



SECTION 5: DEMANDS AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

INTRODUCTION

There is no exact science for determining the level of need for parks and recreation services. As such, the District adopted a ranking system established by the Skagit County Parks and Recreation Department, Skagit County, Washington. The score derived from the application of this ranking system provides a basis for the establishment of project and program priorities.

The following elements are used to evaluate each service category. The corresponding point system for each element is provided.

1. **Survey Results**, which provide a statistically valid means of distinguishing the needs of Snoqualmie Valley residents.
 - a. Highest Level of Need 5 Points
 - b. Some Need 3 Points
 - c. Low Level of Need 1 Point

2. **Use Patterns and Observations of Current Use**, which provides empirical information from those who use or oversee facilities in the Snoqualmie Valley.
 - a. Use Patterns consistently exceed capacity of facility/program. 5 Points
 - b. Use Patterns generally accommodated by facilities/programs. 3 Points
 - c. Facility/program can handle additional use. 1 Point

3. **Public Comment and Inventory of Requests**, which provides information about the needs of the Snoqualmie Valley residents. Input comes in many forms: community meetings, informal conversations, written correspondence, public hearings and the District website.
 - a. Factors warrant significant increase. 5 Points
 - b. Moderate increase is necessary. 3 Points
 - c. No current need to increase capacity. 1 Point

CATEGORY SCORES

The scores are combined and averaged to make a final determination of need for specific facilities and/or programs. The composite scores indication of need can be summarized as follows:

4.0 – 5.0	High Level of Need
2.0 – 3.9	Moderate Level of Need
1.0 – 1.9	Low Level of Need



ANALYSIS OF FACILITIES AND PARKS

Facility Type	Survey	Use Patterns	Public Input	Total	Average
Walking/Hiking Trails	5	5	5	15	5
Aquatic Facilities	5	5	5	15	5
Community Centers	5	5	5	15	5
Playgrounds	3	5	5	13	4.3
Soccer Fields	3	5	5	13	4.3
Baseball/Softball Fields	3	5	5	13	4.3
Natural Areas/Open Space	3	3	1	7	2.3
Picnic Shelters/Picnic Areas	3	3	1	7	2.3
Football Fields	1	1	1	3	1

Walking and Hiking Trails and Connections

Need Analysis: High

Walking and hiking trails were consistently identified as the number one priority in the survey. Usage patterns and public feedback also indicate that many Snoqualmie Valley residents place a high priority on trails, sidewalks and connections for walking, biking, inline skating and similar activities.

New foot trails, pathways or sidewalks are needed to link residences, shopping, parks and schools. Linkages between regional trail systems are also highly desirable. Within neighborhood parks, perimeter trails should be considered for walking and biking. An adequate trail system may be developed through joint cooperation with the City of North Bend, the City of Snoqualmie, King County and the State of Washington. This issue is being considered via the formation of a Regional Parks and Recreation Task Force of which the Cities of North Bend, Snoqualmie, the Si View Metropolitan Park District and the Snoqualmie Valley School District are all participating members.

Aquatics Facilities

Need Analysis: High

Aquatics facilities ranked consistently as the number two priority in the public survey. Usage patterns at the Si View Pool and additional public comment indicate strong support for aquatics facilities and programs in the Snoqualmie Valley. The Valley possesses numerous rivers and lakes prompting residents to express strong support for ongoing water safety and swim lesson programs.

Renovating the existing Si View Pool was ranked as the number one funding priority in the public survey. While this may prove to be inefficient due to the historical landmark status of the building and the age of the facility, it is evident that the pool is not meeting the needs of the community. As the only public pool in the Snoqualmie Valley, the Si View Pool cannot meet the demands of the growing population. Furthermore, as the City of North Bend contemplates lifting the moratorium on development, the anticipated population growth will outstrip the aquatics resources currently available in the Valley.



The City of Snoqualmie previously proposed building a new aquatics facility. The bond issue failed for this proposal, but there may be an opportunity to work with the City of Snoqualmie and reintroduce a plan for a regional aquatics facility to the citizens. This issue is being considered by the Regional Parks and Recreation Task Force.

Community Centers

Need Analysis: High

The public survey indicated strong support for indoor facilities, including community centers and basketball courts. Public feedback and usage patterns at the Si View Community Center also demonstrate a high need for this type of facility.

Built in 1938, the Si View Community Center is the only indoor facility of this type in the Snoqualmie Valley. The School District operates many schools, several of which have recently renovated their gymnasiums. These facilities are available on a limited basis for non-school athletic programs and other activities.

Renovating the Si View Community Center was ranked as a moderate priority in the public survey. Most patrons have expressed an interest in “fixing what is broken” but have not shared thoughts regarding a major renovation. Several modest improvements could be made to improve the quality of the facility including relocating and centralizing the restrooms, upgrading the interior to meet ADA standards, remodeling the kitchen and replacing the gymnasium floor.

The City of Snoqualmie is considering building a community center on Snoqualmie Ridge in the near future. Such a facility would mitigate the high level of use at the Si View Community Center. As additional population growth occurs in the Snoqualmie Valley, the availability of sufficient indoor space for recreation activities and athletic programs must be considered and factored into planning efforts. This issue is being considered via the Regional Parks and Recreation Task Force.

Playgrounds

Need Analysis: High

Safe outdoor playgrounds and play areas remain a high priority for Snoqualmie Valley residents as indicated in the public survey and through usage patterns and public comment. Most of the public feedback obtained on playgrounds has to do with the Si View playground specifically. This structure, known as a ‘Big Toy’ product was likely installed in the 1970’s and has not been upgraded since. Kids and adults have expressed a strong interest in replacing and expanding this structure in the near future.

Many of the playgrounds at local parks and schools are less than five years old. Most of the structures are meeting the needs of the residents. The District will support future playground upgrades at non-District facilities via grant partnerships and in other capacities as appropriate. The District will place a high priority on upgrading the Si View playground upon completion of the Si View Park Master Plan.



Soccer Fields

Need Analysis: High

The public survey indicates that soccer fields are a higher priority than other athletic field types (baseball, football etc.) The overall priority in the survey is moderate as compared to the other categories. Usage patterns and public comments, however, demonstrate an ongoing and very high need for these facilities. Fields are currently available from the Cities of Snoqualmie and North Bend, the Snoqualmie Valley School District and the Si View Metropolitan Park District.

The soccer program in the Snoqualmie Valley serves more kids than any other athletic program in the area and the number of participants continues to grow. The growth in participation is quickly outpacing the availability of fields. In addition, overuse is causing irreparable damage to the existing natural turf fields.

Construction of new fields and renovation of existing fields are the two primary options to address the problem. This is an issue that is best suited for the Parks and Recreation Regional Task Force. In the meantime, the Si View fields are desperately in need of maintenance. The maintenance plan will be a high priority for the near future and may require identification of alternate fields to accommodate a long term closure (8 months or more) at Si View Park.

Baseball/Softball Fields

Need Analysis: High

The public survey indicates a moderate need for youth and adult baseball and softball fields. Usage patterns and public comments, however, demonstrate a high need for these facilities. Fields are currently available from the Cities of Snoqualmie and North Bend, the Snoqualmie Valley School District and the Si View Metropolitan Park District.

As was the case recently, the temporary closure of the high school baseball fields resulted in the gross overuse of the other fields in the Snoqualmie Valley. Simply put, demand exceeds capacity and the population is expected to continue to grow.

The same options exist for baseball and softball fields: construction of new fields and/or renovation of existing fields. This issue will also be addressed via the Parks and Recreation Regional Task Force.

Open Space/Natural Areas

Need Analysis: Moderate

The public survey revealed moderate support for open space and natural areas. Public feedback indicates that most residents are satisfied with the existing open space and natural areas and prefer the priorities be placed elsewhere. Usage patterns indicate a moderate level of support for these areas.



The purchase of additional land by the District for preservation is unlikely unless a unique opportunity presents itself (i.e. donation of land.) In the meantime the District will continue to support partner agencies in their effort to preserve and restore existing open space including Meadowbrook Farm and Tollgate Farm. As of this writing, the District is negotiating an agreement to manage Meadowbrook Farm including the recently constructed interpretive center. This is one example of the many ways in which the District can assist with the management, utilization and preservation of existing open space and natural areas.

Picnic Shelters/Picnic Areas

Need Analysis: Moderate

The public survey indicated a moderate need for picnic areas and picnic shelters. Use patterns and public comment produced a mixed response. There are very few outdoor covered picnic areas available in the Valley. The addition of one or two such facilities, including a shelter at Si View Park, would likely be well-used and meet the current needs of the residents. Efforts should be made to include picnic facilities in the design of future parks in the area.

Football Fields

Need Analysis: Low

The need for football fields did not present itself as a significant priority in the survey, via public comment or through demonstrated usage patterns. The construction of the new stadium at the High School is helping to meet the needs of the football programs in the community.

THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

In reviewing the above needs, the District has established a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) (Section 8) of proposed facility improvements and development projects for the next six years. This list of projects is not “fixed” and will be adapted and modified as funding and District needs change. The CIP will be reviewed and updated annually as part of the District’s annual budget process.



ANALYSIS OF PROGRAMS

Facility Type	Survey	Use Patterns	Public Input	Total	Average
Aquatics Programs	5	5	5	15	5
Sp. Events/Family Programs	5	3	5	13	4.3
Adult Programs	3	5	5	13	4.3
Youth/Teen Programs	3	3	5	11	3.7
Special Population Programs	1	3	3	7	2.3
Arts Programs	3	1	3	7	2.3
Outdoor Education Programs	3	1	3	7	2.3
Senior Programs	1	3	3	7	2.3

Aquatics Programs

Need Analysis: High

The demand for aquatics programs and services is consistently high. This drives ongoing support for expanded and improved aquatics facilities. The Si View Pool is at or near capacity, therefore the District will need to focus on quality programming and efficiency of use to accommodate as many programs and users as possible.

Special Events and Family Programs

Need Analysis: High

Special events, family programs, live theater and concert performances received a high rating in the public survey. Usage patterns indicate moderate support for these types of activities with public input following the same trend.

There are a variety of special events available in the community, with many of them currently provided by the District. Examples of District events include the Family Night Program in partnership with Encompass, the Holiday Bazaar, movie nights in the park, the Bite of the Valley in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce and the Festival at Mt. Si in partnership with the North Bend Educational and Cultural Association.

The amount allocated for special events has been increased in each budget year. Every effort will be made to expand and improve special event and family programs in the Valley. Additional funding via partnerships and grants will be included in annual performance goals to support the expansion of these programs.

Adult Programs

Need Analysis: High

The need for adult programs was measured via many different categories in the public survey – walking, hiking, adult softball, trips and travel and fitness activities. Overall survey findings indicate moderate priority for adult programs. Public feedback and usage patterns indicate that adult programs, specifically fitness classes, are a high priority for the community.



Adult program enrollment has held steady during the first year of operating the Si View Community Center. In each subsequent fiscal year, additional adult programs have been added, which mostly include adult athletic programs. In most cases these programs are operating at or near capacity. Trends and enrollment patterns will continue to be monitored to ensure that a balance of adult activities are available in the Community. Additionally, efforts will be made to partner with other agencies (i.e. the City of Snoqualmie) to coordinate adult recreation services.

Youth/Teen Programs

Need Analysis: Moderate

The public survey indicted moderate support for youth and teen programs and activities. In general teen programs ranked higher than youth and toddler programs. Usage patterns indicate a moderate level of participation in youth and teen programs. Public feedback is similar, with a stronger interest in toddler and teen programs than programs for school-age youth.

The feedback and usage patterns are consistent with the trends and availability of programs for school age children in the Valley. Many children are busy, participating in athletics, dance, gymnastics and a variety of other programs. One area that has been very successful for the District has been provision of Summer Camp and After School programs. These were obvious niches and areas where existing programs were not meeting the needs of the community.

Special Populations Programs

Need Analysis: Moderate

The public survey priority for special populations programs was low. This is likely due to the low percentage of individuals with special needs in the population. The Special Populations programs are relatively new to the District, but are gaining support and enrollment has steadily increased over the past year.

The District will continue to develop these programs and work in partnership with other agencies, such as the City of Issaquah to provide these types of programs. In addition, grant funding will be a priority to help support and expand these programs.

Arts Programs

Need Analysis: Moderate

The public survey did not directly measure the need for arts programs. There are several indications that these types of programs are supported such as the moderate desire for live theater, dance and visual arts programs. Public feedback continuously emphasizes the need for these types of programs, although program attendance is often low.

The long range plan for the District will include a cultural arts initiative, which may be incorporated into the special events plan. In addition, art classes for all ages will continue to be a priority. It may be necessary to explore alternate delivery options such as one-day classes versus full-month classes.



Outdoor Education and Recreation Programs

Need Analysis: Moderate

Outdoor education and recreation programs were not measured directly by the survey, but there are strong indications that Snoqualmie Valley residents frequently utilize and desire outdoor programs. Public support for these types of programs has been moderate to low, but popular programs such as orienteering have received favorable feedback. Usage patterns for the few outdoor programs offered have been low.

The Snoqualmie Valley is rich with outdoor opportunities including an abundance of natural settings for hiking, climbing, mountain biking etc. Outdoor education and recreation clearly has a niche and will be a priority in the long-range plan. In addition, the District will work with other service providers to coordinate programs and activities. Partnerships in this area have already been established with the Cedar River Watershed, the Meadowbrook Farm Preservation Association and Camp Waskowitz.

Senior Programs

Need Analysis: Moderate

The public survey rated senior programs as a low priority. Public input and usage patterns indicate a moderate need for senior programs, with active senior adult programs being a significant area of need.

Senior services in the Snoqualmie Valley have traditionally been provided by the Mt. Si Senior Center. The District has worked in partnership with the Senior Center on many facets of their operation including a dedicated section in the Recreation Guide. Future partnerships and program development will likely expand upon activities available for active senior adults including athletic leagues and fitness classes.

THE PROGRAM PLAN

The needs identified in this section will be used to develop and expand recreation services and programs offered by the District. Program goals, development strategies and funding plans will be included in the District's annual operating budget. Grant opportunities, sponsorship and partnership opportunities are a high priority for the future expansion of many programs.