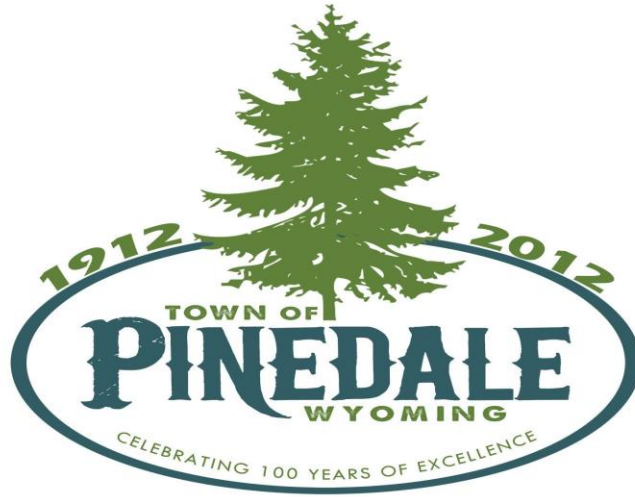


2013 Recreation Master Plan for the Town of Pinedale



prepared by;
Recreation Citizen Task Force

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I. Background:

The Town of Pinedale has a long history of providing recreational facilities for the people of the community. As early as 1949, Mayor Ziegler dedicated Boyd Skinner Park to its namesake who fell in the Battle of Iwo Jima on March 10, 1945. The property was suitable for a park because the town's

early residents had seen fit to preserve the trees and area along Pine Creek. Today, the Pine Creek corridor has become a centerpiece of the Town’s efforts to provide citizens with recreational opportunities. Recently, several parcels have been added to Boyd Skinner Park. In addition, the Town added American Legion Park, which extends north of Pine Street on the western edge of the Creek, to its park system. The Town also acquired the land now used for playing fields and a county cemetery on the eastern edge of town (and on the Fremont Lake Road) in the 1970s. The cemetery was given (for a nominal fee) to the cemetery district when it was formed and a number of citizens developed the ballfields across the road from the cemetery, including “Dud Key,” for whom the ballfields were named. The town also owns other park properties, including the “sledding hill” that now carries the Burzlander family name. In addition, there are two parks (Split Diamond and Trails Creek) in subdivisions in the northwestern part of town. Both of the subdivision parks are neighborhood parks and were given to the Town of Pinedale by the developers of each subdivision. In 1990, the town dedicated a very small parcel on the south side of Pine Street as its Wyoming Centennial Park. The Town plans to add a significant piece of artwork to the Centennial Park, a bronze of antelope migrating, by the summer of 2014.

The Town of Pinedale also owns several undeveloped parcels of land that might be used in the future. One is a geophysical site that was given to the town to be used as an educational location dedicated to teaching about the unique geology of the place. On the northwest corner of Dudley Key Fields (close to the geophysical site), the Town owns an undeveloped piece of property that is roughly an acre in size. Also, the Town owns property on the northern edge of its boundary by and alongside the Tranquility Bridge--these small parcels each comprise less than an acre of usable land but might be developed for some type of recreational use in the future.



The Town of Pinedale was able to make recent land purchases and playing field improvements as the result of increased revenues from gas-field development on the Pinedale Anticline. Demands for more recreational opportunities have increased simultaneously. Amid the rapid development of the area, the capacity of the Dudley Key Ballfields was quickly overwhelmed and citizens asked for more playing field facilities. In particular, the needs of Little League, softball teams and soccer were most critical and the Town responded by forming a Recreation Steering Committee. The steering committee came back to the Town Council with two recommendations; one, expand the ballfields by adding a soccer field and a Little League field; and, two, begin a recreation master planning process. In the fall of 2012, John Anderson with

Kate Grimes and Hyun Kim (town employees) initiated the work of long-term planning by convening a Citizen Task Force. In the spring of 2013, a contract was issued for the recommended expansion of the Dudley Key Fields.

A. Population

The populations of the Town of Pinedale and the surrounding area have both increased significantly over the past ten years. The 2012 census estimate was 2,043 people in town, but the 2010 Census put the area population at 6,892. To understand the changes, the 2000 Census reported only 1,412 people living in Pinedale. While the increase from 2000 to 2012 was roughly 40% in town, an even larger increase in population came in the northern half of Sublette County that surrounds Pinedale. With a booming population influencing recent predictions it seemed the town was in a permanent growth mode, but the actual growth has leveled off in recent years. Since gas-field development and production employs many young people, it would seem logical that Pinedale would be a young community. To the contrary, in Pinedale only about a third of the households (255) had children present at the time of the Census. In town, it seems that a majority are beyond the child-rearing part of life but among those living outside of Pinedale a large number are young families. Sublette County School District #1, which serves the northern half of the county, has a student population of 1,029 and that would not include pre-school age children. The 2010 Census indicated there were 1,698 residents who were 18 and younger. So while Pinedale itself may have a relatively small population of young people, it provides recreational opportunities for a large population of young people. Furthermore, people of all ages engage in recreation and many access the extensive pathway system use the parks and the playing fields.

B. Economics

Like so many Wyoming communities, the economic base of Pinedale is not wide but it is better than most towns in the state. For the most part, the economy in Sublette County is driven by oil and gas development and production. For instance, throughout the last part of 2013 Baker-Hughes reported there were 14 drilling rigs operating in the county while most Wyoming counties have none operating. The local economy was historically based upon a healthy ranching sector, and that part of the economic base is still healthy. In addition, Pinedale has a strong tourist economy that taps streams of travelers going to the area's national parks and it generates some of its own tourism from people who enjoy the fishing, mountains and outdoor activities available here. Over the past few decades, Pinedale has built on that tourist base by attracting a number of people who own second homes (a

26.2% increase was reported in 2000). In comparison to many communities in Wyoming, Pinedale has a slightly broader base for its economy but it is still subject to changes driven by the energy industry. For instance, employment in the county hovered around 3,000 up until about 2000 and then shot up to over 6,000 in 2007, as gasfield operations on the Pinedale Anticline moved into full scale development. According to the Record of Decision (ROD) signed by the BLM and Pinedale Anticline Operators, development of that field will continue for another 20 years. In addition, new development on the flanks of the Anticline and the proposed Naturally-Pressurized Lance (NPL) field could provide an even longer period of economic activity. It appears the community has a solid long-term economic future, but fluctuations will persist.

C. Recreation

Recreation in the Pinedale community is very important; according to the Need Assessment (described below) completed by the planning Task Force, 84.8% of community members either agreed or strongly agreed that recreation was an important part of community life. Going beyond that, 77.5 % of the respondents to the Needs Assessment also agreed or strongly agreed that most of their recreation was done outdoors. Only 32.9% agreed or strongly agreed that organized recreation was important, which suggests a smaller group that uses facilities provided by the Town or County, but it is still a significant one (accounting for roughly 600 residents). So while most people just head to the hills to find their fun and recreational opportunities, the need to provide for organized recreation is also present in Pinedale. The responses to the questions about recreation habits of community members are important because they indicate the Town moving in the right direction with the recreation opportunities it provides much more to provides citizens. Still, the ballfield users reported serving 657 participants in the summer of 2013 and that is a large enough group to warrant continued support from the Town. When considering the way recreation is provided in the community, it is important to understand that there are other important entities that work to provide recreational opportunities. In Pinedale, the Pinedale Aquatic Center (the PAC) should be considered the primary provider of indoor recreational activities--we can be assured, though, that the PAC needs support from the Town and deserves it. Another important recreation service provider is Sublette County, because it provides many opportunities (an ice arena, rodeo grounds, groomed cross-country ski trails and a pathway system that extends beyond the town boundaries) to both indoor and outdoor recreation enthusiasts. With a diversity of recreation practices and providers, it seems the Town has followed a wise course of action by providing what it has.

II. Task Force:

The planning process for the Town of Pinedale began with gathering a citizen task force charged with overseeing the process of putting together a master plan. The task force was purposefully designed to represent a variety of interests in the community. In order to gather wide representation, a large planning group (12 members) was formed. As the work moved along, a few members had to leave because of scheduling conflicts. The final composition of the task force follows:

Brent Thomas (chair and convener)
Nylla Kunnard (council member)
Kate Dahl (town employee)
Valerie Werbelow (Park & Tree representative)
Darren Rhea (Game & Fish and resident parent)
Jennifer Wolf (soccer and resident parent)
Melissa Alphin (softball/Little League and resident parent)
Caitlin Tan (high school student)
JJ Huntley (PAC Director)
John Anderson (facilitator and town employee)

The task force began its work in October of 2012 and met on a monthly basis. The work of the task force started with a learning phase and rapidly moved on to the work of creating a vision statement, establishing priorities and organizing the structure of the plan. When the summer of 2013 came, the task force broke into working groups to address plan details. While the task force was working, public input was also collected through a variety of methods. John Anderson, with the help of several task force members, conducted a community-wide needs assessment that sampled a little over 400 households and netted a 71% response rate. Before the summer began, Anderson had also conducted stakeholder interviews and held several focus groups (described below in the Public Input section of this document). Public input served as a basis for both forming the structure of the plan and as a check on the work of the task force--effectively meaning that no task force ideas could move forward if they ran completely counter to public input (especially the community needs assessment).

Finally, the task force brought its plan to the town and interested citizens in order to receive one final round of input. The task force held a workshop with council, and it presented the details of the planning process to other town employees. The final piece of work for the task force was accomplished through a series of four public meetings held to share the plan and seek further feedback.

III. Executive Summary:

The details of the proposed Town of Pinedale Recreation Master Plan are included in the text and appendices of this document; however, this executive summary (following below) is provided as a summation of recommendations derived from the planning process;

- ❑ The Town of Pinedale should organize its efforts around recreation with the following vision statement to guide it;

"We strive to provide the best park and recreation facilities and to be known as community partners who work to provide a full range of recreation opportunities for everyone."

- ❑ The Town of Pinedale needs to establish a recreation budget with clear line-items for activities.
- ❑ The primary emphasis for the Town of Pinedale should be to maintain its parks, playing fields and pathways.
- ❑ The Town of Pinedale should prioritize maintaining Pine Creek as a community focal point, as well as encouraging recreational use while maintaining its natural character.
- ❑ Collaboration with other recreation providers, especially the County and the Pinedale Aquatics Center, should also be a primary concern for the Town of Pinedale. In particular, the "Skate Park" is an area of concern where the town should head-up an effort to collaborate with other entities to improve the safety and overall utilization of this facility in the center of town.
- ❑ Recreation is currently provided by a wide array of organizations and individuals, rather than attempting to replace current providers the Town should both; continue to provide money to support programs (e.g., PFAC) and initiate a small seed-grant program to help organizations with new initiatives that support community needs (as identified in the plan).
- ❑ It is important that the Town of Pinedale place an emphasis on providing recreational opportunities for youth and young families.
- ❑ The Town of Pinedale should also work to acquire more land for parks, develop the natural character of the Pine Creek Corridor, and work to improve bike-path connectivity as well as pathway safety.
- ❑ The Town of Pinedale should hire a recreation coordinator to assist organized recreation users, improve the effectiveness of playing field maintenance, and support collaboration among those who provide recreation opportunities in the community.
- ❑ Certain new amenities should be considered as improvements that should be considered in the next five years. Those amenities are, in order of importance, an outdoor ice rink, group picnic



shelter, community garden and a sprayground for young children.

- ❑ The Recreation Master Plan is a five-year planning document that is based upon building projects into a base budget with a long-term view for implementation of action steps. In light of that approach, the town should fully utilize the Recreation Master Plan and update it every five years.

IV. Synopsis of Public Input:

Public input was the primary factor driving the process that led to this master plan. To achieve a high level of quality input, multiple methods were employed throughout the planning process. To begin, the task force itself was representative of the community. Also, stakeholder interviews, focus groups and a needs assessment (referred to as the Community Recreation Survey) were used to gather public input that helped establish use patterns, citizen attitudes about priorities and a general assessment of the quality of recreational opportunities in the area. Even the ending of the process was used to gather public input when a series of public meetings were held. In addition, input from the Town staff and Town Council was sought at a variety of times during the process. As a result of gathering the public input, priorities (see table above) came almost directly from the citizens of Pinedale.

Stakeholder interviews were conducted with nearly 30 people in the community and the overall results of those interviews (see details in Appendix) directed the way the Community Recreation Survey was structured. Those interview results also directed the task force to emphasize the importance of maintaining what we have and minimizing the Town's place as an organizer of recreational programs. Unlike most Wyoming communities (e.g., Big Piney, Thermopolis, Green River), Pinedale has not been the focal point for providing recreation programs and need not take that direction. As stakeholders repeatedly said, most of the recreation in Pinedale is centered upon individual recreation and it is outdoor (needing little organization). What is organized in Pinedale has been historically provided by strong, vibrant nonprofits that work well whether it is with the Town (softball), or the County (hockey). Rather than replace the work of community volunteers, the Town should help those voluntary organizations be successful; and, that is precisely the goal of the Master Plan.

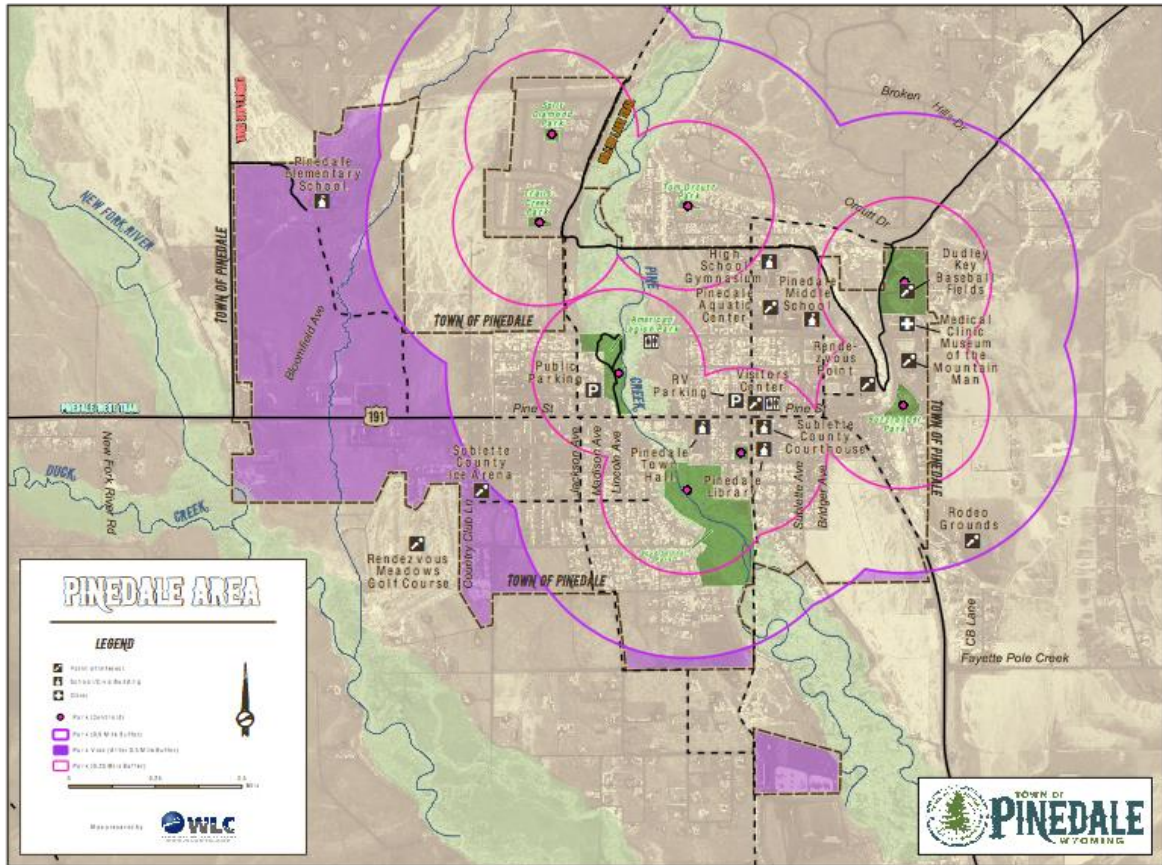
Focus groups with senior citizens and students (elementary, middle school and high school) provided the task force with different insights. Senior citizens were mostly happy with the recreation that is available and only sought immediate solutions to problems that the Town might help with (such as through the proposed mini-grant program). Student focus groups (five total) had one amazingly strong core idea emerge--they want safe places for kids that have minimal adult supervision. It was clear that students were busy most of the time but that there were times when they wanted

opportunities to “hang out” or play together. One suggestion was to have more competitive events (that occurred over at one discrete time, so could fit it into their busy schedules), such as the half-marathon. The Town’s collaboration with the PAC could help here, but so could the mini-seed grant program introduced above. Most of all, the students in the focus groups identified the need for improved safety and use of the Skate Park. In reaction to that student input, the plan identified forming a collaborative group of partners, led by the Town’s Community Development Coordinator, to find creative ways to improve conditions at the Skate Park. The focus group insights provided a few invaluable pieces to the overall plan and its priority list.

The recreational needs assessment, the Community Recreation Survey (see Appendix for a copy of the questionnaire), served two critical purposes. First, it ratified the goals and priorities established by the Task Force. Two, it provided ideas about what the Town can do in the future to improve both the parks and recreation. Findings from the needs assessment are included throughout this plan (see Appendix for the complete results of the survey and other important information about it). We sampled slightly more than 400 households and used the Town’s utilities mailing list to contact the sampled households. A response rate of 71% was achieved after using a Total Design Methodology that included four waves of contact. The confidence interval for the data was +/- 5.3%--meaning that responses from all of the households in town for any question on the survey could be as much as 5.3% higher or lower than what our sample found. It is always a good practice to be cautious about slim majority responses that do not cover the confidence interval. In the case of this plan, virtually every finding used by the Task Force came from responses that exceeded by far the level of a slim majority--in other words, the confidence interval did not come into play on items reported in this plan.

V. Park Inventories:

While public input continually told us that Pinedale has an excellent park system, inventories of existing parks and a geospatial analysis of service suggests the Town must do more than simply “take care of what we have.” For one, the geo-spatial analysis provided by the map (below) indicates that residents of the southwestern part of the community are more than a ½ mile away from a park--see areas that are shaded purple. Traditionally, park planners suggest that parks should be placed to make them accessible from no more than a ½ mile and if possible locate them within ¼ mile. Access to parks is important for the quality of life of all Pinedale residents and the southwest part of the community is under-served at this time. Currently, there is a gap in services that should be addressed in the future.

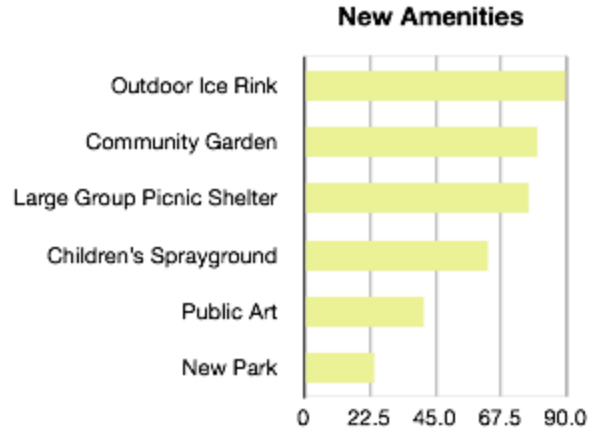


Aside from that one gap in service, the Town of Pinedale excels in providing park areas to residents.

The beauty of town parks in Pinedale is second to none, but the park inventories suggest that a number of improvements could be made in the future.

- handicap accessibility is an ongoing concern for Public Works and those efforts should be encouraged.
- playground equipment for children has been an emphasis for the Park & Tree Board, and their efforts to provide age- and ability-appropriate equipment should be supported.
- a variety of new amenities for park users should be considered and the most popular ones identified through the Community Recreational Needs Assessment were an outdoor ice rink, community garden and a large group picnic shelter. Again, the Park & Tree Board has supported the idea of providing a large group picnic shelter and the plan supports their thinking on that.

- parking is an issue around some of the parks and it is especially important to provide that near parks that get more use (especially Boyd Skinner Park and near any future group picnic shelter).
- improved supervision at the Skate-Park is needed and supported by young people in the community (most strongly supported by the youth focus groups).
- a need for the development of areas for open-play and possibly for youth soccer games/practices may also be important by the end of the five-year scope of this plan.



Most of these improvements are dependent upon the specific purpose of each park. It is a recommendation that the Town consider developing a purpose statement for each park and that can be used to develop specific plans for enhancing the use of parks for recreational purposes. Furthermore, the Town should engage in taking a long-term look at lands it already owns that might be useful for some kind of recreational/learning activities, such as the Geophysical Park area, the land on Pine Creek near the West Chemical Feed Building and the pathway parkland on the east edge of Split Diamond Subdivision.

VI. Prioritization:

Many steps are necessary in a good planning process and the beginning one must be dedicated to educating the participants. The Task Force worked to familiarize itself with the history of recreation and parks, town budgets, the organization and the community. The second step was to establish a vision under which goals and action steps could be identified.

Vision Statement:

The vision established by the task force led to a statement that could inspire action. That statement is;

We strive to provide the best park and recreation facilities and to be known as community partners who work to provide a full range of recreation opportunities for everyone.

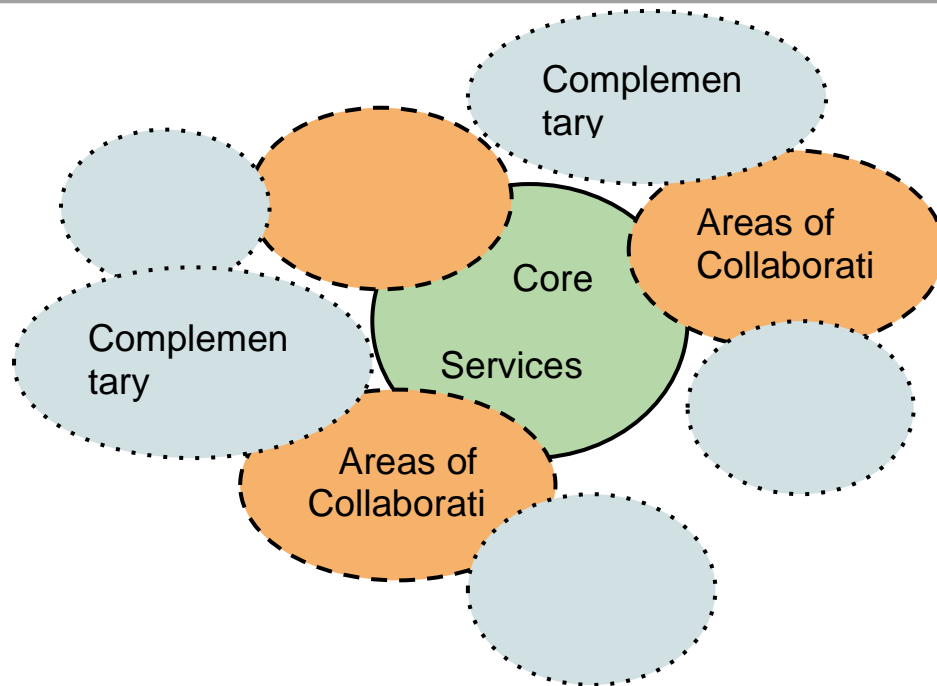
A few phrases in the statement are worth emphasizing. One, the vision statement places an emphasis on providing the best parks and facilities, which indicates that care must be organized and effective. This part of the vision statement complies with the wishes expressed by a number of citizens during the gathering of public input. Overall citizen sentiment about doing basic maintenance is best summarized by one survey respondent who wrote, “maintain what we already have.” Two, the Town should strive to be a good (or even the best) partner when it comes to working to provide recreation opportunities in the community. The Recreational Needs Assessment indicated strong support for being good partners, with 84.8% of the respondents agreeing, at some level, that working with others was important. Many respondents to the community needs assessment expressed a desire to seeing the Town work with volunteer organizations (80.5%), but not to replace them. Finally, the vision statement makes it clear that inclusivity is important in Pinedale--everyone should have recreation opportunities provided. In sum, the vision statement should give the Town of Pinedale a direction forward and the specifics of how we will get there should flow from that vision.

Categories of Recreational Service Provision:

The more specific goals of the master plan were designed by taking a look at the functional elements of recreation in the community and then categorizing them. Categorization of activities for the Town was designed to provide a structure what should be done in the future. The categories designed by the Task Force encompass a range of recreational services that center upon “core services” and then reach out to “areas of collaboration” and on to situations where Pinedale could engage in “complementary action” with other recreation providers. The diagram below provides an apt visualization of the scheme for categorizing action.

In the center of the figure, above, are “core services,” which are defined as those activities that Pinedale would provide regardless of what other entities might do. In a sense, core services are the types of service provision where the Town holds a virtual monopoly. Core services for general service governments are usually related to the activities of public works departments and that is also true in Pinedale. In terms of core recreational services, a good example would be providing parks for public use. The Task Force agreed that providing for quality parks, playing fields and pathways formed the core services the Town of Pinedale should provide for recreational use in the community.

Diagram of Recreational Service Categories



After defining core services, the task force worked to find the “areas of collaboration” where the Town could work with other entities, such as Little League or the County, to provide recreational services. It must be recognized that each category for action is not exclusive of the other areas. For instance, Pinedale has a core service of providing pathways but it also collaborates with the County to provide pathways. Quite often, collaborative activities occur and the town will not carry the primary responsibility for providing the recreational opportunity. For instance, in the case of Little League, the primary responsibility of the Town has been to provide playing fields but the Little League organization has been responsible for providing league structure, equipment, coaching, and running the day-to-day activities. The case of Little League, as well as other ballfield user groups, also illustrates how a core service and a collaborative action can overlap--the Town sees ballfield maintenance as a core service but the provision of the program requires it to collaborate.

The final category used for prioritization captures those recreational activities where the Task Force thought the Town should help individuals and organizations with recreational service provision. In most of these cases, primary responsibilities for providing recreation belong to other providers (e.g., the Half Marathon), but the Town can certainly help those providers. This category of recreational service provision is simply labeled as, “complementary action.” In the past, complementary actions have almost entirely been left to the province of the Town Council and its granting of funds to non-profit organizations who provide recreational or entertainment activities (e.g., Shakespeare in the Park).

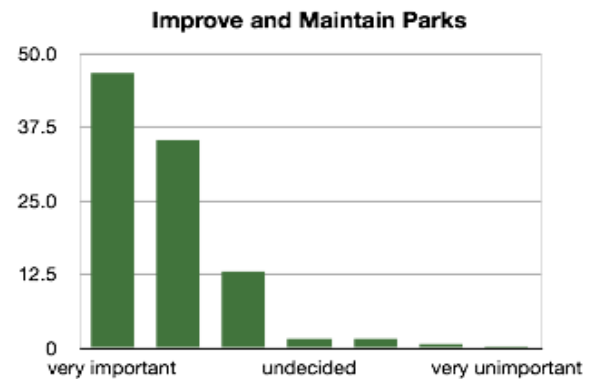
In every category of recreational service provision, actions ought to be directed toward filling identifiable recreation service gaps (e.g., winter recreation opportunities for seniors). Even though core

services are ones the Town has to address, that does not mean there is a clear hierarchy that indicates core services always take priority over collaborating or complementing the actions of other providers. Core services should be seen as important and the provision of services for each area of action can occur along with it. Finally, it should be recognized that there are many kinds of recreational services that are not included in the scheme for categorizing recreational service provision; and, those should be considered services the Task Force does not envision the Town providing (e.g., grooming Cross-country Ski Trails, helping with White Pine).

The most obvious fact about this way of categorizing service provision is that the level of funding for core services is typically higher than for collaborative efforts. Also, funding for collaborative efforts will typically be more expensive than providing for complementary activities.

A brief description of each category of action proposed by the Task Force follows;

Core Services: The Town should continue to provide the best parks and pathways for the use of everyone in the community. Respondents to the Needs Assessment clearly supported providing parks (95.4%). Certain elements of the parks ought to be emphasized, such as the development of each park to meet the different needs of the community. In addition, maintenance of the parks using best practices for care and use of the parks is important. In some instances, parks will need to be developed further through the provision of new amenities and spaces (such as a covered picnic shelter, community garden, or outdoor ice rink).



Collaborative Services: The Town of Pinedale should emphasize collaboration by working to meet each of the following goals;

- 1. Recreation Coordinator** The Town can improve collaboration among users of recreational facilities in town, particularly at Dudley Key Fields, by providing a central person to coordinate and plan activities. The person hired for the proposed position would not only coordinate activities, they would work to do what is in the best interest of the Town economically and aesthetically; and promote the values and general welfare of all those who utilize the Town of Pinedale for recreation (see options and a sample job

description in the Appendix). A primary duty would be to provide a one-stop scheduling service. Also, the person would be the point of contact when issues related to the care and maintenance of Dudley Key Fields arise (see Appendix for details).

2. **Engage with PAC** The Town of Pinedale should also work with the Pinedale Aquatics Center (PAC) to create more opportunities for youth and young families (as supported by public input). The Task Force suggests that efforts be increased to provide recreational opportunities for youth during the summer, with a special orientation toward outdoor education. In particular, the primary goal of any joint venture would be to provide the youth (and their families) of Pinedale a real opportunity to explore the great outdoors that surround us.



3. **Pine Creek Corridor** The Town should devote efforts to develop recreation along Pine Creek and it should do so in collaboration with others who hold a significant stake in the use and preservation of the natural character of the creek and the adjoining riparian habitat. Since the State of Wyoming (DOT and Wyoming Game & Fish), the federal government (U.S. Forest Service and BLM), and multiple non-profit organizations (Trout Unlimited) have important interests in the creek, the Town should work with them to develop appropriate recreational opportunities along the creek. Appropriate development would encourage youth recreation, fishing, along with wildlife and bird-watching.
4. **Sublette County** Pinedale has enjoyed the support of Sublette County and it should make every effort to continue that collaboration. Two separate kinds of recreational facilities have been supported by the County, pathways and Dudley Key Fields, and the Town should work with the Sublette County Recreation Board to continue that special relationship. Attention should be paid to opportunities to collaborate in areas where patterns of use are established and also when new needs arise.

Complementary Activities: The Town currently provides grants and in-kind support for a wide variety of recreational activities (especially when you think of recreation as it is widely defined). In particular, the Town of Pinedale provides annual line-item funding to important endeavors in the community, such as PFAC funding, Sage & Snow Garden Club funding and

other non-profit organizations. The Town should continue to provide that kind of funding. In addition, the Recreation Master Plan suggests spurring new activities through a small seed-grant program (see full description in Appendix) designed to ;

- 1) provide opportunities to underserved populations,
- 2) provide economic benefit to the community,
- 3) offer special educational benefits,
- 4) provide winter-time recreation,
- 5) include a social benefit,
- 6) demonstrates evidence that fosters cooperation,
- 7) introduces a new recreational opportunity,
- 8) uses an existing facility,
- 9) is demonstrably sustainable,
- 10) includes a simple measure of evaluation.

Each of the criteria listed above will help the Town foster voluntary efforts and to provide recreational opportunities that will fill service gaps in the community (see Appendix for full description of small seed-grant program).

Aside from identifying categories for recreational service provision, there is a need to place the action items into a sequence and to suggest concrete actions the Town Council should take in the upcoming years. Such actions should not only come from making policy decisions, it should also be based upon making budgeting decisions. The Task Force has attempted to sequence those action items in Table One (next page). Items included in the list of action items were based upon a set of principles. For the most part, the principles are simply good budgeting principles but there are certain realities that have also directed the prioritization of action steps.

- Priorities were established based upon the public input and work of the Task Force
- Some actions should proceed others, if development is going to be rational
- Financing for projects should allow for careful budgeting that does not generate the need to realign budgets for other departments
- Financing priorities within the arena of recreation must be done with the realization that survey respondents expressed a strong belief that completing the water, sewer and street projects should be the highest priority for the Town of Pinedale.
- The revenue trend for the Town is currently going downward, so it is not a time to be extravagant

When the Task Force finalized the plan's priorities, they accounted for each of the on-the-ground realities and had some differences with the conclusions based on public input. For the most part, the Task Force agreed with public input. If you look at the following table, you will notice that there

were few differences between publicly driven priorities for action and those of the Task Force. The most glaring

Table One, Recreation Priorities

Core Services	Public Input	Task Force
Park Maintenance and Planning	1	1
Pathway Maintenance	2	3
Ballfield Maintenance	3	2
Park and Natural Area Acquisition	4	6
Outdoor Ice Rink	5	4
Group Picnic Shelter	6	5
Community Garden	7	7
Sprayground	8	8
Collaborative/Complementary Services		
Pathway Connectivity	1	3
Pine Creek Corridor	2	1
Form Skate Park Committee	3	5
Hire Recreation Coordinator	4	1

Mini-Grant Program	5	3
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difference there came on the issue of making further land acquisitions. While public input would place that priority as number 4, the Task Force rated it as number 6. The reason the Task Force rated land acquisition lower was that they reasoned the Town had recently purchased more land and its financial situation was not as strong as it once was. Both are valid concerns.

The Task Force had greater differences with public thinking on priorities for the categories of collaborative and complementary services. Most notably, the Task Force reasoned that hiring a Recreation Coordinator was much more important than the public indicated through the needs assessment question on that topic. One Task Force member simply stated, “we had heard too much about the problems” to rate the hiring as a low priority. In addition, the public input from ballfield users and younger respondents strongly favored hiring a recreation coordinator. The need for coordination is likely more of an issue if you have had experiences with it. Furthermore, the Task Force has put forward a range of options for the Town to consider and that includes a fairly low-cost approach that would utilize existing personnel.

In addition, the Task Force had issues with the prioritization of other items. First, the Task Force rated the addition of an Outdoor Ice Rink higher because it could be done quite easily and with little cost (\$10,000 or less). The Task Force also likes the idea of combining an Ice Rink with a sprayground as a multi-purpose facility, like other towns have built. Second, the Task Force strongly believes that the Pine Creek Corridor is a focal point for the community and ought to be considered that for the Town also. Its development and simultaneous protection of its natural character are important. Third, the group rated the Skate Park Committee as less important but because of its low cost and ability to be a vehicle for collaboration with the County and other entities the group still thinks it ought to be pursued by the Town. Finally, the Mini-Grant Program was also rated higher by the Task Force because of what it might bring into being with relatively little financial cost in comparison to the rate of return for encouraging collaboration.

VII. Action Items:

Lining up priorities is an important step in planning but taking it another step forward helps policy makers clearly understand how they can proceed. The Task Force attempted to line up their priorities with potential future actions that can be taken by the Council. In particular, the Task Force attempted to line-up priorities with budgets, lead entities and potential funding sources over a five-year

framework. It was the thinking of the Task Force, which was supported by citizen input, that a practical long-term planning approach had to include spacing action items in a way that could be implemented over time. In addition, the Task Force attempted to set up action items so they built upon each other. For instance, looking for planning money in one year and then repeating that as a yearly line-item so that funds would

Year	Priority Item	Action Items Budget		Potential Funding
		Lead Entities	Budget	
2013	Ballfield Improvements	Town & Ballfield User Groups	\$300,000	2013-14 Budget
2014	Park & Rec. Planning Process Initiated (Parks)	Public Works & Rec., Park & Tree	\$20,000 (new annual line item)	Town's General Fund
2014	Skate Park Committee	Town, County, School, Citizens	\$1,000	Town, County, School District
2014	Recreation Coordinator Position	Public Works & Rec., PAC, ballfield users	0-\$40,000	Public Works Budget
2014	Recreation Mini Seed Grants	Public Works & Rec., Town Council	\$5-20,000 (new annual line item)	Town 2014-15 Budget
2015	Implement ADA Park Access Plan	Public Works & Rec.	\$5,000 (new annual line item)	Town 2014-15 Budget
2015	Outdoor Skate Rink	Public Works & Rec., PAC	\$7,000	Public Works Budget 2014-15
2015 (spring)	Park & Rec. Planning (Pine Cr. Corridor)	Public Works, Trout Unltd., and Wyo. G&F	from Park Plan Budget	Town's 2014-15 Budget and Trout Unlimited
2015	Pathway Connectivity (Safe Routes)	Public Works & Rec., Safe Routes to School, County	\$200,000	DOT, School District, County, Town
2016	Group Picnic Shelter Built	Public Works & Rec.	\$300,000	Town Budget 2013-14
2016 (spring)	Park & Rec. Planning (Community Garden Feasibility Plan)	Public Works and Parks Budget	from Park Plan Budget	Public Works & Rec., Town Budget 2014-15, and Sage & Snow
2016	Ballfield Improvements	Public Works & Rec., County	\$50,000	Town Budget 2016-17
2017	Pine Creek Corridor Fish Habitat Improvement	Public Works & Rec., Trout Unltd., Game & Fish	\$30,000	Town Budget 2017-18

2017	Park & Rec. Planning (northwest park feasibility plan)	Public Works & Rec.	from Park Plan budget	Town Budget 2016-17
2018	Softball Complex Feasibility Study	Rec. & Comm. Dev. Coord.	from Park Plan budget	Town Budget 2017-18
2017-18	Recreation Master Plan Update	Town	from Park Plan budget	Town Budget 2017-18

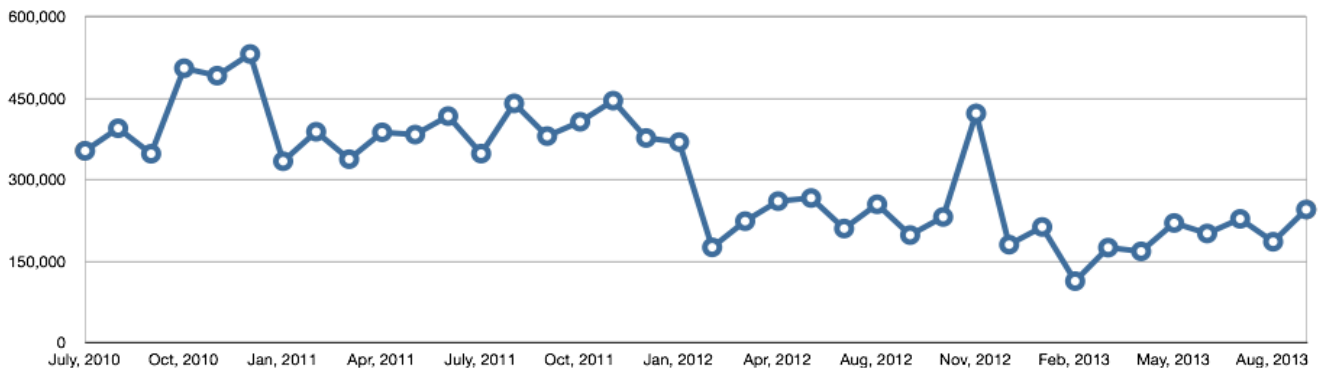
be expended in a planned rather than a reactive manner. The items are listed as Action Items in a table format to make it easier to see how the plan would play-out over the upcoming five-year period.

VI. Strategic Analysis:

Whenever careful planning occurs, a review of the situation of the town is important. While many goals and objectives may have a strong appeal to policy makers, knowing the contours of the field of action are critical. In the case of the Town of Pinedale, there are two critical factors that policy-makers must understand. One, current financial realities will impact what can be done. Two, until rather recently the Town of Pinedale has not had to organize itself in a manner that is conducive to planning and implementing long-term policies and budgets. A short discussion of those facts follows.

The most important trend that will impact planning and budgeting for recreation in Pinedale is the reality of slower development in the gasfields of the County, which generate our single, most important source of revenue, sales and use taxes. The chart below (see page 18) tracks the downward trend in sales and use tax revenue, the primary source of funding for the Town of Pinedale. Note, that in the

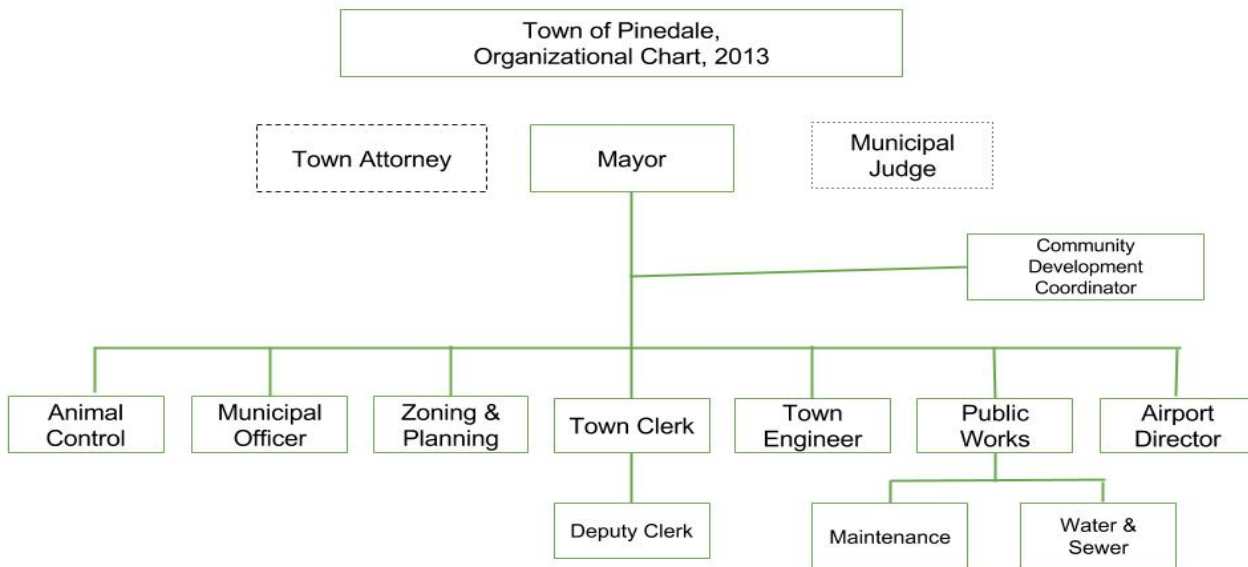
Figure One
Monthly Sales & Use Tax Revenue
Pinedale, 2011/12-2012/13



summer (June) of 2012 sales and use tax revenues stepped down and aside from one anomalous month have tracked at a level between \$150,000 and \$250,000 a month. That trends indicates that the Town of Pinedale can expect an overall annual decline in revenues of about \$1.5 million a year in the near term. With declining revenues, planning and careful budgeting are increasingly important for the Town of Pinedale. Even though the projections for field development (both the Pinedale Anticline and the Naturally Pressurized Lance Formation fields) are quite optimistic, in the short-run financing future recreation projects may be difficult.

The Community Needs Assessment did more than explore what needs people felt, it also asked respondents to indicate the importance of recreational priorities alongside questions about other priorities. While more than one priority was important to respondents, as mentioned above, most strongly supported priority was the completion of future street, water and sewer replacement projects. A large majority (67.9%) marked that it was important (at some level) to complete water, street and sewer projects. Only 59.2% thought it was important to acquire more land for parks and 51.1% thought it was important to hire a recreation coordinator. Given the high costs of water, street and sewer replacement projects and their relative high standing in the minds of citizens, some new amenities and improvements may have to wait.

When it comes to making decisions about the way that the Recreation Master Plan may be implemented, it is also important to understand the organizational reality of the Town of Pinedale. First, the town has never really had a recreation budget (in 2013-14, \$26,400 with \$15,000 going to the 4th of July fireworks show) or any kind of recreation program. The Town has had a relatively strong Parks budget that is built into the Public Works budget. Parks relates to recreation in obvious ways but making that relationship clear is not an easy bargain to strike. In addition to not having a formalized recreation budget, the Town of Pinedale is not organized in a manner that suggests an apparent solution to how implementation of the Recreation Master Plan can be done reliably. As the Town of Pinedale Organizational Chart (below) shows, the town has a flat bureaucratic structure and that suggests either wedging in yet another department or finding a place within the existing structure that



makes sense.

The Task Force recommends a Council decision to address a possible location for a Recreation Coordinator and designating a “chief worrier” to assist with its implementation. The term “chief worrier” is used among education leaders and indicates that a less than formal designation can be useful when taking on special projects. As a special project, it might make sense to give the “chief worrier” position to the Community Development Coordinator; however, making that position work well likely requires

supervision and support from within Public Works (as described in the Appendix). Public Works is the largest department in the Town and has traditionally been assigned to maintain and improve the parks, pathways and playing fields the Town owns. With a strong history of working with the facilities that are used for recreation, the Public Works Department is a natural fit and it is an action the current Maintenance and Water & Sewer Supervisors must accept if it is to work well. Of course, the Town will also need to create line items for the Recreation budget and that will need to be supervised within Public Works.

In Pinedale, there is a strong history of using democratic governance practices that empower citizen advisory boards. In terms of providing public input for a Recreation Coordinator, many options are possible. One option would be for the Town Council to create a new Recreation Board, which would allow for public input and advice when important decisions are being made. The other option, and the more practical one, would be to expand the current Park & Tree Board by adding two members and making it the Park, Tree & Recreation Board. Such an expansion could include designating the two new positions as “recreation” board members. Since advisory boards are not a requirement, the Town Council could easily leave matters as they stand. The problem with leaving matters alone is that in a fairly short period of time the Park & Tree Board will be making decisions that impact recreation.

IX. Conclusion

Overall, the process of creating this master plan has been challenging and fulfilling. The challenges came from being in a situation where no previous plan or recreation program existed. With little for a basis, the Task Force had to create everything out of whole cloth. Fortunately, the Task Force was up to that task and excelled at it. Some of the success of the Task Force came from the members but it was also readily apparent that recreation in Pinedale was in the hands of competent and caring individuals who made good things happen in the community. Whatever is done by the Town in the future, it is the sense of the Task Force that nothing should be done to disrupt the high quality of volunteerism among the community providers of recreational opportunities. It is also the sense of the Task Force that the Town should strive to be known as the best partner in the community for people who want to improve the quality of life in Pinedale, especially when those improvements enhance recreational opportunities. It has been fulfilling to take on the task of organizing a recreation plan in a Town that is so dedicated to high quality recreation.

