

CITY OF KAMLOOPS PARKS MASTER PLAN

Summary of Input from Consultation Workshops, Feb 23 - 24, 2011

Introduction

On February 23 and 24, 2011, six visioning workshops were held with different groups regarding the Parks Master Plan. The purpose of these workshops was to inform participants about the planning process, and to request their perceptions about parks and open space in Kamloops, their ideas for the vision of the Plan, and strategies and recommendations they think the Plan should include.

After a presentation and discussion about the project, participants were asked where they live, followed by some general questions, which were used as a springboard for discussion. The answers to these questions were provided through an audience response system, which enables analysis according to where people live. The following are the primary questions, with the responses of all groups combined, shown in relation to four areas within the City:

Generally how would you rate the parks system in Kamloops?

Neighbourhood	Excellent	Very good	Not so good	Poor
City Centre, West End	4	10	1	0
East of City Centre (Valleyview, Barnhartvale, Dallas)	2	23	4	0
North Shore, Brocklehurst, Batchelor Heights, Westsyde	8	24	5	0
Upper and Lower Sahali, Aberdeen, Dufferin, Pineview Valley	3	15	2	1
Other	2	6	2	1
Total	19	78	14	2
Total %	17%	69%	12%	2%

Do you have a strong sense of community in your neighbourhood?

Neighbourhood	Yes	No	Not sure
City Centre, West End	8	7	1
East of City Centre (Valleyview, Barnhartvale, Dallas)	22	3	4
North Shore, Brocklehurst, Batchelor Heights, Westsyde	16	8	5
Upper and Lower Sahali, Aberdeen, Dufferin, Pineview Valley	6	7	1
Other	8	1	0
Total	60	26	11
Total %	62%	27%	11%

These ratings are highest east of the City Centre, next highest on the North Shore.

Do you have a strong sense of community in relation to the City as a whole?

Neighbourhood	Yes	No	Not sure
City Centre, West End	8	6	2
East of City Centre (Valleyview, Barnhartvale, Dallas)	17	7	4
North Shore, Brocklehurst, Batchelor Heights, Westsyde	23	2	2
Upper and Lower Sahali, Aberdeen, Dufferin, Pineview Valley	14	0	0
Other	5	2	1
Total	67	17	9
Total %	72%	18%	10%

Is there anything that stops you from using parks as much as you might want to?

Neighbourhood	Yes	No	Not sure
City Centre, West End	10	5	1
East of City Centre (Valleyview, Barnhartvale, Dallas)	23	7	1
North Shore, Brocklehurst, Batchelor Heights, Westsyde	17	15	4
Upper and Lower Sahali, Aberdeen, Dufferin, Pineview Valley	10	9	2
Other	8	3	0
Total	68	39	8
Total %	59%	34%	7%

The barriers to park use are fairly high, particularly east of the City Centre and in the City Centre/West End.

After responding to each question, participants were asked to give reasons for their positive and negative impressions of the parks system, neighbourhoods and the City. These were collected using a brainstorming process, and documented as strengths and challenges.

Strengths and Challenges

The following is a summary of comments received at all workshops in relation to the strengths and challenges of the City, parkland, outdoor recreation facilities and use, and park management:

City Strengths

- Diversity of parks and recreation
- Diversity of habitats and natural features, e.g., rivers, ravines
- High quality of parks and facilities, distinctive character
- Accessibility to and availability of enjoyable facilities (at no cost), gathering areas, walkable
- There is something (activities) for everyone (all ages), multi-use, community activities, outdoor-oriented
- Safe place to raise children, family-centred, stable population
- Strong sense of community, defined communities, social support systems
- Tournament capital program, strong volunteer base
- Great park in the core brings people together
- Access to community gardens and farmer's market

City Challenges

- Safety and security concerns, e.g., homeless camping, gangs, drugs, vandalism
- Impacts on wildlife habitat and corridors from roads and development
- City is very spread out, therefore people are not as connected
- Not enough gathering areas
- Accessibility
- Not enough activities for youth
- People too busy to be involved, connect with others
- Irresponsible dog owners, e.g., people who don't clean up after their dogs

- Not enough City consultation and communication

Parkland Strengths

- Total parks area, some large parks
- Good access to parkland for most residents, well distributed parks
- Diversity in park types throughout the city, including natural parks
- Many activities and facilities in parks
- Family and kid friendly
- Accessible year round
- Green spaces with trees
- Parks central to neighbourhoods – promote better sense of community

Parkland Challenges

- Poor connectivity between green spaces and parks, city segmented, difficult for staff too
- Parks often not in easy walking distance
- Not enough trees in some parks
- Development pressures intruding
- Lack of planting diversity – edible foods, creativity, native xeriscape, fruit and berry trees
- Lack of public spaces for outside interaction in neighbourhoods
- Some of the spaces that were left as “parks” are primarily gullies and have limited use
- Degradation of green spaces/facilities in parks

Outdoor Recreation Strengths

- Good variety of facilities and activities
- Parks for different purposes and age groups - trails, recreation, sports, wildlife viewing
- Children’s play areas and water parks
- Sports fields
- Walking/hiking/biking trails and exercise equipment
- Events, e.g., Music in the Park
- Dog parks and welcome of dogs
- Good information and signage
- Restrooms in many facilities
- Mac Park – centralized venue, caters to multiple events
- TCC/fieldhouse – excellent facility
- Horticulture – baskets, displays
- Accessibility
- Low commercial use in parks

Outdoor Recreation Challenges

- Not enough trails, lack of connectivity
- Lack of bicycle-specific trail systems
- Limited accessible playgrounds, parks and trails
- Access to parks by bike or walking is difficult or unsafe
- Lack of amenities in some neighbourhoods
- Not enough signs – interpretive, regulatory and directional, no smoking signs (schools)
- Not enough: water features, drinking fountains, multi-use parks, outdoor basketball courts, gathering/entertainment areas, community gardens, activities for youth, free riding bike trails and BMX bike park area, dog parks, wildlife viewing areas
- Not enough winter uses: no community outdoor rinks or sanctioned sledding hills
- Lack of public access to washrooms
- Equipment is dated, e.g., courts, fences, playground equipment
- Some parks need further development
- Availability of proper fields required for sports (per sport groups)

Park Management Strengths

- High standard of maintenance by committed staff
- Stewardship projects very positive experience
- Natural area management is good, e.g., Peterson Creek Park, riparian protection
- Many quality sports fields
- Aesthetically pleasing, beautification
- Strong Food Policy Council, success with community gardens and community kitchens – private plots, garden to table program, Workshops on growing veggies, Council edible pot completion last year, interest in public plots of edible food
- Dog bags are everywhere
- Good interface fire management and biological weed control
- Trail etiquette communicated well in the brochure

Park Management Challenges

- Maintenance concerns– garbage collection, including along river shoreline, washrooms
- Maintenance – coordination with schools – field repair, mowing
- People not picking up after dogs in parks and natural areas
- Not enough tree canopy in new developments
- Weekend maintenance during events isn't great
- Dog ban on Mac Island
- Conflicts between walkers and bikers
- Sustainability of irrigation, maintenance costs
- Challenge eating public plants – quality concerns
- Dog/wildlife conflicts especially coyotes

- Snow removal and sand/salt for safe pathways (especially to schools)
- Not enough advertising/encouragement to let people know what is available
- Lack of protection for rarer ecosystems (from recreation largely)
- Not enough consultation with individual neighbourhoods

School Site Strengths (youth only)

- Good for all age groups (elementary and secondary)
- Secure (fences)
- Variety of courts and fields

School Site Challenges (youth only)

- Not well maintained, e.g., pavement bumpy and cracked, poor field condition, grass not regularly cut, in bad shape, track is in poor condition, sprinkler heads are a hazard
- Not a great variety
- Lack of bleachers or venues to draw more spectators
- Smoke pit, litter, cigarette butts

Vision, Strategies and Recommendations

Participants were next invited to provide input on their ideas for the vision of the Plan, and strategies and recommendations they think the Plan should include. These were generated by the audience through discussion. These are listed here in order of priority based on “voting” through with the audience response system, in which each participant voted on their top three priorities.

The following are the suggested vision, strategies and recommendations proposed at each workshop. These are listed in order of priority, based on “voting” results:

1. Public Workshop

Vision

1. Protect the integrity of wild spaces and natural parks and protect/increase parkland
2. Better integration of urban and recreational activities – connectivity, alternative transportation
3. Sustainable environmental policies – e.g., for insects, bees, ecosystem health
4. Neighbourhood-based parks
5. Appeal to as large an audience as possible
6. All activities enhance the park or enjoyment of the user
7. Universal accessibility
8. Retreat from urban life stresses

9. Enhance quality of life, e.g., edible plants

Strategies and Recommendations

1. Acquire property or acquire rights-of-way with existing trails – proactively
2. Connected parks and trails along the river
3. Work with community associations, empower citizens, stewardship
4. Restoration of creeks, natural drainage, erosion
5. Sustainable landscape plants – edible, xeriscape, forage, insects, reflect Kamloops landscape
6. More skills parks – bikes, exercise
7. More art, culture, history in parks with First Nations, education
8. More green infrastructure
9. More all-season use, e.g., skating on Mac Island slough, clean it up, non-motor boats

2. Sports User Groups and PACs

Vision

1. Facilities based on future participation
2. Accessibility
3. Dedication to continued sports development
4. Higher quality of school sites
5. Encourage continued participation
6. City liaison for sports
7. Shade
8. Connected trail system
9. Hierarchy of fields/teams

Strategies and Recommendations

1. Lights on fields
2. Washroom accessibility and upkeep, recycling bins
3. More sports fields

4. Improve school sites then maintain better
5. Improve trails to schools
6. More camping, incl at Rayleigh
7. Another indoor field
8. Parking
9. Another artificial turf field

3. Youth

Strategies and Recommendations

1. Better maintenance of school sites including sports fields
2. More sport courts
3. Security cameras and lighting
4. Youth parks in addition to Mac Park
5. Outdoor pool on south side of river
6. More group gathering areas
7. More dog friendly trails
8. More benches along paths
9. Better transit to parks

4. Community Associations Workshop

Vision

1. Ecosystem protection
2. Connectivity of parks and trails
3. Variety of parks in each community
4. Interpretation and education
5. Neighbourhood-based facilities
6. More structure re: park types
7. Multiple uses in parks

8. More local school/park use rather than centralizing
9. Accessibility – transit, all people, etc.

Strategies and Recommendations

1. More community support and consultation
2. Silt cliffs, wetlands, forests, grasslands, wildlife areas with interpretation
3. Water parks , playgrounds
4. More smaller parks in neighbourhoods
5. Community gardens
6. Dog parks

5. Environmental Group Workshop

Vision

1. Protect habitat and ecosystems
2. Connect the trail system
3. Restore and enhance habitat values
4. Improve trail accessibility where practical
5. More partnerships with schools re: trails
6. More social activities in parks

Strategies and Recommendations

1. More stewardship projects and activities
2. More education re: dogs
3. More and better interpretive info
4. More infrastructure on trails, e.g., garbage and benches

6. City Staff Workshop

Vision

1. Maintaining high level of service to a growing and diverse population
2. Promoting active lifestyles
3. Improving the experience of nature
4. Community beautification and identity/ sense of community/ n'hood dev
5. Accessibility to all, sharing, integration of uses and people
6. Sustainability
7. Connectivity
8. Public awareness of services
9. Innovation

Strategies and Recommendations

1. Acquisition of more appropriate land for parks, open space and trails
2. Collaborate with school district and KIB/TIB, golf courses, prov. Parks re: facilities and activities/participation
3. Manage all areas for long-term sustainability
4. Well distributed and accessible parkland, parks for all user interests
5. Connected parks and trail loops
6. Public education / signs
7. Support wildlife habitat connectivity
8. More events to draw legitimate uses
9. Investigate options for making parks safer