

**HRM District 8
Community Recreation
Needs Assessment**

Final Report

December 18, 2001

BURKE/OLIVER
CONSULTANTS LTD

Executive Summary

In the spring of 2001 HRM Recreation Services commissioned a Recreation Needs Assessment for District 8. The study was conducted under the supervision of a Steering Committee comprised of representatives of the Community Liaison Committee established as part of the Halifax Harbour Solutions Project and HRM Recreation Services. The study was conducted in parallel with a review of parks and open spaces being conducted by HRM Parks Planning.

The Recreation Needs Assessment involved the community through public meetings, focus groups, interviews, questionnaires distributed to community groups, and meetings with the Steering Committee. Youth meetings were held at Prince Arthur Junior High School, the South Woodside Community Centre and the North Woodside Community Centre.

The process included a review of previous studies conducted in the area, demographic information relating to the community, and the history of the area. An inventory of existing recreation facilities and services was prepared and research conducted into current patterns in recreation and leisure preferences among Canadians.

Much of the input received from area residents focussed on the need to maintain a "green belt" between the residential neighbourhoods and industrial/commercial development along the waterfront. There was concern expressed that many of the parks and open spaces in the District have been provided with play equipment for younger children but facilities and services for pre teen and teen age youth were lacking. It was also noted that ongoing maintenance of existing parks, play equipment and playing fields needs to be improved.

Since 1978 there have been five significant studies conducted in the area, all of which address the need for a "green belt" along the harbour. In the past two years, both a submission to HRM from the Harbour Drive Residents Association and research conducted by the Community Liaison Committee suggested that the required "green belt" include a trail system that would link the Dartmouth Cove area to the Nova Scotia Hospital lands and eventually to the Woodside Ferry Terminal.

The consultants recommend:

- 1. That a Master Plan be developed which leads to the assembly of the land necessary to create a permanent "green belt" buffer between the residential neighbourhoods from Dartmouth Cove to the Woodside Ferry Terminal.*

That a multipurpose "Harbourside" trail system be developed within this green belt. The system should be accessible to all. It should include areas for play and relaxation. It should include interpretive exhibits recalling the history of the area and perhaps exhibits explaining current and future industrial/commercial activities along the waterfront and in the harbour.

- 2. That improved services to youth be provided by:*
 - a) The development of a "Bike Park". The location and design of the park to be undertaken in consultation with area youth.*
 - b) Converting the Woodside Fire Hall to a Youth Centre when it becomes surplus to the needs of HRM Fire Services in 2003.*
- 3. That an on going plan for upgrading and repairs to existing parks and open spaces be prepared and implemented by HRM Parks Services.*
- 4. That the majority of the One Million Dollars, which will be provided through the Community Integration Fund, be used to create as much of the Harbourside Trail System as possible. The priority for development should be that area on public land from Tupper Street to the park beside the North Woodside Community Centre. Some funds should be kept in reserve to assure proper maintenance and upkeep of the trail.*

1.0 Mandate

This Community Recreation Needs Assessment was commissioned to determine the recreation needs of the community which lies within District 8 of the Halifax Regional Municipality. The study boundaries were defined as "Dartmouth Ferry Terminal to Highway 111, Portland Street Downtown to and including Prince Arthur, through Woodside Industrial Park."

Specifically the study was to determine:

- (A) What are the recreational needs in District 8 of HRM?*
- (B) Is the "up to One Million Dollars" which could be made available through the Community Integration Fund sufficient to meet these needs?*
- (C) If One Million dollars is not sufficient, are there other sources of funding available to assist in meeting these needs?*

The study will parallel and be complimentary to work being carried out by the Parkland Planning and Development Division.

2.0 Methodology

The study process involved a review of previous studies related to recreation services, an inventory of existing facilities and services, focus groups, a questionnaire mailed to community groups, interviews with service providers and community leaders, on site visits with youth groups and school classes, two public meetings and regular meetings with the Steering Committee.

3.0 Background Research

3.1.0 Previous Studies

3.1.1 North Woodside Plan, City of Dartmouth Neighbourhood Improvement Program 1978

The study presents a concept plan which represented the goals and aspirations of residents of North Woodside regarding the use of funds available through the Neighbourhood Improvement Program. It touches on many issues related to the community including its history, demographic characteristics, housing and citizen participation in policy development and implementation.

The study addresses recreation needs in a section entitled Recreation and Beautification and presents a Concept Plan designed "to develop a system of public open space, recreational facilities and neighbourhood parks."

Specific recommendations include the development of a linear open space on vacant lots on Marvin, Chadwick and Renfrew streets. Other recommendations include preschool play areas, picnic areas and upgrading of tennis courts in the area north of Pleasant St., improvements to school grounds and the installation of creative play equipment and other upgrades on Arthur St. south of Pleasant St.

The plan envisions a park and pathway system which begins at the foot of Stephen St. over to Arthur St. down Arthur, across the bottom of the neighbourhood on a path which "overlooks" to the harbour, terminating in a large green space on the east side of the residential area.

3.1.2 Dartmouth Waterfront Development Plan, August 1991

The plan was commissioned by the City of Dartmouth, the Waterfront Development Corporation and the Downtown Development Corporation. It is a wide ranging study examining land use, economic development and preservation of the rich heritage of the area.

Of relevance to the current study is the recommendation to develop a Waterfront Park System which would include a linear pathway system. Part of the system would include a new walkway constructed on the waterside of the railway tracks from Old Ferry Road to Parker Street.

On the longer term, the Parker Street sidewalk would extend further south paralleling the rail line across the Coast Guard property to the present park at Cuisack Street and eventually to the Woodside Ferry Terminal.

3.1.3 North Woodside Waterfront Park Plan North Woodside Community Association, 1995

This study presents a concept plan commissioned by the North Woodside Resident's Improvement Association (which merged shortly thereafter with the NWCA) by Karen Waters, an Environmental Planning Student at NSCAD. The planning area includes all the open space on the waterfront surrounding the Coast Guard Base, the Nova Scotia Hospital and the North Woodside Community Centre.

The plan calls for and provides a map depicting a system of trails utilizing existing pathways and look-off points. Some trail names are proposed which take into account the historical features of the area (e.g Brick Trail, Mount Hope Trail). The report includes numerous colour plates depicting the environmental, topographical and heritage features of the area, land ownership and existing social uses.

This plan is rooted in well documented efforts to create a land use plan for the area by this Association beginning in 1993. The creation of the Water's Plan involved a least one public meeting as well as meetings with particular groups of stakeholders including representatives of the N.S. Hospital, N.S Department of Supply and Services, The Canadian Coast Guard, Dartmouth Parks and Recreation Department, the Provincial MLA (Premier John Savage) and municipal aldermen.

3.1.4 Downtown Dartmouth Secondary Planning Strategy 2000

The Planning Strategy was adopted by HRM Regional Council on July 11, 2000. It addresses planning issues for Downtown Dartmouth and expands on the geographic

boundaries of previous studies. Of particular interest to the Recreation Needs Assessment for District 8 are the recommendations related to "Waterfront Priorities" Specifically the Plan calls for:

1. *Development of a multi-use linear trail and greenway system which extends along the water's edge from the MacDonald Bridge to the Downtown Ferry Terminal, through Dartmouth Cove to the Woodside Ferry Terminal.*
2. *The development of two "anchor parks" at either end of the waterfront.*

3.1.5 Harbour Solutions Project, Survey of Residents, March 2001

The report presents the key highlights of a survey conducted by Omnifacts Research on behalf of the Halifax Regional Municipality regarding issues and concerns surrounding the Harbour Solutions Project.

The survey explored a variety of issues related to the Harbour Solutions Project. Of relevance to those interested in recreation services in District 8 are the findings related to how the monies available through the Community Integration Fund should be spent. The top response overall was the development of parkland. The study notes that "this result was primarily a suggestion from those residing near the Coast Guard site in Dartmouth."

3.1.6 Harbour Drive Residents' Association, April 2000

In a submission to HRM Planning Services dated April 15, 2000, the Harbour Drive Residents' Association suggests that a harbour side park be developed with walking/hiking trails connecting the downtown ferry terminal to the Woodside Terminal. They indicate that designation of the lands as a greenway would ensure "this last parcel of natural beauty will be held in perpetuity for future generations."

The Association also recommends that appropriate reminders of the area's history be incorporated into the water side park plan.

3.1.7 *Dartmouth Sewage Treatment Plant, Community Liaison Committee
Community Questionnaire, October 2000*

Approximately 2,000 questionnaires were distributed to area residents in October of 2000. The questionnaires are not a true survey and the results can not be taken as a scientific sample of community response. It does, nonetheless, provide some insight into the recreation priorities of the community and an indication of how the Community Integration Fund might be used.

Of interest to recreation planners are the responses generated from several key questions. When asked what benefits might be derived from having the treatment plant located on the Coast Guard site responses were:

| | |
|---------------------------------------|------------|
| <i>Cleaner beach and harbour</i> | <i>98%</i> |
| <i>Additional parkland</i> | <i>74%</i> |
| <i>Increased access to waterfront</i> | <i>60%</i> |

When asked what they would like to see done with the 1 million dollar Community Integration Fund, responses were:

| | |
|---|------------|
| <i>Parkland</i> | <i>43%</i> |
| <i>Walking and Cycling Trails</i> | <i>22%</i> |
| <i>Boardwalk</i> | <i>14%</i> |
| <i>Improve waterfront accessibility including wheelchairs</i> | <i>10%</i> |
| <i>No other use received more than</i> | <i>7%</i> |

3.2.0 Demographics

3.2.1 Catchment area

The catchment area for the study is within District 8 of the Halifax Regional Municipality, however, detailed information about the particular section of District 8 which is the focus of this study is not available. All demographic information referred to in this study is for District 8 as a whole. Population information provided by the Municipality indicates that the total population of the District 8 was 11,890 in 1996.

There are about 2,500 acres of land in the district which is yet to be developed. Current projects include 26 acres of single family housing and town houses across from the Penhorn Mall and another 93 acres in Portland Estates. According to HRM planning, total estimated population increase is approximately 5,000. Although this development is outside of the study area it can be expected that this increase in population will place additional demands on recreation infrastructure in the study area.

3.2.2 Age groups

Table 1 provides age group actuals and percentages compared with HRM as a whole, the province and the country as a whole. The age groups represent market segments for recreation and leisure services: pre school (0 - 4), school age (5 - 14), teens (15 - 19), young adults(20 - 34,) middle aged adults(35 - 54), active seniors (55 - 74) and frail elderly (75+). A review of the percentage comparisons indicates that in 1996 District 8 had a higher percentage of pre school and school age children, and a lower percentage of frail elderly than HRM, the province and the country as a whole. The overall impression given is of a community of younger families.

Table 1 Age Group Comparison

Source: Census Canada 1996

| | District 8 | % | % HRM | %NS | % Can |
|---------|------------|--------|-------|--------|--------|
| 0 - 4 | 910 | 7.7% | 6.6% | 6.1% | 6.6% |
| 5 - 14 | 1,750 | 14.7% | 13.4% | 13.7% | 13.8% |
| 15 - 19 | 730 | 6.1% | 6.2% | 6.8% | 6.8% |
| 20 - 34 | 2,900 | 24.4% | 25.5% | 21.9% | 22.2% |
| 35 - 54 | 3,605 | 30.3% | 30.7% | 29.6% | 29.7% |
| 55 - 74 | 1,600 | 13.5% | | 15.9% | 15.8% |
| 75+ | 395 | 3.3% | | 6.0% | 5.1% |
| Total | 11,890 | 100.0% | | 100.0% | 100.0% |

3.2.3 Census Family Average Income

Table 2 presents Census Family Average Income for District 8 compared with Dartmouth, HRM, the province and the country as a whole. District 8 Census Families had a higher average income than the province as a whole and Canada, lower than HRM, and about the same as Dartmouth as a whole.

Table 2 - Census Family Average Income

1995 Source: Statistics Canada

| | |
|----------------|----------|
| District 8 | \$49,421 |
| Dartmouth | \$49,335 |
| HRM | \$53,766 |
| Province of NS | \$40,075 |
| Canada | \$46,137 |

3.2.4 Education

Table 3 presents education levels for District 8 compared with HRM, Nova Scotia and the country as a whole.

The area has higher levels of Non University Education and University Education than both Nova Scotia and Canada as a whole.

| Table 3 Comparison Education Level 15 years+ Source: Stats Can 1996 Census | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|-------|------------|-----------|---------------|
| | <i>District 8</i> | | <i>HRM</i> | <i>NS</i> | <i>Canada</i> |
| <i>Total Pop 15 +</i> | 9,230 | | | | |
| <i>no Grade 9</i> | 705 | 7.6% | 6.7% | 11.1% | 12.1% |
| <i>Grd 9 -13 without secondary qual</i> | 2,455 | 26.6% | 15.8% | 27.9% | 22.7% |
| <i>Grd 9 - 13 with secondary qual</i> | 920 | 10.0% | 7.1% | 9.9% | 14.3% |
| <i>Tradeschool</i> | 315 | 3.4% | 3.2% | 3.9% | 2.8% |
| <i>Other Non Uni Ed</i> | 2,465 | 26.7% | 24.7% | 23.8% | 24.2% |
| <i>Non University without certificate</i> | 390 | 4.2% | 4.3% | 3.9% | 6.5% |
| <i>Non University with certificate</i> | 2,075 | 22.5% | 20.4% | 19.9% | 17.7% |
| <i>University without degree</i> | 1,105 | 12.0% | 14.2% | 11.2% | 9.7% |
| <i>University without certificate</i> | 465 | 5.0% | 7.2% | 4.2% | 4.4% |
| <i>University with certificate</i> | 640 | 6.9% | 7.0% | 5.7% | 5.4% |
| <i>University with degree</i> | 1,265 | 13.7% | 18.7% | 12.2% | 13.3% |

3.2.5 Summary

Research indicates that participation in recreation activities is related to age, income and education. The demographic profile of District 8 indicates that it is a younger, relatively well educated community with average income for the area. It can therefore be expected that demand for recreation activities would be high in this community.

3.3.0 History

The history of South Dartmouth has been documented by various historians and is summarized in most of the previous studies mentioned in Section 3.1.

The history of the area dates back to the time before European presence, a period when the Mi'kmaq people travelled the Shubenacadie inland waterway to access the shores of the harbour for fishing during the summer months.

The first European presence was established in 1749 when a government sawmill was built at Dartmouth Cove. The current business core of Dartmouth was first laid out by government surveyors in 1750 to accommodate 350 settlers arriving on board HMS Alderney. It is also reported that General James Wolfe assembled his troops in the area prior to embarking upon his adventures at Louisbourg in 1755 and the Battle of the Plains of Abraham in 1759.

A more contemporary history of the Woodside area in particular is to be found in a document entitled Woodside History by Mrs. K. Horner. It was offered as an appendix to a Save Our School Project in 1989. The Woodside History describes important developments in the area from 1830 when lands were purchased from the estate of J. E. Fairbanks to create the Mount Hope Asylum to 1950 when Woodside joined the Municipality of Dartmouth. That document is included in Appendix A.

A knowledge of the history of the area is important to recreation planners. As parks, trails, open spaces and facilities are developed, they can be linked to the history of the area through interpretive exhibits, the preservation of historically important sites and the naming of buildings, parks or other features.

3.4.0 Recreation Trends

Recent studies have revealed important trends in patterns of physical activity among Canadians and Americans and on the impact of various types of recreation infrastructure

- 3.4.1 *Foundation for Joint Action: Reducing Physical Inactivity*
Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Institute
Fitness/Active Living Unit, Health Canada and the Interprovincial Sport and Recreation Council 1999

Background

The Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute is a national research agency concerned with advising, educating and informing the Canadian public and health care and recreation professionals about the importance of leading healthy, active lifestyles. The agency is funded by Health Canada. Published in 1999 by CFLRI, the study is another in a series of research efforts designed to measure physical activity among Canadians which began in 1981 with the historic Canada Fitness Survey. The current work was undertaken in partnership with the Fitness/Active Living Unit of Health Canada, and the Interprovincial Sport and Recreation Council. Much of the data used was developed from a nation wide survey. It is the most up to date information available on the subject.

Survey Sample

The Physical Activity Monitor is an annual telephone-interview survey of a random sample of Canadians. Findings are based on a 1997 sample of 1,875 Canadians, selected roughly in proportion to the population residing in each of the provinces.

Key Findings

Two-thirds of Canadians are not active enough for health, but the prognosis for reducing inactivity is encouraging.

- *While this represents a significant improvement from the level observed in 1981, the rate of change appears to have stalled. For children and youth, this means that the majority is not getting enough activity for optimal growth and development. For adults, this means that the majority faces unnecessary risks of premature death, chronic disease and conditions.*

- *As many as 85% of Canadians value physical activity, rating it highly important to them personally.*
- *With concerted effort, the federal-provincial-territorial target of reducing physical inactivity by 10% by 2003 is achievable.*

The individual and collective benefits of a more active Canada are substantial.

- *Among Canadians aged 45 and older, an active population would avoid:*
 - *24% of premature deaths due to coronary heart disease;*
 - *26% of premature deaths due to type II diabetes;*
 - *21% of premature deaths due to colon cancer.*

Recent research has also indicated that increasing physical activity among this group could avoid;

- *18% of the estimated incidence of strokes;*
- *21% of the estimated incidence of functional limitation and its associated reduction in the quality of life.*

There are considerable savings in public health care expenditures to be made by reducing physical inactivity in Canada. For the treatment of ischemic heart disease alone, for example, research indicates that:

- *\$200 million was saved in 1997 compared with what would have been spent had we kept 1981 inactivity levels;*
- *this saving would increase to \$257 million each and every year once the goal of reducing physical inactivity by 10% is achieved;*
- *so far, reductions in physical inactivity levels between 1981 and 1997 have resulted in savings totalling \$984 million;*
- *if all Canadians were to increase their activity levels to the desired level, governments would save \$580 million annually.*

The majority of Canadians support government investment to increase physical activity.

- *93% of adults support continued or increased government investment of their tax dollars in physical activity.*
- *Canadians see policy, legislation and strategies to create socio-physical environments and infrastructures that are more conducive to physical activity as key government roles.*

A balance of strategies is needed to reduce inactivity levels, and these strategies need to take into account the realities of people's daily lives.

- *The five most frequently reported physical activities of Canadians are walking, gardening, swimming, home exercise and dancing socially.*
- *Different population subgroups (eg women, older Canadians) have different ways of participating in physical activity. These differences need to be taken into account in developing strategies*
- *Canadians regard access to safe streets and public places; affordable facilities, services and programs; and paths, trails and green spaces as being very important in supporting an active lifestyle.*

Implications

Physical activity improves the quality of life of Canadians

Reducing the prevalence of physical inactivity in the population contributes significantly to the health, social and economic aims of governments. Lowering the incidence of sedentary living in Canada pays big dividends in long-term-health-related quality of life for Canadians. Moreover, it substantially reduces pressure on the health care system and the public health purse.

In the 1997 Physical Activity Monitor, Canadians indicated unequivocally that they hold strong positive beliefs about the health-related benefits of physical activity and about the

positive impact of programs, services and opportunities for physical activity on the quality of community life. In short, Canadians recognize and understand that regular participation in physical activity:

- *reduces the risk of premature death, heart disease and other diseases;*
- *helps to maintain functional capacity and independent living with aging;*
- *helps maintain a healthy weight;*
- *increases energy, reduces stress and promotes better self-esteem;*
- *contributes to community spirit and pride;*
- *gives young people something to do;*
- *improves awareness for, and the appearance of, the environment;*
- *increases community involvement and cultural harmony;*
- *increases volunteerism within the community.*

Detailed information

The Report contains a number of tables which provide detailed information about current activity patterns by age group and sex. Percentages represent those who reported participating in a physical activity at least once in the last 12 months.

Table 4 Physical recreation activities, ages 5 - 12 and 13 - 17

1997 Physical Activity Monitor

| Rank, 1997 | Activity | Percent of children | | | Percent of children | | |
|------------|----------------------|---------------------|-------------|------|---------------------|--------------|------|
| | | 1997 | age 5-12(1) | | 1997 | age 13-17(1) | |
| | | | Girls | Boys | | Girls | Boys |
| 1 | Bicycling | 94% | 95% | 92% | 77% | 71% | 82% |
| 2 | Swimming | 90 | 96 * | 85 | 81 | 80 | 82 |
| 3 | Walking | 83 | 89 | 79 | 77 | 72 | 82 |
| 4 | Skating | 82 | 83 | 81 | 57 | 54 | 61 |
| 5 | Running/jogging | 62 | 59 | 66 | 53 | 50 | 55 |
| 6 | In-line skating | 62 | 60 | 64 | 48 | 46 | 50 |
| 7 | Basketball | 45 | 42 | 48 | 60 | 49 | 71 * |
| 8 | Baseball, softball | 52 | 44 | 58 * | 41 | * * | 58 * |
| 9 | Soccer | 50 | 42 | 58 * | 34 | 30 | 38 |
| 10 | Dancing socially | 29 | 42 * | * * | 51 | 62 * | 40 |
| 11 | Alpine skiing | 25 | * * | 28 | 48 | 51 | 46 |
| 12 | Gymnastics | 38 | 52 * | 24 | 26 | * * | * * |
| 13 | Volleyball | 22 | 29 * | * * | 47 | 59 * | 36 |
| 14 | Badminton | 26 | 28 | * * | 35 | * * | 43 |
| 15 | Hockey | 29 | * * | 45 * | 26 | * * | 45 * |
| 16 | Tennis | * * | * * | * * | 31 | * * | * * |
| 17 | Cross-country skiing | 14 | * * | * * | 18 | * * | * * |
| 18 | Snowboarding | * * | * * | * * | 18 | * * | * * |
| 19 | Golf | * * | * * | * * | 18 | * * | * * |

1 Percentage who participated at least once in given activity within last 12 months.
* Significantly greater than other sex.
** Data unavailable because of insufficient sample size.

Bicycling, swimming, walking and skating are the most popular activities among both boys and girls aged 5 through 17. Running/jogging, In-line skating and Basketball are also very popular with youth. Basketball is significantly more popular among boys 13 to 17 than among girls. Dancing socially is more popular with girls than boys in both the pre-teen and teenage years.

Table 5 shows the Popularity of Physical Recreation by age 18-24, 25-44, 45-64, 65+. Walking is the most popular among all age groups.

Table 5 Popularity of physical recreation activities, by age

1997 Physical Activity Monitor

| 18-24 | | 25-44 | | 45-64 | | 65+ | |
|-----------------------|----|--------------------|----|--------------------|----|----------------|----|
| Top activities | % | Top activities | % | Top activities | % | Top activities | % |
| 1 Walking | 88 | Walking | 87 | Walking | 88 | Walking | 81 |
| 2 Social dancing | 77 | Gardening | 79 | Gardening | 79 | Gardening | 67 |
| 3 Home exercise | 68 | Swimming | 66 | Home exercise | 50 | Home exercise | 41 |
| 4 Gardening | 68 | Bicycling | 59 | Social dancing | 45 | Swimming | 30 |
| 5 Bicycling | 66 | Social dancing | 56 | Swimming | 43 | Social dancing | 19 |
| 6 Swimming | 62 | Home exercise | 56 | Bicycling | 38 | | |
| 7 Jogging | 61 | Skating | 41 | Golf | 24 | | |
| 8 Weight training | 57 | Bowling | 37 | Bowling | 22 | | |
| 9 Bowling | 49 | Weight training | 36 | X-country skiing | 20 | | |
| 10 Skating | 45 | Jogging | 35 | Jogging | 18 | | |
| 11 Basketball | 44 | Golf | 33 | Skating | 18 | | |
| 12 Baseball, softball | 40 | Baseball, softball | 32 | Weight training | 18 | | |
| 13 In-line skating | 38 | Exercise class | 20 | Baseball, softball | 17 | | |
| 14 Volleyball | 35 | Badminton | 19 | Gymnastics | 16 | | |
| 15 Badminton | 32 | Alpine skiing | 19 | Tennis | 11 | | |
| 16 Exercise class | 29 | X-country skiing | 19 | Exercise class | 11 | | |
| 17 Golf | 26 | Volleyball | 17 | Apline skiing | 10 | | |
| 18 Tennis | 25 | Tennis | 17 | Yoga, tai chi | 9 | | |
| 19 Alpine skiing | 25 | Basketball | 15 | Ballet | 8 | | |
| 20 Ice hockey | 23 | Ice hockey | 15 | Badminton | 6 | | |

Walking is the most popular overall, with women over 18 participating at a significantly higher rate than Men, 91% vs 82%. Swimming is next and gender neutral 54% for each. Exercise classes and aerobics are another area where women participate more frequently than men 28% vs 7%.

3.4.2 The Benefits of Parks and Recreation Canadian Parks/Recreation Association 1992

The Benefits Catalogue is distributed nationally and internationally by CP/RA through a contractual agreement with the Parks and Recreation Federation of Ontario and the support of Fitness Canada and the Interprovidncial Sport & Recreation Council.

The preface to the catalogue reads in part; "To those involved in the delivery of leisure services, recreation has always been seen as a means to a bigger end" and, "regardless of the organization with which people may work or the type of recreational

opportunities in which they are involved, it is clear that this perspective and work is important and significant.”

The supportable Benefits listed in the catalogue include;

Personal Benefits

- Active living, generally through the opportunity for leisure is directly related to personal health (physical, mental and social).*
- Leisure opportunities for Youth provide positive lifestyle choices and alternatives to self-destructive behaviour.*
- Children’s play is essential to the human development process.*
- Regular physical activity is one of the very best methods of health insurance for individuals.*
- Fit senior citizens live longer, remain in their homes longer and participate more fully in community life.*
- Relaxation, rest and revitalization through the opportunity for leisure is essential to stress management in today’s busy demanding world.*

Social Benefits

- Leisure provides opportunities for community involvement and shared management of resources.*
- Integrated and accessible leisure services are critical to the quality of life of people with a disability and disadvantaged individuals.*
- Leisure opportunities, facilities and the quality of the local environment are the foundations of Community pride.*
- Community recreation reduces alienation, loneliness and anti social behaviours.*
- Recreating together builds strong families, the foundation of a stronger society.*

Economic Benefits

- *Pay now or pay later! Investment in recreation as a preventive health service makes sense.*
- *A fit work force is a productive work force.*
- *Many studies have shown that financial investment in recreation projects pay dividends throughout the community - the return is always greater than the original outlay.*
- *Economic development literature repeatedly stresses the attraction of local quality of life in the decision to move a firm to a new city. Parks and community leisure services are primary considerations and measures in such a move.*
- *The provision of meaningful and involving activities for our young people really does deter costly, negative behaviours (eg. vandalism and petty crime).*

3.4.3 Academy of Leisure Sciences 1999

The Academy of Leisure Services is a US based group of leading researchers in the field of leisure. In their view, "the welfare of a society reflects the welfare of its individuals."

Economic Benefits

- *The tremendous economic benefits of leisure investments and expenditures have been well documented empirically, both in terms of how much people are willing to pay for leisure services and in terms of economic impacts of actual expenditures.*

Social Benefits

- *Perhaps the best documented are the significant contributions of leisure and related amenities to pride in one's community (and nation) and to community satisfaction.*
- *This evidence suggests that the benefits realized from leisure opportunities certainly equal, and most likely exceed, the benefits produced from other public services such as police and fire protection, transportation, housing,*

communication, sanitation, health, and educational services. Yet few units of government have given public leisure services the same attention and resources.

3.4.4 Economic Benefits of Trails *Go for Green, Trail Monitor 1*

According to a publication issued by the Go for Green organization,

“There is ample evidence that trails not only enable Canadians to live actively in a healthier environment, but also that trails most often economically benefit both adjacent landowners and the local business community.

- Analyzing the spending of 536 trail users from nine trails in Nova Scotia found that the average spending per party for Non-Nova Scotians is about \$1,120.*
- Increases in property value range from 5 to 32% according to a report by the US National Parks Service that cites examples from across the country. Increases are particularly noted near greenways that highlight open space rather than highly developed facilities (Royal Commission on the Future of the Toronto Waterfront 1992).”*

3.4.5 Equity

Across Canada municipalities are increasingly faced with issues of equity particularly as it relates to fair access for girls and women to facilities, programs and resources. The same principle of equity should apply to constituents in all age groups and to people of all interests and ability levels.

Municipalities including the cities of Ottawa, Toronto, London and Coquitlam have implemented fairness and equity initiatives after either receiving complaints or as a result of examining existing practices.

Any assessment of recreation needs should therefore take into consideration a fair sharing of the municipality's resources.

3.5.0 Existing Recreation Facilities Inventory

The study mandate for the Recreation Needs Assessment for District 8 requires the study to work in parallel with a review of parks and open spaces being conducted by HRM Parks Planning.

3.5.1 Parks

Parkland Planning and Development Division conducted a review and inventory of parks in the community. Their evaluation and recommendations are contained in Appendix C.

3.5.2 Indoor Facilities

Bowles Arena

Bowles Arena is operated by HRM Recreation Services. The facility operates seven days a week during the ice season. The majority prime time hours are rented by the Dartmouth Whalers hockey group. Female users include Dartmouth Ringette, Dartmouth High girls hockey and the Dartmouth Figure 8 figure skating group. One hour per week is made available for Public Skating during prime time hours.

South Woodside Community Centre and Elementary School

The South Woodside Community Centre operates in association with the South Woodside Elementary School. It is operated by a volunteer Board of Directors and offers a wide variety of programs in both the gymnasium and the multipurpose room.

North Woodside Community Centre

NWCC is a converted school building which serves as a community centre. It is administered by a volunteer Board of Directors.

The Centre serves as home to a wide variety of community based programs. The facility is well maintained and booked to near capacity.

4.0 Information Gathering

4.1.0 Public Meeting #1 June 10, 2001 North Woodside Community Centre

A public meeting was convened at the North Woodside Community Centre on Sunday evening June 10, 2001. About twenty area residents gathered to express their views on recreation needs in the area and more specifically how the \$1 million available from the Community Integration Fund might be used for these purposes.

The consultant provided an overview of the Community Recreation Needs Assessment process and explained the conditions under which the Integration Fund could be used.

The meeting heard that although the Community Recreation Needs Assessment was commissioned to examine broad recreation needs in the area from the Dartmouth Ferry Terminal to Highway 111 and from Portland Street through to the Woodside Industrial Park, the Community Integration fund was specifically aimed at upgrading recreation infrastructure within the immediate area of the proposed sewage treatment plant. Current planning calls for the plant to be located on the site now occupied by the Canadian Coast Guard base.

Much of the discussion focused on the community's desire to preserve access to the harbour and the shoreline for recreational purposes. The sewage treatment plant seems to be generally accepted as a necessity, and many feel that provided modern technology addresses concerns such as odour control, the proposed site is acceptable. There is, however, considerable concern related to other commercial or industrial developments which may occur on the waterfront between Dartmouth Cove and the Nova Scotia Hospital site.

Specifically the community would like to see;

- 1. A Master Plan developed which describes the type of development that can take place along the shore between the Dartmouth Cove and the Nova Scotia Hospital site. The plan would include all lands in this area including those owned by the Province of Nova Scotia, the Government of Canada, the Halifax Regional Municipality and the private sector.*

2. *The plan should be sensitive to maintaining the sight lines and view planes which currently exist.*
3. *Public access to the shoreline should be maintained.*
4. *A buffer zone should be maintained between industrial/commercial developments and residential areas.*

In terms of recreation needs and opportunities, the following suggestions and comments were recorded:

- *Develop an accessible walking/bicycle trail between the Dartmouth Ferry Terminal and the Woodside Ferry Terminal, a distance of about 2 Km.*
- *Consider interpretive displays and signage along the trail.*
- *Consider lighting and security along the trail.*
- *Create access to Sandy Cove Beach.*
- *Link this trail to others including the Trans Canada Trail.*
- *Allow dogs and their owners to use the trail and parks.*
- *Create a park with a variety of activities for youth and adults.*
- *Provide skateboarding, outdoor basketball, tennis courts and winter skating.*
- *Develop a boat slip and boat club at the Coast Guard site.*
- *Encourage the private sector to become partners in the development of green space along the waterfront.*
- *Consider the needs of children and youth in the development of the recreation needs assessment.*
- *Use government work programs to assist in developing the park and trail system.*
- *Use the lands that become surplus to the needs of the NS Hospital to create a community park.*

4.2.0 Focus Group Meetings

4.2.1 General Public

A small number of area residents attended two Focus Group meetings on June 4th and 6th, 2001 at the North Woodside Community Centre.

Participants in the meetings live close to the proposed sewage treatment plant site. Although not particularly keen to have the treatment plant in close proximity to their homes, they agreed that if the plant is built on that site there should be tangible benefits which accrue to the neighbourhood.

Suggestions and comments included:

- Creating a buffer zone of green space between the plant and the residential neighborhood.*
- Develop an accessible walking trail along the shore.*
- Link the trail to others that may be developed around the entire harbour. Such a complete trail system would help to bring HRM together as one large community.*
- Link the harbour to inland waterways.*
- Create interpretive exhibits which address the history of the area and the harbour.*
- Build an aquarium, boat house and other tourism attractions.*
- Protect the view planes to the harbour.*
- Create look off points.*
- Develop a long term plan for development along the shore.*
- The Dartmouth side of the harbour does not want the same level of commercial development as has occurred on the Halifax side.*
- Use the ice breaker Louis St. Laurent as a museum and tourism attraction.*
- Have industrial development occur closer to Shearwater than the residential neighborhoods.*
- The harbour clean up and creating opportunities for active living are key ingredients to quality of life and healthy living.*
- Insensitive commercial/industrial development will lead to sense of loss of community.*
- Changes to the neighbourhood will lead to levels of stress which are unhealthy.*
- Creating an attractive user friendly waterfront area will serve as a catalyst to healthy interaction between apartment dwellers and home owners.*
- The Salvation Army has a vacant lot next to their church which could be used to develop recreational opportunities such as a skateboard park for youth or a community garden, perhaps both.*
- There is a history of residents walking the train track from the Dartmouth ferry to the South Dartmouth area.*
- The reason many people choose to live in the area is its proximity to the water*

therefore access, both physically and visually must be protected.

- *Have government create a right of way along the shore that must be maintained regardless of commercial or industrial development.*
- *The Health Board has \$20-\$25k available to support innovative initiatives that encourage or support healthy living. Perhaps those funds could be accessed to assist with creating walking opportunities.*

4.2.2 Youth

Two intensive consultation sessions were undertaken involving youth. The first was a visit to four classrooms at Prince Albert Junior High School. The second was a site visit to the South Woodside Community Centre during their evening recreational basketball program.

The school sessions were particularly enlightening. Often studies such as the Recreation Needs Assessment for District 8 involve groups of teens with a particular interest, or groups of youth selected by adults to represent youth interests. The value of having access to four different classes during school hours was that the teens who were part of the process were typical of youth in the area. They were not pre selected by adults nor did they represent special interest groups.

The South Woodside youth meeting was also valuable in that although all in the group enjoyed basketball, they were representative of what appears to be the majority of teens who prefer unstructured forms of recreation rather than organized leagues and sport based competitive environments.

Prince Arthur Junior High School Students

The consultant and a representative of HRM Recreation Services received permission from the Principal of the school to conduct focus group sessions regarding recreation needs with students during regular school hours. Four classes participated. The following are their suggestions and comments.

Grade 9 Students

Outdoor Facilities

Skate board Park

Bike park - ramps, dirt jumps vs a Skateboard Park

Bring communities together, could be grass/dirt

Roller Hockey court

Regional Park - free access

Bike Park - Salvation Army Property

Central

15-30 minute bike ride from home

Open space by Police Station

Fix up soccer fields, basketball hoops (metal mesh), tennis courts

Playgrounds (central), Southdale needs basketball nets, no playground

Indoor Facilities

Own Community Centre

Pool Room

Arcade

Place for local bands, concerts

Gym at North Woodside Community Centre is too small

Programs

Drama Theatre Venue and program

Dartmouth Players are for adults, youth now go to Halifax for drama

Dances

Basketball

Soccer

Learning Programs

Teen Art club

Grade 7 Students

Clean up the Lakes, swim in the lake and paddle boats, campgrounds

Clean up Fisherman's Cove Dartmouth

Clean up school grounds

Protect environment

Fix up streets/bridges

Homeless shelter

Community centre

Water Park

Big swimming pool near Moirs, outdoor, (Sportsplex is closest pool)

Destination Multipurpose Park - bike 15 minutes/walk 30 minutes

Passive Area

No fences, trees, swings, shade, fountains, picnics, food, flowers, away

from traffic
Washrooms - clean - real bike racks
Clean - trash cans, safe, concert gazebo, lights
Trees and flowers
Benches and ponds
Swings
Playground, animals, fountain
Active elements, bright colors
Swings for teens, big, wood
Climbing stuff,
Community helps build it
Swinging bridge/tires
Rocking horses, big
Include little kids
Monkey bars, trampoline, see-saw

Active Area

Active park in protected area
Basketball court
Hockey rinks, street hockey, arcades
Bike park and trails
SkateBoard Park
Kid activities
Tennis courts

Location for a Youth Centre and/or Bike Park

Woods in Woodside - near oil tanks?
Trailer park - park
Maynards Lake, in association with playing fields, near Bowles Arena
(Industrial Park), Southdale, near Dartmouth General
NWCC - 2/3 not aware of programs
Capsite, higher monkey bars

Grade 8 Students

Clean up lakes
Dock fishing
Skateboard - 1/2 P and 1/4 pike, rails - in ground, GR box - CHP is OK - not
great, location and design small bowl
Parks have too much for little kids, nothing for them, upgrade

Soccer fields are remote
New football field - at PA school
Paint ball
Paved trail, water park, concessions
Walk 20 mins, bike 20 mins, car 10 mins, bus 1/2 h to 20 mins
Vandalism
NWCC - skateboard, bigger gym, food court, cooking lessons, golf range
Repair Centennial Pool - Halifax
Basketball \$2.00 per person, indoor - unstructured, weekends and after school
Youth Centre
 Community owned/operated
 Regional Pavilion - Halifax Pavilion - too small
 Teen made place with better options, movies, TV big screen, DJ's,
 stereo - constant music, cool lights, cap site, tutors, police/no police, food
 court, arcade, stage/drama program, dance/hangout place, talent shows,
 recording studio
 13 - 19 - by age
 In school ID
 Membership
 Dances - Thurs/Fri/Sat/Sun - keep drugs and alcohol out
 Volunteer parents, bouncers, security guards, security cameras
 Teens - membership, group - pay as you go
 Pool (Billiards), food service, hang out, recording studio, bands/concerts,
 dances, raves, arcade, stage/band, tables, coffee shop, etc.

Location
 Coast Guard Base
 Starr Manufacturing
 Better options - walk 30 min, bike 15 min
 Around the three schools - PA - HAW - SD
 Malls are not appropriate
 Woodside Sobeys
 Coast Guard site, multi level buildings
 SWCC, NWCC, Portland Street

The South Woodside Group

The South Woodside Youth Group play recreational basketball one night a week at the South Woodside Community Centre. They offered the following suggestions for improvements to recreation services in the area.

- *Repair basketball nets in local parks.*
- *Offer more programs for teens and extend the time available for indoor recreational basketball from 1 hr. to 1 1/2 hrs.*
- *Offer programs more than one night a week*
- *Organize trips for teens to the swimming pools at Cole Harbour Place or Dartmouth Sportsplex.*
- *Organize camping trips.*
- *Offer dance classes.*
- *Need a place to hang out*
- *Arcade*
- *Pool (billiards) room*
- *Bike Path*
- *Skateboard park*
- *Dances/Talent shows*
- *Paint ball*
- *CAP Site at SWCC*
- *Build*
 - *basketball courts at Gaston Road*
 - *swimming pool*
 - *football field*

The group indicated that they had been previously consulted regarding recreation needs and that nothing had happened to follow up on their suggestions.

4.3.0 Interviews

Telephone and in person interviews were conducted with representatives of various community organizations, corporations and government departments.

4.3.1 Maplehurst Properties

A representative of Maplehurst Properties indicated that the area is relatively well served by existing facilities and programs. He did suggest that the park which is near their property has equipment for young children but nothing for pre-teens and teens. He suggested that basketball hoops would bridge that gap and indicated that Maplehurst Properties would be willing to share the cost of installing them.

4.3.2 Capital Region Health Authority

A senior representative of the Authority indicated that a multi purpose trail along the waterfront would be beneficial to all ages for walking, accessing green space and general recreation. Walking and accessing Green Space are considered activities which enhance the concept of Wellness in the general population. It was suggested that the system be designed to be as safe as possible with good lighting and sensitive landscaping.

4.3.3 HRM Recreation Services

Program staff of HRM Recreation Services indicated that young children including pre-schoolers were relatively well served by existing facilities and services. There is however a need to improve services for teens in the area.

Specifically the group mentioned a need to develop a Youth Centre, a place for teens to "hang out", to be with their peers and engage in unstructured activities. While recognizing the need for adult supervision, they feel that as much as possible the Youth Centre should provide teens with a sense of ownership.

The group also noted the need to improved activity areas for teens including both indoor and outdoor recreational basketball, a "bike park" and performance venues for local bands and performing artists. They envisioned some of these elements being included in a park and trails system.

Other issues include the need to upgrade existing outdoor play areas for all age groups and to immediately repair equipment which is damaged through either normal wear and tear or vandalism.

4.3.4 North Woodside Community Centre

Senior staff and members of the Board of Directors of the North Woodside Community Centre were consulted regarding recreation needs in District 8.

Board members emphasized that recreation opportunities need to be inclusive. The system needs to assure access for all, regardless of gender, age, interest or socio-economic circumstance. In particular they noted that disparities tend to exist between equal access to facilities and resources between boys and girls and that the needs and interests of girls be given the same attention as that given to boys.

They noted that existing parks and playgrounds in the area require improved levels of maintenance. They are concerned that new developments may suffer a similar fate and propose that funding for ongoing maintenance be part of any scheme for future recreation infrastructure.

Board members are supportive of the concept of a multipurpose trail system and cited the area along the waterfront between the NWCC and the Nova Scotia Hospital as a particularly valuable recreation resource. They noted that lighting the trail system would increase use and provide a higher level of security for users. They feel that a properly designed walking system will have a positive impact, bringing people together and strengthening the sense of community which already exists in the area. The Board also noted that consideration should be given to creating winter play areas for sliding and skating and perhaps enhanced docking facilities for boaters in the summer.

4.3.5 Waterfront Development Corporation

Initial discussions were held with a representative of the Waterfront Development Corporation regarding their plans for the shoreline adjacent to District 8. It was agreed that once the community's recreation needs were documented that the WDC would meet with the Community Liaison Committee, HRM Recreation Services and HRM Planners to discuss how the aspirations of the local community could be incorporated into ongoing planning by the WDC.

4.4.0 Questionnaires

Questionnaires regarding recreation facility needs, current use and unsatisfied demand were distributed to fifty community groups serving District 8. (see Appendix B)

Only three of fifty questionnaires distributed to Community User Groups were returned. They were, Coordinators Square Dance, Lake City Square Dance Group and the Down Home Fiddlers.

The dance groups reported that their members are primarily adults between 40 and 70 years of age and that membership has been decreasing in recent years. Current membership is 30 dancers.

The fiddlers group has 30 members between the ages of 40 and 80. Membership has increased recently due to a heightened awareness of the groups activities.

All three groups use the North Woodside Community Centre. Each expressed satisfaction with the facility. Staff at the Centre were described as "courteous and helpful" and the facility is adequate for their needs.

4.5.0 Committee Consultation

The consultants met with the Steering Committee throughout the study process. Regular reports of progress and findings were submitted to the Committee for their review.

5.0 Information Assessment

5.1.0 Overview

It is clear from the the review of previous studies and the input received through the community consultation process that there are two important recreation needs to be addressed in District 8.

They are:

- 1) The preservation of a green belt along the lands that form a buffer between the residential areas and the harbour front.*
- 2) Improvements to Youth services through program initiatives, the upgrading of existing play spaces and the creation of a Youth Centre, and Bike Park.*

5.2.0 Inventory of Parks and Open Spaces

5.2.1 Condition Assessment and Recommendations

HRM Recreation Services conducted on site inspections of existing parks and open spaces in response to comments and concerns raised during the community consultation process.

Each site was inspected, photographed and condition assessment noted along with recommendations for remedial action, upgrades, or additional equipment (see Appendix C).

HRM Parks Planning assembled mapping of District 8 showing current Land Use, Zoning and Ownership. Lands used for, or proposed to be used for recreation purposes were identified.

5.3.0 Recommendations

The following specific recommendations were prepared by the consultants and presented to the Steering Committee for their approval.

1. Develop a Multipurpose Trail System Along The Waterfront

Virtually every previous study of recreation needs in the area has recommended a park and trail system along the waterfront. The current research reveals that residents of the area continue to support this recommendation. Therefore the first priority for improving recreation services in District 8 should be to bring that long standing vision to fruition.

The trail system will accommodate walkers and bicycles and be accessible to persons with disabilities.

It should run from Dartmouth Cove to the NS Hospital site.

The priority for the Community Liaison Committee and District 8 residents is the area from Tupper Street to the property of the North Woodside Community Centre.

The trail should be developed with "trail heads" at the proposed sewage treatment site, NWCC, Dartmouth Cove and the NS Hospital site.

It should have recreation pockets at convenient locations for youth/children play areas, rest/picnic areas and viewing areas.

Public access points to water need to be identified.

Opportunities for interpretive exhibits highlighting the history and development of the area should be incorporated into the design.

2. Develop a Youth Bike Park

Improving youth services in the area is also a priority. Therefore two initiatives put forward by youth, a Bike Park and a Youth Centre, should be high on HRM Recreation Services list of priorities for District 8.

It is recommended that at least two sites be identified as possible locations for a Youth Bike Park. Possible locations include, but are not limited to, the Salvation Army vacant land or perhaps in association with the Harbourside Linear Park System.

Once suitable options are identified, the possibilities should be shared with District 8 youth through a process similar to the school visit program employed during this study. In our view, involving youth in the decision making process will ensure that the most appropriate location is selected. It will also serve to strengthen links between HRM Program, Planning and Maintenance staff and area youth which will be vital to the success of the park.

3. Develop a Youth Centre

There is a need to identify a site for a Youth Centre. The centre should include a common room, arcade, billiards room, wc's, etc. for a total of about 3,000 ft.sq. The Centre could be associated with the Bike Park or developed as an element of the trail system, an existing park or other publicly owned property.

Meetings with the HRM Councillor for District 8 revealed that the North Woodside Fire Hall is due for replacement in two years. The Fire Station may make an ideal location for a Youth Centre. It has many advantages: it is an existing building owned by the municipality, it is somewhat remote from nearby residences, it is highly visible and therefore easily supervised and, it probably will require only modest renovations to serve its new purpose.

4. Consider Developing the Salvation Army Site

The vacant land associated with the Salvation Army Church on Pleasant Street should be identified as a future recreation/park site.

5. Initiate Upgrades to Existing Parks

Upgrades are required at several District 8 parks. Each park has been evaluated by HRM Parks Planning and recommendations made for upgrades where required.

5.4.0 Parks and Open Spaces Concept Plan

As noted earlier, HRM Parks Planning is involved in a parallel study examining long term development of Parks and Open Spaces in District 8. As a result of the current public consultation process, and input from the Steering Committee, the area of the proposed Sewage Treatment Plant and the lands along the water front of the plan were examined in detail and a Concept Plan developed. (see Appendix D)

The Concept Plan shows a Multipurpose Linear Park System extending from Old Ferry Road along the upper side of the railway tracks past the Coast Guard site and proposed location for Sewage Treatment Plant, continuing past the North Woodside Community Centre, along the proposed access road to the STP and linking up with Pleasant Street to form a loop back to Old Ferry Road.

The plan shows the Renfrew Linear Park linking Marvin, Chadwick and Renfrew Streets which will eventually be extended to form a formal link to Acadia Street and the Bowles Arena site.

The plan also shows vacant lands currently owned by the Salvation Army on Pleasant Street. Church officials have indicated that they will consider making the land available for recreation purposes if a suitable use can be identified.

5.5.0 Cost Estimates

Preliminary cost estimates were provided by HRM Parks Planning for the Harbourside Trail System. Depending upon the selection of a specific route, the type of construction and existing conditions, it is estimated that the trail system will cost \$200,000 to \$300,000 per kilometre to construct. If it is to be provided with lighting, as some area residents have proposed, the total cost may be in the order of \$400,000 to \$500,000 per kilometre. The distance and routing from Tupper Street to the North Woodside Community Centre site will need to be determined and trail features identified before an accurate cost estimate can be developed.

A detailed assessment of the condition of the Woodside Fire Hall was not within the mandate of the current study. The costs involved in converting the Bedford Fire Hall into a Youth Centre were about \$ 80,000 including upgrades to meet code requirements, For budgeting purposes it is recommended that a similar amount be carried until a full assessment of the Woodside facility is undertaken.

The cost to establish the recommended Bike Park will be site specific. It may be as simple as providing several loads of clean fill on an existing site and allowing bike riders to make their own trails and bumps or it may be much more sophisticated. What is important, is that area youth be consulted as to location and the level of development required to make a suitable facility.

The cost of upgrades to the parks and open spaces in District 8 have not been fully developed by HRM Parks Planning or Recreation Services. Eighty Thousand Dollars is currently allocated for work on the linear park system. Minor costs for repairs are carried in the on going maintenance budget of the department. It will be necessary for the department to develop a budget for capital upgrades such as paving and replacement of equipment.

5.6.0 Feasibility Assessment/Funding Requirements

5.6.1 The Harbourside Trail System

Many residents of the HRM from Halifax through Bedford, around the top of Bedford Basin and throughout Dartmouth have envisioned a walking trail which extends completely around the harbour. This is a long term vision and beyond the scope of the District 8 study.

However, through the cooperation of all levels of government, local residents' associations and entities including the Waterfront Development Corporation, another part of that system could become a reality on the Dartmouth side of the harbour in the near future.

The Community Liaison Committee is prepared to recommend that a significant portion of the One Million Dollars it will receive from the Harbour Solutions Project be used to implement that part of the trail system which extends from Tupper Street to the North Woodside Community Centre. The Committee will also recommend to the entity eventually responsible for implementation of the plan, that a portion of the One Million Dollars be set aside in a segregated fund to ensure that sufficient monies are available for maintenance and upkeep of the system.

The Community Liaison Committee recognizes that their contribution to the long term vision is but a small part of a long term plan that requires land assembly, a common vision and a consistent design approach. To this end the CLC wishes to see a Master Plan which extends from Dartmouth Cove to the site of the Nova Scotia Hospital lands developed as soon as possible. Once the overall plan is established and design criteria agreed to, that section from Tupper Street to NWCC can go forward and serve as both a design and costing model for the entire system on the Dartmouth side of the harbour.

5.6.2 The Youth Centre

It is anticipated that the costs associated with providing the Youth Centre will need to come from the municipality with perhaps some contribution from local service groups. Youth themselves may be encouraged to participate either through fund raising or contributing their time and energy to assist with decor once the professional renovations are complete.

5.6.3 Upgrading of existing parks and open spaces

As noted earlier HRM Parks Planning have allocated \$80,000 for work on the linear park system. Other capital cost estimates have yet to be developed.

6.0 Consultation/Feedback

6.1.0 Public Meeting #2

A second Public Meeting was convened on October 21, 2001 at 7:00 PM at the North Woodside Community Centre. The purpose of the meeting was to share the Findings of the Recreation Needs Assessment process with the community and to solicit public input.

A small number of area residents, the HRM Councillor for the area, a representative of the Waterfront Development Corporation and HRM staff attended the meeting.

6.1.1 Priorities

Burke/Oliver Consultants presented an overview of the study process and the main findings. The consultant explained to the meeting that the priorities established by the process were:

1. Multipurpose trail system

The trail system will accommodate walkers and bicycles and be accessible to persons with disabilities. It will run from Dartmouth Cove to the NS Hospital site.

The priority for the CLC and District 8 residents is that area from the Coast Guard site to the property of the North Woodside Community Centre.

The trail should be developed with "trail heads" at the Coast Guard site, Old Ferry Road, NWCC, Dartmouth Cove and the NS Hospital site.

It should have recreation pockets at convenient locations for youth/children play areas, rest/picnic areas and viewing areas. Public access points to water need to be identified.

2. Youth Bike Park

An area suitable for development as a Youth Park c/w bicycle tracks and general play area needs to be identified.

3. Youth Centre

There is a need for a Youth Centre in District 8. It is proposed that the existing North Woodside Fire Hall be converted to a Youth Centre when it is vacated by the Fire Department in 2003.

4. Salvation Army Site

The vacant land associated with the Salvation Army Church on Pleasant Street should be identified as a future recreation/park site.

5. Existing Park Upgrades

Upgrades are required at several District 8 parks. Recommendations have been prepared by HRM Recreation Services and Parks Planning.

6.1.2 Parks Planning Presentation

HRM Parks Planning staff presented an overall concept of parks and trails which could be developed in District 8 and a more focused vision of the trail system from the Coast Guard site to NWCC.

Staff also prepared a handout for the meeting which provided a detailed inventory of existing parks and open spaces and an assessment of current condition and recommendations for improvements. (See Appendix D)

6.1.3 Feedback

The recommendations were well received by the majority in attendance. The Chair of the Community Liaison Committee took comments from the floor, thanked those in attendance and closed the meeting.

7.0 Summary

The final recommendations of the study are as follows:

- 1. That a Master Plan be developed which leads to the assembly of the land necessary to create a permanent "green belt" buffer between the residential neighbourhoods from Dartmouth Cove to the Woodside Ferry Terminal.*

That a multipurpose "Harbourside" trail system be developed within this green belt. The system should be accessible to all. It should include areas for play and relaxation. It should include interpretive exhibits recalling the history of the area and perhaps exhibits explaining current and future industrial/commercial activities along the waterfront and in the harbour.

- 2. That improved services to youth be provided by:*
 - a) The development of a "Bike Park". The location and design of the park to be undertaken in consultation with area youth.*
 - b) Converting the Woodside Fire Hall to a Youth Centre when it becomes surplus to the needs of HRM Fire Services in 2003.*
- 3. That an on going plan for upgrading and repairs to existing parks and open spaces be prepared and implemented by HRM Parks Services.*
- 4. That the majority of the One Million Dollars, which will be provided through the Community Integration Fund, be used to create as much of the Harbourside Trail System as possible. The priority for development should be that area on public land from Tupper Street to the park beside the North Woodside Community Centre. Some funds should be kept in reserve to assure proper maintenance and upkeep of the trail.*

Implementation of these recommendations will go a long way toward meeting the recreation needs of residents in District 8. The Trail System will address a long standing aspiration among area residents to create a buffer between the residential neighborhoods and the harbour. If built as envisioned it will be an equitable use of available funding. The trail will be accessible to persons with disabilities and provide healthy recreation opportunities for all residents and visitors to the area regardless of age, gender or physical ability.

**District 8 Recreation Needs Assessment Playground & Park
Inventory and Recommendations
Prepared by HRM Parks and Recreation Services**

Newcastle Playground

This playground is located on Newcastle Street (just up the hill from the Coast Guard Base)

Playground tot lot

Swings

Playground elementary age

Recommendation: Replace existing playground equipment and install benches.

North Woodside Community Centre Playground and Park Area

This site is located at the North Woodside Community Centre on Pleasant Street.

Playground - elementary age

Swings

Sunshine acres garden

Small basketball pad and net

Recommendation: The playground area is in good shape, the basketball pad could be expanded to create a court, basketball standards and backboards need to be replaced, the basketball pad needs to be resurfaced, the park needs benches. It would make an excellent trail head, as there is lots of green space on this location.

Linear Playground and Park Area

This site is located on the upper side of Pleasant Street and the park runs between Chadwick and Renfrew Streets.

Playground elementary age (wooden structure, tire structure)

Tot lot slide

Swings

Basketball court (converted from a tennis court)

Small basketball pad

Recommendation: This playground and park area needs a complete revitalization. The playgrounds need to be replaced, pathways need to be excavated, and resurfaced with gravel and crusher dust, trees along the pathway need thinning, the park needs signage, the basketball courts need to be resurfaced, basketball standards and backboards need to be painted, the tennis fencing could come down, and the small basketball pad could be converted to a small skateboard area.

APPENDIX C

District 8 Recreation Needs Assessment Playground & Park
Inventory and Recommendations

Renfrew Street Tot Lot

This site is located at the top of Renfrew Street.

Playground

Swings

Recommendation: The equipment seems structural sound, but it needs to be painted and the sand needs to be replaced with pea gravel.

High Street Playground

This site is located in the Southwoodside area at the top of High Street.

Playground preschool and elementary age

Swings

Recommendation: This playground has been recently installed and is in great shape, but benches need to be installed.

Brompton Playground and Park Area

This site is located in the community of Southwoodside at the top of Brompton Street by the Trailer Park.

Small ball hockey pad

Small basketball pad

Playground equipment

Tennis court

Recommendation: The playground equipment needs to be replaced, the tennis court needs to be resurfaced, the basketball pad could be expanded to create a bigger court, the basketball standards, backboards and hoops are in great shape and could be used to create the bigger court.

Franklyn Park and Area

This site is located at the top of Crawford Street.

Tennis court

Swings

Recommendation: This park needs to be revitalized and a new plan created to determine what is the best way to utilize this space. It has the potential to be a nice playground and park, the tennis court is in really bad shape and does not appear to be used as a court as it needs to resurfaced.