

District of Vanderhoof, British Columbia

Parks, Recreation and Leisure Survey Report of Findings

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

On behalf the District of Vanderhoof, your non-profit and volunteer associations, and the residents and businesses of the Stuart Nechako Region interested in active sport, arts, culture and leisure time opportunities, we thank those community members that participated in the 2005 survey.

Thank you to Devin and Vera Lindsay for coding and hosting the on-line (electronic version) of this survey. It proved to be an effective tool for the residents of Vanderhoof and area. Thank you to Kerri and Garth Heavenor of Vanderhoof Health and Fitness for donating a three-month pass to one of our survey participants. Thank you to the Vanderhoof District Chamber of Commerce for circulating this survey to all their member businesses.

INTRODUCTION

Survey results are used to identify residents' satisfaction with existing programs and services, determine the priorities possible for budget decisions and to identify trends that have evolved since the start-up of the Recreation Department by the District of Vanderhoof in 2003.

The "Spirit of 2010" time-limited legacy funds through the Olympic and Paralympic Live Sites is available to non-profit societies and local governments at this time. For more information on the Olympic/Paralympic Live Sites guidelines and application forms, go to:

<http://www.ecdev.gov.bc.ca/ProgramsAndServices/OlympicLiveSites/default.htm>.

This survey was administered several ways from October to November 2005, and was limited to one per household.

- Through an on-line, interactive PHP-coded survey instrument that collated the data into a database designed and hosted by a community member.
- Surveys were sent out by email to the Recreation Coordinator's email list.
- Through a downloadable PDF from the District of Vanderhoof website.
- Paper copies were available for pick-up at key business and service locations in Vanderhoof, BC.

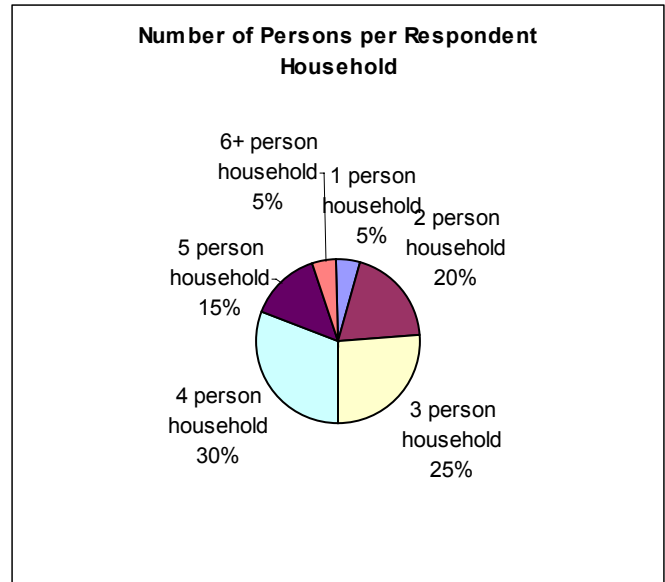
WHO ANSWERED THE SURVEY

Number of Surveys Completed

A total 101 surveys were completed: 59% through the on-line tool and 41% by paper. The surveys were limited to one per household, and with this sampling the survey represented a total of 301 persons.

Number of Persons per Respondent Household

The average number of persons per household is reported to be 2.8 for Vanderhoof, DM by BC Stats (2001). The survey reflects only a slightly higher number - 3 persons per household by the survey respondents. More than 75% of the survey respondents have two, three or four persons per household.

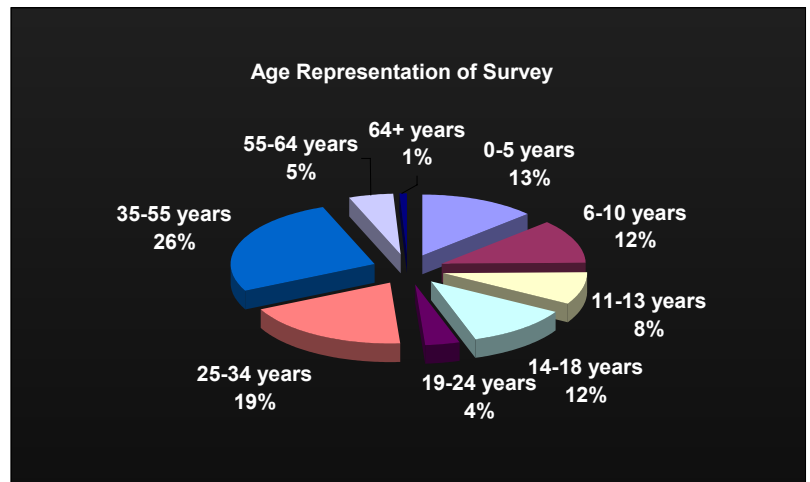


Residency Reported by Survey Respondents

Residence	%
Vanderhoof Municipality	70
Vanderhoof Rural	28
Cluculz Lake	1
Fraser Lake	1

Age Groups Represented by Survey

The survey represents a similar pattern to the community at large, that is, a younger population with more children proportionately than the BC provincial average. Our oldest respondent was 88 years of age, and completed the survey online.



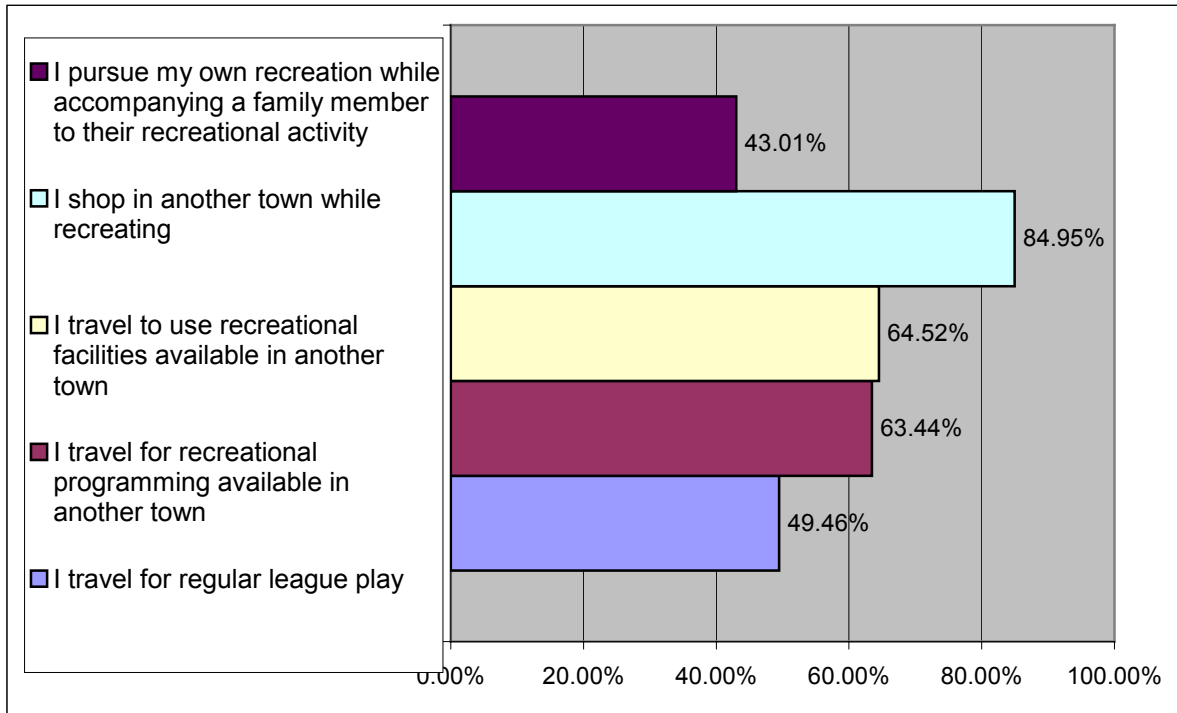
Household Income Reported

This survey was completed by households with the full spectrum of income ranges. Twenty-five (25%) of respondents choose not to disclose their income. Of the respondents that did specify their household income, the results are reported below. The average income of the respondents is \$73,000.

Household Income Reported	
\$25,000 or less	7.46%
\$25,000 to \$49,999	16.42%
\$50,000 to 74,999	22.39%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	25.37%
Over \$100,000	28.36%

Travel and Expenditures Related to Recreational Opportunities Outside of Vanderhoof

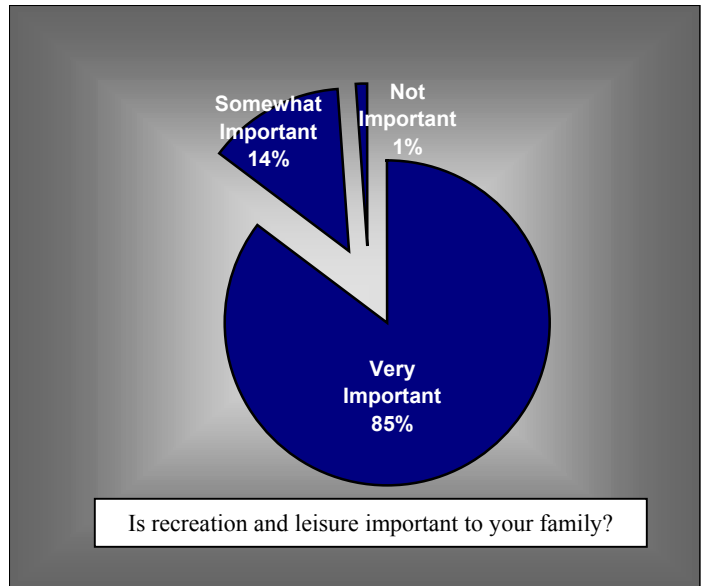
This survey measured the reasons for traveling outside our community that are related to recreation, and the retail or recreational spending leakage by those residents pursuing recreational opportunities outside of Vanderhoof. Where numerical data was recorded it was summarized.



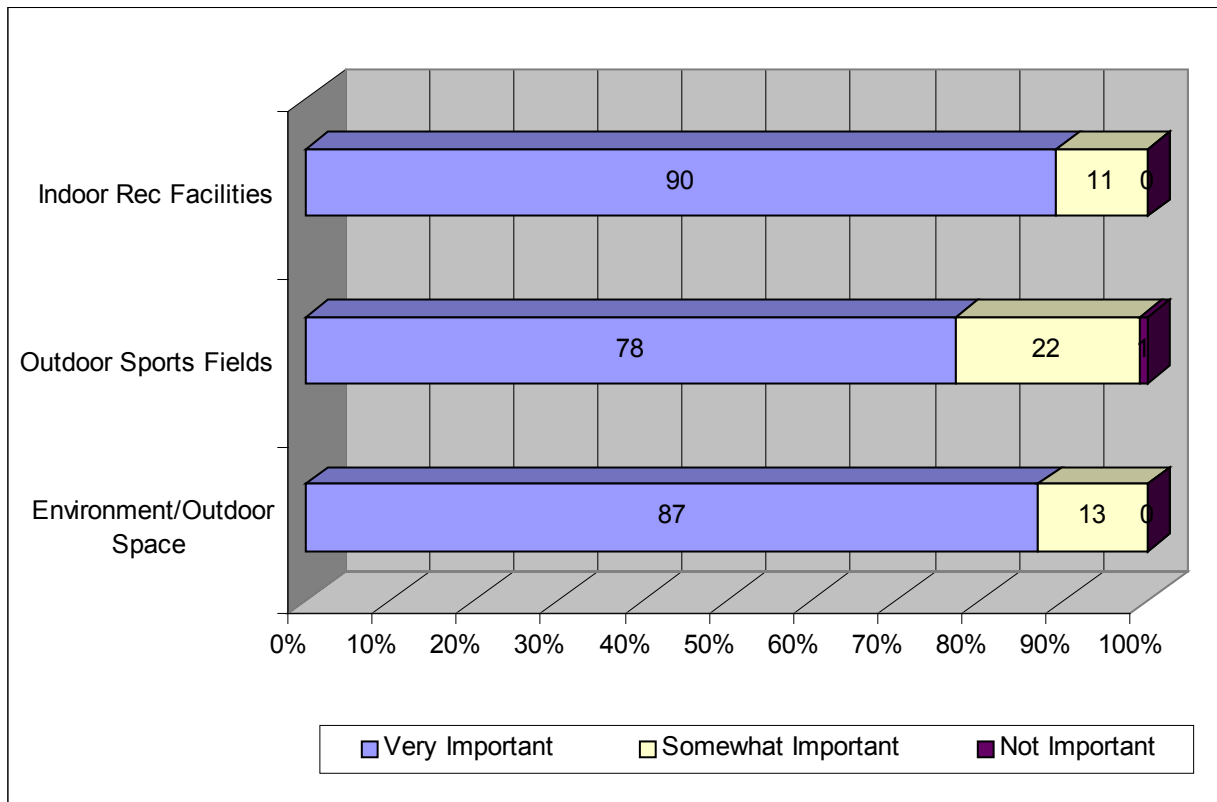
Respondents spent an average of 138 hours per year and \$1,413 per year traveling for the reasons that they reported. The range of hours reported was between 6 and 1000, while a range of spending was reported between \$100 and \$7,500 per year (this was for travel only and does not include holiday travel).

IMPORTANCE OF RECREATION TO RESPONDENTS

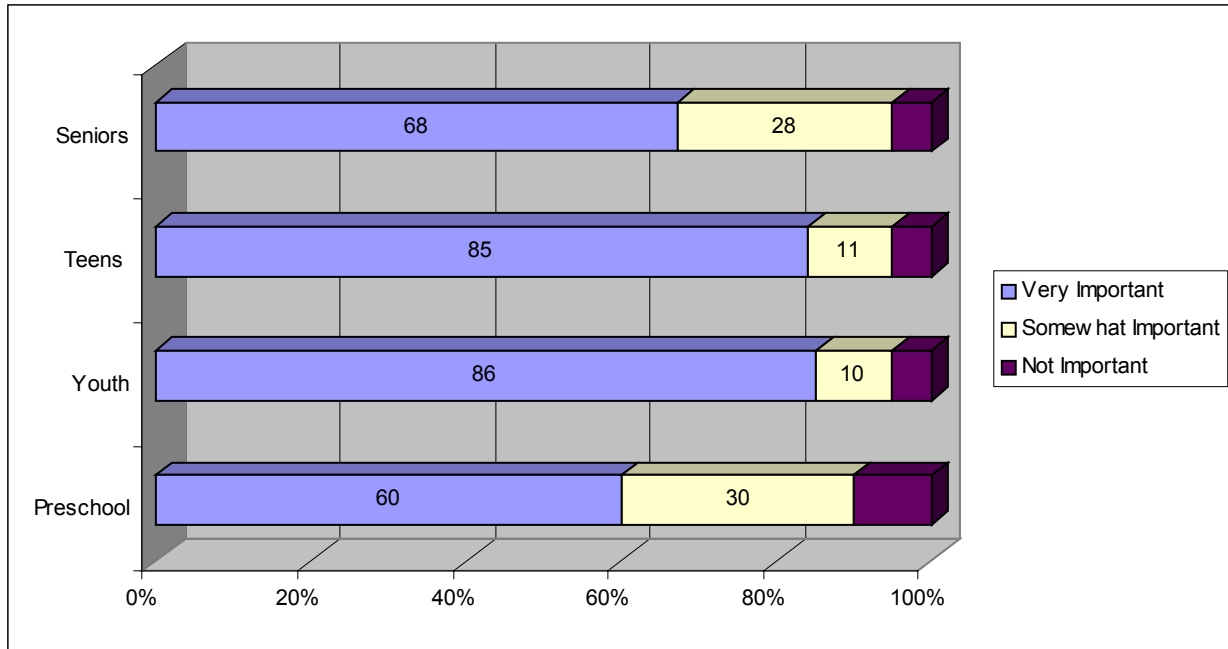
Respondents were asked to rate the importance of recreation and leisure activities for themselves and their family members. Ninety nine (99%) of respondents indicated that recreation and leisure was either very or somewhat important to their family.



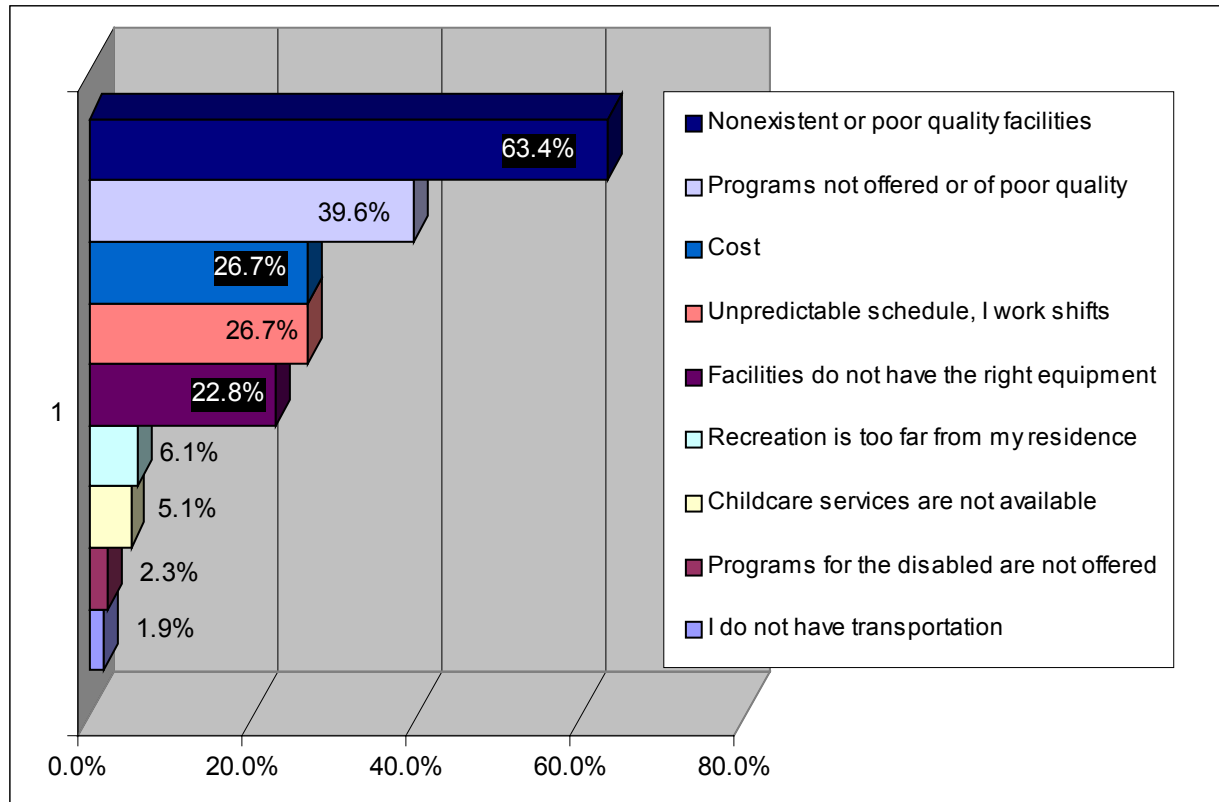
The importance of: (1) having indoor facilities and (2) having outdoor space and the natural environment and outdoor spaces to enjoy was ranked either somewhat important or very important by 100% of the respondents. Outdoor fields were either very important or somewhat important to 99.3% of respondents.



The importance of recreational programming for preschool aged children, youth, teens and seniors was ranked very important, somewhat important and not important. Activities for youth and teens are very important and somewhat important to 96% of the population. Recreational programming for seniors is very important and somewhat important to 96% of the residents of the Vanderhoof area. Recreational programming for preschoolers is very important and somewhat important to 90% of the population.



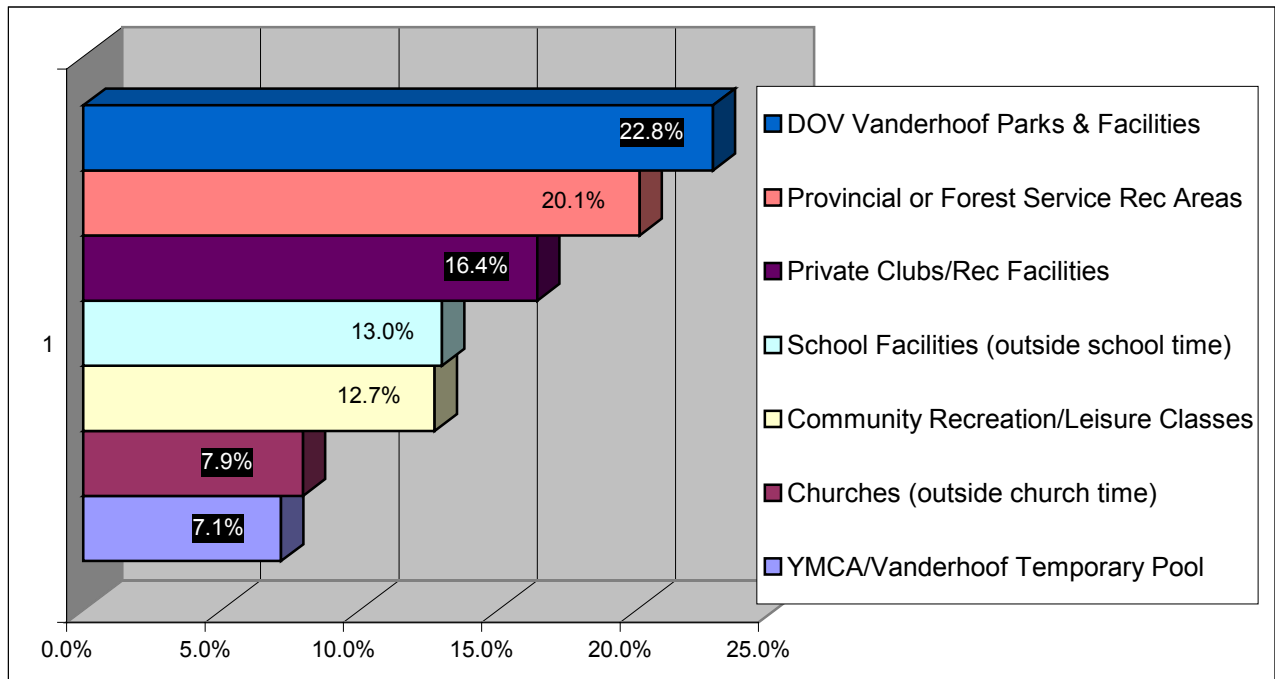
BARRIERS TO RECREATION



Residents indicated that non-existent or poor quality facilities were their most significant barrier to recreational opportunities in Vanderhoof. The second largest barrier to recreation was a lack of programs, or that programs offered were of poor quality.

The third barrier to recreation was cost. This choice could be interpreted as the cost of programs found in Vanderhoof, or the cost of traveling to pursue recreation outside of Vanderhoof. Both choices were inferred to in the written comments of the survey, and this point deserves better analysis in subsequent surveys.

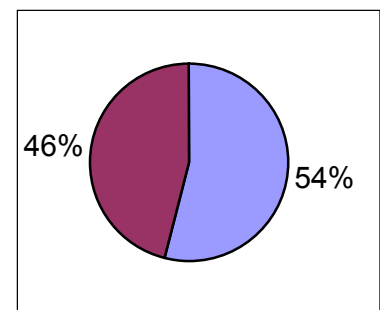
MOST COMMONLY USED / VISITED RECREATION PLACES & SPACES

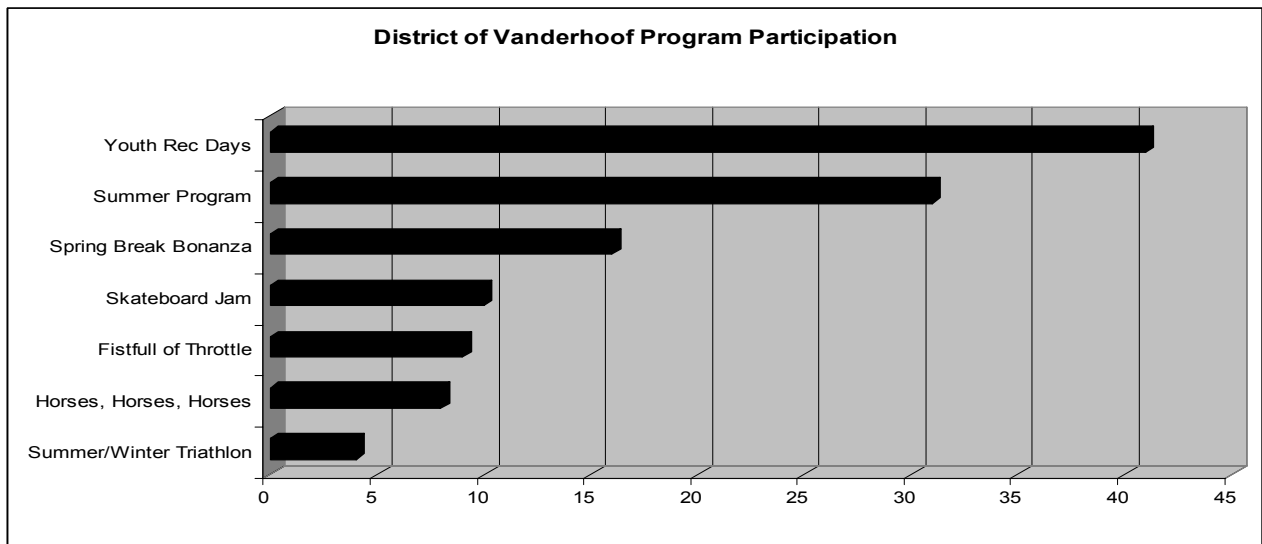


District of Vanderhoof parks and facilities were the most commonly utilized recreation places and spaces by residents with 22.8% of the residents choosing that as their first choice. Provincial or Forest Service Recreation areas outside of the District of Vanderhoof itself were the second most used or visited recreation area, followed by the private facilities and recreation facilities in and around the District of Vanderhoof.

DISTRICT OF VANDERHOOF PROGRAMS

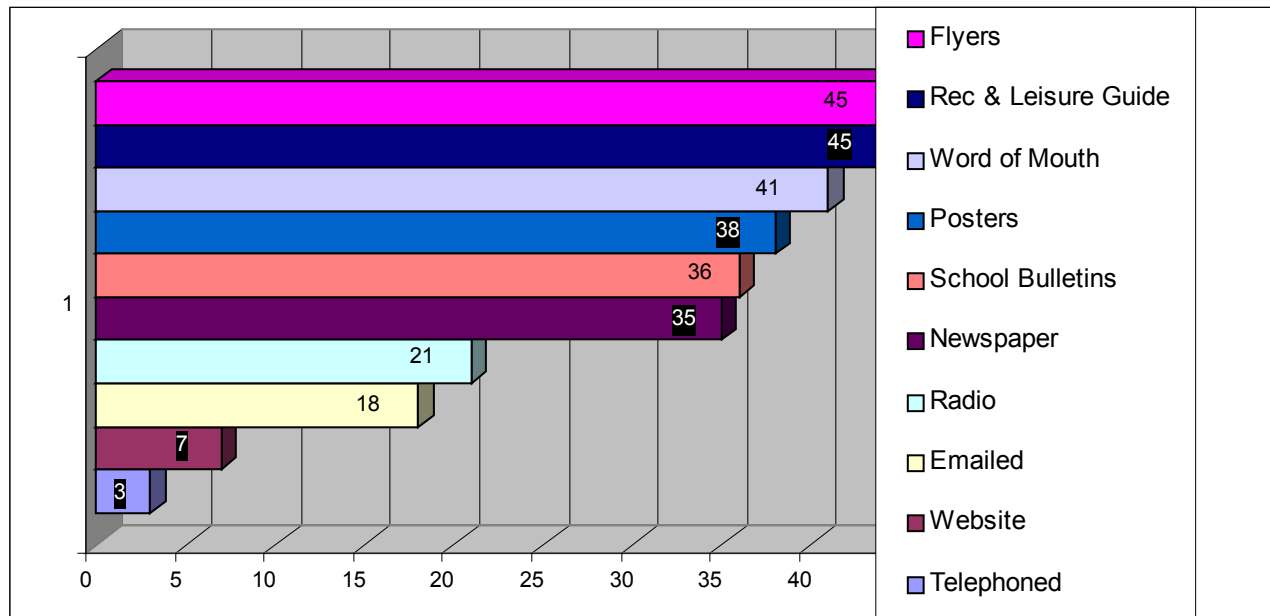
54% of respondents attended in the District of Vanderhoof Community Recreation and Leisure Programs.





Youth Rec Days, the *Summer Program* and *Spring Break Bonanza* were the most commonly participated in programs offered by the District of Vanderhoof.

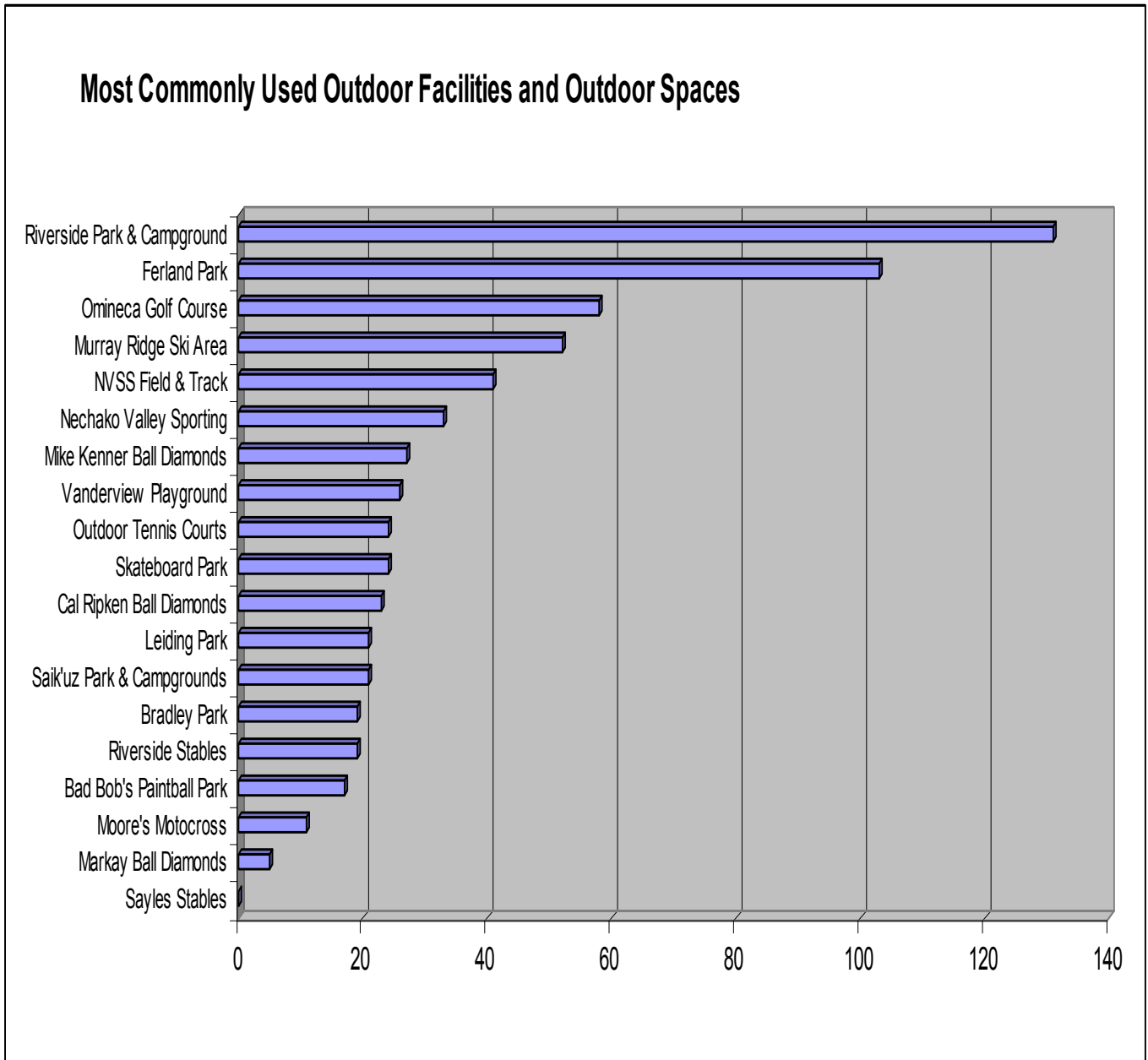
HOW RESPONDENTS LEARN ABOUT DISTRICT OF VANDERHOOF RECREATION PROGRAMS



The District of Vanderhoof has been coordinating community programs through the time and efforts of the Recreation Coordinator (Anne Hollingsworth). The Recreation Coordinator utilized all of the means below to advertise and market community programs, classes and events. The results below indicate the number of uses per category. Flyers, *Community Recreation and Leisure Guide* and word of mouth were the more frequent ways that residents found out about programs and events.

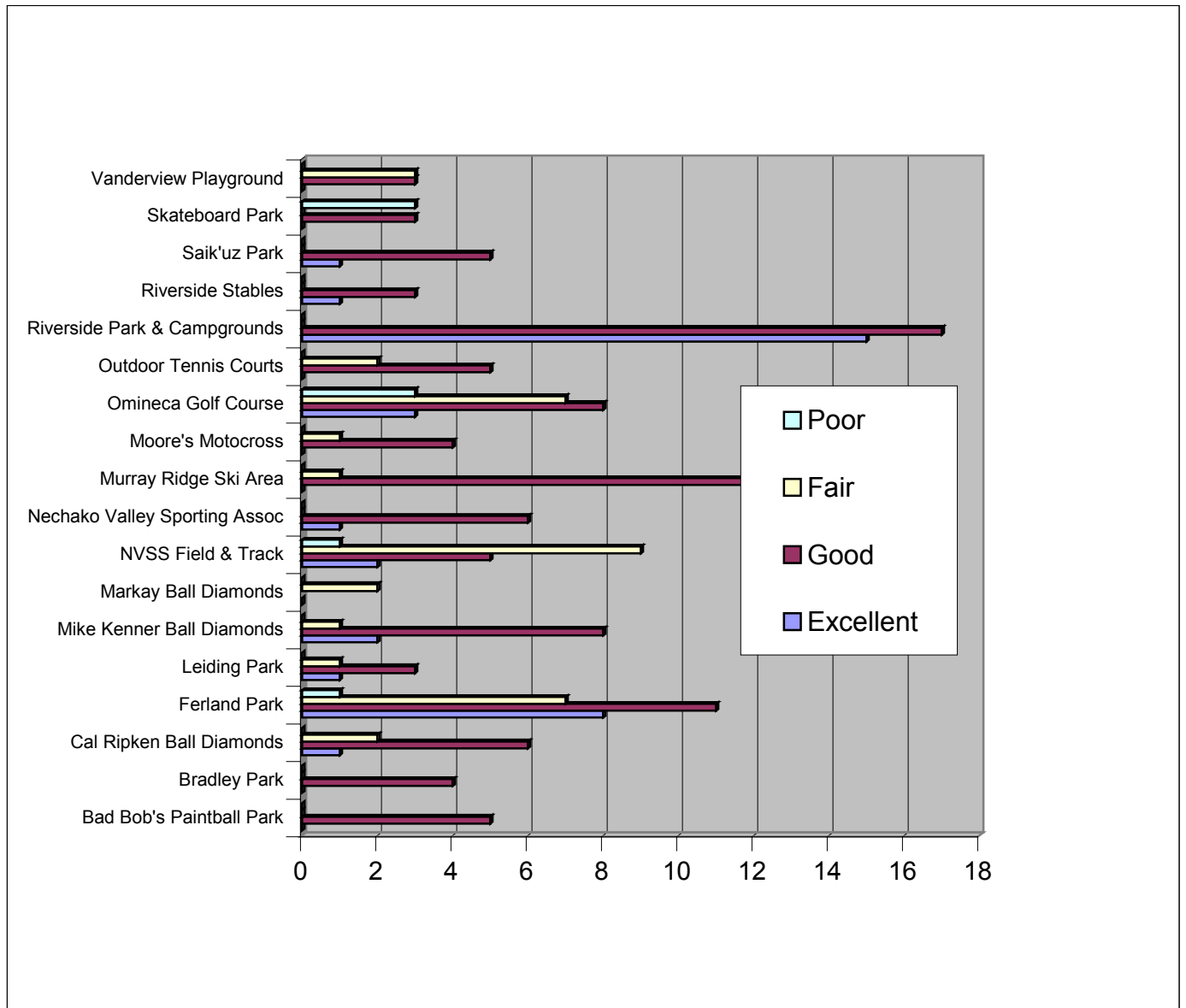
MOST UTILIZED OUTDOOR SPACES AND FACILITIES

Riverside Park and Campground, Ferland Park and the Omineca Golf Course were the top three utilized outdoor facilities in the Vanderhoof area.



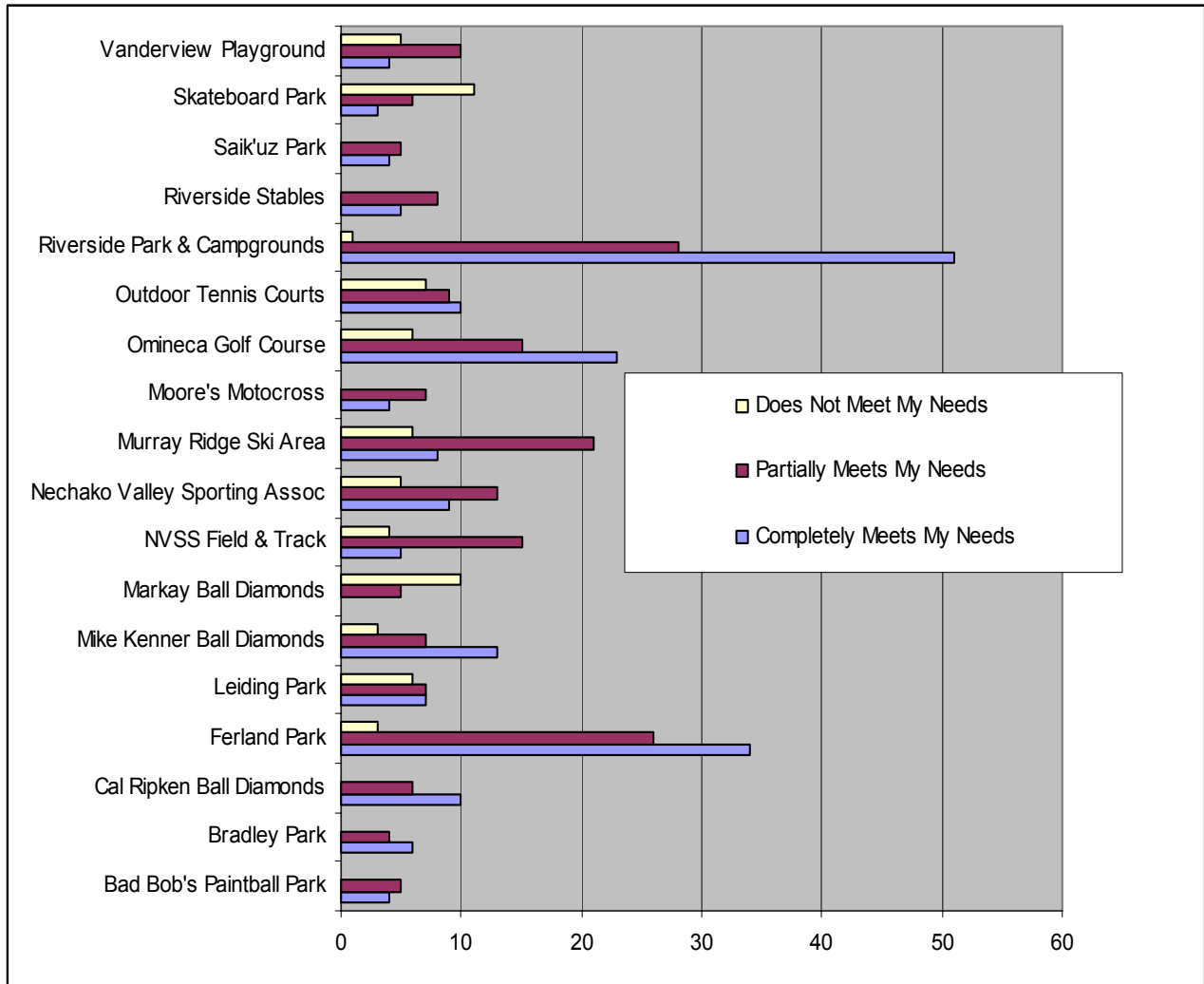
HOW DO RESIDENTS RATE THE QUALITY OF OUTDOOR FACILITIES AND SPACES?

The public and private outdoor facilities and spaces were rated in quality from poor to excellent. Where no choices were recorded the particular quality rating is left blank.



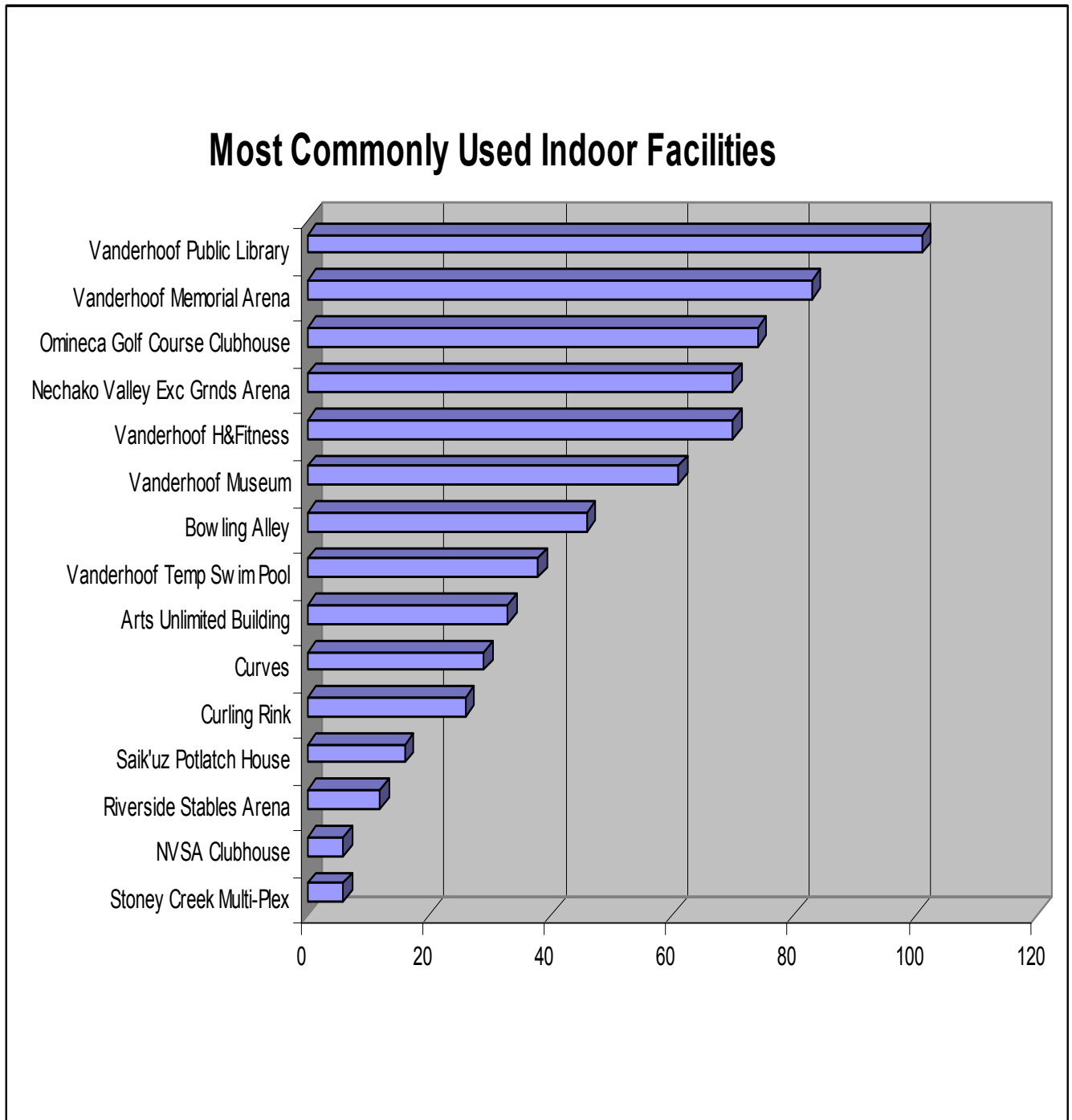
DO CURRENT OUTDOOR FACILITIES MEET RESIDENTS NEEDS?

The comparative results of whether the outdoor facilities available in the Vanderhoof area meet our residents needs are shown below.

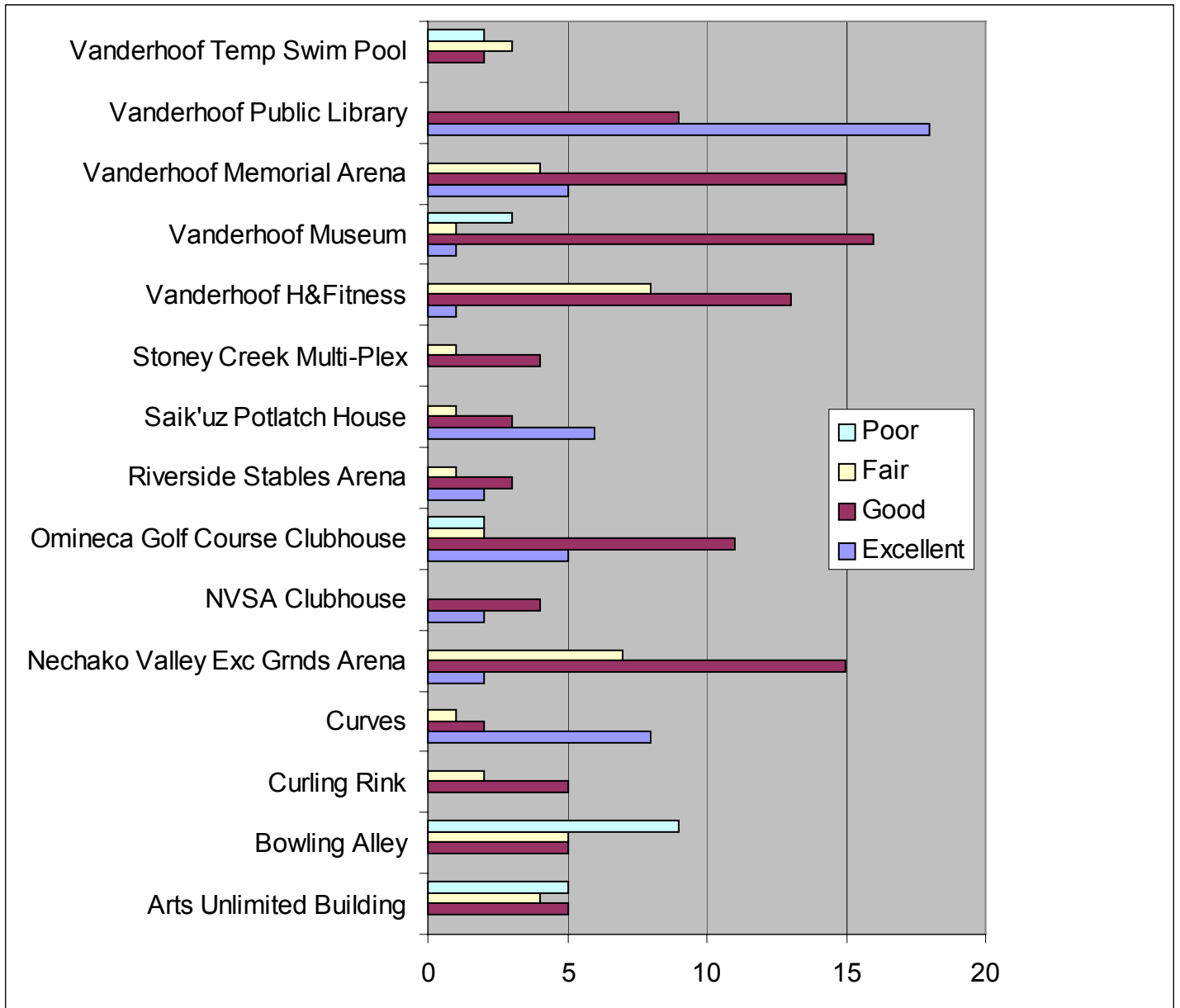


MOST UTILIZED INDOOR SPACES AND FACILITIES

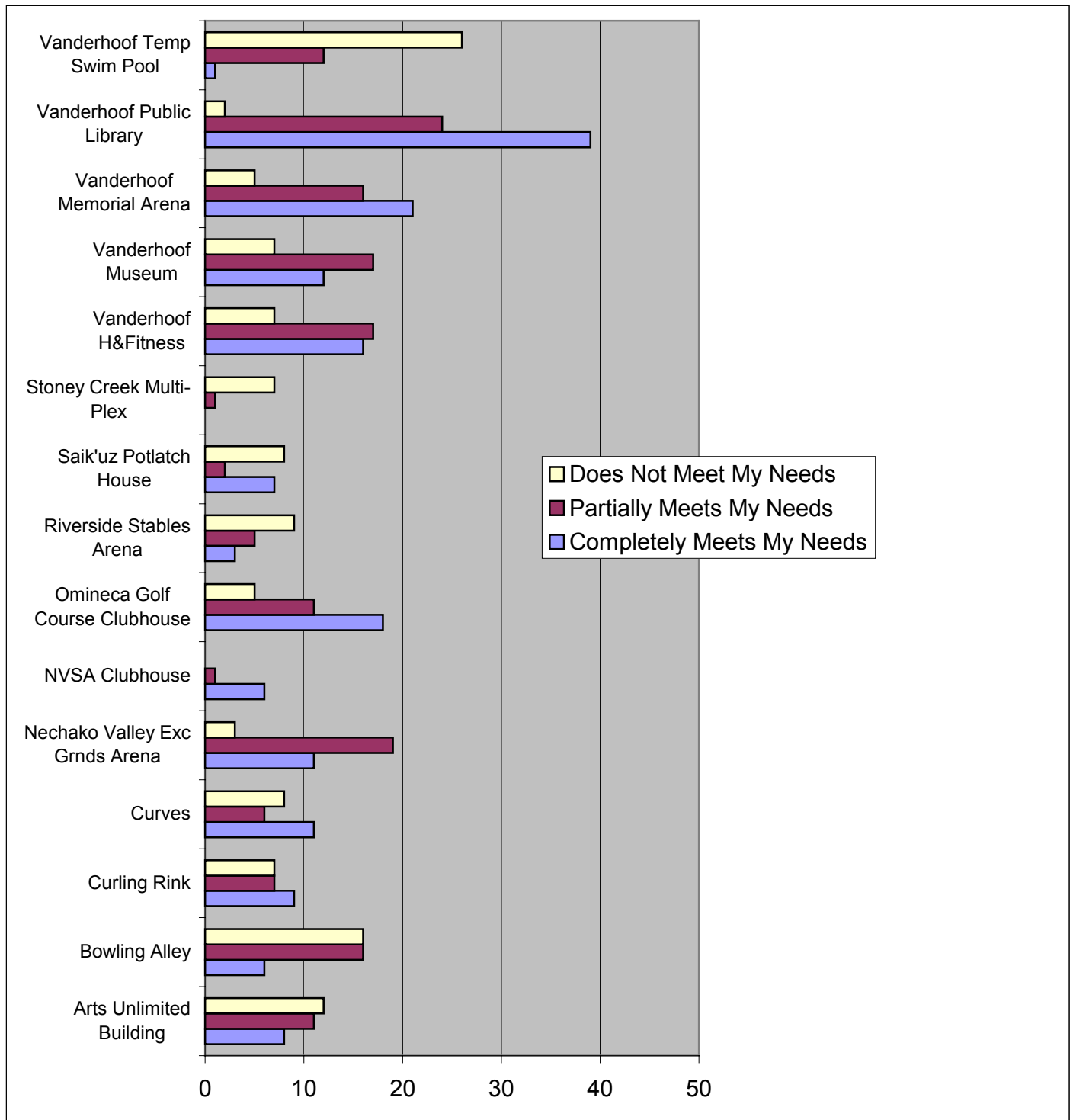
The top three indoor facilities utilized in Vanderhoof are the Vanderhoof Public Library, the Vanderhoof Memorial Arena and the Omineca Golf Course Clubhouse.



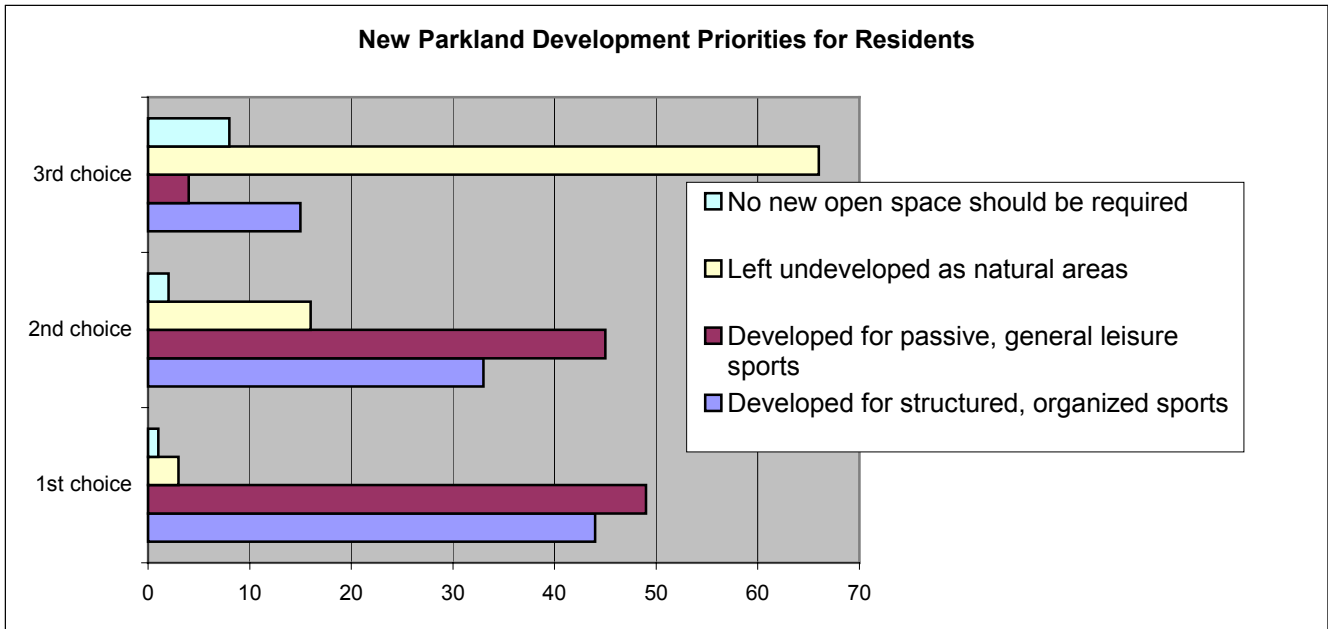
HOW DO RESIDENTS RATE THE QUALITY OF INDOOR FACILITIES?



DO CURRENT INDOOR FACILITIES MEET THE NEEDS OF RESIDENTS?

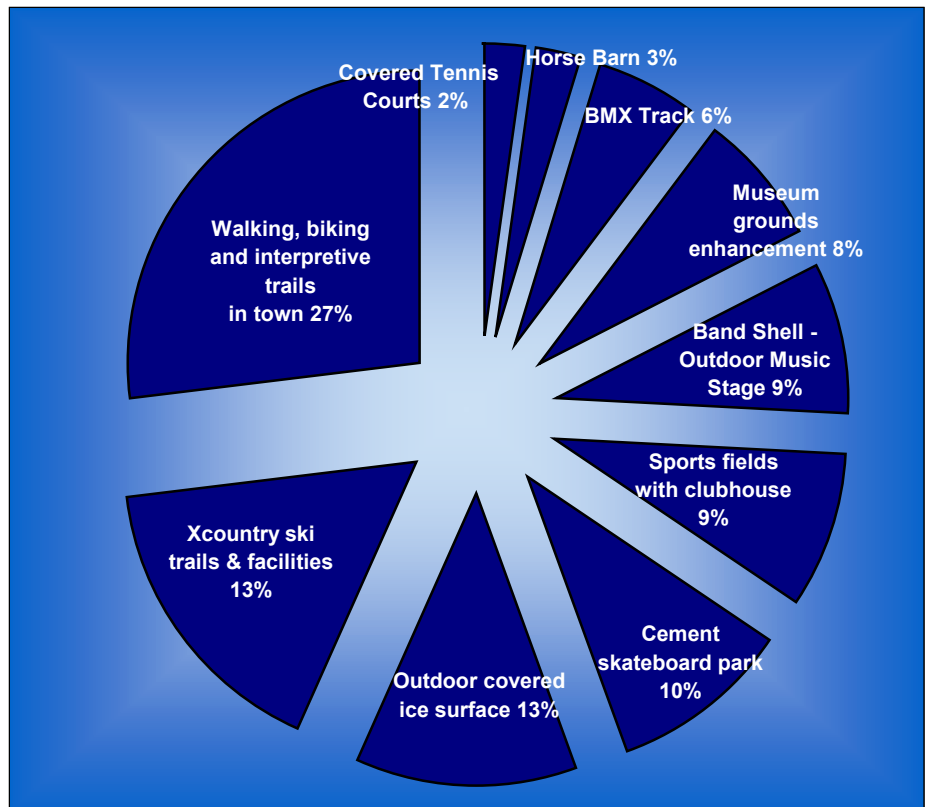


IF MORE PARKLAND WAS DEVELOPED FOR RECREATIONAL USES, FOR WHAT TYPE OF USE SHOULD IT BE USED?



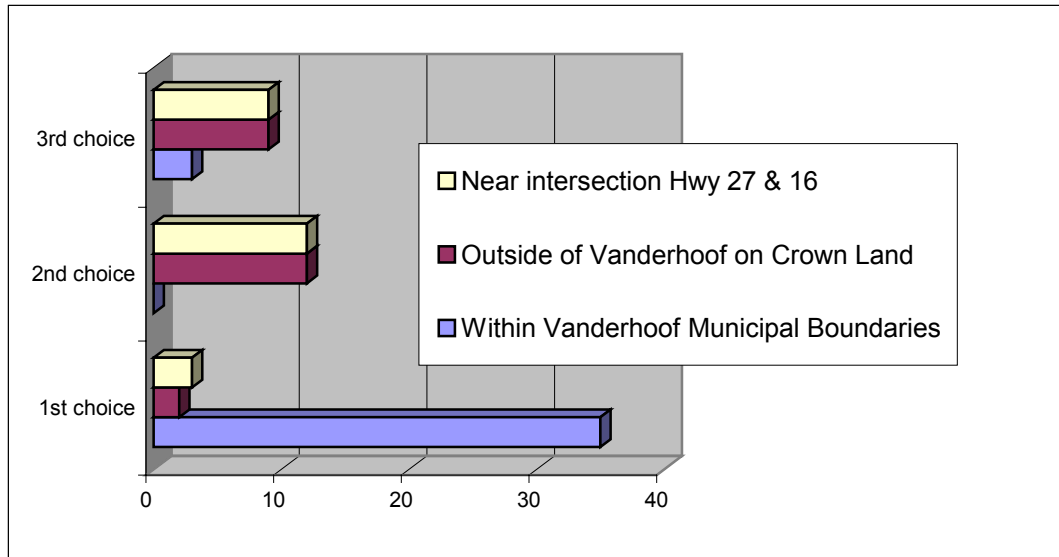
TOP CHOICES FOR NEW SPENDING ON OUTDOOR FACILITIES

The top priority for residents of Vanderhoof was walking, biking and then interpretive trails in and around the townsite area. The second priority was improvements to the cross country skiing trails and improvements to the facility including lighting and the clubhouse. The third priority (before rounding) was an outdoor covered ice surface.

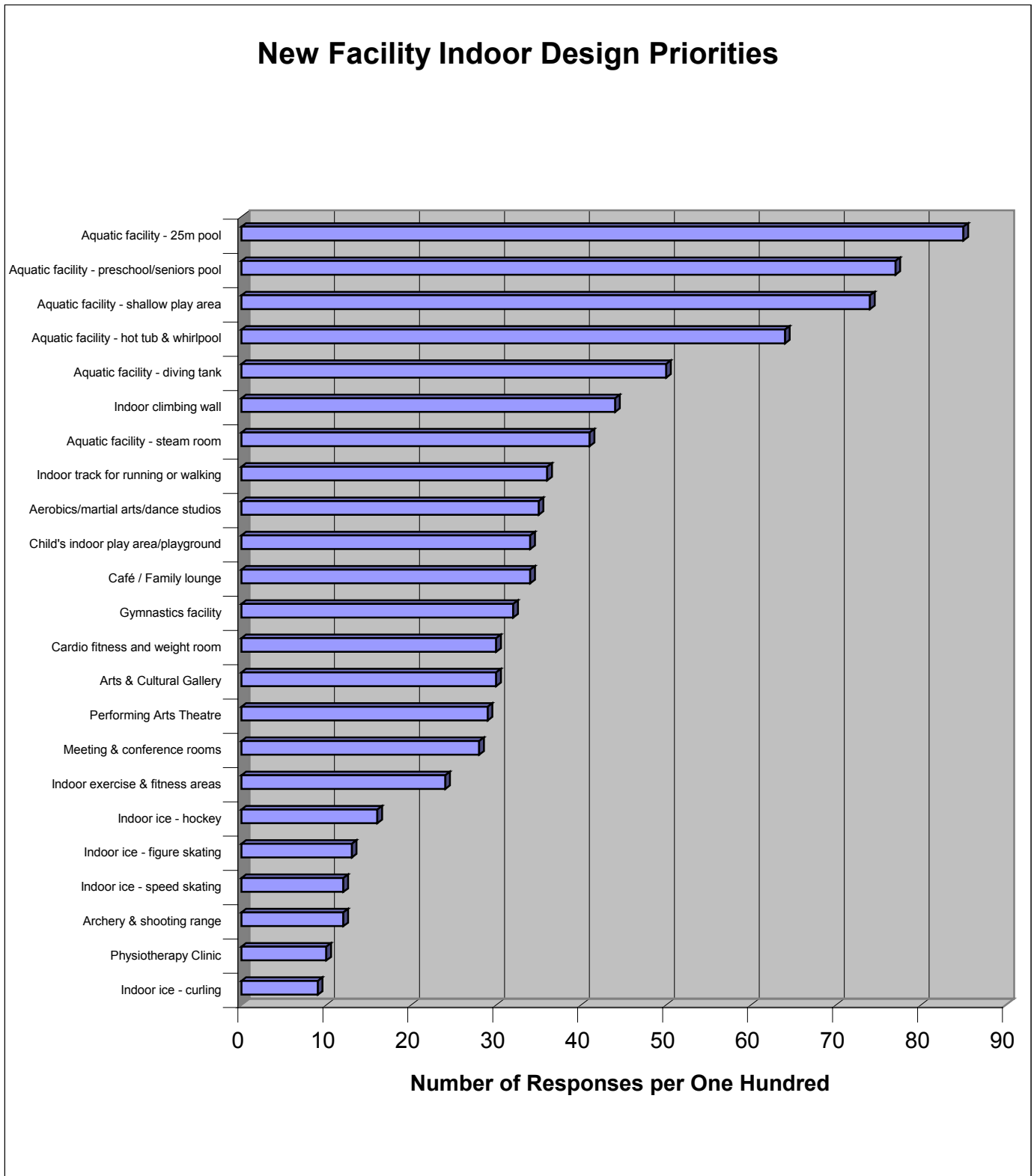


LOCATION OF NEW RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Residents were asked to choose their first, second and third choices for locating new recreational facilities, specifically a multi-sport recreation facility.



TOP CHOICES FOR NEW SPENDING ON INDOOR FACILITIES



APPENDIX 1. COMMENTS, BEEFS, BOUQUETS, WILLING TO VOLUNTEER?

- We love to see a pool facility in Vanderhoof. A pool and indoor walking track are highest on my list of priorities. They could be used by majority of the population, and be year-round. A rec centre including aquatic facility is essential for the well-being of everybody and rehab of the injured. We need these facilities to attract people with skills we are in need of and to keep these people here.
- A swimming pool would be a big asset of Vanderhoof.
- Ann, and the other volunteers that are involved in this survey, your time and concerns are greatly appreciated by all in this community. Keep up the great job !!!!!!!
- Good job. Have fun with these!
- Happy to hear the arena is getting additional/larger dressing rooms. Good to finally see the toilet facilities at the Babe Ruth ball diamonds. Waiting to see a BMX track. Kids on our street (Omineca) are using a vacant lot. Glad to see they have taken the initiative to build their own track. It would be a safer environment if the District had a site available. Dirt is cheap!
- I am really happy to fill out this survey and to see an interest in recreation activities coming from the District. Great work Anne!
- My only comment is that some of the questions grouped activities too coarsely – e.g. #22 – the library is fantastic facility and we are lucky to have it, but the Temporary Pool – well, it’s not great. I am so very impressed with the steps that Vanderhoof has taken in the last several years to offer more to its residents. From upgrading the parks, downtown revitalization, bathrooms at the ball fields and of course all the rec programs. (Anne, you’ve done an excellent job!) Of course, there are still things I would like to see that would benefit my pre-school aged children now and in the future and for me as an adult. POOL/REC FACILITY!!
- First big one I can see to keep people’s weekend dollars here and attract out of town dollars and to enhance the health of our community. Second, would be a permanent building dedicated to health and pre-school education pursuits (circle time/ parent and tots drop-in, pregnancy support, success by six, etc). Anyways, I’m sure that’s been said before and to that end I am willing to volunteer. Thanks for getting this survey out there!
- I am willing volunteer :-).
- I do like to volunteer – please call me and hopefully I can help out with something. I have lived in and visited smaller communities than Vanderhoof that have had their own Aquatic Recreation Centre. It doesn’t make sense to me, in a community so family oriented, and also one that resides in a geographical area surrounded by lakes and rivers, that we don’t have a dedicated swimming facility. Swimming is a family oriented activity, an aquatic recreation facility could only add value to our

community, not to mention an extremely attractive attribute to add to the list of wonderful reasons to live here. I also feel that learning to swim is an important as all the other things that we teach our toddlers and primary school students during those formative years. I will go out of my way to ensure that my children learn to swim, as that skill could save their lives. It deeply disappoints me that there is no support for this type of facility in our community. I strongly believe that an aquatic centre would be very beneficial to Vanderhoof. Also, activities for teens would be beneficial too. I think you will find I volunteer quite a bit.

- I think your questions regarding the most, the least, the third are unnecessary. Do I use? YES. Do I count how many times? No.
- I would like to see in the near future as our economy progresses as predicted, I would like to see a swimming pool put in for year round use. I would definitely be willing to volunteer life guard hours to help make this possible.
- I would love to start volunteering, I just moved here... so I will have to come into the Chamber Office and see what type of events are coming up.
- Love the leisure program run by Anne Hollingsworth! Finally kids and teens have some activities to occupy themselves, rather than just drifting around town! Would like to see more permanent structures to keep kids busy (pool, BMX track, etc.)
- Rec Centre with a pool, gymnastics area and spaces for meetings and youth activities, with a theatre for performing arts as well as an art gallery would be a wonderful addition to our community. Thanks for asking!
- Recreational opportunities and programming are contingent on use of school facilities, which are stretched to the max and not available at certain important times – like the teacher’s strike, etc.
- Some questions are hard to answer. I left them blank. Thanks for giving me the opportunity for my input.
- The Nechako Valley Sporting Association is a disgrace! It is simply a Biathlon Training Centre, and the entire rifle range has been encroached upon by rimfire range (biathlon) as well as poor benches, deteriorating backstops. While I am all for Biathlon and enjoy cross country skiing trails, I feel it is time some money from the membership is distributed toward the upkeep of the range. Certainly some of the members shoot (it is quite a busy range year round actually).
- The Youth Rec Days are fantastic, great opportunities for the kids.
- My biggest beef is the lack of ice availability at the arena, I feel that another indoor ice surface is definitely a high priority. I also feel we as a community lose a lot of money to Prince George because we don’t have a pool, many people to go PG for swimming lessons and so many shopping dollars are thrown away when they shop while there.

- This was a challenge for me to fill out as we just moved here in May. I have a one year old so we've basically just gone to the park to use the baby swings. I live in Vanderview but can't use the Vanderview Park because the equipment is too old for him, so we go to Riverside Park. My husband and I were born and raised in Prince George, but we moved here before my maternity leave ended because I was working here and wanted to stop commuting. We're all currently suffering a bit of homesickness in that we don't have any friends and family here, and don't get out to participate in community activities, however I think when my son gets older there are going to be many more opportunities to get involved and actually make some friends. I took my son to the pumpkin walk and we both enjoyed it thoroughly. We never did anything like that in PG! Also, Christine from Welcome Wagon was great ... she really opened our eyes to the possibilities that Vanderhoof has to offer.
- Vanderhoof is in need of a public swimming pool. With the age of the demographics, there is a building need to get a swimming pool in Vanderhoof to provide multi-generational recreation options and attractive community infrastructure to attract professionals to replace (and provide services) for our growing population of retirees and seniors.
- Would be very interested in hiking/walking trails. An aquatic centre would be nice but the taxes would probably be cost prohibitive. Maybe ALCAN could pay for the upkeep?
- Vanderhoof is a fantastic place to live and raise children. Extra facilities would just be an added bonus. If we add more recreational facilities, commit to full-time recreation director – very important part of community, and build hotel conference centre – people will come and spend money here.
- We need a pool – have needed one for over 40 years. With all the tax dollars generated in the area, it should not have been an issue. I would like to see a permanent seasonal outdoor pool for this town without it being filled up with lessons, etc, just a place to play.
- We need a swimming pool!
- Need better facilities for teenagers. Would like to see more walking trails. Trails for kids and adults using motorbikes and snowmobiles would be nice. Rec days for kids is great!
- I would like to see a facility that provided childcare during aerobics classes in the morning. We don't use above ground pool in arena because it is not suited to multiple young children.
- Great survey!
- A multi-purpose recreational/aquatic facility is without a doubt a dire need in Vanderhoof. How is it that Houston and Mackenzie (smaller communities than Vanderhoof) can pull this together, but Vanderhoof cannot?
- District of Vanderhoof can do more to care for “details,” e.g. garbage, walking trails, pot holes, weeds on sidewalks.
- We need a pool and better hours at the bowling alley.

- We need a pool in Vanderhoof. Bus service for rural kids would be great for summer recreation activities. Activities would be attended if transportation available. Also, I have both my kids in 4-H and I didn't see that one on the form.
- I would not like to see public funded recreation facilities compete with private business, e.g. Curves, Fitness Centre
- Excellent job done by Anne. Always awesome advertising for child/youth programs.
- Need a pool – regardless of whether you have children. It is one of the first amenities you look for in an area. I drive to PG two to three times a week in summer for sports plus at least once every two weeks since I've lived here 8 months. I drive to shop and do leisure activities. I would say 80-90% of my disposable income is spent out of Vanderhoof because we are already traveling for sport and recreation.
- The Recreation Guide is an excellent resource and fabulous tool particularly when I moved here eight months ago. Need more adult structured sport with child care available for women with children so they can participate more readily, also “learn to play” (i.e. soccer) for adults to increase participation never enough people to play what is organized.
- I travel a lot. I travel for dance and swimming lessons in Prince George. I also travel all over BC and Alberta for horse shows. I would like to see the Fall Fair have a full horse show like Smithers.
- Thank you for doing this survey.