

Grande Prairie Regional Recreation Committee Review

February 4, 2025

Context

The Administrative Working Group (AWG) met on January 8th and 24th to action the following motion:

MOTION-GPRRC-12-04-2024-06 (made by Mayor Clayton) to Direct Chief Elected Officers to work with CAO and AWG members to establish some background and identify possibilities for the future of the GPRRC including potential outcomes that AWG wants to achieve. Mayor Clayton to connect with Chief Elected Officials to have an informal discussion on what they have learned from AWG. Chief Elected Officials to then return to their respective councils. Committee members to return to GPRRC at March quarterly meeting with opinion and CARRIED.

This report speaks to the actionable items in the Motion and concludes with recommendations.

1. List of Key Reports and Milestones
2. 2016 Recreation Master Plan Implementation Status
3. GPRRC Additional Achievements
4. Intersection of Regional Recreation + Sports Connection
5. Other Considerations
6. Future Desired Outcomes
7. Recommendations

1: List of Key Reports and Milestones

(# = applicable 2016 Master Plan Recommendation number)

- 2017 – Grande Prairie Regional Recreation Committee (GPRRC) established (#2)
- 2017 – GPRRC Administrative Working Group established (#2)
- 2017 – Hired Regional Recreation Coordinator (#2)
- 2019 – Developed Regional Screening Matrix and Merit Process (#3)
- 2019 – Regional “Black Ice” Tracking started (#5)
- 2019 – First presentation at Alberta Recreation and Parks Association (ARPA) Conference (#7)
- 2020 – Conducted Household Survey Report (#14)
- 2020 – Developed and implemented Regional Ice Users Behaviour Guidelines (#9)
- 2020 – Developed and implemented Regional Ball Diamonds Behaviour Guidelines (#9)
- 2020 – Participated in the County of Grande Prairie’s Clairmont Arena Needs Assessment (#18)
- 2021 – Developed an Ice Allocations Framework report (#9)
- 2021 – Second presentation at Alberta Recreation and Parks Association (ARPA) Conference (#7)
- 2022 – Conducted Group Survey Report (#14)

**GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL
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- 2022 – Researched and produced a Regional Gymnasium Facilities report (#5)
- 2023 – Third Alberta Recreation and Parks Association (ARPA) Conference Presentation (#7)
- 2024 – Facility Allocation Policy Template (#5)
- 2024 – Grassroots Recreation initiative commenced (#14)

2: 2016 Joint Recreation Master Plan Implementation Status

The [2016 Grande Prairie Area Joint Recreation Master Plan](#) included twenty four Recommendations. As of December 31, 2024, the Administrative Working Group has summarized them as:

ACTIONED (15):

- **#1:** It is recommended that Grande Prairie area municipalities use the Vision, Goals, and desired Service Outcomes to define a rationale for recreation services and to guide future decision-making
- **#2:** It is recommended that the Joint County-City Recreation Committee (or an expanded group) continue to provide guidance to recreation service delivery through the implementation of this Master Plan. Furthermore, an administrative body should be formed to support the ongoing work of the committee.
- **#3:** It is recommended that an agreed process be utilized to define regional recreation facilities and services in the Grande Prairie area
- **#5:** It is recommended that standardized facility usage and user data collection be undertaken across the Grande Prairie area.
- **#6:** It is recommended that an ongoing regional recreation engagement process, including the development and maintenance of a web-based Master Plan interface, be agreed to and implemented.
- **#7:** It is recommended that local municipalities continue to provide support to local interest groups through the Grande Prairie Sport Connection and other means
- **#8:** It is recommended that local municipalities support efforts to bolster volunteerism.
- **#9:** It is recommended that recreation marketing and promotions are coordinated on a regional basis with active engagement from all Grande Prairie area municipalities.
- **#10:** It is recommended that service delivery partnerships be explored whenever new programs and marketing efforts are introduced.
- **#11:** It is recommended that infrastructure partnerships be explored whenever new recreation facilities are introduced using the framework presented.
- **#14:** It is recommended that regional recreation needs assessment occur on an ongoing basis to increase understanding of recreation and program opportunity preferences and trends.
- **#15:** It is recommended that the provision of both structured and unstructured recreation opportunities be considered when delivering recreation services.
- **#16:** It is recommended that recreation service providers in the Grande Prairie area pursue enhanced opportunities for residents and visitors in the focus areas presented

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- **#17:** It is recommended that recreation service providers in the Grande Prairie area consider the infrastructure leading practices presented in planning, operating and maintaining recreation infrastructure
- **#18:** It is recommended that recreation service providers in the Grande Prairie area utilize the Facility Condition Index Framework when contemplating the future of existing recreation infrastructure (+ **Best Practice**)

BEST PRACTICES / FUTURE GUIDELINES (5):

- **#20:** It is recommended that Grande Prairie area municipalities follow the planning framework presented in contemplating future recreation infrastructure
- **#21:** It is recommended that Grande Prairie area municipalities use the prioritization process presented in allocating future recreation resources
- **#22:** It is recommended that Grande Prairie area municipalities consider the indoor recreation facility strategies provided as resources permit
- **#23:** It is recommended that Grande Prairie area municipalities consider the outdoor recreation facility strategies provided as resources permit
- **#24:** It is recommended that Grande Prairie area municipalities consider the prioritization presented for future recreation infrastructure.

REDIRECTED (2):

- **#4:** It is recommended that a new conversation around regional cost sharing be initiated with a focus on regional facilities and spaces as defined herein and with the realization that cost sharing will be guided in multiple directions > ***Referred to City-County ICC***
- **#13:** It is recommended that removing financial, transportation, and social barriers to participation should be an area of future focus. > ***Sport Connection has helped facilitate navigation of some financial and social barriers to date.***

NOT ACTIONED TO DATE (2):

- **#12:** It is recommended that performance measurement be included in all service and infrastructure partnership arrangements. > **Specific to each municipality = recommended best practice.**
- **#19:** It is recommended that recreation service providers in the Grande Prairie area consider land acquisition outside of regular Municipal Reserve dedication to meet regional or local recreation needs. > **Specific to each municipality = recommended best practice.**

3: Additional GPRRC Achievements:

- Significantly improved communication, collaboration and relationship building at the municipal recreation administration level.
- Established the Grande Prairie region as a leader in the best practice of municipal recreation collaboration.

GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL **RECREATION** COMMITTEE

- Presented at the provincial Alberta Recreation and Parks Association conference three times in five years.
- Actioned 79% of quantifiable Recommendations from the 2016 Recreation Master Plan.
- Ten years on, the 2016 Joint Recreation Master Plan still has relevance with multiple recreation industry best practices that can be applied to future projects in the region.

4: Other Considerations:

- Is there an appetite among the remaining GPRRC municipal partners to fund a collective paid Coordinator position to oversee the future version? > This will be an Elected Official decision.
- Current ongoing conversations with the City, County and Sexsmith regarding the future of the Sport Connection (GPRSC) as a separate entity. Is there an opportunity to ask the Sport Connection Board to review their mandate to include some GPRRC functions?
- City of Grande Prairie has a large recreation administrative department, while other municipalities have fewer recreation administrative resources.

5: Intersection of Regional Recreation + Sports Connection:

	GPRRC (Regional Recreation)	Where do they intersect?	GPRSC (Sport Connection)
Mandate / Role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of 2016 Master Plan • Enhanced inter municipal collaboration & communication • Identify and evaluate Special Projects to support regional recreation • More focused on municipal perspective • Connectivity with recreation facility operators and creation of best practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2016 Master Plan • Connectivity to community needs & emerging trends • Provide support to community groups • Bolster volunteerism • Marketing and communication of recreation opportunities • Potential catalyst for grassroots recreation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Seat on GPRRC Admin Working Group • 4 Strategic Pillars are: Community Service Education Advocacy • More externally focused on sport & rec landscape • Direct support to local sports groups • Identifies emerging regional and provincial trends and deficiencies • Assistance in addressing financial barriers • Community outreach • Sport group database

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	GPPRC (Regional Recreation)	Where do they intersect?	GPRSC (Sport Connection)
Funding Model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% Municipal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 78% Municipal 8.3% Sponsorship 7.5% Other Grants 6.2% Other
Governance Model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Municipally “owned” Elected Officials Administrative Working Group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registered Society Board of Directors 3 Elected Officials 7 Members of Public 2 Municipal Admin (non voting)
Staffing (#FTEs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 x 0.75 FTE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 x 1.0 FTE
Total Payroll Expense	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$53,663 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$156,111 (avg \$78,055 / FTE)
Total Operating Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$76,795 (does not include GIK at host municipality) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$219,071

6: Future Desired Outcomes for “GPRRC/AWG”:

- FOLLOW THROUGH - Finalize Grassroots Report from Q4 2025. Implementation (or not) would be an autonomous municipal decision.
- FOLLOW THROUGH - High level facility status report (planned for Q1 2025) to gain a collective understanding of key recreation infrastructure status in the region. Remaining AWG to coordinate.
- Is there an opportunity for Sport Connection staff to provide some small-scale administrative support for Regional Recreation initiatives? Example: collection point for black ice reporting. If so, this service would have to be written into funding agreements.
- AWG sees value in retaining the ability to perform some collective Special Project work (e.g. surveys w consultant) on an “as needed” basis and seek funding (with opt in/opt out) from respective municipalities at that time.

7: Recommendations:

- **Grande Prairie Regional Recreation Committee:**
 - KEEP – Committee identity but reduce Elected Official participation and committee scope. The revised committee would be composed of municipal recreation administrative personnel.
 - STOP – Paid Coordinator position.
- **Elected Officials:**
 - STOP – Quarterly Elected Official meeting participation.
 - START – Annual meeting of Elected Officials for a “State of the Region – Recreation” with goal of reviewing the past year + looking forward to upcoming projects.
 - KEEP – Ability to call a Special Meeting if an emergent regional recreation topic arises.
- **Administrative Working Group:**
 - AMEND - Terms of Reference to reflect the new format, participation and objectives.
 - AMEND - Meeting frequency to be not less than six times per year– virtual or in person.
 - KEEP - Collaboration, communication and relationships through information sharing.
 - KEEP - Ability for admin to work collaboratively on “no cost” initiatives as time permits.
 - KEEP – Sport Connection Executive Director representation on the AWG.
 - KEEP - Ability for AWG to seek special funding request for collective project work (at annual State of the Region meeting or mid-year if something emergent crops up).
 - KEEP - centralized monitoring of black ice (possibly via Sport Connection or one municipality to coordinate this).
 - KEEP - intellectual property of GPRRC (tools, branding assets, etc.) and make accessible to all AWG members (note: branding only used for collective regional efforts).
- **Resources:**
 - STOP – Municipal funding for paid Coordinator position conditional on the understanding that:
 - New Special Projects would require additional or consultant resources
 - AWG meetings will continue on an information share basis with rotating Chair and note taker
 - May seek to access support from the Sport Connection to help facilitate ongoing Ice Operator meetings
 - The revised AWG is a living entity and is open to future evaluation and annual review
 - KEEP – Municipal / senior leadership support for recreation administration to participate in the revised version of AWG.
 - KEEP – Equipment belonging to GPRRC (owl etc.) for now until further evaluation.