

Where We Are & Next Steps

1

STEP 1: Outdoor Recreation Study

- Understand current challenges, opportunities & needs.
- Should the RDBN Create and Outdoor Recreation Service?

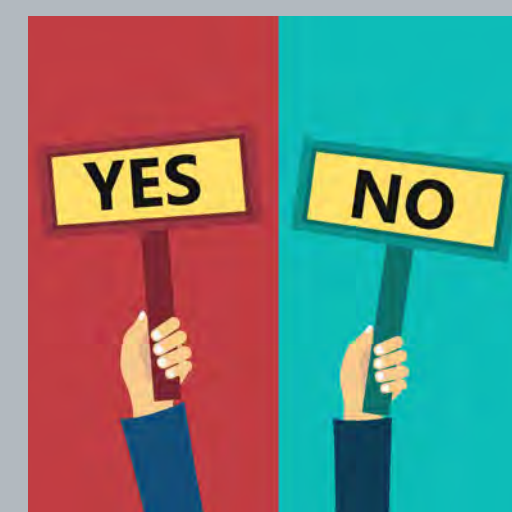


**WE ARE
HERE**

2

STEP 2: Establish the Service Bylaw & Tax Rate

- RDBN Board decides on the type of service and tax rate to support the service



3

STEP 3: Planning & Setting Priorities

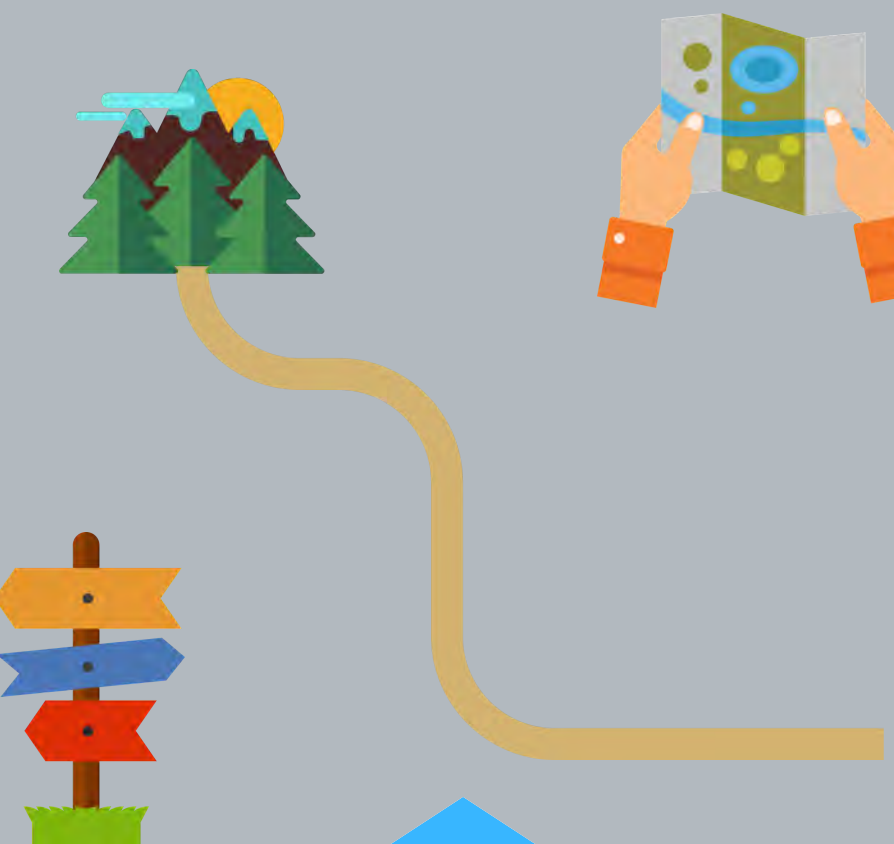
- Community meetings to identify projects & priorities
- Grant applications
- Create funding programs
- Partnerships



4

STEP 4: Build & Fund

- Coordinate permits
- Construct new projects
- Implement funding programs
- Promotion and online information



5

STEP 5: Monitor & Manage

- Standards and enforcement
- Maintenance Contracts



What is the Parks & Outdoor Recreation Study?

The purpose of this Study is to explore how the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako (RDBN) could enhance and provide sustainable funding for outdoor recreational services. The Study seeks to answer the following questions:

What are the needs and demands for outdoor recreation?

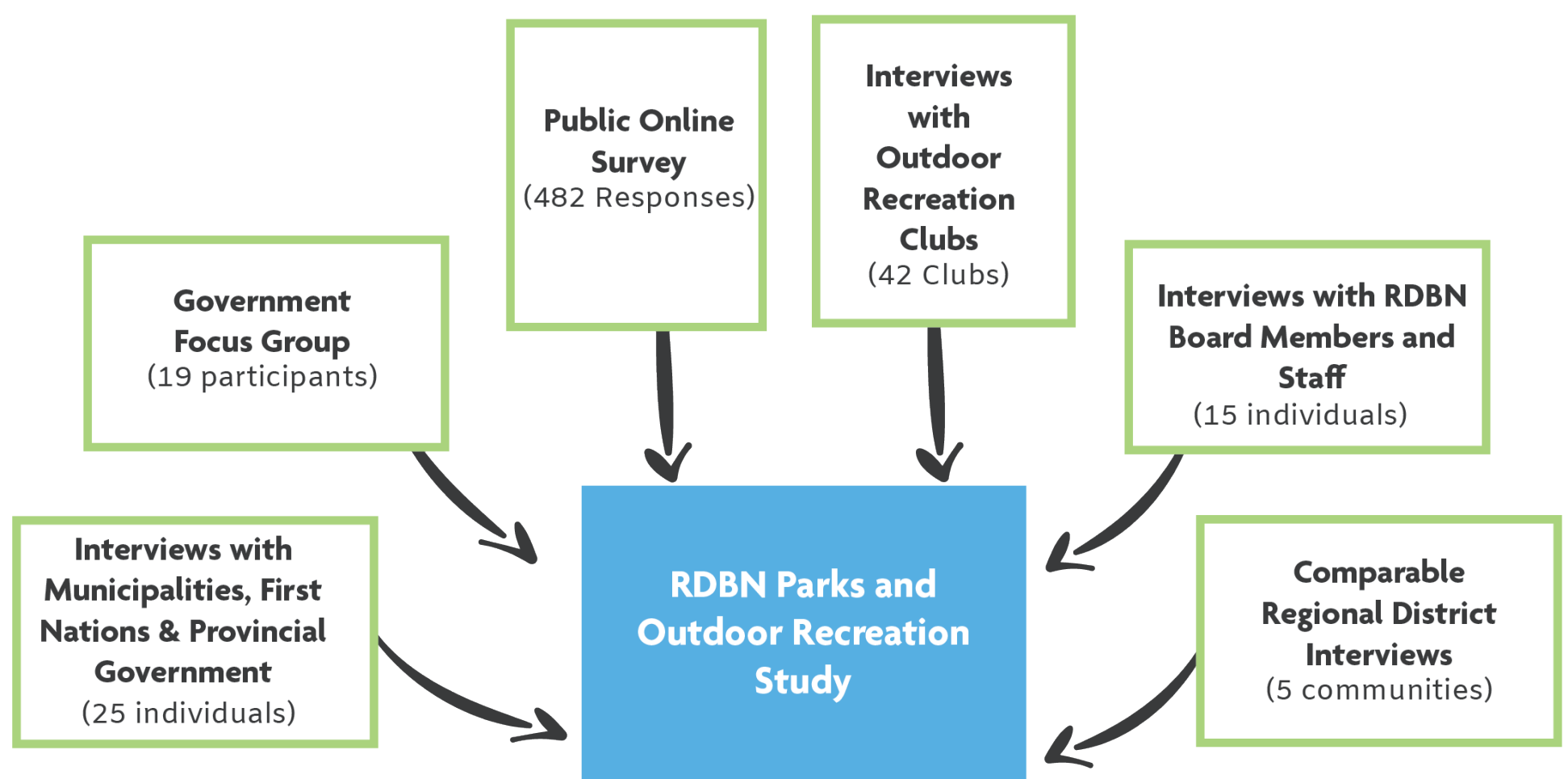
How can the RDBN support clubs and give clubs autonomy?

What could a RDBN outdoor recreation service look like?

Does the Study include pools and arenas?

This Study is focused on **rural areas** of the RDBN and **outdoor recreation** only. Indoor recreation amenities, such as pools and arenas, are not within the scope of this work.

Who was involved in this Study?



What We Heard from the Survey

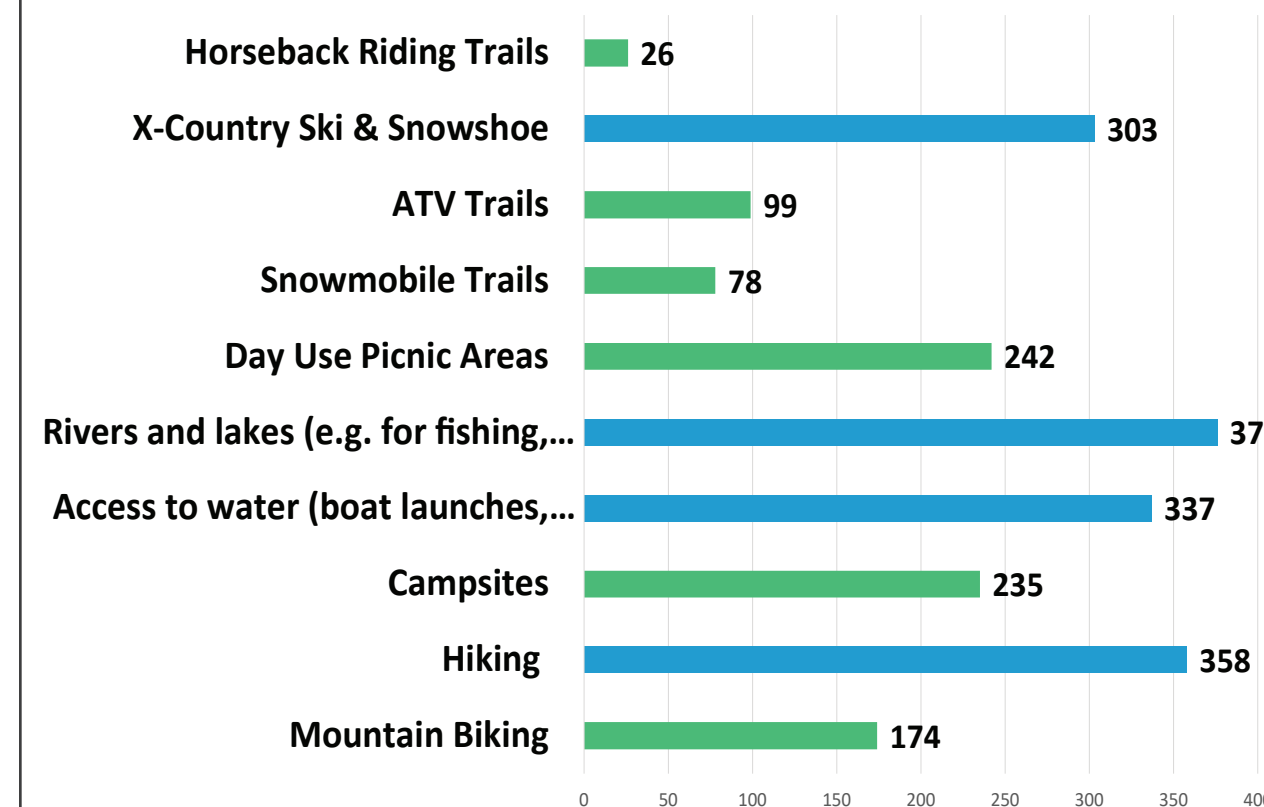
The public survey received 482 responses. Half of the responses came from the Smithers region.

The top 3 most common clubs that respondents belong to are: bike clubs (54) cross-country ski clubs (51) and hiking clubs (39)



Many survey respondents expressed a need for more outdoor recreation opportunities that are close to town and accessible for all ages and skill levels

Activities that Survey Respondents do Daily, Weekly or Monthly



Survey Respondents report that the most frequently used recreation Amenities are:

- Rivers & Lakes
- Hiking
- Access to water
- Cross-country ski and snowshoe trails

Common Challenges Survey Results



The top 4 most frequently reported challenges include maintenance (blow-down and overgrowth on trails), lack of signage and information available, poor access road conditions and a lack of amenities for accessing rivers and lakes

What We Heard from the Interviews

The process involved interviewing 42 outdoor recreation clubs across the Regional District of Bulkley Nechako.

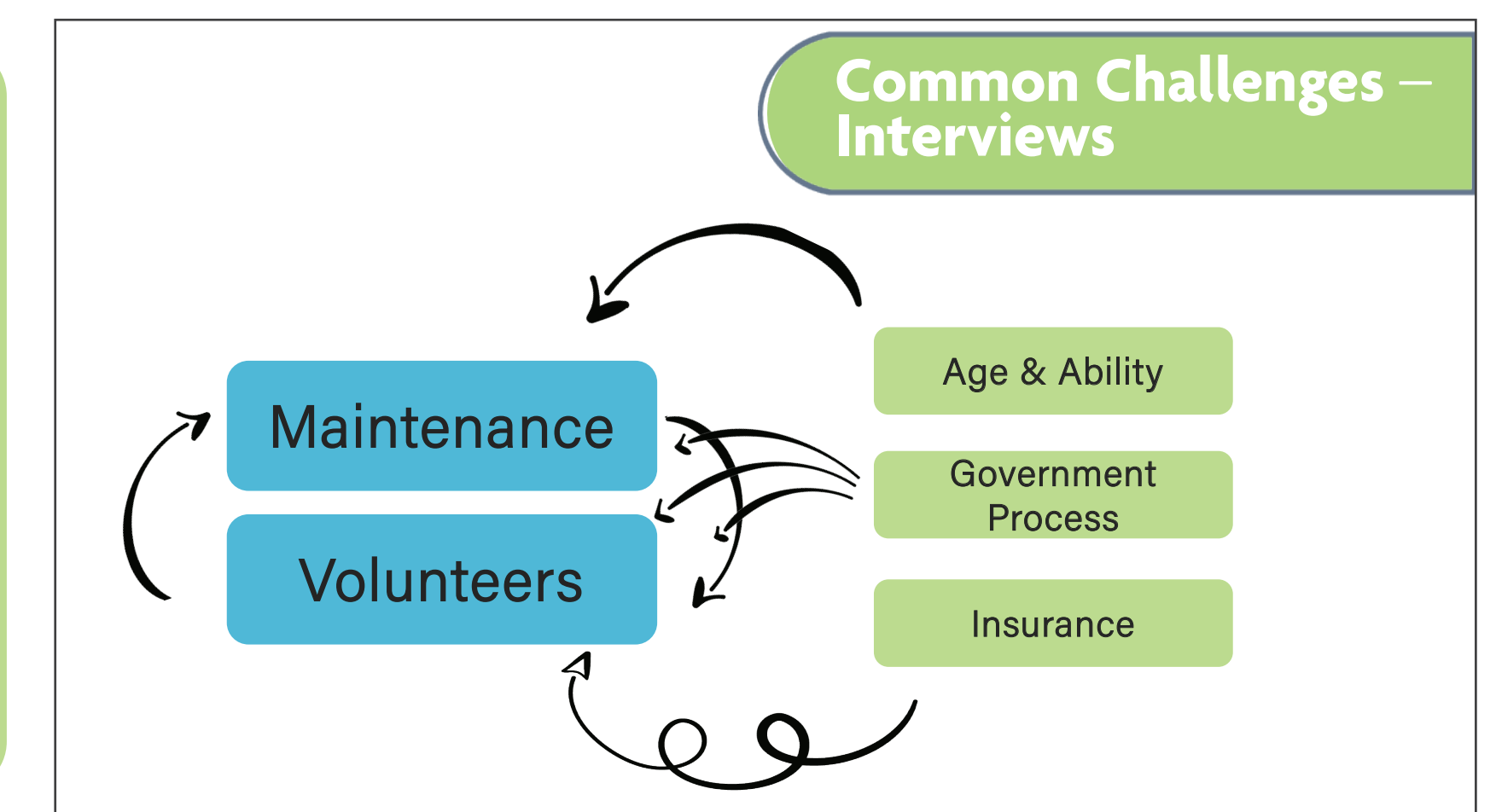
Though each club was unique, the following common needs were most frequently reported:

- Funding for Maintenance and Operations
- Improved Boat Launches and Water Access
- More Volunteers and Volunteer Training
- Support Navigating Government Process
- Promotion and Advertising
- Maintaining Access Roads
- RDBN Ownership of Trails and Amenities that Require Government Ownership

Though the seven common needs were frequently mentioned, there were differences across Electoral Areas that are important to consider. The table on the right illustrates the magnitude of each need within each Electoral Area (low, medium high)

	Low				Medium				High			
Needs	A	B	C	D	E	F	G					
Funding For Maintenance & Operations												
Improve Boat Launches & Water Access												
More Volunteers & Volunteer Training												
Support Navigating Government Process												
Promotion & Advertising												
Maintain Access Roads												
RDBN Ownership of Trails & Amenities that Require Government Ownership												

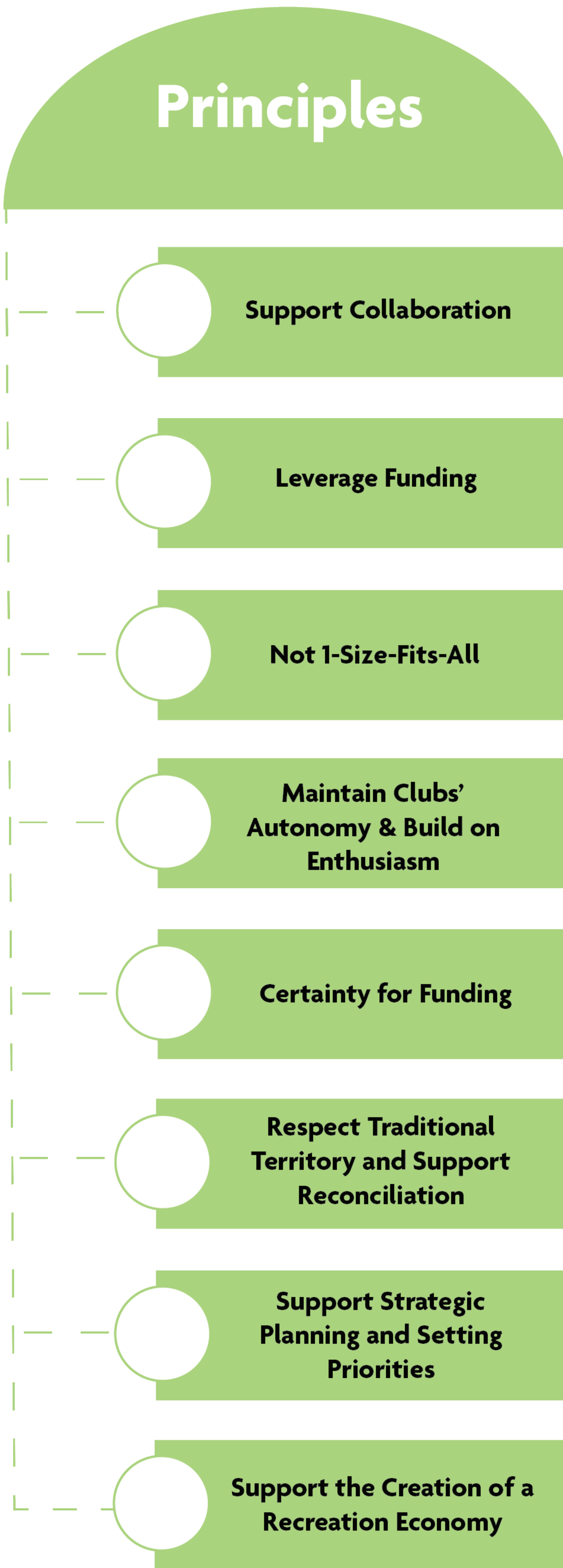
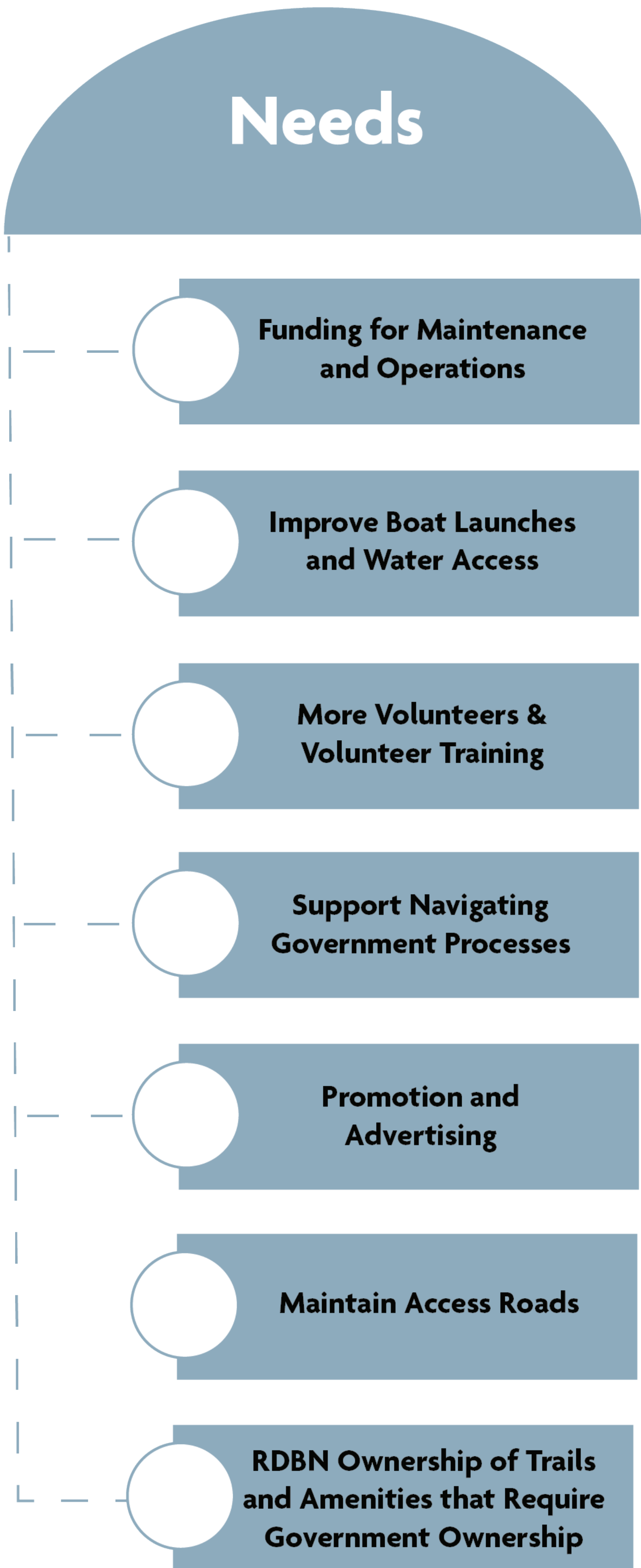
As the diagram to the right illustrates, each of these themes from the interviews are inter-connected and one issue may intensify another issue. For example, without sufficient trail maintenance and volunteers it is very difficult to create trails that are accessible for all ages and skill levels.



Needs & Principles

The diagrams below illustrate key needs and principles to guide the development of a Regional District parks and outdoor recreation service. These needs and principles are based on key findings from the engagement process.

Do you agree with the needs and principles? Use a sticky note to provide feedback or add anything that you think is missing



Building Blocks for an Outdoor Recreation Service

RDBN Coordinator

A recreation coordinator would be responsible for administering and monitoring funding programs and maintenance contracts, liaising with clubs and the public, building partnerships, and initiating and coordinating parks planning efforts. Most Regional Districts in B.C. that offer a parks service have a recreation coordinator or similar role.

Non-Profit Society

A Regional District may provide funding to a non-profit organization to deliver a service (i.e. Library Boards, Arts Councils, etc.). This model can promote collaboration and allow for a more locally-based service. This model is used on Hornby Island, where a non-profit society is responsible for managing parks through a funding agreement with the Comox Valley Regional District.

Management of Beach Accesses, Boat Launches & Active Transportation Trails

A Regional District can acquire parks and trails and operate them as Regional District amenities. In some cases, Regional Districts will lease a recreation amenity from the B.C. Government or a private property owner and in other cases Regional Districts will own the amenity. By playing an ownership and management role there is certainty that the Regional District will maintain, insure, and promote the amenity.

Grants

A Regional District can establish a grant program to support clubs and organizations that are delivering outdoor recreation services. A grant program could focus on providing funding for maintenance in order to fill the gap that currently exists as a result of most grant programs being focused on developing new infrastructure.

Multi-Year Funding Agreements with Clubs

A Regional District can enter into multi-year agreements with outdoor recreation clubs who own or lease parks or trails. Clubs would be responsible for operating and insuring the amenity and the RDBN could provide funding to help with the costs of maintenance and operations. There are many examples of these types of partnerships across B.C.

Building Blocks

Benefits

Challenges

RDBN Coordinator

- Allows the RDBN to operate assets that are currently not managed by any level of government, such as boat launches, water access and inter-community trails
- RDBN has capacity to administer and build an outdoor recreation service that is responsive to local needs
- RDBN would have capacity to:
 - Administer funding programs
 - Liaise with local clubs, First Nations and governments
 - Promote outdoor recreation and make more information available to the public

- Having 1 coordinator for a large geographic area like the RDBN could make it challenging to deliver services that meet local needs
- Will result in more government involvement and could create or be perceived to create more bureaucracy

Non-Profit Society

- Promotes collaboration, information and resource sharing
- Service could be administered locally
- Opportunities to leverage funding
- A collaborative body to develop strategic priorities and share resources

- Requires a non-profit society that has the capacity and willingness to play the role
- It would not be feasible to have one organization for the entire RDBN
- Limits RDBN funding available to manage beach accesses, boat launches and other outdoor recreation amenities that are not currently managed by any level of government

Management of Beach Accesses, Boat Launches & Active Transportation Trails

- Provides a formal system for maintaining and developing unmanaged outdoor recreation amenities
- Would work well for projects like Cycle 16 that require a government body to take ownership of the asset

- Requires full time RDBN staff dedicated to parks and recreation
- Increased liability for RDBN as the owner of the asset over the long term
- Will result in more government involvement and could create or be perceived to create more bureaucracy

Building Blocks

Benefits

Challenges

Grants

- Maintains club autonomy and control over maintenance of their recreation assets
- Encourages clubs to plan ahead for maintenance needs
- Funnels tax revenues directly to funding maintenance
- Simple to administer
- Clear criteria and process for clubs to apply for funding for maintenance

- Clubs do not have certainty for funding each year
- Only supports clubs who are formally involved in recreation and does not support informal recreation, such as boat launches
- Does not facilitate collaboration
- Decisions regarding who receives funding could become political

Multi-Year Funding Agreements with Clubs

- Provides certainty to clubs for funding
- Requires clubs to plan maintenance needs in advance
- Allows clubs to maintain autonomy, while providing a more sustainable model for ongoing operations and growth of a recreation amenity
- Does not pose risk for RDBN having to manage an amenity and liability risks if the outdoor recreation clubs decides to no longer be involved

- Requires full time RDBN staff dedicated to parks and recreation
- Will result in more government involvement and could create or be perceived to create more bureaucracy

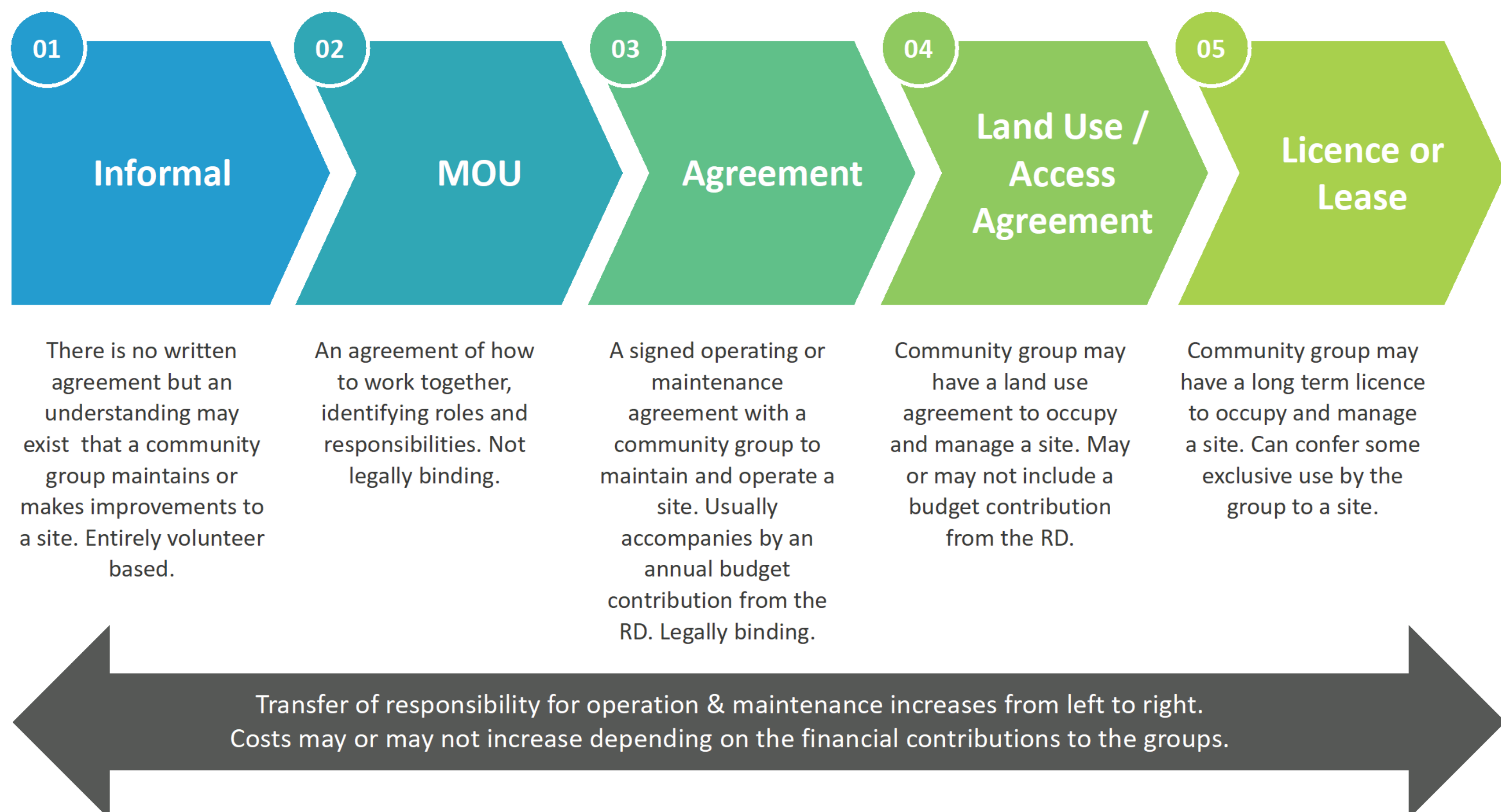


Parks & Outdoor Recreation Services in Comparable Regional Districts

 PEACE RIVER REGIONAL DISTRICT	 CSR COLUMBIA SHUSWAP REGIONAL DISTRICT	 Comox Valley REGIONAL DISTRICT	 Strathcona REGIONAL DISTRICT	 SUNSHINE COAST REGIONAL DISTRICT
<div>  1 Full Time Admin Employee </div> <div>  Recently hired in-house maintenance staff (previously done via contracts) </div> <div> 5 Regional Parks 1 Community Park Exploring opportunities for trail development </div> <div> Annual Operating Budget: \$430,000 </div>	<div>  3.6 Full Time Admin Employees </div> <div>  Maintenance Contracts & Partnerships </div> <div> 234 km of Trails 32 Community Parks 17 Lake Access Points 5 Boat Launches 2 Campgrounds 2 Bike Skills Park </div> <div> Annual Operating Budget: \$2.3 M </div>	<div>  5.2 Full Time Admin Employees </div> <div>  Maintenance Contracts & Partnerships </div> <div> 14 Trail Corridors 43 Parks 28 Beach Accesses 2 Boat Launches </div> <div> Annual Operating Budget: \$1.7 M </div>	<div>  2 Full Time Admin Employees </div> <div>  Maintenance Contracts & Partnerships </div> <div> 3 Trail Corridors 14 Parks 4 Beach Accesses 1 Boat Launch 6 Community Docks </div> <div> Annual Operating Budget: \$550,000 </div>	<div>  2 Full Time Admin Employees </div> <div>  6 Maintenance Staff </div> <div> 17 km of Paved Paths 71 km of Trails 9 Regional Parks 17 Community Parks 88 green spaces 10 Neighbourhood Parks 3 Tot Lots </div> <div> Annual Operating Budget: \$2.3 M </div>

Partnerships

Many Regional Districts and government agencies partner with volunteer groups to deliver outdoor recreation services. The diagram below provides some examples of tools that can be used to facilitate partnerships.



In the Comox Valley Regional District, the local fly fishing club maintains beach accesses for popular fishing spots. The CVRD has a licence of occupation (Item 5 above) with the Government of BC (the owner of the beach access) and memorandum of understanding (Item 2 above) with the fly fishing club.



The Peace River Regional District owns the Halfway Graham Rodeo Grounds and provides funding to a local non-profit organization to operate the grounds via an agreement (Item 3 above).



On Hornby Island, the Hornby Island Residents and Ratepayers Association (HIRRA) is responsible for maintenance and operations of parks through an agreement (Item 3 above) with the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD). The Mount Geoffrey Nature Park is a popular hiking and mountain biking park on Hornby Island that is a partnership between HIRRA, BC Parks, the CVRD and the local mountain bike club.

Costs in Comparable Regional Districts

Comparable RD Tax Requisitions for Parks & Recreation

Strathcona Regional District (2.4 people/km ²):	\$555,000
Comox Valley Regional District (39.1 people/km ²):	\$1.7 M
Columbia Shuswap Regional District (1.8 people/km ²):	\$2.3 M
Regional District of East Kootenay (2.2 people/km ²):	\$1.9 M
Peace River Regional District (0.54 people/km ²):	\$430,000

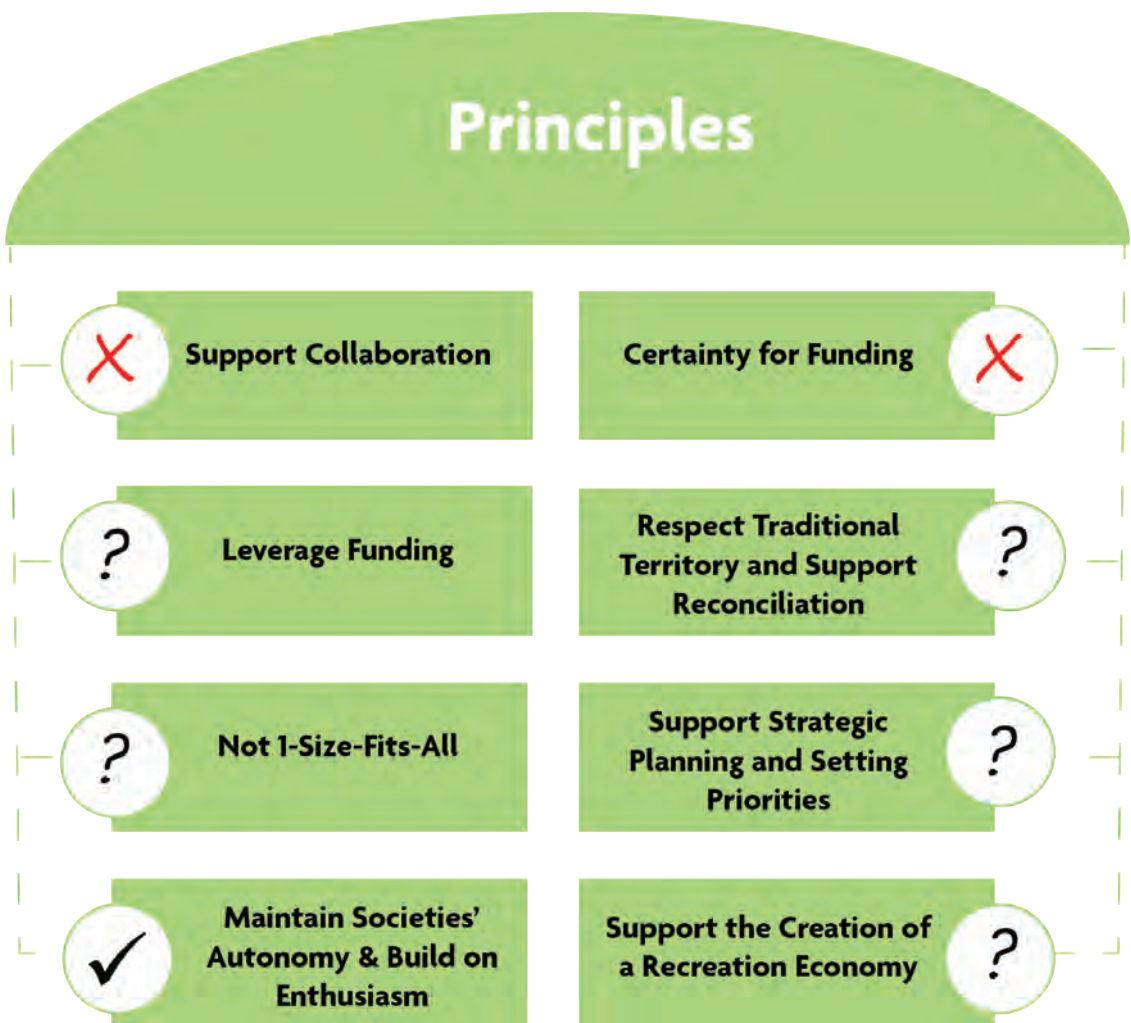
*RDBN population density is 0.52 people/km²

Examples of Scenarios & Potential Costs

Scenario 1

Grants

Could be implemented with any tax rate. A higher tax rate results in larger and more grants available



Scenario 2

RDBN Administration

Management of Beach Accesses, Boat Launches and Active Transportation Trails

Multi-Year Funding Agreement for Clubs

Assuming all Electoral Areas pay into the service, an ideal minimum budget is \$300,000 which requires a tax rate of approximately \$10 per \$100,000 Assessed Value



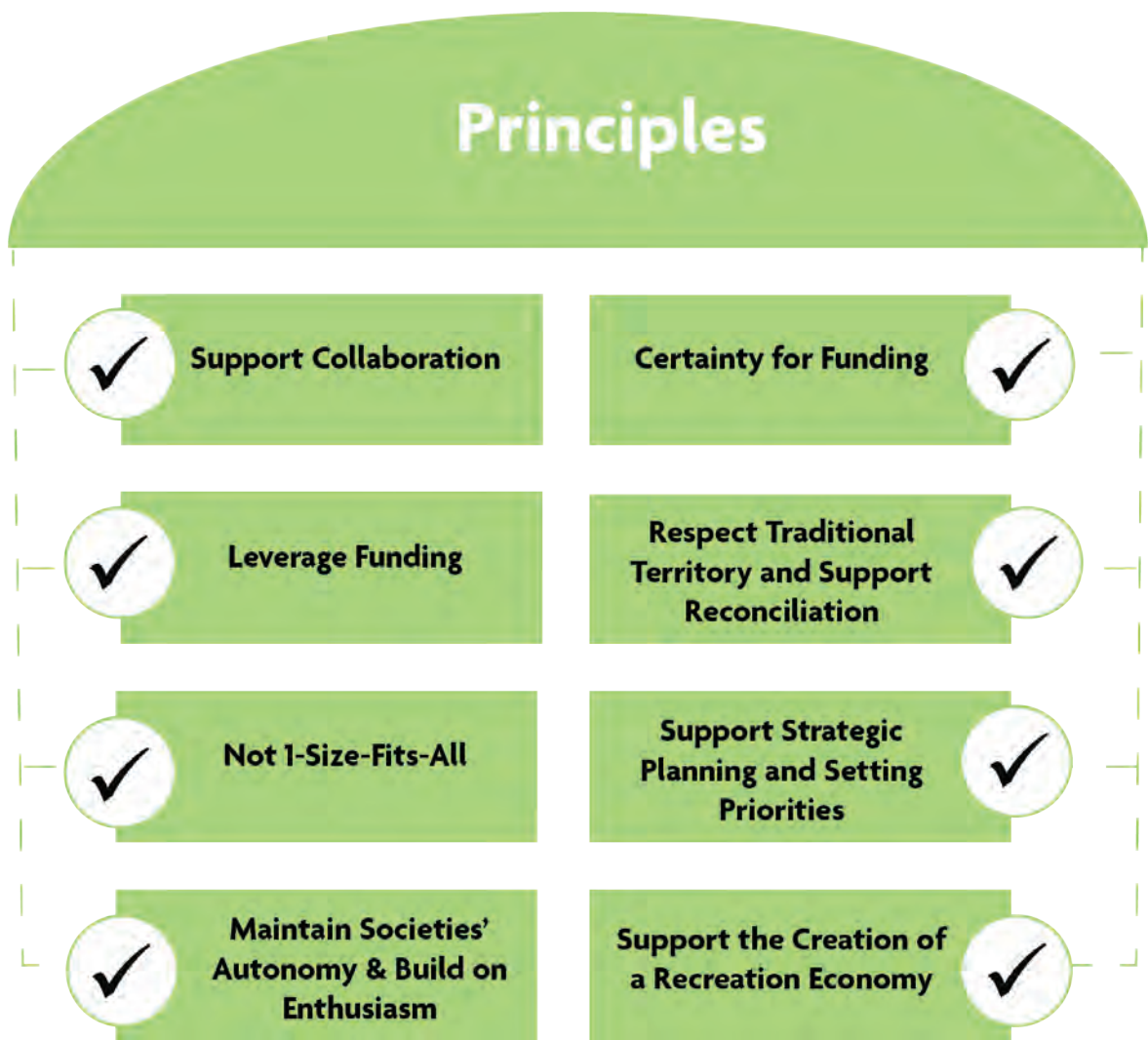
Scenario 3

Community-Led Non-Profit Administration

Grants

Multi-Year Funding Agreements for Clubs

If Area A only paid into this service at a rate of \$13 per \$100,000 Assessed Value the total revenue would be approximately \$109,000



Potential Tax Rates

\$5 to \$8 / \$100,000 AV

\$5 to \$22 annually for the average home

No RDBN administrative employee

RDBN could provide small grants to clubs (~2,000 to \$3000 per grant)

No new rec amenities

\$9 to \$12 / \$100,000 AV

\$10 to \$33 annually for the average home

1 full time or part time administrative employee

RDBN could provide grants or funding agreements to clubs (valued at \$2,000 to \$4,000 per club if most clubs applied and received equal funding)

RDBN could apply for grants to develop new rec amenities (RDBN would have limited seed funding for matching grants)

\$13 to \$16 / \$100,000 AV

\$13 to \$44 annually for the average home

1 full time administrative employee

RDBN could provide grants or funding agreements to clubs (valued at \$2,000 to \$6,000 per club if most clubs applied and received equal funding)

New infrastructure could be supported by grants.

RDBN would have sufficient seed funding to pursue large grants where they must provide matching funding.

\$17 to \$20 / \$100,000 AV

\$17 to \$55 annually for the average home

1 to 2 full time employees

RDBN could provide grants or funding agreements to clubs (valued at \$2,000 to \$10,000 per club if most clubs applied and received equal funding)

New infrastructure could be supported by grants and RDBN capital reserves.

RDBN would have sufficient seed funding to pursue large grants where they must provide matching funding.



Electoral Area A residents pay **\$35.99** per \$100,000 Assessed Value (~\$98 per average home annually) for the **Bulkley Valley Aquatic Centre**



Residents within the Fire Service Area of Area C pay **\$18.98** per \$100,000 Assessed Value (~\$24 per average home annually) for the **Fort St James Arena**