still ‘overcome’ the high weighting value place on this criteria if it scores highly across several other criteria.	Using findings from the Resident Survey.	3
Capital Cost	Resources are limited and the funding of recreation infrastructure needs to consider financial realities, including potential implications related to debt servicing, the viability of a referendum process, etc.	A relative score is given to the amenity types based on a high-level unit cost range.	2
Operating Cost	Beyond simply the capital cost of developing infrastructure, public sector operators must consider the only subsidy an amenity requires and the associated tax impact. As such, this criteria is weighted equally to the capital cost.	A relative score is given to the amenity types based on a typical level of subsidy.	2
Financial Equity and Access	Recreation services achieve the highest level of benefit when facilities (and the programming that occur in them) are accessible to all residents, regardless of financial means. As such this criteria is highly weighted to reflect these values and benefits considerations.	Score based on whether the amenity is typically access at a no/low cost vs requires a higher cost to use.	2
Populations Served	As with financial equity and access, recreation services lever a high level of benefit when they serve a broad cross-section of residents.	Score based on whether the amenity provides programming and drop-in opportunities across a wide array of interests and age groupings	2
Utilization and Capacity Indicators	If capacity is limited across a type/category of amenity, the ability for residents to participate in programming may be limited. Additionally, many tenured groups will not be able to grow and emerging groups and activity interests will not have sufficient space to expand or even initiate programming.	Relative score for the amenity types based on the available utilization data and capacity analysis presented in the Needs Assessment.	2

Criteria	Rationale for this Criteria and Its Relative Weighting	How was it scored?	Weighting Value
Geographic Gaps	The Cowichan Valley is a large geographic area with a fairly concentrated population. While complete geographic distribution of all amenity types is not realistic, potential geographic gaps should be considered to some degree in the evaluation of amenity need.	Use of the research, community analysis, and spatial analysis to assess if an amenity may not have equitable geographic distribution.	2
Community Group Input and Their Anticipated Growth	Organized sport, recreation, and culture organizations are primary users of many amenities. As such, their input is important to capture as a framework criteria. However, since their ability to access space is also largely captured under the 'Utilization and Capacity' criteria as well as the broader 'Community Demand' criteria, this criteria is given a slightly lower weighting value	Findings from the discussion sessions and Community Group Survey.	1
Provincial and National Trends	Considering broader trends sources and data can help public sector providers anticipate activities that may be emerging, declining, or evolving. As trends can be hard to assess across all amenity types, this criteria is weighted lower but still included in the overall scoring of the amenities.	Relative scoring based on the growth outlook of activities that are likely to take place at the amenities being scored.	1
Economic Benefits	Some types of recreation amenities can drive significant non-local visitation and associated spending. This can occur through hosting tournaments, competitions, and performances or as destination facilities that draw from a broader catchments area due to the uniqueness / appeal of the amenity or facility cluster.	Scoring based on the likelihood of the amenity type drawing non-local spending and visitation.	1

7.3. Recommended Recreation Infrastructure Strategies

Table 40 reflects recommended strategies for amenity types that are currently provided at the regionally significant facilities or may warrant future consideration for regional funding contributions as part of facility expansion, retrofits, or new development. These strategies are informed by the Prioritization Framework ranking while also factoring in practical considerations such as amenity synergies and co-location opportunities, renewal need, and geographic gaps/supply. Based on these practical considerations, amenity type that score lower may still be recommended for capital investment to sustain existing service levels in a safe and functional manner (but are unlikely to be recommended for an increased level of service).

Table 40: Recommended Recreation Infrastructure Strategies

Amenity Type	Relative Ranking (as per Step 2 of the Prioritization Framework – see Section 7.2.)	Recommended Short Term Strategy (2026 – 2031)	Recommended Longer Term Strategy (2031 – 2040)	Key Planning Considerations
Performing Arts Venues	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustain the existing Cowichan Performing Arts Centre through sound asset management practices. • Undertaken a feasibility study to explore program options, sites, and costs for a smaller scale community performing arts venue (black box or similar). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the feasibility study to inform future decision making on a smaller scale performing arts venue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The existing Cowichan Performing Arts Centre is an extremely important regional facility that supports a wide array of performances and events, but is too large and costly for many smaller performing arts groups. A smaller scale venue can help meet their needs and provide more suitable space than is currently available at halls, churches, and similar facilities.

Amenity Type	Relative Ranking (as per Step 2 of the Prioritization Framework - see Section 7.2.)	Recommended Short Term Strategy (2026 - 2031)	Recommended Longer Term Strategy (2031 - 2040)	Key Planning Considerations
Sports Fields and Ball Diamonds	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to ensure amenities at the Cowichan Sportsplex are sustained through sound asset management practices. • If replacement of the Rotary Track at the Cowichan Sportsplex is funded and undertaken in the short-term, opportunities to upgrade the infield should be explored to add functional sport field capacity. These upgrades could include drainage repairs, surface repairs, and the addition of lighting to support increased evening use. • Remain open to partnership and fundraising proposal from community groups to provide increased artificial turf. However, the evaluation of these proposals needs to evaluate and consider public benefit/access and lifecycle costs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace the water-based turf (John Ferrara Field) at the Cowichan Sportsplex as per manufacturers guidance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bookings data suggests that some specific natural surface sport field and ball diamond sites are at capacity. However, more clarity is needed on booked vs actual use. • Available bookings data does not reflect that capacity challenges currently for artificial turf fields in the region. Future partnership and fundraising proposals may require a re-evaluation of needs specific to artificial turf and the rationale for potentially increasing supply. • The Cowichan Sportsplex is a unique, high-value sports park site on Vancouver Island. Maximizing use through targeted investments in existing infrastructure can help maximize the benefits provided by the regionally supported site.

Amenity Type	Relative Ranking (as per Step 2 of the Prioritization Framework - see Section 7.2.)	Recommended Short Term Strategy (2026 - 2031)	Recommended Longer Term Strategy (2031 - 2040)	Key Planning Considerations
Indoor Aquatics	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustain aquatics facilities through sound asset management practices. • Undertake concept planning and costing to ensure an accurate and up to date understanding of the capital and operating cost impacts of developing a third aquatics facility to service the southern areas of the Cowichan Valley. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the recommended concepts planning and cost analysis to inform future decision making on a new aquatics facility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aquatics services are highly beneficial and valued. The benefits of aquatics services include teaching essential water safety skills, low impact activity, multi-generational activity, and the overall variety of uses that a pool can accommodate. While the benefits of aquatics services are undeniable and significant, aquatics also represent the highest cost (subsidy) amenity within public sector recreation. • The decision on whether to offer a third pool in the region will need to factor in direct costs as well as the financial impacts on other pools (e.g. the amount of use re-distributed from the CAC to a new pool in the south of the Cowichan Valley).

Amenity Type	Relative Ranking (as per Step 2 of the Prioritization Framework - see Section 7.2.)	Recommended Short Term Strategy (2026 - 2031)	Recommended Longer Term Strategy (2031 - 2040)	Key Planning Considerations
Court Hubs (Larger Clusters of Courts for Pickleball and/or Tennis)	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustain existing courts through sound asset management practices. • Municipal partners should continue to identify opportunities to retrofit existing underutilized courts or paved spaces (e.g. plazas and parking lots) for pickleball. • Undertake a feasibility study (or regional pickleball strategy) to further explore a 'hub' pickleball facility in the Cowichan Valley. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the feasibility study to inform decision making on the viability of a new pickleball hub. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The recommended feasibility study should explore outdoor and covered options, sites, costs, and management approaches. This study should additionally provide guidance on whether this type of facility meets a sufficient threshold to be considered a potential regionally significant facility. • Developing a hub facility could help reduce the need for municipal partners to invest in existing courts, alleviate conflicts with other court uses, support trends, and create opportunities for tournament hosting.
Indoor Walking / Running Tracks	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to identify opportunities to make indoor walking available at existing facilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include an indoor walking track as part of future major facility development (e.g. new arena facility, new multi-sport facility, new aquatics facility, etc.). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demands for indoor walking tracks are growing as a result of climate change (e.g. smoke, heat, increased rain) and demographics (aging population). • Walking / running tracks are relatively low cost inclusion in new facilities and provide a high degree of value.

Amenity Type	Relative Ranking (as per Step 2 of the Prioritization Framework – see Section 7.2.)	Recommended Short Term Strategy (2026 – 2031)	Recommended Longer Term Strategy (2031 – 2040)	Key Planning Considerations
Fitness Facilities	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustain existing fitness spaces through sound asset management practices. • Remain open to space retrofits and re-purposing opportunities where viable. • Continue to monitor regional fitness supply, including private sector provision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wherever viable, include fitness and training spaces in new or expanded facilities (e.g. a new aquatics facility, arena facility, etc.). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fitness market is highly dynamic, with both public sector and private sector providers. Private sector provision is hard to predict long-term and often evolves based on market conditions and specific trends. As such, public sector provision is often best positioned when it meets broad resident needs and is highly inclusive and comfortable.
Sports Boxes	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustain the existing sports box (Weyerhaeuser Thunderbox) at the Cowichan Sportsplex and continue to explore opportunities to maximize use. One opportunity that may warrant exploration is a covering that can help increase winter season usability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-evaluate sports box needs as required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available data does not suggest that a need exists for another sports box for the short or medium term.
Gymnasiums / Large Span Multi-Sport Facilities	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustain existing gymnasium and hall spaces through sound asset management practices. • Remain open to partnerships proposal from sport organizations (e.g. covered turf or multi-sport facility) but evaluate these partnerships with a strong consideration of public benefit / access and risk profile. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the viability of including a gymnasium space as part of future major facility development (e.g. new aquatics facility, new arena facility, etc.). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gymnasiums and similar large span spaces provide a high degree of recreation benefit and relatively low level of risk as they can accommodate a wide array of program based and casual activity uses. As such, considering gymnasium opportunities as part of future facility development or partnerships brought forward by external groups warrants consideration.

Amenity Type	Relative Ranking (as per Step 2 of the Prioritization Framework - see Section 7.2.)	Recommended Short Term Strategy (2026 - 2031)	Recommended Longer Term Strategy (2031 - 2040)	Key Planning Considerations
Arenas	Tied 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustain existing arenas through sound asset management practices. • Continue to identify, and budget for, accessibility and equity upgrades to existing arenas to ensure alignment with best practices, participation trends, and provide optimal user experiences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan to add 1 - 2 new ice sheets by 2040. • Undertake an Arena Strategy to determine how to optimize future ice arena provision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilization and growth analysis suggests that if participation trends and allocation practices remain similar, existing arena capacity is likely to be maxed out before 2040. • Arena surfaces are ideally provided in multi-sheet facilities to maximum tournament hosting and program efficiency. There is not currently a multi-sheet facility in the Cowichan Valley. The recommended Arena Strategy should explore approaches to creating a multi-sheet facility as new arenas are added and older facilities are potentially decommissioned or replaced.
Track and Field Amenities	Tied 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support replacement of the track to support both athletics and safe casual use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The track at the Cowichan Sportsplex is nearing end of life and requires replacement.

Amenity Type	Relative Ranking (as per Step 2 of the Prioritization Framework - see Section 7.2.)	Recommended Short Term Strategy (2026 - 2031)	Recommended Longer Term Strategy (2031 - 2040)	Key Planning Considerations
Curling Rinks	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invest the required resources to sustain the Kerry Park Curling Centre as a primary regional hub for curling in the Cowichan Valley. Sustain the curling facility at the Cowichan Lake Recreation Centre for the immediate term, but re-visit viability and alternative uses if significant capital repair is required within the short term. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The recommended Arena Strategy should also include a review of long-term curling needs, trends, and options for co-location to maximize efficiency. Retrofit of the curling facility at the Cowichan Lake Recreation Centre may warrant another comprehensive exploration if participation numbers continue to decline. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trends for curling are varied across the province and largely dependent on local demographics and the existence of sport champions. Curling is a highly beneficial activity that all ages can enjoy - however the cost of providing curling infrastructure (and associated tax requisition impact) needs to be justified by sufficient participation numbers.

APPENDICES



Appendix A: Profiles of the Regionally Significant Facilities

Cowichan Community Centre



Cowichan Aquatic Centre



Cowichan Lake Sports Arena



Cowichan Performing Arts Centre



Fuller Lake Arena



Kerry Park Recreation Centre



Frank Jameson Community Centre



Shawnigan Lake Community Centre



Cowichan Sportsplex





Cowichan Community Centre



Address: 2687 James St, Duncan, BC

Year Built/ Renovated: 1974/1976/2004

Owner/ Operator: CVRD

Funding Model: Regionally funded

Last Assessment: November 2017

Drive Time to Facility

5 minutes: 9,818 residents (11% of Regional Population)

10 minutes: 23,705 residents (27% of Regional Population)

15 minutes: 35,913 residents (40% of Regional Population)





Ice Arena

Physical Characteristics

- Regulation Size (200' x 85')
- 1,350 permanent seats (with reserved seating available)
- 1,000 portable seats for use on arena floor
- 4 Box Suites
- Viewing mezzanine
- 6 dressing rooms plus referee room

Key Uses

- On ice programming
- Public skating
- Hockey programs
- Figure skating
- Junior hockey
- Community events
- Lacrosse
- Dry floor activities



Hall (Heritage Hall)

Physical Characteristics

Large Room

- Multi-use hall (72' x 44') with flooring designed for dance, fitness and other movement activities
- 2 washrooms
- In-house sound system
- Elevator accessible
- Licensed venue
- Attached full-service kitchen available for rent
- Room capacity up to 264 persons

Key Uses

- Community events (e.g. craft fairs, seminars, public meetings)
- Active programming space
- Warming centre
- Public health clinics (e.g. vaccine, blood donation, etc.)



Multi-purpose Hall (Gymnasium)

Physical Characteristics

Large Activity Space

- Multi-use hall (120' x 88') containing sport court flooring, basketball hoops, racquet sport nets, volleyball and more
- 2 dressing rooms
- In-house sound system
- Licensed venue
- Room capacity up to 800 persons

Key Uses

- Fitness programs
- Sports (e.g. basketball, floor hockey, soccer)
- Community events



Multi-purpose Rooms

Key Uses

- Meetings (internal and external)
- Programs use
- Community events

Physical Characteristics

Small Rooms:

- Arbutus Room (10' x 12')
- Board Room (26' x 30')
- Koksilah Room (21' x 33')
- Maple Room (22' x 25')
- Nitinat Room (21' x 31')
- Quamichan Room (21' x 24')

Medium Rooms:

- Somenos Room (21' x 49')
- James Street Studio (28' x 31')



Dance & Fitness Studios

Key Uses

- Fitness programs
- Dance classes

Physical Characteristics

Medium Rooms:

- Dance Studio is 6m x 15m (21' x 50')
- Genoa Room Studio 17m x 14m (55' x 47'); room capacity up to 235 persons
- Both venues include professional sprung flooring, mirrors and in-house sound system
- Elevator accessible



Duncan Dynamics Gymnastics Club

Physical Characteristics

- 10,000sq feet floor space (national level training centre)
- 2 washrooms

Key Uses

- Gymnastics
- Recreational programs



Vancouver Island Regional Library

Physical Characteristics

- 12,800sq feet
- 2 washrooms

Key Uses

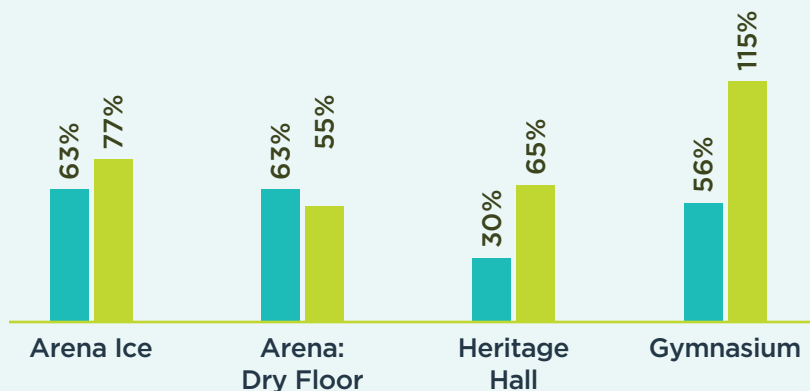
- Library
- Computer access
- Programming
- Meetings
- Seed library



Utilization Indicators

Average Booked Capacity (2022 - 2024)

- % Booked of Total Capacity
- % Booked of In Demand/ Prime Capacity



Prime Capacity (Arena):

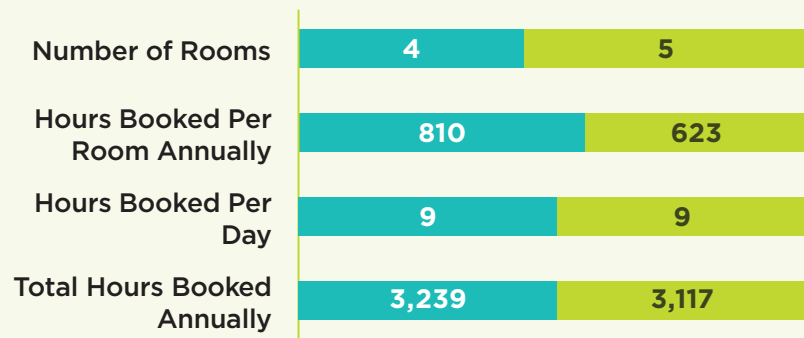
Prime ice time is defined as 3:00-10:00 p.m. on weekdays and 8:00 a.m.-11:00 p.m. on weekends. These hours represent the most desirable booking periods.

In- Demand Capacity:

In-demand capacity was estimated at six hours per day. Similar to prime capacity, it represents the most desirable hours of operation.

Average Bookings Multi-purpose Rooms & Dance/ Fitness Studios (2022 - 2024)

- Medium Rooms
- Small Rooms



Utilization Assessment

Core Amenities

Arena Ice: High booked use
Hall: Moderate booked use
Gymnasium: High booked use
Arena Dry Floor: Moderate booked use

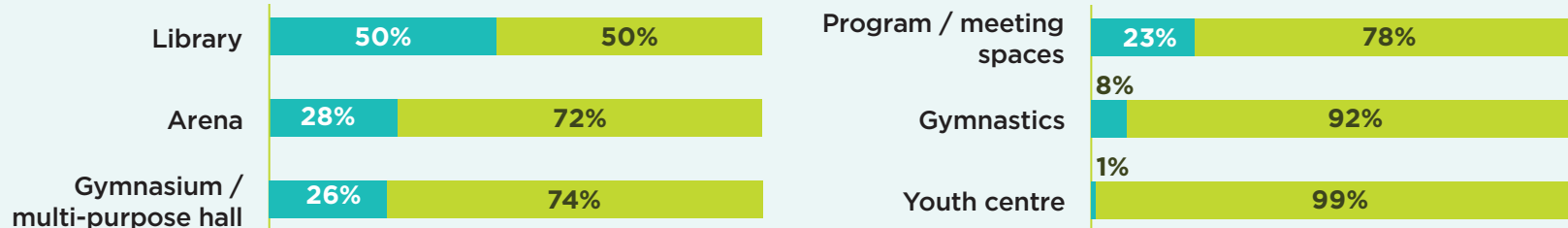
Multi-purpose Rooms

Small Rooms: Moderate booked use
Medium Rooms: High booked use

**Only 5 of the small multi-purpose rooms are bookable*

Resident Survey Results: Frequency of Use

- Used
- Did Not Use





Impactful Trends



Hockey: Shifting participation patterns in hockey are prompting a fundamental rethinking of arena design, with facilities needing to prioritize equitable locker room spaces and modern amenities that serve all users



Large Span Spaces: Shifting indoor recreation trends and growing multi sport demand are increasing the need for large, flexible multipurpose spaces.



Fitness Spaces: Municipal fitness facilities are shifting from traditional gyms to flexible community wellness hubs that emphasize strength training, recovery, social connection, and active aging needs. Demand is rising for multi purpose spaces that can transition quickly between programs and support both structured fitness and community based recreation.



Create Spaces that Encourage Socialization: Provide welcoming gathering areas with seating, open layouts, and amenities that support informal connection.



Create Strategic Spaces Dedicated to Sponsorship and Revenue Generation. Create opportunities for revenue generation; this could look like branded lounges, venue naming rights, retail space, etc.





Cowichan Aquatic Centre



Address: 2653 James St, Duncan, BC

Year Built/ Renovated: 2008/2020

Owner/ Operator: Municipality of North Cowichan

Funding Model: Regionally funded

Drive Time to Facility

5 minutes: 9,865 residents (11% of Regional Population)

10 minutes: 24,017 residents (27% of Regional Population)

15 minutes: 36,216 residents (41% of Regional Population)





Aquatic

Physical Characteristics

- 8 lane, 25 metre program tank
- Leisure aquatic amenities (lazy river, play features, twin water slides, steam room, sauna)

Key Uses

- Swimming lessons
- Aquatic fitness programs
- Swim club rental
- Lane swimming
- Community events



Fitness Centre

Physical Characteristics

- Fitness centre with a variety of equipment

Key Uses

- Drop-in fitness use
- Fitness classes and programs



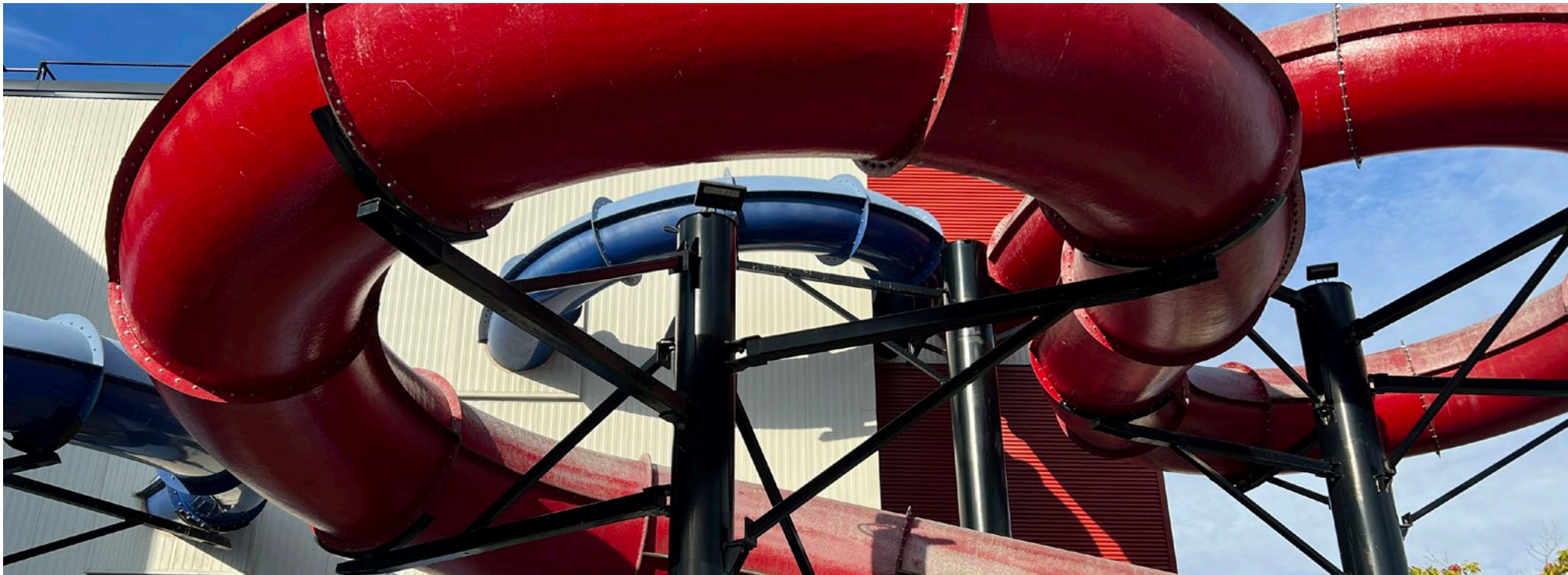
Multi-purpose Rooms

Physical Characteristics

- 3 small multipurpose rooms

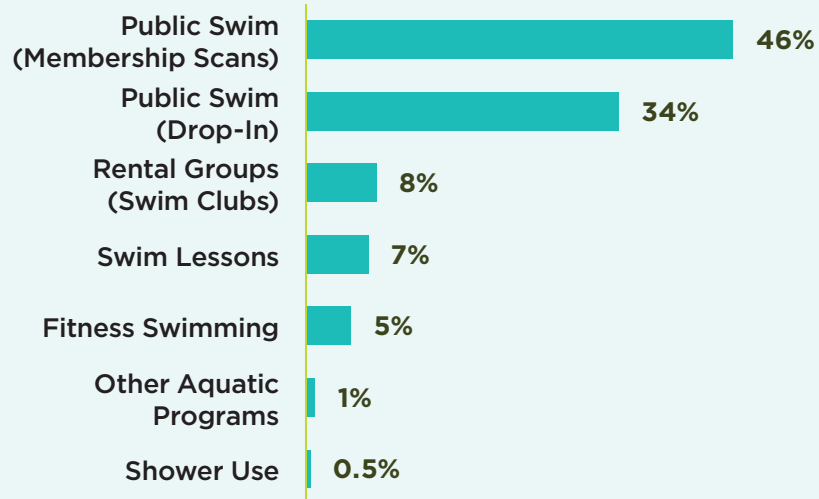
Key Uses

- Meetings
- Birthday parties
- Fitness programming



Utilization Indicators

Average Proportion of Swim Visits (2022 - 2024)



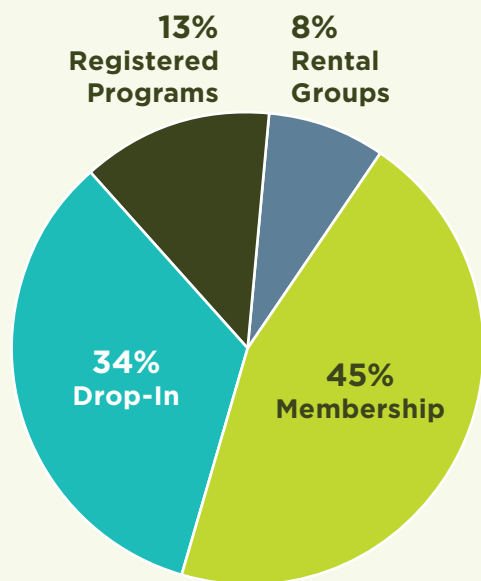
Swim Visits:

Utilization is measured using annual swims per capita, a widely recognized benchmark that reflects all individual visits. Comparing local participation levels to the industry standard of 6 swims per capita helps indicate whether the regional aquatic system is achieving optimal use. Operational factors have influenced annual swim-visit totals in some years.

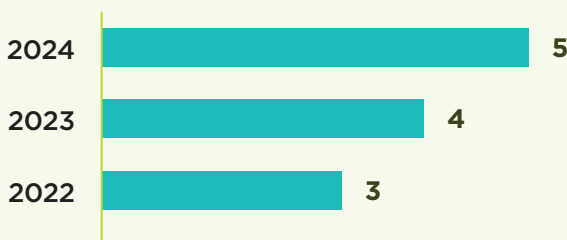
Cowichan Aquatic Centre:

- Swim Visits 2022: 3
- Swim Visits 2023: 4
- Swim Visits 2024: 5

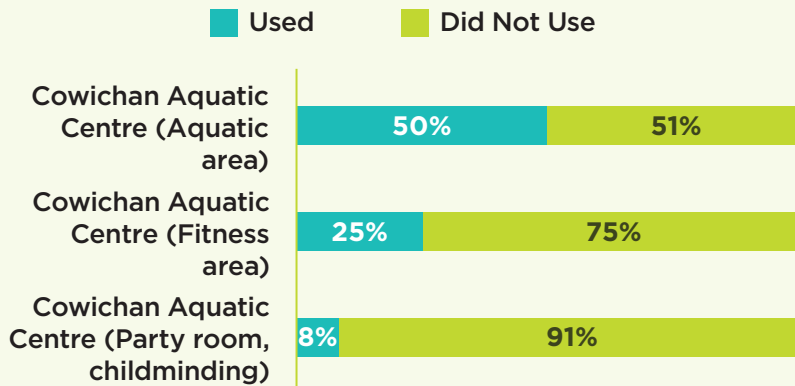
Facility Visits 2024



Hours Booked Per Day in Multi-purpose Rooms



Resident Survey Results Frequency of Use



Utilization Assessment

Core Amenities

Aquatic Centre: Well used
Fitness Centre: Well used*

**Not able to separate membership drop-in use to pool vs fitness centre.*

Multi-purpose Rooms

Small Rooms: Low - Moderate booked use



Impactful Trends



Aquatic Facilities: Aquatic facilities are under growing pressure to serve a widening range of user groups, from competitive swimmers to toddlers, fitness participants, lesson-takers, and therapeutic users, each with distinct space, temperature, and program needs. Modern facilities are responding with multi-zone or highly flexible designs, but smaller communities often rely on one or two multi-use pools, requiring careful scheduling to balance competing demands. The overall trend is toward versatility: maximizing limited space and budgets while still supporting diverse and evolving aquatic participation. The Cowichan Aquatic Centre reflects this shift, operating as a multi purpose hub that must accommodate diverse programming.



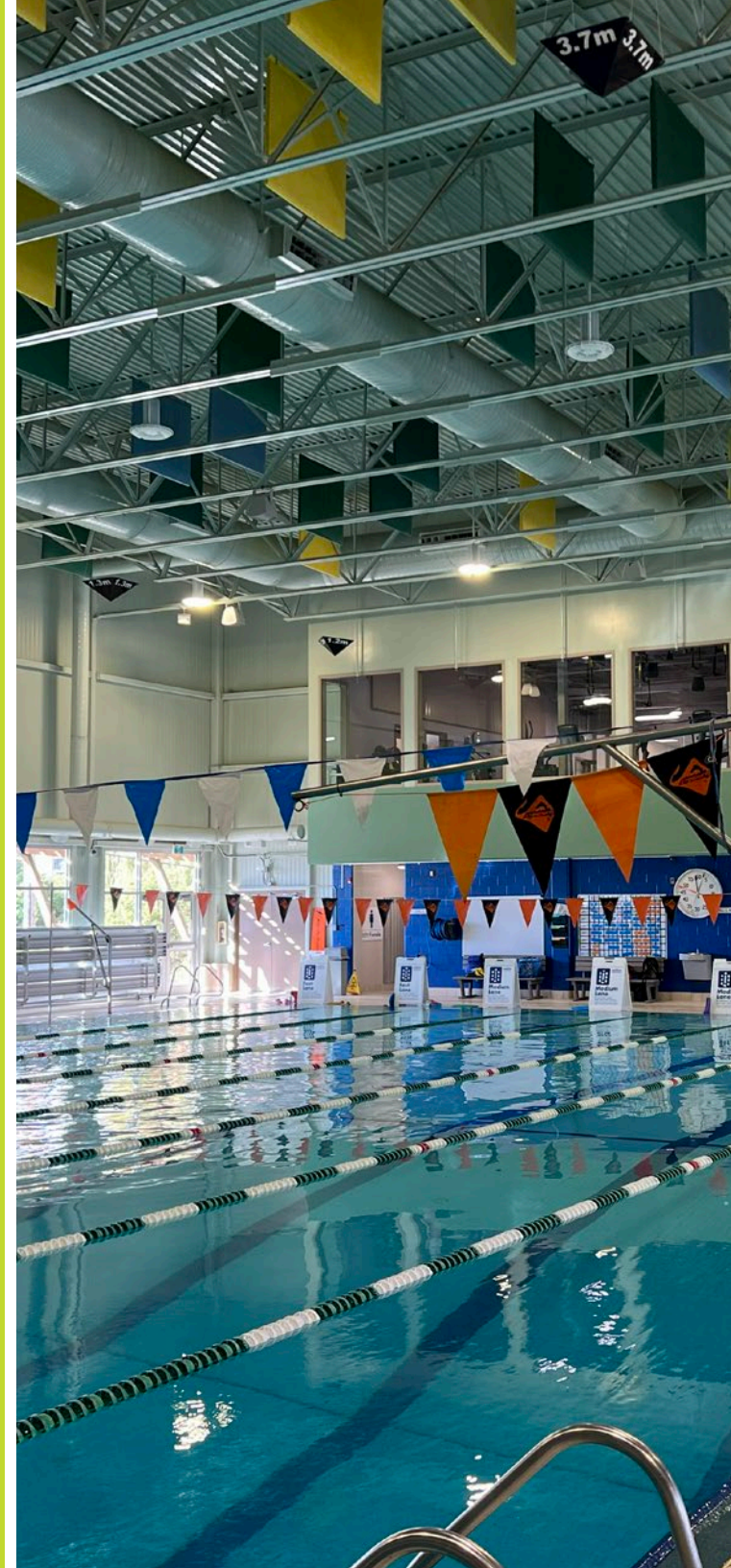
Fitness Spaces: Municipal fitness facilities are shifting from traditional gyms to flexible community wellness hubs that emphasize strength training, recovery, social connection, and active aging needs. Demand is rising for multi purpose spaces that can transition quickly between programs and support both structured fitness and community based recreation.



Create Spaces that Encourage Socialization: Provide welcoming gathering areas with seating, open layouts, and amenities that support informal connection.



Create Strategic Spaces Dedicated to Sponsorship and Revenue Generation. Create opportunities for revenue generation; this could look like branded lounges, venue naming rights, retail space, etc.





Cowichan Lake Sports Arena



Address: 311 South Shore Road, Lake Cowichan, BC

Year Built/ Renovated: 1969/2011

Owner/ Operator: CVRD

Funding Model: Regionally funded

Last Assessment: 2017

Drive Time to Facility

5 minutes: 3,063 residents (3% of Regional Population)

10 minutes: 3,830 residents (4% of Regional Population)

15 minutes: 4,119 residents (5% of Regional Population)





Ice Arena

Physical Characteristics

- Regulation size (200' x 85')
- Spectator seating for 800 with premium seating for 75
- Concession
- Skate shop

Key Uses

- On ice programming
- Public skating
- Hockey programs
- Figure skating
- Junior hockey
- Community events
- Lacrosse
- Other dry floor activities



Curling Rink

Physical Characteristics

- 4 sheets of ice with wheelchair accessibility

Key Uses

- Curling
- Community events
- Off-ice training



Curling Lounge

Physical Characteristics

- Medium size room

Key Uses

- Community events
- Programming



Multi-purpose Rooms

Physical Characteristics

Small Rooms:

- Upstairs Meeting Room
- Multi-Purpose Room B
- Playschool Room

Key Uses

- Meetings
- Birthday parties
- Fitness programming
- Play school



Fitness Room

Physical Characteristics

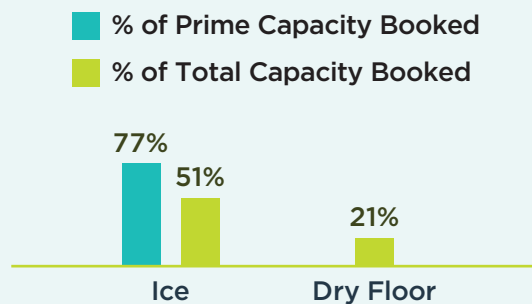
- A small, functional fitness room equipped with a selection of cardio and strength-training machines.

Key Uses

- Drop-in fitness use

Utilization Indicators

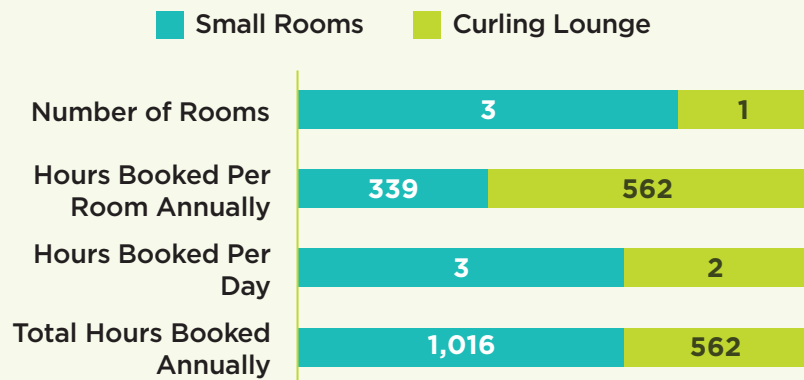
Arena Amenities - Average Utilization Rate (2022-2024)



Prime Capacity:

Prime ice time is defined as 3:00-10:00 p.m. on weekdays and 8:00 a.m.-11:00 p.m. on weekends. These hours represent the most desirable booking periods.

Average Bookings Multi-purpose Rooms & Curling Lounge (2022 - 2024)



Utilization Assessment

Core Amenities

Arena Ice: High booked use

Arena Dry Floor: Low booked use

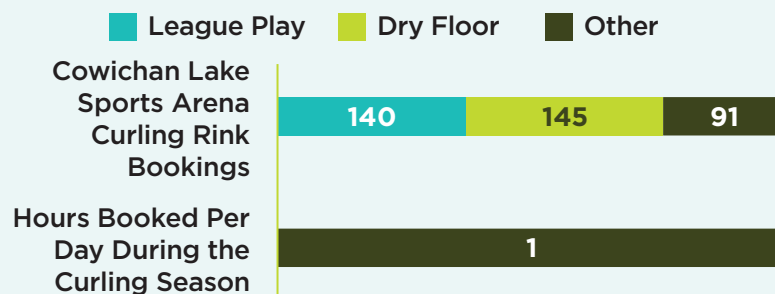
Curling Rink: Low booked use

Multi-purpose Rooms

Small Rooms: Low booked use

Medium Room (Curling Lounge): Low -Moderate booked use

Average Curling Rink Bookings (2022-2024)





Impactful Trends



Hockey: Shifting participation patterns in hockey are prompting a fundamental rethinking of arena design, with facilities needing to prioritize equitable locker room spaces and modern amenities that serve all users



Large Span Spaces: Shifting indoor recreation trends and growing multi sport demand are increasing the need for large, flexible multipurpose spaces.



Fitness Spaces: Municipal fitness facilities are shifting from traditional gyms to flexible community wellness hubs that emphasize strength training, recovery, social connection, and active aging needs. Demand is rising for multi purpose spaces that can transition quickly between programs and support both structured fitness and community based recreation.



Create Spaces that Encourage Socialization: Provide welcoming gathering areas with seating, open layouts, and amenities that support informal connection.



Create Strategic Spaces Dedicated to Sponsorship and Revenue Generation. Create opportunities for revenue generation; this could look like branded lounges, venue naming rights, retail space, etc.





Cowichan Performing Arts Centre



Address: 2687 James Street, Duncan, BC

Year Built/ Renovated: 1978/2023

Owner/ Operator: CVRD

Funding Model: Regionally funded

Drive Time to Facility

5 minutes: 9,818 residents (11% of Regional Population)

10 minutes: 23,705 residents (27% of Regional Population)

15 minutes: 35,913 residents (40% of Regional Population)





Theatre

Physical Characteristics

- 720 soft seat theatre
- 4 dressing rooms
 - 2 dressing rooms with capacity for 4 -6 people
 - 2 dressing rooms with capacity for 20 people

Key Uses

- Performance



Rehearsal hall

Physical Characteristics

- Sprung floor
- Bars on two walls
- Mirrors on one wall

Key Uses

- Rehearsing for performance
- Dance



Greenroom

Physical Characteristics

- 36' x 17' space
- Includes lounge amenities (e.g. couch, TV, eating area, refrigerator)

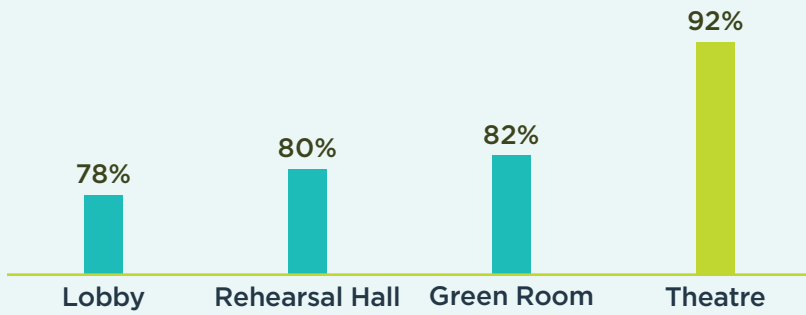
Key Uses

- Lounge for performances



Utilization Indicators

Average % Booked of Capacity (2022 - 2024)



Utilization Assessment

Core Amenities

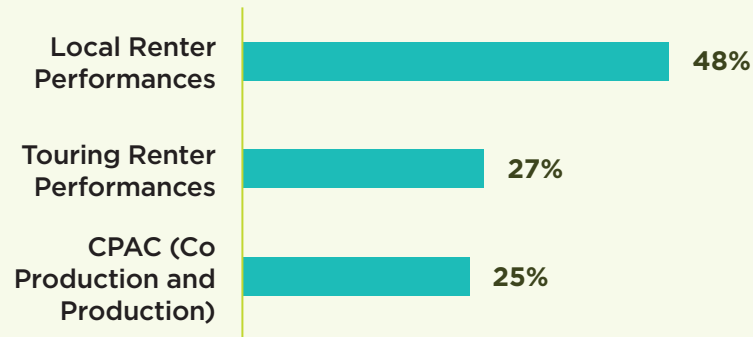
Theatre: High booked use

Supporting Spaces: High booked use

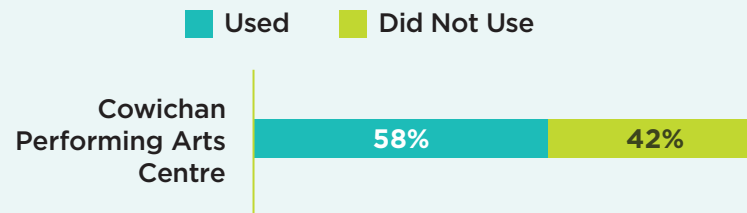
The facility serves a broad range of performances and performers.

Resident Survey respondents indicated that they visit the Cowichan Performing Arts Centre more than any other facility.

Average Proportion of Performances (2022 - 2024)



Resident Survey Results: Frequency of Use





Impactful Trends



Performance Spaces: Performance spaces in public recreation and cultural facilities are increasingly shifting toward flexible, adaptable designs that support a wide range of artistic formats and community uses. Fredericton's new Performing Arts Centre and Kelowna's Black Box Theatre both illustrate this trend, offering configurable, right-sized venues that balance professional touring needs with accessible spaces for local artists. Together, they reflect a broader move toward multi-purpose cultural infrastructure that strengthens community creativity and participation.



Create Strategic Spaces Dedicated to Sponsorship and Revenue Generation: Create opportunities for revenue generation; this could look like branded lounges, venue naming rights, retail space, etc.



Incorporating public art: Art pieces can be swapped in and out to create a more dynamic space and celebrate local culture.





Fuller Lake Arena



Address: 2876 Fuller Lake Rd, Chemainus, BC

Year Built/ Renovated: 1968

Owner/ Operator: Municipality of North Cowichan

Funding Model: Regionally funded

Drive Time to Facility


5 minutes: 1,188 residents (1% of Regional Population)

10 minutes: 6,634 residents (7% of Regional Population)


15 minutes: 23,467 residents (26% of Regional Population)



Ice Arena


 **Physical Characteristics**

- Ice arena with spectator capacity of ~600


 **Key Uses**

- On ice programming
- Public skating
- Hockey programs
- Figure skating
- Junior hockey
- Community events
- Lacrosse

Fitness Room


 **Physical Characteristics**

- A small, functional fitness room equipped with a selection of cardio and strength-training machines.

 **Key Uses**

- Drop-in fitness use

Multi-purpose rooms


 **Physical Characteristics**

Small Room

- AB Room

Medium Rom

- Upper Meeting Room

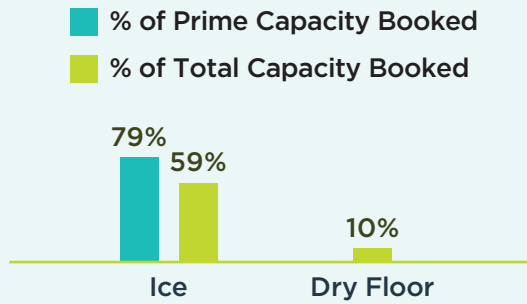
 **Key Uses**

- Meetings
- Birthday parties



Utilization Indicators

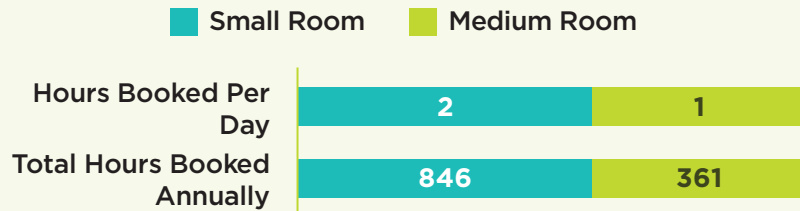
Arena Amenities - Average Utilization Rate (2022-2024)



Prime Capacity:

Prime ice time is defined as 3:00-10:00 p.m. on weekdays and 8:00 a.m.-11:00 p.m. on weekends. These hours represent the most desirable booking periods.

Average Bookings Multi-purpose Rooms (2022 - 2024)



Utilization Assessment

Core Amenity

Arena Ice: High booked use

Supporting Spaces: High booked use

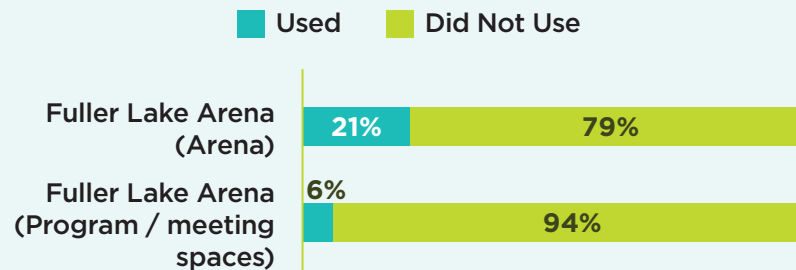
Arena Dry Floor: Low booked use

Multi-purpose Rooms

Small Rooms: Low booked use

Medium Room: Low booked use

Resident Survey Results: Frequency of Use





Impactful Trends



Hockey: Shifting participation patterns in hockey are prompting a fundamental rethinking of arena design, with facilities needing to prioritize equitable locker room spaces and modern amenities that serve all users



Fitness Spaces: Municipal fitness facilities are shifting from traditional gyms to flexible community wellness hubs that emphasize strength training, recovery, social connection, and active aging needs. Demand is rising for multi purpose spaces that can transition quickly between programs and support both structured fitness and community based recreation.



Create Spaces that Encourage Socialization: Provide welcoming gathering areas with seating, open layouts, and amenities that support informal connection.



Create Strategic Spaces Dedicated to Sponsorship and Revenue Generation. Create opportunities for revenue generation; this could look like branded lounges, venue naming rights, retail space, etc.





Kerry Park Recreation Centre



Address: 1035 Shawnigan/Mill Bay Rd, Mill Bay, BC

Year Built/ Renovated: 1990/1995/2017

Owner/ Operator: CVRD

Funding Model: Regionally funded

Last Assessment: 2017

Drive Time to Facility

5 minutes: 1,141 residents (1% of Regional Population)

10 minutes: 11,097 residents (7% of Regional Population)

15 minutes: 18,113 residents (26% of Regional Population)





Ice Arena

Physical Characteristics

- Regulation size (200' x 85')

Key Uses

- On ice programming
- Public skating
- Hockey programs
- Figure skating
- Junior hockey
- Community events
- Lacrosse



Curling Rink

Physical Characteristics

- 4 ice sheets

Key Uses

- Curling
- Community events
- Off ice training and programs



Curling Lounge

Physical Characteristics

- Medium size room (next to full service kitchen and bar) (40' x 44')
- 3 TVs

Key Uses

- Community events
- Curling viewing
- Summer camps
- Fitness
- Pickleball



Multi-purpose Rooms

Physical Characteristics

Medium Rooms:

- Denis McLean (28' x 50')

Key Uses

- Meetings
- Birthday parties
- Fitness classes



Outdoor Pickleball Courts

Physical Characteristics

- 6 pickleball courts
- Fenced

Key Uses

- Pickleball



Ball Diamonds

Physical Characteristics

- 3 softball diamonds (1 diamond restricted to youth only)

Key Uses

- Softball
- Slow pitch
- Orthodox



Sport Field

Physical Characteristics

- 1 sport field

Key Uses

- Soccer
- Lacrosse
- Rugby
- Football



Playground

Physical Characteristics

- Playground with swings, climbing wall, and slide features

Key Uses

- Play



Other Amenities

Physical Characteristics

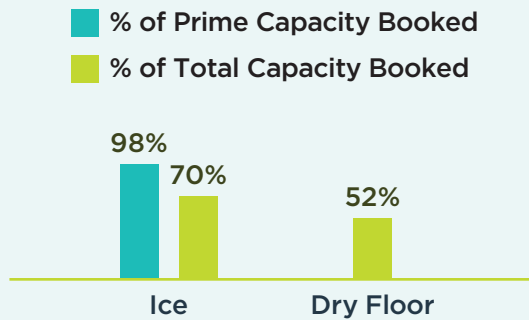
- Concession
- Changerooms
- Parking lot

Key Uses

- Changing
- Serving food and beverage

Utilization Indicators

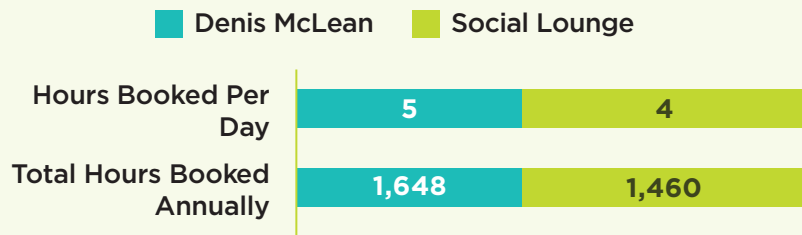
Arena Amenities - Average Utilization Rate (2022-2024)



Prime Capacity:

Prime ice time is defined as 3:00-10:00 p.m. on weekdays and 8:00 a.m.-11:00 p.m. on weekends. These hours represent the most desirable booking periods.

Average Bookings Multi-purpose Rooms (2022 - 2024)



Utilization Assessment

Core Amenity

Arena: High booked use

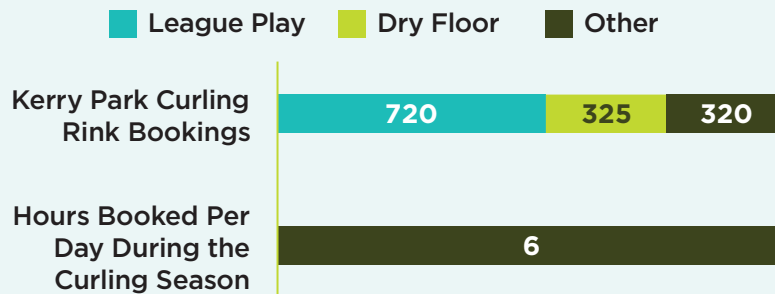
Curling Rink: Moderate booked use

Multi-purpose Rooms

Denis McLean: Moderate booked use

Curling Social Lounge: Moderate booked use

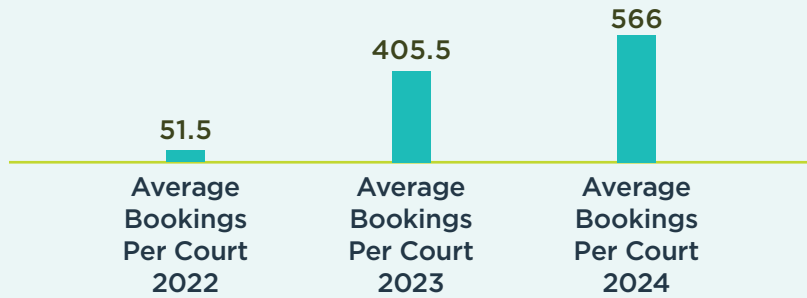
Average Curling Rink Bookings (2022-2024)





Outdoor Utilization Indicators

Hours Booked Per Pickleball Court



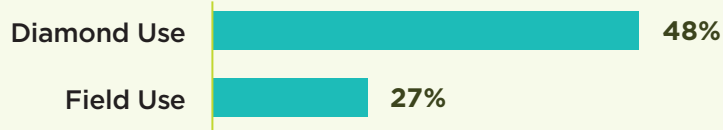
Pickleball Court Booked Use:

The CVRD permits four of the six courts at Kerry Park. This arrangement ensures that the remaining two courts remain available for drop in public use, supporting both organized club play and spontaneous community access.

Field and Diamond Capacity:

Capacity is typically calculated using an industry standard that estimates the maximum number of annual hours a field can sustain before turf degradation occurs. For ball diamonds and sport fields, this threshold is generally capped at approximately 600 hours per year per diamond or field. Ball diamond 3 is not suitable for adult use.

Average % Booked of Capacity



Utilization Assessment

Pickleball Courts: Moderate - High booked use

Field: Low - Moderate booked use

Diamonds: Moderate booked use





Impactful Trends



Hockey: Shifting participation patterns in hockey are prompting a fundamental rethinking of arena design, with facilities needing to prioritize equitable locker room spaces and modern amenities that serve all users



Create Spaces that Encourage Socialization: Provide welcoming gathering areas with seating, open layouts, and amenities that support informal connection.



Create Strategic Spaces Dedicated to Sponsorship and Revenue Generation: Create opportunities for revenue generation; this could look like branded lounges, venue naming rights, retail space, etc.



Sports Field Hub Development

Municipalities are increasingly developing multi field “sports hubs” that centralize play, improve hosting capacity, and streamline operations through shared amenities like washrooms, change rooms, and concessions. These sites emphasize smart layout, good transportation access, and room for future expansion.



Rising Demand for Synthetic Turf

User groups are driving strong demand for synthetic turf fields to extend seasons, reduce rain outs, and ensure consistent playing conditions. Advances in turf technology, and the ability to convert gravel or all weather fields, are accelerating this shift across many communities.



Higher Expectations for Park Support Amenities

Expectations for high quality park amenities are rising, with users prioritizing safe washrooms, shade, seating, and comfort features that shape overall experience. Municipalities are responding by designing amenities that enhance both usability and the character of parks and sport precincts.



Pickleball: Pickleball is one of Canada’s fastest growing recreation activities, with participation expanding across age groups and more households playing regularly. This rapid growth is creating planning pressures, including court shortages, shared use conflicts, accessibility needs, and rising expectations for indoor options. Municipalities are also grappling with noise mitigation, partnership capacity, and the economic potential of tournaments as they work to keep pace with demand.



Frank Jameson Community Centre



Address: 810 Sixth Avenue, Ladysmith, BC

Year Built/ Renovated: 1982/1994/2015

Owner/ Operator: Town of Ladysmith

Funding Model: Regionally funded

Last Assessment: 2017 (Aquatics Operations)/ 2018

Drive Time to Facility

5 minutes: 6,156 residents (7% of Regional Population)

10 minutes: 9,779 residents (11% of Regional Population)

15 minutes: 13,398 residents (15% of Regional Population)



Aquatic

Physical Characteristics

- 25 meter main pool
- Leisure pool
- Hot tub
- Dry sauna

Key Uses

- Swimming lessons
- Aquatic fitness programs
- Swim club rental
- Lane swimming
- Community events

Gymnasium

Physical Characteristics

- Gymnasium lined for different activities
- Stage

Key Uses

- Drop-in sports
- Fitness classes
- Active programming

Fitness Centre

Physical Characteristics

- Well equipped fitness centre (3,000 sq. ft.)

Key Uses

- Drop-in fitness use
- Fitness classes

Multi-purpose Rooms

Physical Characteristics

Medium Room

- Rec Room
- Program Room
- Fitness studio

Small Room

- Meeting room

Key Uses

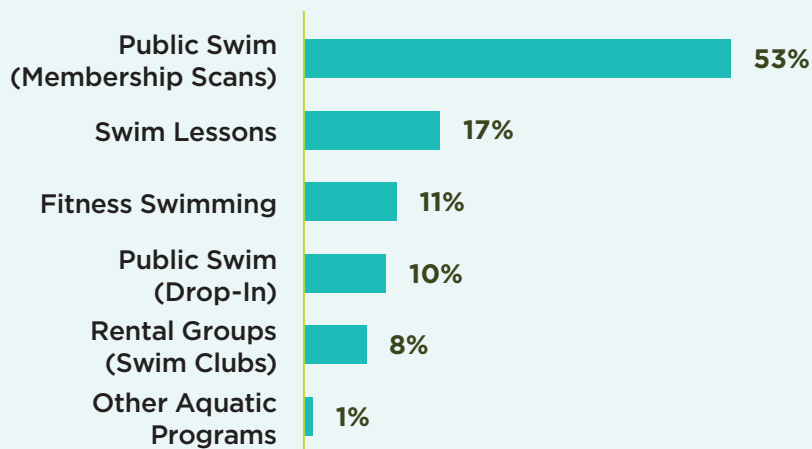
- Meetings
- Birthday parties
- Fitness classes
- Social space
- Youth drop-in centre

Source: Ladysmith Parks, Recreation and Culture 2024 Summer Activity Guide https://issuu.com/ladysmith/docs/2024_summer_guide_online_final



Utilization Indicators

Average Proportion of Swim Visits (2022 - 2024)



Swim Visits:

Utilization is measured using annual swims per capita, a widely recognized benchmark that reflects all individual visits. Comparing local participation levels to the industry standard of 6 swims per capita helps indicate whether the regional aquatic system is achieving optimal use. Operational factors have influenced annual swim-visit totals in some years.

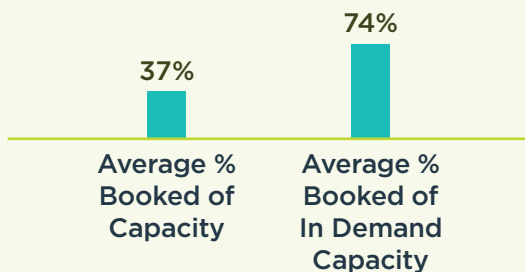
Frank Jameson Aquatic Centre:

Swim Visits 2022: 5
Swim Visits 2023: 6
Swim Visits 2024: 7

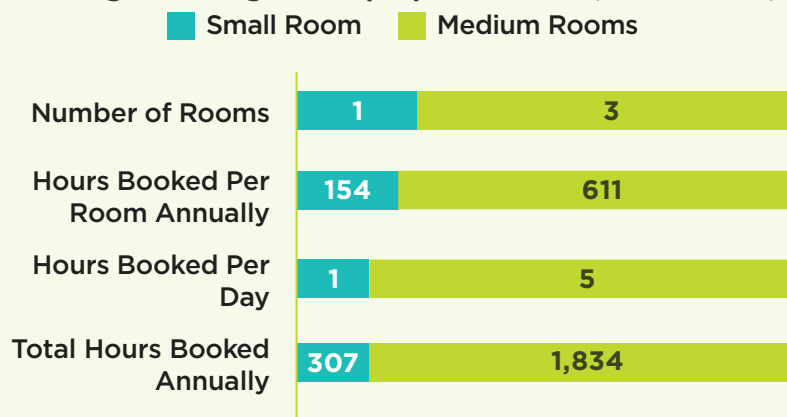
In- Demand Capacity:

In-demand capacity was estimated at six hours per day. Similar to prime capacity, it represents the most desirable hours of operation.

Gymnasium Average % Booked of Capacity (2022 - 2024)



Average Bookings Multi-purpose Rooms (2022 - 2024)



Utilization Assessment

Core Amenities

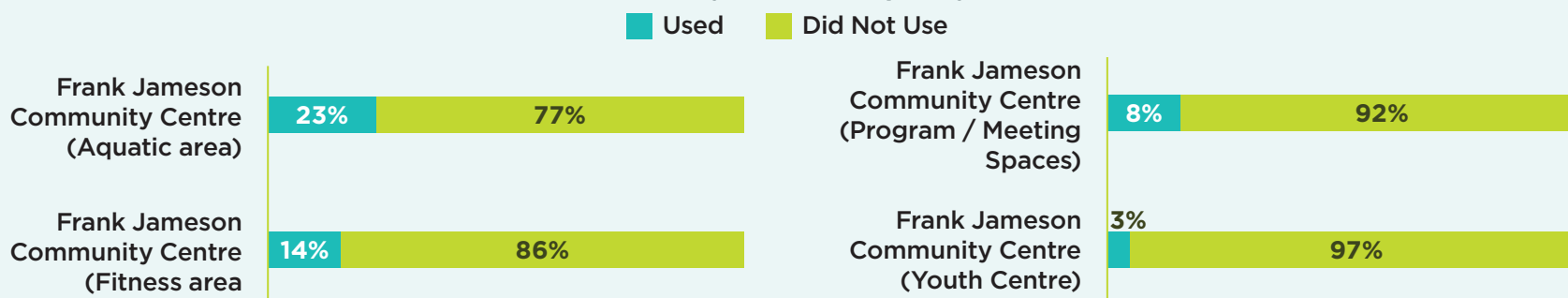
Aquatic Centre: Well used
Gymnasium: Moderate - high booked use
Fitness Centre: Well used*

**Not able to separate membership drop-in use to pool vs fitness centre.*

Multi-purpose Rooms

Small Rooms: Low booked use

Resident Survey Results Frequency of Use





Impactful Trends



Aquatic Facilities: Aquatic facilities are under growing pressure to serve a widening range of user groups, from competitive swimmers to toddlers, fitness participants, lesson-takers, and therapeutic users, each with distinct space, temperature, and program needs. Modern facilities are responding with multi-zone or highly flexible designs, but smaller communities often rely on one or two multi-use pools, requiring careful scheduling to balance competing demands. The overall trend is toward versatility: maximizing limited space and budgets while still supporting diverse and evolving aquatic participation. The Cowichan Aquatic Centre reflects this shift, operating as a multi purpose hub that must accommodate diverse programming.



Fitness Spaces: Municipal fitness facilities are shifting from traditional gyms to flexible community wellness hubs that emphasize strength training, recovery, social connection, and active aging needs. Demand is rising for multi purpose spaces that can transition quickly between programs and support both structured fitness and community based recreation.



Create Spaces that Encourage Socialization: Provide welcoming gathering areas with seating, open layouts, and amenities that support informal connection.



Create Strategic Spaces Dedicated to Sponsorship and Revenue Generation. Create opportunities for revenue generation; this could look like branded lounges, venue naming rights, retail space, etc.



Large Span Spaces: Shifting indoor recreation trends and growing multi sport demand are increasing the need for large, flexible multipurpose spaces.





Shawnigan Lake Community Centre



Address: 2804 Shawnigan Lake Rd, Shawnigan Lake, BC

Year Built/ Renovated: 1991

Owner/ Operator: CVRD

Funding Model: Regionally funded

Drive Time to Facility

5 minutes: 6,156 residents (7% of Regional Population)

10 minutes: 9,779 residents (11% of Regional Population)

15 minutes: 13,398 residents (15% of Regional Population)





Gymnasium

Physical Characteristics

- Gymnasium lined for different activities (three quarter size)(77'x60')



Key Uses

- Drop-in sports
- Fitness classes
- Active programming
- Gymnastics
- Community events



Multi-purpose Rooms



Physical Characteristics

- Medium Room
- Dance Studio
- Lounge



Key Uses

- Meetings
- Birthday parties
- Fitness classes
- Social space
- Dance



Elsie Miles Annex



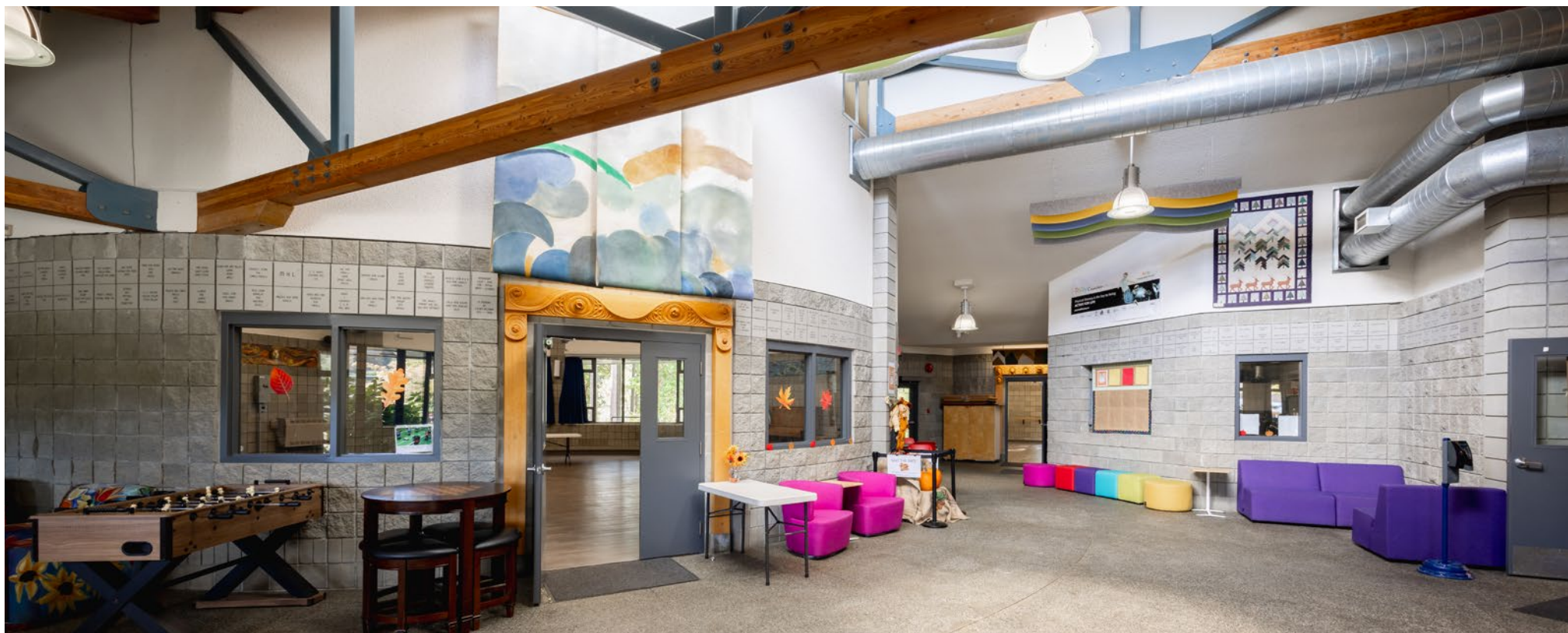
Physical Characteristics

- 4 Classrooms



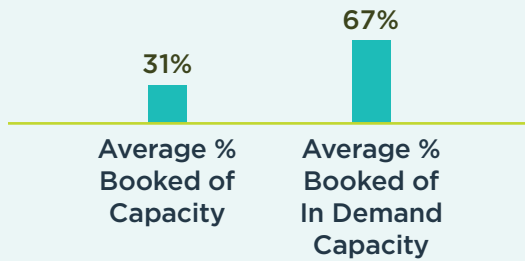
Key Uses

- Licensed childcare
- Community programming



Utilization Indicators

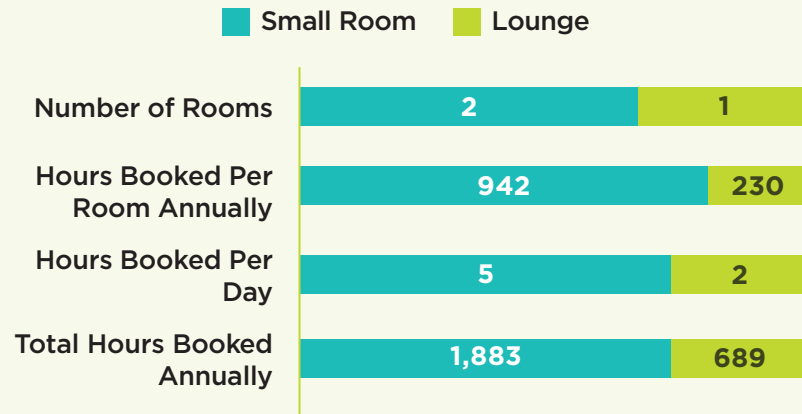
Gymnasium Average % Booked of Capacity (2022 - 2024)



In- Demand Capacity:

In-demand capacity was estimated at six hours per day. Similar to prime capacity, it represents the most desirable hours of operation.

Average Bookings Multi-purpose Rooms (2022 - 2024)



Utilization Assessment

Core Amenities

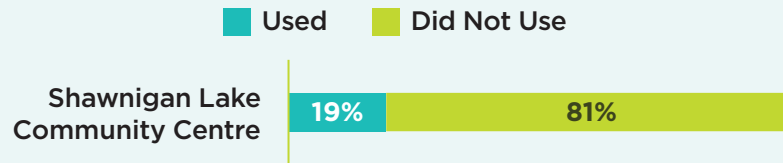
Gymnasium: Moderate booked use

Multi-purpose Rooms

Small Rooms: Moderate - high booked use

Lounge: Low booked use

Resident Survey Results Frequency of Use





Impactful Trends



Create Spaces that Encourage Socialization: Provide welcoming gathering areas with seating, open layouts, and amenities that support informal connection.



Large Span Spaces: Shifting indoor recreation trends and growing multi sport demand are increasing the need for large, flexible multipurpose spaces.



Indoor outdoor connections: Integrating indoor and outdoor environments can be as simple as ensuring interiors have good opportunities to view or directly access the outdoors, creating a sense of freshness and connection with nature.



Incorporating public art: Art pieces can be swapped in and out to create a more dynamic space and celebrate local culture.





Cowichan Sportsplex



Address: 1035 Shawnigan/Mill Bay Rd, Mill Bay, BC

Year Built/ Renovated: 1997 (track and infield)/ 2000 (track renovated)/ 2005 (lacrosse box)/2005 (artificial turf field)/ 2006 (ball diamonds)/ 2007 (playground) / 2011 (fitness circuit)/ field house (2024)

Owner/ Operator: Municipality of North Cowichan (Owner)
Chesterfield Sports Society (Operator)

Funding Model: Regionally funded


Drive Time to Facility

5 minutes: 5,282 residents (6% of Regional Population)

10 minutes: 22,492 residents (25% of Regional Population)

15 minutes: 34,300 residents (39% of Regional Population)





Field House

 **Physical Characteristics**

- Office
- Meeting space for teams
- Concession
- Change rooms
- Indoor washrooms

 **Key Uses**

- Meetings
- Site administration
- Changerooms



Softball Diamonds

 **Physical Characteristics**

- 3 softball diamonds
- Fully fenced
- Extended backstops
- Bleachers
- Lightintg

 **Key Uses**

- Softball
- Other sports such as ultimate frisbee and soccer can be played in the outfield




Artificial Turf Field

 **Physical Characteristics**


- Water based artificial turf field designed for field hockey
- Lighting for evening use
- Fully fenced
- Covered team benches
- Spectator seating

 **Key Uses**


- Field hockey
- Soccer



Athletic Track

 **Physical Characteristics**


- 8 lane track
- Cushioned synthetic surface

 **Key Uses**

- Walking
- Running
- Track meets




Natural Grass Field

 **Physical Characteristics**


- Natural grass field located inside the track infield

 **Key Uses**


- Soccer
- Athletic events




Lacrosse Box

 **Physical Characteristics**


- Lacrosse box
- Electronic score board
- Spectator seating
- Lighting
- Lines for other sports

 **Key Uses**


- Lacrosse
- Pickleball (lines)
- Ball hockey




Playground

 **Physical Characteristics**


- Fully fenced playground
- Intended for kids between 5 and 10 years

 **Key Uses**


- Play




Fitness Path

 **Physical Characteristics**


- 660 metre circular path
- Outdoor fitness equipment

 **Key Uses**


- Fitness




Rotary Nature Walk

 **Physical Characteristics**


- Wooded area with a pond
- Pathway that winds around the pond

 **Key Uses**

- Walking



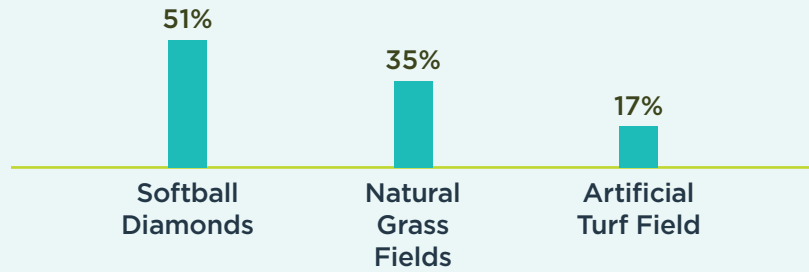
Other Amenities

 **Physical Characteristics**

- 3 washrooms
- 3 parking lots

Utilization Indicators

Average % Booked Capacity (2022 - 2024)



Natural Grass Field and Diamond Capacity:

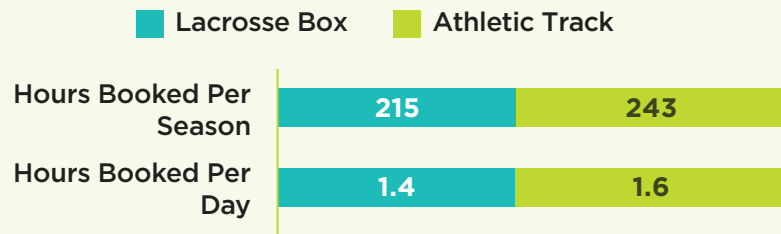
Capacity is typically calculated using an industry standard that estimates the maximum number of annual hours a field can sustain before turf degradation occurs. For ball diamonds and sport fields, this threshold is generally capped at approximately 600 hours per year per diamond or field.

Artificial Turf Fields

Artificial turf fields are not constrained by turf wear, allowing for substantially higher annual use. A capacity of 3,000 hours per year is applied.

The Cowichan Sportsplex Artificial Turf Field is water based; this field type is typically reserved for field hockey use.

Average Bookings for the Lacrosse Box and Athletic Track (2022 - 2024)



Utilization Assessment

Core Amenities

Athletic Track: Low - moderate booked use

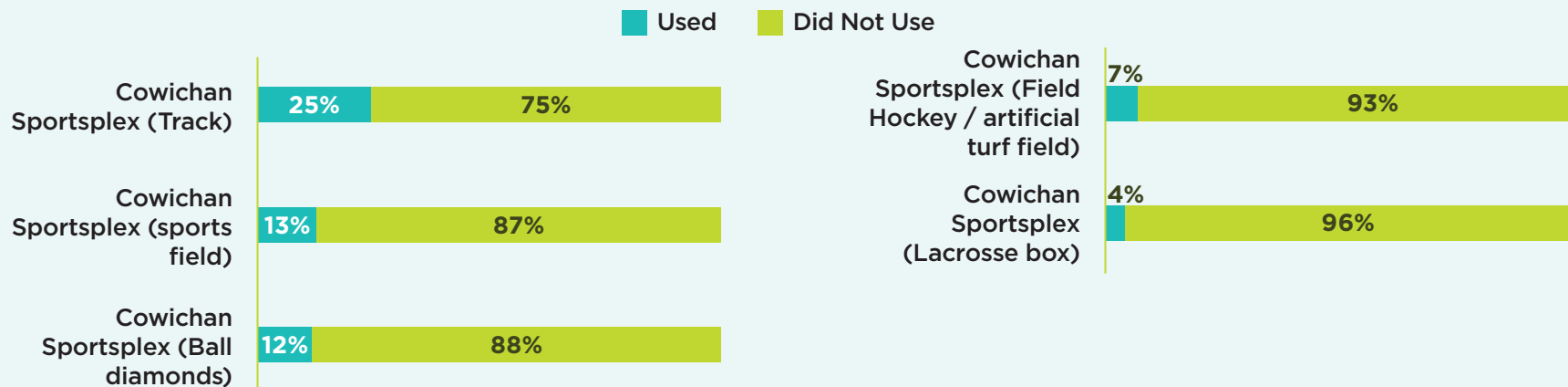
Lacrosse Box: Low - moderate booked use

Softball Diamonds: Moderate booked use

Artificial Turf Field: Low booked use (equivalent of the capacity for one natural grass field)

Natural Grass Field: Low booked use

Resident Survey Results: Frequency of Use





Impactful Trends



Create Strategic Spaces Dedicated to Sponsorship and Revenue Generation: Create opportunities for revenue generation; this could look like branded lounges, venue naming rights, retail space, etc.



Sports Field Hub Development

Municipalities are increasingly developing multi field “sports hubs” that centralize play, improve hosting capacity, and streamline operations through shared amenities like washrooms, change rooms, and concessions. These sites emphasize smart layout, good transportation access, and room for future expansion.



Rising Demand for Synthetic Turf

User groups are driving strong demand for synthetic turf fields to extend seasons, reduce rain outs, and ensure consistent playing conditions. Advances in turf technology, and the ability to convert gravel or all weather fields, are accelerating this shift across many communities.

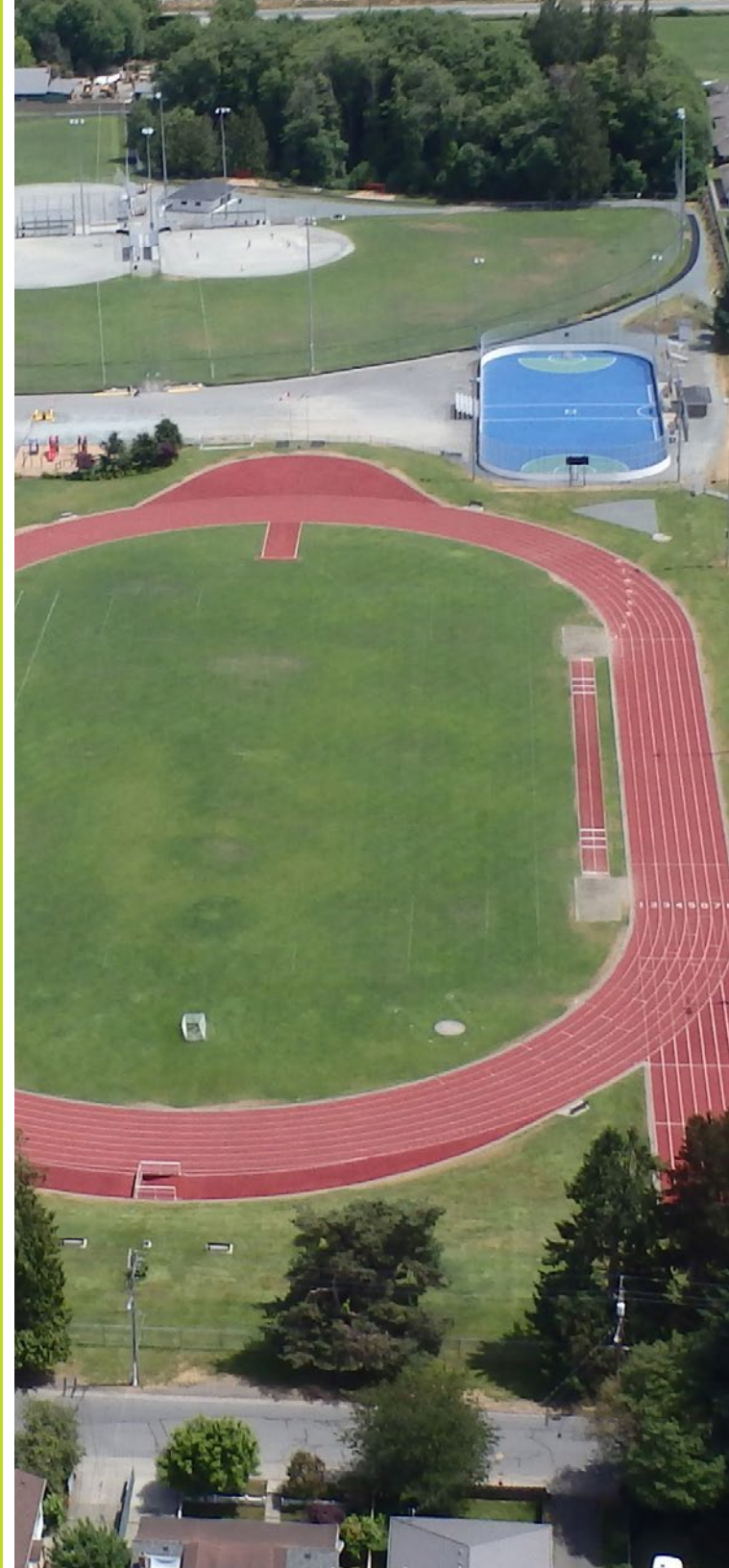


Higher Expectations for Park Support Amenities

Expectations for high quality park amenities are rising, with users prioritizing safe washrooms, shade, seating, and comfort features that shape overall experience. Municipalities are responding by designing amenities that enhance both usability and the character of parks and sport precincts.



Pickleball: Pickleball is one of Canada’s fastest growing recreation activities, with participation expanding across age groups and more households playing regularly. This rapid growth is creating planning pressures, including court shortages, shared use conflicts, accessibility needs, and rising expectations for indoor options. Municipalities are also grappling with noise mitigation, partnership capacity, and the economic potential of tournaments as they work to keep pace with demand.



Appendix B: Benchmarking Tables

Table 41: Indoor Amenity Comparator Analysis Count

Municipality	Population (2021)	Indoor Arena Ice Facility Sheets	Indoor Aquatic Facilities	Curling Facility	Fitness Centres	Community Gymnasium Spaces (Rec or Community Centre)	Hall Space	Theatre
CRD (Victoria)	91,867	1	1	1	1	4		
CRD (Westshore)	84,669	3	2	1	2	2		2
CRD (Peninsula)	41,938	2	1		2	3		
Regional District and City of Nanaimo	170,367	6	3	1	1	2	4	1
Strathcona Regional District and Campbell River	48,150	3	1	1	2	3	2	
Comox Valley Regional District (Town of Comox, City of Courtney, Village of Cumberland)*	72,445	2	2	1	1	2	2	1
City of Kamloops	97,902	6	3	2	2	1	1	1
City of Abbotsford	153,524	3	2	1	2	2	6	1
Metro Vancouver (North Vancouver District, City of North Vancouver, Port Moody, Port Coquitlam, Coquitlam, Vancouver, Burnaby, New Westminster, Maple Ridge, Richmond, Delta, Surrey, Township and City of Langley)	1,857,257	34	33	8	49	51	30	14
Average	N/A	7	5	2	7	8	8	3
Cowichan Valley Regional District	89,013	4	2	3	2	8	15	1

Table 42: Indoor Amenity Comparator Analysis Provision Per Capita

Municipality	Population (2021)	Indoor Arena Ice Facility Sheets	Indoor Aquatic Facilities	Curling Facility	Fitness Centres	Community Gymnasium Spaces (Rec or Community Centre)	Hall Space	Theatre
CRD (Victoria)	91,867	91,867	91,867	91,867	91,867	22,967		
CRD (Westshore)	84,669	30,622	45,934	91,867	45,934	45,934		45,934
CRD (Peninsula)	41,938	45,934	91,867		45,934	30,622		
Regional District and City of Nanaimo	170,367	15,311	30,622	91,867	91,867	45,934	22,967	91,867
Strathcona Regional District and Campbell River	48,150	30,622	91,867	91,867	45,934	30,622	45,934	
Comox Valley Regional District (Town of Comox, City of Courtney, Village of Cumberland)*	72,445	45,934	45,934	91,867	91,867	45,934	45,934	91,867
City of Kamloops	97,902	15,311	30,622	45,934	45,934	91,867	91,867	91,867
City of Abbotsford	153,524	30,622	45,934	91,867	45,934	45,934	15,311	91,867
Metro Vancouver (North Vancouver District, City of North Vancouver, Port Moody, Port Coquitlam, Coquitlam, Vancouver, Burnaby, New Westminister, Maple Ridge, Richmond, Delta, Surrey, Township and City of Langley)	1,857,257	2,702	2,784	11,483	1,875	1,801	3,062	6,562
Average	N/A	34,325	53,048	76,077	56,349	40,179	37,512	69,994
Cowichan Valley Regional District	89,013	22,253	44,507	29,671	44,507	11,127	5,934	89,013

Table 43: Outdoor Amenity Comparator Analysis Count

Municipality	Population (2021)	Lacrosse Box	Natural Surface Sport Fields	Tennis Courts	Pickleball Courts	Ball Diamonds	Artificial Turf Fields and Diamonds
CRD (Victoria)	91,867	1	8	23	8	16	2
CRD (Westshore)	84,669	1	3	8	6	15	6
CRD (Peninsula)	41,938	1	5	8	6	9	2
Regional District and City of Nanaimo	170,367	4	55	34	19	59	3
Strathcona Regional District and Campbell River	48,150	1	13	8	8	13	1
Comox Valley Regional District (Town of Comox, City of Courtney, Village of Cumberland)*	72,445	2	43	12	20	37	1
City of Kamloops	97,902	1	14	45	8	26	1
City of Abbotsford	153,524	1	25	13	22	26	6
Metro Vancouver (North Vancouver District, City of North Vancouver, Port Moody, Port Coquitlam, Coquitlam, Vancouver, Burnaby, New Westminster, Maple Ridge, Richmond, Delta, Surrey, Township and City of Langley)	1,857,257	29	377	400	330	444	86
Average	N/A	5	60	61	47	72	12
Cowichan Valley Regional District	89,013	2	15	17	22	34	3

Table 44: Outdoor Amenity Comparator Analysis Count

Municipality	Population (2021)	Lacrosse Box	Natural Surface Sport Fields	Tennis Courts	Pickleball Courts	Ball Diamonds	Artificial Turf Fields and Diamonds
CRD (Victoria)	91,867	91,867	11,483	3,994	11,483	5,742	45,934
CRD (Westshore)	84,669	91,867	30,622	11,483	15,311	6,124	15,311
CRD (Peninsula)	41,938	91,867	18,373	11,483	15,311	10,207	45,934
Regional District and City of Nanaimo	170,367	22,967	1,670	2,702	4,835	1,557	30,622
Strathcona Regional District and Campbell River	48,150	91,867	7,067	11,483	11,483	7,067	91,867
Comox Valley Regional District (Town of Comox, City of Courtney, Village of Cumberland)*	72,445	45,934	2,136	7,656	4,593	2,483	91,867
City of Kamloops	97,902	91,867	6,562	2,041	11,483	3,533	91,867
City of Abbotsford	153,524	91,867	3,675	7,067	4,176	3,533	15,311
Metro Vancouver (North Vancouver District, City of North Vancouver, Port Moody, Port Coquitlam, Coquitlam, Vancouver, Burnaby, New Westminster, Maple Ridge, Richmond, Delta, Surrey, Township and City of Langley)	1,857,257	3,168	244	230	278	207	1,068
Average	N/A	69,252	9,093	6,460	8,773	4,495	47,753
Cowichan Valley Regional District	89,013	44,507	5,934	5,236	4,046	2,618	29,671

Appendix D: Participating Community Organizations

Group Name	Survey	Discussion
Adult Drop- In Floor Hockey Ladysmith	✓	
Apollos Hockey club	✓	
Cobble Hill Events		✓
Cowichan Capitals	✓	
Cowichan Field Hockey Association	✓	✓
Cowichan Music Society	✓	
Cowichan South Arts Guild/ Diane Mellott		✓
Cowichan Valley Arts Council	✓	✓
Cowichan Valley Football Association		✓
Cowichan Valley Soccer Association	✓	✓
Cowichan Youth Services	✓	✓
Craig Royal Mustangs U√3 AAA Baseball	✓	
CVMHA	✓	✓
David Coulson Design / Cowichan Public Art Gallery		✓
Dive Victoria	✓	
Duncan Badminton Club	✓	
Duncan Christian School	✓	✓
Duncan Curling Club	✓	

Group Name	Survey	Discussion
Duncan Skating Club	✓	✓
Duncan Stingrays		✓
Forever Fit		✓
Fuller Lake Skating Club		✓
Hustlers	✓	
Island Hockey Club	✓	
Kerry Park Minor Hockey	✓	✓
Kerry Park Skating Club		✓
Ladysmith Chemainus Swim Club		✓
Ladysmith Steelers Football Club	✓	
LC District Minor Hockey	✓	✓
LT Dance	✓	
Mercury Players	✓	✓
NextLevel Basketball	✓	
Old Timers Hockey	✓	
Shawnigan Lake Community Association	✓	✓
South Island Serpents	✓	
Special Olympics Cowichan		✓
Special Olympics Swim Team (Cowichan Valley)	✓	
St John's Academy Shawnigan Lake School	✓	✓
Thursday Line Dancing	✓	

Group Name	Survey	Discussion
Volunteer Cowichan	✓	
Warmland Dance	✓	
Warmland Strategy	✓	✓
Youbou Community Association	✓	
Cowichan Lake Arts and Culture	✓	
Duncan Junior Baseball	✓	
Arts Council of Ladysmith	✓	
Vancouver Island Regional Library	✓	
Cowichan Valley Breakers Swim Team	✓	
Total Participating Groups		49

Appendix E: Prioritization Framework – Detailed Scoring and Results

Table 45: Scoring Metric

Criteria	Metric	Weighting Value
Community Demand	<p>3 PTS: Identified as a priority by over 50% of Resident Survey respondents.</p> <p>2 PTS: Identified as a priority by 25 - 49% of Resident Survey respondents.</p> <p>1 PT: Identified as a priority by 15 - 24% of Resident Survey respondents.</p> <p>0 PTS: Not identified as a priority by at least 15% of Resident Survey respondents.</p>	3
Capital Cost	<p>3 PTS: LOW (amenity typically has a capital cost < \$1 M)</p> <p>2 PTS: MEDIUM - LOW (amenity typically has a capital cost in the \$1 - 10 M range)</p> <p>1 PT: MEDIUM - HIGH (amenity typically has a capital cost in the \$10 - 20 M range)</p> <p>0 PTS: HIGH (amenity typically has a capital cost exceeding \$20 M)</p>	2
Operating Cost	<p>3 PTS: LOW (additional amenities will have no or minimal impact on the existing cost to provide services)</p> <p>2 PTS: MEDIUM - LOW (additional amenities may require some additional resourcing / requisition amount but at a relatively small level with the possibility of being largely offset through user fees or other sources)</p> <p>1 PT: MEDIUM - HIGH (additional amenities are likely to require a moderate level of additional resourcing / requisition amount with limited abilities to offset through user pay or other sources)</p> <p>0 PTS: HIGH (additional amenities are likely to have a significant impact on the tax base, requiring a significant requisition amount on an ongoing basis)</p>	2
Financial Equity and Access	<p>3 PTS: The amenity type can be typically accessed at no or a very low cost</p> <p>2 PTS: The amenity type often require an admission or program fee, but doesn't require participation in a multi-month program (with associated program and equipment fees).</p> <p>1 PT: Accessing the amenity type typically requires registration in a multi-month program with associated program and equipment costs, however these costs may be offset by available support programs.</p> <p>0 PTS: The amenity has a significant financial cost to use/access for most residents.</p>	2
Populations Served	<p>3 PTS: The amenity type provides a wide array of active living opportunities (e.g. programs, drop-in times, events, etc.) across all ages.</p> <p>2 PTS: The amenity type provides active living opportunities across most age groups.</p> <p>1 PT: The amenity type has some adaptability to service multiple activities and ages, but is primarily focused one 1 or 2 specific activities and/or age ranges.</p> <p>0 PTS: The amenity type is highly targeted towards a specific activity and age range.</p>	2

Criteria	Metric	Weighting Value
Utilization and Capacity Indicators	<p>3 PTS: Utilization indicators / data exist that suggest the amenity is at risk of reaching capacity within the next 10 years.</p> <p>2 PTS: Utilization indicators / data exist that suggest the amenity is well utilized but has capacity to support current use levels for the medium term.</p> <p>1 PT: The amenity is sufficiently utilized and data does not exist to support that capacity will be challenged by growth.</p> <p>0 PTS: Utilization indicators / data exist that suggest the amenity is underutilized.</p> <p><i>*A score of '1' is assigned for amenities that do not have sufficient data.</i></p>	2
Geographic Gaps	<p>3 PTS: More significant geographic gaps exist (e.g. most residents cannot access the amenity within a 15-minute drive)</p> <p>1 PT: Some minimal geographic gaps exist (most residents cannot access the amenity within a 10 minute drive, but can access within an approximate 15 minute drive)</p> <p>0 PTS: The amenity is generally well distributed throughout the Cowichan Valley (the majority of residents can access the amenity within a 10 minute drive)</p>	2
Community Group Input and Their Anticipated Growth	<p>3 PTS: Amenity need a prevalent theme through the discussion sessions and community organization survey.</p> <p>1 PT: Amenity need mentioned by multiple groups through the discussion sessions and community organization survey.</p> <p>0 PTS: Amenity need did not frequently come up through the group engagements or in the community organization survey.</p>	1
Provincial and National Trends	<p>3 PTS: Activities that occur at the amenity type are strongly trending.</p> <p>1/2 PTS: Activities that occur at the amenity type are moderately trending and/or have continued popularity.</p> <p>0 PTS: Activities that occur at the amenity type show some indications of decline.</p>	1
Economic Benefits	<p>3 PTS: The amenity type is likely to draw significant levels of non-local visitation and associated economic generation.</p> <p>1/2 PTS: The amenity type is likely to draw some modest levels of non-local visitation and associated economic generation.</p> <p>0 PTS: The amenity type is used almost exclusively by local residents with minimal associated economic generation.</p>	1

Amenity Type	Community Demand	Capital Cost	Operating Cost	Financial Equity and Access	Populations Served	Utilization and Capacity Indicators	Geographic Gaps	Community Group Input and Their Anticipated Growth	Provincial and National Trends	Economic Benefits	Weighted Score
Arenas	0	0	1	2	3	3	1	3	2	3	28
Curling Rinks	0	1	1	2	2	0.5	3	0	0	2	21
Fitness Facilities	2	2	2	2	2	2.5	1	0	3	0	32
Gymnasiums / Large Span Multi-Sport Facilities	0	1.5	1	2	3	2	1	3	3	2	29
Indoor Aquatics	3	0	0	2	3	2	3	1	3	2	35
Indoor Walking Tracks	1	2.5	2	2	3	1	3	0	3	0	33
Court Hubs (Larger Clusters of Courts for Pickleball and/or Tennis)	2	2.5	3	3	2	1	0	1	3	1	34
Performing Arts Venues	1.5	1	1.5	2	3	2	3	3	3	3	38.5
Sports Boxes	1	3	2.5	3	2	1	1	1	2	0	31
Sports Fields and Ball Diamonds	1	3	2	3	2	3	0	3	3	2	37
Track and Field Amenities	0	3	2	3	2	1	1	1	1	2	28

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