



THE UNIVERSITY
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

JOINT FINANCIAL TASK FORCE COMMUNITY CENTRES AND ATHLETICS ACCESS FEE ASSESSMENT

This report has been prepared by Neilson Strategies Inc. for the UNA/UBC Joint Financial Task Force. The report is presented for discussion with, and for the sole use of, the UNA and UBC. No representations of any kind are made by the consultants to any party with whom the consultants do not have a contract.



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INTRODUCTION

The University Neighbourhoods Association (UNA) and the University of British Columbia (UBC), Campus + Community Planning, established a Joint Financial Task Force in 2016 to manage the fiscal pressures facing the UNA. The Task Force is now working to implement the recommendations from its second phase of work. Implementation involves undertaking a series of studies to understand and address specific challenges and opportunities related to UNA's organizational structure, service levels and operations, as well as its partnership and cost-sharing relationships with UBC.

As part of the implementation phase, the parties wish to assess the recreation service levels at the UNA's Wesbrook and Old Barn Community Centres, relative to those in place at community centres across a set of comparison communities. The parties also wish to develop, based on a review of others' experiences, approaches for selecting, pricing and measuring the value of programs offered at the centres. Practices followed elsewhere related to the rental of community centre space to for-profit companies arose over the course of the project as an additional topic of interest to the Task Force.

Aside from the community centres and recreation programs, the parties wish to revisit the design of the Athletics Access Fee that is paid to the University by the UNA in exchange for enhanced resident access to specific UBC Athletics' recreation facilities. This fee is paid annually pursuant to the *Neighbours' Agreement*, and on behalf of University Neighbourhood residents. The parties seek independent advice on the types of factors used to determine the fee.

Neilson Strategies Inc. was retained by the parties to examine and to report to the Joint Task Force on all of these topics. This document, titled *Community Centres and Athletics' Access Fee*, presents the consultant's work.

REPORT

The assessment of issues related to the UNA's community centres and their programs is presented as Part I of the report. Part I itself is divided into four chapters:

- *Chapter I.1: Context* — The first chapter provides an overview of the UNA's Wesbrook and Old Barn Community Centres. The services available at the centres are outlined, along with the current staffing levels, service finances and the service governance model. The programs offered through the centres are then discussed, as are the existing approaches taken by the UNA to select programs and price programs.
- *Chapter I.2: Service Level* — Chapter 2 examines the service level provided



by the UNA at the community centres. The chapter looks beyond user expectations and assesses the existing service level against that which is in place in other local jurisdictions.

- *Chapter I.3: Program Selection, Pricing and Measurement* — Chapter 3 reports on the approaches used in benchmark communities to select which programs to provide each season, price the programs, and measure the value of the programs. Practices on the rental of facility space to for-profit firms are also reviewed in this chapter.
- *Chapter I.4: Conclusions and Recommendations* — The final chapter presents conclusions and recommendations on all of the issues explored in Part I, including service levels, approaches to the selection and pricing of programs, metrics to use for measuring program value, and an approach to the rental of community centre space to for-profit firms.

Part II of the report deals with the Athletics' Access Fee. The focus in Part II is on how the access fee is determined — that is, on the specific factors that are used to set the fee level each year. The UNA and UBC wish to ensure that the approach used to set the fee in the years ahead is practicable and defensible, and can be supported by all parties.

Chapter 1 in Part II provides a review of the access fee as it exists today, as well as its evolution over time. Chapter 2 identifies and explains options for calculating the fee on a go-forward basis. Each option features a different set of factors and produces a different fee payment. The options are assessed against a set of evaluation criteria. Recommendations and comments on implementation are provided in Chapter 3.



PART I

COMMUNITY CENTRES

COMMUNITY CENTRES
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CHAPTER I.1 CONTEXT

This chapter profiles the UNA's Wesbrook and Old Barn Community Centres. The services provided at the centres, the centres' current staffing, the existing service finances and the governance model are all outlined. The programs that are offered through the centres are then reviewed, as are the programming delivery model, and the approaches taken by the UNA to select and price programs.

COMMUNITY CENTRES

The Wesbrook Community Centre (WCC) is a 30,000 ft² facility located on Webber Lane in Wesbrook Village. The centre was built by UBC Properties Trust, pursuant to section 6.1 of the *Neighbours' Agreement*, using community amenity contributions raised from development in the University Neighbourhoods. The centre was opened in 2016 as the community's flagship facility with sufficient capacity to service the existing population and future (planned) growth in the University Neighbourhoods.

The Old Barn Community Centre is the much smaller (10,000 ft²), original community facility of the University Neighbourhoods. It is located on Thunderbird Boulevard in Hawthorne Place. The OBCC was built by UBC in 2007 and designated as a UNA community facility pursuant to the *Neighbours' Agreement* in the same year. At one time, UBC and the UNA had planned to decommission the OBCC as a designated facility when the WCC opened for use in early 2016. It was ultimately determined, however, that the ongoing use of the OBCC in addition to the WCC was important to the community, in particular the residents of Hawthorne Place for whom the OBCC's location is most convenient.

Responsibility to operate, maintain, repair and replace both the WCC and the OBCC is assigned to the UNA under section 6.2 of the *Neighbours' Agreement*. Both centres are designated as community facilities in Schedule C of the *Agreement*.

Community Centre Services

Both of the centres feature some of the same services, albeit on a smaller scale at OBCC. Both centres, for example, offer:

- a fitness centre
- a variety of recreation and related programs (e.g., music, arts, education)
- a variety of activity rooms which are used for programs and events, and which can be rented by groups for various uses
- a before- and after-school care program, operated by the YMCA under a tri-partite partnership involving the UNA, UBC and the YMCA
- a front desk, staffed by UNA employees
- adjacent outdoor activity and gathering spaces
- a neighbourhood lounge area



Each of the centres features also certain unique services not available at the other facility. The OBCC, for example, includes a privately-run coffee house, and is host to a variety of large, outdoor community events such as the annual Barn Raising and Lunar New Year celebration. The OBCC also has a "living room" that is used for the before- and after-school care program, and at other times as an informal gathering place. The WCC includes:

- a dedicated yoga studio
- a locker room and shower facility
- a full, sub-dividable gymnasium
- an outdoor water spray park ("Splash Pad")
- the UNA's Green Depot for drop-off recycling
- UNA Recreation office space
- a separate room dedicated for use, at separate times, by seniors and youth

Both community centres are open to residents seven days per week. Exact hours for the facilities are listed in Figure I.1.1.

Figure I.1.1
Community Centre Hours of Operation

Days	Wesbrook			Old Barn	
	Community	Fitness	Splash Pad	Community	Fitness
Mon-Thu	0830 – 2200	0600 – 2200	0800 – 2000	0700 – 2130	0700 – 2130
Friday	0830 – 2030	0600 – 2030	0800 – 2000	0700 – 2130	0700 – 2130
Sat-Sun	0830 – 1800	0830 – 1900	0800 – 2000	0830 – 2200	0830 – 2200
Hours/Week*	85.0	99.5	84.0	99.5	99.5

* Hours for all facilities except the Splash Pad are 10:00 am to 6:00 pm on statutory holidays.

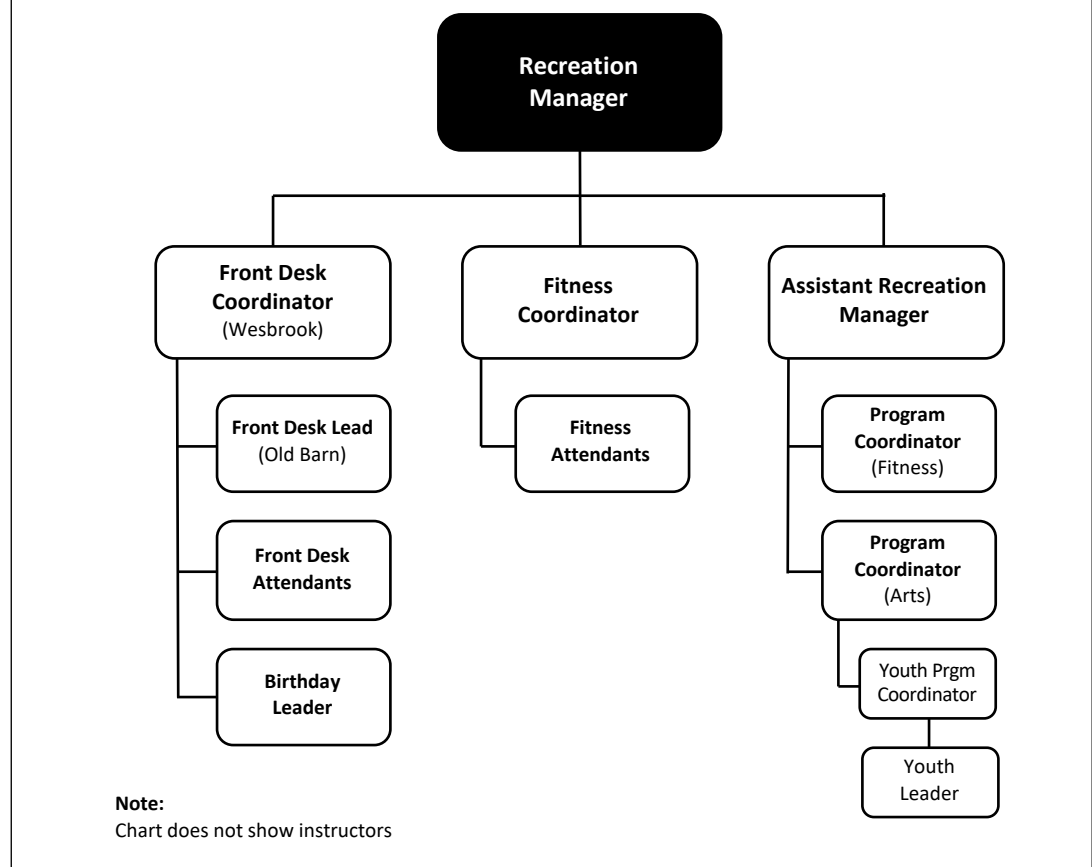
The centres and the services that are provided within them make up the bulk of the UNA's recreation function. The UNA is also responsible, however, for managing the artificial-turf Community Field, the grass-turf Nobel Softball Diamond, and a set of eight beach volleyball courts. Programs, summer camps and events are offered by UNA Recreation on these fields and courts, as well as in the community centres.

Community Centre Staffing

Both community centres are operated using a combination of UNA Recreation staff and a separate contingent of program instructors. At present, there are a total of 25 full- and part-time UNA Recreation staff. Figure I.1.2 presents an organization chart that shows the various positions that these staff fill.¹ All positions operate from, and

¹ Instructors are not shown on the chart.

Figure I.1.2
UNA Recreation Organization Chart



are based in, the community centres. All except the OBCC front desk lead and some front desk attendants are based in the Wesbrook Community Centre. The program coordinators, however, do spend some of their time at the Old Barn.

The number of instructors varies by season depending on the types and number of programs on offer, and the availability of instructors. Instructors are retained and paid in different ways. For example:

- Some instructors are treated as employees and paid on an hourly basis, once every two weeks.
- Other instructors are treated as contractors and paid a flat fee per class, up to a certain number of participants, then a bonus for each additional participant.² Most of these instructors are paid twice per season.
- Instructors who belong to incorporated companies are retained and paid

² One yoga instructor receives no flat fee, but is paid a higher per-participant rate.



through revenue-sharing agreements. Most (but not all) of these agreements conform to a revenue percentage split of 70 percent (instructor) to 30 percent (UNA).

Community Centre Finances

Figure I.1.3 presents the actual 2017-2018 costs and revenues associated with the two community centres. As indicated in the figure, certain costs and revenues are allocated specifically to one or another of the centres. Some costs and revenues related to programs and staff, however, are shown for both centres combined. Different types of programs may be assigned, season by season, to different spaces in either centre. Similarly, program instructors and UNA recreation staff may be

**Figure I.1.3
Community Centre Finances
(2017/18 Actuals)**

REVENUES		EXPENSES*	
Wesbrook Centre		Wesbrook Centre Operating	
Rentals	54,524	Janitorial & Maintenance	157,294
Fitness Membership	209,340	Utilities & Security	44,101
Personal Trainer	22,142	Office Expenses	58,381
Sub-total	286,006	Sub-total	259,776
Old Barn Centre		Old Barn Centre Operating	
BATW Coffee Shop	75,672	Janitorial & Maintenance	74,614
Rentals	16,887	Utilities & Security	24,472
Fitness Membership	30,652	Office Expenses	62,003
Sub-total	123,211	Sub-total	161,089
Programming		Community Centre Staffing	
Wesbrook Program Fees	363,247	Staff Salaries & Wages	750,859
Wesbrook Yoga Studio	44,706	Benefits	95,269
Old Barn Program Fees	130,040		
Sub-total	537,993	Sub-total	846,128
		Programming	
		Community Centre	6,210
		Instructors & Utown	286,673
		Community Events	3,536
		Program Guide & Charge	80,717
		Sub-total	377,136
TOTAL REVENUE	947,210	TOTAL EXPENSE	1,644,129
		COMMUNITY CENTRE NET COST	696,919

* Transfers to reserves, and a portion of general UNA overhead, are not included in these figures. The salary and benefits for the Recreation Manager have been added to the Community Centre costs.



moved between centres based on demand. Breaking out all program and staff costs and revenues by community centre is not possible.

Figure I.1.3 shows that the community centres incurred a deficit of \$0.7 million in the 2017-2018 fiscal year. Deficits are typical in the operation of local community centres; thus, the deficit associated with the UNA's centres is not unexpected.

Community Centre Governance

Governance of the community centres and their use is the responsibility, primarily, of the UNA Board of Directors, as outlined in Parts 6.0 (Facilities and Amenities) and 7.0 (Other Activities of the UNA). The sections in these two parts highlight the UNA's role in governance as follows:

- section 6.2 (b) assigns the UNA responsibility over the operation, maintenance, repair and replacement of all designated facilities, including the community centres
- section 6.4 gives the UNA authority for determining and adopting rules to control and manage use of, and access to, the facilities
- section 6.4 also makes the UNA responsible for managing the facilities to a municipal standard
- section 7.1 gives the UNA sole discretion to decide the activities it undertakes on behalf of residents, and specifically lists as activities the provision of community and recreation programs, and the provision of community events

UBC, as the owner of agency the built and that owns the community centre facilities, has a limited role in community centre governance. Section 6.4 gives Campus + Community Planning the authority to review and propose amendments to rules set by UNA on the operation and use of the community centres. Under this provision, the UNA may not unreasonably refuse to make amendments that are recommended by C+CP.

At present, there is no formal mechanism in place to involve University Neighbourhoods residents in decision-making for the community centres or the UNA recreation function in general. In July, 2018, however, the UNA Board of Directors endorsed the recommendations in a report titled *Review of the UNA Committee Structure*. One recommendation in the report calls for the creation four community advisory committees, including a Community Advisory Committee on Parks, Recreation and Culture. This committee, once in place, will provide advice and recommendations to the UNA Board on matters relating to the "development and delivery of recreation programs", the "management, use, operation, and maintenance of the Community Centres", and the "development and delivery of multi-cultural programs". This committee is expected to be established in 2019.

Users of the community centre facilities and programs who are not also residents of the University Neighbourhoods do not have a formal mechanism to provide input to



decision-making. Suggestions may be provided (and are provided) to staff at the centres; and, program instructors are encouraged to canvass program participants' views, feedback and ideas. There are no surveys or other tools in use, however, to gather user input in a systematic way.

PROGRAMMING

An important part of the UNA's mandate involves the development and provision of recreation and other programs to residents of the University Neighbourhoods. Primary responsibility for programming belongs to the UNA's Recreation Department, which is headed by the Recreation Manager.

Programs Offered

The range of programs available through the UNA is considerable, and includes:

- active recreation programs, both organized and unorganized (i.e., drop-in) focused on different types of indoor sports such as basketball, volleyball, table tennis and pickleball
- martial arts programs
- fitness classes and personalized training programs
- dance, music and other performing arts classes
- board game and social programs
- cultural and educational programs on a wide variety of topics
- ESL and other language classes
- arts and craft instruction
- early childhood (i.e., preschool) education programs
- seasonal indoor and outdoor active recreation and education camps
- various types of yoga classes

Most of the UNA's programs are delivered by UNA instructors and contracted companies out of the two community centres, in particular Wesbrook. A small number of programs are delivered to adults and older adults at the Osborne Fitness Centre by UBC Athletics instructors. Summer sports camps are also delivered by UBC Athletics on UBC sports fields.

Many municipal recreation departments provide a comparable range of opportunities, but also offer aquatic and ice programs. These specific programs are provided to residents of the University Neighbourhoods by UBC Athletics, pursuant to the terms of the Athletics Access Fee agreement.³

The number of programs offered by UNA Recreation is considerable. Figure I.1.4 reproduces data from the UNA's *Program Guides* for every season in 2018. The data include every offering of every distinct program.⁴ The vast majority of programs are

³ The Access Fee is reviewed in Part II of this report.

⁴ Most programs have several offerings (i.e., different classes) per season. Some programs are offered in more than one season.



delivered out of the Wesbrook Community Centre, as would be expected given the size of the facility relative to that of the Old Barn, and the suitability of program space for sports programs. The most prevalent program types at the Old Barn at present include:⁵

- children/youth education
- table tennis (all ages)
- adult/older adult language

Figure I.1.4
UNA Program Totals in 2018

Season	No. of Programs
Winter, 2018	194
Spring, 2018	290
Summer, 2018	
Fall, 2018	201
Total	

Each season, different programs are developed to appeal to and attract different client groups, including preschool-age kids, children and youth, adults, and older adults. Within each age category, certain programs are open to all people; others cater to specific populations such as non-English speakers. In 2017/2018, specific efforts were taken to expand the range and number of program offerings to pre-school kids, children and youth, and older adults. English learners represented another target group.

The UNA also produces and hosts a number of community events at the centres — a total of 15 in 2017-18. Total attendance at all events combined was close to 5,000 people. The two most popular events, by far, were the Barn Raising and Lunar New Year, both of which occur at the Old Barn Community Centre.

Registration

Three times per year, the UNA publishes a *Program Guide* to advertise all of the UNA Recreation's programs on offer at the Wesbrook and Old Barn Community Centres.⁶ Each edition of the guide is produced in hard copy and available online. The guides set out the three ways that residents can register for programs — namely, online, by phone and in person at either centre. The programs also present the UNA's policies related to registration and cancellation, sports drop-in, program fees and refunds, community spaces and photos. Hours of operation and costs of fitness centre drop-in at the community centres and Osborne Centre are advertised, as are the annual community events organized by the UNA.

Figure I.1.5 shows the total program registration and drop-in numbers from the beginning of 2016 through the end of August, 2018.⁷ The numbers illustrate a trend, evident in other jurisdictions, towards increasing numbers of drop-in participants.

⁵ These types of programs are also delivered at Wesbrook.

⁶ UNA programs delivered by UBC instructors in the Osborne Fitness Centre are also featured.

⁷ Drop-in visits to the fitness centres are not included in these numbers; drop-in attendance at fitness *programs* are included.



Programming Decisions

The existing approach taken by the UNA to determine which programs to offer each season involves the UNA Program Coordinators, instructors, program participants, residents, UNA partner groups, the UNA Board of Directors, and the UNA Recreation Manager. The roles played by each group are as follows:

- *Program Coordinators* — These staff monitor industry trends, develop and review program proposals, assess existing and past programs, and review participant feedback to identify programs for recommendation to the Recreation Manager. Each candidate program is assessed based on criteria such as:
 - anticipated demand (i.e., number of anticipated registrants)
 - availability of appropriate space
 - potential level of cost-recovery
 - target client group, and the degree to which the group is under- or over-served
 - ability of the UNA to offer pre- or post-requisite programs
 - availability of qualified instructors
 - presence of competing programs, offered by private providers or UBC Athletics, in the University Neighbourhoods

To date, assessment of candidate programs have been somewhat informal in nature, unguided by any specific policy. Earlier in 2018, however, the UNA endorsed the recommendations of the *UNA Operations and Staffing Needs Analysis*, one of which called for Program Coordinators to present business cases (using a template provided) to assist the organization in its choice of programs. The business case approach was designed to help ensure that all candidate programs are assessed using the same set of criteria.

- *Program Instructors* — Instructors are an important source of ideas for

**Figure I.1.5
UNA Programs Attendance Numbers**

Season	Register	Drop-In	Total
Winter, 2016	1,502	8	1,510
Spring, 2016	1,371	708	2,079
Summer, 2016	343	383	726
Fall, 2016	1,720	1,370	3,090
Winter, 2017	1,454	1,534	2,988
Spring, 2017	1,324	1,160	2,484
Summer, 2017	498	822	1,320
Fall, 2017	1,529	1,883	3,412
Winter, 2018	1,359	1,350	2,709
Spring, 2018	1,524	1,495	3,019
Summer, 2018	519	198	717



possible programs each season. Instructors often understand program trends, and typically work in various jurisdictions and settings where they are exposed to different program ideas. Instructors also interact directly with users, which allows them to learn about users' preferences and needs.

- *Program Participants* — Participants are asked — formally and informally — to provide feedback on programs completed. This feedback helps to inform decisions on whether to offer the same programs again, and on what types of programs should be provided.
- *Residents* — Residents are encouraged to submit program suggestions directly to UNA staff. To date, residents have not been surveyed in any formal way on program needs or preferences.
- *Partner Groups* — A key partner group for the UNA is UBC Athletics. As a result of recent and ongoing joint discussions, the two agencies have agreed to collaborate in various efforts, including those related to ensuring that the community program offerings of the groups are complementary, and that areas of program overlap are minimized. The groups also both have an interest in ensuring that the programming needs of the residents are met.
- *Board of Directors* — The Board of Directors is not involved in the operation of the community centres — operations are the purview of staff, under the authority of the Executive Director. The Board's strategic directions for the UNA and its services, however, inform programming choices.
- *Recreation Manager* — The Recreation Manager works with Program Coordinators to develop program lists, based on all of the input and feedback from the various sources to the process. The Recreation Manager makes the final decisions on programs each season.

Program Pricing

The UNA does not, at present, have policies in place to guide the pricing of programs that are offered by the organization. As a matter of practice, however, staff do set registration minimums for every program that generate revenues sufficient to recover the direct program costs incurred (e.g., instructor wages, program supplies), as well as certain indirect costs — namely, a rent cost that is assigned to each program space.

The UNA's community centre budget structure, presented earlier in Figure I.1.3, isolates program-specific revenues and program-specific costs, and shows that the former exceed (considerably) the latter. The program-specific costs, however, consist almost entirely of instructor wages, the cost to produce the *Program Guide*, and the service charge paid by the UNA for the registration software. The costs do not include other indirect costs (such as the Program Coordinator salaries), community centre operating costs, or a portion of administrative overhead. At



present, it is difficult to determine the full degree to which programming costs are recovered through user fees.

One recommendation in the *UNA Operations and Staffing Needs Analysis* called for the UNA to develop a *Cost-Recovery Policy* for its programs. The policy outlined in the report speaks to the need to define different levels of required cost-recovery, based on target populations and program type. The policy also recognizes the need to consider the full cost to the organization of providing each program. "Full cost" includes all direct costs, all indirect costs (including department overhead), and all corporate costs (including corporate support and a portion of corporate overhead). This issue is revisited later in chapters three and four.

The UNA also, it should be noted, provides a 10% discount on many of its programs to members of the UNA, and members of the UBC and UTown communities. Others are required to pay the posted prices.



CHAPTER 1.2

SERVICE LEVELS

The Wesbrook and Old Barn Community Centres are important assets that support the UNA's ongoing efforts to build community. The centres are places that bring residents together, help them connect with one another, and enable them to participate in developing a sense of place. The ultimate value of the centres to the community is a function, in part, of the physical buildings — their visual appeal, their ability to accommodate people, their location and their state of repair. The value is more a function, however, of the programs that are provided within the centres.

Programming for the centres, as explained in the previous chapter, is the job of the UNA, undertaken through the Recreation Department. A key challenge faced by the UNA — indeed, by all local government agencies involved in programming — concerns decisions related to service level. What level of service, expressed through the range and number of community centre programs, should the UNA be providing?

The expectations of residents influence the UNA's choice of service level. So, too, do the expectations of UBC and UBC Properties Trust, both of which have a strong interest in promoting the University Neighbourhoods to prospective buyers as a complete, well-served community. Expectations from all groups, however, need to be balanced against available resources. The UNA faces significant resource limitations — limitations that are more acute in the University Neighbourhoods than in other local jurisdictions, thanks to the inflexibility of the neighbourhood levy formula.

This study sets out, in the context of these resource limitations, to examine more closely the issue of service level. The study sets out, more specifically, to look beyond expectations to assess the UNA's existing service level against levels that are in place in other BC local jurisdictions. This chapter reports on the study's findings.

BENCHMARK JURISDICTIONS

It is difficult in any comparative research study to select benchmark jurisdictions that are truly comparable. The difficulty is even greater in the case of the University Neighbourhoods, given the many unique characteristics — housing mix, demographics, growth rate, assessment base, local government, development history — of the community. To overcome this difficulty, and to allow for a meaningful assessment, efforts were taken to select a variety of benchmark places using a range of criteria.

Selection Criteria

For this study, benchmark communities were chosen by taking into account population, growth rate, population mix, housing type, length of residency, scope of



services and other factors. The full list of criteria is outlined as follows:

- *Population* — The size of a jurisdiction's population has a significant influence on service level, as expressed by the number and range of community centre programs, the hours of community centre access, and other measures. Indeed, service population may be the most important factor to consider in the context of service level, and in identifying a set of benchmark communities.
- *Growth Rate* — Jurisdictions with high growth rates face unique challenges in adjusting service levels to meet growing needs.
- *Population by Age Group* — The spread of population across age groups influences the number and types of community centre programs offered to different demographics. Many jurisdictions focus programming efforts on preschoolers, children and youth. Jurisdictions with large concentrations of residents in these age groups may experience higher demands for programming relative to other places.
- *Labour Participation Rate* — This measure can influence the types and numbers of programs. Jurisdictions with high participation rates may require before- and after-school care programs, a variety of after-school programs for older children, and hours of access that take into account typical workday schedules.
- *Housing Types* — The mix of housing types may be an additional influencing factor. Jurisdictions with a predominance of multi-family housing may provide more programming than jurisdictions with mostly single detached houses. Residents in multi-family housing usually lack backyards and on-site recreation space. These residents, more than others, may look to community centres as places to gather and recreate.
- *Assessment Base* — The character of a jurisdiction's assessment base is key in most places to determining the taxes charged to residential households, and the total resources available for services. In general, jurisdictions with diverse assessment bases are able than others to afford a higher level of recreation service to their populations. Places with very little non-residential assessment typically find it difficult to provide high service levels.
- *Range of Recreation Services* — The range of recreation services that a jurisdiction provides to its residents, directly or indirectly, will impact the availability of resources for programming, which in turn may influence the level of programming offered.

These criteria do not represent the definitive set of factors that help to determine community centre service levels. The criteria are considered important, however,



and do allow for the identification of a set of benchmark communities.

Figure I.2.1 applies the list of criteria to the University Neighbourhoods. The data in the figure come from a number of sources, including Campus + Community Planning, UBC Properties Trust, and Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Some data also come from Statistics Canada (2016 Census); however, Census data apply to the entire "Greater Vancouver A Census Subdivision", which includes the University Neighbourhoods, but also the University Endowment Lands and a collection of lightly populated, unincorporated areas across Metro Vancouver.

Figure I.2.1
Criteria Applied to University Neighbourhoods

Criteria	University Neighbourhoods	Comments
Population	12,358	– 2018 figure provided by UBC C+CP
Growth Rate (2011-2016)	>25% ⁸	– Stats Canada shows 24.2% for entire census subdivision – rate for BC as a whole was 5.6%
Population by Age Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 0-14 years – 15-64 years – 65+ years 	14.7% 75.6% 9.7%	– Stats Canada data for entire census subdivision – 0-14 years likely a higher percentage in Neighbourhoods specifically
Labour Participation Rate	49.8%	– Stats Canada data; considerably lower than for BC as a whole (63.9%)
Percentage of Single Detached Dwellings	0%	– figure identified using information from UBC and Properties Trust – Stats Canada shows 7% for census area – figure sets Neighbourhoods apart from BC
Percentage of Residential Assessment	98.5%	– figure from UBC Properties Trust – one of the highest percentages in BC
Range of Recreation Services	Full	– UNA directly provides community centres, sports fields, programming – UNA provides resident access to UBC aquatic, ice and related facilities, as well as sports fields, through Access Fee payments

Benchmark Communities

There is no other community in British Columbia that mirrors the University Neighbourhoods as defined by the selection criteria. Different jurisdictions,

⁸ Statistics Canada provides a rate of 24.2% for all of Electoral A, including the University Neighbourhoods. If the population outside of the Neighbourhoods were removed from the calculations, the growth rate for Neighbourhoods specifically would have been in excess of 25%.



however, share some of the characteristics. These jurisdictions, while not perfect comparisons, are considered useful for the purpose of assessing community centre service levels.

The full list of benchmark communities, listed in alphabetical order, is as follows:

- Town of Comox
- City of Courtenay
- City of Langley
- City of Pitt Meadows
- City of Port Moody
- District of Squamish
- Resort Municipality of Whistler

Figure I.2.2 on the following page profiles the benchmark communities using the selection criteria. The following points are useful to note when reviewing the figure:

- All of the benchmark communities have populations between 11,500 and 26,000, with the exception of the City of Port Moody with a population of 33,500. The upper end of this range (i.e., 26,000) was chosen to better reflect the University Neighbourhoods' 2041 build-out population, which is identified in UBC's *Land Use Plan* as 24,500. The Wesbrook Community Centre is designed to serve this build-out figure.
- Most communities in BC within the population range did not experience double-digit population growth between 2011 and 2016. The Resort Municipality of Whistler and, to a lesser extent, the District of Squamish, did experience strong growth. Their inclusion in the list is important.
- For the comparison group, both the median (15.1%) and average (15.8%) percentage of the 0-14 years demographic — a key programming target group in many centres — are considered close to the figure for the University Neighbourhoods.⁹
- Squamish and Whistler best match the population breakdown for all age groups. These jurisdictions also match closely the average and median age for residents (not shown).
- No places come close to the 0% single detached housing figure of the University Neighbourhoods (this statement applies province-wide). Most, however, have a lower percentage than the 44.1% figure for the province as a whole. Similarly, none of the places comes close to the 98.5% figure for Class 1 (residential) assessment. Three of the benchmark communities, however, have greater than 90% Class 1.

⁹ The stated figure for the Neighbourhoods is 14.7%; however, this figure is for all of Electoral Area A, and is almost certainly lower than the actual figure for the Neighbourhoods specifically.



Figure I.2.2
Benchmark Communities Profiled

Community	Population	Growth 2011-16 (%)	Age Groups (%)			Labour Rate (%)	Single Detach (%)	Class 1 Assess (%)	Recreation Services
			0-14	15-64	65+				
Town of Comox	14,028	2.9	14.0	56.9	29.1	53.7	66.8	95.1	Full ¹
City of Courtenay	25,599	5.7	14.3	59.6	26.1	55.7	51.0	84.4	Full ¹
City of Langley	25,888	3.2	15.1	65.7	19.2	65.2	23.1	74.2	Partial ^{2,3}
City of Pitt Meadows	18,573	4.7	17.1	67.2	15.8	69.4	42.6	84.8	Full ³
City of Port Moody	33,551	1.6	18.0	69.8	12.2	70.8	30.3	90.9	Full ³
District of Squamish	19,512	13.7	19.8	69.1	11.1	76.4	46.6	86.9	Full
Resort Mun of Whistler	11,854	20.7	12.5	80.4	7.0	85.2	29.4	90.7	Full
University Neighbourhoods	12,358	>25	14.7	75.6	9.7	49.8	0.0	98.5	Full ⁴

Sources: Statistic Canada (Census 2016); Campus + Community Planning; UBC Properties Trust; Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

¹ Participates in shared regional recreation service for aquatic centre and ice rinks
² Does not provide, directly or indirectly, an ice rink
³ Provides outdoor aquatic centre(s)
⁴ Secures enhanced access through Athletics Access Fee



- Importantly, all of the comparison communities, with the sole exception of the City of Langley, directly or indirectly provide a full range of recreation services, including community centre programming. All either provide their own aquatic and ice facilities, or participate in regional (shared) aquatic and ice facilities. The City of Langley provides an outdoor aquatic centre, but does not provide ice rinks.

SERVICE LEVEL COMPARISONS

For the purpose of this report, service level is related primarily to the number and range of programs offered through community centres. Certain other measures, however, are also important. In total, service level is gauged using a combination of:

- range of services offered in community centres
- hours of service
- range of programs offered
- number of registered programs offered (absolute and *per capita*), broken down by age group

In an effort to obtain information on these measures, managers from each benchmark community were contacted by email and phone.¹⁰ In all cases but one, in-person, follow-up interviews were conducted. Not all places were able to provide quantitative data on every point, either because the data were not readily available, or because respondents did not have the time available to generate full responses. In some instances, information gaps were filled using annual reports, budget materials and other publicly-available resources.

In all, it was not possible to get complete data on every jurisdiction. Enough information was collected, however, to allow for some meaningful comparisons to be made, and conclusions to be drawn. Key comparisons and conclusions are presented as findings in the remainder of this chapter. Recommendations that emerge from the findings are presented in Chapter 4 of Part I.

Range of Services Offered

Each of the benchmark communities operates at least one community centre, or similar type of community facility (e.g., recreation centre), in which recreation and other programs are provided. Figure I.2.3 on the following page presents the information. The number and range of services offered across jurisdictions is similar in a number of respects. All centres, for example, offer activity rooms in which residents take a variety of programs, at least one gymnasium for different types of sports programs, and adjacent outdoor space for play, recreation, events, and in some cases programs.

Other areas of similarity among communities are as follows:

¹⁰ Managers from three additional benchmark candidates — Fort St. John, Lake Country and White Rock — were also contacted; however, these jurisdictions were unable to participate in the study.



Figure I.2.3
Community Centre Services

Community	Community Centre (CC) Facilities	Childcare	Activity Rooms	Fitness Centre	Youth Centre	Senior Centre	Gymnasiums	Adjacent Outdoor	Living Room	Other
Town of Comox	> Comox CC	– childminding	✓	– 1 centre	✗	✗	– 1 divisible gym – 1 gymnastic gym	✓	✗	– squash courts – multi-purpose hall
City of Courtenay	> Lewis CC (primary) > Filberg Centre (seniors) > LINC Youth Centre	– daycare – childminding	✓	– 1 centre	✓	✓	– 2 divisible gyms	✓	✓	– squash courts
City of Langley	> Timms CC (primary) > Douglas Rec Centre (RC)	– preschool – childminding	✓	– 1 centre	✗	✗	– 1 divisible gym – 1 gym	✓	✓	– indoor walking track – spin studio
City of Pitt Meadows	> Pitt Meadows RC (primary) > South Bonson CC > Pitt Meadows Hall > Pitt Meadows Seniors Ctr	– after school	✓	– 1 centre	✓	✓	– 1 divisible gym	✓	✓	
City of Port Moody	> Port Moody RC (primary) > Kyle Centre (seniors) > Glenayre CC > Heritage Mountain CC > Old Orchard Hall > Westhill Youth Centre	– childminding	✓	– 1 centre	✓	✓	– 1 divisible gym	✓	✓	– spin studio – aerobics studio – Glenayre & Old Orchard cater to tots – indoor walking track – also uses school gyms
District of Squamish	> Brennan Park RC (primary) > 55+ Activity Centre > Youth Centre	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	– 1 gym	✓	✓	– fitness classes offered but no fitness centre – also uses school gyms
Resort Municipality of Whistler	> Meadow Park Ctr (primary) > Myrtle Philip CC > LUNA Youth Centre	> after school	✓	– 1 centre	✓	✗	– 1 gym	✓	✓	– also uses school gym – squash courts
University Neighbourhoods	> Wesbrook CC (primary) > Old Barn CC	– daycare – before/after school	✓	– 2 centres	✗	✗	– 1 divisible gym	✓	✓	– childcare is offsite at Vista Point



- all communities, with the exception of Squamish, offer a fitness centre
- all communities, with the exception of Comox, offer a "living room" area in one or more facility for people to gather and socialize

The University Neighbourhoods community differs from others in the benchmark set in some key respects. Note the following points:

- Unlike other jurisdictions, the UNA provides both before- and after-school care (a new service). Two other places provide after-school; however, no places appear to provide before-school care.
- The UNA's Vista Point daycare service is matched only by one the City of Courtenay, which offers licensed daycare in its Lewis Community Centre.
- Four of the seven benchmark communities provide childminding services — that is, child care to assist parents while they are attending an activity. The UNA and three other local governments do not offer the service.
- Significantly, the UNA is the only authority that provides a fitness centre in two separate facilities (for a total of two fitness centres).
- The UNA does not provide a separate seniors centre or youth centre.¹¹ Most of the comparison communities provide at least one of these centres as a separate facility, or dedicated and separated space in multi-purpose facility.

Hours of Service

Figure I.2.4 identifies the hours of service offered in the primary community centre, fitness centre, secondary community centre(s), youth centre and seniors centre in each of the benchmark communities and the University Neighbourhoods. The hours of service in all places vary depending on the day of the week. For that reason, the total hours-per-week of each facility are also shown.

The following points speak to the data in the figure:

- The UNA's hours of service for the Wesbrook Centre (primary facility) are more restrictive than the primary facilities in all of the benchmark jurisdictions. The hours of access to the fitness centre in the WCC, however, are comparable to those in the other places. In all of the other centres, it is useful to note, the hours of the primary centre, and the fitness within the primary centre, are identical. The UNA is unique in having an unstaffed (and thus, not open) front desk in the primary facility during early morning hours. The fitness centre on the second floor is staffed from 0600 Monday to Friday (later on the weekends).

¹¹ The WCC does provide a room that offers, at different times, a space for youth and seniors. This service is smaller in scale than the youth and service facilities offered in the other jurisdictions.



Figure I.2.4
Hours of Service

Community	Primary Centre	Hrs. / Week	Fitness Centre	Hrs. / Week	Secondary Centre(s)	Hrs. / Week	Youth Centre	Hrs. / Week	Senior Centre	Hrs. / Week
Town of Comox	Mon-Fri 0600 – 2130 Sat-Sun 0800 – 1630	94.5	Mon-Fri 0600 – 2130 Sat-Sun 0800 – 1630	94.5	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
City of Courtenay	Mon-Fri 0500 – 2200 Sat 0830 – 1600 Sun 0830 – 2000	106.0	Mon-Fri 0500 – 2200 Sat 0830 – 1600 Sun 0830 – 2000	106.0	n/a	n/a	Evenings 5 nights per week	30.0	Mon-Fri 0830 - 1630	40.0
City of Langley	Mon-Fri 0600 – 2200 Sat 0800 – 2200 Sun 0800 – 2000	106.0	Mon-Fri 0600 – 2200 Sat 0800 – 2200 Sun 0800 – 2000	106.0	Mon-Fri 0830 - 1630	40.0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
City of Pitt Meadows	Mon-Fri 0600 – 2130 Sat-Sun 0800 – 2000	101.5	Mon-Fri 0600 – 2130 Sat-Sun 0800 – 2000	101.5	Open for classes as required	n/a	Evenings 7 nights per week	32.5	M, T, Th, F 0900 – 1600 Wed 0900 – 2100 Sat 0900 – 1400	45.0
City of Port Moody	Mon-Fri 0600 – 2200 Sat-Sun 0800 – 2100	106.0	Mon-Fri 0600 – 2200 Sat-Sun 0800 – 2100	106.0	Open for classes as required	n/a	Evenings 5 nights per week	20.0	Mon-Fri 0830 - 1630	40.0
District of Squamish	Mon-Thu 0800 – 2000 Fri 0800 – 2100 Sat 0900 – 2000 Sun 0900 – 2100	96.0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Evenings 5 nights per week	27.0	M, Sa 0830 – 1630 Tue-Fri 0830 – 2100	66.0
Resort Municipality of Whistler	Mon-Sun 0600 – 2200	112.0	Mon-Sun 0600 – 2200	112.0	Drop-in 3 nights; open for classes as required	n/a	Afternoons and evenings 3 days	13.5	n/a	n/a
University Neighbourhoods	Mon-Thu 0830 – 2200 Fri 0830 – 2030 Sat-Sun 0830 – 1800	85.0	Mon-Thu 0600 – 2200 Fri 0600 – 2030 Sat-Sun 0830 – 1900	99.5	Mon-Fri 0700 – 2130 Sat-Sun 0830 – 2200	99.5	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a



- The UNA provides a much higher level service in its secondary centre (OBCC) relative to levels in the benchmark communities, as measured by hours of operation. Other places with secondary community centres tend to open only during active program times, and have far fewer total hours of service.
- Hours of service for stand-alone seniors and youth centres are relatively modest in most centres — the exception is the seniors centre in Squamish, which is open for programs and drop-in for 66.0 hours per week. The UNA, as noted, does not provide such stand-alone facilities.

Range of Programs

Figure I.2.5 shows the range of programs provided by the benchmark jurisdictions and the UNA. The figure divides the programs into key program types. For sports, fitness and yoga program types, offerings are broken down further into registered ("Reg") and drop-in ("D/I"). Programs under all other types are registered programs, unless otherwise noted. The figure shows, for each type of program, the different age groups targeted.¹²

It is important to note that aquatic and ice rink-based programs are not included in Figure I.2.5 for any of the communities listed. The range of such programs is considerable in many of the places, as it is for the University Neighbourhoods through UBC Athletics.

The following points speak to the data in Figure I.2.5:

- Almost all places offer both registered and drop-in options for sports and fitness programs. In most cases, drop-in participants are welcome, space permitting, to attend sports, fitness, yoga and dance classes.

The degree to which drop-in only programs are offered varies across jurisdictions and is not apparent in the data presented. A move toward drop-in is evident in the UNA, which offers a range of after-school drop-in for children and youth, several drop-in sports programs, drop-in fitness and drop-in yoga. Indeed, in the case of yoga the UNA only offers drop-in classes. In other communities, such as Courtenay, drop-in opportunities exist but are less of a focus than registered programs.

- The range of program types offered by the UNA is greater than that offered by other communities. The UNA is the only jurisdiction that offers a variety of language programs to all age groups — no other jurisdiction, with the exception of Squamish, provides any language programs. No other jurisdiction offers the same range of music programs across all client groups. Only one other offers the same range of education programs.

¹² The age ranges identified for each target group in the legend to the Figure I.2.5 differ slightly in some places.



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Figure I.2.5
Range of Programs Provided

Community	Sports		Fitness		Yoga		Dance	Mar Arts	Arts	Music	Edu	Lang	Aft Sch Drop-in	Pro-D Camp	Holiday Camps	Social	Events	B'day Party
	Reg	D/I	Reg	D/I	Reg	D/I												
Town of Comox	P,C,Y A,OA	P,C,Y A,OA	Y,A OA	A,OA	P,Y A,OA	A,OA	P,A OA	C,Y,A OA	P,C,Y	P	P	×	✓	×	P,C,Y	×	✓	✓
City of Courtenay	P,C,Y	A,OA	Y,A OA	Y,A OA	A,OA	A,OA	P,C,Y A,OA	C,Y,A OA	P,C,Y A OA	P,C,Y	P,C,Y A,OA	×	×	✓	P,C,Y	P,C,Y A,OA	✓	✓
City of Langley	P,C,Y A,OA	P,C,Y A,OA	Y,A OA	Y,A OA	A,OA	A,OA	P,C,Y A,OA	C,Y,A	P,C,Y A,OA	P,A,OA	×	×	✓	×	P,C,Y	A,OA	✓	✓
City of Pitt Meadows	P,C,Y	C,Y,A OA	A,OA	A,OA	A,OA	A,OA	P,C,Y A,OA	Y	P,C,Y A,OA	×	×	×	✓	✓	P,C,Y	×	✓	✓
City of Port Moody	P,C,Y A,OA	P,C,Y A,OA	Y,A OA	Y,A OA	P,Y A,OA	P,Y A,OA	P,C,Y A,OA	Y	P,C	P	C,Y,A OA	×	✓	✓	P,C,Y	A,OA	✓	✓
District of Squamish	P,C,Y A,OA	P,C,Y A,OA	Y,A OA	A,OA	OA	OA	P,C,Y A,OA	×	P,C,Y A,OA	P,Y,OA	OA	OA	×	✓	P,C,Y	Y,A OA	✓	✓
Resort Municipality of Whistler	×	A,OA	Y,A OA	Y,A OA	Y,A OA	Y	×	×	P,Y	P	×	×	×	✓	P,C,Y	Y	×	✓
University Neighbourhoods	P,C,Y A,OA	P,C,Y A,OA	A,OA	A,OA	×	A,OA	P,C,Y A,OA	C,Y,A OA	P,C,Y A,OA	P,C,Y A,OA	P,C,Y A,OA	P,C,Y A,OA	✓	✓	P,C,Y	P,C,Y A,OA	✓	✓

P = Preschool (0-5)
C = Children (6-12)
Y = Youth (13-17)
A = Adult (18-54)
OA = Older Adult (55+)

Mar Arts = Martial Arts
Edu = Education
Lang = Language
Aft Sch Drop-in = After School Drop-in
Holiday Campus = primarily to summer camps

Events = Community events offered at the Community Centre



- In every case, the majority of programs are offered in the jurisdiction's primary community centre. In most cases, secondary centres (where they exist) focus on specific client groups (e.g., preschool, children, seniors) or program types (e.g., yoga). In the University Neighbourhoods, the secondary OBCC hosts many programs for preschoolers. The facility also, however, hosts a range of education, language, social and table tennis programs for children, youth, adults and older adults.

Number of Registered Programs

Figure I.2.6 identifies the number of registered programs offered in each benchmark community and the University Neighbourhoods in 2018. The data were collected by recording each discrete program registration number in every program guide published in 2018. The numbers in the figure show the total number of program offerings in each season, including multiple offerings of the same program, for which clients were able to register.

Not shown in the figure are the various drop-in only programs provided by jurisdictions. In the case of the UNA, as noted earlier, the numbers of drop-in yoga, fitness, after-school, and sports programs were significant in 2018. Drop-in only programs were numerous, as well, in places such as Whistler and Langley, but less prevalent in other places. The figure also does not include any aquatic or ice-based programs.

The following points speak to the data:

- In absolute terms, the total number of registered programs offered by the UNA in 2018 was greater than in two of the comparison communities (Langley and Whistler), and equal to those offered in one (Squamish). There were fewer programs offered by UNA than by four of the benchmark jurisdictions, including Courtenay, Port Moody, Comox and Pitt Meadows. It should be noted, however, that in the case of Comox approximately 40% of the program offerings were gymnastics classes, provided by a contracted gymnastics group in a dedicated gymnastics gym at the Comox Community Centre. This emphasis on one type of programming is unique across the comparison group.
- Significantly, in *per capita* terms UNA provided more programs than every other benchmark community except Comox.
- The relatively high numbers of programs in 2018 for adults and older adults in Comox, Courtenay and Langley reflect those communities' relatively high proportions of adults and seniors (combined). Port Moody's emphasis on preschool ages and — in the summer months — children and youth reflects the predominance of young families in that community.



Figure I.2.6
Number of Registered Programs Offered 2018

Community	Winter				Spring				Summer				Fall				Total	Programs per 100 Pop
	P	C/Y	A/OA	Total	P	C/Y	A/OA	Total	P	C/Y	A/OA	Total	P	C/Y	A/OA	Total		
Town of Comox	42	79	110	231	40	86	104	230	45	132	37	214	42	60	104	206	881	6.3
City of Courtenay	38	122	166	326	41	117	186	344	26	159	116	301	38	122	166	326	1,297	5.1
City of Langley	11	51	97	159	31	76	113	220	included in Spring			n/a	26	55	116	197	576	2.2
City of Pitt Meadows	19	113	19	151	28	153	31	212	17	69	18	104	20	255	52	327	794	4.3
City of Port Moody	120	68	91	279	130	68	92	290	138	146	30	314	136	90	106	332	1,215	3.6
District of Squamish	43	49	88	180	55	56	62	173	25	64	46	135	57	64	75	196	684	3.5
Resort Mun of Whistler	included in Fall			n/a	24	8	32	64	included in Spring			n/a	26	13	47	86	150	1.3
University Neighbourhoods	27	86	81	194	39	145	106	290	included in Spring			n/a	25	87	89	201	685	5.5

P = Preschool (0-5)
C = Children (6-12)
Y = Youth (13-17)
A = Adult (18-54)
OA = Older Adult (55+)

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- Program numbers may be a function, in part, of the range of other local opportunities available to residents. Relatively low program numbers in Whistler and, to a lesser degree, Squamish may reflect the high availability of outdoor recreation and leisure opportunities in those communities.
- Program numbers, as well as the range of programs, are influenced by resource constraints. Several of the benchmark places — Whistler, Squamish and Courtenay stand out — noted during interviews that they have either reduced or frozen the number and range of programs offered in recent years. In every case, funding limitations were cited as a significant cause.

Other Service Level Measures

This report has focused on four measures of service level, including:

- range of services offered in community centres
- hours of operation
- range of programs offered
- number of registered programs offered (absolute and *per capita*), broken down by age group

There are several other measures that could be considered, such as age and size of facilities, registered spots available, prevalence of wait lists, numbers of staff at centres, numbers of students per class, programming budgets, expenditures *per capita*, and so forth. Efforts were made to gather relevant data on several of these other measures, and to address them with managers in benchmark communities. In several cases, jurisdictions were not able to provide data. In other cases, figures that were provided were not comparable to UNA data. For example, the data on staffing and finances that several places (but not all) were able to provide applied to recreation functions that were broader in scope than those of the UNA. It was not possible to isolate costs and positions for community centre programs and services.



CHAPTER 1.3

PROGRAM SELECTION, PRICING AND MEASUREMENT

This chapter reports on the approaches taken in the benchmark communities to determine which programs to provide, and to set prices for individual programs. The chapter also examines the various metrics that are used to measure the value of programs. Finally, practices that are followed in renting facility space to for-profit companies are reviewed.

SELECTING PROGRAMS

All community centre service providers have limited programming budgets that must be managed carefully. Several providers also have limited space available for programs, particularly at certain times of the day. Care must be exercised in the management of this resource, too.

Service providers manage their resources, in part, through the careful selection of programs. The exact steps taken in the selection process vary by jurisdiction, based on programming goals, criteria used, steps followed, and people involved. All service providers, however, make use of some type of decision-making approach to identify programs that should, and should not, be supported. Key findings from a review of the approaches taken in the benchmark jurisdictions are presented in the remainder of this section.

Programming Goals

Program selection is easiest when it is guided by well-defined goals. Examples of such goals from the benchmark communities are as follows:

- *Physical Literacy* — Physical literacy speaks to the importance, particularly among children, of mastering the fundamental movement skills that are needed to engage and be confident in physical activities. It is widely recognized in sport and recreation that children need to learn these movement skills, in the same way that they must learn how to read and write. A number of benchmark communities — Whistler, Squamish and Langley are examples — explicitly identify physical literacy in their program guides as a programming goal for preschoolers and children.¹³ Managers in Port Moody identified physical literacy as an important goal in discussions for this study.
- *Promoting Inclusion* — As public agencies, it is important for community centre providers to offer at least some programs that are able to engage groups which are traditionally under-represented in program participant numbers.

¹³ Physical literacy is also cited by the UNA in its program guides.



- *Distinct from Private Sector* — Most of the benchmark communities share a goal to provide programs that are distinct from those offered by local private sector providers. Whistler will not offer programs, such as spin classes and most types of yoga, that are provided by others in the municipality. Indeed, Whistler has taken steps in recent years to phase-out existing programs to make room for local businesses that have decided to enter a particular programming field. Port Moody and some other jurisdictions are active in most areas of programming, irrespective of private sector activity. These jurisdictions, however, ensure that their programs offer experiences that are distinct from, and do not attempt to duplicate, private sector offerings.
- *Cost Recovery* — The desire to achieve a certain level of cost recovery drives pricing decisions, but also the selection of programs. All benchmark communities are guided by the goal of full, direct-cost recovery in their programming efforts.
- *Diversity of Offerings* — Some places, such as Port Moody, seek to provide a broad range of programs, or "connection points", in an effort to appeal to as many residents as possible.
- *Strong Attendance* — The goal of strong attendance also guides program choices. In recent years, jurisdictions such as Squamish and Courtenay have taken the initiative to reduce their respective ranges of programs to focus on those that are believed — and, that ultimately demonstrate the ability — to attract strong attendance. Courtenay follows an "80-20 goal" when selecting its programs to ensure that the City's core, high-demand programs comprise 80% of all program offerings (the remaining 20% consists of new, untested programs for which demand is uncertain).

Program Ideas

Programming goals give direction to jurisdictions' programming efforts, and set the stage for the consideration of specific programs. The identification of goals, however, is only one element of the selection process. Specific, potential program ideas that support the goals must be identified.

Across the benchmark communities, potential programs to offer include existing programs, but also new, untested programs that may be identified by various sources, including staff programmers who work at the community centres. These staff understand their jurisdictions' programming goals, follow programming trends closely, and tend to have a good understanding of community needs and preferences. Existing and prospective program instructors are also important sources of program ideas. Existing and past program participants represent another source. Benchmark jurisdictions seek ideas from participants largely through program feedback forms. Finally, residents of the benchmark communities are



considered sources of program ideas. None of the communities, however, actually solicits resident input through surveys or other formal outreach mechanisms.¹⁴

Assessing Candidate Programs

Once identified, potential programs are assessed against various selection criteria. The level of formality and rigor in the assessment process vary across the benchmark jurisdictions, as do the criteria that are used for assessments. Most places take an informal approach to assessment built around team discussions and a focus on expected (or proven) demand, as well as anticipated cost-recovery. A small number of places assess all programs through more systematic approaches that make use of assessment guides, interviews, templates, team discussions and spreadsheets. Squamish stands out as one such place; another is Whistler.

➤ District of Squamish

Squamish has created a formal program vetting process to assess new program proposals each quarter. Most programs are proposed by existing or prospective instructors. Some proposals are put forward by staff based on their own ideas, or on ideas submitted by participants, residents or others. Existing programs are reviewed through a separate process to determine if they should remain on the municipality's list of program offerings. The criteria used to assess existing programs, however, are almost identical to the criteria used for new program proposals.

The assessment criteria are divided into three groups: social value, participation, and cost recovery.

- *Social Value* — "Social value" speaks to the degree to which a proposed program is anticipated to benefit the Squamish community. Criteria that are used to gauge social value are set out in Figure I.3.1.

Figure I.3.1
Social Value Assessment Criteria

Criteria	Application
Program Price	High program prices can be a barrier to participation. Prices that are considered high result in low scores; free programs receive the highest scores.
Non-Prime Time	Programs that are proposed for non-prime time hours may appeal to groups that may be under-represented at the community centre. These programs receive a high score.
Sole Provider	A high score is awarded in cases where Squamish is the only organization to offer the program. The municipality wishes to

¹⁴ A number of comparison jurisdictions noted that they would like to begin regular surveys.



Criteria	Application
	provide unique programs to engage different groups, but does not wish to compete against private entrepreneurs.
Partnership	The department seeks opportunities to partner in its programs with public and private groups. A high score is provided if the proposed program involves another agency working in partnership with Squamish.
Underserved	Proposed programs that engage an underserved population, and/or a population in need, receive a high score.
Health Promotion	Proposed programs that promote fitness, physical literacy and/or physical activity receive high scores.
Education	Programs that promote education and learning are also given high scores.
Social Inclusion / Interaction	Programs that appeal to and engage groups that are typically excluded (e.g., isolated seniors) are scored highly.

- *Participation* — "Participation" speaks to the degree to which a proposed program would likely succeed in bringing residents to the community centre facilities. Criteria in this category are presented in Figure I.3.2.

Figure I.3.2
Participation Assessment Criteria

Criteria	Application
Repeatable	Squamish, similar to all benchmark jurisdictions, is wary of investing resources into "one-off" programs — such programs are capable of engaging only a limited number of residents.
Accommodates Wait Lists	Squamish (and other benchmark communities) do not wish to turn away people from the community centres. Programs that help get people off of wait lists and into activities are favoured.
Feeder	Squamish favours programs that align with, and are able to "feed" people into, other programs at the centres. Such "feeder" programs help to create long-term clients.
Instructor Rating	Strong instructors reflect well on the department and attract participants to the centres. Past performance can be used to rate instructors who have experience with the department. Instructor qualifications and resumes can be used to rate new instructors.
Number of Participants	Programs that are designed to accommodate high numbers of participants are awarded high marks.



- **Cost Recovery** — Similar to all benchmark communities, Squamish needs to ensure that the programs it provides achieve a high level of cost recovery. Individual programs, including some for under-represented groups, may not recover costs to a high degree, and may need to be subsidized by others. Overall, however, the level of cost recovery for the programming function is expected to be high.

As part of the program assessment process, Squamish estimates the minimum revenue expected, then divides this figure by the costs that the jurisdiction expects to incur. The resulting figure is then placed into a scoring matrix that awards points based on level of cost recovery.

➤ **Resort Municipality of Whistler**

Whistler uses a program evaluation form to both assess and price potential programs, including programs that have been offered before, and those that are new to the municipality. The assessment section sets out a number of criteria in the form of questions. Figure I.3.3 groups and presents these questions by themes.

Figure I.3.3
Program Evaluation Form (Whistler)

Theme	Questions to Address
Target Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Which types of participants are expected to register? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – age, life stage – type of Job (hourly, shift work salary, 9-5) – time of day that works best
Risk Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > What are the risks inherent to running the program? > How will Recreation mitigate the risks? > Is insurance for involved external organizations in order? > On a scale of 1 to 10, what is the risk of offering this program?
Whistler 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > What priorities in <i>Whistler 2020</i> does the program support?
Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > How will Recreation promote the program to its target audience? > What other programs at the Recreation Centre would the target audience be expected to attend? > Are there opportunities to promote the program through the other programs? > Would the program compete with other programs that Recreation already provides? > Do others in Whistler that already provide a similar program? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Is there an opportunity to partner with others (existing or new) to enhance the program?



Approach for the UNA

The assessments undertaken by the benchmark jurisdictions of new program proposals and existing programs identify the specific programs that jurisdictions choose to provide each season. As noted earlier, the exact approaches taken in the benchmark communities differ in terms of rigor, formality and criteria — the process followed in Squamish is the most formal and rigorous. All approaches, however, take into account programming goals, proposals from various sources, and assessment criteria.

In March, 2018, the UNA received the findings of an *Operations and Staffing Needs Analysis* that was conducted by the consultant. Chapter 4 of the *Analysis* outlined a proposed decision-making framework to assist with the selection of UNA programs to provide. The framework spoke to the need for guiding principles, and suggested that all proposed programs — new and existing — be assessed for selection based on program-specific business cases. Suggested business case templates, complete with criteria to address, were provided in the chapter.

Chapter 4 of this *Community Centres and Athletics' Access Fee* report provides recommendations for the Joint Financial Task Force to consider. Recommendations dealing with the UNA's process of selecting programs take into account the findings from the review of benchmark communities, and the earlier suggestions from the *Operations and Staffing Needs Analysis*.

PRICING PROGRAMS

All of the benchmark communities report that they are required to achieve full cost recovery on the programs they offer. Certain individual programs, it is understood, will not be able to meet this expectation, and will need to be subsidized by revenues from other programs. Full cost recovery is expected, however, on the overall collection of programs provided every season.

Full Cost Recovery

The calculation of "full cost recovery" is the starting point to determining the price that is charged to the participants of individual programs. Across the benchmark communities, costs that are included in the calculation include:

- instructor wage (e.g., hourly rate)
- instructor benefits (in cases where instructors are classified as employees)¹⁵
- program supplies
- transportation costs (where applicable)

Some of the jurisdictions — Squamish and Whistler stand out — itemize additional costs, such as:

- a room use fee

¹⁵ In almost all of the benchmark jurisdictions, most instructors are employees of the organization.



- community centre staff time required to set-up and clean-up
- a facility attendant cost if the facility is not regularly staffed
- the cost of time (instructor or programmer) required for lesson planning

Other jurisdictions, such as Courtenay and Langley, apply a straight administration percentage fee in place of specific room use, community centre staffing and other costs. In the case of Courtenay the administration fee is 14%; Langley charges 12%.

Discounts

In every benchmark community, the costs associated with different types of programs are adjusted based on the program type and target participant group. In most communities, for example, programs for preschoolers, children, youth and special needs persons are discounted in an effort to both enable and encourage participation. Programs for adults and older adults, conversely, are often charged a premium so that revenues from these programs may be used to cross-subsidize the others. The levels of discounts vary by jurisdiction and by program group.

All jurisdictions offer additional financial assistance to individuals who, even after general discounts, are unable to afford to participate. All jurisdictions cite the importance of ensuring that financial barriers do not prevent individuals — in particular, children and those with special needs — from participating.

Registration Price

For every program, all benchmark jurisdictions take the full program cost, apply the general discount where applicable, and divide the remainder by the minimum number of program participants required to run the program. The resulting figure represents the proposed price to be paid by individuals who wish to register in the program.

Each proposed price is assessed by staff to determine whether it is reasonable. Staff make this judgement based largely on experience, but in some cases also on a comparison to prices for similar programs in other jurisdictions. In cases where the price is deemed to be too high, the minimum number of participants will be increased, or an additional discount will be considered.

Non-Resident Cost

Most benchmark jurisdictions allow non-residents to register for programs under the same pricing regime that is offered to residents. Whistler is one municipality, however, that takes a similar approach to the UNA in charging a different rate for non-residents.

The UNA, as noted in the previous chapter, applies its non-resident rate in the form of a 10% discount that is provided to members of the UNA, as well as members of the UBC and UTown communities. Posted program rates are charged to others. In Whistler, the non-resident rate is applied as a surcharge to program registrants who are not residents of the municipality (proof of residency is required to avoid the



surcharge). The surcharge, which is set at a maximum of 33% above the posted price, applies to many programs. For some of its more popular programs, Whistler also gives residents a one-week registration "head start".

Overhead

It needs to be emphasized that calculations of "full cost recovery" in all of the benchmark communities leave out facility, departmental and corporate overhead costs. Thus, certain costs incurred by the organization related to facility management, departmental staff, and corporate support are not fully — or in some cases even partly — recovered through program revenues. This finding means that in every jurisdiction, taxpayers are expected to fund a portion of community centre operations. The finding also means that programs impose a net cost on the jurisdictions that provide them. Put differently, programming is not cost neutral.

PROGRAM MEASUREMENT

As emphasized earlier, all communities today have limited resources with which to develop and provide programs in their community centres. Recreation managers are expected to allocate resources in ways that maximize overall benefit to the communities they serve. One step that managers are increasingly taking in an effort to increase benefit is to measure the value of the programs that are provided.

Program value is measured using various metrics. Among benchmark communities the number and range of metrics vary. All jurisdictions make use of at least two basic metrics, namely the number of participants, and the degree to which actual cost recovery achieves the cost recovery target. Several jurisdictions, however, make use of others as well. The full range, including number of participants and level of cost recovery, is presented in Figure I.3.4.

Figure I.3.4
Metrics Used to Measure Program Value

Metric	Description
Participants	This metric measures the number of participants who registered in the program, as well as the number who attended the program as drop-ins. Program value is maximized when total participation matched the maximum number of participants allowed.
Cost Recovery	This metric compares the actual level of cost-recovery against the level expected, as determined by the type of program and target participation group. A higher-than-expected level of actual recovery is desirable.
Target Market	Each program is designed to engage a target group of participants. This metric measures the degree to which the target group was reached.
Participant Feedback	Most jurisdictions encourage participants to provide feedback on programs attended. Some places provide forms for participants to



Metric	Description
	complete; others make feedback boxes available. The actual feedback is an important qualitative measure of value.
Advance Rate	This metric measures the percentage of participants who choose to advance to the next program in the series (where applicable), or to a similar program.
Ongoing Registration	This metric measure the percentage of participants who register for new, unrelated programs following the completion of the program. The metric is used by jurisdictions, such as Port Moody, that want residents to enjoy a broad range of experiences at the centre (i.e., a broad range of connection points).

These metrics, it should be emphasized, are used to gauge the value of individual, existing programs. Several of the benchmark jurisdictions also use metrics that apply to their broader collections of programs and their programming functions. Examples of such metrics that are used in Courtenay, Squamish and/or Port Moody include:¹⁶

- *Family Activity* — This metric measures the number of people from the same family that register in programs at the same time. The metric stands as a measure of "creating place".
- *Diversity of Programs* — Some places, such as Squamish, allocate program resources to a relatively narrow range of the most popular programs. Other places, such as Port Moody, seek to provide a broad diversity of opportunities that appeal to a broad range of people.
- *Partnerships* — Some jurisdictions seek programming partnership opportunities with community organizations. This metric measures the number of partnerships established.
- *Program Guide Clicks* — The number of online visits to a jurisdiction's program guide. The metric is intended to show level of interest among residents.
- *Cancellation Rate* — Programs are cancelled when they are unable to attract the minimum number of registered participants. A low cancellation rate is in indication that the jurisdiction's programs are well-chosen.
- *Repeat Rate* — This metric measures the percentage of existing programs that are considered successful and are offered again.

¹⁶ Note that there are also metrics used for the community centre facilities, and for fitness centres. None of these metrics is identified here.



- *New Programs* — It is important to refresh program offerings; however, it is also important, and more efficient, to identify a core group of programs and program types that appeal to large numbers of residents. In Courtenay, the target rate for new programs is 20%; the desired core program percentage is 80%.

RENTAL OF FACILITY SPACE TO FOR-PROFIT COMPANIES

As a supplemental request, the UNA asked the consultant to examine practices and issues concerning the rental of community centre space to for-profit companies that wish to use the space to provide their own programs.¹⁷ The request arose in response to an application by a private, for-profit company to rent space at the Wesbrook Centre for the purpose of providing a non-UNA program.

The consultant provided findings on this topic in a memorandum to the UNA Executive Director on October 22, 2018 — a full copy is attached as *Appendix I*. Key portions of the memorandum are reproduced in this sub-section of the chapter.

Rental of Space

The benchmark jurisdictions, along with other places examined for this topic, make a practice of renting available community centre space to local groups, associations, governments, school districts, non-profit societies, private groups and for-profit firms (typically referred to as commercial users). Most of the jurisdictions have policies in place that set out the:

- specific types of entities that may book space
- order of preference that will be followed when accepting bookings
- allowable uses of community centre spaces
- insurance, staffing and other requirements that must be met by different types of entities for different types of uses
- fees and payment terms that apply to different types of entities

Benchmark jurisdictions give preference when booking space to the programming activities of the departments or agencies that operate the centres. Preference then extends to other local government departments, followed typically by local neighbourhood groups, school groups, non-profit societies and private groups. Some jurisdictions make a distinction between groups that are within the community, and those that are based in other communities. Some jurisdictions also give preference to youth groups over adult groups. For-profit companies are eligible to rent space in all cases; however, in almost every instance, these firms are assigned a low priority. This approach to space allocation reflects the nature of community centres, which exist as publicly-funded and -operated facilities, in place to benefit the community as a whole.

¹⁷ The request to explore this topic was not identified in the original terms of reference.



Proposed Uses

The types of allowable uses in spaces rented by for-profit firms is a key point to consider, and is at the core of the issue that has arisen in the Wesbrook Community Centre. Most if not all jurisdictions allow for-profit firms to rent community centre space for events (e.g., trade shows), social gatherings, workplace training seminars, meetings and other related uses. Jurisdictions do not typically allow for-profit firms to sell tickets for events held in community centre spaces, or to advertise the events using the community centre name.

The specific case that has arisen in the Wesbrook Community Centre concerns a for-profit firm that is seeking classroom space for the purpose of providing a fee-based program to youth. The following points speak to the approaches used across the benchmark communities and beyond to address this particular type of proposed use:

- On the whole, jurisdictions do not rent community centre space to for-profit companies that seek to provide programs that may duplicate, undermine or in any way conflict with the programs and services that exist in the centres, agreements that are in place with existing providers, or the policies and values of the agencies that operate the centres. "Conflict" could include cases in which the proposed program:
 - addresses a subject area (e.g., dance) in which other programs are offered at the centre, irrespective of any overlap in class times
 - showcases an activity that the centre does not condone
 - competes in a time slot with an existing program for a specific client group
 - competes with the efforts of a different firm that has been contracted by the centre to provide a specific type of program (e.g., karate)
- In cases where conflict can be avoided, most jurisdictions will require the company to submit a program proposal that, if accepted, would result in the company becoming a contracted service provider to the local government. In these cases, the program being provided would be advertised in the centre's program guide. Registration would be handled by the centre in the same way as registration is handled for all programs in the guide. Pricing for the program would be determined through the jurisdiction's standard pricing process, based on the company's proposal. All monies would be received by the centre.

As a contracted service provider, the for-profit company would share program revenue with the local government. The portion of revenues awarded to the government would reflect the benefit to the private company of using the public space, as well as the benefits related to insurance coverage, administration, the registration system, and advertising



in the program guide. An additional considerable benefit is the value of being associated with the centre. The exact revenue split varies by jurisdiction — a 70-30 division in favour of the company is standard across the benchmark jurisdictions (as well as the broader industry).

- A small number of benchmark jurisdictions — Langley is an example — appear willing to simply rent space to for-profit firms for the purpose of offering programs that do not conflict with existing offerings. In these cases, a premium rental rate is applied (e.g., 300% the base rental rate), along with several conditions related to insurance coverage, business licensing, advertising and other considerations. Where additional community centre staff or other services are needed, extra costs must be paid.

Recommendations on this issue are presented in Part I, Chapter 4 of the report.

CHAPTER I.4

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Part I of this report has, thus far, presented the findings of the comparative research that was undertaken on:

- community centre service levels
- the selection, pricing and measurement of programs
- the rental of community centre space to private, for-profit companies

This final chapter of Part I presents conclusions on the findings, and recommendations to address the topics.

SERVICE LEVELS

Conclusions

Chapter 2 of Part I presented findings from the review of community centre service levels in benchmark communities. Four measures of service level were examined, including:

- range of services offered in community centres
- hours of service
- range of programs offered
- number of registered programs offered (absolute and *per capita*), broken down by age group

Figure I.4.1 presents key conclusions drawn from the review of findings.

Figure I.4.1
Conclusions on Service Levels

Measures	Conclusions
Range of Services Offered	<p>Overall, the UNA provides a range of services at its community centres that is greater than the range provided in the benchmark communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > The UNA is the only jurisdiction in the comparison group to provide two fitness centres. > The UNA is the only jurisdiction to provide before-school care, in addition to after-school care. > The UNA is one of only two jurisdictions in the comparison group to provide daycare. The UNA is also, however, one of four to not provide childminding services.



Measures	Conclusions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > The UNA is one of four jurisdictions to not offer a separate youth centre and seniors centre. The UNA does, however, provide a wide range of after-school drop-in activities and programs for older-adults. Similarly, the UNA provides space in both community centres for seniors to gather and socialize.
Hours of Service	<p>The UNA's hours of service at its two community centres (combined) exceed the total hours of service available at facilities (combined) in almost all of the benchmark communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > The UNA's hours at the primary centre (WCC) and its fitness area fall slightly short of hours elsewhere. The UNA's hours at its secondary facility, however, far exceed those offered in secondary centres elsewhere.
Range of Programs Offered	<p>The UNA's range of programs offered is broader than in most, if not all, of the comparison jurisdictions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > The UNA offers a full range of programs to most age groups. Within individual program categories, different jurisdictions focus on types of activities that may not receive significant attention by the UNA (e.g., Comox's sports category has a heavy focus on gymnastics). The UNA does, however, provide opportunities across the spectrum. > The UNA offers a broader range of music, education and language programs than any of the benchmark jurisdictions.
Number of Programs Offered	<p>The number of programs provided by the UNA is comparable in absolute terms, to the numbers provided in most of the benchmark communities (Courtenay and Port Moody are the two exceptions).</p> <p>On a <i>per capita</i> basis, the number of programs provided by the UNA is greater than the <i>per capita</i> numbers in all of the benchmark communities, with the sole exception of Comox, in which 40% of all programs are provided through the gymnastics centre.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > The breakdown of program totals by age group is a function of each jurisdiction's demographics, and priorities.

Recommendations

The service level that the UNA chooses to provide is, ultimately, a policy decision of the Board of Directors. In making its decision, the Board considers a number of factors, including the interpretation of its mandate, the community's needs and



expectations, available resources, and advice from staff. The Board also wishes to consider service levels that are provided in other comparable communities. This study has examined service levels elsewhere, and has drawn conclusions based on the examination.

The resource challenges facing the UNA provided the impetus for the study — indeed, for the Joint Financial Task Force and all of its initiatives. Recommendations from the study are intended to help the UNA address these challenges. Figure I.4.2 presents the recommendations on service level. All recommendations are expected to produce net savings for the UNA.

Figure I.4.2
Recommendations on Service Levels

Recommendations	
>	THAT the UNA work with UBC Athletics, as previously discussed, to explore new uses for the fitness centre at the Old Barn Community Centre, and to transition the fitness centre to a new joint use by the end of 2019.
>	THAT the UNA reduce the hours of service at the Old Barn Community Centre to reduce staffing costs, including costs associated with the present need for two staff to be on shift during late evening hours.
>	THAT the UNA focus programming at the Old Barn Community Centre on preschoolers and children, in order to facilitate a reduction to operating hours and staffing costs.
>	THAT the UNA limit the total number of programs offered in 2019 and 2020 to the 2018 level.

PROGRAM SELECTION, PRICING AND MEASUREMENT

Conclusions

Chapter 3 of Part I presented findings from the review of approaches taken in the benchmark communities to select and price programs. The chapter also examined metrics that are used by jurisdictions to measure the value of programs. Figure I.4.2 presents key conclusions drawn from the review of the findings.

Figure I.4.2
Conclusions on Selection, Pricing and Measurement

Measures	Conclusions
Selection of Programs	The most effective approaches to the selection of programs are grounded in, and guided by, a set of well-defined programming goals. The goals chosen by a jurisdiction reflect the mandate of the jurisdiction



Measures	Conclusions
	<p>as a public service provider, as well as the values of the jurisdiction and the community it serves.</p> <p>The sources of program ideas in place for the UNA's programs are similar to those in place in other jurisdictions. Sources include staff programmers, program instructors, participants and residents.</p> <p>The UNA's existing informal approach to assessing candidate programs for inclusion in a program guide is similar to the approach used in most of the benchmark communities. Squamish and Whistler, however, use formal processes that allow for more systematic, rigorous assessments.</p> <p>The most effective approaches make use of several assessment criteria, and are similar in scope and rigor to the approach set out in the <i>Business Case Template</i> that was presented in the 2018 <i>UNA Operations and Staffing Needs Analysis</i>.</p>
Pricing of Programs	<p>All benchmark jurisdictions are expected to generate sufficient program revenues to fully recover all direct costs (e.g., instructor wages and benefits) incurred in providing programs, and a portion of the facility costs incurred. No jurisdictions recover the actual "full cost" associated with programming functions.</p> <p>All benchmark jurisdictions apply discounts to various programs that are aimed at specific target groups. In all cases, target groups include preschoolers, children, youth, and adults with special needs. Revenues generated from discounted programs do not achieve the same degree of cost recovery as others.</p> <p>Minimum participant numbers are used in all jurisdictions to determine programs' registration prices.</p>
Program Measurement	<p>Benchmark jurisdictions measure the value of programs in order to help determine which programs should continue to be provided.</p> <p>All jurisdictions measure value based on the number of participants, and the degree to which actual cost recovery meets the cost recovery target. The most effective approaches use a broader range of metrics.</p>

Recommendations

Figure I.4.3 presents a set of recommendations on program selection, pricing and measurement. All recommendations are expected to help ensure that the UNA's programming function meets the needs of the community, reflects the values of the community, and is cost-effective.



Figure I.4.3
Recommendations on Selection, Pricing and Measurement

Recommendations

- > THAT the UNA develop and articulate a set of programming goals to guide the organization's selection of programs.
 - > THAT the UNA review the programming goals periodically to ensure their ongoing relevance.
- > THAT the UNA seek input, through surveys and other mechanisms, from program participants, community centre users, and University Neighbourhood on programming needs and ideas.
- > THAT the UNA assess all candidate programs for inclusion in the organization's program offerings using revised versions, presented in *Appendix II*, of the two *Business Case Templates* from the 2018 *UNA Operations and Staffing Needs Analysis*.
- > THAT the UNA adopt a *Policy on Program Pricing*, presented in *Appendix III*, to identify target cost recovery levels for different types of programs and/or target groups, and specific costs to recover.

Metrics are not specifically noted in these recommendations. The revised *Business Case Template for Existing Programs*, cited in the recommendations, however, includes metrics to assist in measuring the value of programs that are offered.

RENTAL OF FACILITY SPACE TO FOR-PROFIT COMPANIES

Conclusions

Chapter 3 of Part I also presented findings from the review of practices and issues concerning the rental of community centre space to for-profit companies. The findings point to certain conclusions:

- Benchmark jurisdictions rent community centre space to for-profit companies, but only to hold events (e.g., trade shows), social gatherings, workplace training seminars, meetings and other related uses.
- Jurisdictions do not rent community centre space to for-profit companies for the purpose of providing separate, independent programs that duplicate, undermine or in any way conflict with the programs and services that exist in the centres, agreements that are in place with contract providers, or the policies and values of the jurisdictions.
- For-profit companies that wish to provide programs in community centres are expected in all benchmark communities to make proposals to the



jurisdiction in charge. Companies whose proposals are accepted are expected to become contract service providers of the host jurisdiction.

Recommendations

Figure I.4.4 presents recommendations that are designed to guide the UNA on the rental of community centre space. The recommendations are based on the findings of the comparative research, but are also structured to reflect key factors such as:¹⁸

- the UNA's mandate as a not-for-profit society and public service provider
- the need to be aware of consistency and precedence in dealing with for-profit firms
- the need for the UNA to exercise a certain amount of oversight and control over the development and delivery of all programs, in order to ensure a uniformly high level of quality
- the potential risk to the UNA's reputation that would result from private programming efforts within the community centres
- the need to protect and foster the developing partnership between the UNA and UBC Athletics

Figure I.4.4
Recommendations on Rental of Space to For-Profit Companies

Recommendations	
>	THAT the UNA require every for-profit firm that wishes to use UNA community centre space for program delivery to submit a formal program proposal to the UNA Recreation Manager for consideration.
>	THAT the UNA require every for-profit firms with an approved program proposal to enter into a programming contract with the UNA, and to deliver the program as a UNA program contractor.

¹⁸ See the consultant's October 22, 2018 in *Appendix I* for full commentary.



APPENDICES

COMMUNITY CENTRES
AND
ATHLETICS
ACCESS FEE

APPENDICES

NEILSON
STRATEGIES

NOVEMBER 2018



APPENDIX I

CONSULTANT'S MEMORANDUM ON SPACE RENTALS

This appendix reproduces the consultant's October 22, 2018 memo to the UNA on facility rentals to for-profit companies, as follows:

INTRODUCTION

In early November, 2018, I will be submitting my report that examines UNA recreation service levels and the UNA Athletics Access Fee. One of the issues that I was asked to examine, and that will be addressed in the report, concerns the rental of space in community centres to for-profit companies. I understand from our recent discussion that this issue has arisen at UNA's Wesbrook Community Centre, and may require early attention by the Board. This memorandum provides my thoughts on the matter, in advance of my full report, for the Board's consideration.

The memorandum begins with a review of findings from my research into community centres in a variety of municipalities across BC with populations between 11,000 and 33,000. The memorandum then identifies a number of factors to take into account when developing an approach to the use of UNA facility space for programs delivered by for-profit firms. The document ends with a suggested approach for UNA's consideration.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The research into community centres and recreation functions undertaken for the full assignment focused on the following municipalities:

- Town of Comox
- City of Courtenay
- City of Langley
- City of Pitt Meadows
- City of Port Moody
- District of Squamish
- Resort Municipality of Whistler
- City of Vancouver

These municipalities — with the exception of Vancouver — have populations between 11,000 and 33,000, and are active in the provision of recreation and community programs through community centres and other facilities. The City of Vancouver was included, in part, because of its proximity to the University Neighbourhoods.

For the specific issue of space rentals to for-profit firms, I went beyond this comparison group to consider practices in a broader range of jurisdictions, including some in Metro Vancouver, some in other parts of BC, and some outside of BC.



Rental of Space

Community centres everywhere make a practice of renting available space to local groups, associations, governments, school districts, non-profit societies, private groups and for-profit firms (typically referred to as commercial users). Most centres have policies in place that set out the:

- specific types of entities that may book space
- order of preference, by type of entity, that will be followed when accepting bookings
- allowable uses of community centre spaces
- insurance, staffing and other requirements that must be met by different types of entities for different types of uses
- fees and payment terms that apply to different types of entities

All community centres, as public buildings, give preference when booking space to the programming activities of the departments or agencies that operate the centres. Preference then extends to other local government departments, followed typically by local neighbourhood groups, school groups, non-profit societies and private groups. Several centres make a distinction between groups that are within the host jurisdiction, and those that are based in other communities. Some centres also give preference to youth groups over adult groups. For-profit companies are eligible to rent space in all cases; however, in almost every instance, these firms are assigned a low priority. This approach to space allocation reflects the nature of community centres, which exist as publicly-funded and -operated facilities, in place to benefit the community as a whole.

Proposed Uses

The types of allowable uses in spaces rented by for-profit firms is a key point to consider, and is at the core of the issue that has arisen in the Wesbrook Community Centre. Most if not all community centres allow for-profit firms to rent space for events (e.g., trade shows), social gatherings, workplace training seminars, meetings and other related uses. Community centres do not typically allow for-profit firms to sell tickets for events held in community centre spaces, or to advertise the events using the community centre name.

The specific case that has arisen in the Wesbrook Community Centre concerns a for-profit firm that is seeking classroom space for the purpose of providing a fee-based program to youth. The following points speak to the approaches used by other centres to address this particular type of proposed use:

- Community centres as a whole do not rent space to for-profit companies that seek to provide programs that may duplicate, undermine or in any way conflict with the programs and services that exist in the centres, agreements that are in place with existing providers, or the policies and values of the agencies that operate the centres. "Conflict" could include cases in which the proposed program:



- addresses a subject area (e.g., dance) in which other programs are offered at the centre, irrespective of any overlap in class times
 - showcases an activity that the centre does not condone
 - competes in a time slot with an existing program for a specific client group
 - competes with the efforts of a different firm that has been contracted by the centre to provide a specific type of program (e.g., karate)
- In cases where conflict can be avoided, most community centres will require the company to submit a program proposal that, if accepted, would result in the company becoming a contracted service provider to the community centre. In these cases, the program being provided would be advertised in the centre's program guide. Registration would be handled by the centre in the same way as registration is handled for all programs in the guide. Pricing for the program would be determined, ultimately, by the community centre based on the company's proposal. All monies would be received by the centre.

As a contracted service provider, the for-profit company would share program revenue with the community centre. The portion of revenues awarded to the centre would reflect the benefit to the private company of using the public space, as well as the benefits related to insurance coverage, administration, the registration system, and advertising in the program guide. An additional considerable benefit is the value of being associated with the centre. The exact revenue split varies by jurisdiction — a 70-30 division in favour of the company is considered reasonable.

- A small number of community centres appear willing to simply rent space to for-profit firms for the purpose of offering programs that do not conflict with existing offerings. In these cases, a premium rental rate is applied (e.g., 300% the base rental rate), along with several conditions related to insurance coverage, business licensing, advertising and other considerations. Where additional community centre staff or other services are needed, extra costs must be paid.

FACTORS TO CONSIDER

Given the issue that has arisen at the Wesbrook Community Centre, the UNA will be expected to take a position on the rental of community centre space to for-profit firms that wish to undertake their own program delivery. In developing a position, there are some key factors that Board may wish to consider:

- *Mandate* — The UNA is a not-for-profit society that was created to represent and provide important local services to the community. A major component of the society's mandate is community recreation, which includes the provision of recreation, leisure, education, art, cultural programs and events to the residents of the University Neighbourhoods. Efforts are made by the society to recover its programming costs through



user fees; however, in some cases the social value of program offerings compels the society to subsidize program delivery.

Programs are delivered by the UNA at public facilities that were constructed for the community using funds provided by the university. The facilities exist as centres of opportunity — gathering places where all members of the community may go to be active, connect with one another, learn new skills, and have fun. Barriers to access, including financial barriers, are intended to be low or non-existent.

The UNA facilities were not developed as private facilities, available for rent by any group for the provision of private, high-cost programs.

- *Revenue Generation* — Mandate notwithstanding, the UNA is expected to minimize the net cost impact of its recreation function. To that end, the society cannot ignore opportunities to generate revenues through its various facilities. All revenue generating opportunities, however, must be considered, pursued and structured carefully in order to minimize perceived and real conflicts, and in order to avoid setting precedents that may pose future difficulties.
- *Program Offerings* — The UNA, similar to every service provider, seeks to offer a rich diversity of programs to its different client groups. In some cases, the society will need to rely on outside firms (as opposed to in-house instructors) to develop and deliver programs — indeed, the UNA uses a number of private firms today for specialized programming. All of the firms that today provide programs at UNA facilities, however, operate and are compensated as UNA contractors. Their programs are advertised in the UNA program guides; registration for the programs is handled through the UNA registration system. The UNA is not unique in taking this approach. As noted earlier, most community centres engage private firms as contractors for the purpose of providing programs in public facilities.
- *Precedent* — It is important to acknowledge that the approach taken to accommodate the wishes of one for-profit company will set a precedent that the society may be expected to follow in its dealings with others. There are likely many for-profit firms that would be quite interested in using the UNA's high quality community centre space, even at a premium rate, for the provision of private, high cost programs.
- *Competition* — Different types of programs, even when offered at different times, compete with one another for scarce client group resources. Prospective clients who seek to register for programs have a limited amount of money, time and energy to spend on activities. Resources that are directed toward one program are automatically directed away from another.



Competition among programs for resources cannot be avoided. Efforts can be made, however, to ensure that competition is fair. Fairness is maximized when all for-profit firms that wish to deliver their programs in community facilities are engaged as contractors, subject to the same revenue-sharing, advertising, registration, fee structure and other conditions as all firms. Fairness is undermined when some firms are allowed to simply pay a premium room rental charge, then allowed to operate privately, outside of the community centre programming structure.

- *Quality Control* — It is incumbent on the part of all community centre operators to ensure that the programs provided achieve a high level of quality. To ensure this outcome, community centre operators must exercise a certain amount of oversight and control in the development and delivery of the offerings. Oversight and control are strongest for programs that are provided by community centre staff (i.e., instructors), followed by programs that are provided by contractors. Contractors are required to submit detailed program proposals for review and scrutiny, and must present the credentials of program instructors. Community centre staff receive feedback from program participants, and are able to conduct program evaluations.

Oversight and control are weakest for private programs that are delivered by for-profit firms who simply rent space at a commercial rate. Efforts could be made to introduce strict quality control measures. The time, energy and cost required to monitor and enforce such measures, however, could be significant. The preferred option may be to require all such programs to be delivered by contract operators under the rules and expectations set out in programming contracts.

- *Reputation* — The UNA should consider carefully the potential risk to the society's reputation associated with the private programming activities of for-profit companies. The actions of all persons involved in delivering programs at the UNA's facilities reflect on the UNA. Patrons of the centres make no distinction between programs that are delivered by UNA staff, and those that are delivered by others. Patrons automatically assume that all of the programs offered at the centre are endorsed by the UNA and overseen by the UNA managers. A certain amount of control over program design and delivery (see previous point) may be warranted in order to safeguard the UNA's reputation.
- *Partnership with Athletics* — Finally, at the direction of the Board, the UNA staff have made a concerted effort to identify opportunities for collaboration with UBC Athletics. Initiatives to consolidate functions and explore the joint use of facilities are underway. Athletics, it is understood, does not allow for-profit firms to rent UBC space for the purpose of providing programs, outside of UBC programming contracts. A decision by the UNA to embrace a different position may have implications for the partnership.



SUGGESTED APPROACH

Based on the information presented in this memorandum, I suggest that the UNA take the position that any for-profit firm that wishes to use UNA facility space to deliver a program be required, first, to submit a formal program proposal to the UNA Recreation Manager. If the proposal is accepted, the firm should then be required to enter into a programming contract with the UNA, and deliver the program as a UNA program contractor.

The UNA would list the program in the program guide, schedule the program and provide the space, handle all registration for the program, review and approve all advertising for the program, set the fees for the program in consultation with the provider, ensure that the provider is included by UNA insurance, confirm that the provider has met other licensing requirements, monitor delivery of the program, and evaluate the program post-delivery. The contractor, in exchange, would receive a fair share of program revenues (e.g., 70%).



APPENDIX II

PROGRAM SELECTION TEMPLATES

Figure All.1 presents a revised version of the *Business Case Template for New Programs*, first presented as Figure 4.2 in the *UNA Operations and Staffing Needs Analysis*. This version takes into account findings from the comparative review.

Figure All.1
Business Case Template for New Programs

This template is intended to be completed by Programmers for new, proposed programs not currently being offered by the UNA.

1. Does the proposed program align with the UNA's Programming Goals?
2. How will the program benefit the community?
3. What specific user group in the UNA Neighbourhoods is the program designed to target? Does this target group need more programs?
4. If the program is successful, is it repeatable — that is, will the UNA easily be able to offer the program on an ongoing basis?
5. Does the program feed into others so that participants who wish to pursue further study or activity in the subject field are able to?
6. Does the UNA, UBC Athletics, or a private company in the University Neighbourhoods already offer a similar program?
7. What is the expected number of program participants?
8. What level of cost-recovery should be expected, given the type of program and target group (see UNA's *Policy on Program Pricing*)?
9. Is the proposed instructor in good standing with relevant accreditation bodies and with the UNA?
10. What risks does the program present for:
 - ☐ participants
 - ☐ UNA brand
 - ☐ UNA's relationship with UBC Athletics or others
11. How will the UNA mitigate these risks?
12. Based on the information presented in this business case, what is the suggested overall rating of the proposed program:
 - ☐ essential
 - ☐ very important
 - ☐ important
 - ☐ nice to have



Figure All.2 presents a revised version of the *Business Case Template for Existing Programs*, first presented as Figure 4.3 in the *UNA Operations and Staffing Needs Analysis*. This version takes into the findings on metrics.

Figure All.2
Business Case Template for Existing Programs

This template is to be completed by Programmers for existing programs that are being considered for renewal.

1. How many people registered for the program in its most recent offering? How many drop-in (where applicable)? Were these participants in the program's target market?
2. How many times has the program have been offered?
3. How has the program benefitted the community?
4. Has the program consistently achieved its cost-recovery target?
5. Has the program been consistently well-received by participants in past sessions, according to participant feedback?
6. What changes have been made to "keep fresh" the program?
7. What problems, if any, has the program experienced in past sessions; and what steps have been taken to address these problems?
8. Is the proposed instructor in good standing with relevant accreditation bodies and with the UNA?
9. What percentage of participants have registered for the next level in the program series (where applicable)?
10. What percentage of participants registered for other programs following the end of this program?
11. Based on the information presented in this business case, what is the suggested overall rating of the proposed program:
☐ essential ☐ very important ☐ important ☐ nice to have



APPENDIX III

SAMPLE POLICY ON PROGRAM PRICING

Figure AIII.1 presents a sample *Policy on Program Pricing* for the consideration of the UNA. It should be emphasized that the policy is very much a sample document that must be customized based on further thought and discussion. The UNA will need to give further thought, in particular, to the specific costs to recover (section 3 of the policy), the adjustments to apply (section 5), and the specific programs that should receive different levels of adjustment (section 5).

Figure AIII.1
Sample Policy on Program Pricing

OVERVIEW

1. This policy is intended to guide the UNA Recreation Department in determining the prices to charge registrants for UNA community centre programs.

COSTS RECOVERY

2. Each season, revenues generated from the UNA's programs are expected to recover all direct costs incurred by the UNA to provide the programs, as well as a portion of community centre administration and overhead.
 - 2.1. Not every program is expected to achieve the same level of cost recovery; however, the programming function as a whole is expected to recover all costs identified in section 3.
3. Costs to recover through program revenues include:
 - instructors' and/or attendants' wages
 - instructors' and/or attendants' benefits
 - the cost of supplies required by the program
 - the cost of any special insurance required by the program
 - any other direct costs incurred specifically for the program
 - a 15% additional charge, applied to the sum of all direct costs, to offset a portion of facility overhead and administration

DRAFT PROGRAM PRICE

4. The draft price to register for a program is to be determined by dividing the total sum of all costs to recover, by the minimum number of program registrants required for the program to run.
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- 4.1. The minimum number of registrants for a program is to be determined by a UNA programmer, based on the instructor's proposal and/or the programmer's experience.

ADJUSTMENTS

5. The draft program prices established in section 4 are to be adjusted for programs based on the following criteria:
- draft prices for all programs aimed at preschoolers are to be multiplied by 0.80
 - draft prices for introductory level children and youth programs are to be multiplied by 0.80
 - draft prices for any programs designed for persons with special needs are to be multiplied by 0.80
 - draft prices for programs that provide intermediate- or advanced-level instruction to children and youth are to be multiplied by 1.0
 - draft prices for all private or semi-private lessons for children and youth are to be multiplied by 1.20
 - draft prices for all adult and older adult programs are to be multiplied by 1.20
6. A 10% surcharge is to be added to the program price that is charged to registrants who are *not* members of the UNA, full-time UBC students, UBC faculty and staff, or residents of UTown.

REVIEW

7. This costs to recover, and the adjustments to apply, are to be reviewed periodically based on the UNA's fiscal situation, and program costs in other jurisdictions.
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