Community Parks and Trails Strategy
Electoral Area F

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY #2:
Survey and Open House

Introduction
Public engagement is integral to the development of the Community Parks and Trails Strategy (CPTS). Overall, the process consists of an Advisory Committee of community representatives and two public Open Houses with corresponding online surveys. The following provides a summary of the second Open House and Online survey.

Executive Summary
The summary is based on the survey results, input received at the Open House, staff insight and discussion with the Advisory Committee and the Parks and Open Space Advisory Committee in Electoral Area F (POSAC).

The following Vision statement was developed after incorporating suggestions from the public process:

“A vibrant community where all residents can easily access community trails for recreation, exercise, commuting and nature appreciation, with local parks for play and social interaction.”

The majority of respondents (60%) agreed that the number and distribution of Neighbourhood park land is somewhat adequate, however, adding to the supply of parkland going into the future is desirable provided it is done strategically.

A 25km network of existing and proposed Community trails throughout the Electoral Area was illustrated on the revised plans developed for the Open House and online survey. Seventy seven percent (77%) of respondents were completely or somewhat satisfied that this proposed Community Trail network was complete, however, a number of suggestions was provided resulting in an additional 7km of potential trail. Some residents are looking for roadside trail connections for direct access while others are looking for more natural trail experiences.

The top priority in the short-term is to continue developing additional trails followed by the park improvements at Meadowood Park.

According to the survey there is also a strong desire to acquire more Natural Park land and to develop recreation facilities at other existing Community Parks. There is also strong interest in the RDN playing a greater role in the provincial land at Little Mountain.

Overview of Input Received
Both the Survey and Open House addressed similar content. Input was sought on: the draft Vision statement; adequacy of the Neighborhood Parks supply and distribution; completeness of the proposed Community Trail network; and priorities for future action.
Seventeen (17) people attended the second Open House, held on May 6th from 4:30 – 7:30pm at the Errington Memorial Hall.

Twenty four (27) people completed the online survey, which was available from May 6 to 21, 2013 on the RDN website. It was also available in hard copy at the Workshop. We received survey responses from residents in all of the five communities with Errington providing the highest response rate at 44%.

**Vision Statement**

The proposed draft Vision statement was developed using key words chosen by residents in Survey #1. The respondents were very supportive of the proposed draft statement. Only minor changes were suggested and these are incorporated into the following final Vision Statement:

“A vibrant community where all residents can easily access community trails for recreation, exercise, commuting and nature appreciation, with local parks for play and social interaction.”

*To what extent are you satisfied that the vision reflects your values and the kind of parks and trails system you hope will created in your community?*

**Adequacy of existing Neighbourhood Parks supply**

The majority of respondents (60%) agreed that the number and distribution of Neighbourhood park land is somewhat adequate, however, adding to the supply of parkland going into the future is desirable provided it is done strategically. For example, Harris Community Park might be too small to adequately function as a Neighbourhood Park with active play elements such as playground, sport court, open grass play and may benefit from expansion. Also, the RDN can continue to provide financial support in the delivery of park services to community organizations with land holdings. There is also an opportunity to partner with the Province to improve access and experiences at some valuable Crown land such as Little Mountain.
Do you feel the number and distribution of Neighborhood Parks is adequate?

Completeness of the proposed Community Trail system

A 25km network of existing and proposed Community trails throughout the Electoral Area was illustrated on the revised plans developed for the Open House and online survey. The majority of proposed trails utilize developed and undeveloped Road rights of way and existing Community and Regional Park land. In order to create an inter-connected system of trails, the plan also included some Crown land and small portions of private land.

Seventy five percent (77%) of respondents were completely or somewhat satisfied that this proposed Community Trail network was complete, however, a number of suggestions were provided resulting in an additional 7km of potential trail. Some residents are looking for roadside trail connections for direct access while others are looking for more natural trail experiences.

The equestrian community of interest would like to see the trail network plan reflect their needs in the final plan as much as possible. They are currently using a mix of RDN, Crown and private lands for rides and events. Developing a continuous equestrian trail network would require additional planning and communication with the numerous other players and land owners.

Does this proposed trail system reflect the vision for an inter-connected community?
Short, Medium and Long-Term Priorities

As expected, the top priority in the short-term is to continue developing additional trails. Further analysis will be undertaken to determine the next set of trail priorities that will be recommended for future planning and development.

According to the survey there is also a strong desire to acquire more Natural Park land and to develop recreation facilities at existing Community Parks. The short-term focus for park improvements is Meadowood Community Park as part of Phase 1 from the Provincial Community Recreation grant. Some respondents would like to see Phase 2 improvements to Meadowood Park including a community hall in the medium term. Residents in communities outside of Meadowood/Corcan would like to see the limited budget funds for park improvements spread throughout the Electoral Area.

Working with community groups and other levels of government is also seen to be a good strategy in the short-term to achieve the goals. With regards to working with the Province there is strong interest in the Little Mountain area. This property is seen as very valuable both locally and regionally and many residents want to see better management and believe the RDN has an important role to play. It was also suggested that the RDN should give serious consideration to acquiring the French Creek Community School property if it ever became available.
In terms of priority how would you rate the following strategies?