



REVIEW OF THE FUNDING MODEL FOR RECREATION & CULTURAL FACILITIES

RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF TWO BORDERS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In November 2022, the Rural Municipality of Two Borders (the ‘RM’ or ‘Two Borders’) engaged BDO Canada LLP (‘BDO’) to undertake a review of funding model for recreation and cultural facilities (the ‘Facilities’). This project was fully funded through Province of Manitoba’s Municipal Services Delivery Improvement Program (‘MSDIP’). The scope of the review endeavored to evaluate how best to modify its funding approach for its recreation and cultural services program.

The RM is located in southwestern Manitoba. It was established in 2015 to reflect the amalgamation of the former Rural Municipality of Albert, the Rural Municipality of Arthur, and the Rural Municipality of Edward. Per census data, the RM covers an area of approximately 2,300 square kilometers and has a population of approximately 1,100 people. The RM uses property taxes to fund its operations, as well as support from the provincial government. As part of the budgeting process, the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) prepares a financial plan that determines the allocation of funds for various services, including for the Recreation & Cultural Services Program. In the years 2021 and 2022, the expenses for the Recreation & Cultural Services Program amounted to approximately \$299,000 and \$248,000 respectively.

The overall objective of the RM through applying for funding through the MSDIP for this review was to improve its funding approach for the Recreation and Cultural Services Program, and to evaluate the impact of reducing Council committee hours and budget meeting times. Further, it was to provide realistic and equitable services to all area ratepayers and streamline operations.

This report presents observations and recommendations to achieve these objectives effectively. To properly assess and provide informed recommendations, a current state assessment was conducted which included:

- conducting interviews with staff, Council, and residents;
- reviewing and analyzing supporting documentation; and
- conducting a survey of residents regarding their usage of facilities.

Throughout the report detailed recommendations have been provided. Below is a summary of the key observations and recommendations by each section:

#	OBSERVATION	RECOMMENDATIONS
I. GOVERNANCE AND FUNDING POLICIES		
1	The current structure and size of the Council may not be adequate to support efficient decision making, nor meet budget constraints the RM currently faces.	It is recommended to gradually reduce the number of Councillors per ward over time to improve decision-making efficiency and promote a shared vision for the entire community.
2	The current practice of a Council Member attending separate committees for each	Restructuring the project committees based on facility types rather than individual projects will streamline the

#	OBSERVATION	RECOMMENDATIONS
	facility results in an inefficient use of resources.	process, enhance coordination, and foster better collaboration among members.
3	The absence of comprehensive policies poses significant challenges, highlighting areas in need of improvement regarding grant and levy application processes, allocation submissions, and the accompanying policies.	Consider enhancing the criteria and evaluation process for grant and levy applications by considering factors such as sustainability, community engagement, nearby facilities, asset management, and resident utilization. Additionally, establish a formalized process with clear timelines to ensure transparency and efficiency in grant allocation and levy policies.
II. CULTURAL FACILITIES		
4	Lyleton Community Hall is minimally used and is largely operating with a reliance on volunteers therefore requiring reduced financing from the RM.	It is recommended that funding for property insurance should continue, while operational funding and volunteer support can be sustained through the local community.
5	Pierson Community Hall is utilized and requires minimal financing from the RM.	Given that no further funding is required from the RM, it is recommended that the Pierson Community Hall remains open and accessible to the community.
6	Tilston Community Hall is minimally used and is largely operating with a reliance on volunteers therefore requiring reduced financing from the RM.	It is recommended that funding for property insurance should continue, while operational funding and volunteer support can be sustained through the local community.
7	The RM has an outdated agreement to fund other neighboring libraries.	It is recommended that the RM reconsider providing financial contributions to libraries outside of the Two Borders jurisdiction.
8	Melita Library is not a facility within Two Borders but is utilized by the community therefore receives funding by the RM.	The RM should consider continuing funding to Melita Library while potentially revising the contributed amount as it benefits Two Border communities.

#	OBSERVATION	RECOMMENDATIONS
9	Pierson Library is utilized and relies on financing from the RM.	It is recommended to continue operations as the Pierson Library is operating optimally and appears to be operating efficiently.
10	Reston Library is not a facility within Two Borders but is utilized by the community therefore receives funding by the RM.	It is recommended that the RM reconsider providing financial contributions to libraries outside of the Two Borders jurisdiction.
III. RECREATION CENTRES		
11	Two Borders has no formal agreement to fund other neighboring recreational facilities.	Given facilities are unable to produce usage reports, it is recommended that Two Borders should implement usage reporting to determine the proportion of facility usage by its' residents. This will allow for a better understanding and decision making by Two Borders for grant/levy application.
12	Enns Brothers Place is not a facility within Two Borders but is utilized by the community therefore receives funding by the RM.	It is recommended to exercise tighter control over budgets and closely monitor Enns Brothers Place's cost controls to ensure adherence to the allocated budget. This will enable the RM to maintain financial stability while supporting the operations of Enns Brothers Place.
13	The Edward Sports Centre is seeing declining utilization and increased reliance on volunteer effort, yet significant capital expenditures are necessary within the next five (5) years.	It is recommended to closely monitor budgets, ensuring tighter cost controls and adherence to the allocated budget.
14	There is no funding formula for contributions to the Reston Recreation Centre and no way to assess the appropriateness of that funding	It is recommended for the RM to require the Reston facility to track and monitor the usage of the facility specifically by Two borders residents. This may be done through implementing a non-resident fee for using the Reston rink. Such a fee would streamline the contribution process and help ensure the financial burden is distributed fairly across all users.

#	OBSERVATION	RECOMMENDATIONS
15	Waskada Ice Rink is not a facility within Two Borders but is utilized by the community therefore receives funding by the RM.	It is recommended that the RM develop processes and policies to distinguish and measure the use of the Waskada, by Two Borders residents. Such a process would assist all communities in properly formulating cost recovery strategies.

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

The Rural Municipality of Two Borders (the “RM” or “Two Borders”) is located in southwestern Manitoba. It was established in 2015 to reflect the amalgamation of the former Rural Municipality of Albert, the Rural Municipality of Arthur, and the Rural Municipality of Edward. The RM covers an area of approximately 2,300 square kilometers and has a population of approximately 1,100 people. The Town of Melita, which is surrounded by Two Borders, was not included in this amalgamation.

The RM is divided into wards whose division aligns with the previous structure of the old RMs within Two Borders. This ensures that the wards accurately reflect the geographical areas that were previously designated under the RMs. Ward 1 corresponds to the northern region, Ward 2 corresponds to the eastern region, and Ward 3 corresponds to the western region. According to the 2021 census, the population of Two Borders was 1,120, which reflected a decline of 4.7% compared to the 2016 census, where the population stood at 1,175.

The RM is governed by a Council that is comprised of a Reeve and nine (9) Councillors. The Council meets regularly to discuss and vote on issues related to municipal services, budgets, and planning. This includes the process of granting levies to recreational facilities, requiring a majority vote from the Council Members for an approval.

The RM’s main sources of revenue include property taxes, provincial grants, and user fees. Within the budgeting process, the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) prepares a financial plan that determines the allocation of funds for various services, including recreation and culture. Financial plans are reviewed and approved by the council and presented to the community through a public hearing for feedback.

In the years 2021 and 2022 the expenses for recreation and culture amounted to approximately \$299,000 and \$248,000 respectively. Once the funding amount is determined, the CAO reviews budgets submitted by facilities for levies and applications received for grants. The CAO ensures that all necessary information has been provided and proposes recommendations for approved levies and grants, along with the corresponding amounts. In addition, the RM negotiates with neighboring communities of Melita, Reston, and Waskada over the use of their recreation facilities. Contributions from these municipalities have been requested due to their historical usage by Two Border residents.

The declining population affects the RMs ability to generate revenues to service municipal programs. Resources are constrained and Council endeavours to optimize all aspects of its programming as to ensure taxpayers are well served. This review of cultural and recreational facilities is part of that ongoing effort.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this review was to provide recommendations on a more appropriate and equitable service delivery approach for funding programs and facilities. More specifically, this review was designed to:

- Assist Council in reducing committee hours and budget meeting times
- Support a comprehensive approach to realign inter Municipal agreements based on a new funding model
- Support Council and Staff in optimizing their operations through undertaking a comprehensive review of facilities. The review includes both quantitative data analysis (such as utilization rates, program participation, and financial performance) and qualitative assessments (including feedback from stakeholders, community satisfaction surveys, and program effectiveness).

SCOPE

The scope of this review considers the facilities that the RM currently provides funding to in the form of levies. Specifically, this refers to indoor facilities as they entail higher financial burdens in terms of capital upkeep, utilities, and maintenance expenses (as opposed to compared to outdoor recreational facilities. The Levy Summary Document is a listing of funded facilities prepared by the CAO of the RM to detail the amount allocated for recreational levy support. In addition, individual facility managers were interviewed to assess their need or likelihood for requesting a levy from the municipality based on historical requests and their need for future assets, to determine whether a significant levy is expected in the future. The following table outlines the final scoping agreed to with the RM.

FACILITIES WITHIN TWO BORDERS		
SITES	FACILITIES IN SCOPE	COMMENTARY
Bede, Broomhill, Coulter, and Elva	No facilities scoped in	There are no recreation facilities, or substantial population within the area. There are no direct recreational levies and therefore, these communities were not considered within this review.

FACILITIES WITHIN TWO BORDERS		
SITES	FACILITIES IN SCOPE	COMMENTARY
Lyleton and Tilston	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Lyleton Hall ➤ Tilston Hall 	<p>While the halls have not received levy income support in the past two years, the property insurance is covered by the Municipality and has been included in the scope of this engagement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Lyleton Hall: This hall is mainly used for fund raising, weddings, craft club and other small events. ◆ Tilston Hall: Primarily used for weddings and funerals.
Pierson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Pierson Memorial Arena ➤ Pierson Community Hall ➤ Pierson Library 	<p>There are recreation facilities included within this community that has historically received grant and levy income and therefore it has been scoped in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Pierson Community Hall: The community hall is a multi-purpose facility that can be used for weddings, meetings, and other social events. It has a full kitchen and can accommodate up to 400 people. ◆ Pierson Memorial Arena: The arena is home to a hockey team and offers public skating sessions and ice rentals for other sports such as figure skating. The arena also has a canteen and a lounge. ◆ Pierson Library: The library is based within a Municipal building, that provides access to a wide range of books, educational materials, and services for residents.

Facilities Outside Two Borders

The close proximity of the Melita, Reston and Waskada facilities provides convenient use to many of the RMs residents. The RM contributes to these surrounding communities’ facilities through various means and are accordingly considered in this review. The following sites have been included in the scope of this review based on contributions made by the RM.

FACILITIES OUTSIDE TWO BORDERS		
SITES	FACILITIES IN SCOPE	COMMENTARY
Melita	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Enns Brothers Place ➤ Melita Library 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Enns Brothers Place (Melita & Area Communiplex): This recreation centre has a gym & fitness room, golf simulator, skating & curling, and an aquatic centre. ➤ Melita Library - offering residents access to diverse collections, educational resources, and valuable library services.
Reston	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recreational centre ➤ Reston & District Library 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recreation centre: A facility that houses an ice rink used for hockey and curling activities. It provides a space for local teams to practice, compete, and host tournaments. ➤ Reston Library - The RM contributes towards the operations of Reston library.
Waskada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Arena 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Waskada Arena - The arena supports hockey recreational teams and offers public skating sessions and ice rentals for other sports such as figure skating. There is also a batting cage and curling space.

APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

The approach for this review was to conduct interviews, and review policies and source documentation to develop an understanding of the RMs processes and priorities. The methodology used for this review was to work with CAO and RM staff to confirm in-scope locations and then to gather information upon which the review and recommendations are based. An on-site visit was undertaken wherein residents, Management and Council were engaged to further develop an understanding of key issues.

A survey was undertaken to develop additional insights on the preferences and expectations of residents - the results of the survey are referred to throughout the report, in relation to specific observations.

The review concentrated on the following three (3) areas of focus:

- I. Governance and Funding Policies;
- II. Cultural Facilities; and
- III. Recreation Facilities

I. REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE & FUNDING POLICIES

Governance and funding policies maintained by the RM affect the overall function and coordination of facilities and service delivery. Improving existing policies and formalizing previously informal policies provides the community with a baseline against which its operations can be improved into the future. The following observations were made in relation to governance and funding policies.

1) Composition of the Council

Observation 1: The current structure and size of the Council may not be adequate to support efficient decision making, nor meet current budget constraints the RM faces.

Discussion

The RM is comprised of three (3) wards, each with three (3) Councillors, representing its residents. The current composition raises concerns about the fairness of Council representation, as smaller wards hold the same number of Councillors as those with higher population. However, given that all wards have similar land space, an evaluation is needed to determine whether Council representation should be based on population for a more equitable system. The Councillors are elected by the residents of their respective wards in a general municipal election that takes place every four (4) years. The most recent election occurred on October 26, 2022.

Analysis

The RM is currently facing challenges regarding its council structure, as differing perspectives make it difficult to achieve a unified approach. The large council size can make it difficult for the operators to approach councillors and express their concerns or seek assistance. A larger Council size also incurs more expenses. In the previous year, the Council incurred expenses totaling \$40,000 with most costs relating to travel.

Through a reduction in the number of Councillors, the Council can enhance its approachability by facility representatives, fostering a stronger connection between residents and their Council to facilitate a more inclusive decision-making process.

Recommendations

To enhance effectiveness of decision making and approachability a systematic reduction in the number of councillors per ward over the next election periods is suggested. A reduction from three (3) councillors to two (2) councillors per ward would significantly reduce bureaucracy. A work plan should be developed to guide this transition process. Elements of this plan could include:

- Defining specific roles and responsibilities for Councillors. This would clarify their areas of focus and expertise, ensuring a more organized and coordinated approach. Council duties are to the benefit of Two Borders residents and not the operational commitment to other municipalities facilities.
- Implementing clear policies and procedures, such as establishing a purchasing or granting approval matrix, can empower Councillors to make certain decisions. This would enable a more efficient decision-making process.

- Defining specific roles and responsibilities for Councillors. This would clarify their areas of focus and expertise, ensuring a more organized and coordinated approach to governance. Outlining clear expectations and objectives for each Councillor would help optimize their individual contributions to the Council's overall goals. By cultivating a shared vision, Councillors can overcome biases towards their individual areas and prioritize the Two Borders community as a whole.

There are also cost benefits to reducing the size of Council. In person meetings are crucial to continue fostering a working relationship, but through the use of technology (i.e., through the use of Microsoft Teams on iPads that have already been provided to Council Members) there is an opportunities to limit the number of in-person meetings, and thus related travel costs incurred to attend.

To enhance efficiency and to accommodate the evolving needs of the RM, implementing a hybrid meeting model is advisable. This approach combines in-person and virtual meetings, allowing Council Members to participate remotely when appropriate. It reduces travel costs, saves time, and ensures that decision-making processes can continue uninterrupted, even in situations where physical attendance may be challenging.

Recommendation 1: It is recommended to gradually reduce the number of councillors per ward over time and transitional work plan to improve decision-making efficiency and promote a shared vision for the entire community.

Priority: High

2) Reduction of Project Committees

Observation 2: The current practice of a Council Member attending separate committees for each facility results in an inefficient use of resources.

Discussion

Project committees assist the RM by overseeing and managing specific facilities. These committees are responsible for planning, coordinating, and implementing various initiatives that contribute to the development and improvement of the recreation facilities. Whenever a project arises, a dedicated committee is established for that specific facility. These committees are typically comprised of volunteers and is lead by one of the Council's committee members.

Analysis

The current practice of forming separate committees for each facility can lead to inefficiencies for Council. The considerable time dedicated to establishing and managing multiple committees, each with its own focus, can cause delays in decision-making and impede progress. Furthermore, operating each committee independently increases the likelihood of redundant efforts. Since project committees meet at least once a month, this approach fails to save time and travel costs.

Project committees are set up and arranged, irrespective of the facility's size. This approach lacks formal criteria for assessing which facilities require a project committee. Instead, committees are formed based on qualitative factors such as their perceived importance to the

community. As a result, resources, including both funds and time, may be inefficiently allocated. In addition, the formation of committees for all sizes of facilities reduces synergies.

Committees could be organized around building types such as halls, libraries, and arenas. This approach allows for a holistic consideration of all matters related to a particular type thus reducing duplication of efforts and fostering better coordination and knowledge-sharing among members.

Recommendation 2: Restructuring the project committees based on facility types rather than individual projects will streamline the process, enhance coordination, and foster better collaboration among members.

Priority: Medium

3) Financial Policies

Observation 3: The absence of comprehensive policies poses significant challenges, highlighting areas in need of improvement regarding grant and levy application processes, allocation submissions, and the accompanying policies.

Discussion

The RM maintains a plan (the “Financial Plan”) that provides a comprehensive overview of the funding amounts and categories available to the public, including general government, environmental initiatives, economic development, recreation & culture, and other fiscal matters. The allocation towards recreation is proposed by the CAO of the RM taking into account historical costs. Public hearings take place, which allow individuals or representatives of facilities the opportunity to present their views and voice their concerns or support regarding the financial plan. The allocations are then subsequently approved by Council.

Grants and levies both financially assist the recreational facilities. Grants are one off payment to cover capital costs whereas levies are to assist with operational costs that occur more regularly. There is a policy in place for grant applications exceeding \$500 but no formal policy exists for levies.

To apply for a grant, applicants complete an application form. To apply for levies, applicants provide budgets detailing the amount needed from the RM to complete the budget.

Analysis

Provincial basket funding approaches are used and refer to a funding approach where a single pool of money or resources is allocated for multiple purposes or projects. Instead of allocating funds to specific individual programs, basket funding allows for flexibility and allows the Council to distribute resources across various areas based on priorities and needs. The split allocated by the CAO is proposed within the Financial Plan.

The following pie charts (Figure 1 and 2) illustrate the allocation of funding to recreation facilities in 2022 and 2021 respective. As mentioned above, the CAO generally allocates the amounts based on the proportion that was determined before basket funding existed, which is ultimately historical data, and therefore is a reasonable method of allocation.

Figure 1 - Funding Allocation to Recreational Facilities (2021)

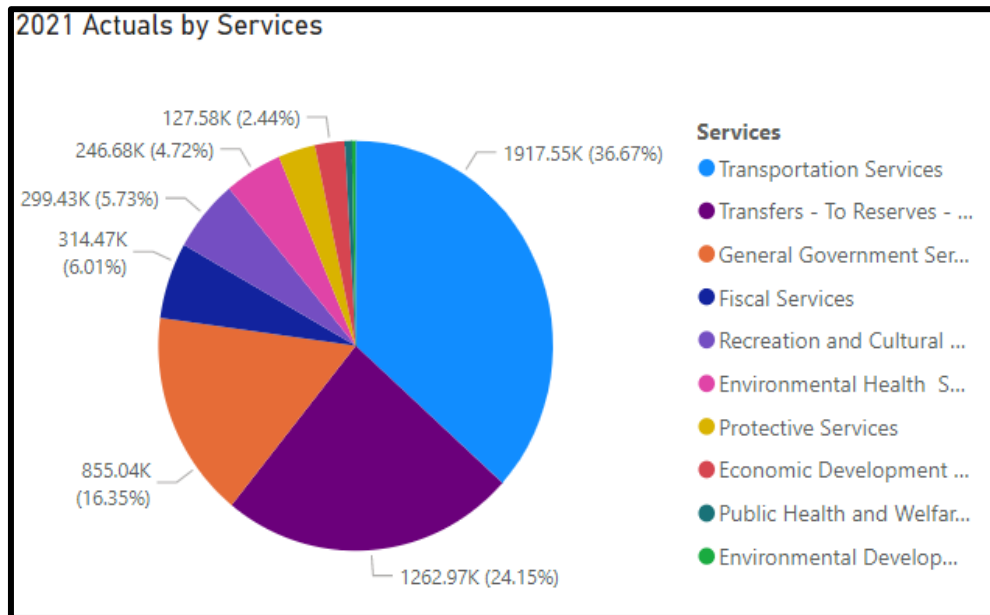
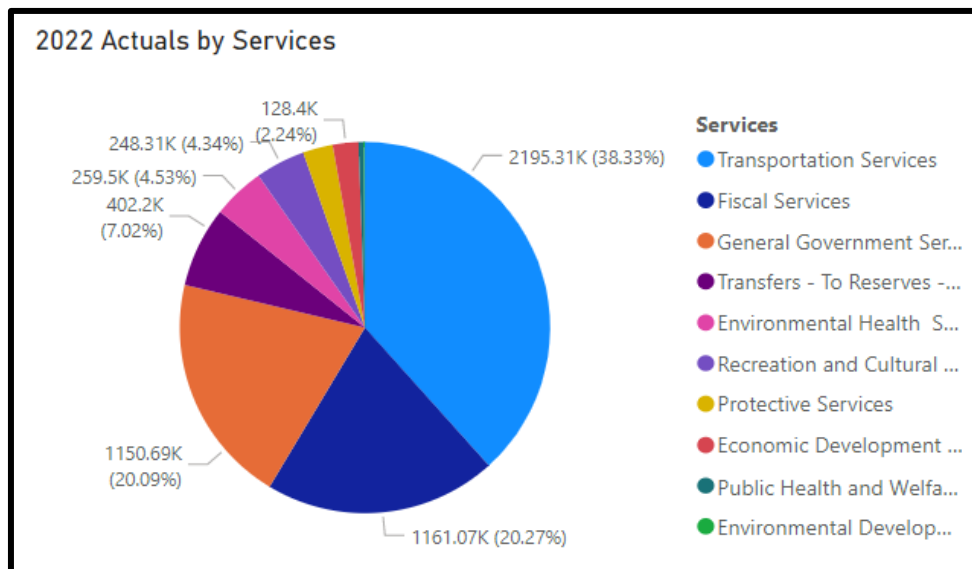


Figure 2 - Funding Allocation to Recreational Facilities (2022)



However, these decisions are largely guided by informal processes and lack comprehensive policies. This reduces the RMs ability to measure performance and prioritize future funding.

The following areas have been identified for improvement when considering the criteria associated with Two Borders providing grants and levies:

- **Future Sustainability:** Consider the long-term sustainability and viability of the project or organization requesting the grant. Evaluate the applicant's plans for financial stability, revenue generation, and sustainability beyond the grant period by reviewing budgets and historic data. This will help ensure that the

grant investment has a lasting impact and contributes to the community's overall well-being.

- **Volunteer Willingness and Engagement:** Assess the level of volunteer support and engagement within the applicant organization. Consider the capacity and willingness of volunteers to contribute their time and skills towards the project's success. Volunteer involvement can be indicative of community support and dedication to the project's objectives.
- **Assessment of Nearby Facilities:** Evaluate the presence and adequacy of other facilities or initiatives in the nearby area that address similar needs or objectives. Consider how the proposed request complements or fills a gap in the existing offerings. This assessment will help avoid duplication of efforts and ensure that resources are distributed efficiently.
- **Asset Management Needs:** Consider the applicant's asset management practices and their plans for maintaining and maximizing the use of existing facilities or resources. Consider how the grant will contribute to the efficient utilization and preservation of assets, ensuring their long-term value for the community.
- **Utilization of Two Border residents:** To ensure that facilities receiving funding prioritize the provision of services and resources that directly benefit and cater to the needs of Two Border's residents. By incorporating resident utilization as a criterion, the policy can effectively promote community engagement, maximize the impact of funding, and foster a strong sense of ownership and investment from the local population.

Recommendation 3: Consider enhancing the criteria and evaluation process for grant and levy applications by considering factors such as sustainability, community engagement, nearby facilities, asset management, and resident utilization. Additionally, establish a formalized process with clear timelines to ensure transparency and efficiency in grant allocation and levy policies.

Priority: Medium

II. REVIEW OF CULTURAL FACILITIES

Rural communities rely on the smaller, multi-purpose, spaces for a range of social, municipal, and recreational events. They are often heavily supported and maintained through the efforts of community volunteers. However, the RM ultimately retains certain obligations and counts on these facilities in considering their overall service delivery. The following observations were made with respect to cultural facilities.

1) Lyleton - Community Hall

Observation 4: Lyleton Community Hall is minimally used and is largely operating with a reliance on volunteers therefore requiring reduced financing from the RM.

Discussion

Lyleton is a small rural community located near the Saskatchewan border. Lyleton consists of only a few households and a single community hall (the “Lyleton Hall”). It is used mainly by the local community for funders, weddings, craft club and other small events.

Analysis

Based on the Two Borders survey, out of the 160 responses, only 13 people reported using the Lyleton Hall. However, of these 13 individuals, only one (1) individual solely used the Lyleton Hall, while the majority also utilized other halls, with Pierson or Melita Halls being the most common alternatives. Lyleton Hall is the least utilized among the halls in the RM.

Based on the consensus of the survey, the condition of the halls were satisfactory and no substantial expenditure to be expected. There are other halls within Two Borders that can equally host similar gatherings, which includes Pierson (19km from Lyleton). There are no other surrounding communities that would rely on Lyleton as Melita will be the next option for other smaller communities near Lyleton like Cameron and Coulter.

Based on the survey and interviews, it has been communicated there is willingness to support and maintain the facility as it is a landmark for the community. Most residents had no issues with pricing - the hall rental rates per an event were consistent with surrounding areas as they stand at:

- Basement - \$50
- Upstairs - \$50
- Socials - \$200

The RM only covers the annual insurance expense of \$2,500 while the facility bears the remaining costs. The hall belongs to the RM therefore any overages in operating expenses must be subsidized. The main reason for low maintenance of this facility is its reliance on volunteers for operations. With regards to financial commitments there are no foreseeable capital expenditure nor operational costs with the exception of the property insurance.

Recommendation 4: It is recommended that funding for property insurance should continue, while operational funding and volunteer support can be sustained through the local community.

Priority: Low

2) Pierson - Community Hall

Observation 5: Pierson Community Hall is well utilized and requires minimal financing from the RM.

Discussion

Pierson Community Hall (the “Pierson Hall”) has been a central hub for social events and community activities in the area for more than 20 years. The Pierson Hall has a kitchen and a basement, in addition to the ground floor hall. The Pierson Hall is used for a range of events, such as dances, weddings, banquets, meetings, classes, flu clinics and elections. It can accommodate up to 400 people and includes a stage for performances, presentations, and a full kitchen. Volunteers play a crucial role in running and maintaining it.

Analysis

Based on the survey conducted, it was found that out of the 160 responses, only 46 individuals reported using the Pierson Hall, with 22 of them exclusively utilizing the facility. Other frequently used halls in conjunction with Pierson include Melita and Tilston.

The town of Pierson has experienced an 8.4% decrease in population from 2016 to 2021, as indicated by the 2021 Census, resulting in a current population of 174 individuals. This decline in population could potentially contribute to the primary challenges faced by the facility, namely, low turnout for events. It is possible that this low turnout is a result of a limited community interest. The decrease in population is a significant contributing factor to the overall decline in event participation.

The decline in population is notable within Pierson and Two Borders. In the absence of the Pierson Hall, Two Border residents would have to rely on either smaller facilities or halls from other municipalities.

Other programs such as low-impact exercise programs, which can increase the hall's usage and contribute to community engagement should be considered. The operational costs of the Pierson Hall are currently incurred and funded by the local community through operational fees, with no municipality levies projected for the future.

The Pierson Hall's pricing structure aligns well with other halls. Expenses incurred are primarily related to day-to-day operations, including hydro (electricity), landline phone bills, and the caretaker's salary. However, due to the age of the facility, the manager anticipates the need for additional capital expenditures in the upcoming years.

Planned expenses, which will be covered through a combination of fundraising efforts and grants, include:

- Ensuring wheelchair accessibility (to be funded by an accessibility grant),
- Replacing the lighting fixtures, and
- Upgrading the furniture to improve the overall functionality and appearance of the facility.

The facility has faced challenges in effectively utilizing the levies that were allocated for facility improvements in the past. From 2016 to 2021, the facility received an annual levy of

\$10,000. A miscommunication occurred regarding the intended use of these funds. The facility sought the funding to alleviate the need for constant fundraising, leading them to primarily save and reserve most of the funds for emergencies. However, Council had the expectation that the funds would be utilized for day-to-day operations and facility improvements, resulting in a discrepancy between the intended purpose and the actual utilization of the funds. As the facility aims to use the reserves built up, there were no levies funded in 2023.

In the absence of the Pierson Hall, Two Border residents would have to rely on either smaller facilities or halls from other municipalities. Other programs such as low-impact exercise programs, which can increase the hall's usage and contribute to community engagement should be considered.

Recommendation 5: Given that no further funding is required from the RM, it is recommended that the Pierson Hall remains open and accessible to the community.

Priority: Low

3) Tilston - Community Hall

Observation 6: Tilston Community Hall is minimally used and is largely operating with a reliance on volunteers therefore requiring reduced financing from the RM.

Discussion

Tilston is a small rural community located in the southwestern region of Manitoba, Canada, with a very small population consisting predominantly of aging population. The Tilston Hall is mostly used for funerals or weddings. The RM owns the facility and is responsible for both its operational and financial viability.

Analysis

Based on the survey, out of the 160 responses, 28 individuals reported using the hall. However, among these 28 individuals, only four (4) people had solely used Tilston Hall recently, while the majority also utilized other halls such as Pierson, Melita, and Sinclair. The Tilston Hall is not used that frequently and due to the small population of the town, it is challenging to find staff to assist in the maintenance of the facility. There is also no appetite to host activities within the local area due to the demographics of the population.

The Tilson Hall is in reasonable condition and is not expected to incur any significant capital expenditures over the next five (5) years. There are other halls within Two Borders that can equally host similar gatherings, which includes Pierson (30km), Melita (40km), Sinclair (20km) from Tilston Hall. There are no other smaller surrounding communities that would rely on Tilston as they too have alternative locations to seek a community hall.

According to the survey, the majority of residents have no issues with the pricing of hall rentals as they are consistent with rates in the surrounding areas. For funerals and memorials, the rental fee stands at \$200. While Two Borders covers the annual property insurance expense of \$2,500 for the Tilston Hall, all other costs are the responsibility of the facility itself. The Tilston Hall belongs to the RM therefore any overages in operating expenses must be subsidized. The main reason for low maintenance of this facility is its reliance on volunteers for operations.

While providing property insurance support for the facility may seem reasonable, it is contingent upon the availability of willing volunteers to manage it. If levy request were to arise, Two Borders should carefully consider whether Tilston meets the criteria in terms of usage and the availability of alternative facilities

Based on the survey results, it has been observed that there is willingness to support and maintain the facility as it is a landmark for the community. With regards to financial commitments there are no foreseeable capital expenditure nor operational costs with the exception of the property insurance.

Recommendation

Recommendation 6: It is recommended that funding for property insurance should continue, while operational funding and volunteer support can be sustained through the local community.

Priority: Low

4) Observation of Library Agreement

Observation 7: The RM has an outdated agreement to fund other neighboring libraries.

Discussion

Pierson Library is the only one library within Two Borders. Pierson Library has an agreement with other libraries that governs current financial contributions for libraries. During the years 1975 - 1978, the Municipalities of Arthur, Edward and Albert entered into agreements with the closest fully functioning libraries, i.e. - Municipality of Albert partnered with Reston Library and Municipalities of Arthur and Edward partnered with Melita Library. Libraries are funded purely through levies.

All the libraries receive the following funding:

- Provincial - Up to \$8.50 per capita for operating funding
- Rural grant - \$1.43 per capita
- Rural library tech grant - weighted formula
- Provincial Collection Development Grant - \$5,500

Analysis

The RM offers library services to its residents using this agreement, allowing the libraries to cover a wider area with Melita, Pierson, and Napinka libraries. The RM is currently contributing based on decade old population estimates and pre-amalgamation areas rather than actual usage. As a result, resources may be misallocated, leading to inadequate services for growing areas and neglecting the specific needs of residents. With advancements in digital resources and online access, the needs and preferences of library users may have shifted significantly since the original agreements were made. The failure to update agreements also hinders the provision of modern and relevant services, undermining the effectiveness of the RM's library services.

Some residents might still prefer to continue using other libraries such as Reston or Melita due to factors such as distance/travel time. These numbers can be assessed by analyzing information such as residential addresses as part of the patron onboarding process.

Recommendation 7: It is recommended that the RM reconsider providing financial contributions to libraries outside of the Two Borders jurisdiction.

Priority: Medium

5) Melita Library

Observation 8: Melita Library is not a facility within Two Borders but is utilized by the community therefore receives funding by the RM.

Discussion

The Melita Library operates under the Southwestern Manitoba Regional Library system, a partnership between the Village of Napinka, the former RM of Edward, and the Town of Melita. It is funded through a combination of government support, grants, donations, and fundraising efforts. The Town of Melita has a population of 1,041 in 2021, according to Statistics Canada¹.

Analysis

The Melita Library receives an average of 15 people a day, mostly between the ages of 16-80 from within the Town of Melita itself. It is only open from Tuesdays to Fridays and is mostly utilized for printing and books loans.

The survey responses supported that Melita Library is well used by the Two Borders residents. All libraries under the Manitoba Regional Library offer interlibrary loans which allows the patrons to access literary resources at all participating branches. There were no challenges identified by the librarian and no forecasted changes with library operations.

The majority of Melita Library is financed by the Town of Melita. For the 2022 and 2023 levies, Two Borders contribution represented 25% of the local government contribution. The RM contributions garners an additional \$5,000 from the province based on the current formula used for calculating provincial contributions.

Melita Library has recorded surpluses in 2020, 2021, and 2022. The nominal value of these surpluses reflects the contribution made by the RM during those years. This raises the question of why Two Borders is contributing to levies when the funds are not being fully utilized to support residents effectively.

The Melita Library is not anticipating any capital expenditures or significant maintenance requirements over the next five (5) years.

Recommendation 8: The RM should consider continuing funding to Melita Library while potentially revising the contributed amount, as it benefits Two Border communities.

¹ Statistics Canada Census Data for Melita, 2021, ([Profile table, Census Profile, 2021 Census of Population - Melita, Town \(T\) \[Census subdivision\], Manitoba \(statcan.gc.ca\)](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/92-627-x/2021001/article/00001-eng.htm))

Priority: Low

6) Pierson Library

Observation 9: Pierson Library is utilized and relies on financing from the RM.

Discussion

The Pierson Library operates under the Southwestern Manitoba Regional Library system, which provides public library services to the Town of Melita, the RM of Two Borders, and the Municipality of Brenda-Waskada. It serves as a hub for educational and recreational activities, offering programs and events for people of all ages, such as book clubs, story time and workshops. The library also collaborates with local schools, community organizations, and other stakeholders to promote literacy and foster a love for reading and learning in the community.

Analysis

The Pierson Library is funded through a combination of government support, grants, donations, and fundraising efforts. The town has a population of 190 according to the Two Borders website. The library serves 190-220 patrons a month and the circulation count (utility of the resources) is 500-600 books. In addition to the immediate community, the library also serves patrons from the northern region of Two Borders and Gainsborough, Saskatchewan.

The Pierson Library relies on funding support from the facility of Two Borders. The Pierson Library is not anticipating to incur any significant capital expenditures over the next five (5) years. The Pierson Library started operating in 2015 and is relatively new. Substantial operational expenditures consists of wages.

Since the Pierson Library is located in a shared building with the Two Borders, it does not have any property related expenditures such as hydro and water. As per the 2023 budget, each resident of Two Borders pays roughly \$56 towards library funding through their taxes.

Recommendation 9: It is recommended to continue operations as the Pierson Library is well utilized and appears to be operating efficiently.

Priority: Low

7) Reston & District Library

Observation 10: Reston Library is not a facility within Two Borders but is utilized by the community therefore receives funding by the RM.

Discussion

The Reston & District Library (the “Reston Library”) was established in 1976 with the combined efforts of the Municipalities of Pipestone and Albert. It is funded through a combination of government support, grants, donations, and fundraising efforts. Reston has a population of 550 and sits just north of Two Borders.

Analysis

The annual gate count was 3,471 in 2022, which is an average of 15 people per day. In addition to the immediate community, the Reston Library also serves patrons from adjoining towns and villages. It offers various programs to engage the community such as Mom and Tots, TD Reading Club, Child Care, and the Pipestone and Area Recreation Day Camp for kids. During the summer of 2022, 257 children actively participated in the scheduled events organized by the Reston Library. Based on the survey conducted with residents and general observations it is evident that the Reston Library is well used. It was difficult to determine; however, whether the majority of Reston Library's patrons are residents of the Two Borders community.

The Reston Library receives funding from the Rural Municipality of Pipestone and the Rural Municipality of Two Borders. Two Borders supports the Reston Library by providing approximately \$10,000 a year. This contribution is not reciprocated by the Rural Municipality of Pipestone to any of Two Border's libraries. Due to Two Borders contribution, the Reston Library is able to receive an additional provincial grant amount.

Reston had posted surpluses of \$8,000 in 2021 due to the levies not being fully utilized. The facility is also expecting capital expenditures to replace windows and new shelving units.

Two Borders contributes levy income based on an old 1975 policy that requires updating and revision. A recent email exchange between the RM of Pipestone and the RM, revised part of the old agreement so that the RM contributes a minimum, to ensure the provincial share can be awarded to ensure the library does not miss out on provincial grant money. This is because the provincial government will provide additional funding if more rural municipalities contribute and meet a certain threshold per criteria.

This commitment does not necessarily translate into added community benefits for Two Border residents. Additionally, the current allocation between the two municipalities is based on 2012 population numbers and takes into accounts all residents of the former Municipality of Albert rather than actual users from Two Borders.

Recommendation 10: It is recommended that the RM reconsider providing financial contributions to libraries outside of the Two Borders jurisdiction.

Priority: Medium

III. REVIEW OF RECREATION CENTRES

Recreation facilities are key to community health and a strong social fabric. As they are often larger and more complex than other facilities, there are fewer of them and residents are more likely to travel across municipal lines to use them. Recreation facilities may also support team-sports which are important considerations to the attraction and retention of young families in the community. The following observations were made with respect to recreation facilities.

1) Regional Agreements

Observation 11: Two Borders has no formal agreement to fund other neighboring recreational facilities.

Discussion

Currently, there are four (4) rinks located within a 30-minute drive of each other. The rinks include Melita, Pierson, Reston, and Waskada (Appendix B - Figure 18).

All of the rinks offer similar facilities such as changing rooms, cafes, and curling rinks. Only one rink is within the RM, and that is Pierson. The others fall outside of the RM but are currently supported by the RM. In comparison to the winter months when the rink is used for hockey and skating, the summer months can include weddings and special events.

Analysis

Two Borders strives to ensure that the majority of the population has access to the facilities. The area covered by Two Borders is extensive, given the relatively small population size. To address this, Two Borders has supported facilities outside its own Municipality, such as Melita, Reston, and Waskada, recognizing the need to cater to the dispersed population.

Public discussions have highlighted a general acknowledgment on the issue of depopulation resulting in lower usage of these facilities. It is exacerbated by the high cost and commitment associated with hockey, long distances travel and fuel expenses, have made forming teams more challenging. While the public is aware of the reduced usage, they still value their facilities and most are willing to support them through taxes. The community recognizes the benefits derived from hockey games, including revenue from parental admission fees and canteen sales, as well as the sense of pride associated with having their own rink.

The financial dynamics of ice hockey clubs revolve around revenue generated from hosting games and food sales. Each rink receives income from the games it hosts, as the league fee paid by the hockey team is distributed among participating rinks based on usage, rather than being solely directed to the rink based on player's location.

Recommendation 11: Given facilities are unable to produce usage reports, it is recommended that Two Borders should implement usage reporting to determine the proportion of facility usage by its' residents. This will allow for a better understanding and decision making by Two Borders for grant/levy application.

Priority: Medium

2) Enns Brothers Place

Observation 12: Enns Brothers Place is not a facility within Two Borders but is utilized by the community, and therefore receives funding by the RM.

Discussion

Enns Brothers Place is a multi-purpose facility located in Melita that caters to a diverse range of interests. It features an indoor arena that hosts hockey games, figure skating competitions, and public skating sessions during the winter months, and can be transformed into a venue for events during the summer months. The facility also includes a fitness center with modern exercise equipment, golf simulator, swimming pool, curling rink, and a gymnasium to promote health and wellness in the community. The facility started operating a year ago and is used by members both closer to and farther away from the community it is located in.

Two Borders has entered into an agreement with the Town of Melita and the Rural Municipality of Brenda-Waskada to establish and fund the Southwest Regional District (SRD). Enns Brothers Place also falls under jurisdiction of the SRD and is consequently funded by the aforementioned parties. The agreement is automatically renewed annually unless a notice has been provided stating otherwise.

Analysis

The facility provides a wide range of activities and has been a part of the SRD for just one (1) year. During the initial year under SRD, there were some challenges in terms of staffing and budgeting that needed to be addressed. The Council recognized the need for improvement and brought it to the attention of the Facility Manager. Since then proactive changes have been implemented but this should be monitored closely to prevent further unexpected deficits arising.

The community has acknowledged the wide array of offerings at the facility, particularly highlighting the swimming pool. It is worth noting that approximately 275 children have already enrolled in swimming lessons, emphasizing the popularity of this activity within the community.

The survey results clearly demonstrate the high utilization of the swimming pool in Melita, with a significant majority of respondents, 69%, reporting that they use the pool. Among the individuals who use Melita Swimming Pool, 67 out of 110 respondents exclusively utilize this facility. Respondents were asked about other swimming pools they have used, and the second most commonly mentioned pool after Melita was Gainsborough.

Deloraine is a community located approximately 30km East of Melita. It is expected that more individuals from Deloraine will be coming to Melita soon too, as it is currently facing structural issues with its existing pool. Consequently, they are in the process of constructing a new pool, which is expected to be completed within the next two years. During this transitional period, Melita is experiencing an influx of visitors from Deloraine, further increasing the demand for its facilities.

In terms of ice hockey, there are various recreational teams catering to different age groups, including Year 7, Year 9, Year 11, Senior, and Year 15 teams in collaboration with another town. However, it is worth noting that the number of hockey teams has decreased over time. Presently, there is insufficient demand in Melita to form a girls' team, necessitating travel to

Deloraine for participation. Based on the findings of the BDO survey, it was revealed that out of the 160 respondents, 64 individuals utilize the Melita Rink. Based on discussions with the facility management, it is estimated by that 50% of the usage is from the Town of Melita and the other 50% is from out of town.

The Melita Recreation Centre relies on various sources of funding to sustain its operations. Revenues generated by the facility itself contribute to more than 50% of income. User fees make up 54% of the revenue generated, while the Municipality of Melita, Two Borders, and Waskada contributions represent the remaining 46% in levies. Levies play a significant role in supporting the facility, with the Municipality of Two Borders accounting for 36% (\$95,684) of the total levy income for 2023.

There was a \$45,000 deficit incurred in 2022, which then requires further support from the RMs. The cause of the deficit included staffing issues leading to unnecessary overtime and rising hydro and gas costs. By implementing improved staffing schedules and optimizing workforce management practices, it is possible to effectively mitigate overtime expenses.

To ensure the facility's sustainability, it is crucial to enhance its understanding of costs and ways to streamline its operations. The facility can minimize the occurrence of emergency deficits that need to be covered. This improvement will not only contribute to the financial stability of the facility but also allow for better planning and resource allocation.

Furthermore, the facility's management should continue to review its pricing strategy to ensure it aligns with financial goals. The decision to increase swimming prices by 15% for 2023 is a step in the right direction, as it helps improve budgeting and generate additional revenue. Regular evaluations of user fees, facility rentals, and other service charges can provide insights into potential adjustments that can support financial sustainability without compromising accessibility for the community.

The facility is not expecting any significant capital expenditures in the near future as it remains a fairly new facility. Given the extensive coverage of Two Borders and the central location of the Town of Melita, it is logical to maintain a supportive relationship with Enns Brothers Place.

Lastly, given the complicating factor of the Rural Municipality of Two Borders' 30% ownership, it is essential to clarify and define the financial obligations associated. Clear communication and agreement on responsibilities, cost-sharing mechanisms, and decision-making processes will help mitigate any potential financial complexities and ensure a transparent and sustainable partnership.

Recommendation 12: It is recommended to exercise tighter controls over budgets and closely monitor Enns Brothers Place's cost controls to ensure adherence to the allocated budget. This will enable the RM to maintain financial stability while supporting the operations of Enns Brothers Place.

Priority: Medium

3) Pierson - Edwards Sports Centre

Observation 13: The Edward Sports Centre is seeing declining utilization and increased reliance on volunteer effort, yet significant capital expenditures are necessary within the next five (5) years.

Discussion

The Edward Recreation Centre consists of an ice hockey rink that is also used to host events, weddings, and day camps. Volunteers play a crucial role in running and maintaining the facility. Events are well attended by the community in the winters and the facility is used sporadically during the summers for weddings or day camps. Edward Sports Centre is the only rink within the actual municipality of Two Borders.

Analysis

Pierson used to have a thriving hockey community with up to 10 teams utilizing its rink from November to April, but currently no longer has sufficient players to create a team. People of the Pierson community stated that the decline is likely due to the rising cost of living and the commitment required for travel within the hockey league, as people are unwilling to travel long distances, such as to Carman, particularly for weekday games under challenging travel conditions. These factors have contributed to a significant decrease in the usage of the facility, along with depopulation of the area.

Despite the decline in usage the rink is still well-maintained and regarded as a source of pride for the community and provides a safe space for children to have fun. To ensure that informed decisions can be made about the future of the facility, it is recommended that usage is closely monitored by the municipality.

The fee schedule for various activities is currently based on what the adjoining towns centers are charging and does not account for the demand, community appetite or the facilities own expenses. Please see below for the current fee schedule:

- Hockey - \$110/hr
- Family gatherings and birthday parties - 2 hours for \$100
- Public skating - \$200 family rate

Per review of the 2023/2024 budget it was determined that the facility is to replace ice plant equipment within the next year and therefore, significant capital expenditures are expected. For 2023/2024 budget, \$150,000 has been granted by the RM for the replacement of the ice machine. This is only half the expected amount as the RM has placed a letter of support to the provincial government for the remaining balance. This is considered an essential and necessary expense as it is needed for the operation of the facility, approval has already been granted.

Once the purchase is made, an invoice will be provided to the RM to confirm the expense. In addition to the one-off capital expense, the facility receives an annual levy of \$12,000 to cover the caretaker's salary.

Previously, the Edwards Sports Centre had a successful fundraising program, generating approximately \$40,000 in 2020 and \$22,000 in 2021, which accounted for around 45% of the income in each respective year. The fundraisers included raffles and a cook-off. Unfortunately,

this particular fundraiser is no longer conducted due to a similar event taking place in the area at the same time.

Apart from the operating and capital maintenance spend, the most significant cost for the Edwards Sports Centre is electricity, amounting to approximately \$20,000 per year. Given the support received from the provincial government and the one-time expense covered by the RM for the ice plant replacement, the levy amount required to sustain the facility is considered reasonable. The review of the 2023/2024 financial budget identified a deficit of \$12,370 (Income - \$333,500 and Expenses - \$345,870). Deficits should be addressed and covered before approving a levy.

The annual levies contribute significantly by covering the caretaker's salary, ensuring the facility's proper maintenance and operation. However, the levy alone does not fully address all the financial needs of the facility, and it is recommended that fundraisers begin to take place again, and budgets are carefully adhered to. The levies effectiveness should be assessed based on the facility's ability to provide affordable services to the community while maintaining a balanced budget. This includes considering the demand for activities, community engagement, and the facility's overall expenses.

Recommendation 13: It is recommended to closely monitor budgets, ensuring tighter cost controls and adherence to the allocated budget.

Priority: Medium

4) Reston

Observation 14: There is no funding formula for contributions to the Reston Recreation Centre and no way to assess the appropriateness of that funding

Discussion

The Reston Community is located north of the RM of Two Borders. The community offers variety of services such as campgrounds, ice rink, movie theatre, golf course and dance studio (the only one in SW Manitoba).

At present, the exact number of Two Borders residents utilizing the Reston facility is unknown, as data on usage by residents is not currently collected. The facility, being situated in Reston with its larger population, attracts more users compared to other rinks in the area. Reston is able to form a greater number of hockey teams up to the age of 15, resulting in an increasing number of users for the rink.

Considering that Reston is located in the northern region, it serves as the closest region to the northern part of Two Borders. It is important to note that this particular area of Two Borders is the least populated, making it less likely to be heavily utilized by residents of Two Borders.

In terms of financial contributions, it is important to note that while Two Borders contributes towards the Reston Recreation Centre, Reston does not contribute to Two Borders. Currently, the contribution amount from Two Borders is determined based on the number of residents in the former Municipality of Albert, resulting in a ratio of 192 residents out of 1,447 (13.27%). The income received from Two Borders amounted to \$9,216 in 2023 and \$7,855 in 2022.

Analysis

To address financial challenges, the Reston Recreation Centre is planning to increase fees across various offerings to generate more revenue. This strategy aims to improve the financial sustainability of the facility by aligning fees with the services provided. However, it is essential to carefully consider the impact of fee increases on the community's ability to access and afford the facility, as this could potentially affect usage and community engagement.

The Reston Recreation Centre is currently operating at a loss due to taking on big projects such as a roof replacement, emphasizing the need to explore efficiencies and assess demands to identify opportunities for cost savings and revenue enhancement. Conducting a thorough analysis of the facility's operations, including staffing, maintenance, and other expenses, can help identify areas where efficiencies can be achieved without compromising the quality of services provided.

In terms of capital expenditures, the facility is anticipating significant costs, in the renovation of the kitchen and canteen area projected at \$250,000. These capital investments are critical for the long-term viability and functionality of the facility.

There is a potential risk of overcontribution from the RM to the Reston Recreation Centre. The RM lacks the ability to track and monitor the usage of the facility specifically by Two Borders residents. Through collecting accurate usage data, the RM could determine an appropriate contribution amount that aligns with the actual usage patterns of Two Borders residents. This updated agreement between the RM and Reston could incorporate the recent usage statistics from Two Borders residents to ensure a fair and equitable arrangement.

The RM may benefit from establishing a more transparent and accountable approach regarding their financial contributions to Reston Recreation. By negotiating an updated agreement based on usage data and considering the implementation of a non-resident fee, the RM can ensure a fair and sustainable funding arrangement that accurately reflects the usage of the facility by Two Borders residents. This will help optimize the allocation of financial resources and promote greater efficiency and fairness in supporting recreational activities for the community.

Recommendation 14: It is recommended for the RM to require the Reston facility to track and monitor the usage of the facility specifically by Two Borders residents. This may be done through implementing a non-resident fee for using the Reston rink. Such a fee would streamline the contribution process and help ensure the financial burden is distributed fairly across all users.

Priority: Medium

5) Waskada

Observation 15: Waskada Ice Rink is not a facility within Two Borders but is utilized by the community therefore receives funding by the RM.

Discussion

The Waskada Ice Rink sits east of Two Borders and serves as a valuable community asset, offering recreational activities such as skating, curling, and hosting various events. It was constructed in January 2017 and includes both a skating and curling rink, as well as a batting cage.

Approximately 90% of the facility's users come from the Waskada community, while the remaining 10% come from neighboring towns. The rink experiences high utilization during after-school hours and has attracted visitors from across the region. Although there are no hockey teams based in Waskada, residents typically travel to Melita for hockey activities.

Due to a generous bequest of oil royalties, the residents of Waskada were not taxed for the construction or operational costs of the facility. However, the operational expenses, including those funded by levies, are being charged to Two Border residents as part of their taxes. It is unclear how many users from Two Borders utilize the facility but based on the number of families who signed up for figure skating in 2022, it was observed that six families from Two Borders were using the rink. Since the facility is relatively new, no significant capital expenditures are anticipated in the coming years.

Analysis

Operational revenues contribute 47% to the total revenue stream, while the remaining 53% comes from grants and levies. Among the levies, 62% is provided by the Municipality of Brenda-Waskada, and the remaining 38% is from Two Borders.

Two Borders has contributed \$21,000 in both 2021 and 2022, while the facility generated surpluses of \$34,700 and \$23,800, respectively, after excluding amortization from operational costs. It is worth noting that the surplus in 2022 was influenced by additional one-off incomes, including \$19,000 in donations and a \$12,000 gain from the disposal of a capital asset.

Two new revenue streams have been introduced, namely the batting cage and the multi-sport simulator. It would be beneficial to assess the generated revenue and associated expenses for these additions.

Recommendation

Recommendation 15: It is recommended that the RM develop processes and policies to distinguish and measure the use of the Waskada, by Two Borders residents. Such a process would assist all communities in properly formulating cost recovery strategies.

Priority: Medium

CONCLUSION

The review evaluated the RMs policy and funding model, as well as the role of specific cultural and recreational facilities. While there was general satisfaction with the existing level of service provided, there was also broad acknowledgement of the challenges in sustaining that service delivery against a backdrop of low density and declining population. There is a tremendous diversity to these facilities with some intensively supported by community volunteers while other destination facilities draw users from across municipal boundaries.

As these challenges continue to persist into the future it will be increasingly important for the RM to formalize its policies and procedures so it maintains clear and constant visibility to the constantly shifting financial and operational considerations that drive service delivery. Facilities and resources will continue to be shared across municipal boundaries and steps should be taken to mitigate risks that the associated financial burdens are not borne disproportionately by one community or another. Active monitoring of these financial arrangements will allow them to be tailored as requirements change, and thus ensure the optimal model for service delivery.

APPENDIX A - SURVEY RESULTS

To gauge the operating effectiveness of local recreation facilities and identify areas for improvement, a comprehensive survey was conducted. The survey employed a methodology that involved the distribution of a carefully designed questionnaire, the collection of responses from a diverse range of participants, and a meticulous analysis of the received feedback. The valuable insights obtained from the respondents not only shed light on the current state of the facilities but also provided valuable recommendations on how to enhance their efficiency and effectiveness. The goal of this survey was to ensure that the recreation facilities can optimally serve the needs and aspirations of the local communities they cater to.

A total of 160 respondents participated in the survey, contributing to a robust dataset that reflects the perspectives of a diverse group of individuals. It is important to note that certain questions in the questionnaire allowed for multiple answers, resulting in varying response numbers for specific items. This approach allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the respondents' experiences and preferences, ensuring that the analysis captures a wide range of insights. By accommodating the variability in responses, the survey aimed to accurately assess the operating effectiveness of the recreation facilities and identify the key areas for improvement to better serve the local communities.

These responses additionally, aided in recommendations and areas that could be improved to improve the efficiency and the effectiveness of the program to best serve the local communities.

Figure 3 - Count of Users by Community Centers

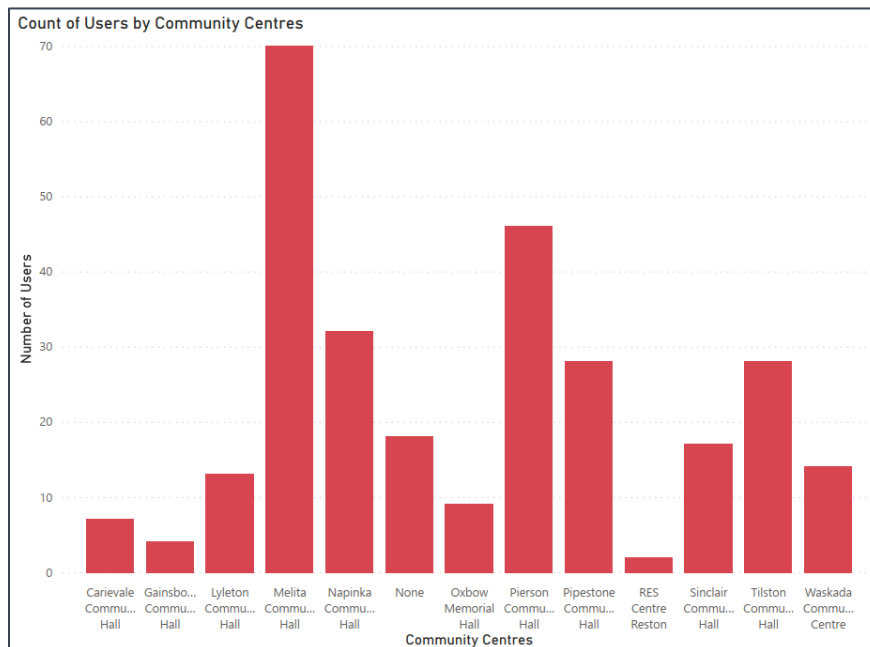


Figure 4 - Count of Users by Library Facilities

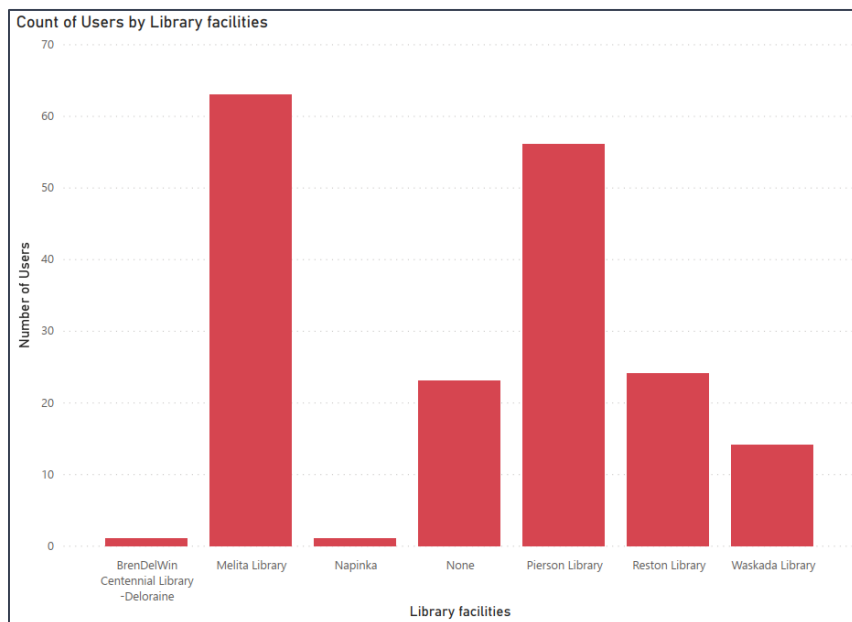


Figure 5 - Count of Users by Ice Rink Facilities

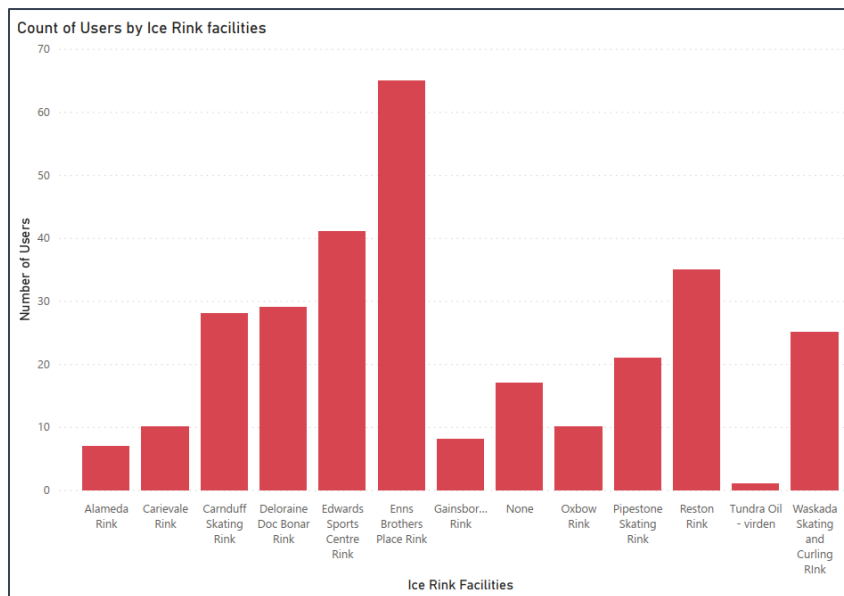


Figure 6 - Count of Users by Recreation Facilities

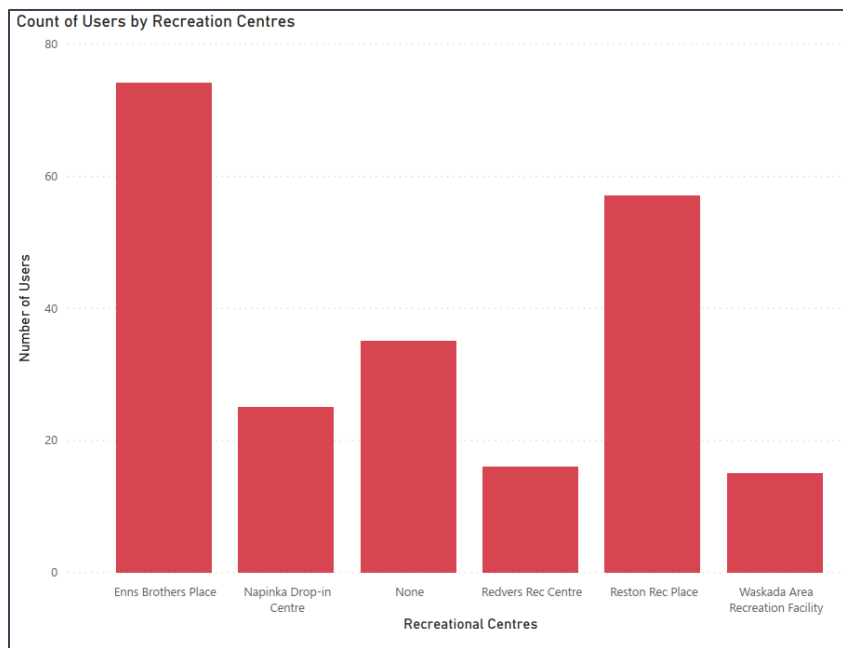


Figure 7 - Count of Users by Swimming Pool

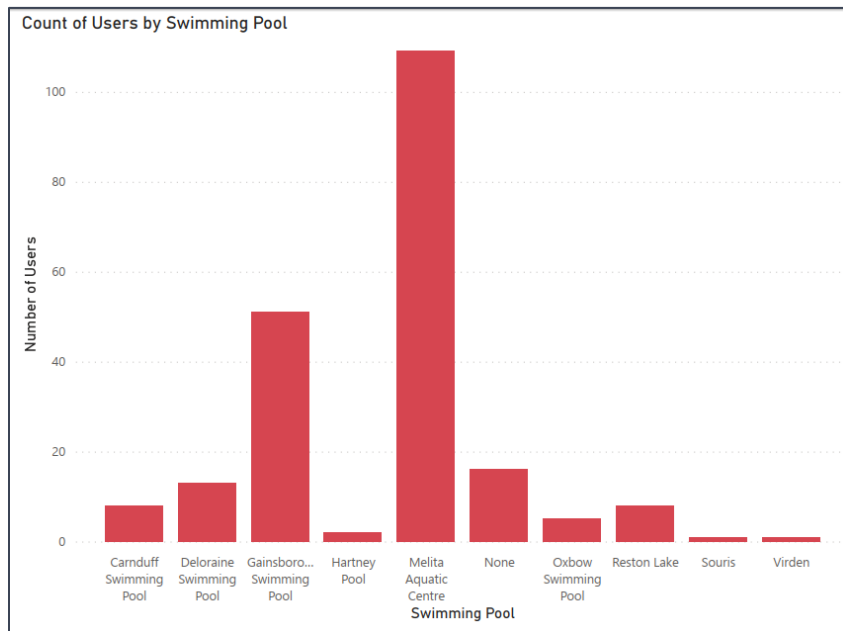


Figure 8 - Most used words for areas of improvement

The survey results identified the following words as being associated with areas of improvement. The size and prominence of the text conveys its relative significance. These responses indicate that the community places importance on better and upgraded facilities with (more/better) equipment.



Figure 9 - Swimming Pool usage

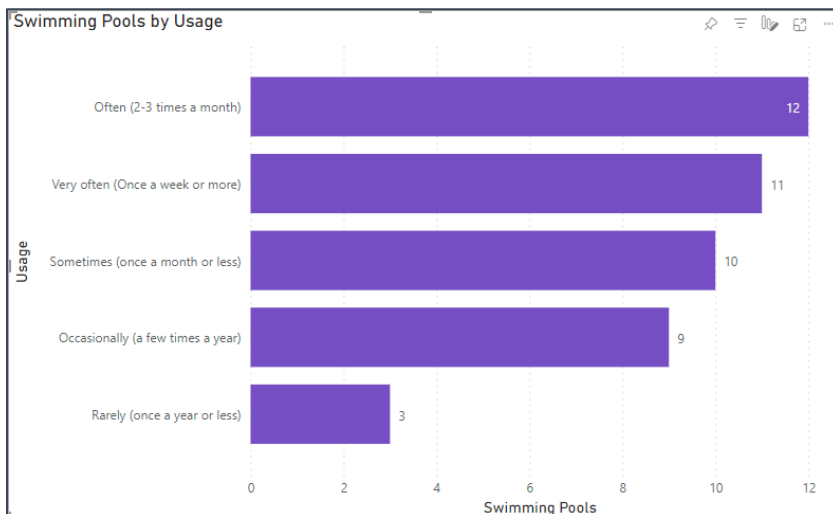


Figure 10 - Ice Rink usage

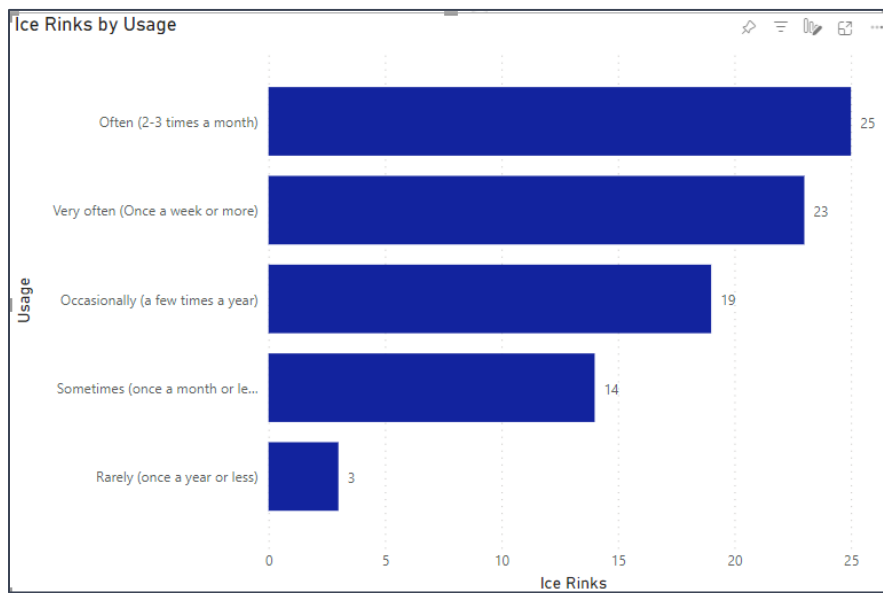


Figure 11 - Campground usage

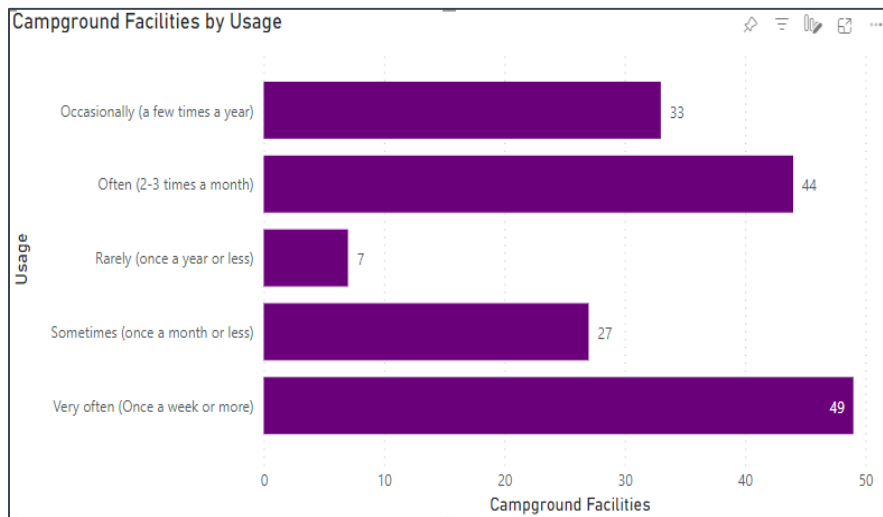


Figure 12- Library usage

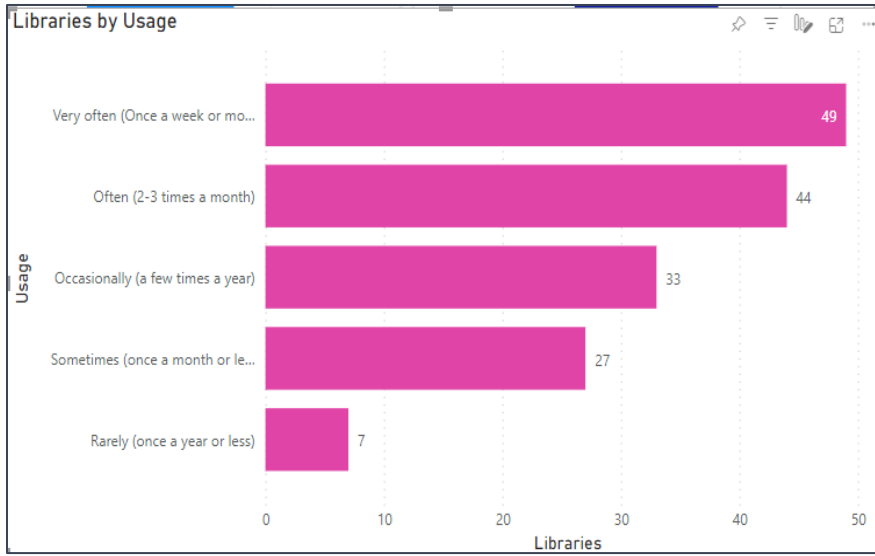


Figure 13 - Recreational Centre usage

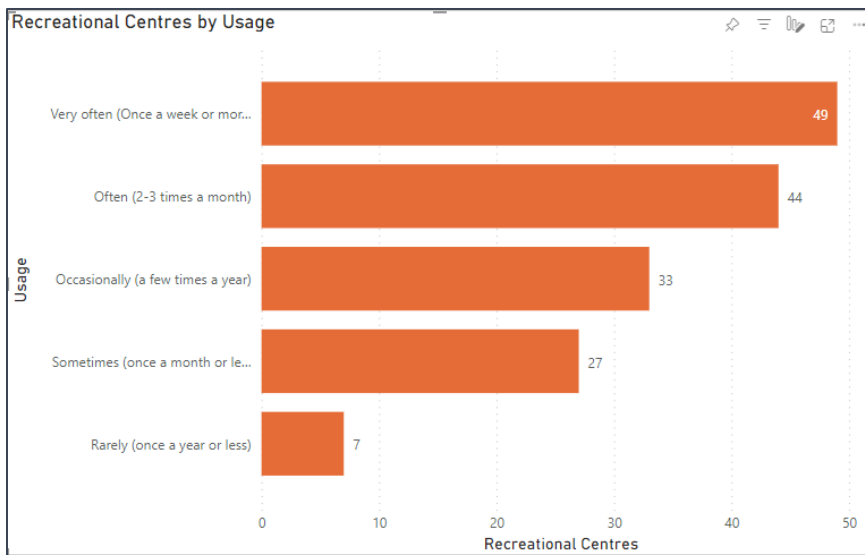


Figure 14 - Average Commute Time

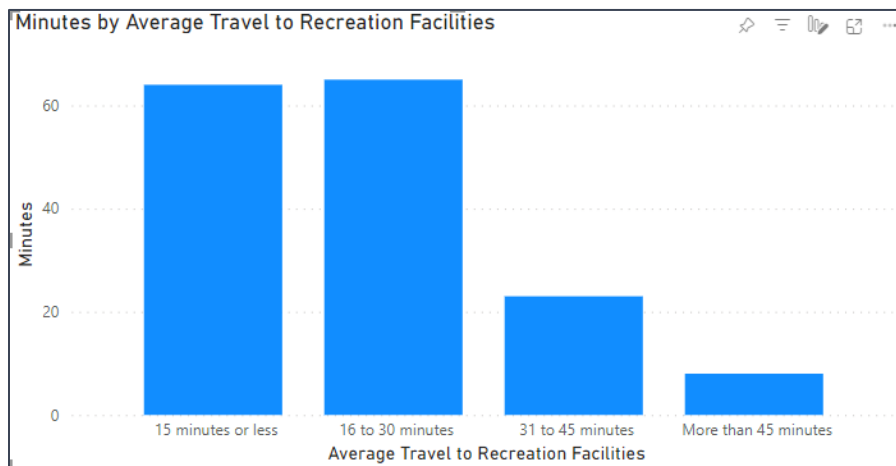


Figure 15 - Reasons for not using Recreational Facilities

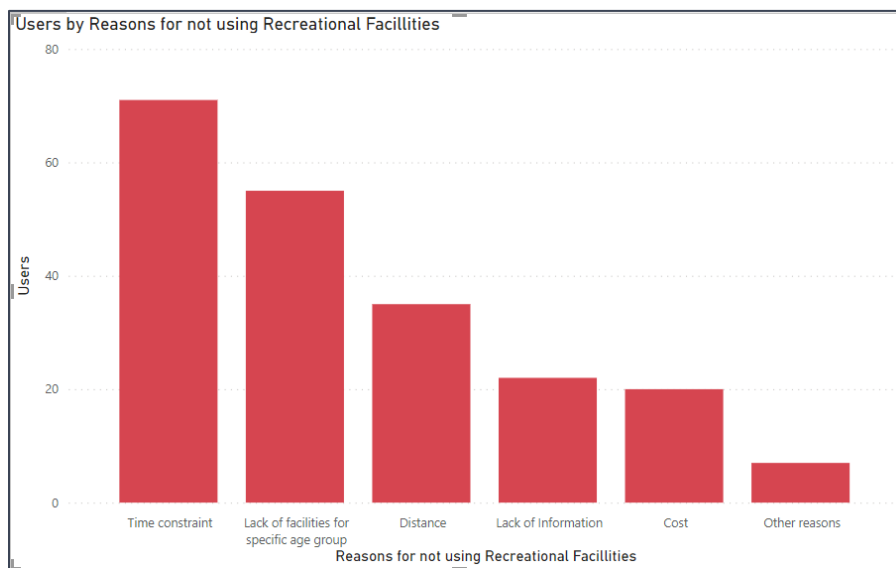


Figure 16 - Mode of Transport used

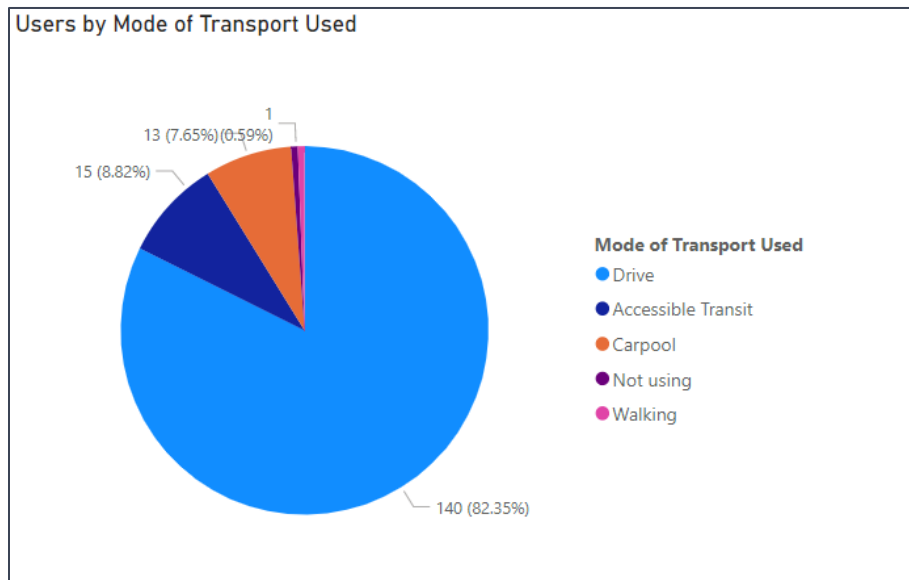
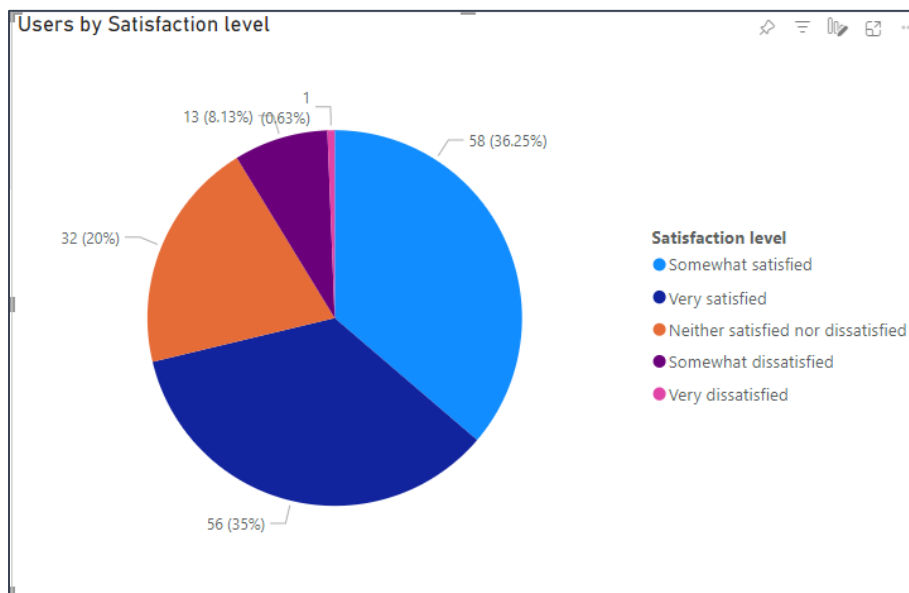


Figure 17 - Satisfaction level of users



APPENDIX B - FACILITY LOCATIONS

Overview

We have included a breakdown of the locations included in the analysis, offering an understanding of the geographical distribution of recreational facilities. The report focuses on identifying and mapping the various areas where these facilities are situated, ensuring that users gain insights into the accessibility and availability of recreational resources in different regions. By presenting this breakdown, users can effectively assess the coverage and distribution of recreational facilities, enabling them to make informed decisions regarding their utilization and potential areas for improvement. This breakdown serves as a valuable resource for policymakers, community organizations, and individuals seeking to enhance recreational opportunities in specific locations.

Figure 18 - Map of Ice Rinks in Two Borders Area

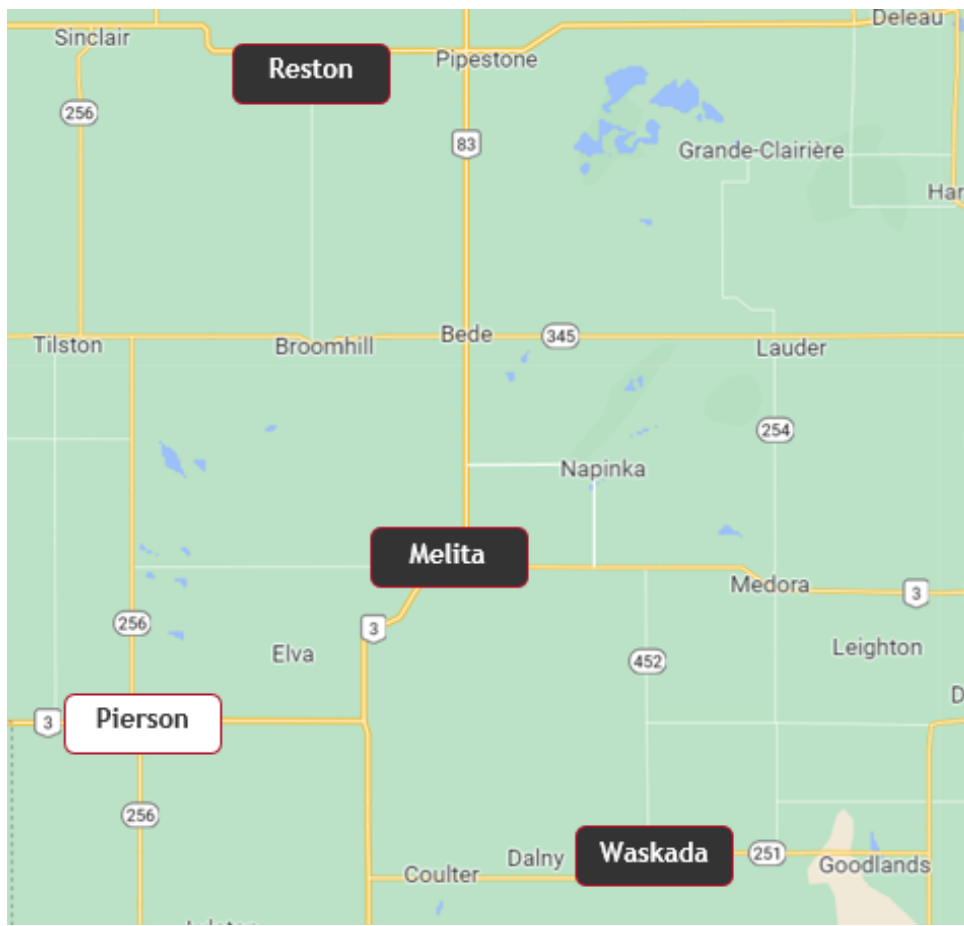


Figure 19 - Map of Melita

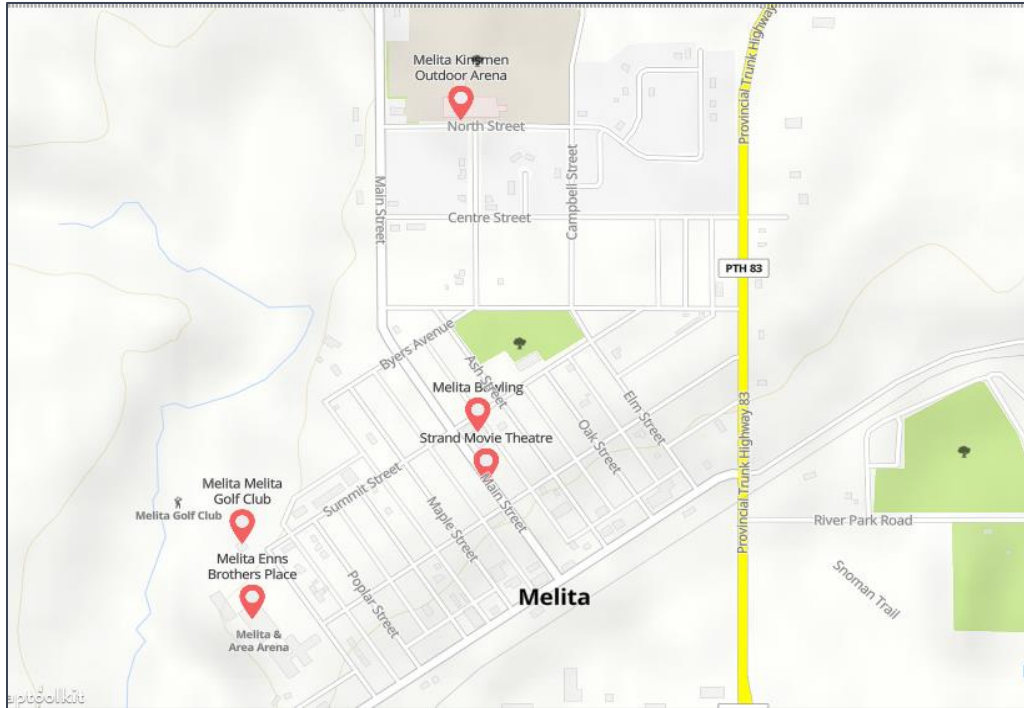


Figure 20 - Map of Pierson

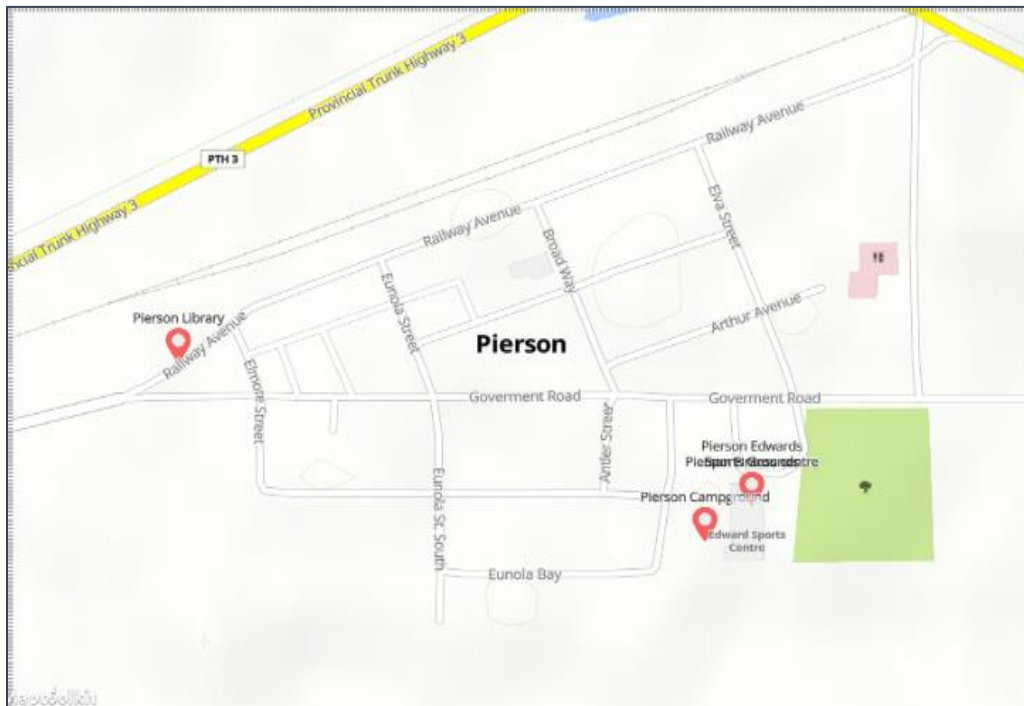


Figure 21 - Map of Waskada

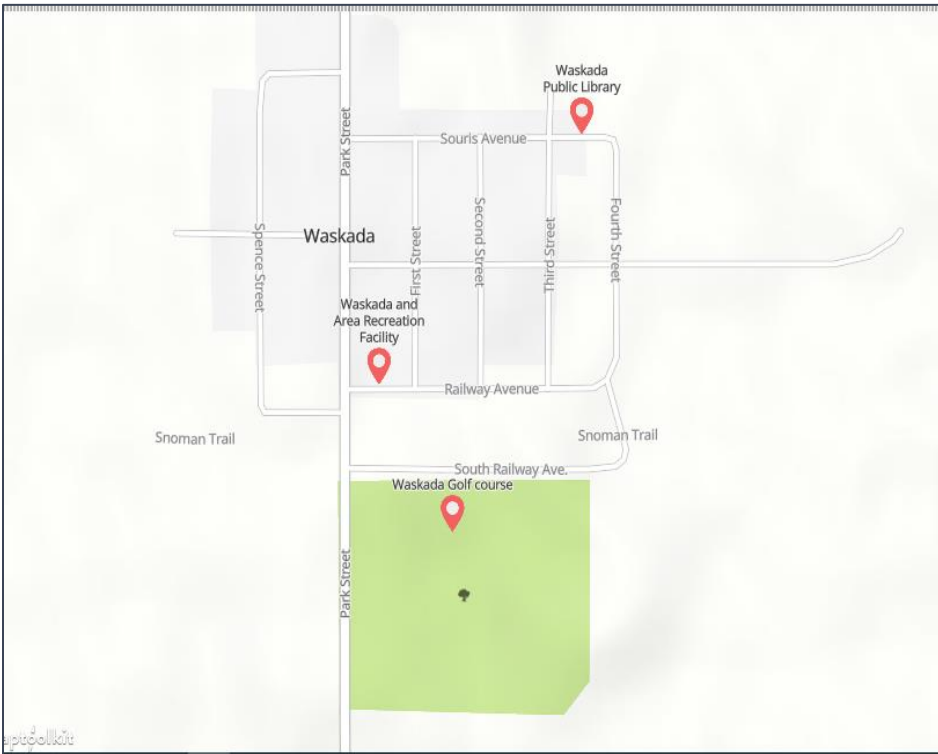
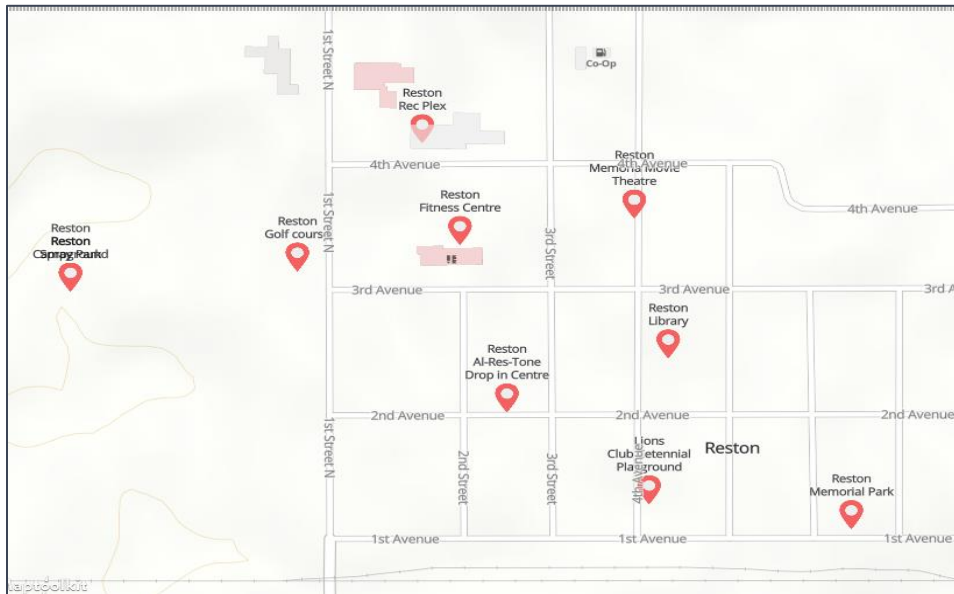


Figure 22 - Map of Reston



APPENDIX C - RECOMMENDATION AND MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN PRIORITY SCALE

The following scale has been used to assess the priority associated with recommendations noted as part of the audit to facilitate management’s action planning.

PRIORITY	MANAGEMENT RESPONSE
HIGH	<p>The risks identified have a high level of exposure and should be addressed in the immediate or short-term, as a result of significant deficiencies in control structures and systems or required financial adjustments that are material to the organization.</p> <p>High priority recommendations should be addressed within 6 months.</p>
MEDIUM	<p>The risks identified have a medium level of exposure and should be addressed in a timely manner to ensure that they do not escalate or result in a higher level of exposure for the organization.</p> <p>Medium priority recommendations should be addressed within 12 months.</p>
LOW	<p>The risks identified represent lower priority or minor process improvement observations, which should be addressed where practical to improve the overall efficiency and/or effectiveness of the operations of the organization.</p> <p>Low priority recommendations should be addressed within 2 years.</p>