RDOS Area "D" Service & Boundary Configuration Study
Fact Sheets
October 2021

PARKS & RECREATION SERVICES

➢ What services are provided?

The Area "D" parks, trails and recreation function consists of two services:

- regional parks and trails, and
- Okanagan Falls recreation programming, parks and facilities

Regional Parks and Trails

The RDOS has 9 regional parks featuring unique topography, flora and fauna; and offering sandy beaches, hiking trails, historic sites, picnic areas, playgrounds, spray parks and baseball diamonds. Two regional parks are located in Area "D" – Lions Park and Kenyon Park.

Regional trails include portions of the Kettle Valley Rail (KVR) Trail (through a licence of occupation and a partnership agreement with the Province), the Similkameen Rail Trail and other multi-use trails. As part of the service, the RDOS also provides the Click, Hike and Bike trail information database. The KVR trestle in Okanagan Falls is also part of the Regional Parks and Trails system.

The RDOS is currently developing a Parks, Trails and Recreation Master Plan to guide decision-making over the next 10 years. The plan is intended to ensure the region has sufficient outdoor and indoor recreation facilities and services, while continuing to protect environmentally significant areas.

Okanagan Falls Recreation, Parks, and Facilities

Okanagan Falls and district recreation, parks and facilities service provides community parks such as Keogan Sports Park, Christie Memorial Park and Garnett Family Park in Heritage Hills. Outdoor amenities at those parks include playgrounds, skateboard parks, ball fields, a cricket pitch, and beach volleyball. In addition, Area "D" includes 9 beach accesses (classified as roads under Provincial Highways) in Okanagan Falls and Skaha Estates (including the Skaha Lake Dog Park and the Skaha Lake boat launch). Centennial Park in Okanagan Falls is owned and operated by the Okanagan Falls Irrigation District, however the Kenny McLean statue, outdoor stage and new public washroom (2022), were funded and built by the RDOS.

Recreation programs offered in Area "D" include activities for seniors, children and families. The RDOS has a long-term use agreement with School District 53 for the elementary school during weekends and evenings as a community centre, including the activity room and gym. The Zen and Fitness Centre and Tennis/Pickleball courts are also leased from the School District for recreational purposes.

The service area for the Okanagan Falls recreation, parks and facilities service is shown in Figure 1.

Although not part of Area "D" services, the residents also have access to the RDOS recreation services located outside of Area "D" (i.e., parks, trails, arenas and pools).

Provincial and Private Recreation

Residents of Area "D" also have access to local provincial parks, including Vaseux Lake Park, sx̌ wəx̌ wnitkw (Okanagan Falls) Park, Skaha Bluffs Park, as well as the Vaseux Protected Areas.

➢ Who makes decisions?

The RDOS Board of Directors (Board) is responsible for the operational decisions related to regional parks and trails. The Okanagan Falls recreation,

parks and facilities service area overlaps two electoral areas, so both directors (Area "D" and Area "I") have an interest in the service. However, as noted below, most of the decisions for the service are made on the advice of staff and the Recreation Commission.

The Board has a Community Services Committee (made up of the full Board) to advise on service decisions related, but not limited to, the operation and control of all public parks, trails, public recreation grounds and facilities.

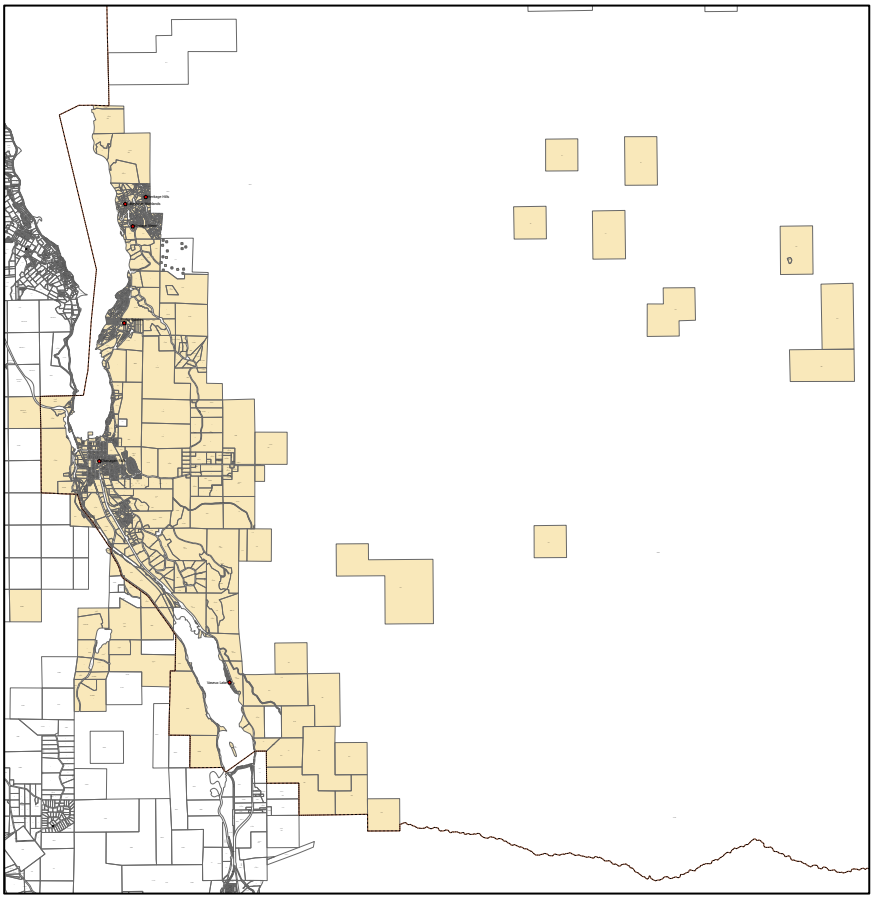
The parks, recreation and trail services are managed by the Community Services Department of the RDOS. Staff make recommendations to the Board considering both local interests and regional perspectives.

The RDOS Board has established the Okanagan Falls Parks and Recreation Commission. Commission directors are appointed by the RDOS Board for a term of 2 years, and include the Area "D" director as a non-voting member. The Okanagan Falls Parks and Recreation Commission is comprised of 11 voting members. Meetings are open to the public and all questions before the Commission are decided by a majority vote.

The Commission provides guidance and advice on behalf of Okanagan Falls and the surrounding communities to the RDOS on operational matters related to parks and recreation. The Commission operates within the annual budget approved by the RDOS Board. RDOS staff provide advice and recommendations to the Commission and oversee the administration of the service area operating budget.

All parkland acquisitions are approved by the Board on the advice of staff and the Commission.

Figure 1: Okanagan Falls Recreation, Parks & Facilities Service Area



➢ Who delivers the service?

RDOS staff maintain all Area "D" parks and trails. The recreation commission in Okanagan Falls provides additional oversight of their local and regional parks including initiation of volunteer projects. RDOS staff that deliver the parks and trails services include the Parks and Facilities Manager, Parks Lead Hand, Labourers and Summer Students.

Okanagan Falls Recreation, Parks and Facilities

RDOS staff deliver recreation programing with the Commission providing guidance. Each year the Pakrs and Recreation Commission identifies the projects it wishes to pursue (in consultation with RDOS staff) and a budget for RDOS staff time is established to pursue the projects. The Commission is supported by full and part-time staff, including the Parks and Facilities Manager, Recreation Manager,

Recreation Coordinator, assistants, instructors and summer staff.

A private contractor delivers custodial services to the Okanagan Falls community centre, and other facilities associated with Area "D" services. Volunteer organizations and park user groups also contribute significantly to Area "D" parks and recreation. Community organizations and individuals played a significant role in establishing the ball fields, skateboard park and cricket pitch in Keogan Sports Park; benches and picnic tables in Lions Park and Kenyon Park; and the playground and water fountain in Kenyon Park.

➢ What is spent by RDOS on the service?

The total cost of regional parks and trails, and the Okanagan Falls recreation, parks, and facilities service can be broken down into:

- 2021 Area "D" portion of the budgeted cost of the RDOS regional parks/trails service; and
- 2021 budgeted cost of Okanagan Falls recreation, parks and facilities service.

Figure 2
Cost of Services
2021

Service Component	Cost[1]
RDOS Regional Parks/Trails[2]	$2,463,110
OK Falls Recreation, Parks & Facilities	$872,788

1 Cost estimates are from adopted 2021 budget figures

2 Atypical budget (approx. $2.13 million in capital expenditures)

It is worth noting that 2021 was an unusual year for the Regional Trails service as the budget includes approximately $2.13 million in capital expenditures, including trail construction, resurfacing signage, as well as an RDOS Parks, Trails and Recreation Master Plan. The majority of capital projects were funded through Gas Tax monies, provincial grants and some reserve transfers. As with many services, total costs will fluctuate from year to year depending on the capital projects pursued and grants obtained in that year. The total costs, including capital expenditures, are reflected in Figure 2. Operating costs, and the resulting tax requisition, are generally more consistent. Operating costs for regional parks and trails are in the range of $335,000 to $350,000, and operating costs for the Okanagan Falls recreation, parks and facilities service are typically in the range of $700,000 to $750,000. Tax requisition amounts for 2021 are shown in Figure 4.

In addition to service costs, there are also operating and capital reserve accounts for these services. It is useful to consider the amounts set aside for future expenditures. Reserve totals are shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3
Reserve Totals
2020

Service	Reserve Total[1]
Regional Parks Capital Reserve	$377,029
OK Falls Recreation	$162,758
OK Falls Parkland Acquisition	$2,252
Area D Parkland Acquisition	$2,052

1 Reserve totals are as at the end of 2020.

➢ How are the costs recovered?

Regional Parks and Trails

In 2021, the costs of the regional parks and trails service were recovered through property taxes, transfers from reserves and through service revenues, grants and Gas Tax funding. The service was the beneficiary of significant grants in 2021, and as a result, several capital projects were undertaken. The property tax portion of the service is shared by all local governments in the region, allocated on the basis of converted assessment for land and improvements. The tax requisition for the service was $300,958, which translated into $5.40 for a representative residential property ($450,000 assessment).

Okanagan Falls Recreation, Parks and Facilities

In 2021, the costs of the Okanagan Falls recreation, parks and facilities service were recovered primarily through property taxes allocated to a specified area (see Figure 1). Fees and charges, grants, rental revenue, prior surpluses and

transfers from reserves made up the remainder. The tax requisition amount was $566,880 which translates into a residential tax rate of 0.4956 per $1,000 of assessed value (land and improvements) for properties within the service area boundary. Area "D" residents outside the service area do not contribute taxes to the Okanagan Falls recreation, parks and facilities service.

➢ What is the cost to a typical residence?

The net cost of RDOS parks, trails and recreational services depends on where within Area "D" a property is located. All residences throughout Area "D" assessed at $450,000 paid approximately $5.40 in taxes in 2021 for the regional parks and trails service. A house (assessed at $450,000) in the Okanagan Falls recreation service area (Figure 1) paid an additional $223. Figure 4 summarizes the cost impact on a typical residence within the Okanagan Falls parks and recreation service area. User fees also apply in relation to specific recreational programs.

Figure 4
Cost Impact on Typical Residence
2021

Service	Tax Req.[1]	Res. Rate	Owing[2]
Regional Parks & Trails	$300,958	0.0120	$5.40
OK Falls Rec, Parks & Facilities	$566,880	0.4956	$223.04
Total			**$228.44**

1 Tax requisition amount excludes 5.25% Surveyor of Taxes fee

2 Impact is calculated on a home assessed at $450,000

➢ What impact would incorporation have on these services?

Incorporation would not automatically require changes to the parks and recreation services currently provided to Area "D".

The regional trails service would continue to be provided by the RDOS, and funded by all local governments within the RDOS, with any new incorporated municipality as a participant in the service (with tax contributions based on the same basis as is currently provided).

The new municipality would have options on how it could provide the recreation, parks, and facilities services to residents. There would be two primary options to provide these services:

1. If the service is provided to the municipality as well as areas that remain unincorporated (within the electoral area) then the service could have the following options:

    a) The RDOS could continue to provide the service to both the municipality and electoral area, and decisions would be made on this service by the participants (municipal director and electoral area director). The service could continue to be guided by a commission with representatives from both the municipality and electoral area;

    b) The municipality could provide the service to its residents, as well as to a defined area outside the municipality. The RDOS could collect funds from the electoral area and contract the municipality to provide the service. The municipal council would be the governing body for the service. The municipality could choose to have an advisory commission or committee with representatives from both the municipality and electoral area to provide input on the service.

2. The municipality could provide parks and recreational services to its own residents, and residents outside the municipality would not contribute to those services (although could still access the parks and recreation services).

The RDOS would likely retain ownership of the regional parks (funded regionally); however, the municipality would assume ownership of, and responsibility for, any Area "D" parks that were within the municipal boundary. In addition, any beach accesses within a municipal boundary (currently unconstructed roads) would be transferred from the Province to municipal ownership. If, as part of the incorporation, the Okanagan Falls Irrigation District were encompassed by the municipal boundary and subsequently dissolved (as is required for irrigation or improvement districts that are within a newly incorporated municipality), Centennial Park in Okanagan Falls would also become an asset owned by the municipality.