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# Recreation Assets and Access

Adventure forms core part of our community. Squamish residents pride themselves on easy access to adventure, from the ocean, to rivers, to provincial and municipal parks, to the extensive trail system leading into the backcountry surrounding Squamish.

Squamish continues to strengthen its reputation as a world-class adventure hub including:

- More than 3,500 rock climbing routes and boulder problems including the famous Stawamus Chief.
- Over 200 km of world-renowned mountain biking single-track trails.
- Access to some of the best kite boarding and windsurfing conditions in North America.
- Access to pristine backcountry skiing and hiking terrain within the Garibaldi Provincial Park.

Our unique geography provides a wider array of recreation opportunities than many other mountain towns and Squamish is positioned as one of the best multi-sport destinations in the world.

The opportunity for an adventurous lifestyle, conveniently located close to a major urban center continues to draw new residents to Squamish.

## Current Trends

- **More recognition, more visitors.** As Squamish's abundant recreation opportunities continue to gain regional and international recognition, more and more visitors are putting pressure on our recreational and environmental assets as well as the community and volunteer organizations who manage/maintain them. At present, little work has been done to identify the relationships between current users and the carrying capacity of our existing amenities.
- **Recreation-based migration.** In addition to drawing more visitors, our exceptional recreation and natural assets combined with reasonable commute times and more flexible work arrangements are motivating more and more people to relocate to Squamish.
- **Authentic outdoor recreation.** Our reputation is differentiated from other mountain resort towns by our authentic, often self-guided adventures in less managed outdoor/wilderness settings.
- **A recreation technology industry is developing** including equipment manufacturers and retailers, guiding companies and others looking to take advantage of our growing reputation, quality of life and availability of athletes and enthusiasts.

## What does the current OCP say?

- The OCP generally aims to support recreation by fostering access to outdoor activities and water-based recreation, providing trails, parks, playgrounds and recreational facilities, and generating economic opportunities to capitalize on the recreational potential of the District.
- Implement a Trails Master Plan and Smoke Bluffs Park Master Plan in cooperation with local organizations and take a leadership role in coordinating the development and maintenance of trail systems.
- Develop “blueways” as water-based recreation assets (ocean, channels and rivers) and secure public access to key locations for kayak access and wind sports.
- Recognize the contribution of climbing and alpine activities to the community and the importance of the Chief, Smoke Bluffs and other rock climbing sites.
- Acknowledge the economic and social value of the off-road/mountain bike trail system and collaborate with land owners and agencies to preserve these networks.
- Support off-road motorized recreation in identified areas.

## Challenges

- Increased use of recreation areas is taxing the capacity of the volunteers who maintain this infrastructure.
- Increased use has also increased environmental impacts and led to challenges with waste, wildlife, and concerns about wildfire hazards.
- Our trail network is located on provincial, municipal and private lands. Sustainability of the network over time will depend on collaborative planning amongst various levels of government, access agreements with private land owners and in many cases will be influenced by residential and industrial development.
- Need more coordinated management for recreation assets including funding and increased support from various levels of government and organizations.
- Volunteer Search and Rescue organizations are responding to an increasing number of calls due to increased recreation activity.

## Opportunities

- Exceptional adventure recreation opportunities are driving tourism and economic growth, and attracting new residents.
- High profile athletes are choosing to live in Squamish to take advantage of training opportunities. These athletes contribute to the recreation culture, support development of recreation activities and are positive role models for children and youth.
- Several new and proposed facilities in Squamish support training and a culture of recreation including a climbing gym, a trampoline centre, a Nordic training facility and an indoor bike park.
- Creating year-round job and business opportunities beyond tourism - recreation technology, including recreation products as well as film, photography, design, and online technologies.

## For More Information

- Current [Official Community Plan](#) (2009)
- [Squamish Trails Master Plan](#) (2011)
- [Squamish Branding, Development & Marketing Action Plan](#) (2014)
- [Employment Lands Strategy](#) (2015)

## Current Initiatives

- Continued implementation of the [Squamish branding plan](#) and marketing of recreation assets.
- Developing a wayfinding program to help visitors find recreation assets in and around Squamish.
- Funding support for developing and maintaining climbing infrastructure in Smoke Bluffs Park.
- Funding support for volunteer groups to develop and maintain biking, hiking and running trails.
- Leasing land to non-profits for recreation uses including a BMX track, bike skills park, boat storage, equestrian facilities, and wind sport launch.