
Recreation Amenities

Gap Analysis

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Introduction

In 2008, The City of Calgary Recreation was directed by City Council to identify recreation gaps within the city and to develop a business case to address these gaps. Conducted in two phases (Parts I and II) by HarGroup Management Consultants and K. Knights and Associates Ltd, the Recreation Amenities Gap Analysis (RAGA) examined the recreation needs and preferences of Calgarians in twelve areas of the city. These Study Areas were determined to be made up of communities relatively similar in terms of age and general demographics; boundaries were also drawn along natural geographic and transportation lines where possible.

Telephone surveys were conducted with a total of 6,024 randomly selected households (approximately 500 surveys completed within each of the twelve Study Areas). This data was supplemented with focus group interviews conducted with community leaders and various segments of Calgary's population. Additionally, information was incorporated from published reports about recreation and leisure activities, and from various planning initiatives including the Calgary Arts Development Authority, [Arts Spaces Strategy](#)¹, and the Calgary Sport Council, [A 10 Year Strategy for Sport Facility Development and Enhancement](#)².

Results of the RAGA surveys and focus groups affirm the importance of recreation and leisure in the lives of Calgarians across the city. Participants acknowledged the many individual and community benefits of recreation; indeed, 97% of survey respondents feel that it is important that The City of Calgary be involved in the provision of recreation opportunities. By providing a current and comprehensive snapshot of the recreation needs and preferences of Calgarians, the RAGA research can be used to guide strategic planning efforts in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors, and can also serve as a foundation for future research into recreation and leisure in Calgary.

About This Report

This report is part of a series that provides a concise summary of each of the twelve individual Study Areas for easy and convenient reference by interested parties and stakeholders. It is not intended to replace the rich detail provided in the full report, which can be found [online](#)³. Readers are encouraged to consult the larger document for more detailed analyses and conclusions.

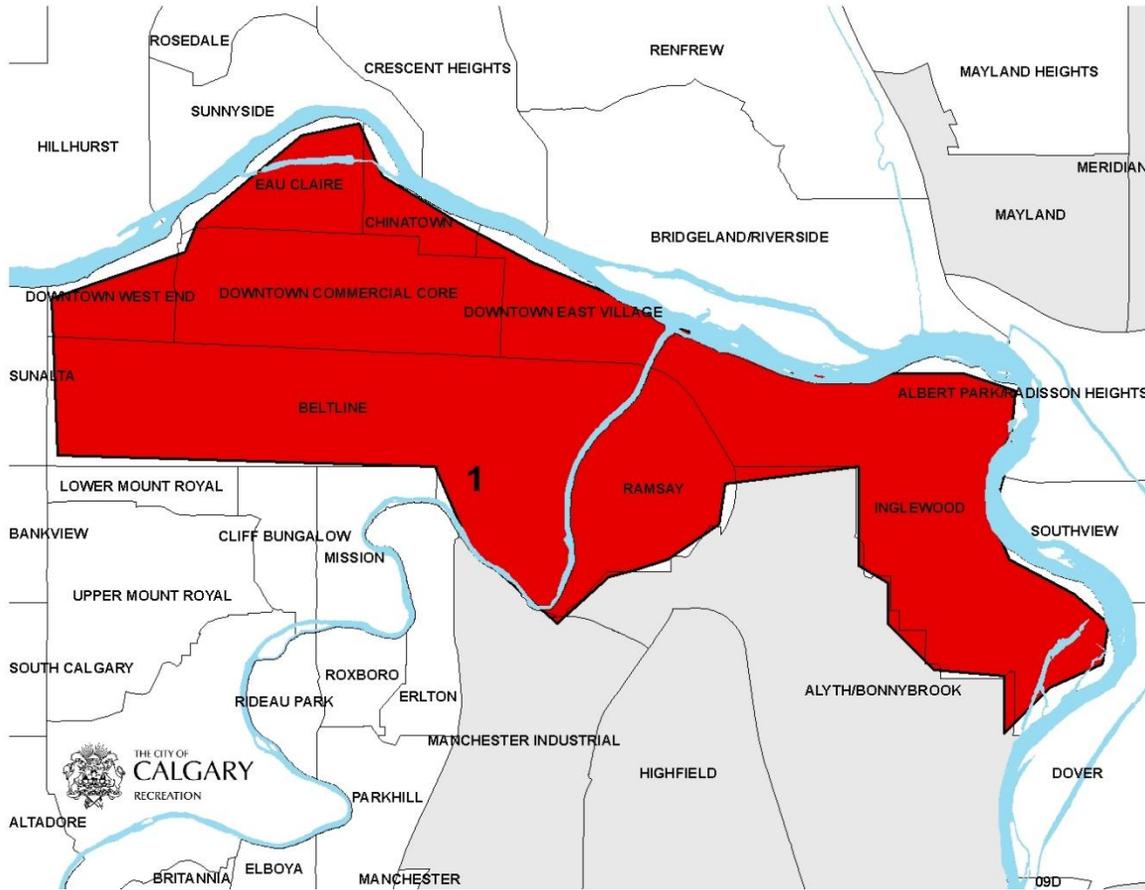
RAGA provides a comprehensive and detailed overview of the recreation activities that Calgarians engage in, and identifies needs, preferences, challenges and opportunities for recreation planning and service delivery across the city. However, while the results presented here are representative of the Study Area, they are not statistically valid at a community level. As such, RAGA cannot replace community needs and preference studies, but rather can provide a thorough and relevant context at the Study Area level that in turn can provide general insights into each region, and also guide the development of community-specific research initiatives.

¹ <http://www.calgaryartsdevelopment.com/artspace-strategy>

² http://www.calgarysportcouncil.ca/images/stories/File/homepage/final_report_sport_facility_strategic_plan_may_23_2008.pdf

³ http://www.calgary.ca/docgallery/bu/recreation/planning_and_policy/gap_analysis_report.pdf

Area 1



Area 1 represents the Centre City area of Calgary, and contains the following communities:

- Beltline (Connaught/Victoria Park)
- Chinatown
- Downtown Commercial Core
- East Village
- Eau Claire
- Inglewood
- Ramsay
- West End

A total of 500 telephone surveys were conducted with residents in this area. With a population of 38,885⁴, a sample of this size yields results that are accurate within +/- 4.35%, 19 times out of 20.

⁴ 2006 Federal Census

Geodemographics

Community Development

The Centre City area was the first part of Calgary to be constructed; development in Area 1 began in the 1880s, and continued in phases until the late 1920s.

While Calgary as a whole has experienced significant population growth, particularly in the past few decades, this growth has not been evenly distributed across the city, with some communities making significant gains while others lose residents. **Area 1 has experienced some modest population gains in recent years; between 2002 and 2008, the population increased by 3,838 residents, or 11.0%.**

City of Calgary planning documents suggest that in the short term (i.e. over the next 20 years), population growth will occur primarily in the inner city and in outlying areas, and those areas that have experienced population decline may in fact experience further decline as a reflection of typical community lifecycle aging. However, over the longer term, increased densification in Calgary is expected to take place in developed communities. The Municipal Development Plan states that The City of Calgary will endeavour to accommodate 50 per cent of future population growth over the next 60 to 70 years within Developed Areas of the city.

Currently, numerous high-rise condominium towers are under construction in the Centre City; up to 3,500 new dwellings will boost the population of Area 1 by an estimated five to six thousand new residents once they are occupied.⁵

Such a projected community development pattern will have important implications for recreation amenity planning in Area 1. Increasing the number of facility-based recreation and leisure amenities may be challenged by a lack of undeveloped real estate in the Centre City. On the other hand, ample park and pathway infrastructure may be able to absorb an influx of new residents while meeting the recreation needs and preferences of existing residents.

Population growth at the city level and community lifecycles are important and tangible considerations for recreation service planning and delivery in Calgary. Other considerations, such as the aging and growing diversity of the population will help shape the expectations that Calgarians have for recreation service provision in different areas of the City.

⁵ Municipal Development Plan

Age

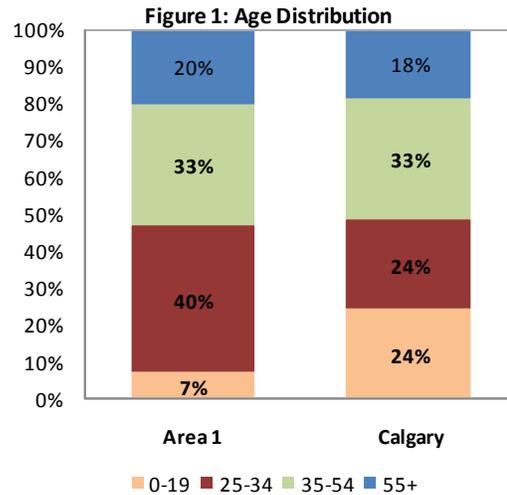
Data indicate that there are a number of distinctive age profiles in different areas of Calgary. **Area 1 has a substantially higher proportion of residents between 25 and 34 years of age in comparison to Calgary as a whole; four in ten residents are in this age cohort.** In contrast, there is a much lower proportion of children and youth under 20. This suggests a higher than average composition of young professionals in Area 1.

It should be noted, however, that the overall demographic profile of Calgary is expected to change over the next few decades. In particular, the age composition of residents will become older. In contrast, growth in the number of residents who are newborn to age 14 within the city will be minimal.

Should these trends continue over the next two decades, there is likely to be a substantial effect on the demand for recreation and leisure, most notably a significant increase in demand from pre-seniors and seniors as the baby boomers age.

In Area 1, the aging of the population may be experienced differently than in other areas of Calgary. Efforts to increase population density in the centre city, such as high-rise condominium construction and Transit Oriented Development may enhance the appeal of the Centre City for older residents. On the other hand, the population of new Calgarians in the 25-34 age cohort has increased faster than other cohorts as migrants have come to the city to take advantage of a relatively strong economy⁶. To the extent that this pattern continues, this cohort may continue to be strongly represented in Area 1.

However, as in other areas, RAGA data suggests that as the population ages, these older residents are likely to be more involved in recreation and leisure pursuits compared to previous generations of seniors. In particular, they will likely want to be both physically and mentally active to ensure that they maintain a quality of life that is sustainable for longer than has been observed in previous generations.



⁶ Municipal Development Plan

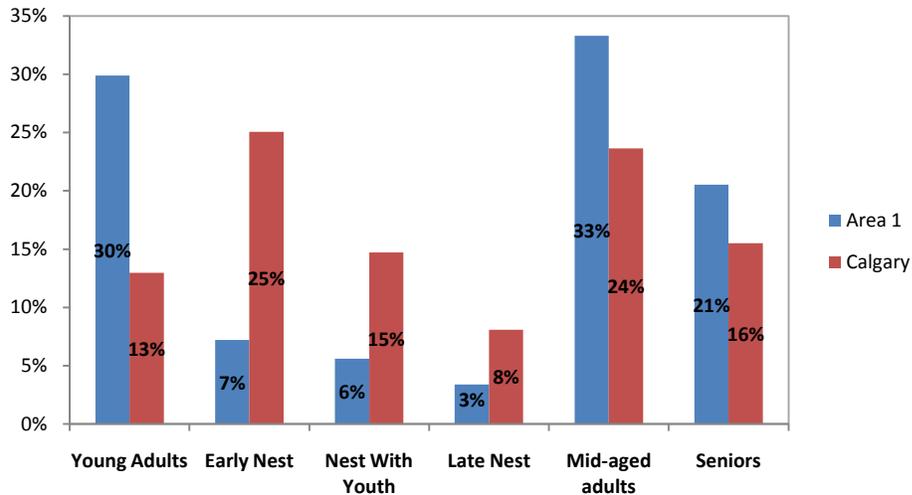
Family Life Stage

Family life stage is based on the concept that most families progress through a number of distinct phases over time, particularly with respect to household composition (both ages of household members and identified categories of household). RAGA divided survey respondents into six family life stages:

- **Young adults (without children/youth)** – adults are primarily under 45 years of age, no children or youth are present;
- **Early nest** –children/youth are primarily under 13 years of age, adults are any age;
- **Nest with youth** –children/youth are primarily between 13 and 19 years of age, adults are any age;
- **Late nest** –children/youth are primarily between 20 and 24 years of age, adults are any age;
- **Mid-aged adults** – adults are primarily between 45 and 64 years of age, no children or youth present; and
- **Seniors** –adults are primarily 65 years of age or older, no children or youth present.

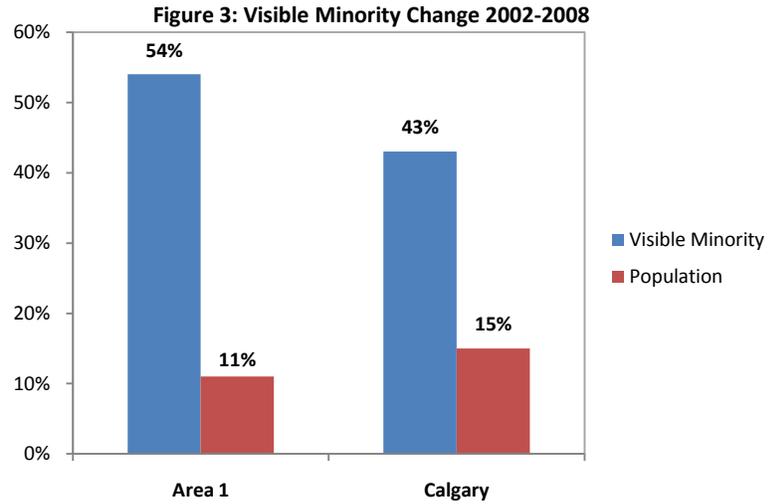
Not surprisingly given the respective age profiles, the family life stages of Area 1 residents are also somewhat different than in Calgary as a whole. Fully one-third of Area 1 households are Mid-Aged Adults, and another three in ten are Young Adults. **There are relatively few households with children in this part of the city.** This suggests a much different population in the Centre City area than in other areas of the City, and further suggests different recreation needs and preferences among its residents

Figure 2: Family Life Stage



Diversity

Not only is Calgary’s population growing, it is also becoming more diverse. Data from Statistics Canada show that between 2001 and 2006, the proportion of the population of Calgarians considered to be visible minorities rose from 19%, or one in five residents, to 23%, or nearly one in four residents. In fact, the visible minority population in Calgary increased 43% between 2001 and 2006 compared to 15% for the population as a whole between 2002 and 2008. **In Area 1, while the overall population growth has been lower than the city as a whole, growth of the visible minority population has been significant, increasing by 54% between 2002 and 2008.** This suggests that the demographic profiles of communities in Area 1 have changed considerably in a relatively short period of time.



Additional data reveals that various Study Areas have attracted residents of different ethnic origins. **In Area 1 there is a somewhat higher concentration of residents from East and Southeast Asia, and a lower concentration of residents from the British Isles, Western Europe, South Asian nations, and Other North American regions.**

Table 1: Population by Ethnic Origin (%)					
Origin	Area 1	Calgary	Origin	Area 1	Calgary
British Isles origins	38	45	African origins	4	2
East and Southeast Asian origins	19	13	South Asian origins	3	6
Western European origins	17	21	Latin, Central and South American Origins	2	2
Other North American origins	15	20	Arab origins	2	2
Eastern European origins	15	16	Caribbean origins	1	1
French origins	8	10	West Asian origins	1	1
Southern European origins	7	7	Oceania origins	0	0
Northern European origins	6	8			
Aboriginal origins	4	4			

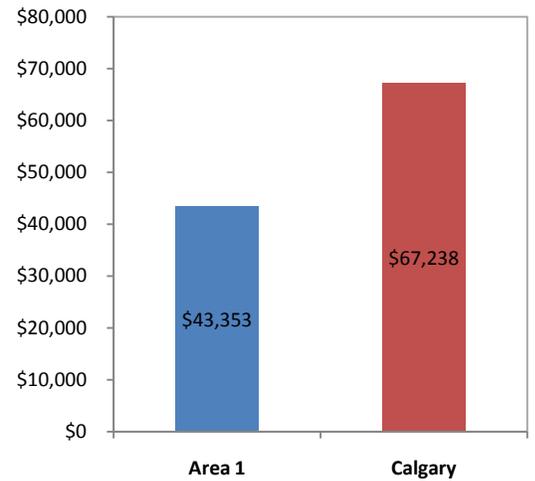
≥ 3% of Calgary Average	≤3% of Calgary Average
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Increasing diversification has the potential to impact recreation amenity provision to the extent that it introduces or emphasizes different and/or specialized recreation needs and preferences, as well as distinct cultural, language and community traditions.

Household Income

RAGA found that household income levels among the various Study Areas differ considerably. **Median annual household incomes in Area 1 are substantially lower - by an average of almost \$24,000 - than for the city as a whole.** The affordability of recreation and leisure opportunities in the city is a concern for many Calgarians, particularly those with lower household incomes, and impacts the degree to which they consider themselves involved in recreation and leisure activities. Family life stage is also an important consideration, and given the smaller proportion of families with children and higher concentration of young and mid aged adults with no children at home in Area 1, many residents in this area may not face financial barriers to the extent of households where children's recreation and leisure activities represent a significant expense.

Figure 4: Household Income

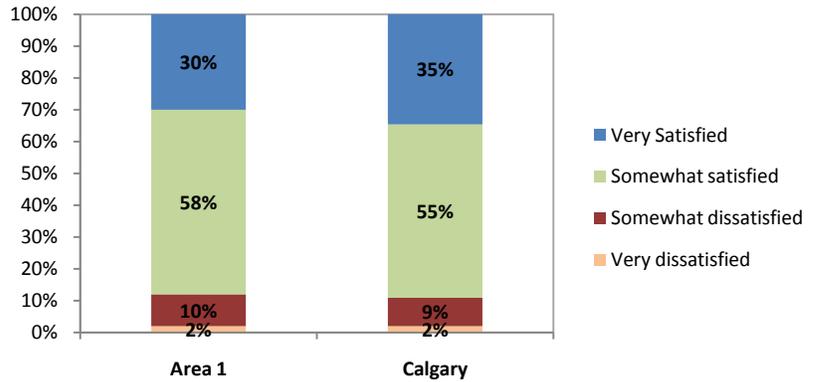


Overall Perceptions of Recreation and Leisure Opportunities

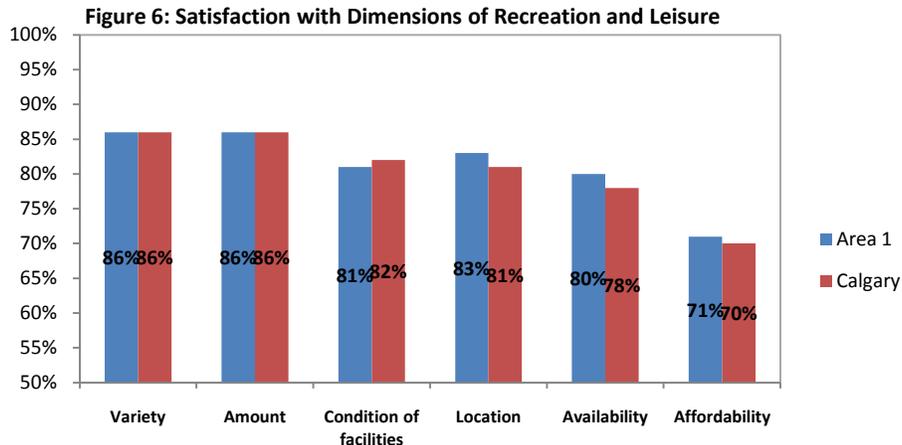
The RAGA survey results found that for the most part, Calgarians are satisfied with the recreation and leisure activities undertaken by members of their household. Overall, nine in ten respondents (90%) stated that they were very or somewhat satisfied with their recreation and leisure activities. Still, there are notable differences observed among the various Study Areas, especially when the ‘very satisfied’ responses are considered.

Results from the RAGA surveys show that while overall satisfaction levels are high, **respondents from Area 1 gave similar satisfaction ratings to their recreation and leisure activities compared to respondents from all Study Areas combined.**

Figure 5: Overall Satisfaction with Recreation and Leisure Opportunities



There are a number of factors that may contribute to the overall satisfaction that Calgarians have with the recreation and leisure activities of their households. The amount and variety of recreation opportunities, the location of opportunities and the condition of recreation facilities, the availability of suitable recreation opportunities and their affordability are all thought to play a role in how individuals, families and communities experience recreation. The RAGA surveys explored satisfaction along these dimensions; Figure 6 shows the percentage of respondents from Area 1 and from all Calgarians who were ‘somewhat satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with each.



Recreation Amenities Gap Analysis Summary Report Area 1

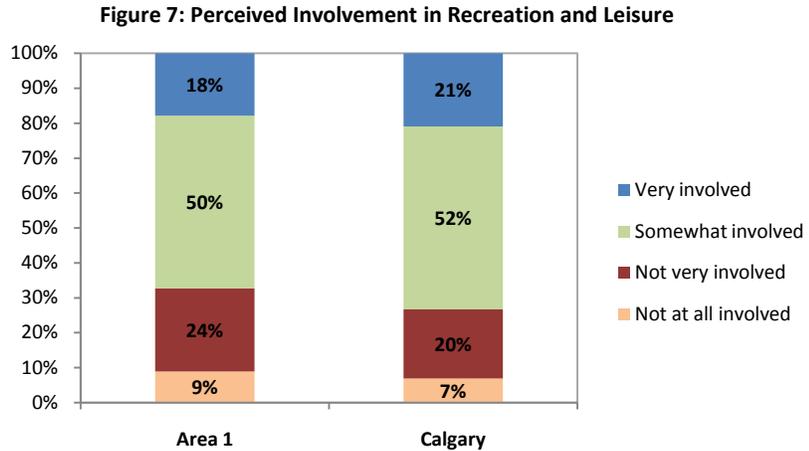
Survey results indicate that respondents in Area 1 are more satisfied with some aspects of recreation and leisure service provision than others. Overall, almost nine in ten survey respondents indicated that they were 'somewhat satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the variety and the amount of recreation and leisure opportunities, (86%). About seven in ten were satisfied with the affordability of recreation and leisure opportunities, which is similar to the rating for Calgary as a whole. **Overall, Area 1 residents gave similar satisfaction ratings on most dimensions of recreation opportunities than Calgarians as a whole.**

Of all of the aspects of recreation and leisure service provision that were examined, affordability rated lowest among residents of Calgary as a whole as well as those in Area 1. Further analysis of survey data shows that in general, respondents with lower household incomes are significantly less likely to be satisfied with affordability of recreation and leisure opportunities than households with higher incomes. In addition respondents from early nest and nest with youth households are less satisfied with the variety, condition, location and availability of recreation and leisure opportunities. Finally, RAGA found that for the city as a whole, visible minority respondents are markedly less satisfied with the amount, location and affordability of recreation and leisure opportunities in Calgary.

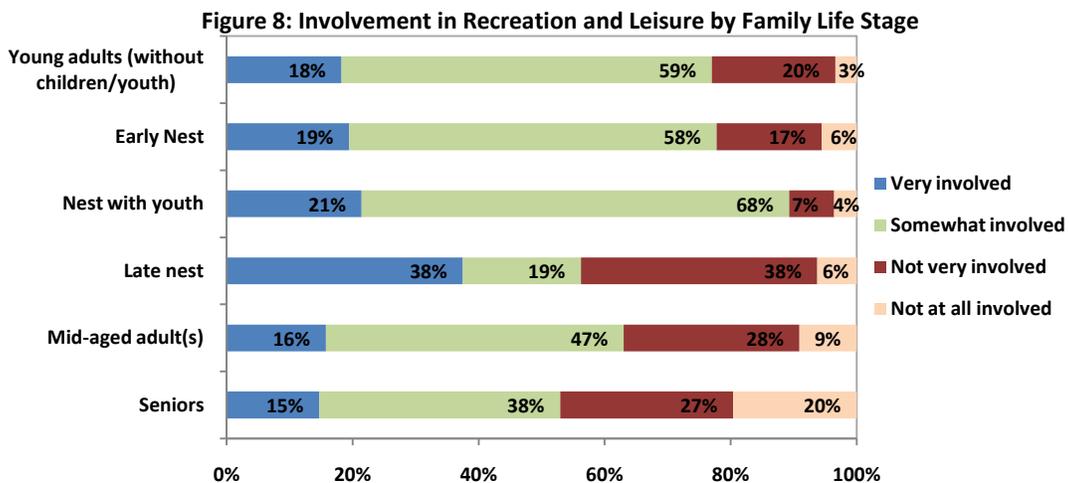
It may be assumed that, since there is a much higher proportion of households in Area 1 that do not have children living at home, satisfaction with the affordability of recreation and leisure opportunities would be higher than in other areas, or Calgary as a whole. However, this may be offset by lower average household incomes and/or a higher proportion of residents in visible minority populations.

Level of Involvement in Recreation and Leisure

To gain a sense of Calgarians' involvement in recreation and leisure, respondents were asked to rate the extent to which they perceive themselves to be involved with recreation and leisure activities. As can be seen in Figure 7, a slightly smaller proportion of Area 1 respondents (68%) indicated that they were 'very involved' or 'somewhat involved' in recreation and leisure as compared to Calgary as a whole (73%).



Survey findings suggest that in general, early nest, nest with youth and late nest households (i.e. households with children present) in Calgary are somewhat more likely to perceive themselves to be involved in recreation and leisure across the family life stages. However, in Area 1 the pattern is somewhat different. **In particular, Late Nest households in Area 1 had a 17% lower percentage of respondents who indicated being 'very' or 'somewhat' involved in recreation and leisure than in Calgary as a whole. However, 38% reported being 'very' as opposed to 'somewhat' involved⁷.**



⁷ Results should be interpreted with caution, as there were just 16 respondents in this cohort.

Recreation and Leisure Activities

One way that RAGA examined involvement in recreation and leisure activities was by considering the types of activities that Calgarians across the various age cohorts participate in. From this exploration a number of general observations were made, which apply to Area 1 as well as to Calgary as a whole.

- Swimming, cycling and walking are multi-generational activities, ranking in the top ten activities among all age groups.
- Fitness training becomes popular among 13 to 19 year olds, and remains popular throughout the older cohorts.
- Individual pursuits such as fitness training, golf, reading books, hiking, running/jogging, yoga, gardening, and attending musical concerts and live theatre become more prominent in the 20 to 44 year age group and continue into later age groups.
- Children and youth are more likely to be involved in a variety of sport activities and involvement in sport decreases and, in some cases changes as a person ages.
- Creative activities such as playing a musical instrument and participating in ballet and jazz dancing are more likely to be engaged in among children/ youth, while observatory arts and cultural activities such as musical concerts and live theatre become more prominent in adulthood.
- Beginning in the 45 to 64 age group, more passive activities such as traveling, volunteering, and attending a sport event as a spectator become prominent. These types of activities continue into the 65+ age category, with increased popularity in book reading, gardening and more social activities like playing cards, attending church, and playing board games/puzzles.

Table 2 reflects the higher involvement in recreation and leisure activities reported by residents of Area 1 compared to Calgary as a whole. The RAGA surveys asked respondents to identify recreation and leisure activities in which members of their household had participated in the previous twelve months. While the top reported activities are relatively consistent, there are significant differences in the frequency with which residents from each age cohort report having engaged in certain activities over the previous year.

Recreation Amenities Gap Analysis Summary Report Area 1

Table 2: Top 30 Most Common Activities by Age Group (Area 1)

Under 13 (n=215)		13-19 (n=113)		20-44 (n=327)		45-64 (n=252)		65+ (n=51)	
Activity	%	Activity	%	Activity	%	Activity	%	Activity	%
Swimming - for pleasure	54	Swimming - for pleasure	58	Walking for pleasure	53	Walking for pleasure	62	Walking for pleasure	58
Swimming - lessons	54	Basketball	29	Fitness training - workout/gym	34	Cycling - for pleasure	29	Books/reading	21
Going to the park/playground	36	Swimming - lessons	29	Swimming - for pleasure	31	Fitness training - workout/gym	27	Fitness training - workout/gym	19
Cycling - for pleasure	18	Cycling - for pleasure	23	Cycling - for pleasure	29	Swimming - for pleasure	23	Visiting friends/relatives	17
Books/reading	15	Skiing - Alpine	23	Hiking	20	Golf	17	Swimming - for pleasure	12
Camp (summer/day camp)	13	Running	16	Running	17	Books/reading	12	Golf	10
Soccer - Outdoor	10	Fitness training - workout/gym	13	Golf	14	Hiking	11	Television - watching	10
Skiing - Alpine	10	Music - play an instrument	13	Park	12	Running	11	Traveling	9
Craft or hobby	10	Books/reading	13	Attend movies	12	Television - watching	8	Cycling - for pleasure	8
Walking for pleasure	8	Badminton	13	Books/reading	11	Traveling	8	Gardening	7
Camping	8	Volleyball/Beach volleyball	13	Hockey - Ice	10	Attend movies	6	Cards/playing	7
Boy scouts/guides/cadets	8	Tennis	13	Soccer - Outdoor	9	Visiting friends/relatives	5	Hiking	5
Soccer - Indoor	5	Soccer - Outdoor	10	Television - watching	9	Skiing - Alpine	5	Volunteering	5
Going to the library	5	Television - watching	10	Tennis	8	Yoga	5	Dancing - Other - Participant	5
Computer - games	5	Soccer - Indoor	6	Soccer - Indoor	8	Attend music concert	5	Church	4
Visiting friends/relatives	5	Visiting friends/relatives	6	Visiting friends/relatives	7	Tennis	4	Board games/puzzles	4
Hiking	3	Skateboarding	6	Camping	7	Camping	3	Attend music concert	3
Dancing - Ballet - Participant	3	Walking for pleasure	3	Skiing - Alpine	5	Attend live theatre (not movies)	3	Attend live theatre (not movies)	3
Zoo	3	Computer - games	3	Yoga	5	Hockey - Ice	3	Park	3
Skating for pleasure/fun	0	Football	3	Attend music concert	5	Gardening	2	Curling	3
Hockey - Ice	0	Skating for pleasure/fun	3	Computer - games	4	Skating for pleasure/fun	2	Bowling - 5/10 pin	3
Music - play an instrument	0	Attend movies	3	Attend live theatre (not movies)	4	Park	2	Library	2
Gymnastics/Rhythmic	0	Dancing - Other - Participant	3	Snowboarding	4	Craft or hobby	2	Attend movies	2
Dancing - Other - Participant	0	Baseball	3	Skating for pleasure/fun	3	Volunteering	2	Camping	1
Basketball	0	Hockey - Ice	0	Library	3	Fishing	2	Skiing - Alpine	1
Baseball	0	Hiking	0	Baseball	3	Attend a sport event (spectator)	2	Aquasize	1
Martial arts	0	Snowboarding	0	Basketball	2	Library	1	Yoga	1
Television - watching	0	Golf	0	Fishing	2	Skiing - Nordic	1	Knitting/sewing	0
Dancing - Jazz - Participant	0	Camping	0	Craft or hobby	2	Curling	1	Attend a sport event (spectator)	0
Golf	0	Going to the library	0	Gardening	1	Dancing - Other - Participant	1	Craft or hobby	0

≥ 3% of Calgary Average

≤3% of Calgary Average

Recreation Amenities Gap Analysis Summary Report Area 1

In general, residents in each age cohort in Area 1 appear to participate in many recreation activities to a lesser extent than in Calgary as a whole. Further, data show that Area 1 residents, with exception of the 20-44 cohort participate in a fewer number of activities on average than in Calgary as a whole.

Among the under-13 year old age group, swimming, either for pleasure or in lessons was the most common activity in Area 1 as it was for all Study Areas. However, there were some notable differences between Area 1 and Calgary as a whole. Going to the park /playground was indicated by 7% more residents in Area 1 than in Calgary as a whole, as was summer/day camps. In contrast, cycling for pleasure was indicated by fewer residents of Area 1, (-10%), as was walking for pleasure (-8%) and cycling for pleasure (-6%). In addition, there were a number of activities that ranked among the thirty most common for Calgary, but which had no participants among Area 1 survey participants. Notable among these are skating for pleasure (-21%), ice hockey (-16%) and playing an instrument (-16%).

Swimming, both in lessons (+19%) and for pleasure (+16%) and basketball (+12%) were the most commonly cited activities among 13 to 19 year olds in Area 1, and were each indicated by substantially more residents here than in Calgary as a whole. A number of activities were reported by fewer residents of Area 1 than in Calgary as a whole including outdoor soccer (-13%), indoor soccer (-12%) and walking for pleasure (-12%). Further, as with the younger cohort, there were a number of activities that ranked among the thirty most common for Calgary, but which had no participants among Area 1 survey participants, including ice hockey (-18%) and hiking (-10%).

In the 20 to 44 age group, walking for pleasure was the top rated activity, and was indicated by 12% more survey respondents in Area 1 than in Calgary as a whole. Conversely, swimming for pleasure was reported by 14% fewer residents here than in Calgary as a whole. In general, many activities were reported in similar or somewhat smaller proportions of Area 1 residents in this cohort.

Among adults between the ages of 45 and 64, walking for pleasure was most common and was prevalent in all Areas. Table 2 shows that in general, Area 1 residents were less involved in a number of activities than residents of Calgary as a whole, notably swimming for pleasure (-8%) gardening (-8%) and golf (-7%).

Walking for pleasure was again the most common activity among people in the 65+ age group in Area 1, though less so than for Calgary as a whole (-12%). Residents of this cohort in Area 1 were generally less active on average, notably in golf (-12%) and gardening (-8%).

Many of the top activities in which residents of Area 1 participate are similar to those in other areas, though as shown for most cohorts, their level of involvement tends to be lower than in Calgary as a whole. Though, patterns are difficult to identify, it appears that in particular, involvement in the 'for pleasure' activities tends to be lower in Area 1.

Barriers to Recreation and Leisure Involvement

RAGA survey respondents were asked to identify factors that may prevent them and/or members of their household from being involved in recreation and leisure activities to the extent that they would like. Interestingly, 51% of all respondents and 57% of respondents from Area 1 indicated that they already recreate as often as they would like. Still, more than four in ten respondents in this Area indicated that they would like to recreate more than they do currently, and are facing one or more barriers. Moreover, these perceived barriers may represent potential opportunities for recreation service providers to improve recreation products, services and facilities to address some of these challenges, and ultimately provide more opportunities for all Calgarians to increase/maintain their level of participation in recreation activities.

Table 3: Barriers to participation in recreation activities (%)		
	Area 1	Calgary
Personal interest/situation	70	63
Already participate as often as would like	57	51
Involved in other activities	7	9
Just lazy	3	2
Not interested	3	1
No children/children grown up	0	0
Other priorities/time constraints	15	17
Work commitments	9	6
No time	5	9
Travel a lot	1	0
Family commitments	0	2
School commitments	0	0
Facility/Program Accessibility	6	14
Prices/fees too high/too costly	3	3
Too far away/inconvenient	1	4
The right kinds of recreation/leisure opportunities/amenities not available	1	2
Opportunities available do not my schedule	1	1
Other	0	0
Opportunities available too full/crowded	0	1
Nothing organized/available	0	1
Lack of awareness/information	0	1
Social Isolation	7	6
Cannot afford	3	3
Poor health/physically challenged	3	2
Age (too old)	1	1
Other	1	0
Feel uncomfortable with other people who participate/intimidated by others	0	0
Don't know	0	0
Total	100	100

Recreation Amenities Gap Analysis Summary Report Area 1

Recreation service providers may be in a position to address certain barriers, such as those related to facility/program accessibility and social isolation, which may present opportunities for enhanced or additional services. Barriers related to personal situations and time constraints, however, may be less easily addressed. Area 1 residents were more likely to report these personal interest barriers, and were less inclined to mention facility/program accessibility barriers than in Calgary as a whole.

Latent Demand for Recreation and Leisure

As a primary goal of RAGA was to identify potential service/amenity gaps, survey respondents were specifically asked if there were recreation and leisure activities that they were interested in and in which activities they do not currently participate. RAGA survey results indicated that 30% of respondents from all Study Areas combined, though just 24% of those from Area 1 were interested in one or more other recreation activities in which that they do not currently participate. Table 4 shows the percentage of respondents interested in participating in each of the top 30 most common activities.

Table 4: Recreation Activities of Interest (%)					
(Organized by Top 30 Most Common Activities)					
	Area 1	Calgary		Area 1	Calgary
	(n=500)	(n=6,024)		(n=500)	(n=6,024)
Swimming - for pleasure	4	4	Dancing - Ballroom	1	1
Fitness training - workout/gym	3	4	Art class/program	0	2
Attend educational courses	2	1	Music - play an instrument	0	1
Tennis	2	2	Soccer - Outdoor	0	1
Dancing - Other - Participant	1	2	Golf	0	1
Yoga	1	2	Craft or hobby	0	1
Martial arts	1	2	Aquasize	0	1
Skating for pleasure/fun	1	1	Running/jogging	0	1
Swimming - lessons	1	1	Hockey - Ice	0	1
Skiing - Alpine	1	1	Gymnastics/Rhythmic	0	1
Cycling - for pleasure	1	1	Curling	0	1
Parachuting	1	1	Courses	0	1
Walking for pleasure	1	1	Rock climbing	0	1
Skiing - Nordic	1	1	Badminton	0	1
Hiking	1	1	Baseball	0	1

The activities indicated are numerous and varied, but in many instances are similar to the commonly reported activities of other respondents. Interestingly, swimming and fitness training - both facility-based activities - were the most frequently mentioned activities of interest, although swimming for pleasure was reported by fewer Area 1 residents, with the exception of the 13-19 age cohort, than in other areas Calgary. This may point to perceived amenity gaps in facility-based recreation opportunities in this part of Calgary

Recreation and Leisure Amenity Use

RAGA demonstrates that Calgarians on the whole expect The City of Calgary to be involved in the provision of recreation and leisure services, and a primary goal of RAGA was to identify gaps in recreation and leisure service provision. To do so, it was important to consider amenity use.

In Calgary, there are recreation and leisure amenities available to all residents, regardless of where they may reside. At a minimum, there are parks and pathways that offer recreation and leisure opportunities at no cost, and these are important and well used amenities among residents. However, RAGA findings suggest that there may be special circumstances in each area of the city that recreation service providers ought to consider in terms of providing recreation and leisure opportunities to Calgarians.

Table 5: Current Amenity Use (%)					
	Area 1 (n=500)	Calgary (n=6,023)		Area 1 (n=500)	Calgary (n=6,023)
Parks	75	85	Outdoor rectangular fields	12	19
Pathways	69	78	Outdoor ice rinks	11	30
Public Libraries	57	67	Classrooms	11	19
Performance theatres or stages	45	44	Indoor ice rinks	11	17
Fitness facilities with weight training/ cardio equipment	44	53	Meeting rooms	10	22
Indoor swimming pools/Leisure aquatic facilities	38	61	Outdoor Tennis courts	9	13
Neighbourhood gathering places	36	42	Multi-purpose rooms	8	16
Arts centres or arts studios	24	22	Dance studios	6	8
Gymnasiums	20	30	Outdoor ball diamonds	5	15
Playgrounds or tot lots	13	37	Squash/Racquetball courts	4	4
Outdoor rectangular fields	12	32	Indoor rectangular fields	0	17
Outdoor ice rinks	12	29	Indoor Tennis courts	0	2

For the most part, Area 1 residents use the listed recreation and leisure amenities at lower, and often significantly lower levels than do Calgarians as a whole. As in all areas, parks and pathways are the most commonly used amenities, likely because they are located throughout the city, are multi-purpose and have no cost. Not surprisingly given the family life stage profile of Area 1, amenities such as playgrounds/tot lots are used by a smaller proportion of residents, though the pattern of less use extends to almost every amenity listed.

The specific amenities that residents of Area 1 use can be found in the main RAGA Report; a listing of the top 5 most frequently used amenities in each category is provided in Appendix A.

Perceived Recreation and Leisure Amenity Gaps

To gain an understanding of community perspectives on possible gaps in available recreation and leisure amenities, survey respondents were asked to identify amenities that they felt were needed within their areas.

On the whole, a considerable portion of respondents from Area 1 (57%) suggested that nothing was needed, which is a higher proportion than for the city as a whole (47%). Additional parks were the only perceived amenity need that was reported by a larger proportion of Area 1 residents.

Table 6: Perceived Amenity Needs and Expectations (%)

	Area 1 (n=500)	Calgary (n=6,023)		Area 1 (n=500)	Calgary (n=6,023)
Nothing	57	47	A community centre	1	3
Parks	10	5	Outdoor rectangular fields	1	2
Pathways	5	5	Dance studios	1	1
An indoor swimming pool	4	8	Playgrounds/tot lots	1	1
Other	4	4	A public library branch	1	2
A Southland/Village Square Leisure Centre	2	7	Performance theatres or stages	1	1
A(nother) regional recreation facility	2	6	Outdoor pool	1	1
Indoor ice rink	2	9	Squash/racquetball	1	1
Gymnasium	2	3	Indoor tennis	1	1
Arts centres or arts studios	2	2	Outdoor ball diamonds	1	1
Multi-purpose room	2	2	A leisure aquatic pool/wave pool/lazy river	0	3
Gathering places for community residents	2	2	Public golf course/golf facility	0	1
More facilities/amenities	2	3	Running track/indoor/outdoor	0	1
Outdoor ice rinks	2	4	Outdoor tennis	0	1
Aquatic/fitness Centre	2	2	Classrooms	0	1
Indoor rectangular fields	1	3	Skateboard park	0	1

Summary and Conclusion

The research conducted as part of RAGA suggests a number of important considerations that must be made when thinking about recreation amenity planning and delivery in Calgary. Broad trends, such as the growing, aging and diversifying population will impact the demand for various recreation and leisure opportunities throughout the city. However, one of the key benefits of RAGA is the demonstration of how different regions of the city vary in terms of involvement, activities, barriers and perceived amenity gaps. Such knowledge offers a great deal of insight for recreation and leisure service providers in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors alike.

As has been shown, Area 1 has some similarities to the rest of Calgary, but also has some particular characteristics that set it apart from other areas of the city, including:

- Modest population growth in recent years, though significant development is underway, and is population expected to grow substantially in the short and long term, as outlined in the Municipal Development Plan
- Lower than average household incomes, reflected in family life stage profile
- Lower than average levels of involvement in recreation and leisure activities
- Similar or higher than average levels of satisfaction with various dimensions of recreation service provision
- Lower than average usage of many recreation amenities, combined with lower reporting of non-personal barriers.

Overall, the findings suggest that residents in Area 1 have different recreation needs and preferences than residents in other areas of Calgary. Their lower levels of involvement are not accompanied by lower satisfaction ratings, particular barriers or a clearly needed amenity. This might be surprising given the lower household incomes and higher proportion of visible minorities. However, it may be that the Area 1 has a relatively high proportion of single professionals whose personal interests and individual incomes are such that neither represents a significant perceived barrier to recreation and leisure opportunities. However, as the cultural and business epicentre of Calgary, recreation planning in Area 1 must consider the needs and preferences of more Calgarians than those who reside there.

Ultimately, responsive recreation service provision in Area 1, as in all areas of Calgary, will require an ongoing commitment to public engagement and a careful monitoring of demographic and recreation trends among all Calgarians.

Recreation Amenities Gap Analysis Summary Report Area 1

Appendix A

Appendix A: Amenities used most often by Area 1 survey respondents (Top 5 for each amenity type)

Parks (n=441)		Pathways (n=385)		Indoor Swimming Pools or Leisure Aquatic Facilities (n=316)		Public Libraries (n=359)		Playgrounds/Tot Lots (n=199)		Fitness Facilities (n=291)	
Facility	%	Facility	%	Facility	%	Facility	%	Facility	%	Facility	%
Prince's Island Park	35	Bow River Pathway	31	Talisman Centre	29	Downtown/Central/WR Castell	75	In community	81	Talisman centre (lindsay park)	21
Other	24	Other	30	YMCA- Eau Claire	17	Memorial Park	16	Other	15	Other	16
In community	21	In community	26	Other	13	Other	4	Don't know	5	YMCA- Eau Claire	12
Bowness Park	6	Prince's Island Park	13	Inglewood pool	10	Forest Lawn	2			Condo-Private facilities	11
Edworthy Park	5	Bowness Park	2	Betline Aquatic and Fitness Centre	8	Signal Hill/Westhills	1			World Health Club	5
Total	91	Total	102	Total	77	Total	98	Total	101	Total	49
Neighbourhood Gathering Places (n=235)		Performance Theatres and Stages (n=248)		Outdoor Rectangular Fields (n=181)		Indoor Ice Rinks (n=0)		Gymnasiums (n=167)		Outdoor Ice Rinks (n=157)	
Facility	%	Facility	%	Facility	%	Facility	%	Facility	%	Facility	%
Other	58	Jack Singer Concert Hall/Epcore Centre	26	Other	32	Other	25	Other	25	In community/centre	42
Don't know	11	Other	17	Community	25	Saddledome	13	Talisman Centre	22	Olympic Plaza	27
Retail locations	11	Jubilee Auditorium	13	Don't know	14	U of C- Olympic Oval	11	YMCA- Eau Claire	14	Park/Lake	14
Community Centres	10	Calgary Centre for Performing Arts/Theatre Calgary	12	School	10	Don't know/Refused	11	Don't know/Refused	8	Don't know	8
Parks	8	Downtown-Unspecified	6	McMahon Stadium/Park	10	Calgary Centennial Arenas	6	Mount Royal College	7	Other	5
Total	98	Total	74	Total	91	Total	66	Total	76	Total	96
Outdoor Ball Diamonds (n=150)		Running Tracks (n=150)		Multi-Purpose Rooms (n=150)		Arts Centres/Arts Studios Rooms (n=135)		Indoor Rectangular Fields (n=81)		Outdoor Tennis Courts (n=116)	
Facility	%	Facility	%	Facility	%	Facility	%	Facility	%	Facility	%
Other	60	U of C	n/a	Other	30	Other	19	Calgary Soccer Centre	48	In community	59
Don't know	30	Other	n/a	Don't know/Refused	16	Downtown- Unspecified	18	Don't know	17	Other	33
Shouldice Park	5	YMCA- Crowfoot	n/a	Talisman centre	16	Glenbow Museum	17	Talisman centre	13	Don't know	7
School (not post secondary)	3	U of C- Olympic Oval	n/a	Community Centres	14	Art Central	13	Other	9		
Foothills Athletic Park	3	Talisman Centre	n/a	Condo-Private facilities	10	Epcor Cente/Jack Singer Concert Hall	11	Calgary West Soccer Centre	4		
Total	101	Total	0	Total	86	Total	78	Total	91	Total	99
Classrooms (n=78)		Dance Studios (n=78)		Indoor Tennis Courts (n=29)		Meeting Rooms (n=78)		Squash and Racquetball Courts (n=78)			
Facility	%	Facility	%	Facility	%	Facility	%	Facility	%		
Schools	24	Other	22	Don't know	32	Other	40	Other	30		
Other	19	Private Facility/Studio	20	Other	18	Don't know	16	U of C	20		
U of C	17	YMCA	13	Rico Tennis Academy	9	Workplace (offices)	16	Mount Royal College	17		
Don't know	15	Other Community Centres	11	Bow Valley Club	9	Churches	11	YMCA- Eau Claire	10		
Mount Royal College	14	Don't know/Refused	9	Downtown Commercial Core	9	Other community centres	10	Winter Club	7		
Total	89	Total	75	Total	77	Total	93	Total	84		