



PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURE  
**Seniors Services Strategy**

**2018 – 2028**

Coquitlam

*The City of Coquitlam acknowledges SPARC BC for their contribution to the research, analysis and community engagement process that led to the development of this Strategy.*

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# Executive Summary

Coquitlam recognizes the need for comprehensive and systematic approaches to planning recreation services for and with the growing and diverse community of older adults and seniors. Like all leading municipalities, Coquitlam recognizes that seniors' recreation programs, services and resources play important roles in enhancing quality of life, creating civic pride, increasing physical activity, and building a civil society through volunteerism and community participation.

A large-scale demographic shift that began five years ago will continue to change the landscape of the traditional delivery of parks, recreation and culture services in Coquitlam over the next 10-15 years. The current seniors' population will be replaced by the "Boomers"; the current "Generation X"-ers will become older adults; and the entire older adult/senior population will double in numbers. These older adults and seniors have a variety of recreation values and interests, and may be faced with single or multiple barriers to participation in recreation that can shift dynamically throughout their lifetimes. With this projected growth, and the changing of recreation values and needs of the older adult population in Coquitlam in mind, the Coquitlam Parks, Recreation & Culture *Seniors Services Strategy* (the *Strategy*) aims to guide the future delivery of recreation services of older adults and seniors, and provides recommendations to meet the requirements and interests of this population until 2028. In particular, the *Strategy* focuses on service delivery within the mandate of the Coquitlam Parks, Recreation & Culture Services (PRC) Department and a framework to address the delivery of current and anticipated future PRC services for Coquitlam's older adults and seniors.

The four-phased methodology used to develop the *Strategy* began with a phase of evidence-based research that grounded the planning process on a solid base of knowledge and information, including a comprehensive demographic review, a trend analysis of recreation participation data, and an assessment of service standards and best

program practices. It then moved into a community consultation process that included presentations at the Council Advisory Committees, three community workshops, a workshop for PRC and cultural facility staff, and an online survey. The results were brought together in a *Key Findings Report*, followed by a *Key Findings Summary Report* that was forwarded to Council on October 3, 2016 for further discussion, and to key stakeholders for feedback. The process then moved to the preparation of the draft *Seniors Services Strategy*, which was received by Council in May 2017 followed by extensive public consultation and census data updates through the rest of 2017.

This *Strategy* is organized around a strategic framework of four overarching goals. Each goal is supported, in turn, by a series of Action Items to be initiated in the future and considered for implementation as part of future years' business plans. The goals reflect the major themes and directions that emerged from the planning process and stakeholder consultation, and support the mission and vision of the *PRC Master Plan*. This *Strategy* is significantly different than some of the recently-approved PRC strategies that are facility- or capital-project based, such as the *Aquatic Services & Infrastructure Strategy* or the *Arena Services and Facilities Strategy*. The *Seniors Strategy* is a people, program and policy-based strategy that provides outcome-based departmental practices and approaches that will help steer future decisions to meet the needs of seniors.

This *Strategy* will help to answer the questions of how we better serve seniors when we design a park, develop and event or program and establish a new service.

It is important to note that this *Strategy* is aimed at adults 65+ ("seniors"), and not developed with the idea of providing services to the "older adult" (50 – 64 years). Older adults may choose to participate in, or may benefit from, the implementation of this *Strategy*, but it is recognized that this group does not wish to be called or included as "seniors."

## COMMON TERMS USED THROUGHOUT THIS STRATEGY:

**Seniors:** people 65 years and older

**Older Adults:** people 50 – 64 years old

**Baby Boomers:** people born approximately in the years 1946 – 1964

**Generation X-ers:** people born approximately in the years 1965 – 1979

### Definition of

**Recreation:** The experience that results from freely chosen participation in physical, social, intellectual, creative and spiritual pursuits that enhance individual and community well-being.

— "A Framework for Recreation in Canada 2015: Pathways to Well-being," Joint Initiative of the Interprovincial Sports & Recreation Council and the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association.



## TOP 10 ACTIONS BY GOAL

To focus the City's action and achieve the greatest gains in service delivery, it is recommended that Parks, Recreation & Culture Services prioritize the following top actions under four strategic goals:

### GOAL: ACCESS AND INCLUSION FOR ALL

1. Continue to create a welcoming, older adult-focused facility environment during the day with programs and services that meet seniors' needs and interests; optimize usage at the 50+ Pavilions so the general public feels welcome in the evenings and weekends and can access specific programs and services.
2. Complete a review of the Get Connected/Get Active financial assistance program and create an action plan specifically to increase the usage of the program by low-income seniors.
3. Examine the fee structure for drop-ins, programs and activity groups with the goal to increase seniors' participation while at the same time, ensuring cost effectiveness and responsible management of public dollars.
4. Build multicultural connections and develop opportunities to engage new immigrant seniors in community recreation.

5. Increase physical access and adapted recreation equipment for people with mobility and sensory impairments as well as prevention strategies and supports for people with mental and cognitive health-related issues.

### GOAL: EXCELLENCE IN PROGRAM AND SERVICE DELIVERY

6. Establish Service Provider Agreements with both the Dogwood Seniors and Glen Pine 50+ Advisory Boards to ensure alignment of programs and services with the *PRC Master Plan* and the departmental *Recreation Program Policy*.
7. Increase relationships and collaboration with community agencies and improve outreach to isolated seniors.

### GOAL: COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION

8. Develop a communication plan for seniors to improve awareness and understanding of the range of recreation programs and services.

### GOAL: EXCELLENCE IN VOLUNTEER SERVICES & STAFF DEVELOPMENT

9. To meet the *Project-Based* and *Serious Leisure* needs of seniors, develop a five-year plan to increase the participation of seniors in volunteer opportunities across the City, from Council Advisory Committees to facilities, parks and events. This includes specific recruitment and retention strategies.
10. Build the capacity of the Advisory Boards through workshops and ongoing learning opportunities to work with staff to engage with a greater diversity of seniors and to assist in providing outreach and communication, especially to those not currently served.



## 1. MAJOR INFLUENCES IN THE EVOLUTION OF FUTURE SERVICES FOR SENIORS

*To provide effective service delivery for seniors over the next 10 years, it is important to recognize the powerful demographic shifts that are already taking place within the senior population and to understand how the leisure needs of older adults evolve through the various life stages.*

### 1.1 SENIORS AND LEISURE

When it comes to a municipality's role in facilitating seniors' recreation, it is vital to understand the three interrelated concepts of *Casual Leisure*, *Project-Based Leisure* and *Serious Leisure* developed by Canadian sociologist Robert Stebbins, PhD. Understanding *Casual*, *Project-Based* and *Serious Leisure* can help municipal recreation departments deliver services to seniors who may or may not be working past the age of 65.

A person who is working typically engages mostly in activities that can be defined as *Casual Leisure*. These activities do not take a lot of planning, can be flexible in nature and do not require extensive commitments. *Casual Leisure* is critical for managing stress, improving health, and for the sheer fun of the experience. Examples of *Casual Leisure* activities are watching TV, reading a book, walking in a park, taking a fitness or cooking class or having a fun hobby like gardening or swimming.

Many people are also involved in *Project-Based Leisure*, which is a short term enjoyable commitment like coaching a child's soccer team for a season.

A *Serious Leisure* activity is one that takes extra commitment and develops to the point that it becomes part of a person's identity. Examples of *Serious Leisure* could be playing in a band, regular volunteering for a cause, a hobby or sport that becomes so important that it begins to define a person.

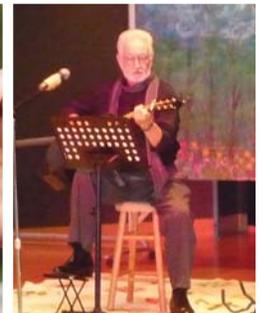
Someone who is working may be engaged in all three types of leisure behaviours, however, after retirement developing a *Serious Leisure* activity becomes critical in replacing the identity that has been lost through exiting the workforce.

**Casual Leisure:** is immediately, intrinsically rewarding; it is a relatively short-lived, fun activity requiring little or no special training for personal enjoyment. It is fundamentally hedonic; it is engaged in for pure enjoyment and pleasure. Examples are: play, relaxation, watching TV, being social with friends, dining out, and physical activity.

**Project-Based Leisure:** is a short-term, moderately complicated undertaking requiring considerable effort, skills and abilities. Examples: writing memoirs, planning a lengthy trip, a volunteer commitment that is time limited such as membership on an Advisory Board or coaching.

**Serious Leisure:** is the purposeful pursuit of an amateur, hobbyist, or volunteer activity that is highly interesting and fulfilling and where a person finds a "career" in acquiring and expressing a combination of special skills, knowledge and experience. Examples: playing in a band, volunteering for a cause, seriously pursuing a hobby such as photography.

*Adapted from Robert Stebbins, PhD*



Adults need to feel like they are contributing, especially after wrapping up a successful career. Often, upon retirement, adults may struggle with not having something to “sink their teeth into”. Public recreation departments need to facilitate opportunities that are flexible (*Casual Leisure*) for working seniors, as well as more enriching and involved (*Project-Based or Serious Leisure*) for those seniors looking to contribute and develop an identity through a meaningful leisure pursuit. From activities available through the highly flexible ONE PASS to volunteering, Coquitlam’s Parks, Recreation & Culture Services Department strives to offer a range of accessible and meaningful *Casual, Project-Based, and Serious Leisure* pursuits.

## 1.2 BABY BOOMERS

The baby boomers (born between 1946 and 1964) make up a significant portion of the population and continue to have an ongoing and variable impact on priorities for recreation service delivery, both on government and the private sector, as this demographic cohort moves through the aging process. The baby boomers will impact Coquitlam in ways yet to be predicted as they age, continue to work or retire, and live longer than the generation before them.

The delivery of public recreation in Canada has always been shaped by the baby boomer generation and their families by directing programs and service delivery to children, youth and adults. These baby boomer-led families have influenced everything in North American culture from television programming to the rise of fast food. In the 1970’s and 80’s, many B.C. communities became focused on building schools and providing programs for youth. Some municipalities supported the creation of stand-alone recreation facilities, purpose built for seniors. This was likely a reaction to the focus public recreation services placed on children and parent/adult programming. Seniors were likely feeling left out of recreation service provisions and, as a result, advocated for their own spaces and facility operating models, ensuring their voices were heard and their recreation needs met. The focus of recreation in seniors’ centres was on socializing and tapping into the collective wisdom and talent of retired seniors while at the same time providing low-cost programs for seniors on fixed incomes. Examples of these stand-alone centres include Oak Bay’s Monterey Recreation Centre which opened in 1971, Delta’s Kennedy Seniors Recreation Centre in 1974, Coquitlam’s Dogwood Pavilion in 1977, and Vancouver’s Kerrisdale Community Centre, with the seniors’ wing, which opened in 1986.

Over the past 15 years, many municipalities have started to shift beyond this stand-alone facility model to an integrated facility model, keeping on trend with the changing patterns of recreation participation in older adults and seniors and optimizing the use of civic facilities.

Just as working with children and youth has been a dominant function of municipal recreation services to date, the focus moving forward will shift to an increased importance placed on older adults and seniors. Fortunately, due in large part to changes in social policy at the provincial and federal levels, fewer seniors are living in poverty today than 10 years ago. Advancing the value of recreation participation as an instrumental and enjoyable component of daily living to reduce health care costs has become a major driver of provincial health authorities.

## 1.3 NEW IMMIGRANT SENIORS

After the influence of the baby boomers, the second powerful demographic shift in the seniors’ population is immigration and the resulting cultural diversity. From the 2016 census data, we know that Coquitlam is home to 61,060 immigrants and that approximately 7,400 of these were already age 45+ when they came to Canada. Additionally, approximately 615 immigrant seniors (age 65+) moved to Coquitlam between the years 2011 – 2016. Many of these seniors speak a language other than English; in Coquitlam, the top non-official home languages include Chinese (Mandarin, Cantonese), Korean and Persian.

Starting a new life in Canada is challenging for most new immigrants but for older adults and seniors whose first language is not English, this transition can be especially difficult. Without the structure and daily interaction that school or employment may provide, older adults and seniors may struggle to form connections in their new community. Understandably, many rely on their younger family members to provide language translation and assistance navigating the system, but over time, that dependence can increase social isolation for the older adult. The ability to access support services and affordable opportunities for learning, recreation and social engagement are vital to a positive transition to living in Coquitlam for many new immigrant older adults and seniors.



**When Marion<sup>1</sup>**, now age 78, immigrated to Canada from Taiwan, joining a faith group and learning English to feel connected to her new community were important early goals. That was 22 years ago and Marion still makes Coquitlam her home, appreciative of the many friends and opportunities she has discovered here. Organizations such as S.U.C.C.E.S.S., her church, and the City’s Parks, Recreation & Culture Department each play an important role in helping her make connections and contribute. After her husband passed away, Marion moved into a condominium in the Town Centre area. She now lives alone, but she does not feel lonely. Marion regularly participates in physical activity at Town Centre Park, takes dance classes, and attends an English practice group at Glen Pine Pavilion. Improving her English conversation skills continues to be an important goal in her life. She recommends

that older adults who are new to Canada join a class or program where they can practice English in an enjoyable, social environment. “There is so much benefit,” Marion observed. “You make friends; everybody is kind; it makes life happy.”

**Yasmin**, who also participates in the English practice group at Glen Pine, agrees. Now age 80, Yasmin emigrated from Iran to Canada in 2006, and understands the many challenges facing new immigrant seniors, both emotional and financial. Her adult children provided significant support in the early stages, but their lives became busy and Yasmin needed to gain a sense of independence and develop new relationships outside her family circle. The affordable activities at Glen Pine, such as the English practice group, made participation possible for her. “It is very beneficial,” she said, “and very good emotionally. It’s like medicine for seniors.”

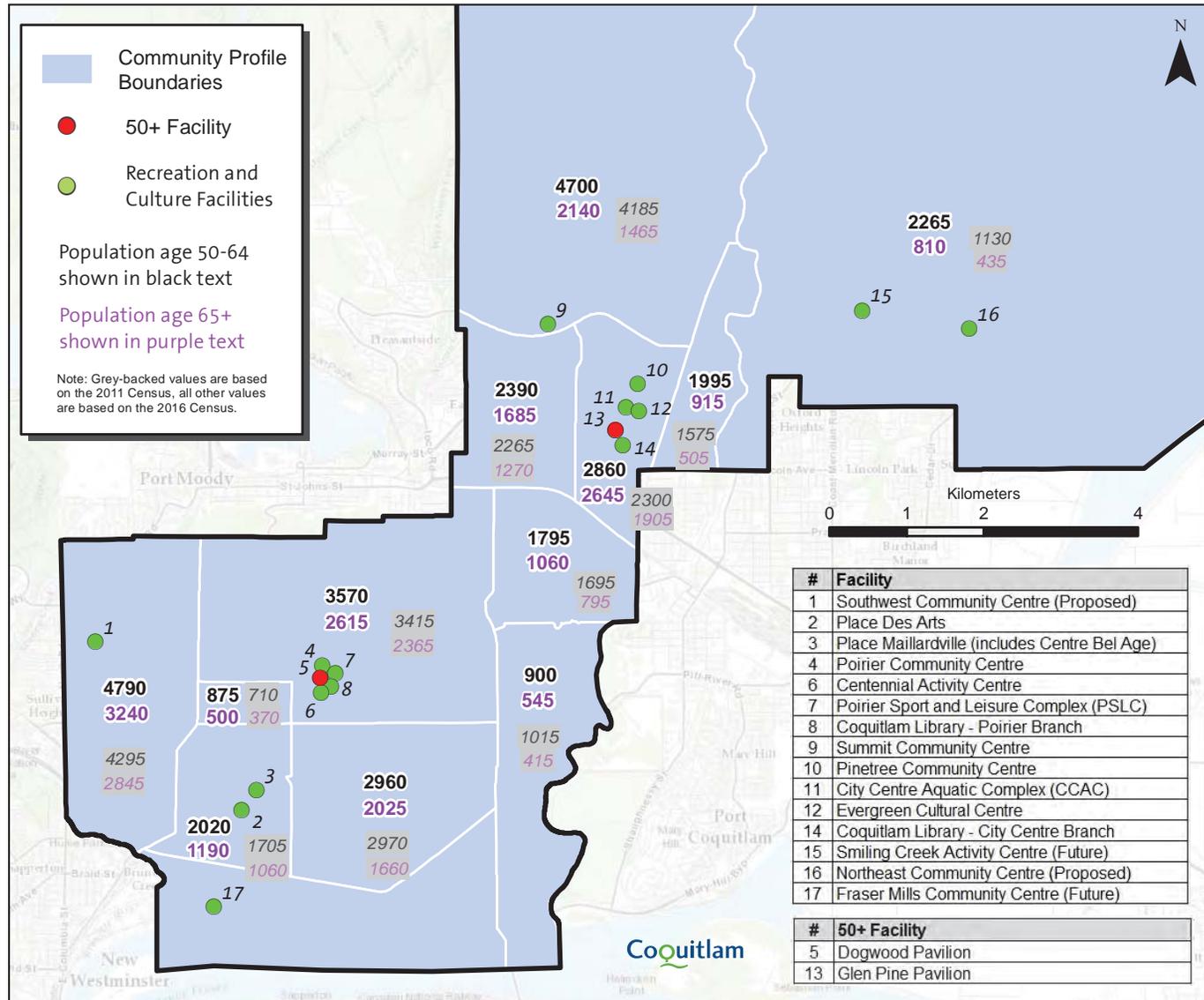
1 These are actual stories from two participants at Glen Pine Pavilion. For privacy, the names and photos used are not real.



**FIGURE 1:**

**1.4 PROXIMITY OF OLDER ADULT AND SENIOR POPULATIONS TO RECREATION FACILITIES IN COQUITLAM**

The map below shows the number of older adults (50 - 64 yrs.) and seniors (65+ yrs.) residing within each of Coquitlam’s neighbourhood profile areas (based on the 2016 census data) and their proximity to the City’s current and proposed recreation facilities. Noticable growth in the older adult and senior population between 2011 – 2016 can be seen in the City Centre, Northeast, Westwood Plateau and Cariboo/Burquitlam neighbourhoods.



## 2. COQUITLAM SENIORS PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Coquitlam Parks, Recreation & Culture Services currently provides a wide range of programs, services and opportunities for the City's older adult and senior residents, falling along the continuum of *Casual*, *Project-Based* and *Serious Leisure* pursuits.

Coquitlam seniors highly value parks and use them frequently. As part of the public consultation for this strategy, 87% of survey participants said they used the City's parks more than once a month.

The City's two stand-alone 50+ facilities, Dogwood Pavilion located in the southwest and Glen Pine Pavilion in the City Centre, have provided dedicated service delivery for older adult residents and seniors since 1977 and 2007 respectively. Both are City-operated with not-for-profit volunteer Advisory Boards acting as a resource for staff. A variety of registered programs, social activities, educational seminars, workshops, special events, outdoor recreation, volunteer opportunities and food services are available at these facilities to meet a range of interests and needs. Additionally, staff work with external agencies, such as the Fraser Health Authority and the Alzheimer Society, to offer programs related to health and wellness, including the prevention and management of chronic disease.

Club Bel Age at Place Maillardville Community Centre offers social activities and programs for Francophone seniors. Club Bel Age is managed by the Société Place Maillardville Society through funding from the City. Place Maillardville has recently increased its programming to reach seniors from all cultural backgrounds in Maillardville.



At the City's larger recreation complexes and community centres, older adults and seniors swim regularly, play sports, use the fitness centres and participate in aqua-fit and other group fitness programs, including those adapted for people with mobility challenges and goals. Organized sport and physical activity opportunities continue to be a growing area of interest by seniors; activities such as pickleball and slo-pitch are gaining in popularity and creating a demand for additional time at indoor and outdoor sport facilities, both in the daytime and evening hours.

The City's cultural delivery partners, specifically, Evergreen Cultural Centre, Place des Arts, the Coquitlam Heritage Society and Coquitlam Public Library provide a variety of events, life-long learning programs and performances for residents of all ages. The City and affiliated festival groups also provide culturally-rich events throughout the year, all of which bring communities and generations together.

Many seniors volunteer with the City in a number of capacities. Some are episodic volunteers at events and festivals (*Casual Leisure*), some are regular volunteers at the Pavilions or in the parks, and some are highly committed through volunteer roles at the Pavilions or on Council Advisory Committees (*Serious Leisure*).

### 2.1 OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Despite the challenges and constraints that will be addressed in the goals and objectives, overall the feedback and research conducted for the development of this *Strategy* confirms that Coquitlam is doing a good job in meeting the current recreation needs of the seniors' population. The following summarizes the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Challenges based on the research and community engagement shared in the *Key Findings Report* and through the public consultation process.

#### STRENGTHS

- The Parks, Recreation & Culture programs and amenities that are offered through the City are well-loved and many seniors view the programs, facilities, parks and cultural offerings as playing a key role in their overall quality of life.
- With the completion of the Coquitlam YMCA and future facilities in the northeast most seniors in Coquitlam will live within a 2-km distance of a cultural or recreation facility, meeting the goal of facility placement standards of the draft *PRC Master Plan* (see Figure 1: Proximity of Older Adult and Senior Populations to Recreation Facilities).



*(Strengths Continued)*

- The new Coquitlam YMCA in Burquitlam will be situated in an area that has (and will continue to have) a high population of seniors.
- 27% of all PRC program registrations are by participants 50+ years, and this is anticipated to grow.
- Half of the current ONE PASS holders are 50+. Drop-in fitness activities are currently very popular with older residents and will likely continue to increase as the boomer cohort typically places a high value on being physically active.
- 87% of seniors surveyed say they use Coquitlam parks at least once a month.
- The City's parks and trails are valued and well-used by older adults. The 2016 Citizen Satisfaction Survey reported that Coquitlam's "parks, trails, and other green space" were rated important by 94% of residents 55+ years of age. Many older adults and seniors enjoy walking, hiking, biking and informal gatherings in the parks, while others participate in specialized outdoor programs and may volunteer at the Inspiration Garden, at a Park Spark event or with one of the stewardship groups.
- The governance model in place at the 50+ Pavilions has allowed for many low- and no-cost recreation opportunities for seniors.
- Coquitlam's diversity is a rich resource with new seniors' programs and services being developed and offered that celebrate this diversity.
- Many seniors use and value the Coquitlam Public Library.

**WEAKNESSES**

- The current model of service delivery is not resourced to meet the social and recreation needs of isolated seniors.
- The current name "Pavilion" is used to describe the City's 50+ recreation centres and does not identify the function of the facilities.
- There is some confusion regarding the recreation programs at Glen Pine. Although mostly known as a recreation centre for 50+, the programs are widely available to all adults.
- Dogwood and Glen Pine Pavilions are highly valued by the users; however, the online survey results showed that many Coquitlam seniors have limited knowledge about the pavilions and the variety of recreation opportunities available to older adults and seniors.



- While Club Bel Age focuses on French speaking seniors, non-French speaking Maillardville seniors are underserved by the current model of seniors' program delivery at Place Maillardville.
- There is a lack of coordination and collaboration across the Tri-Cities for seniors' recreation services.
- Increased promotion and communication of PRC opportunities to non-English speaking seniors is needed.

**OPPORTUNITIES**

- Baby boomers have the longest retirement phase in history, which means they are available to contribute through volunteerism and as recreation instructors.
- Many seniors would like to contribute by volunteering with the City but do not know how to or what the opportunities are.
- Within the redevelopment of Place Maillardville, the planning of the Coquitlam YMCA and future facilities in the northeast, flexible program space for seniors can be incorporated.
- More adults and seniors with greater cultural diversity are moving to Coquitlam, which can lead to a diverse and attractive variety of recreation programs and cultural opportunities.



(Opportunities Continued)

- The Pavilion Boards have capacity to become champions and leaders in reaching Coquitlam’s isolated seniors.

### CHALLENGES

- 16% (3,030) of Coquitlam seniors (65+) have low income (Low Income Measure – After Tax), and yet only approximately 20% of these seniors (603 people) take advantage of the City’s financial assistance program, Get Connected Get Active.

## 3. WHAT DOES THE FUTURE LOOK LIKE IN SENIORS LEISURE SERVICE DELIVERY?

In 2014 the PRC department began working on a *Master Plan*. This Plan tells the story of parks, recreation and culture in the City—where it is today, what it does well, what it needs to do better, and the direction it needs to head to provide the optimal balance of services to the residents of Coquitlam. The development of a seniors strategy was a recommended action within the *PRC Master Plan* (Strategic Direction #1: *Recognize the Evolving Role of Community Recreation*).

The *PRC Master Plan* notes that the impacts to recreation services will vary with an aging population. Managing the participation trends and programming demands for baby boomers—and the challenges to traditional service delivery with greater access required for changing health, social and physical needs—were among the key issues identified for the City’s community centres.

The baby boomers will continue to be interested in health and physical activity and will engage in *Casual Leisure* as many continue in the workforce beyond the traditional retirement age of 65. Their preferences are expected to shift to less demanding physical activities such as aquatics, cycling, hiking, low-impact fitness classes and weight training in community centres. This group will also enjoy cultural programming, practical learning, as well as a variety of outdoor activities, however, will not be as likely to commit to long-term volunteer roles, preferring to take on short-term commitments and spontaneous volunteer opportunities.

For the older senior who is living longer, access to programs and facilities and a continuum of support will be important. Traditionally, physical activity levels decline as a person ages and limited mobility, disability and chronic diseases further restrict

- The baby boomer generation will challenge the current pricing philosophy behind PRC seniors’ programs. Programs are currently priced-based in part on the assumption of fixed income, and maximizing use of non-prime time in facilities. Older adults and seniors will become the primary market of PRC services and the definitions of “prime time” may need to be adjusted to include daytime hours.
- Seniors who do not drive have difficulty getting safely to Coquitlam parks, cultural events and facilities and many are not comfortable taking public transit.
- The significant growth over the past five years will make it important to continue to monitor the concentration of seniors throughout the City, particularly with respect to the location of the different community facilities to ensure that adequate opportunities for engagement are available.

activity and participation. These challenges can increase the risk of social isolation, loneliness and decrease the ability to maintain a healthy lifestyle in the older senior. As noted in the *PRC Master Plan*, the City’s two stand-alone seniors’ facilities are regularly establishing new partnerships with service agencies and the private sector to provide additional supports and specialized opportunities for this age group.

For the senior who has retired and is no longer engaged in the workforce, the development of a *Serious Leisure* pursuit becomes critical for personal fulfillment and the development of a new post-employment social identity.

There is only so much TV watching and swimming a newly-retired person can engage in before they will want to “sink their teeth” into something more meaningful that uses their skills and abilities.

These leisure behaviours and demographic trends raise several questions for municipal recreation services and were identified in the *PRC Master Plan*:

- What recreation programs and services will be required across the lifespan of seniors who do/will call Coquitlam home?
- What are the recreation needs of Coquitlam residents based on age or cultural norms and perspectives?
- What is the future of Coquitlam’s stand-alone seniors’ facilities? How will the needs of seniors be met in future recreation centres?
- What is the sustainability and the rationale for continued program subsidy based on age and/or financial need?

## 4. TRENDS FOR CONSIDERATION

*A number of trends and themes emerged through the research of current leisure behaviours and demographic data allows us to predict future leisure behaviours of the senior and older adult population. Goals to address these trends are included in Section 5.*

### 4.1 INCREASED PARTICIPATION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

From 2018 – 2028 there will be more older adults and seniors than ever participating in physical activity and cultural pursuits which will result in changing demands on facility and outdoor space use. Many baby boomers will want to participate in mainstream recreation facilities rather than be ‘typecast’ as seniors and isolated in stand-alone seniors recreation centres. Coquitlam has already been experiencing this trend as the number of participants using the 50+ centres has leveled off while at the same time, this population segment in Coquitlam has dramatically increased. The growth in participation of the 50 – 65 age group is most apparent at the major recreation facilities, as shown by the number of One Passes purchased by the 50 – 65 year population, increasing 9% in just three years. In fact, 50% of Coquitlam ONE PASS holders are over the age of 50. PRC will see a greater desire for 50+ sport teams and activities that have “Masters” age categories. Combining this trend with the delayed onset of retirement for many older adults, Coquitlam will likely see:

- the daytime use at the pavilions continue to be seniors-focused for people 65+ years old with continued multigenerational programming; and
- the younger seniors engage in more physically active and casual leisure pursuits in all City facilities, fields and the outdoors.

### 4.2 SHIFTING VOLUNTEERISM

Another trend unfolding is the way seniors volunteer. The senior of the future is less likely to engage in long-term volunteer commitments, preferring short term or “one-off” volunteer opportunities that fit into a semi-retired or work schedule. This change will impact the service delivery at pavilions, where regularly committed volunteers are relied upon for everything from activity group supervision to positions on the Advisory Boards. At the same time, this opens up possibilities for greater recruitment of volunteers for events and short-term commitments such as Park Spark and cultural events.



### 4.3 DIVERSITY

Additionally, the increased diversity in Coquitlam will mean that some future Coquitlam older adults and seniors may speak a language other than English and have different recreation needs and value *Leisure Pursuits* other than what the current City facilities or outdoor spaces offer. Using the *Recreation Program Policy* as a guide, PRC will continue to focus on the provision of vibrant, relevant, community-based programs that will result in rich and diverse recreation experiences and opportunities for all.

In the next 15 years the City will have three additional recreation facilities: the Coquitlam YMCA, a new Place Maillardville and a vibrant recreation centre in the northeast. Older adult recreation programs and services will take place and emanate from these multi-age recreation facilities with dedicated programs, times and spaces for seniors. The 50+ pavilions will remain primarily seniors-focussed facilities during the day. As facilities and needs evolve, all programs currently provided at Dogwood Pavilion, Poirier Community Centre and the Centennial Pavilion will be reviewed and assessed as part of the Poirier Recreation Precinct Planning.

### 4.4 BARRIERS TO SENIORS' PARTICIPATION

Segments of the older adult and senior population will continue to experience challenges and constraints to meaningful recreation participation. To put it simply: a constraint intervenes between the desire to participate and actual participation. These can be summarized into five main categories and can be understood as either a personal constraint or a constraint caused by a systemic barrier:

- 1. Financial:** There is increasing income disparity within the senior demographic. The assumption that all seniors require some form of subsidy due to a low, fixed income needs further examination. Sixteen percent of Coquitlam's 65+ population has low income (LIM-AT) and a large proportion of seniors living in poverty are single women.
- 2. Limited knowledge of available recreation resources:** Information about recreation resources may not be available, relevant, or provided in a timely manner.
- 3. Transportation:** Seniors need to be able to easily and safely get to and from a recreation centre, park or an event.
- 4. Health and activity limitations:** Approximately half of Coquitlam seniors have health and activity limitations that impact their full participation in recreation.
- 5. Isolation and loneliness:** 19% of Coquitlam seniors live alone; the number of isolated or lonely seniors is unknown. Seniors who are new to Canada may encounter language and other cultural barriers. The risk of becoming socially isolated and disconnected from community life increases significantly for seniors who experience one or more of these challenges and constraints. Seniors with low social support are less likely than were those with high social support to report positive self-perceived health, and are more likely to be dissatisfied with life. Having a friend to participate with can make all the difference.





## 5. ACTIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION

The *Seniors' Strategy* supports the vision and mission of the *PRC Master Plan* through the development of four key goals.

1. Access and inclusion for all;
2. Excellence in program and service delivery;
3. Communication and collaboration; and
4. Excellence in volunteer and staff development.

Based on the *Key Findings Report*, and further supported by the feedback and insights gained from the public consultation, these goals are broken down into \*Action Items\* and assigned priority levels of 1 through 3. The Action Items will be included in the PRC department annual workplan and budgeted accordingly. It is anticipated that as part of the PRC's continuous quality improvement activities, this strategy will be reviewed every five years.



The City's parks and trails are valued and well-used by older adults. The 2016 Citizen Satisfaction Survey reported that Coquitlam's "parks, trails, and other green space" were rated important by 94% of residents 55+ years of age. Many older adults and seniors enjoy walking, hiking, biking and informal gatherings in the parks, while others participate in specialized outdoor programs and may volunteer at the Inspiration Garden, at a Park Spark event or with one of the stewardship groups.



## SENIORS SERVICES: ACTIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION 2018 – 2028

STRATEGY GOAL/ DESIRED OUTCOME	ACTION	DESCRIPTION	PRIORITY LEVEL
<b>1. Access and Inclusion for All</b>	<b>Continue to Provide Weekday Senior-Focused Programming at the Pavilions</b>	Continue to create a welcoming, older adult-focused facility environment at the 50+ Pavilions during the day with programs and services that meet seniors' needs and interests; optimize Pavilion usage so that the general public feels welcome in the evenings and weekends and can access specific programs and services.	<b>1</b>
	<b>Complete a Review of the Financial Assistance Program</b>	Complete a review of the Get Connected/Get Active financial assistance program and create an action plan specifically to increase the usage of the program by low-income seniors.	<b>1</b>
	<b>Review the Program &amp; Service Pricing Structure to Increase Participation</b>	Examine the fee structure for drop-ins, programs and activity groups with the goal to increase seniors' participation while at the same time, ensuring cost effectiveness and responsible management of public dollars.	<b>1</b>
	<b>Investigate Specifically Targeted Programs for New Immigrant Seniors</b>	Build multicultural connections and develop opportunities to engage new immigrant seniors in community recreation.	<b>1</b>
	<b>Enhance Access and Support for Seniors with Disabilities</b>	Increase physical access and adapted recreation equipment for people with mobility and sensory impairments as well as prevention strategies and supports for people with mental and cognitive health-related issues.	<b>1</b>
	<b>Investigate a Transportation Initiative</b>	Investigate the feasibility and operating model for a transportation initiative for seniors.	<b>1</b>
	<b>Review and Enhance Park Access to Include Age-Friendly Amenities for Lifelong Physical Activity</b>	Enhance access to and within City parks and outdoors spaces to ensure a balanced provision of trails, fields and park options are available to meet the diverse physical activity and mobility needs of residents. This may include a 'needs assessment' at some sites and a review of lighting, terrain, seating, signage, as well as allocation and age-appropriate physical activity amenities.	<b>2</b>

STRATEGY GOAL/ DESIRED OUTCOME	ACTION	DESCRIPTION	PRIORITY LEVEL
<b>2. Excellence in Program and Service Delivery</b>	<b>Establish Agreements with the Pavilion Advisory Boards</b>	Establish Service Provider Agreements with both the Dogwood Seniors and Glen Pine 50+ Advisory Boards to ensure alignment of programs and services with the <i>PRC Master Plan</i> and the Departmental <i>Recreation Program Policy</i> .	<b>1</b>
	<b>Increase Relationships and Collaboration with Community Agencies and Improve Outreach to Isolated Seniors</b>	Investigate a new service delivery model that increases partnership and outreach activities in order to engage effectively with underserved and isolated seniors.	<b>1</b>
	<b>Enhance Intergenerational Opportunities while Continuing to Design Programs Specific to the Physical Activity Needs of Seniors</b>	Enhance intergenerational recreation program opportunities at all City facilities. Incorporate these opportunities in ways that enhance seniors' recreation experience while respecting their age-appropriate physical activity needs.	<b>3</b>
	<b>Examine Service Gaps for Older Adults</b>	Examine the service gap for active, working seniors who are seeking challenging, engaging experiences and opportunities to connect with others in their age group.	<b>3</b>

STRATEGY GOAL/ DESIRED OUTCOME	ACTION	DESCRIPTION	PRIORITY LEVEL
<b>3. Communication and Collaboration</b>	<b>Develop a Communication Plan</b>	<p>Develop a communication plan for seniors to improve awareness and understanding of the range of recreation programs and services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Increase the learning opportunities for seniors to better understand technology and how to access information via the internet including social media sources.</li> <li>→ Investigate best practices for translating relevant recreation information to other most spoken languages in Coquitlam.</li> <li>→ Engage in information-sharing and outreach initiatives targeted towards distinct seniors' cultural groups.</li> </ul>	<b>1</b>
	<b>Update the Current Pavilion Names to <i>Dogwood</i> and <i>Glen Pine Recreation Pavilions</i> to Reflect the Function of these Facilities</b>	<p>Identify the facility function in the current Pavilion names with the addition of the word "recreation." Update the building and way-finding signage and marketing materials.</p>	<b>3</b>
	<b>Strengthen Tri-Cities Collaboration</b>	<p>Strengthen recreation service delivery collaboration across the Tri-Cities. Improve the networking of people working in seniors' recreation across the Tri-Cities to strengthen relationships and explore potential partnership opportunities.</p>	<b>3</b>
	<b>Support English Practice Opportunities within an Informal Recreation Context</b>	<p>Increase the number of purposeful opportunities for residents to practice English language skills in an informal community recreation environment.</p>	<b>3</b>
<b>4. Excellence in Volunteer Services and Staff Development</b>	<b>Develop a Five-Year Volunteer Plan to Include All Opportunities for Seniors to Contribute</b>	<p>To meet the <i>Project-Based</i> and <i>Serious Leisure</i> needs of seniors, develop a five-year plan to increase the participation of seniors in volunteer opportunities across the City, from Council Advisory Committees to facilities, parks and events. This includes specific recruitment and retention strategies.</p>	<b>1</b>
	<b>Build Advisory Board Capacity</b>	<p>Build the capacity of the Advisory Boards through workshops and ongoing learning opportunities to work with staff to engage with a greater diversity of seniors and to assist in providing outreach and communication, especially to those not currently served.</p>	<b>1</b>
	<b>Complete a Staff Learning Assessment</b>	<p>Complete a Learning Needs Assessment with PRC staff to determine gaps in knowledge related to the dynamic and changing recreation needs of seniors. Use this assessment to develop Learning Plans.</p>	<b>3</b>





**City of Coquitlam**

**Parks, Recreation & Culture Services**

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