Appendix H – Trends in Leisure Services

This section provides an overview of a number of trends that are affecting leisure lifestyles, and parks, recreation and cultural services across Canada, with more specific references to how they impact or relate to Richmond. Trends are observable patterns of change, some obvious and others more subtle, in areas as diverse as demographics, consumer preferences, economics, organizations and the environment. In this section, the trends are grouped under the following categories and sub-sections:

1. Demographic
2. Behavioural
3. Organizational and Workplace
4. Infrastructure
5. Environmental

1. Demographic Trends

Appendix G provides a detailed demographic profile of Richmond. This overview of demographic trends focuses on five broader demographic trend areas occurring in BC and Canada, and how they are reflected in Richmond.

1.1 *Population Cohorts:* David Foot, Canada's leading demographer, has written two books, *Boom, Bust & Echo* and *Boom, Bust & Echo 2000.* He identifies that it is too simplistic to view Canada as aging uniformly, and that there are significant differences between age cohorts and their respective impacts on society – especially the Baby Boom generation. Beginning with those born in 1930, Foot identifies the following age cohorts:

- Depression Babies 1930-1939: These individuals will be between 69 and 78 in 2008. Many have more traditional values in comparison with succeeding generations, have a sense of duty and citizenship (they almost all vote), and are often suspicious of change. Others of this generation are more open to new ideas, travel and continued learning. Whatever their perspectives, this group had large families and were the parents of the major bulge in the Baby Boom born from the mid-50's to mid-60's.

- World War II Pre-Boomers 1940-1946: This relatively small cohort will be between 62 and 68 this year, so are either retired or about to retire. They were or still are the key leaders in many fields, including parks and recreation, assuming senior

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positions fairly early in their careers and staying there. They will be less likely to join senior's centres as they age and will continue to use mainstream facilities. They could be a great source of volunteers because of their organizational abilities, but will need to be personally asked.

- Baby Boom 1947-1966: Some demographers use 1946-1964 to describe the Baby Boom years, while Foot uses 1947-1966 as being more representative of Canadian population shifts. This 19 year age cohort makes up over one-third of the Canadian population. Significant increases in the birth rate, coupled with immigration after WW II, led to a swelling of the population over this period. At the height of the Boom in 1959, there were 479,000 births in Canada; that was more than 135,000 more births than annually occur now. The oldest Boomers turned 60 in 2007 and the youngest were 42 in 2008, but based on the peak birth years, the "average" Boomer is only between 46 and 56. This means that the 65+ population, won't really peak until 2026 at 20%, and then grow more slowly to 23% by 2041. Foot named those born between 1961 and 1966 as "Generation X". This very large sub-cohort had difficulty getting good jobs and opportunities because: a) there were so many of them, and b) early Boomers were already entrenched in management positions. While Foot applied the term "Generation X" to this cohort at the height of the Boom, it is now more commonly used to describe those in their mid-twenties to mid-thirties. As a whole, Baby Boomers are more affluent, tend to be more active than preceding generations, and think of themselves as younger than their parents at the same age. As they age, Boomers are shifting from activities such as tennis and aerobics to less strenuous ones such as walking, cycling, tai chi and yoga.

- Baby Bust 1967-1979: The drop in the birth rate began in 1964, but there was a sharper drop in the birth rate and the number of children born between 1967 and 1979. These individuals will be 29 to 41 in 2008. This drop in birth rate led to elementary school closures in many communities across Canada in the early 1980's. This small cohort was fortunate in a number of ways. They had less competition getting into university, and as the first "techno-generation", rose relatively quickly as they entered the workforce – bypassing many of the original Generation X who remained sandwiched between them and the incumbent early Boomers. The Baby Busters tend to seek work-life balance and are more loyal to the team they work with than the organization itself.

- Baby Boom Echo 1980-1995: The fertility rate remained low entering the 1980's in terms of family size, but the number of births expanded as the Baby Boomers began to have children. This second swelling in the Canadian population, the "Echo", was far smaller than the Boom but still led to increased demands for school and university places as the Echo generation matured. Their presence has kept current secondary school populations high and has made university acceptance more

difficult because of the size of the cohort. The Echo cohort, aged 13-28, are a major consumer force, are wired technologically, are risk-takers recreationally, and often consider their friends as "family".

- ▪ Millennium Busters 1996-2010: Just as the Baby Boomers created the smaller Echo by having children, the smaller cohort of those born after the 1959-61 peak of the Boom (the Baby Bust generation), produced far fewer children. The number of births hit a 55 year low in 2000 and is now growing very slowly. The 2005 birth rate of 1.54 children is less than half the 3.6 rate in 1947. The Millennium Busters, aged 12 and under in 2008, have resulted in declining elementary school populations and school closures across British Columbia and Canada. In British Columbia in 2006, there were 26,460 fewer children 14 and under than in 2001, and 16,000 more grade 11 students than those in grade 1. This decline will also likely be reflected in drops in swim lesson demand and minor sport participation in the future. In Richmond, there were 1,245 fewer school aged children and youth in 2006 than 2001 as the Millennium Busters moved through the system.

The demographic patterns identified by Foot are evident in Richmond, and the age cohorts are virtually identical in proportion to those of the province. There is also a clear interplay between demographics and other community characteristics. For example, the drop in tennis participation across Canada is a result of Boomers shifting to less strenuous activities such as walking, but communities that have excellent tennis facilities and youth programs have altered that trend.

1.2 *An Aging Population*: The most significant shift in the Canadian population as a whole is that it is aging. Every five years, the median age of the Canadian population increases by approximately 2.1 years. In Richmond, the increase was 2.2 years, moving from 38.5 to 40.7. Some provinces age faster than others, depending largely on the in-or-out migration of young people and their families. Alberta is the youngest Canadian province because of strong job growth and what was relatively affordable housing. The three territories are younger still; the birth rates remain higher there and in Nunavit, for example, 45% of the population is under the age of 15. Table 1 shows the projected shifts of age group proportions in BC from 2006 to 2031 as the fertility rate remains stable and the population ages.

Table 1 - Age Groups Distribution by Percentage in BC

Age Groups	2006 Census	2016 Projected	2031 Projected
0-14	16.5	14.2	13.1
15-24	13.1	11.1	9.8
25-44	27.4	28.1	25.3
45-64	28.2	29.2	27.4
65+	14.6	17.5	24.1

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Almost a quarter of BC residents will be 65+ in 2031 and the number of those who are 80+ will increase from 4.0% in 2001 to 6.7% in 2031. The median age in the province has moved from 30.6 years in 1981 to 40.8 in 2006. Richmond has a lower proportion of 65+ residents at 12.6%, and this proportion will grow at a slightly slower rate than the province as a whole. These new "seniors", however, may be quite different than preceding older generations in their leisure choices. They will be more active and will likely stay in mainstream facilities rather than join designated seniors' centres. When they do use seniors' centres, they will more likely attend specific programs rather than becoming social members.

1.3 *The Changing Family*: In Canada, the mix of family types shifted between 2001 and 2006. Within overall population growth, the number of married-couple families grew by only 3.5%, lone-parent families went up by 7.8%, while common-law-couple families shot up by 18.9%. Richmond didn't really see these trends, and the proportion of single parent and common-law-couple families remained virtually the same. Common law relationships, in particular, remained much lower in Richmond at 5.7% as compared to BC at 12.2%. Canada also saw a higher growth of male-led as opposed to female-led lone-parent families, but this didn't occur in Richmond. Other Canadian trends were an increase of one-person households, and more young adults living with their parents. In 2006, 43.5% of young people aged 20-29 still lived at home, in contrast to 41.1% in 2001 and 32.1% in 1986. Richmond had a lower proportion of one person households at 20.5% than BC at 28.0%, and the proportion barely changed from 2001 when it was 20.2%.

1.4 *Increasing Diversity*: Communities, especially large urban centres, have become increasingly ethnically diverse. In 2006, 57.4%% of Richmond residents were foreign born in comparison to 27.5% of BC residents. In BC, just over 50% of these immigrants came from Asia, another 35% from Europe, and the remaining 15% from other regions of the World. In Richmond, the country of origin is more heavily focussed on Asia.

The proportion of visible minorities in the province has also continued to grow, moving from 17.9% in 1996 to 21.6% in 2001, and then to 24.8% in 2006 as BC's population has become more diverse. While many of these individuals were Canadian born, immigration has played a significant role in the increase. Richmond experienced a greater increase in its visible minority population between 1996 and 2006, moving from 49.3% in 1996 to 59.0% in 2001, and then to 65.1% in 2006 – making it the most diverse major community in Canada. There are also increasing numbers of individuals from Eastern Europe, and other world regions and language groups. Parks, recreation and cultural services need to ensure that facilities and services are welcoming, address language barriers appropriately, and recognize the needs and interests of various cultures when the demand and need is there. Richmond is well positioned to address these challenges through its Diversity Services Section.

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1.5 *Personal Economics - Growing Gap between Haves and Have-Nots:* There has been a general shift in North America to a growing gap between the haves and the have-nots from a personal economic perspective. The gap is somewhat greater in the United States than Canada. In both counties, that gap is age related in that more than half the wealth of North Americans is now owned by people over 50. Young families with children are now twice as likely to live in poverty as defined by the Low Income Cut-off (LICO). Fee rates, however, still generally favour older adults more than young families. There is a need to re-examine accessibility and pricing policies, and to implement measures that support all individuals with low income, but especially young families and their children. Richmond, as with virtually all urban areas, has significant variation between average incomes between neighbourhoods, with areas in the City Centre and West Cambie showing the greatest needs. Richmond augments its Fee Subsidy Program with a number of affordable program opportunities.

Implications of Demographic Trends

- The Baby Boom generation will continue to be active and place a high demand on services. Their preferences, however, will shift to less strenuous physical activities as they age and to cultural activities.

- The school population has declined and school closures have occurred. Stable neighbourhoods, where people tend to stay in the family home after their children leave, will be the most vulnerable to future school closures, leading to a potential loss of community access to school facilities and open spaces. There could also likely be declines in swim lessons, sport participation levels, and other programs as the fertility rate remains low.

- Demands for additional sports fields and arenas need to consider the future reductions in the child and youth population. While there may be the need for additional sport facilities in some specific neighbourhood areas, in many cases improving the quality of existing ones may better meet the needs in an era of declining youth population.

- The proportion of seniors will increase, but new seniors will likely continue to use multi-generational facilities for longer periods of time.

- As the cultural diversity of communities increase, the development of policies, programs and services, and marketing approaches will need to reflect this diversity and reach out to different ethno-cultural groups.

- Many ethno-cultural groups place a premium on large gatherings, (as do many organizations), for gatherings and special events. The provision of large outdoor group areas with adequate shelter and washrooms should be considered within parks systems.

- Accessibility and affordability for young families will need to be a priority. Fee policies will need to be re-examined, especially high discounts for seniors who can easily afford services. Recreation opportunities for children living in poverty needs to remain a high priority.

- Most Canadians view parks as part of the "commons". There is an expectation that they will continue to have free access to parks and trails for individual use. The significant public reaction to parking charges in Provincial Parks is an indicator of these expectations. Care needs to be taken in introducing new fees that impact use and access.

2. Behavioural Trends

2.1 *Toward Informal and Individual Activities:* There has been a clear shift from formal and organized activities to more individualized and informal. People are increasingly choosing activities that can be done individually or in small groups, at a time of the individual's choosing, and often near or at the individual's home. This is reflected in the top five favourite physical activities for adults and youth in Canada as identified in the 2003 Canadian Community Health Survey:

Favourite Adult Activities

1. walking
2. gardening
3. home exercise
4. swimming
5. bicycling

Favourite Youth Activities

1. walking
2. bicycling
3. swimming
4. running/jogging
5. basketball

With the exception of swimming, these activities can be done close to or at home. They can all be carried out at a personally convenient time and are generally unstructured. The only team sport found in either list is basketball; however, its inclusion is largely based on informal play rather than on formal organized team activity. In fact, registered sport participation levels fell to 34% in 1998 from 45% in 1992. In the case of swimming, most aquatic activity is drop-in water play or lap swimming. There is an increased interest in outdoor activities. New trail development consistently ranks at or near the top of public surveys in terms of preferred new

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facilities. Young families are also looking for inexpensive, informal activities that can be enjoyed as a family unit. The Needs Assessment survey reinforced this shift to more individual and informal activities.

2.2 *Changing Preferences and Expectations:* Another clear trend is the shift toward the experiential aspect of activities. People are seeking personal growth and meaning in the activities they choose. For example, the two fastest growth areas in tourism are cultural learning and ecotourism. Registration in classes has increased as people seek lifestyle skills. People not only have high expectations for achieving personal benefits, but also that there will be a high quality of service in terms of quality of instruction, customer service, and facility cleanliness and appearance.

As the Baby Boomers age, they continue to have an interest and commitment to being active, but will turn away from more strenuous activities such as tennis and jogging to more moderate activities such as walking and yoga. Boomers are also showing an increased interest in culture, both in terms of attending performances, visiting cultural venues, and in actual participation in art activities.

2.3 *Time Segmentation:* Geoff Godbey and others have noted the general feeling that many people feel rushed, and that their discretionary time is available in smaller chunks. This is reflected not only in the shift to more individual activities, but also to shorter periods of activity that involve "time deepening" where people multi-task during both work and leisure activities, (e.g. reading a report while on a treadmill). While many individuals report that they value their leisure time more than work, they may still be challenged to integrate leisure into their lifestyles by finding or creating time. The Needs Assessment Survey noted that "lack of time" as a barrier applied most to organized activities.

2.4 *Volunteerism:* Canada lost a million volunteers between 1997 and 2000, going from 7.5 to 6.5 million (Stats Canada). The greatest drop-off in volunteerism was found for the 35-49 age group; these individuals are perhaps most affected by time segmentation and having to juggle work and family obligations with leisure and volunteerism. As Baby Boomers begin to retire, they may create an excellent pool of skilled volunteers. They will likely have to be actively recruited to become a volunteer in the community. Because of time pressures, individuals will more likely be willing to volunteer for shorter term projects and tasks, as opposed to long-term commitments. Examples of short-term projects are trail building and invasive species removal days in parks, and special event planning in recreation. This trend is termed "episodic volunteering". A number of Richmond organizations have identified volunteer recruitment and retention as an issue.

2.5 *Wellness and Chronic Disease:* People are increasingly aware of the health benefits of activity and nutrition. This interest in personal wellness is reflected in the proportion of Canadian adults who are active enough to achieve health benefits. BC is the most

active province in Canada with 58% of the population active enough to receive health benefits (2003/04 Canadian Community Health Survey). The proportion for Canada has risen from 24% in 1881 to the current 49%. While Canadian adults are generally more active, they are also becoming more overweight; approximately 15% of the adult population is now obese. A lack of activity, coupled with fast foods and trans-fats intake, are responsible; community wellness initiatives will need to include a healthy eating component along with physical activity.

Older adults are becoming increasingly active, but activity levels still go down as people age. There is also a 15% discrepancy between older men and women in terms of activity levels with men being more active. The male-female gap is very small for mid-age adults, so the current discrepancy may disappear as the Baby Boomers age. There is also the "fourth generation". These are individuals who are impacted by chronic diseases such as Type 2 Diabetes as they age. Activity, however limited, will be an integral part of chronic disease management for these individuals.

2.6 *Children and Youth Inactivity:* Inactivity levels for children and youth are considered to be a greater problem. The Ontario Medical Association estimates that Canadian children are 40% less active than 30 years ago. Obesity rates tripled for children between 1981 and 1996, and children's overweight levels grew from 15% for both genders to 29.2% for girls and 35.4% for boys. Canadian children are averaging 5-6 hours of screen time on weekdays and 6-7.5 hours on weekend days, and less time playing outside. This challenge will require a coordinated effort by recreation, health, education and parents. There is also a 16% gap between male and female teens in activity levels. Inactivity and obesity levels in children and youth are resulting in the increasing early diagnosis of chronic diseases such as Type 2 Diabetes.

2.7 *Growing Leisure Activities:* Activities that have grown in popularity and will likely continue to grow include:

- Walking and Cycling – There will be continued demands for safe and inviting places for active transportation activities.

- Home Landscaping and Gardening – As the interest in gardening and landscaping grows, people will be looking for good information sources beyond television.

- Cultural Activities – The Boomers, in particular, will want to enjoy and participate in the visual, performing and cooking arts. There will also be a growing demand for art programs for school-aged children.

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- Outdoor Activities and Environmental Learning – There may be a shift away from traditional camping towards closer to home, but challenging, outdoor pursuits on a day-basis. There is a growing interest in learning about local and regional flora and fauna.

- Cultural Learning and Ecotourism – When people do travel, they will want to go someplace to learn: art, language, the culture, cooking, and heritage. Ecotourism will also remain strong as people seek unique experiences.

- Youth Physical Activity and Healthy Living – Parents are beginning to get the messages about child and youth obesity and inactivity. There will be increasing demands for programs that get young people active and help them make healthy choices.

- Rehabilitation and Chronic Disease Management – As people age and chronic disease conditions increase, they will seek to remain active while managing injuries and conditions. Community recreation facilities, combined with rehabilitation programs and elements, will be key settings.

Implications of Behavioural Trends

- There will be greater demands on drop-in opportunities in recreation and cultural facilities, and scheduling should ensure that these are available throughout the day.

- The development of greenways, bikeways and pathway systems is a key priority for community open spaces systems. These systems contribute to personal and environmental health.

- More experiential programs will be in high demand. These include outdoor adventure programs, cultural learning and participation, and more intensive learning opportunities.

- Where feasible, more programs should be offered in compressed timeframes – a one or two day workshop instead of on a weekly basis for a longer timeframe.

- Conversely, many people enjoy the constancy and social aspects of ongoing programs. Especially for older adults, social elements should be included as part of the post-activity period.

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- Volunteer recruitment and development programs will need to be revived, with retired Boomers and young people as two key targets. Volunteer experiences may need to be packaged into shorter timeframes around community projects.

- Programs aimed at rehabilitation and wellness can be offered through partnerships with the health sector. Programs offered in community, rather than clinical settings, are more likely to lead to ongoing healthy lifestyle behaviour. Aquatic and fitness elements can be included in facility design.

- Youth inactivity and obesity are considered by many to be at the epidemic level. Schools play a key role but often have diminished capacity. Partnership approaches by schools, parks and recreation departments, community sport, and parents will be required to address the issue.

- There will be an increasing demand for recreation staff to work with their park counterparts to plan and provide programs that address the growing interest in gardening, plant selection, pruning and home landscaping.

3. Organizational and Workplace Trends

3.1 *Leadership Shifts and Gaps:* The early Baby Boomers who have led parks and recreation organizations are soon going to retire. There are a number of capable people to replace them at the senior levels, but there appears to be a gap at the entry level with fewer younger people being attracted to the field or having had a chance to advance. There are also issues with attracting program, instructional and technical staff in areas as diverse as aquatics and arena plant maintenance. This is especially evident in smaller and mid-size communities.. Entry-level leadership issues are also evident for non-profit society management and the cultural field. A concerted effort will need to be made by post-secondary institutions and the field to address leadership gaps. Individual departments may need to develop and train their own staff in technical and program areas when there is a short supply.

3.2 *The Benefits Movement:* The 1992 and 1997 CPRA Benefits Catalogues have had a subtle but profound affect. They have helped the field become more outcomes focussed, and to broaden its mandate from the delivery of traditional services to the creation of individual and community benefits. In the 1990's the Benefits Movement and approach largely focussed on using the evidence of the benefits of parks and recreation as advocacy and communication tools – aimed at municipal councils, other institutions and citizens. The shift now is toward using the Benefits approach as a key planning tool. Departments are increasingly defining outcomes in their strategic planning processes, and then directing new strategies to achieve those outcomes.

3.3 *Partnering:* Parks and recreation has always functioned within a mixed delivery system model and has worked closely with other voluntary sport, culture and recreation organizations in the delivery of services. The most significant shift is the extension of these partnerships beyond the voluntary sector. Newer partners include the health system, social services, justice, education, the corporate sector, and community service agencies. This reflects both a broader interpretation of the mandate of parks and recreation agencies, and the increased willingness of other sectors to work together to address community issues. The relationship with health will be vital in promoting wellness. The traditional relationship with education, the sharing of facilities through joint-use agreements, is evolving into cooperative planning and programming aimed at addressing youth inactivity levels and community needs. Richmond has been a leader in forging partnerships with other sectors.

There has been a growth in internal partnerships within municipalities. There are closer relationships with police departments around public safety and youth initiatives, and there are closer relationships with planning and engineering departments in the development of greenway and active transportation systems.

3.4 *Alternative Delivery Systems:* Municipal parks and recreation structures and delivery systems have changed and more alternative methods of delivering services are evident. There is more contracting out of certain services, and more cooperative agreements with non-profit groups and other public institutions. Generally, contracting out works best for simple services that are easy to define and evaluate, while more complex services and operations are more effectively operated in-house. There are also more public-private partnerships involving either the construction of new facilities, or the inclusion of private operations within publicly operated facilities. The successful public private partnerships have been based on strong and comprehensive agreements and ongoing communication.

3.5 *Expanding Service Demands:* Throughout British Columbia, local parks, recreation and culture departments are increasingly asked to be an integral part of addressing a myriad of social issues, responding to homelessness, drug-use by youth and young adults, child care needs, and other issues traditionally responded to by provincially sponsored programs. In many communities, recreation personnel are working more closely on internal integrated service teams, and with social service personnel in responding to these needs. This often requires new and different skills, different programs and services design, and the re-allocation of resources. Funding issues aside, leisure is becoming more widely recognized as a tool for social change. Its potential for improving the quality of life for local citizens is significant. There is a growing trend to advocate the use of leisure programs and services to reduce crime, to reduce risk factors for youth at risk, and to break down ethnic divisions and create better understanding between different cultures.

3.6 *Accountability:* Another clear shift is that political decision makers and volunteer boards are increasingly demanding that their departments measure and demonstrate their impact on the community. This demand for accountability through performance measures doesn't necessarily result in outcomes focused organizations, because outputs are still far easier to measure. In the coming decade, the field will need to develop its capacity to ensure that sound performance measurement systems are in place, and have a balance between output and outcome measures. The field also has to become better at communicating the outcomes and benefits at a local, provincial and national level.

3.7 *Technology:* Parks and recreation has increasing embraced greater use of technologies. This includes bar-coded entry systems for pass holders, computer and web-based program registration systems, user tracking systems, and enhanced communications with both users and colleagues. These high tech capacities will compliment, but never replace the need for human contact and personal attention.

In the parks area, the use of digitized aerial photography has changed mapping systems and has allowed for easier overlays of GIS mapping levels. Many of these maps, including trails, will be available to the public on interactive web-sites. In the near future, parks maintenance staff will all carry a hand-held PDA that they can record work information on, and send directly to payroll and other computerized maintenance management systems. These will soon all be voice activated.

3.8 *Broad Workplace Shifts:* A large proportion of new jobs in the Canadian economy are self-employed or part-time, and a number of full-time jobs have more become more flexible in time patterns. This has contributed to an increase in weekday use of recreation facilities and open spaces, especially drop-in casual use. Job descriptions are becoming obsolete in many fields as individuals often find themselves working in teams and on tasks outside of their normal roles. Younger staff members, especially the Baby Busters, are less loyal to the organization than they are to the team and achieving goals; they expect to be part of the planning and decision-making processes of the organization.

Implications of Organizational and Workplace Trends

- The recruitment of young people into the field and its post-secondary education programs will be a priority. Young leaders also will need mentoring and professional development opportunities as they enter the field.

- Parks and recreation departments will need to become more skilled at integrating the benefits and outcomes into both operational and strategic planning.

- The analysis of trends and their impacts should be integrated into organizational strategic planning processes to ensure they are considered in identifying strategies and priority setting.

- As the field partners with other sectors, it will need to ensure that there is a mutual understanding of mandates as a starting point in the development of partnership approaches. This includes internal partnerships at the municipal level.

- Partnering with other sectors in the provision of services will require a clear set of expectations and written agreements. The development of an overall set of partnership guidelines can support this.

- Working with other sectors will create the need for developing greater skills in community development, team building and social inclusion.

- The development of a clear set of performance measures for the field will be required so that outcomes can be measured and communicated. The field needs to ensure that these measures are relevant, and are not simply output measures that are imposed by others.

- Mechanisms will be required to allow those in the field to share information about technological advances and opportunities.

- As job schedules become more flexible and people retire, there will be increased demands for day-time use – especially informal drop-in use.

4. Infrastructure Trends

4.1 *Aging Infrastructure and Funding:* Many of Canada's facilities are aging. The 2005 BCRPA Community Infrastructure Report - Phase 1 identified that almost 75% of ice arenas in BC are 25 years or older, along with 82% of curling rinks and 91% of outdoor pools. Just over half of BC's indoor pools were 25 years of age or more in 2004. Many early facilities were built as Centennial projects in 1967, while others were built in a second wave of facility construction in the 1980's. Many older facilities are deteriorating more rapidly than necessary because of limited preventative maintenance programs. These facilities now have envelope, code, mechanical, and slab problems. The multi-purpose recreation centres built in the 1980's are in better shape, but need work, particularly in the pools component.

Compounding the issue of aging facilities are reduced provincial infrastructure funding programs. Many provinces, including BC, had their own community facility infrastructure funds in the 1980's and 1990's that provided either a half or third of a project's capital cost. As a result, a large number of new facilities were built and others renovated. Most of these funds were discontinued in the mid to late 90's, with the funding generally being redirected to health. The Canada Infrastructure Program was not as accessible for funding community facilities, and the current programs such as the Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund are nearing their completion. It's still unclear whether the successor federal/provincial programs will be more supportive. It is hoped that a new dedicated provincial infrastructure fund for parks, recreation and cultural facilities, (such as the one in Saskatchewan), will be created in British Columbia.

4.2 *Historical Facility Shifts:* A large number of community recreation facilities were built across Canada at the time of the 1967 Centennial. Many of those facilities were stand alone arenas and curling rinks that catered to children and youth. They are not only aging, but suffer from functional obsolescence – and no longer address current needs. The second wave of recreation facility construction in the 1980's saw a shift to multi-purpose, multi-generational facilities that combined a number of uses. There was also a shift to constructing free-form leisure pools to complement traditional rectangular pools within these complexes beginning in the mid to late '80s.

4.3 *Senior and Youth Oriented Facilities*: A more recent shift has been a trend to including both senior and youth related spaces within multi-generational facilities rather than as stand-alone buildings. Individuals now entering their 60s are more likely to remain within mainstream facilities than to join designated seniors centres. If they do join, it is often to take advantage of program discounts rather than to become a social member. It is becoming more common to add older adult oriented social and program spaces within a multi-purpose complex, and to balance these with existing stand-alone senior's centers. These multi-purpose facilities still need social and program spaces that are older adult oriented. In terms of youth facilities, small stand-alone facilities have proven to be less successful than those that are part of a larger facility with gymnasium, fitness and other program spaces.

4.4 *Expanded Facility Roles:* Community leisure facilities are taking on a greater role in attracting tourism and in economic development. In particular, games and tournaments, cultural events, and heritage and agricultural activities are regarded as a means for economic growth and development. In fact, larger events have the benefit of providing the impetus and funding for facility construction and renovation. The Richmond Oval will be a significant sports tourism venue well after the 2010 Games. A growing trend will be the inclusion of partners from other fields in combined facilities. This may include public health units, libraries and social services.

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Implications of Infrastructure Trends

- A careful analysis of the major systems of aging facilities will need to be done and a repair/retrofit plan developed. As systems such as roofs age, deterioration accelerates with time, so repairs that are put off generally become more serious and costly.

- Facilities of any age require a life cycle management plan to review the condition, and repair and replace systems within reasonable timeframes.

- Fossil fuel costs will continue to increase and systems to reduce consumption need to be considered based on payback. These include roof solar panels, heat recovery systems and motion sensitive lighting. Buildings should be designed with appropriate green building or LEED principles, and supplementary energy sources such as solar and geothermal. Water use needs to be reduced in shower, toilet, pool, and grounds/landscaping applications.

- Active transportation systems are a major contributor to individual and community health. Ideally, walkway and bikeway connections should be made to indoor facilities. At a minimum, adequate bicycle parking and storage should be provided.

- Care should be taken before developing stand alone senior centres because of changing expectations of the coming generation of older adults. Seniors' oriented spaces should be grouped with other adult program spaces and include social elements.

- Stand-alone youth facilities have proven to be less effective in most settings than the inclusion of youth elements in multi-generational facilities. Again, these spaces should be grouped with gymnasiums and other active areas.

- The most successful youth parks have enough elements that they attract a range of youth groups and interests. These elements may include a skateboard facility, sport courts and social gathering spaces.

- Partnering with other sectors in recreational facilities requires careful planning and clear agreements. The most successful ones are those that involve program partnerships rather than simply being a landlord-tenant relationship.

5. Environmental Trends

5.1 *Growing Sense of Stewardship:* The environment has remained on the agenda of individual British Columbians and other Canadians. This is evidenced by the public support given to the preservation and protection of natural areas, and the current pressures on the Province to upgrade provincial parks that are perceived to have deteriorated. On a personal level, 88% of Canadians recycle or compost. This and other environmentally friendly behaviours do not appear to extend to reducing fossil fuel consumption in vehicles use. The average car produces 4 tonnes of Green House Gases annually, and public active transportation and public transit systems will need to be improved to reverse this pattern. Environics found that 85% of Canadians think the environment will get worse, especially in terms of air and water quality.

Parks and recreation departments will be challenged on their stewardship practices, and will need to have sound urban forest management and Integrated Pest Management (IPM) policies and practises in place.

5.2 *Interest in the Environment:* There is heightened interest in environmental activities and learning, including an interest in learning about local flora and fauna. Growing activities include birding; over 70 million North Americans collectively now spend approximately $5.5 billion annually. Richmond is uniquely positioned to build on this interest because of the estuary lands on the Pacific Flyway. While interest in camping remains high, there is a growing trend towards shorter-term, but more intensive environmental experiences such as wilderness hiking. People are also investing more in their individual environments as gardening and home landscaping grow in popularity. Municipal parks and recreation departments should look at increasing environmental and outdoor education opportunities.

5.3 *Climate Change:* While there is not common agreement on the causes, there is agreement that global warming is occurring. In the 20th century, the average global temperature rose 1 degree Fahrenheit; the expected increase in the 21st century is 5-8 degrees F. A rise of this magnitude will impact snow levels and glacial melting, sea levels and eco systems. The only safe prediction appears to be that weather will become more unpredictable. The number of extreme weather events in this decade in Canada has doubled over those 30 years ago, and Richmond has been impacted by recent major wind storms and tree damage.

Implications of Environmental Trends

- The stewardship of natural environments requires sound and sensitive management practises; many communities have developed natural areas and urban forest management plans, and integrated pest management plans.

- There is increased interest and opportunities to engage local citizens and groups in environmental stewardship activities such as stream and riparian zone restoration and the removal of invasive species.

- The conservation and wise use of water needs to infused into park operations, including automated irrigation systems and drought tolerant, native plant selection.

- Energy conservation in facilities and parks operations needs to become a greater priority, especially with older facilities that are "energy hogs".

- With a heightened interest in nature and the environment, local authorities may consider interpretive programs, signage, and environmental education and information programs.

- Parks operations need to consider the likely impacts of climate changes on flora and fauna and examine longer-term planting programs in terms of these changes. Plans must also be made to deal with tree damage and other damage from significant storms.

- Parks and recreation departments should consider becoming environmental leaders in their communities through a combination of sound environmental practices, educational programming, and citizen involvement.

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