

APPENDIX H

DEFINING CORE SERVICES

PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURE MASTER PLAN

District of Saanich, BC.

July 2012

Defining Core Services

The Request for Proposals requested, among other things, that within the Master Plan, the consultants:

- *Define and prioritize the core services and programs and associated strategic initiatives to be delivered by the Department (e.g. core/fringe services; service level guidelines) as required to balance demands with resources.*

The concept of core services has at least three roots:

- The core/periphery concept that within any service, there are elements which are core or essential, and others which are peripheral and by definition non-essential.
- The need to periodically review the services offered with a view to limiting or reducing services. Wikipedia defines a *service review* as follows:
A service review is a review of an organisation's services designed to identify potential service delivery improvements. A Service Review can be used to improve the organisation's efficiency and effectiveness, and assists in addressing financial sustainability. Local government is one of the largest providers of services for the community. Councils have progressively taken on greater responsibilities for delivering services as community expectations have grown and other levels of government have devolved various functions. By systematically reviewing its services, a council can redesign its mix of services, achieve efficiency gains and generate additional income.

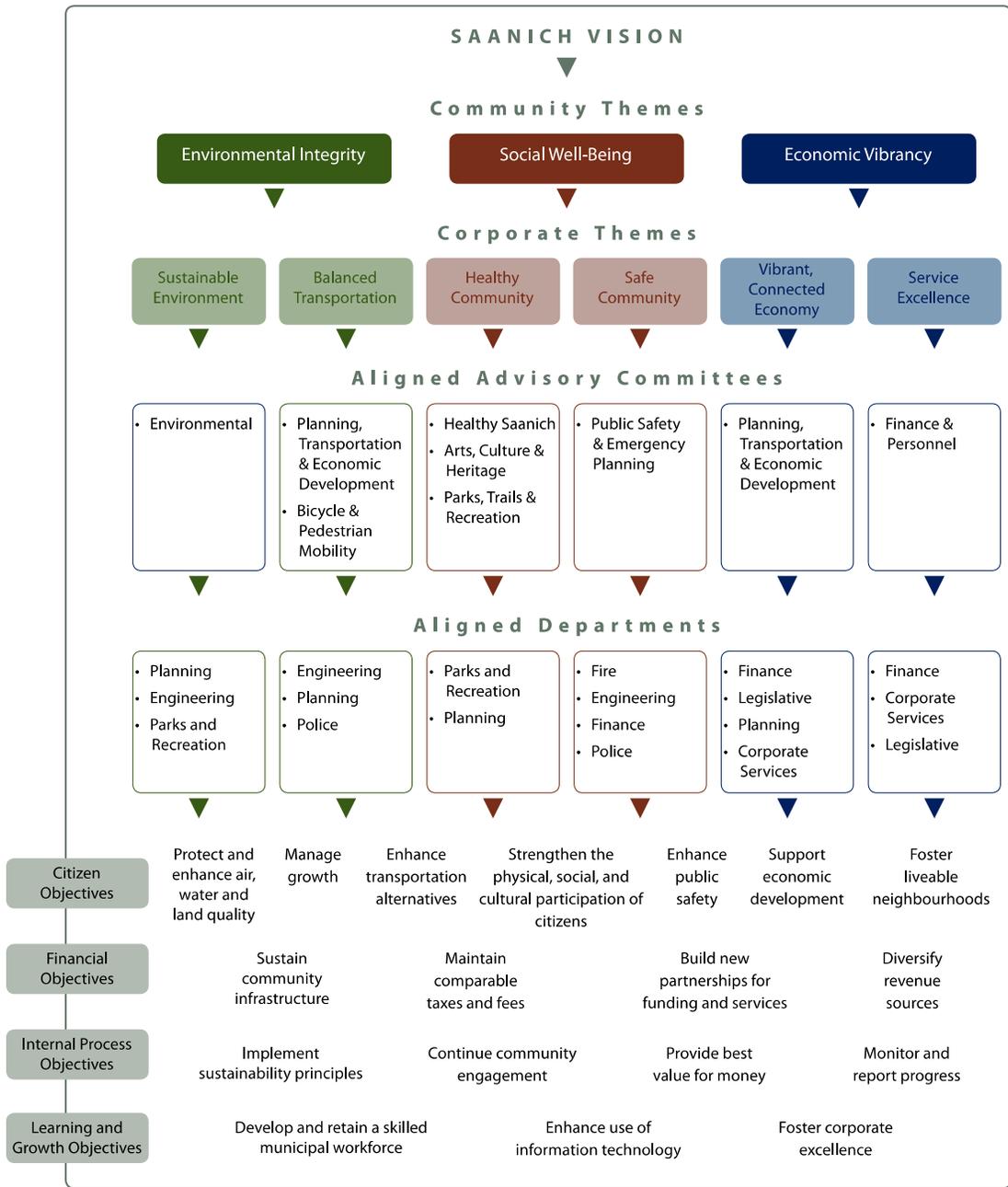
In BC, the provincial government instituted what it termed Core Service Reviews in 2003, with a clear intention of identifying services that were non-core and could therefore be terminated.

- A modified view of the core/periphery concept which argues that any system is in a state of dynamic change where services are continually in flux, with new ones emerging at the periphery and moving toward the core, while old services at the core fade into obsolescence or indeed hang on beyond their 'sell-by' date. This idea is embodied in the recent BCRPA/CPRA conference¹ discussion about the core and emerging edges of recreation. The drivers of new services were seen as follows:
 - Developing healthy and engaged citizens – such as by providing facilities and programs for fitness and skill development.
 - Building healthy communities – such as through support of community organizations and special events.
 - Building leadership – such as providing programs for youth.
 - Creating inclusive opportunities – by ensuring that programming is affordable.
 - Building places and protecting spaces – both recreation facilities and all kinds of active and natural parks.

In reality, the Parks and Recreation Department operates within a municipal framework that has two policy guides – the OCP and the Strategic Plan. One is a long term document (10 years) while the other focuses on the short/medium term (up to 5 years) and is revised annually. Both are aligned around the same Saanich values (Environmental Integrity, Social Well-Being and Economic Vibrancy), and community and corporate themes, which in turn drive a set of objectives – citizen's objectives focusing on what Saanich citizens want, and financial, internal process and learning and growth objectives, which are more internally focused to ensure efficient and effective operations. This is diagrammed in the Strategic Plan as follows:

¹ See <http://www.bcrpa.bc.ca/cpra-national-strategy-discussions>

Alignment Diagram



Neither uses the term, nor addresses the issues, of core services. In fact the OCP is an expansive document which identifies a broad range of items as within the Municipality's purview. It certainly does not comment that any item might be core, peripheral or emerging, or even outside the District's scope of service.

The Department's current scope of service is outlined in Appendix D in terms of current operations, assets and resources, while its relationships with community groups, another element of its scope of service, is outlined in Appendix E.

There are always pressures to expand services, and some of these services are as follows:

Current Service Delivery Areas	Pressures to Expand
Recreation - Centre Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program design and delivery • Partnership programming • Facility rental • Facility management • Design and construction support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Program expansion in areas such as early childhood development, culture and the arts ➤ Additional programs to increase usage, such as youth centres and youth engagement, and the LIFE program ➤ Outreach programming such as the development of satellite centres in schools and seniors centres, and youth outreach programming ➤ Increasing hours of use – currently 18 hours per day and could be more.
Community Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Regional initiatives ➤ Working with community groups – sport, culture, etc ➤ Working with minority groups, such as persons with a disability and multi-cultural groups ➤ Special events, such as Art in the Parks
Parks Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and construction • Maintenance • Sports fields and park buildings • Trails • Natural areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ More partnerships with more groups with less volunteer capacity ➤ More consultation and more planning ➤ Higher expectations for facilities and parkland but with less ability to meet expectations due to more 'natural' control mechanisms (no pesticides) ➤ Higher expectations of natural area management such as control of invasive species and the urban forest ➤ Continual replacement of aging infrastructure ➤ More trails ➤ More accountability such as reporting re GHG, etc.
Golf Course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Improved drainage and additional capital investment.

Defining the scope of service is, ultimately, the responsibility of the elected officials. The OCP establishes many of the areas noted above as being either goals, community values, or specific strategies. This acknowledges the expanding core and recognizes that the municipality, in the 21st century, will be expected to do more and deliver at the 'edges' not just at the more traditional 'core'.