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City of Owen Sound Recreation, Parks & Facilities Master Plan: 2018-2028

January, 2018

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2016, the City of Owen initiated a Service Review. A key recommendation from this Review was to undertake a review and update of the 2007 Recreation, Parks and Facilities Master Plan. The consulting team of MacNaughton Hermsen Britton Clarkson (MHBC) Planning Ltd. was retained by the City to undertake the Recreation, Parks and Facilities Master Plan Update. The purpose of the Recreation, Parks and Facilities Master Plan is to provide the City of Owen Sound with a five year strategy to be used as a guide in maintaining and developing recreational programs, services, partnerships and facilities as well as open spaces, parks and trails. This Master Plan will build on the previous Recreation, Parks and Facilities Master Plan as well as the City's 2015 Strategic Plan.

The updated Master Plan is intended to complement past studies (Recreation, Parks and Facilities Master Plan; Harbour and Downtown Urban Design/Master Plan Strategy; Harrison Park Master Plan; Victoria Park Master Plan; Kelso Beach Park Master Plan; and Recreation Trails Master Plan) and provide a comprehensive strategy which focuses on program and service delivery and built infrastructure to ensure the City continues to meet the recreation needs of residents and visitors of all ages and abilities.

The scope of the Recreation, Parks and Facilities Master Plan is limited to the programs and services provided by the City of Owen Sound, which are delivered primarily through the City's Community Services Department. This plan will also address partnerships between the City and other recreational providers such as the YMCA.

This Plan is a five-year plan with a broader 10-year strategy to complement the existing strategic plans. The updated Master Plan was supported by a public consultation program, which included a public workshop/public meeting, input from stakeholders, staff and other recreation program service providers, and on-line survey. Detailed results of this consultation are included in a compendium appendix document.

Based on the public input and background review conducted as part of this study, four general themes emerged, centered on the following issues:

- Accessibility/Affordability
- Marketing and communications
- Partnerships and Collaboration
- Desire for indoor turf facility

In addition to these themes, this update also addresses parkland requirements and acquisition; recreational asset improvements; programming; and service delivery and monitoring. As a result, over 100 key recommendations/strategic actions have been provided under these 8 strategic goal areas, which are intended to help the Community Services Department build capacity in programming; enhance diversity of opportunities for participants; and establish a strategy for the dedication of parkland and rationalization of parks.

This update provides Owen Sound with an opportunity to reflect on past success, while looking ahead to the future. Owen Sound is on the cusp of change, navigating the new direction for recreation, leisure, and community. This will require leadership and vision that

will demand support and the combined efforts of the Community Services Department and prospective partners from all community sectors in order to make changes that will allow for success.

1.0 Introduction



1.1 Master Plan Goals and Scope

The purpose of the Recreation, Parks and Facilities Master Plan is to provide the City of Owen Sound with a long term strategy to be used as a guide in maintaining and developing recreational programs, services and facilities as well as open spaces, parks and trails. This Master Plan will build on the previous Recreation, Parks and Facilities Master Plan as well as the City's 2015 Strategic Plan.

Relevant to this Master Plan, key objectives proposed in the 2015 Strategic Plan include:

- Enhancing tourism opportunities;
- Encouraging participation in cultural activities and active lifestyles;
- Facilitating affordable recreation and sports opportunities;
- Fostering inclusive public spaces; maintaining, improving and promoting the use of local parks and trails; and
- Ensuring the responsible management of natural resources.

Several policies and plans are currently used to inform various aspects of the City's Recreation model. These plans include the City of Owen Sound's Official Plan (2006); Recreation, Parks and Facilities Master Plan (2007); Harbour and Downtown Urban Design/Master Plan Strategy (2000); Harrison Park Master Plan (2002); Victoria Park Master Plan (2011); Kelso Beach Park Master Plan (2010); and Trails Master Plan (2012). Additional policies and

documents impacting the City's recreation model include the 2016 Service Review, the City's Asset Management Plan, the YMCA's AODA Statement of Commitment to Accessibility, the Downtown River Precinct Conceptual and Schematic Design as well as economic development policies and plans.

These plans and strategies are in effect, and serve as important planning tools for the provision of parks and recreation facilities within the City. The updated Recreation, Parks and Facilities Master Plan is intended to complement these documents and provide a comprehensive strategy which focuses on program and service delivery to ensure the City continues to meet the recreation needs of residents and program/ service users from the surrounding area of all ages and abilities.

In addition to addressing the parks system, recreational facilities and services provided by the City of Owen Sound, this Master Plan reviews the joint partnership between the Julie McArthur Regional Recreation Centre and the YMCA. Through this partnership, local and regional residents can access a diverse range of activities that result in more active lives.

This Plan also addresses current issues and opportunities for program delivery not envisioned in the existing Master Plan. Key issues reviewed include financial sustainability, parkland dedication and parks rationalization.

This Plan is a five-year plan with a broader 10-year strategy to complement the existing strategic plans. The Recreation Parks and Facilities Master Plan establishes a clear path forward for the City, which will:

- Enhance diversity of opportunities for participants based on current and projected demographic trends;
- Provide a snapshot of user needs now and in the future;
- Identify how current and future services can be improved and/or developed to meet user expectations;
- Provide City staff with best practices and recommendations for parkland dedication and rationalization to consider for the Official Plan review and update taking place in 2018; and
- Provide best practices and recommendations for staff for continued maintenance and management of parks and recreational facilities.

1.2 Methodology

The foundation of the Master Plan is based upon public consultation with the community, input from stakeholders, staff and other recreation program service providers, while considering recreation and leisure trends and the City’s demographics and population.

In order to get a better understanding of how the community currently utilizes programs offered by the City and obtain input on the delivery of parks and recreation programs moving forward, a community consultation exercise was undertaken to identify program needs and areas for improvement. This consultation assisted in answering fundamental questions such as:

- What is the level of satisfaction with existing recreational facilities and parks in Owen Sound?
- How could existing programs and services be improved?

- What other programs and services would you like to see offered in the community?
- Are there enough parks and trails?
- How do residents feel about altering the use of under-utilized parks and open spaces in order to improve their usage and meet changing recreational needs?

In addition, an online survey was undertaken to obtain additional feedback regarding:

- The community’s current participation in leisure programs offered by various organizations within and outside of the City of Owen Sound;
- Facility usage within the City;
- Barriers to participation;
- Level of service provided by the City with respect to recreational needs and programming;
- Areas for improvement; and,
- Perceptions and opinions on partnerships between the City and community organizations.

The survey ran through October, 2017. In total, there were 505 responses to the survey. However, 43% of respondents were responding on behalf of households, representing an additional 524 individuals. Thus, the online survey accounts for 1029 individuals. 72% of these respondents were residents of Owen Sound; 5% were residents of Meaford, 4% were residents of Chatsworth; and 19% indicated ‘Other’ (Georgian Bluffs, Hepworth, Shallow Lake, etc.)

A public Open House was held on September 27th, 2017 with staff, user groups and other community stakeholders to:

- Assess the current demand and capacity for existing programs;
- Understand how recreation and leisure service providers perceive the strengths and weaknesses of the current delivery of programming;
- Confirm if there are enough parks, trails and facilities for recreational use; and
- Gauge the support of altering use of under-utilized parks and open spaces in the City.

These exercises assisted in the identification of major goals, gaps, opportunities and priority areas to direct the provision and delivery of future parks and recreation services in the City. The results of the survey and a summary of the community open house consultation are included as appendices to this report.

Existing background reports and plans were also reviewed to assist in establishing an understanding of the City’s existing recreation offerings in order to identify gaps and priorities for recreation and the future needs for recreation facilities, parks and services in the City. These have included strategic master plans including the Strategic Plan (2015), Recreation, Parks and Facilities Master Plan (2007), Parks Master Plans (Harrison Park, Kelso Beach Park, Victoria Park, etc.), and the Recreation Trails Master Plan as well as the City’s recreational program offerings and other community organization program offerings.

Available data on user rates, participation numbers in minor sports, program fees, and operating budgets made available by the City were also relied upon. Demographic data, obtained primarily from Statistics Canada, and local planning policy documents were also

used in order to get a better understanding of the demographic profile and future demographic trends that could potentially influence parks and recreation program delivery in the City. Geographical Information Systems (GIS) data was also made available, and utilized to assess parkland and open space supply for the City.

1.3 Organization of the Plan

The Recreation, Parks and Facilities Master Plan includes the following components:

- **A Review of Background Information**, including a review of local demographics, a summary of background studies completed by the City, which inform and complement the findings and directions of this Plan (Section 2.0); and, a review of current programming and recreation trends (Sections 3.0 and 4.0);
- **Identification and Summary of Key Themes**, which were identified through community consultation and background research and analysis (Section 5.0);
- **Inventory of parks, open spaces and recreational facilities** in Section 6.0; and,
- **Implementation/Action Plan**, developed based on the recommendations proposed for each of the identified key themes (Section 7.0).

2.1 Owen Sound Regional Context

The City of Owen Sound is located on the southern shore of Georgian Bay, at the base of the Bruce Peninsula. Owen Sound is the largest urban community in Grey and Bruce County. The total population of Grey County, according to the 2016 Census, was 93,830. Grey County is comprised of nine municipalities:

- Township of Southgate;
- Township of Georgian Bluffs;
- Township of Chatsworth;
- Town of the Blue Mountains;
- Town of Hanover;
- Municipality of West Grey;
- Municipality of Meaford;
- Municipality of Grey Highlands; and
- City of Owen Sound;

With a population of 21,341, Owen Sound is the largest of the nine municipalities within the County and is considered to be an 'urban hub' for the neighbouring communities. Key natural attractions including Kelso Beach, Harrison Park and the Niagara Escarpment are within the City's boundaries. Additional natural spaces within close proximity include Inglis Falls and Hibou Conservation Area.

The City of Owen Sound provides a variety of parks and recreation facilities intended to serve residents of the City and County,

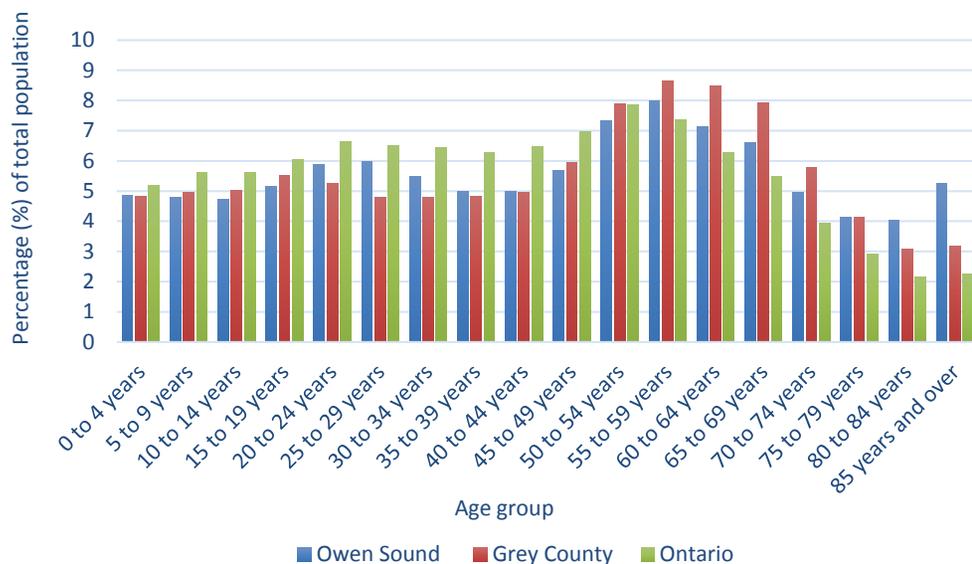
including two community centres, an advanced trail system and numerous public outdoor spaces (parks) of varying sizes. While this Master Plan update explores Owen Sound's recreational needs, it is important to note that the City's recreational assets provide recreation and leisure opportunities for the wider region, including the adjacent rural municipalities.

In addition to the recreational facilities and public spaces provided and operated by the City, many other private facilities exist and contribute to the recreation and leisure opportunities available to residents of the City and County. These include a variety of private fitness facilities, yoga studios, dance academies, and organized sport leagues (e.g. soccer).

2.2 Demographics

With a population of 21,341 in 2016, the City of Owen Sound represents the largest municipality in Grey County. West Grey (12,518); Meaford (10,991); Georgian Bluffs (10,479); and, Hanover (7688) are the next most populous municipalities within the County.

Based on population forecasts provided in the Grey County's Growth Management Strategy Update (Hemson Consulting Ltd., 2015), it is expected that by 2036 Owen Sound's population will grow by 2179 people to a total of 23,520. Notwithstanding the

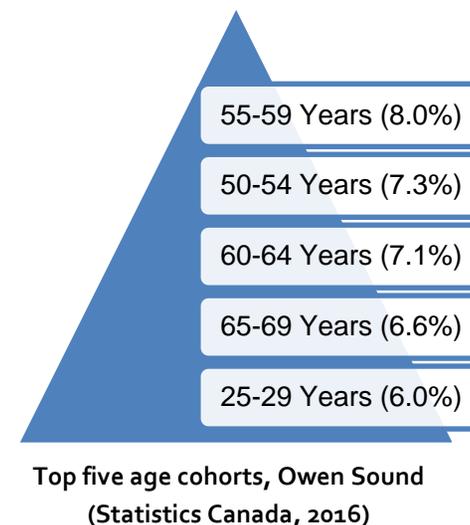


Age distribution: Owen Sound, Grey County & Ontario (Statistics Canada, 2016)

growth projections allocated to the City, the 2016 Census data shows that Owen Sound's population is not growing as fast as in previous Census years and not as fast as forecasted. Population growth from the 2011 Census to the 2016 Census was -1.6% (347 people). This is a larger decline than the previous Census years, where Owen Sound experienced a growth of 0.06% from 1996-2001; 0.28% from 2001-2006, and; -0.06% from 2006-2011. While

Owen Sound's population is not growing, the number of households did increase in the 2011-2016 period.

The slow growth/decline in population points to an overall aging population and smaller household size in the City. This is further confirmed by analysis of median age. The median age of residents of the City of Owen Sound is 47.8 years old, which is significantly higher than the provincial (41.3) and national (41.2) median age. According to Statistics Canada, the average household size in Owen Sound is 2.1 people, which is less than the provincial and national averages of 2.6 and 2.4 respectively



It is worth noting, however, that the 5th largest age cohort is 25-29 years. This is higher than Grey County's 25-29 years cohort (4.8%), and an increase from the 2011 Census (5.1%) which may indicate a growing centre for new and/or young families living in Owen Sound.

Analysis of immigration patterns suggests that growth is also not likely to occur via immigration to the City. Census data indicates that the proportion of new immigrants to the City between Census years, as a proportion of the total population, is declining.

Research indicates that there is a correlation between income and participation in recreational activities whereby participation in recreation activities is often higher among higher income families. Studies have also shown that wealth and family income increases with age. Based on the latest Census data, the average household income in Owen Sound is lower than the Provincial average. The National Household Survey determined that the median household income after tax for Owen Sound was \$46,857 compared to \$65,285 for Ontario.

The level of education one achieves also influences the likelihood of engaging in healthy physical and recreational activities. As the level of education one achieves increases, so does the probability that participation in physical and recreational activities will increase. Nearly half (45.3%) of the City's population has a post-secondary certificate, diploma or degree, while the balance (54.6%) has either attained only a high school diploma or reported no formalized education. Given these statistics and the links between educational attainment and physical activity levels, it can be inferred that as educational attainment continues to grow, participation in recreational activities should grow as well.

Demographic analysis shows that the majority of Owen Sound's population speaks English as a first language. The top 5 languages, other than English and French, spoken by residents in Owen Sound are German, Korean, Dutch, Arabic and Tagalog. Ethnicity can influence the community services provided by a municipality. The diversity of ethnic groups in the community can lead to greater demand for recreation pursuits that these ethnic groups enjoy. For example, in the future there may be greater demand on facilities for activities such as cricket, bocce, or other culturally specific programs

in order to serve the diverse community needs. It is therefore important for the City to continue to monitor the changing demographics to ensure cultural, leisure and recreation services meet the socio-demographic demands.

Overall, the demographic trends suggest that Owen Sound is comprised of an aging population. However, current marketing efforts to attract young families to the City aims to offset the demographic trend of an older/aging population.

2.3 Planning Framework Review

2.3.1 *Planning Act (1990)*

Section 42 and 51.1 of the Ontario Planning Act deal with the applicable policies which permit municipalities to enact by-laws that will require parkland conveyance to the municipality for new development or redevelopment. Section 42 specifies the required parkland dedication through specific policies that outline parkland requirements based on the proposed development land uses.

Currently, the City's Official Plan contains a rate for parks of different scales (i.e. Neighbourhood parks and Community parks specifically). The proposed update to the Recreation, Parks and Facilities Master Plan has reviewed the City's requirements for parkland dedication in the Official Plan and the Recreation, Parks and Facilities Master Plan

and has evaluated the existing supply of parks through a mapping exercise, which shall be discussed below.

Furthermore, Section 42(4.1) and 51.1(2.1) of the Planning Act state that a municipality shall prepare and make available to the public a parks plan that examines the need for parkland in the municipality prior to adopting policies in the Official Plan that deal with the provision of lands for park or other public recreational purposes and the use of the alternative requirement for parkland dedication.

Section 42(4.2) and 51.1(2.2) state that in the preparation of the parks plan, the municipality shall consult every school board that has jurisdiction in the municipality and may consult other persons or public bodies as the municipality deems appropriate. In accordance with these policies, the update to the Recreation, Parks and Facilities Master Plan will recommend that the Department undertake consultation with local school boards and public bodies for future changes to parkland requirements and changes to the parks plan in order to ensure that input can be provided by these parties.

Section 42(6) and 51.1(3) state that where applicable, the council of a municipality may request a payment in lieu for the parkland that is required to be conveyed, at a rate to be established by an implementing Official Plan policy, and based on the direction of the Planning Act policies. Section 42(15) of the Planning Act states that where a municipality collects payment in lieu of parkland dedication, that all money received by the municipality for the purposes, "less any amount spent by the municipality out of its general funds in respect of the land, shall be paid into a special account and spent only for the acquisition of land to be used for park or other public recreational purposes, including the erection, improvement or repair

of buildings and the acquisition of machinery for park or other public recreational purposes." Each year, the treasurer must provide a statement for the special account that identifies any transaction made to and from the account.

These policies will be discussed further in Section 6.0 of this Master Plan.

2.3.2 Provincial Policy Statement (2014)

The Provincial Policy Statement (2014) provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. While the majority of policies within the PPS focus on these topics, there are policies which support the continued provision of parkland and open spaces to serve the surrounding community. Specifically, policy 1.5.1 states that "*Healthy, active communities should be promoted by:*

b) planning and providing for a full range and equitable distribution of publicly-accessible built and natural settings for recreation, including facilities, parklands, public spaces, open space areas, trails and linkages, and, where practical, water-based resources;"

The proposed update to the Recreation, Parks and Facilities Master Plan recognizes the importance of maintaining parkland and open space within the City of Owen Sound, and will seek to implement the significance of this policy through the revised parkland policies and a parkland rationalization analysis.

2.3.3 Grey County Official Plan (2013)

The County of Grey Official Plan was approved by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing on March 5, 1998, and replaced the Grey/Owen Sound Official Plan, that was approved by the Province in 1981. As of June 30th, 2000, the Minister of Municipal Affairs approved an order to restructure the County of Grey which would come in effect on January 1st, 2001. This restructuring was developed by the County and proposed that a two-tier government system with a county government and nine local municipalities be implemented. The updated plan reflects this new structure by basing land use schedules and the growth strategy on the County and nine local municipalities.

The Official Plan is meant to guide the development within the County to the year 2026, and to interpret and apply the intent of Provincial legislation, regulations and policies for developments within the County. The policies within the plan integrate the principles of sustainable, healthy and strong communities, a healthy environment, and economic growth for the long term.

The Official Plan contains a variety of policies that are relevant to the update of the Owen Sound Parks and Facilities Master Plan. One of the goals of the County Official Plan is to *"strengthen the role of Grey County as a desirable place to work, live, and visit by encouraging the provision of affordable, diverse and accessible housing and by promoting the provision of adequate social, recreational, cultural, health and educational services"*.

Some policies of the County Official Plan also support sustainable environmental management of fisheries and wildlife in order to continue to provide opportunities for outdoor recreational space for area residents and visitors. Policies suggest that many recreational and tourism-related activities in the County can provide year-round recreation/tourism activities through the establishment of new facilities. Recreational uses such as skiing, snowmobiling, fishing, hunting, golfing, walking, hiking, biking, and water access activities are some of the uses that can be diversified to provide year-round recreation opportunities.

One of the fundamental policies of the County Official Plan is to *"promote healthy and diverse communities where residents can live, work and enjoy recreational opportunities."* The update to the Recreation, Parks and Facilities Master Plan will seek to ensure that there is adequate provision and preservation of indoor and outdoor recreational facilities and parks to promote the continued recreational use of facilities within the City of Owen Sound.

2.3.4 City of Owen Sound Official Plan (2006)

The City of Owen Sound Official Plan was adopted by City Council on March 20, 2006, and was approved by the County of Grey on August 10, 2006. A review of the Official Plan was undertaken in 2011/2012, in accordance with the direction of the Planning Act and policy from the 2006 Official Plan. The updated Official Plan provides a long-term vision for all lands within the City of Owen Sound, as well as goals to guide the future development of the City.

The policies of the City Official Plan promote a healthy population through the provision of recreation facilities that are accessible to all ages. The policies also support the expansion, redevelopment, and extension of these recreation facilities and parks where financially feasible partnerships are developed and community needs are addressed.

Specific policies regarding updates to the Recreation, Parks and Facilities Master Plan are included in the Official Plan and include the following:

- Review the current and projected recreation needs of the Owen Sound community in the context of the demand for recreational services from surrounding communities, tourism needs and usage trends for various types of recreational activities.
- Assess the capacity and adequacies of the existing public and private facilities to meet these needs.
- Provide direction to the City in the development, improvement, expansion and maintenance of the public park system and recreational facilities.
- Provide the basis for long-term strategies and master plans for Owen Sound's Parks and other potential open space options.
- Identify appropriate recreation program ideas for the City and recreation partners.
- Provide comprehensive plan or strategy for the design, use, maintenance and development of the trail systems within the City, under the general framework of the Tom Thomson

Trail on the east side, Georgian Bluffs Rail Trail on the west side, and Freedom Trail at the south end of the City.

- The City shall maintain and regularly update Schedule 'D' – Trails to provide for paths and trails.

The provision of parks is also highly detailed within the City Official Plan. Details regarding the appropriate parkland dedication rate as well as definitions for the different types of parks are provided within the policies. Where there is a need for additional parkland within the City, the Official Plan policies identify means through which the City can acquire parkland. Policies outlining the City's parkland dedication requirement for new developments are also included. As part of this update, Section 42 and 51.1 of the Planning Act will be reviewed to ensure the City's Official Plan policies are up to date.

In addition to public parks, the Official Plan identifies that recreation trails and trail systems are also a promoted form of recreation. Since the Official Plan was approved, the City has completed a Recreation Trails Master Plan that contemplates the creation of a trail system within the City to support transportation, environmental, social, cultural and recreational functions.

The findings of this study will help to inform the 5 year review of the Official Plan which the City will be undertaking in 2018.

2.4 Review of Previous Studies Completed

Over the past ten years, a number of other studies, strategies and plans have been completed regarding the planning and provision of parks and recreation in the City. These studies, reviewed below, generally deal with the planning and development of parks and recreation infrastructure. It is anticipated that the recommendations of this Recreation, Parks and Facilities Master Plan will complement and build upon the recommendations of these other studies.

2.4.1 *Owen Sound Strategic Plan (2015)*

The Strategic Plan for the City of Owen Sound was finalized in 2015 and represents a vision to the year 2020. The development of the Strategic Plan included significant consultation with the public through public meetings, working sessions, comment cards and on-line surveys. The Plan sets the overall direction for development within the City, and thereby guides the creation of the policies within the Official Plan and the Asset Management Plan. The Strategic Plan is founded on a vision and mission statement and underlying values that are intended to help guide future decision-making.

Furthermore, the Strategic plan identifies objectives and actions to help guide the City towards their goals. The City has identified a desire for the Recreation, Parks and Facilities Master Plan Update to address objectives 3, 7, 14, and 15 of the City of Owen Sound Strategic Plan. The objectives are as follows:

- Objective 3 - Leverage our City's assets in order to enhance tourism opportunities;
- Objective 7 - Encourage and promote participation in cultural activities and active lifestyles;
 - Action 7.2 - Continue to facilitate affordable recreation and sports opportunities;
- Objective 14 - Maintain, improve and promote the use of our local parks and trails; and
- Objective 15 - Ensure the responsible management of natural resources.

The update to the Recreation, Parks and Facilities Master Plan will include a section to describe what objectives of the Strategic Plan are being addressed through the Recreation, Parks and Facilities Master Plan.

2.4.2 *Recreation, Parks and Facilities Master Plan (2007)*

The Recreation, Parks and Facilities Master Plan was finalized in January 2007 and has since served as the City's guide to the development of parks and recreation facilities. The plan was intended to span a period of 10 years, which is why an update to the plan has been initiated by the City.

The Master Plan had identified overarching goals and action plans that contribute to the completion of the goals. In a staff report to City Council (CS-16-113), a report card was provided that reviewed the individual action plans and evaluated their status. Overall, many

of the action plans have been completed or are in the process of being completed.

The construction of the Julie McArthur Regional Recreation Centre has addressed many of the action items identified in the 2007 Master Plan. The main recommendation that stemmed from the previous Master Plan was the need for a new multi-use recreational facility to address the community's recreation needs. This facility changed the landscape of recreation in Owen Sound. Additionally, the partnership with the YMCA changed Owen Sound's approach to recreational service delivery.

Despite several action plans from the current Recreation, Parks and Facilities Master Plan being completed, there are still some recommendations that will be priorities in this updated Master Plan. These include:

- Review whether playground equipment is being provided in accordance with the standards that are identified in the City's Official Plan (Action Plan #30)
- Confirm if the minimum parkland provision rates in the City's Official Plan remain relevant (Action Plan #42)
- Identify policies regarding parks rationalization for undersized parcels (Action Plan #49)
- Based on information in Official Plan, the City should develop a comprehensive inventory of municipal parks and open space that contains information on the size, location, and associated facilities of each parcel (Action Plan #41)

2.4.3 *Harrison Park Master Plan (2002)*

Harrison Park is the largest park in the City of Owen Sound, and the only regional park, consisting of over 40 hectares of land. The park is located at the southeast end of the City, and contains trails, campgrounds, and the City's only outdoor pool. The Park is bounded by Grey Sauble Conservation Area lands which extend the public open space.

In 2002, the Community Services Department at the City of Owen Sound retained consultant, Larry Porter, to undertake the Harrison Park Master Plan Study to conduct an overall review of the park's land use planning and the overall condition of the park. The purpose of the study was to identify areas of the park which required immediate or long term attention, and provide a list of "actions" to address these areas.

The study was conducted through many conversations with groups and individuals to understand the park's background and issues. The issues within the park were identified and categorized into eight areas for which the study outlines design issues and provides recommendations of design actions. While there were recommendations for the eight identified areas of Harrison Park, the study also provided global recommendations for Harrison Park which included conducting projects that would address some of the issues observed and improve the operation of the park.

- Youth activity area;
- Children's play area;

- Hard surface plaza for events;
- Portable stage for concerts/ events;
- Traffic circulation; and
- Infrastructure (utilities, water, sewer, electrical)

2.4.4 *Victoria Park Master Plan (2011)*

Victoria Park is located on the east end of Owen Sound, on 10th Street East and has a natural escarpment band that goes through the park, providing key views of the downtown, harbour and Georgian Bay. In October 2010, Benj Art Inc. Construction was retained by the City of Owen Sound to conduct the Victoria Park Master Plan, which was completed in October 2011. Despite the study being conducted just before the completion of the Julie McArthur Regional Recreation Centre, the Master Plan provided for the Regional Recreation Centre and identifies it as the central element of Victoria Park. The Plan identifies the Recreation Centre as a hub for the community which provides facilities and opportunities to encourage a healthy, active lifestyle for people of all ages.

Development of the Master Plan was informed by public consultation with the City residents in the form of a public visioning meeting and a questionnaire that was collected from the public and stakeholder groups. Meetings with the public were held in February 2011, September 2011 and October 2011. The final result of the Master Plan produced a comprehensive document that identified issues, opportunities, overall recommendations, and a proposed Master Plan drawing for Victoria Park.

2.4.5 *Kelso Beach Park Master Plan (2010)*

Kelso Beach Park is located on the west shore of Owen Sound on Georgian Bay at the mouth of Pottawatomi River and close to the Owen Sound harbour and marina. Based on the City's classification of parks in the Official Plan, Kelso Beach Park is considered a "City Park", which provides unique, specialized recreational facilities and services and serves users from throughout the City and adjacent communities. The Kelso Beach Park Master Plan was completed in April 2010 by Northwood Associates Landscape Architects Ltd. The Master Plan process included extensive public consultation and engagement in the form of a visioning meeting, an open house, and two public meetings. As part of the Master Plan process, the consultant conducted an inventory and assessment of Kelso Beach Park and recommendations for phasing of future improvements to the park.

As part of the Recreation, Parks and Facilities Master Plan, one of the Action Plans identified in the Report Card was that a Park Master Plan for Kelso Beach be undertaken for the intention of beginning a process to restore a permanent beach environment that can be enjoyed by the community. This action plan has been met and the implementation of recommendations from the Master Plan is ongoing.

2.4.6 Recreation Trails Master Plan (2012)

The Recreation Trails Master Plan was created for the purpose of encouraging and facilitating trail use as an alternative form of transportation and recreation within the City of Owen Sound. The Trails Master Plan identifies trails as a key strategic initiative for the City of Owen Sound, which is also supported by the Official Plan and the current Recreation, Parks and Facilities Master Plan. Furthermore, the Recreation Trails Master Plan identifies that relationships between City departments will be integral to maintaining a well-used trail system, and that lines of communication between all departments must be open in order for the City to provide the best trails system possible.

In addition to a review of policies which emphasize the importance of providing adequate trail systems, the Recreation Trails Master Plan also identifies strategies and methods that should be used when improving existing or implementing new recreation trails. To aid in the explanation, the Master Plan also contains a section which identifies trail classifications and major uses as well as existing and future trail routes.

Section 8 of the Master Plan identifies a Five Year Priority Plan for trails projects within the City. The priorities identified are those which are expected to provide the most value to the City's residents and those that are most desired based on previous input. Some of these items include:

- Continue "Safe Trails Network Project";
- Remediation of Existing Trails in Poor Condition;

- New Trail Construction (various); and
- City Wide Trail Signage Project.

2.4.7 Greenwood Cemetery Master Plan (2012)

The Greenwood Cemetery is a 19th century cemetery located at the south end of the City, in proximity to Harrison Park. In 2012, a review of the Cemetery Master Plan was undertaken to evaluate the operation and provide recommendations to address needs and opportunities. The cemetery is classified as a park and open space as its trails are used for passive recreation purposes. The internal road network is heavily used for walking and cycling to other areas of the City, including Harrison Park, Nine Bends and Second Avenue East.

2.4.8 2016 Service Review

The 2016 Service Review was initiated to review the status of the services that are being provided to the City and surrounding municipalities, and provide recommendations regarding the operation of these services. The Service Review also identified goals for various Departments within the City of Owen Sound to improve the success of operations. The Service Review identifies key policies within the planning framework such as the Official Plan or the Strategic Plan, and evaluates the status of the policies against the existing operation.

The Service Review included a review of the following divisions, as they relate to the Recreation, Parks and Facilities Master Plan:

- Parks and Open Space;
- Greenwood Cemetery;
- Community Programs;
- Facility Booking;
- Property & Building Management;
- Special Events;
- Tourism; and
- Two recreation centres.

Additional issues included in the Service Review include:

- Senior's Rates and Facilities; and
- Non-resident Fees.

Many observations and recommendations were made with regards to the operation of the Parks and Open Space division of the Community Services Department. Some of the key recommendations from the Service Review include the following:

- *THAT City Council investigate the following Parks recommendation: 24.14.2, as amended, to update the Recreation, Parks & Facilities Master Plan in 2017, including a focus on park rationalization and a determination if parks or portions of parks are sufficient to meet the needs of the City in the short and long term"*
- *"THAT City Council direct staff to provide a report card on the Recreation, Parks and Facilities Master Plan"*
(Addressed in staff report: CS-16-113)
- *"THAT City Council directs staff provide a report to the Community Services Committee with a complete review of youth and adult non-resident user fees for sports and recreation programs"* (Addressed in staff report CS-17-014)

These recommendations have since been provided, or will be addressed through the update of the Recreation, Parks and Facilities Master Plan.

Each of the studies and plans mentioned above should be reviewed to ensure they are still relevant. Older Plans, such as the Harrison Park Master Plan should be reviewed first.

3.0 Trends in Recreation & Programming



3.1 Program and Recreation Trends

The 2007 Master Plan contained a very comprehensive review of trends relating to the provision and design of recreation facilities and parks. Most of these trends continue to apply to the City moving forward, such as the need to ensure that facilities be as multi-functional and flexible as possible.

The following is a summary of trends that the City will need to continuously monitor in order to ensure that the programs and services offered align with these evolving trends.

3.1.1 *Physical Activity and Wellness*

Physical activity is associated with a range of physical, mental and social health benefits. The more activity, the greater the benefit.

For children and adolescents (ages 5-17), guidelines published by the World Health Organization (WHO) recommend that children and youth accumulate a minimum of 60 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity (MVPA) per day, as well as muscle-and-bone strengthening activities, at least three times per week.

However, the 2016 ParticipACTION Report Card of Physical Activity for Children and Youth in Canada indicates that only 9% of kids aged 5-17 get the 60 minutes of heart pumping activity they need each day.

Looking at adult physical activity, new guidelines from the WHO recommend that adults should accumulate at least 150 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity (MVPA) a week. However, the majority of Canadian adults' waking hours – 68% for men and 69% for women – are sedentary. The Canadian Health Measures survey found that the recommended level of activity is achieved by only 17% of men and 14% of women.

Studies show that a sedentary lifestyle may be connected to a multitude of serious health risks such as diabetes, weight gain, osteoporosis, and cardiovascular health risks. In terms of the connection between physical activity and wellness, a report from Vital Signs/ True Sport Foundation found that 71% of sport participants see themselves as being in excellent or very good mental health. Players say sport participation improves their skills, sense of achievement, self-esteem, sense of belonging and self-worth. Beyond the physical health effects, physical activity can help participants enjoy positive social relations.

3.1.2 *Children's Participation*

The benefits of participation in physical activity and leisure have been demonstrated by a number of research and practical initiatives. Health Canada estimates that for each \$1 invested in physical activity there is long term saving of \$11 in health care costs. The benefits are particularly important for children, since physical recreation is crucial to physical, social, motor and emotional development.

In its Summer 2008 edition of Canadian Social Trends, Statistics Canada examined trends in regular sports participation of children

aged 5 to 14 from 1992 to 2005. In the article entitled, “Kids’ Sports”, participation in sports is described as having declined from 57% to 51%. The 2016 ParticipACTION Report Card confirms that this trend has continued, but there has been some improvement. According to parents, 77% of 5-19 year olds in Canada participate in organized physical activities or sports. Sports participation is most prevalent among children from high-income households and lowest among children from lower income households. Children of recent immigrants are less likely to participate in sports than children of Canadian born parents (55%).

3.1.3 Unstructured and Spontaneous Use Opportunities

Citizens are demanding more flexibility in timing and activity choice, moving away from structured team sports to spontaneous activities such as fitness / wellness, leisure swimming, walking, and open gymnasiums for spontaneous activities. People are seeking individualized, informal pursuits that can be done alone or in small groups, at flexible times, often near or at home. This does not, however, eliminate the need for venues that accommodate structured activities and the stakeholder groups that utilize them. Instead, this trend suggests that planning for the general population is as important as planning for traditional structured use environments.

Statistics Canada, through the 2010 research document entitled “Sport Participation in Canada, 2010”, relates a number of key trends in sport participation occurring in the nation. In the period between 1992 and 2010, participation rates in organized sport dropped from

45% to 26% of the population. This drop was consistent across all age groups. This trend can be seen in Owen Sound, as minor sport participation has declined over time.

Although many team sports offer a number of positive physical and mental benefits to participants, the concept of spontaneous recreation and the increasingly busy lifestyles of Ontarians have prompted a shared focus on infrastructure development that accommodates both team sports and individual pursuits. As both provide a myriad of benefit to health and wellbeing in a community, it is important that future infrastructure development have opportunities for both team and individual activities.

Approximately two-thirds of Canadian sport participants participate alone (65%) or with close family (69%). More Canadians report a preference for non-competitive activities (47%) than for competitive activities (9%); 44% of Canadians prefer competitive and non-competitive activities. This trend is reflected in the Owen Sound survey data, which shows that participation in outdoor fitness activities such as running and cycling (69%) - programs that are generally individual by nature – were in demand by residents.

3.1.4 Recognize the Evolving Role of Community Recreation

The parks and recreation field is recognized as a vital element in overall community health, including improving fitness behaviours of residents and addressing social issues at the community level. Indeed, the largest impact in people’s health, well-being and happiness comes from improving where we live, work and play and participation in recreation can result in a more cohesive community.

Leisure needs and values change across an individual's lifetime and there are generalizations that can be made about leisure behaviours of specific population groups. For example, as the population ages, the appreciation for physical well-being improves and there is an increased demand for spaces and activities that may not have previously been considered. Older adults and seniors are more active today than in the past and they are seeking opportunities for casual sports, active living and a greater variety of choices, including more readily accessible pursuits such as walking, picnicking, sightseeing, or attending sporting and cultural events; however, outdoor activities requiring significant physical exertion, excessive skill development or special equipment remain popular with the Baby Boomer generation of seniors.

There is also a clear shift in the adult and youth population toward more informal and individualized activities that can be done at convenient times and places and include (but are not limited to) walking, cycling, gardening, cultural events, outdoor activities, environmental and cultural learning, ecotourism and physical exercise. In addition, as people's schedules become increasingly busy, there is greater demand for informal and individual activities rather than scheduled programs.

The Owen Sound survey data is in line with existing and future trends in that respondents are pursuing adventure, outdoor sport and outdoor fitness based programs that can be accessed on an individual's leisure and are in most cases unstructured.

Parks and recreation plays a role in improving quality of life within the broader community that includes people living on lower incomes

or with disabilities as well as members of visible minorities. The on-line survey identified the following barriers to participation:

- Cost (fees are too high);
- Not enough time;
- Lack of information (unsure of what is being offered);
- Program or event times (inconvenient scheduling); and
- Overcrowded facilities.

Programs and services with continued emphasis on inclusion and access will be important as will a priority of creating safe and engaging public places, in order to build community.

This best practice can be found in the City of Owen Sound. Through a joint partnership between the City and the YMCA, the YMCA delivers inclusive community recreation programming that is aimed at enhancing the personal, social, environmental and economic well-being of the community and incorporates the principles of exceptional service, operational sustainability and community development. Through this partnership, the following best practices are being applied:

- Developing opportunities for people to be active on an individual, informal basis.
- Ensuring sport and physical activity programs and amenities reflect the range of interests, inspirations and abilities of the diverse community while aligning planning with community usages, participation and trends.
- Improving "learn-to" sport and physical literacy (fundamental movement and sports skills) programs to facilitate learning experiences for all ages and abilities.

- Delivering introductory programming in all service areas through a variety of delivery models.
- Embracing opportunities to build on and incorporate emerging sport and activities into program offerings.
- Considering facility and park design, programming and community partnerships that foster physical activity, social gathering, connection, and responsiveness to the recreation needs of the growing and changing community.

3.1.5 *Volunteerism*

The evolving nature of volunteerism is important for recreation service providers to understand, given the importance of volunteers in the delivery of community programs and events. In 2013, 44% of Canadians, aged 15 years and older, participated in some form of volunteer work. This represents a decrease from a high 47% in 2010. It is important to note that experiences volunteers are looking for is also changing. Increasingly, volunteers are seeking more defined roles and terms as well as opportunities to gain new skills and experiences.

Based on the National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating findings (Statistics Canada, 2013), it is clear that the majority of volunteer hours are provided by the minority of volunteers. This is also true within the realm of sports and recreation. Seventy-nine (79%) of total volunteer hours contributed to sports and recreation organizations came from 25% of volunteers.

The 2013 National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating suggest that many groups still struggle in finding volunteers. One

key result of the national survey was that 18% of the volunteer hours in Canada are in sports and recreation sector, which is the highest of all sectors. It should also be noted that the absolute average volunteer hours per year decreased slightly from 156 hours per year in 2010 to 154 hours per year in 2013.

Similar to trends in the general population, the population of volunteers is aging. In 2013, 28% of all Canadian volunteers were aged 55 and older. In contrast, the share of volunteers aged 35 to 44 decreased from 22% to 18% in 2013. This changing age profile of volunteers could have several implications on recreation and leisure programs, because older volunteers tend to prefer certain types of activities (For example, participating on boards/committees instead of coaching).

The City of Owen Sound Recreation, Parks and Facilities department should consider ways to create opportunities for all ages to volunteer in various capacities. This may be done through partnerships that support minor sport leagues, seniors groups or the YMCA. The future delivery of recreation and sport is dependent on ensuring that volunteers are engaged at all levels in program development and delivery; facility planning and operations; participating in leadership roles on community task groups, and sport delivery at all levels. Survey feedback from community organizations based on anecdotal data indicates that the stronger organizations owe a great deal to their volunteer recruitment, training, retention and recognition activities. It was also noted that all groups would welcome collaboration with other organizations that clearly have developed a number of “Best Practices” in volunteer involvement in their organizations. Collaboration is strongly encouraged amongst all

organizations in order to build a strong volunteer network in the community.

3.1.6 *Social Inclusion*

Research has demonstrated that recreation and leisure can foster social inclusion for residents facing social, financial, physical or mental health barriers. While always an important issue, its significance has risen as communities have become more diverse.

Social inclusion is about making sure that all children and adults are able to participate as valued, respected and contributing members of society. It involves the basic notions of belonging, acceptance and recognition. For immigrants, social inclusion would be manifested in full and equal participation in all facets of a community including economic, social, cultural, and political realms. It goes beyond including “outsiders” or “newcomers.” In fact social inclusion is about the elimination of the boundaries or barriers between “us” and “them.” There is a recognition that diversity has worth unto itself and is not something that must be overcome.

Children living in families which are struggling are more likely to be excluded from some of the aspects of life essential to their healthy development. Children are less likely to have positive experiences at school, less likely to participate in recreation, and less likely to get along well with friends, if they live in families struggling with parental depression, family dysfunction or violence.

Increasingly, municipalities and other recreation providers are putting a focus on providing recreational opportunities for individuals with barriers to participation. Support for initiatives such

as the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association’s ‘Everybody Gets to Play’ program, KidSport and JumpStart can help ensure that youth have access to programs and activities that can foster social inclusion and overall physical and mental health. Outreach programs, partnerships with social service providers and subsidized user fees are also potential mechanisms being used by providers to remove barriers. The City of Edmonton’s Leisure Access Program is one example of a municipally operated initiative, which provides low income families with subsidized access to programs and passes. The program provides qualified families with a 75% discount on programs free admission to a number of City facilities.

The County of Grey funds the Grey County NCB Reinvestment Program, which provides subsidies for approximately 400 children from low income families to participate in a wide variety of recreation activities, including music lessons, hockey, soccer, girl guides, boy scouts, martial arts, dance lessons, swim lessons, etc. The program is administered by the YMCA. The YMCA works collaboratively with local sports associations, the Ontario Works Program, the City of Owen Sound and Grey County to inform families of this funding assistance.

Subsidies are one way to enable residents to participate in sports and recreation programs, regardless of income. For example, the YMCA currently provides 13 per cent of members with subsidized membership rates. Additionally, seniors are able to access recreational activities for a low fee of \$2 at the Harrison Park Seniors Centre.

A number of groups have sport equipment swaps or provide sponsorships for participants who identify barriers due to income.

The City should consider an "Access Owen Sound" program to ensure access for all. This can be as simple as a sponsored free skate, try it hockey time, or facilitating access through a sport or community organization.

4.0 Trends in Recreation Infrastructure



4.1 Creating Opportunities for All under One Roof

The design, allocation and distribution of parks and recreation facilities plays an integral role in the delivery of recreation programs. Without properly designed and equipped infrastructure and maintenance programs, the range, type and quantity of programs offered can be limited. Therefore, infrastructure needs have to be considered along with exploration of facility development partnerships, ensuring balanced and equitable access and optimization of facilities and resources to best meet program needs.

A growing trend in the development of recreation, leisure and cultural infrastructure involves providing amenities that appeal to a variety of individual interests and ability levels. Including a variety of amenities in a facility can help maximize facility usage and ensure that a facility is viewed as being relevant by all residents. While traditional recreation facility components such as ice arenas, gymnasiums, fitness centres and aquatic areas continue to be important, many facilities are now including components and amenities that have previously been stand-alone in the community or not identified with recreation facilities. Examples include senior's centres, youth centres, indoor child play areas and libraries. Including these amenities can also help recreation facilities become community "hubs" of activity and further justify municipal investment.

The Julie McArthur Regional Recreation Centre and YMCA facilities have been designed to encourage participation for all abilities and

ages, and has become a community hub for health and wellness in Owen Sound and the wider region.

4.2 Spaces that Encourage Social Interaction

A recent trend in recreation and cultural infrastructure is to create facilities, which are highly social in nature, and that can act as social gathering 'hubs' within a neighborhood or broader community. In active spaces such as fitness centres, walking / running tracks, and aquatic facilities, social interaction can be encouraged through the layout and design of these areas and adjacent support amenities (e.g. change rooms, stretching areas, information desks). Increasingly, many facilities are also focusing on increasing social interaction opportunities in passive spaces such as lobbies, corridors, spectator areas, and food service locations. This is often accomplished through a combination of facility design, facility aesthetics and by a creating warm and welcoming atmosphere. By increasing social interaction in passive areas, many facilities have been successful in attracting individuals and groups who might not typically visit recreation or cultural facilities.



Julie McArthur Regional Recreation Centre: lobby and spectator area

Another growing trend is to include program areas within multipurpose facilities that focus on providing socially interactive opportunities to specific populations. Whereas in the past child care facilities, youth centres, adult social clubs and seniors centre were often built as stand-alone facilities; many municipalities are now including these spaces as components of multi-purpose recreation and cultural facilities. The Julie McArthur Regional Recreation Centre is an example of a multi-purpose recreational facility that enhances opportunities for social interaction, providing unique opportunities to the City of Owen Sound.

4.3 Spontaneous and Scheduled Activities

While schedule (structured) activities remain important, there is a growing demand for opportunities to participate in spontaneous (unstructured) activities. People are seeking individualized, informal

pursuits that can be done alone or in small groups, at flexible times, often near or at home. Examples of spontaneous use activities include fitness / wellness, leisure swimming, walking, and open gymnasium time.

The public is placing greater demand on spontaneous, non-program forms of activity due to evolving households, schedules and lifestyles, prompting a transition of activities from organized to unorganized sports. In 2005, Statistics Canada reported that participation in organized sports declined from 57% in 1992 to 51%. The Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Institute found that 61% of children were more likely to participate in unorganized physical activities, although this is a decline from 69% in 2000; suggesting an overall decline in physical activity. This trend is largely driven by lack of time, a general decline of many organized sports, socio economic status, and the desire for self-scheduled and accessible forms of activity. Research revealed that the top four physical activities with the highest participation rates among Ontarian's are 'spontaneous' in nature:

1. Walking for pleasure (81.4%);
2. Bicycling (41.9%);
3. Swimming in pools (40.5%); and
4. Aerobics / fitness / aqua-fit / yoga (37.7%)

The Owen Sound online survey data agrees with the Ontario trends with the following activities being the top four indicated by respondents:

1. Adventure activities – E.g. hiking, camping, boating, skiing (69%)

2. Outdoor fitness – E.g. running, cycling, cross-country skiing (69%)
3. Outdoor athletics – E.g. Soccer, tennis, baseball (65%)
4. Indoor fitness – E.g. exercise classes, yoga (53%)

This does not, however, eliminate the need for venues that accommodate structured activities and the stakeholder groups that utilize them. Instead, this trend suggests that planning for the general population is as important as planning for traditional structured use environments.

4.4 Integrating Indoor and Outdoor Environments

A new concept in recreation and culture infrastructure planning is to ensure that the indoor environment interacts seamlessly with the outdoor recreation environment. This can include such ideas as indoor / outdoor walking trails, indoor / outdoor child play areas and indoor / outdoor aquatics facilities. Although there are a number of operational issues that need to be considered when planning indoor/ outdoor environments (e.g. cleaning, controlled access, etc.) the concept of planning an indoor facility to complement the site it is located on (and associated outdoor amenities included) as well as the broader community parks and trail system is prudent and will ensure the optimization of public spending on both indoor and outdoor recreation infrastructure. Some of these types of concepts were previously been recommended and implemented through the 2007 Recreation, Parks and Facilities Master Plan. For example, the

YMCA includes an indoor track while Victoria Park includes an outdoor track. The development and implementation of the Trails Master Plan also demonstrates a commitment to complementing the network of community parks and recreational facilities.

4.5 Including Convenience Amenities

Increasingly, recreation facility users and patrons are demanding that their facility experience be convenient and tailored to their personal and family needs. Convenience amenities such as child minding (temporary child care), food services, medical services (e.g. physiotherapy, chiropractic) and retail are being included in many new and retrofitted recreation facilities. In addition to enhancing the user experience, the inclusion of these amenities can generate increased revenues for a facility.

Providing an array of social amenities can further enhance the facility experience and increase overall facility visitations. Examples of social amenities include attractive lobby areas, common spaces, restaurants and cafeterias, spectator viewing, areas, meeting facilities, wireless internet and adjacent outdoor parks or green space. Including these amenities can also help attract residents who might not normally use a recreation facility, and increase facility traffic during non-peak hours.

4.6 Multipurpose Spaces and Expandability

The inclusion of spaces that are multi-purpose and multi-functional in nature can help a facility create the critical mass necessary to maximize usage and expand revenue potential. Field houses and gymnasiums are examples of spaces that are commonly being designed and outfitted with dividing curtains, portable boards, temporary bleachers and multi-use flooring types. Many recreation facilities are also putting an increased focus on including multipurpose programs rooms that can be used for fitness classes, meetings, smaller social functions and a host of other activities.



Multi-purpose Space (with dividing walls) at the YMCA

When developing recreation infrastructure, it is also important to plan for potential expandability should community needs and population characteristics evolve. Ensuring that facilities are built on sites with adequate amounts of adjacent land can make future expansion both possible and more efficient. Many recreation facilities are also developing components and amenities in such a

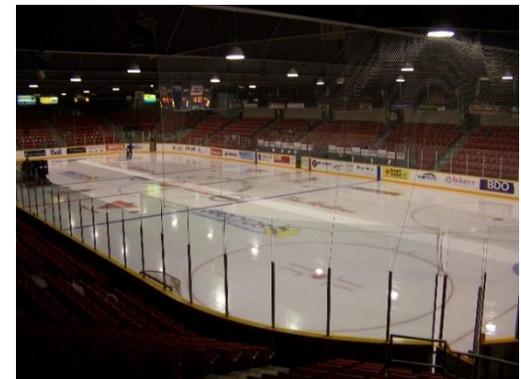
manner that they can be re-purposed in the future to meet user demand. Placing common or non-allocated spaces next to high demand amenities (e.g. fitness centres) can help make future expansion and re-purposing feasible.

4.7 Special Events and Competitions

Hosting special events and competitions remain important to many communities. Hosting events and competition can result in increased community pride and result in economic benefits through both local resident and visitor spending. The capacity of a community to host tournaments or events is in large part driven by the availability and quality of facilities and other public spaces.

When developing new recreation and cultural facilities it is important for municipalities to balance providing spaces and facility amenities that are relevant and needed by the whole community on a regular basis, while also considering spaces and amenities that can help

The J.D. McArthur Arena at the Bayshore Community Centre can accommodate both regular community usage and special tournaments and events



attract tournament and events. Increasingly facilities such as field houses, gymnasiums, and ice arenas are being designed to accommodate regular community usage as well as special events and tournaments. This is commonly accomplished in many newer facilities by incorporating expandable seating, flexible change room options, audio / visual elements (e.g. sound systems, lighting, video boards) and equipment loading areas.

5.0 Emerging Themes in Owen Sound



"More than any other service, recreation has the ability to reach all citizens, and to bring people together in a non-threatening, pleasurable atmosphere. However, a rebalancing of recreation is necessary if it is to strategically address the barriers and constraints to participation faced by some people, and to celebrate the diversity of Canada's population."

(A framework for Recreation in Canada 2015)

5.1 Key Themes

Based on the background research completed, public input received through the on-line survey, and facilitated workshop, four broad 'themes' emerged that help influence and direct recreation programming in the City. These themes include:

- Accessibility & affordability
- Marketing & communications
- Collaborations & partnerships
- Desire for an indoor (turf) facility

The following summarizes what we have heard, reviews current experiences/ practices of the City, identifies gaps and opportunities, reviews trends and best practices and provides recommendations. Other issues such as recreational amenity improvements, and recommendations for programming, service delivery and monitoring of the master plan will be discussed in the implementation strategy.

5.2 Accessibility/ Affordability

The World Health Organization estimates that approximately 15% of the world's population lives with a disability, making this group the world's largest minority (World Health Organization, World Report on Disability, 2011). In Canada, the Participation and Activity Limitation Survey conducted by Statistics Canada in 2006 estimated that approximately 4.4 million Canadians were challenged with a disability, with nearly one quarter of those living in Ontario. It is anticipated that this figure will continue to grow, increasing to 3.3 million Ontarians with a disability by 2025. As a result, the province has been responsive to this growing segment through enacting the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).

Accessible and affordable programs and services are essential to providing equitable parks and recreation services and maximizing participation. As the City grows and demand for services increases, Owen Sound will need to look for ways to ensure it is delivering its parks and recreation services fairly and equitably.

5.2.1 What we Heard

- 71% of survey respondents believe that there is a need for greater access to recreational programs and services.
- Based on survey results, key barriers that prevent individuals and households from participating in recreational and leisure activities include: high fees (47%); time limitations (42%); low

awareness of what programs/services are offered (35%); and inconvenient hours (31%).

- Some respondents indicated that all-day child minding services at the YMCA would allow working parents to access more classes/program, resulting in more active lives. In the past, the YMCA has offered child minding services beyond the busiest times (E.g. 8:30 – 11:30), but it was found that there was not enough demand.
- To improve affordability, respondents and workshop participants suggested more drop in classes/sports that do not require high fees or long-term commitments may help improve accessibility.
- Survey respondents and workshop participants expressed that more opportunities for pay per use activities would be beneficial as they would allow users to try new activities without committing to a fee associated with an activity/program.
- The specific age groups that respondents feel there are not enough recreational and leisure programs for include teenagers/ages 14-19 (39.4%) and adults/ages 19-65 (34.8%).
- Survey respondents and participants from the workshop indicated there is strong demand for year-round, indoor activities. The demand for an indoor turf facility will be discussed further below.
- In particular, seniors felt that there could be better usage of underutilized parks and facilities, such as the Active Living Seniors Centre.
- Trails are highly valued in Owen Sound. Survey respondents and workshop participants highlighted the need to improve connectivity and year-round usage. There is also demand to

further connect the trail system with the wider Region (E.g. Chatsworth, Thornbury) and update trails for multi-usage.

In general, a consistent theme that emerged from the survey and community workshop was that accessibility, in terms of range of programs, cost, and communications, could be improved. Year-round activities for all ages and income levels should be prioritized in order to provide equitable and accessible recreation and leisure services to the City of Owen Sound.

5.2.2 Gaps and Opportunities

Since the last Master Plan, the Julie McArthur Regional Recreation Centre was built and addresses several of the gaps identified through the 2007 Master Plan. Investing in a multi-purpose facility demonstrates the City's commitment to providing local and regional residents with an accessible space for a range of activities and uses. Multi-use facilities allow for greater flexibility, and provide users with options for less structured activities, while responding to increased demands for new activities without major building retrofits.

The Master Plan update provides the City an opportunity to gather feedback on how to further improve recreational and leisure facilities, services and programs for residents. Stakeholder consultation indicated high levels of satisfaction with the new Recreation Centre. For example, 70% of survey respondents are satisfied with the variety of programming the YMCA provides. However, feedback shows that barriers such as cost, time limitations and low awareness of programs offered continue to limit residents

from participating in recreation and leisure programs in Owen Sound.¹

It will become increasingly important for the City and service partners to identify ways to improve accessibility for all age groups and income levels. This will require consultation with partners and stakeholder organizations to gather specific suggestions on how to improve accessibility. Suggestions from the online survey and community workshop include the following:

- More drop-in classes;
- All-day child minding;
- Pay-per-use activities (E.g. Pickleball);
- Year-round activities;
- Improve trail maintenance (year round) and shift towards more multi-use trails (paved, widened, etc.)
- Improve communication of information regarding recreation and leisure programs, facilities, trails;
- Increase program offerings for very popular classes (E.g. swimming lessons fill up very fast); and
- Offer classes that work better for working parents/commuters (evenings and weekends).

While communication will be discussed further below, survey respondents provided information on how they prefer to stay informed of recreation and leisure programs offered by the City of Owen Sound. Social media (68%), email messages (42%) and the

¹ It is important to note that the YMCA is an independent charity and operates its Health, Fitness and Aquatics facility based on the fees it receives from members and

City's website were the preferred methods for keeping Owen Sound residents informed.

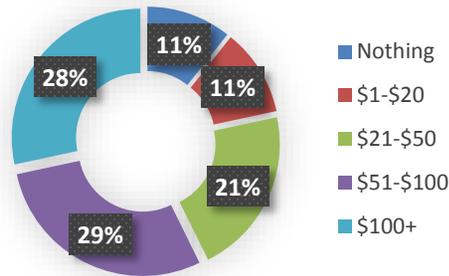
5.2.3 Trends/Best Practices

Trends suggest that the barriers discussed above are not unique to the City of Owen Sound, although the extent to which they limit a person's ability to participate is community-specific. Income is directly correlated with the level of participation in recreational activities since the amount of disposable income affects the ability to pay for services.

A person's ability to pay needs to be considered as it will be a deciding factor whether or not residents will participate. The online survey shows that recreational spending for Owen Sound residents varies, but 57% are spending \$51 or more each month.

participants. Through a joint agreement between the City and the YMCA, the YMCA is responsible to manage its operations, set fees and offer programs and services.

How much do Owen Sound residents spend per month on outdoor or indoor recreation programs and activities?



User fees and rental rates continue to rise across the province for a variety of reasons including cost of insurance and maintaining infrastructure. Recreational and leisure activity providers continue to face the challenge of ensuring programming is accessible and affordable for all income levels. Independent service providers, such as the YMCA, face challenges to find staffing for popular programs such as swimming lessons as most instructors are high school aged and often move away for college/university upon graduation.

Another trend and municipal best practice that is changing recreational use in Ontario includes increased demand for passive and less rigorous recreation activities that promote socialization and community cohesiveness. Facilities such as the JMRRRC play an important role in providing a community facility that provides users with a multitude of recreational experiences.

A Policy Development and Implementation Guide prepared by the Ontario Task Group on Affordable Access to Recreation (supported by Parks and Recreation Ontario) suggests that municipalities

develop and implement an Affordable Access Policy to improve access to recreation services. The guide also suggests providing a core set of free programs to establish a degree of universality in communities.

5.2.4 Recommendations

The use of City facility assets and indoor and outdoor amenities needs should be continually reviewed to ensure that basic recreation and leisure needs are being met, that existing allocation are being properly and responsibly allocated and that opportunities are being provided for a variety of programs and services.

This includes all indoor and outdoor facilities, including sports fields. Pressures to meet current and new demands are increasing and demands exceed capacity based on current practice. Improved access to School Board joint-use facilities will provide increased opportunities for the community to maximize existing and potential partner facilities to grow programs and services where it meets established core program criteria.

Extending hours of operation and programming to evenings and weekends would provide some of the much-needed space to support programming for individuals and households who are unavailable during business hours (E.g. 9:00 am to 5:00 pm). In summary, the following should be considered:

- Investigate operational changes such as extending days and hours of operation, reviewing Fees and Charges Policy, subsidy

rates, and make changes to Policies that support more balanced and best use of publicly owned space (City facilities).

- Consult with trail users to discuss year-round multi-use trails and connectivity;
- Increase awareness of recreation and leisure program offerings by strengthening online presence via social media and the City's website.
- Develop a youth strategy and a senior's strategy that is relevant and consistent with changing trends, and address the barriers to access and participation through engagement with non-users.
- In Owen Sound, the use of some City facilities and amenities such as ice pads is currently guided by an Allocation Policy. Each recreational facility should have its own Allocation policy which should be guided by considering the following five criteria:
 1. Equity;
 2. User Profile;
 3. Function Profile;
 4. Past Performance; and
 5. Economic Benefit to the Town
- To ensure community facilities, services and procedures enhance accessibility for all, including different ages, genders, abilities and cultures, the City should consider the following:
 - Facilitate the continued support and operation of facilities and services targeting the needs of specific age groups, with particular reference to seniors and youth.
 - Encourage citizens of all ages to feel welcome and self-sufficient in all community facilities.

- Explore opportunities for increasing a sense of belonging for youth.
- Encourage service providers to investigate the possibility of intergenerational programming.
- Encourage physical environments that do not inhibit the movement of people with disabilities.
- Ensure that people of all ethnicities benefit from, and feel welcome in Owen Sound community facilities and services. The City should consider the development of an Inclusion Policy for community facilities.
- Build upon the core set of free programs to establish a degree of universality in communities.

5.3 Marketing & Communications

The City's Community Services Department will need to evaluate how it is communicating with the community and surrounding catchment areas and develop an effective marketing plan that meets the needs of a diverse population. Before a marketing plan can be realized, the Department needs to understand its "brand". What describes the Department, its products, services, what image does the Department want to project? When brand, marketing and communication strategies are in-sync, great things happen. Strengthening communication also contributes to improving accessibility for Owen Sound residents.

5.3.1 What we Heard

- There is a need to improve communication between the City and residents to increase awareness of programs, facilities/services, parks and trails found in Owen Sound.
- Survey respondents indicated that the registration process for programs/classes can be difficult, and could be improved by providing an online registration option. The most frequent registration mentioned was swimming lessons at the YMCA.
- 68% of survey respondents feel that communication via social media is the best way to stay informed (followed by email messages and the City's website)
- Lack of signage/ visibility in parks and trails; way finding could be improved.
- There is a lack of knowledge regarding Owen Sound's trail system. The City should consider alternative ways to distribute the Trail Map to residents.
- There is a lack of knowledge regarding what recreational activities/programs and amenities are offered in Owen Sound. Better communication of existing programs/activities/amenities is required. The City's Event Calendar (available on the website) includes this information, but respondents and workshop participants indicate this could be more readily available to residents (not available online).
- The City should increase advertisement of programs/facilities to get the word out to more residents.

5.3.2 Gaps and Opportunities

Effectively communicating and engaging various target groups is both a challenge and an opportunity as it continues to grow and become more diverse. A well-coordinated marketing program is a great investment that can have a direct, positive impact on participation and revenue. There are a variety of ways that the Department can approach its marketing plan. The plan should include the following:

- **Situation Analysis:** a thorough review of the department noting its assets, strengths, and weaknesses.
- **Customer Analysis:** a close look at your resident base. A good 'consumer' analysis will include geographic, demographic, psychographic, and behavioural segmentations.

In terms of streamlining processes such as online registration for classes, the YMCA is working towards an online registration system for all classes/programs and expects this to be in place by the end of 2018.

5.3.3 Trends/ Best Practices

Generational Marketing: Recreation programs have long had the image of being programs for youth. Many are making some changes in this perception by creating brochures that clearly target specific segments of multiple generations. For example, Fox Valley Park District in Aurora, IL has a brochure targeting active seniors (*not* Baby Boomers) called "Prime Times." Many brochures are

featuring young families on the front cover in response to the interest of young parents in family activities. A few programs have even developed special promotional pieces for Millennials/Generation Y (born between 1980 and 2000) which are designed and developed with substantial input from the target group. For example, in the Township of Langley, BC, in addition to having a section inside the brochure designed with graphics and narrative to appeal specifically to 'Generation Y', the department also enlisted a 15-year old to design and draw a comic book aimed at promoting programs to youth. It was such a success, that it is going to become a regular feature of the program.

Many parks and recreation directors report seeing a gap in service delivery for boomers who refuse to participate in "senior" activities. For example, the City of Owen Sound could undertake an exercise to identify activities that are geared toward active, healthy fifty (50) something's as a starting point, and even develop a separate brochure/marketing materials for this age group.

The One-Year Marketing Plan: Budgets are becoming tighter, accountability is increasing, and demands on departments to increase community participation are mounting. Many programs have begun to develop one-year marketing plans to guide their efforts and to help establish strategies that will increase the likelihood of growth and program success.

Increased Importance of Technology: Parks and Recreation directors are reporting that participants are increasingly turning to their websites for information. This does not mean that brochures/guides are obsolete, but it does mean that marketing

materials and websites need to be designed to support and complement each other. Marketing materials need to drive prospective participants to the website, and the marketing function of the website needs to be considered carefully in the design of the site. Quick loading, easy navigation, and good graphics are all essential to successful online marketing, as is online registration software.

More and more agencies are going online to reach patrons and purchase registration systems, perform automatic monitoring of buildings and the environment, monitor public safety and employ technology to complete day-to-day tasks.

Parks and recreation is being dramatically affected by these leaps in technology. In addition, younger adults are turning to technology to connect to nature and the outdoors in addition to their typical entertainment. The "Pokémon" phenomena is a clear indication of the immediate impact of technology on an individual's health and wellbeing.

Email newsletters: Email newsletters are an excellent way to promote the overall program or a specific class or event. Generally, this is a one-page email with graphics and color that has information of interest to the recipient in addition to promotional copy. There are some excellent templates and designs available for purchase.

Social Media: There is no longer any question about the validity of using social media today to communicate with consumers of all ages and demographics. While some audience segments may make less use of social media, the vast majority are using some form of it. Parks and Recreation organizations can make efficient use of social media

to promote programs, services, facilities and events that encourage physical activity and overall health and wellness.

Social marketing is a way of communicating with various audiences in newer, quicker and more creative ways. It is also a more efficient way to build communities of interested, vested and dedicated people that share interest in parks, recreation and sport. The following social media trends are recommended to assist in promoting park and recreation programs and services:

- Daily Deal Coupon for Activities and memberships
- Managing Your Online Reputation
 - Google alerts
 - Twitter Saved Searches
 - Social Mention
- Location-Based Marketing
- The Big Five Social Media Platforms
 - Twitter
 - Facebook
 - YouTube
 - Instagram
 - LinkedIn

5.3.4 Recommendations

In order to meet expectations of recreation and leisure users in Owen Sound, the City should also consider the following:

- Defining the department's core services through a vision-driven Community Services Department that is determined to be a leader in community building.
- Conduct a review of best practices for promoting and marketing recreation and leisure programs and services. Select promotional approaches that are appropriate for Owen Sound and implement an updated promotion and marketing framework.
- Creating a Customer-Centred Culture that focuses on core values and expectations of the organization.
- Implementing a customer service excellence training program for staff members and volunteers.
- Integrating customer service, marketing and communication into staff meetings.
- Develop ongoing strategies for customer feedback for both internal and external customers.
- Improve the use of information technology and develop and increase the availability for online information, transactions, e-solutions and mobile applications.
- Continue to monitor need for personal contact with customers and grow customer staff to respond to changing desire by customers to connect with staff in the department.
- Improve the online facility booking through a 'one-window' booking approach
 - Booking should be consistent for all facilities (rates, contacts, hours of operation, etc.)
- Ensure City website includes links to other recreation providers and their services (E.g. YMCA classes and programs)

5.4 Partnerships & Collaboration

Municipalities can no longer be the central provider of all recreation and cultural facilities and services, so partnership arrangements are becoming increasingly important and prevalent in the service-delivery model. Municipalities are adopting a greater oversight role and providing leadership and support to non-profit agencies and organizations that can operate with greater autonomy and responsibility for their operation.

5.4.1 *What we Heard*

- There is a desire for a streamlining of services between different organizations to eliminate duplication.
- Need to improve communication between organizations in order to foster an effective partnership.
- Survey respondents and workshop participants indicated that there is a need for co-operation and partnerships across the various organizations and service providers in the City.
- It would be beneficial to explore opportunities to collaborate/ partner with local recreation and sport providers (E.g. Grow partnership with Owen Sound Minor Soccer Association, Owen Sound Slo-Pitch) in order to appropriately service recreational amenities.
- Create a database of existing organizations/ activities within the City and the County: consider asset mapping.

- There is recognition that the partnership between the YMCA and the City is important.
- Community workshop participants are supportive of partnerships that encourage better usage of underutilized parks/facilities in order to improve usage
- There is strong demand for an indoor sports field in Owen Sound. There are a number of teams/organizations who are eager to collaborate with the City.

5.4.2 *Gaps and Opportunities*

Partnerships are a viable strategy for developing a service mix. However, they should be approached purposefully and not be seen as an exit strategy to simply divest of a struggling program or service.

A partnership is a cooperative venture between two or more parties with a common goal, who combine complementary resources to establish a mutual direction or complete a mutually beneficial project. Partnerships can be facility-based or program-specific. The Community Services Department can foster collaboration by fostering with other service providers to enhance public offerings for Owen Sound residents.

Partnerships can accomplish tasks with limited resources, respond to compelling issues, encourage cooperative interaction and conflict resolution, involve outside interests, and serve as an education and outreach tool. Partnerships broaden ownership in various projects and increase public support for community goals. Partners often

have flexibility to obtain and invest resources/dollars on products or activities where municipal government may be limited. There must be support for the concept and process of partnering from the very highest organizational level – i.e. City Council, Community Services Department, and Parks and Open Space Division.

It is very important to have a partnership policy in place before partner procurement begins. This will allow the City to be proactive rather than reactive when presented with a partnership opportunity. It also sets a “level playing field” for all potential partners, so that they can know and understand in advance the parameters and selection criteria for a proposed partnership. Such a policy is currently in place between the City and the YMCA. This approach should be used for other partnerships between the City and recreation providers.

A partnership policy and process should set development priorities and incorporate multiple points for “go/no-go” decisions.

5.4.3 Trends/ Best Practices

Emerging best practice in municipal partnership is extending to a variety of newer partners in health, justice, education, community and social services and the corporate sector. Interdepartmental municipal partnerships are also growing as cooperation between parks and recreation, planning, engineering and the police play a greater integral role in community design and public safety. Business partnerships such as P3’s and not-for-profit organizations are also called upon to help deliver services that were once the sole responsibility of the municipality.

Traditionally, the calculation of facility needs within a community was based on its population and demand. Increasingly, recreation facilities are also expected to contribute to stimulating tourism. In particular, games, tournaments and cultural events are seen as a means of encouraging economic growth. Such events are often supported by a fee structure with variable rates for residents or non-residents, as well as new partnership arrangements with the local business community.

There is also a trend to include more partners in facilities. The most successful are those that involve program partnerships rather than simply having a traditional landlord-tenant relationship. Owen Sound’s partnership with the YMCA demonstrates this municipal best practice. Through this partnership, the Julie McArthur Regional Recreation Centre and the YMCA attributes to healthy lifestyles for Owen Sound and the wider region.

Municipalities can no longer be the central provider of all facilities and services, so partnership arrangements are becoming increasingly important and prevalent in the service delivery model. Municipalities are adopting a greater oversight role and providing leadership and support to non-profit agencies and organizations that can operate with greater autonomy and responsibility for their operation.

5.4.4 Recommendations

- Continue to strategically explore and utilize both private and not for profit partnerships to deliver facilities and services

wherever financially viable while ensuring standards of quality are being met.

- Establish principles and policies for each type of partnership the City engages in (E.g. public/public, public/private, and public/not-for-profit).
- Conduct regular evaluation of the City's partnership with recreation providers. Assess quality and diversity of service, economic benefit and customer service.
- City Staff should continue to meet with the YMCA on a quarterly basis to coordinate the operations of the Recreation Centre as per the operating agreement.
- Identify potential partners to help improve usage of underutilized parks/facilities
- Identify opportunities to engage partners and stakeholders to collaborate in assessing current program gaps and overlaps in order to maximize recreational options for users.
- Consider joint partnership plan with Owen Sound Minor Soccer Association and other sports field users to support and facilitate the expansion/improvements of the Kiwanis Soccer Complex.
- Consider partnerships for other sports fields and recreational facilities (E.g. Duncan McLellan Park) for capital improvements.
- Implement an award system for community leaders/partners who help deliver recreational and sport and/or promote healthy, active living in Owen Sound.
- Investigate corporate marketing and sponsorship partnerships to fund facilities, programs and service enhancements.
- Align facility development/space clustering with like-minded partners so as not to duplicate efforts and to ensure that expertise of any given organization is maximized.
- Develop and implement a sponsorship policy that connects sport providers with businesses, and other potential partners in the City.
- Consult with baseball groups to explore options for improving existing ball diamonds.
- Recognize health and nutrition as contributing factors toward the development of healthy children and develop and strengthen existing and new partnerships with local health organizations, sport, YMCA and like-minded agencies.
- Develop a service continuum to meet the broad community needs that includes operating agreements with all partners to ensure coordination of programming and identifies service areas that may be best suited to be delivered by the private sector.
- Strengthen stewardship activities and programming within parks by collaborating with a variety of community partners.
- Review site-specific agreements and complete a reciprocal joint-use agreement with School Board's to guide future arrangements.
- Explore corporate marketing and sponsorship partnerships to fund facilities, programs and service enhancements.

"Taking the time to connect with partners on a regular basis is an integral part of successful cross-sectoral collaboration; it prevents duplication, streamlines resources and ensures all partners feel heard and supported."

Kristen MacDonald, Sport Development Specialist and Chair of the PL4ALL Steering Committee of Hamilton

5.5 Desire for Indoor Recreation Facility

The 2007 Recreation, Parks and Facilities Master Plan recommended "the City should monitor demand for an indoor turf facility in five to 10 years' time." It further stated that "should there be an identified need that can be justified through a business case, creative provision strategies should be examined, including re-use of an existing building and local partnerships."

Through stakeholder consultation, it is clear that there is still a strong desire for a multi-use indoor turf facility. This update provided an opportunity to gather additional feedback on the demand for an indoor turf facility.

Prior to the time of writing the Master Plan update, efforts were undertaken by recreation and sports organizations to advocate for the inclusion of updated recommendations on the need for an indoor turf facility. A petition in support of a covered indoor artificial turf

field in Owen Sound was received by the City and signed by 196 individuals.

This project is contingent on the demonstration of a business case and several feasibility studies. Support from neighbouring municipalities and creative partnerships are key considerations.

5.5.1 What we Heard

- Lack of availability/ accessibility to indoor sports facilities for year round activities. For example, soccer players use school gymnasiums during winter months.
- The City will require additional information regarding the long-term implications to their operating budget and will continue to circulate information to Council and the Community Services Committee as they are made available.
- Minor soccer is the most popular minor sport activity in Owen Sound with 902 registered in 2016.
- Survey respondents highlighted that an indoor turf facility would increase physical activity for all ages throughout winter months.
- Some respondents also suggested that an outdoor turf field that would extend the playing season should be explored further if the indoor facility is not feasible in the short-term.
- Interested user groups would like to see a committee developed including key user organizations, recreational service providers and City staff/Council members

5.5.2 Gaps and Opportunities

The current operating budget for the City of Owen Sound does not include funding for an indoor turf facility. Consideration should be given to creative partnership models and/or sponsorships to help fund this facility. The City can provide support by engaging with user groups and any committees that develop to further examine the need for an indoor turf facility.

Based on the input received through the survey and the current level of support for an indoor turf facility, this opportunity should be explored further.

5.5.3 Trends & Best Practices

Indoor turf facilities are becoming increasingly common throughout Ontario. Regionally, there are indoor turf facilities within Guelph (Guelph Community Sports Dome and the Gryphon Field House at the University of Guelph), Halton Hills (Dufferin Rural Heritage Community Centre), Milton (Milton Soccer Centre), Kitchener (Budd Park Indoor Field), Cambridge (Com Dev Soccer Park), Hamilton (Soccer World, Player's Paradise, Wentworth Arena), Brantford (Brantford City Soccer Club Indoor Complex), and Guelph/Eramosa (The Royal Distributing Athletic Performance Centre). While there is no set service level for the municipal provision of indoor turf, trends indicate that indoor turf facilities are typically built to serve a population of over 50,000.

An indoor turf facility provides access to field sports, indoor walking and running year-round. Fields can typically be divided into two

smaller fields which provide opportunities for multiple users and/or a variety of options for single user groups. For the purposes of this update, the indoor turf facility for Guelph-Eramosa has been used to provide additional background on the provision and construction of indoor turf facilities.

The Royal Distributing Athletic Performance Centre (Township of Guelph/Eramosa):

Size: 210' x 120' (can be subdivided into two smaller fields of 100' x 120'. Includes an indoor walking track.

Revenue: Nearly neutral overall, but very little usage from June to August (which is typical for these facilities).

User Groups: Include soccer leagues (from surrounding areas), intramural sports such as Frisbee and soccer, track and field clubs, football clubs, rugby.

Bookings: Typically booked through most evenings. Very few bookings during daytime hours Monday through Friday.

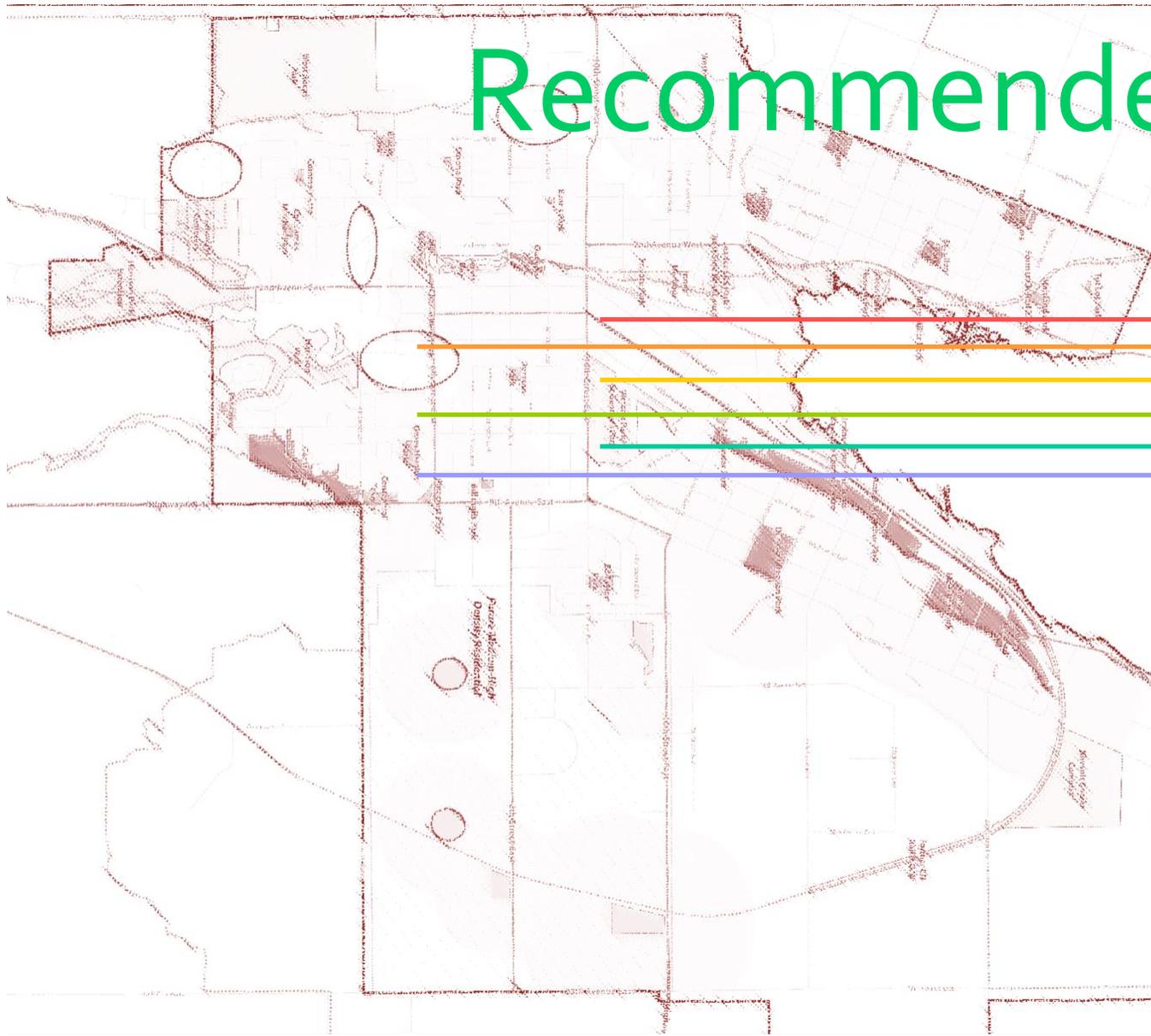
Funding: Funding was secured for construction through Federal and Provincial Sources (Building Canada Fund Communities Component) and municipal contributions.

5.5.4 Recommendations

The City should evaluate its involvement in an indoor turf facility based upon a business plan, feasibility study and financing strategy prepared by an interested party. The following steps would be part of this process:

- Undertake a detailed analysis of the current use of soccer fields in Owen Sound and determine key user groups through consultation with sports groups (OSMSA, Frisbee, lacrosse, rugby, lawn bowling, gymnastics, track and field, pickleball, etc.)
- The City and interested parties should consult with neighbouring municipalities (Georgian Bluffs and Meaford) to discuss regional need for indoor turf facility and potential partnerships.
- Perform analysis of future projections and confirm if there is a need from Owen Sound and regional users for an indoor turf facility.
- Support interested user groups through the development of a business case by providing them with the necessary resources (E.g. planning and development support).
- Consider potential locations for a future indoor turf facility, and provide relevant information to user groups.
- Consider partnership options (E.g. School Boards)
- Review and compare potential management models proposed by the proponents.
- The City should support committees/organizations that may develop around the need for an indoor turf facility and provide input and direction by liaising with the Community Services Committee which advises Council on recreational services and facilities.

6.0 Parkland Analysis & Recommended Policy Updates



6.1 Parkland Requirements & Acquisition

The Master Plan Update provided an opportunity to:

1. Review the amount of parkland and open space in Owen Sound;
2. Assess if locations are meeting demands or identify gaps in parkland facilities;
3. Determine opportunities/potential for rationalization, repurposing and/or partial-full disposition of existing parks; and
4. Establish a framework for future consideration and process associated with re-purposing, modification of functions and/or disposition of parklands.

An examination of parkland policies, including standard provisions and park classification, as well as a mapping exercise was undertaken to explore Owen Sound’s current supply and future need for parks and open space.

6.2 Owen Sound Parkland Provision

The City’s Official Plan establishes policies on the standard of Parkland Provision in Owen Sound. Specifically, Section 7.5.1.2 states the following:

The major components of City recreational services shall consist of a system of open space, public parks, trails, sports facilities and recreational facilities as well as the programming of these resources.

Expansion, redevelopment and extension of facilities, parks and trails associated programs will be encouraged where financially feasible partnerships are developed and community needs are addressed.

Parks provision is included in Section 7.5.2.1 of the Official Plan and provides the following minimum standards of provisions:

| Park Classification | Standard Provision | Walking Distance/ Radius Served |
|---------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Neighbourhood Park | 0.5 hectares per 1000 population | 0.5 km |
| Community Park | 1.5 hectares per 1000 population | 1.5 – 2.5 km |
| City Park | 1.5 hectares per 1000 population | n/a |
| Open Space Corridor | Strategic Linkages | n/a |
| Regional Park | No minimum requirement | n/a |

Neighbourhood Parks: Generally a small open space area serving a local neighbourhood area of 2,000 to 3,000 people, and containing recreation facilities and complementary services primarily for younger children and their parents. Examples include Ed Taylor Park and Ryerson Park.

Community Parks: An open space containing a range of recreational facilities and services primarily for teenaged children and adults, serving a community with a population of between 4,000 and 10,000. Examples include Duncan McLellan Ball Park and St. Julien’s Park.

City Parks: Open spaces providing unique, specialized recreational facilities and services, serving user from throughout the City. Examples include Kelso Beach Park and Harrison Park.

Open Space Corridors: Open space elements that provide connection between various parks and open space. They are linear parks and trails, wildlife corridors and riverbanks.

Regional Parks: Open spaces providing recreational facilities and natural environments for regional users, and are generally provided by the Province, County or Conservation Authority. Examples include West Rocks and Mill Dam Park East and West.

In terms of the classification and standard provisions, an assessment of other municipalities on the standards and classification suggested that the existing Official Plan provisions are appropriate. The current benchmarks should be maintained. An analysis of how the City is meeting the benchmark is included below in Section 6.5. It is recommended that this provision be monitored and implemented in future development.

With regard to the provision of existing parks, built areas, the location, function and physical state of the park should also be a factor should there be consideration for re-purposing, modification of functions and/or disposition of parklands.

6.3 Parkland Requirements & Acquisition Policies

As mentioned earlier, the Section 42 and 51.1 of the Planning Act include updated policies on parkland dedication that should be considered as part of this Master Plan in preparation for Owen

Sound's Official Plan review in 2018. It is timely to review and update parkland policies since the passing of Bill 73, *The Smart Growth of our Communities Act* in 2015. This bill resulted in changes to the Planning Act that impact parkland dedication.

Key changes include:

- The requirement to prepare a parks plan that is made available to the public; and
- The requirement to consult with every school board and any other persons or public body that the municipality considers appropriate.

These changes encourage municipalities to strategically plan for parks and be prepared for potential opportunities to acquire park lands to meet future community needs.

Bill 73 also resulted in changes to the payment in lieu requirements:

- The maximum alternative parkland rate changed from **one hectare per 300 units to one hectare per 500 units for cash-in-lieu.**

The intended outcome of this change is to help incent acquisition of land for parks and to help provide parkland more quickly.

Section 42(1) and 51.1(1) of the Planning Act specify the required parkland dedication requirements based on the proposed development land uses. The current Official Plan is consistent with this policy, in the requirement for 2 per cent of commercial/industrial developments to be dedicated parkland; and 5 per cent for all other cases (E.g. residential).

Owen Sound Official Plan, Section 7.5.3.2: *The City may require a park dedication of 5% of the land proposed for new residential purposes and 2% of the land proposed for new industrial and commercial subdivision. This requirement should apply equally to the whole of the City through the subdivision process. The City may decline any offer of land that does not specifically meet the City's requirements regarding size, shape, location, topography or suitability for the intended park or open space use. Stormwater management ponds or Hazard Lands may be part of a park system but will not be applied to the parkland dedication required by this Plan.*

As an alternative to requiring the conveyance provided above (2 and 5 per cent), the City can consider the following policy:

*Planning Act, Section 42(3) and 51.1(3): In the case of land proposed for development or redevelopment for residential purposes, the by-law may require that land be conveyed to the municipality for park or other recreational purposes at a rate of **one hectare per 300 units proposed** (or at a lesser rate as may be specified by by-law).*

In order for an alternative rate to be enforced by a parkland dedication by-law, the Official Plan must include policies that speak to parkland dedication and an alternative rate.

Council may also require payment of money to the value of land otherwise required to be conveyed in lieu of the conveyance:

Planning Act Section 42 (6) and 51.1 (3.1): If the approval authority has imposed a condition under subsection (1) requiring land to be conveyed to the municipality and subsection (2) applies, the municipality may require a payment in lieu, calculated by using a rate

of one hectare for each 500 dwelling units proposed or such lesser rate as may be determined by the municipality.

Regarding cash-in-lieu payments, the City's Official Plan currently states:

Section 7.5.3.3: *In place of the dedication of land, the City may require a payment in lieu of land at a rate appropriate to the value of the required land. The City may also accept the provision of alternate public recreational facilities by the developer of the land in place of payment.*

The City should consider updating its Official Plan to ensure that its cash-in-lieu policies are consistent with Section 42 (6) and 51.1 (3.1) of the *Planning Act*. An update to cash-in lieu policies would require that the City adopts the updated park plan and undertakes consultation with school boards.

6.4 Recommended Updates to Parkland Policy

Based on the updated Planning Act, the City's Official Plan and Parks By-Law should be updated to reflect the following changes:

Owen Sound Official Plan Updates:

The City should consider updating the following policies as stated below:

Section 7.5.1.3: *In order to adequately plan for the recreational needs of the community, the City shall continue to update the Recreation, Parks and Facilities Master Plan. Updates to the plan shall:*

- a) *Review the current and projected recreation needs of the Owen Sound Community in the context of the demand for recreational services from surrounding communities, tourism needs and usage trends for various types of recreational activities.*
- b) *Assess the capacity and adequacies of the existing public and private facilities to meet these needs.*
- c) *Identify appropriate recreation program ideas for the City and recreation partners (Including the YMCA).*
- d) *Provide comprehensive plan or strategy for the design, use, maintenance and development of the trail systems within the City, under the general framework of the Tom Thomson Trail on the east side, Georgian Bluffs Rail Trail on the west side and the Freedom Trail at the south end of the City.*

Section 7.5.3.2: *The City may require a park dedication of 5% of the land proposed for new residential purposes and 2% of the land proposed for new industrial and commercial subdivision. This requirement should apply equally to the whole of the city through the **site plan and plan for subdivision** process. The City may decline any offer of land that does not specifically meet the City's requirements regarding size, shape, location, topography or suitability for the intended park or open space use. Stormwater management ponds and Hazard Lands may be part of a park system but will not be applied to the parkland dedication required by this plan.*

Section 7.5.3.3: *In place of the dedication of land, the City may require a payment in lieu of land at a rate of **one hectare for each 500 dwelling units proposed**. The City may also accept the provision of alternate public recreation facilities by the developer of the land in place of payment.*

In addition to these proposed updates, the City could consider including the following policies in the Official Plan, Parks By-Law and/or as a general practice:

In order to determine if the provision of land for such parks can be repurposed, transitioned to another use, or partially/fully disposed of, the City should undertake one of the following two approaches depending on the intended outcome (repurposing vs. disposition of lands):

Recommended Approach for Repurposing Park Lands:

1. *City staff identify and recommend park to consider for repurposing to new recreational new. Council consideration to confirm direction, including public input.*
2. *Assess current conditions of park and assess alternatives.*
3. *Survey residents within 500 metres of park to gather data on park usage.*
4. *Hold public meeting with surrounding residents and stakeholders to discuss alternatives.*
5. *Based on public feedback, select preferred alternative and present to committee/Council for consideration.*
6. *Develop a preliminary design and action plan.*
7. *Hold public meeting to discuss preliminary design and action plan.*

8. *Present final plan to Committee/Council for approval.*

Recommended Approach for Partial/Full Disposition of Park Lands:

1. *City staff identify and recommend park to consider for partial or full disposition. Council consideration to confirm direction, including public input.*
2. *Assess current parkland supply (full system and specific quadrant) based on standards for park provision.*
3. *Survey residents and other stakeholders within 500 metres of park to gather data on park usage.*
4. *Hold public meeting with surrounding residents and stakeholders to discuss.*
5. *Based on public feedback and usage data, present options to committee/Council for consideration.*
6. *Develop an action plan.*
7. *Hold public meeting to discuss process and action plan.*
8. *Present final plan to Committee/Council for approval.*
9. *Comply with City bylaw regarding disposition of land.*

These processes will be discussed further below (Section 6.6).

To ensure park development is not delayed in development processes, the City should also consider including a policy that requires front end construction:

For plan of subdivision, front end construction of parkland is required.

Parks By-Law Updates:

The City should consider updating the existing parks by-law (1992-014 Regulate and Control Parks) or create a new Parkland Dedication By-Law that includes the updated parkland dedication policies for enforcement.

6.5 Park Rationalization Analysis

Based on the City's current provisions for parks, an analysis was undertaken to explore the current inventory of parks as well as future needs. This analysis incorporates feedback from stakeholders and the City in terms of usage and bookings. Overall, this analysis indicates there are existing gaps in the parks system, as well as a need to consider repurposing some parks to maximize use and benefit to users.

Through the 2016 service review, it was concluded that the City generally meets or exceeds the standard of park provision for community and city parks.

The following analysis shows that the City is slightly undersupplied in neighbourhood parks as there is a need for an additional 2.19 hectares of neighbourhood parks. Some neighbourhoods are also served by Community or City Parks. However, the standard varies slightly depending of the area/quadrant of the City that is examined.

This is based on the City's standard provisions, as follows:

Table 1: Parkland Requirements

| | Population (2016) | Required | Actual |
|---------------------|-------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Neighbourhood Parks | 21,341 | 10.6 hectares | 8.41 hectares |
| Community Parks | 21,341 | 32.0 hectares | 40.21 hectares |
| City Parks | 21,341 | 32.0 hectares | 107.9 hectares |

There are 156.51 hectares of parkland (including neighbourhood, community and city parks). This does not include Regional Parks, open space corridors or Greenwood Cemetery, which results in a total of 245.28 hectares of publically accessible greenspace.

Looking forward to 2022, and based on a forecasted population of 21,799², parkland requirements are anticipated to slightly increase. While Community Park and City Park provisions will continue to be met, the land required to meet Neighbourhood parkland requirements is forecasted to increase slightly from 10.6 hectares to 10.9 hectares.

Table 2: Forecasted Parkland requirements for 2022

| | Population (2022) | Required |
|---------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Neighbourhood Parks | 21,799 | 10.9 hectares |
| Community Parks | 21,799 | 32.7 hectares |
| City Parks | 21,799 | 32.7 hectares |

² Based on estimated population growth in Grey County Management Strategy Update (Source: Hemson Consulting Ltd., 2015)

It is worth noting Owen Sound has a relatively high number of parks and area of parks when compared to similarly sized municipalities. Furthermore, the City's cost per acre of parkland is relatively low.

Table 3: Comparison of Parkland and Budgets

| | Owen Sound | Brockville | Collingwood | Orangeville |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Number of Parks | 43 | 39 | 26 | 39 |
| Number of Parks/ resident | 0.002 | 0.0017 | 0.0012 | 0.0013 |
| Acres of Parkland | 386.7* (156.51 ha) | 95 (38.44 ha) | 262 (106 ha) | 121 (49 ha) |
| Acres of Parkland/ resident | 0.018 (0.007 ha) | 0.0042 (0.0017 ha) | 0.012 (0.005 ha) | 0.0041 (0.0017 ha) |
| Budget | \$1,144,480 | \$1,110,222 | \$1,562,850 | \$277,104** |
| Cost of Parks/ acre | \$2960 per acre | \$11,686 per acre | \$5919 per acre | \$2290 per acre** |

*Does not include Regional Parks, open space corridors or Greenwood Cemetery

**Does not include wages

A mapping exercise was undertaken to identify any gaps in Owen Sound's Park System, specifically looking at neighbourhood parks and community parks. This analysis is included at the end of this Section. The analysis included the following factors:

- A walking distance of **300 metres** for neighbourhood parks
- A walking distance of **500 metres** for community parks

While these parks serve a wider radius (0.5 km and 1.5-2.5 km respectively), a conservative walking distance was applied to identify more accurate gaps.

While the number of parks and area of parks is sufficient (and exceeded in the case of community and city parks), there are still gaps found in Owen Sound. In particular, the City will need to consider future parkland locations in the Sydenham Heights Planning Area. This is discussed further in Section 6.8 below. Parkland gaps have been identified in the red circles on Figure 1.

6.6 Proposed Process for Transition of Use

If the City wishes to consider transition of use for parkland in Owen Sound, staff and Council should be cognisant of parkland provision and the impacts of removing land from the parks system. Direction from Council and staff shall be based on data such as bookings (sports fields), usage and public input.

Subject to Council direction, the City should consider ways to transition parks/portions of these parks to other recreational purposes. For example, sports fields could expand use to host large outdoor events. Alternatively, large parks could be reduced in size to encourage better usage of space. Parcels could be sold and developed to leverage funds for other recreational improvements. The funds leveraged from selling off parcels of larger parks could

help offset costs for improvements at highly used parks including Harrison Park, Kelso Beach Park and sports fields.

In order to determine if the provision of land for such parks can be re-purposed, transitioned to another use, or partially/fully disposed of, the City should undertake one of the following two approaches depending on the intended outcome (repurposing vs. disposition of lands):

Recommended Approach for *Repurposing* Park Lands:

1. City staff identify and recommend park to consider for repurposing to new recreational use. Council consideration to confirm direction, including public input.
2. Assess current conditions of park and assess alternatives.
3. Survey residents within 500 metres of park to gather data on park usage.
4. Hold public meeting with surrounding residents and stakeholders to discuss alternatives.
5. Based on public feedback, select preferred alternative and present to committee/Council for consideration.
6. Develop a preliminary design and action plan.
7. Hold public meeting to discuss preliminary design and action plan.
8. Present final plan to Committee/Council for approval.

Recommended Approach for *Partial/Full Disposition* of Park Lands:

1. City staff identify and recommend park to consider for partial or full disposition. Council consideration to confirm direction, including public input.
2. Assess current parkland supply (full system and specific quadrant) based on standards for park provision.
3. Survey residents and other stakeholders within 500 metres of park to gather data on park usage.
4. Hold public meeting with surrounding residents and stakeholders to discuss.
5. Based on public feedback and usage data, present options to committee/Council for consideration.
6. Develop an action plan.
7. Hold public meeting to discuss process and action plan.
8. Present final plan to Committee/Council for approval.
9. Comply with City bylaw regarding disposition of land.

This approach will ensure that residents are consulted on proposed changes (repurposing, transition of uses or partial/whole disposition of lands) for parks in Owen Sound.

The table below shows preliminary examples of park locations that could be considered by Council and staff for transition of use. Any proposed changes should be subject to the recommended approach for transitioning park lands.

Table 4: Preliminary examples of park locations to consider for transition of use

| Park | Rationale |
|--|--|
| St. Julien (ball diamonds) | This is a very basic ball diamond (without lights) and has had low bookings in the past. |
| Harrison Field (ball diamond) | Very low use (low bookings) in recent years. |
| Garafraxa Park | Large area with little frontage onto arterial roads. |
| Portion of Kelso Beach Park (soccer field) | Very large parcel of land/open space that is rarely used for soccer (very low bookings). *Note, these lands are leased by the City. |
| Owen Heights Park | This playground meets the need for play structures in the area. Partial disposition of parklands could be considered. |

6.7 Play Structure Analysis

The 2007 Master Plan also includes a recommendation stating: *The City should strive to provide playground equipment within a 500 metre radius of all residential areas, without causing pedestrians to cross a major natural or man-made barrier.* To determine the City's current status, a mapping exercise was undertaken. Figure 6 shows that there are still gaps in playgrounds remaining, as not all residential areas can access a play structure within 500 metres without having to cross arterial roads and/or natural barriers.

Based on the playground proximity analysis, the following parks should be considered for development of playgrounds:

Table 5: Parks to consider development of playgrounds

| Park | Rationale |
|---------------------|---|
| Harrison Field | Large open space with low usage. This would help fill a gap in playgrounds between 14 th Street West and 10 th Street West. |
| Stobbe Park | There is a gap between Evans Park and Comm-r-ette Park. A new playground at Stobbe would help fill this gap. |
| Stoney Orchard Park | There are no playgrounds in this portion of Owen Sound. A play structure at either parks would help complete the playground network. |

The recommended approach for determining the repurposing/ transition/disposition of parklands will include consideration of how an existing park may assist in achieving a different objective or meeting another gap within the parks system. For example, a playground gap is found west of the West Side Boat Launch (from 14th Street West to 10th Street West). However, if a play structure was added at Harrison Field – an underutilized park – this gap would be reduced or addressed.

6.8 Future Parks – Sydenham Heights Planning Area Analysis

Since the 2007 Master Plan, the City has designated lands for new greenfield residential development. Density for these lands is anticipated to be medium to high. There are no existing parks or playground within the area as this is a new growth area.

Parkland policies have been reviewed in order to ensure that new development in this area is adequately and equitably serviced with parks and recreation opportunities. The Sydenham Heights Planning Area (identified through the Sydenham Heights Secondary Plan in the Official Plan, Schedule A2) was selected for further analysis, based on its proposed low, medium and high density residential development.

Section 5.2.3 of the Official Plan provides policies on parkland for the Sydenham Heights Planning Area.

Section 5.2.3.2 states: *Four neighbourhood parks with links to the Trail system are to be provided as shown on Schedule A2 to provide local parkland needs of residents in the Sydenham Heights Planning Area. The southerly park is adjacent to lands designated Escarpment Rural on Schedule A2 and shall be designed and developed for passive recreational activities for the area residents. The City may require the completion of a landscape plan for any park area and may enter into a development agreement for the construction of a park.*

There are currently four proposed areas for open space – parks, as well as the existing rail trail identified on Schedule A2. There is,

however, no park proposed in the Phase 1 area adjacent to the area designated as Escarpment Rural. This area is proposed to be developed for passive recreational activities in close proximity to an area proposed for medium to high density residential dwellings.

To enhance recreation needs, the City:

1. Should explore opportunities to partner with the hospital to utilize any surplus land through a creative public-public partnership for the development of a neighbourhood/ community park to serve this area.
2. Should ensure that the amenity/landscape requirements for new site plans provide the required amenity and landscape area with consideration for appropriate play structures and programming.

Figure 7 shows a larger planned open space/park area in the northwest portion of the Sydenham Heights Planning Area. This area is encouraged to be a Community Park based on its potential size. A smaller neighbourhood park, including play structures and open space for passive use should be developed south of 8th Street East, west of Telfer Creek and another East of Telfer Creek.

With the recent closure of the neighbouring public school, it will be important to provide future residents with access to open space and parks. The City should consider requiring parkland dedication for any redevelopment of any school board lands as an opportunity for continued park area.

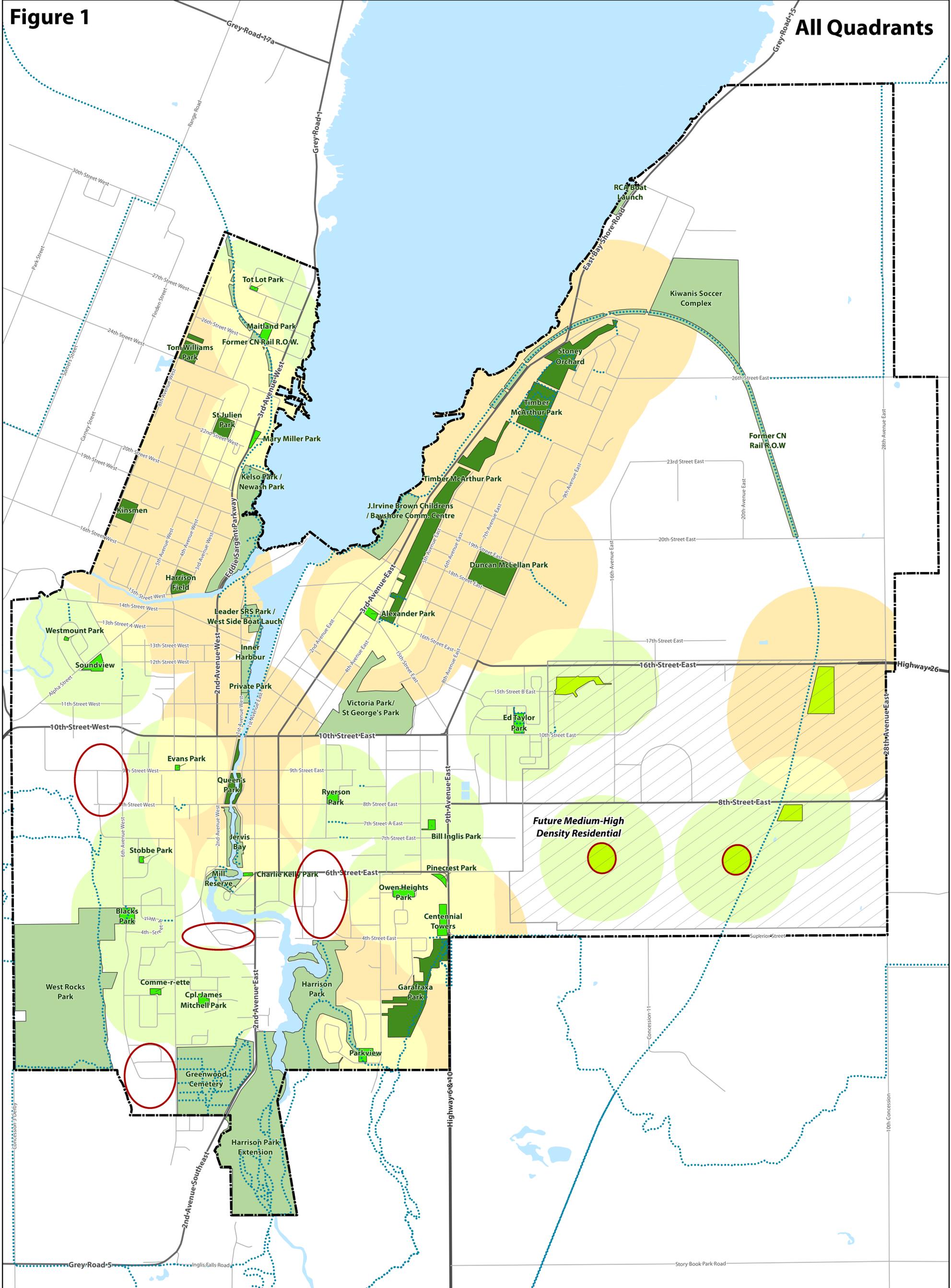
Based on review of the Secondary Plan and park location criteria, the following recommendations are proposed for modification to the Official Plan for the Sydenham Heights Planning Area:

- Section 5.2.3.2 should be updated to provide further clarity on how parkland will be dedicated in future developments for this area. There should be at least one community park (as already identified) for this area, and at least five neighbourhood parks.
- In addition to the three neighbourhood park areas proposed on Schedule A2, two new parks should be designed and developed. One should be in close proximity to the area proposed for medium and high density residential, north of the Escarpment Rural lands. The other park should be located west of Telfer Creek in the Phase 1 lands. These proposed parks can be seen in the attached Figure 7 (Schedule A2). Final locations would be determined through planning applications.
- Trail connectivity should continue to be maintained in this area, particularly along the linear rail trail.

These recommendations for updates to the Official Plan may be completed as a City-initiated Official Plan Amendment or as part of the upcoming Official Plan review. Should development applications be submitted in advance of any update, the recommendations of the Master Plan Update shall be referred to as the policy direction for any review associated with planning applications.

Figure 1

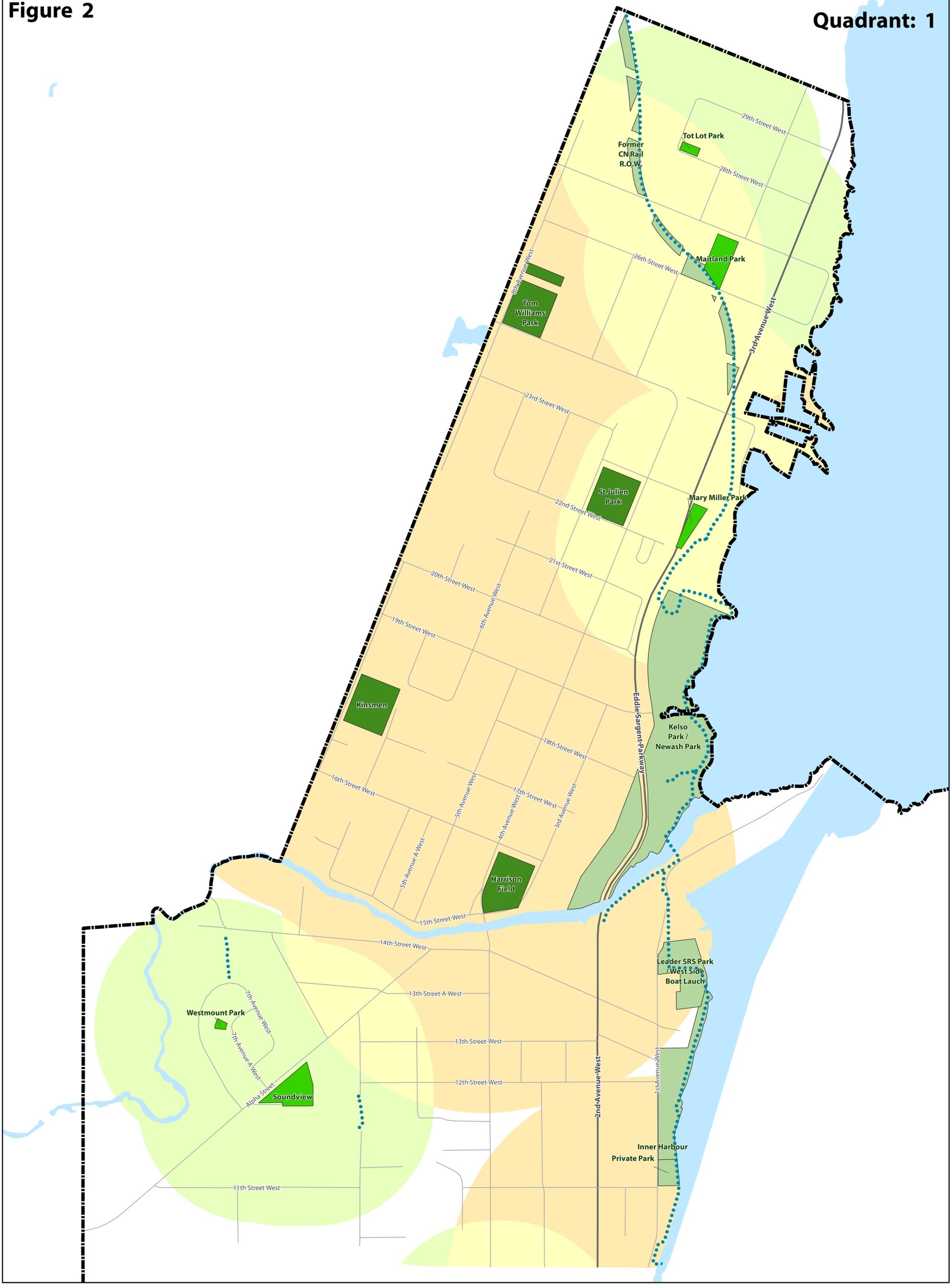
All Quadrants



Park Proximity Analysis

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| <p>Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> City Boundary Trails Waterbody Sydenham Heights Planning Area | <p>Parks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neighbourhood Parks Community Parks City Parks, Regional Parks, & Open Space Corridors Proposed Parks - Sydenham Heights | <p>Proximity Analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within Walking Distance of a Neighbourhood Park (300m) Within Walking Distance of a Community Park (500m) Within Walking Distance of a Neighbourhood and Community Park Areas to Assess for Potential Parks |
|---|---|---|

Figure 2



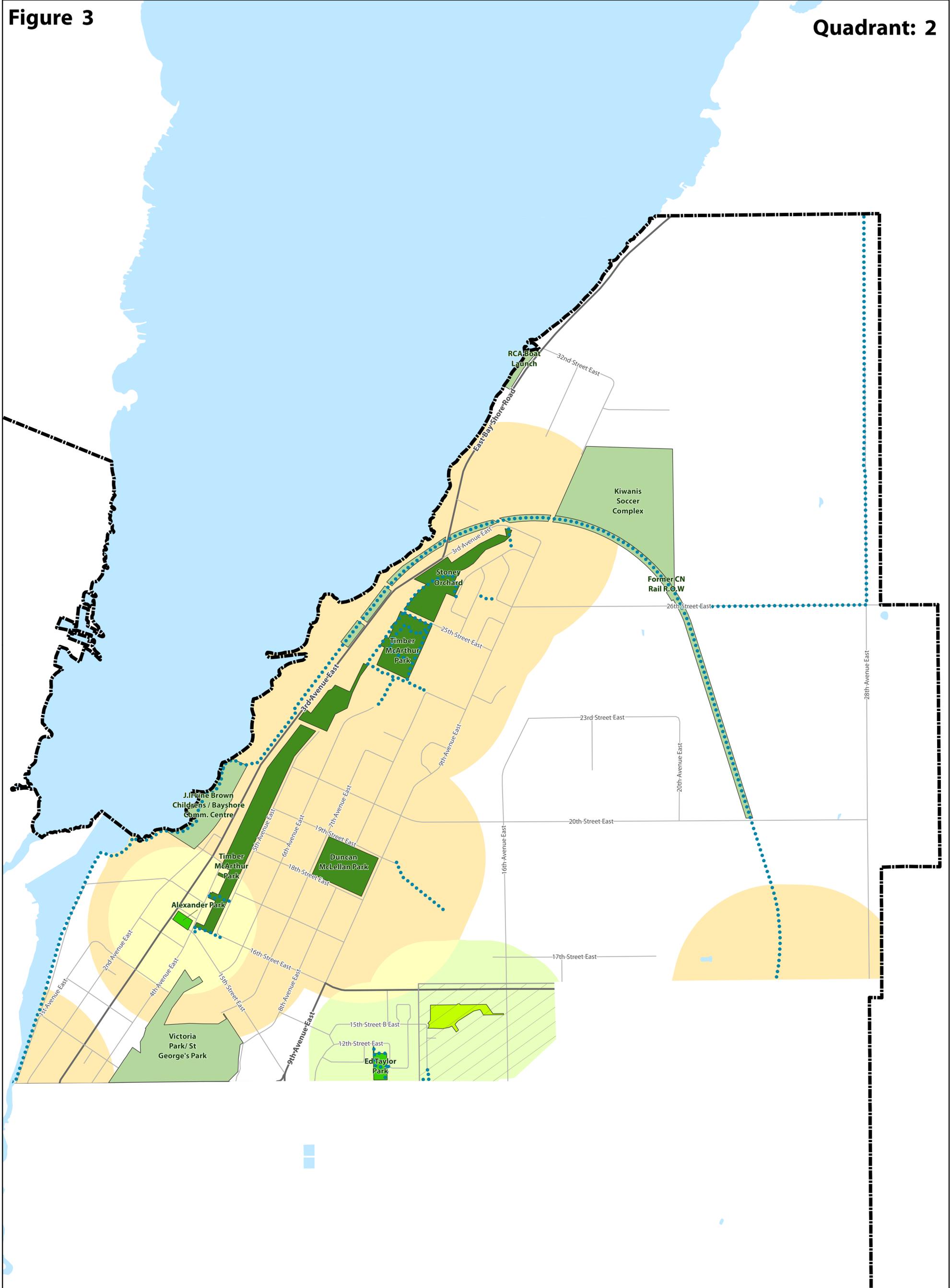
Park Proximity Analysis

- Features**
- Sydenham Heights Planning Area
 - City Boundary
 - Waterbody
 - Trails

- Parks**
- Neighbourhood Parks
 - Community Parks
 - City Parks, Regional Parks, & Open Space Corridors
 - Proposed Parks - Sydenham Heights

- Proximity Analysis**
- Within Walking Distance of a Neighbourhood Park (300m)
 - Within Walking Distance of a Community Park (500m)
 - Within Walking Distance of a Neighbourhood and Community Park

Figure 3

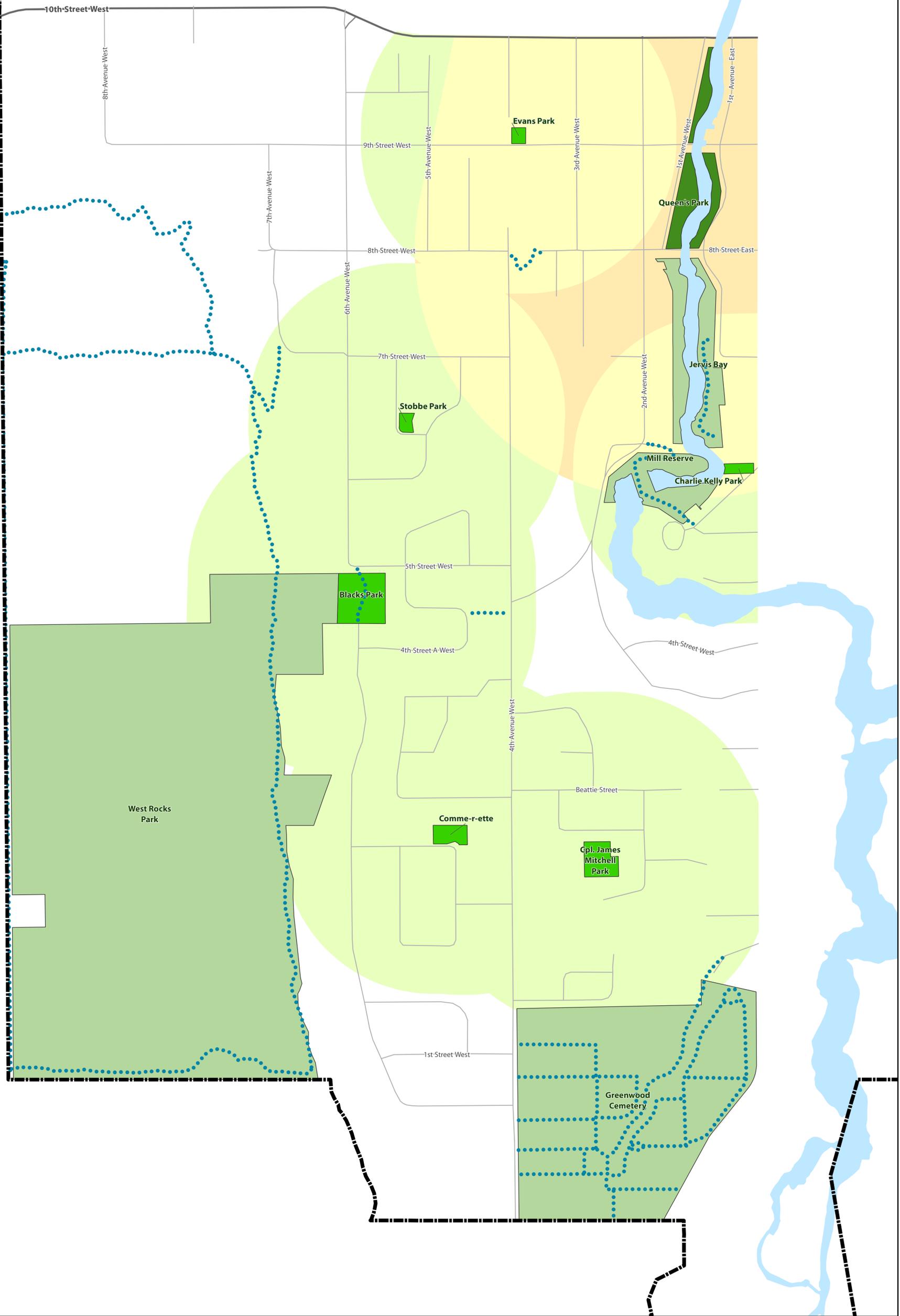


Park Proximity Analysis

- | | | | | | |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|--------------|--|---------------------------|---|
| Features | | Parks | | Proximity Analysis | |
| | Sydenham Heights Planning Area | | Neighbourhood Parks | | Within Walking Distance of a Neighbourhood Park (300m) |
| | City Boundary | | Community Parks | | Within Walking Distance of a Community Park (500m) |
| | Waterbody | | City Parks, Regional Parks, & Open Space Corridors | | Within Walking Distance of a Neighbourhood and Community Park |
| | Trails | | Proposed Parks - Sydenham Heights | | |

Figure 4

Quadrant: 3



Park Proximity Analysis

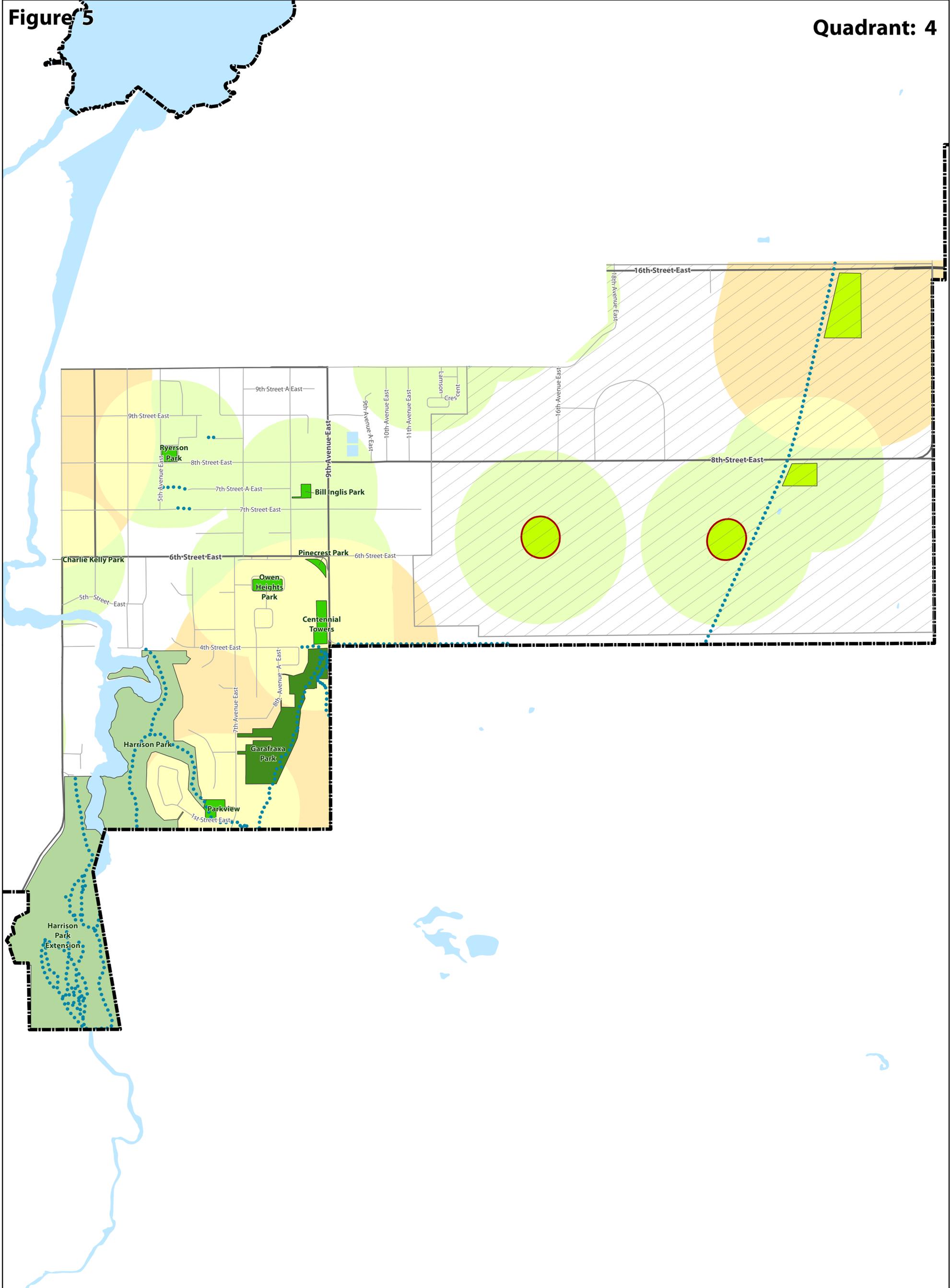
- Features**
- Sydenham Heights Planning Area
 - City Boundary
 - Waterbody
 - Trails

- Parks**
- Neighbourhood Parks
 - Community Parks
 - City Parks, Regional Parks, & Open Space Corridors
 - Proposed Parks - Sydenham Heights

- Proximity Analysis**
- Within Walking Distance of a Neighbourhood Park (300m)
 - Within Walking Distance of a Community Park (500m)
 - Within Walking Distance of a Neighbourhood and Community Park

Figure 5

Quadrant: 4



Park Proximity Analysis

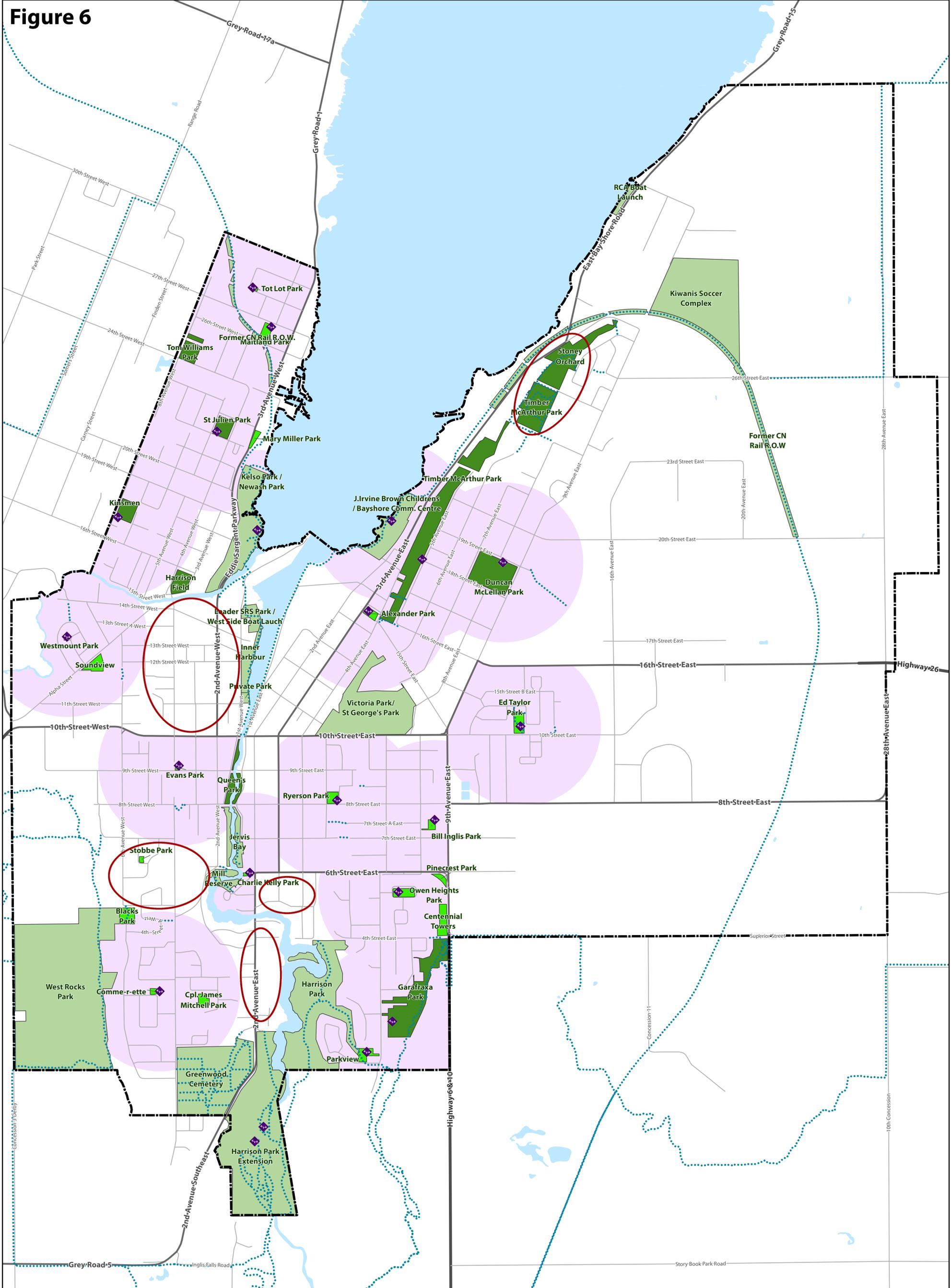
- Features**
- Sydenham Heights Planning Area
 - City Boundary
 - Waterbody
 - Trails

- Parks**
- Neighbourhood Parks
 - Community Parks
 - City Parks, Regional Parks, & Open Space Corridors
 - Proposed Parks - Sydenham Heights

- Proximity Analysis**
- Within Walking Distance of a Neighbourhood Park (300m)
 - Within Walking Distance of a Community Park (500m)
 - Within Walking Distance of a Neighbourhood and Community Park



Figure 6



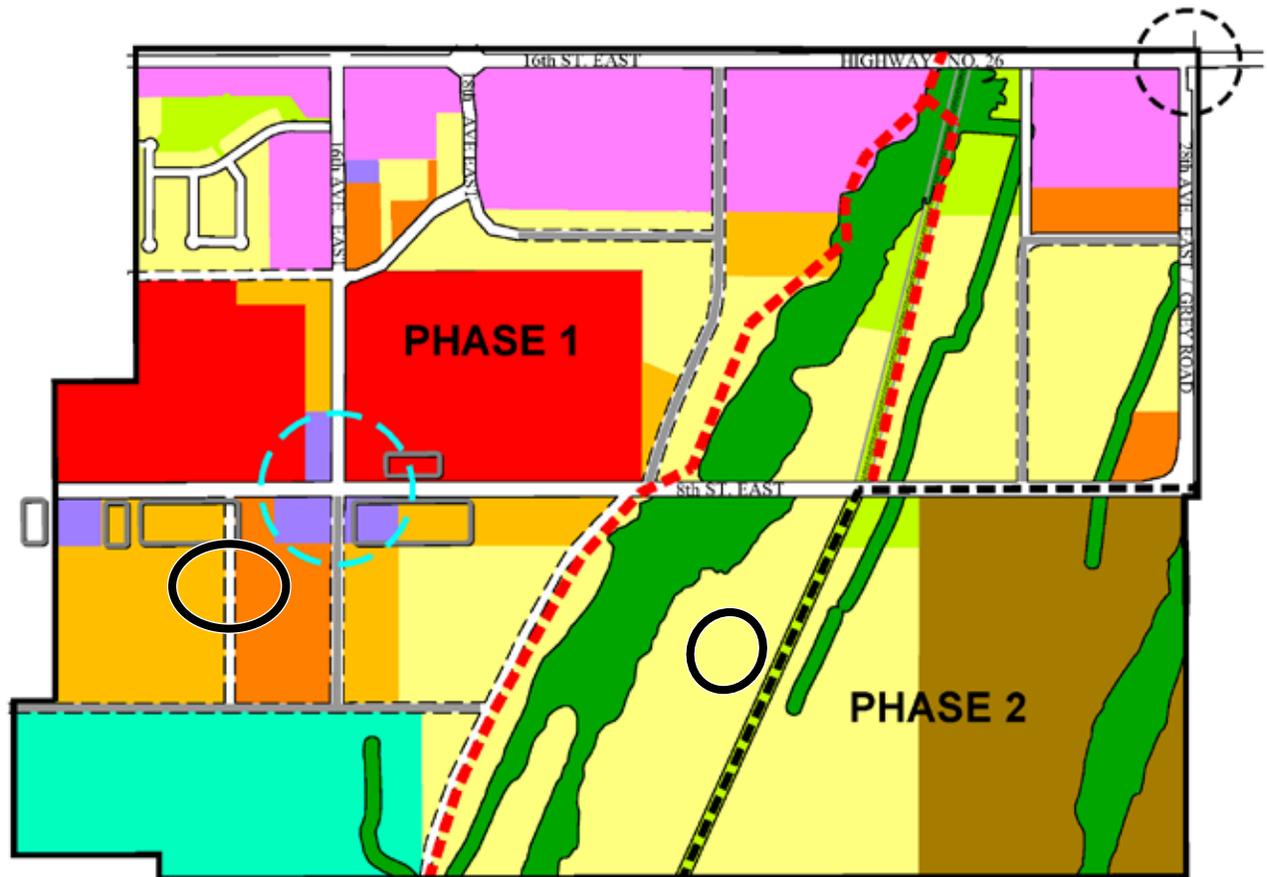
Playground Proximity Analysis

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| Features | Parks |
| City Boundary | Neighbourhood Parks |
| Waterbody | Community Parks |
| Trails | City Parks, Regional Parks, & Open Space Corridors |

- Playgrounds (21)
- 500m Unimpeded Walking Distance
Barriers include Highways, Arterial Roads, and Watercourses
- Areas to Assess for Potential Playground Access



Figure 7



**SYDENHAM HEIGHTS PHASE I AND II
PLANNING AREAS**

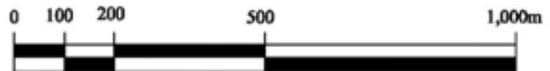
-  Area to Assess for Potential Park
-  Potential Location of Easthill Elevated Water Storage
-  Proposed Trunk Sanitary Sewer Alignment (Exact Location TBD)
-  Planned Road
-  Escarpment Protection
-  Future Mixed Use Node
-  Phase Boundary

LAND USE

-  Residential - Low Density
-  Residential - Medium Density
-  Residential - Medium/High Density
-  East City Commercial
-  Arterial Commercial
-  Institutional
-  Open Space - Park
-  Hazard Lands
-  Escarpment Rural
-  Trail
-  Future Collector Road
-  Gateway

SCHEDULE 'A2'

OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT No. 4
BY-LAW No. 2012-112



CITY OF OWEN SOUND OFFICIAL PLAN

7.0 Inventory Of Recreational Facilities, Parks, Open Space & Trails



7.1 Facility Inventory

Table 6 summarizes the inventory of selected municipal recreation and parks facilities in the City of Owen Sound (school facilities permitted by the City are not included). All inventory information has been provided by the City's Community Services Department and is understood to be accurate as of Fall, 2017.

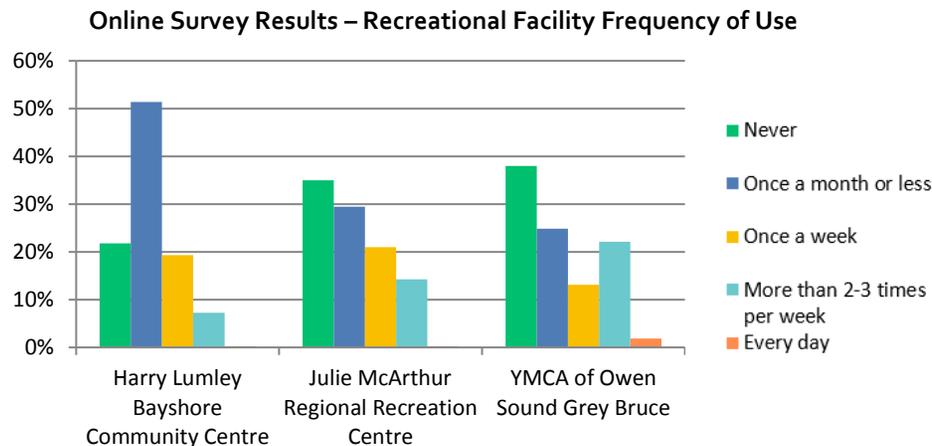
Table 6: Facility Inventory

| Facility | Municipal Supply | Location / Comments |
|-----------------------|------------------|--|
| Community Centres | 1 | Harry Lumley Bayshore Community Centre Includes four halls that can be converted into two larger halls Includes two kitchens Includes a stage |
| Community Halls | 1 | Harrison Park Community Centre |
| Senior Centres | 4 | Harrison Park Seniors Centre, Active Lifestyles Seniors' Centre Grey Bruce, North of 55 – An Active Living Centre, Owen Sound Legion |
| Ice Pads | 3 | Bayshore Community Centre (J.D. McArthur Arena) and Julie McArthur Regional Recreation Centre |
| Indoor Pools | 2 | Family YMCA Includes leisure pool (warm water) and 25 metre competitive pool The City is also served by non-profit/private indoor pools: - Hotel pool (Days Inn) |
| Fitness Centres | 1 | Family YMCA The City is also served by non-profit/private facilities: - Anytime Fitness - Owen Sound Fitness & Training - Velocity Sports Performance & Fitness - A Woman's Journey - Goodlife Fitness |
| Soccer Fields | 9 | Fields are located at the Kiwanis Soccer Complex (7), Victoria Park (1), Kelso Beach (1) |
| Ball Diamonds (Total) | 14 | Class A (Lit): Duncan McLellan Park (4); Class B (Lit): Victoria Park (1); Class C (Unlit): Kelso Beach Park (1), Harrison Field (4), Kinsmen (3), St. Julien (1), Tom Williams (1). |

| | | |
|---|----|---|
| Tennis Courts (unlit) | 2 | Tennis court (also used for Pickleball) is located at Harrison Park OSDSS tennis courts (through agreement with BWDSB) |
| Pickleball Court (outdoor) | 1 | Pickleball court (tennis court) is located at Harrison Park. |
| Basketball Courts: | 4 | Courts located at Harrison Park (2 half courts), Getaway Sk8board Park (1 half court) and JMRRC/YMCA (1 full court) |
| Outdoor Pools | 1 | Harrison Park |
| Outdoor Ice Rinks | 1 | Harrison Park |
| Skateboard Parks | 1 | Kiwanis Skate and Bike Park |
| BMX Bike Parks | 1 | Kiwanis Skate and Bike Park, |
| Playground Locations | 18 | 18 locations contain creative play equipment, 9 contain traditional play equipment (slides, monkey bars) and 12 contain swings |
| Beaches | 2 | Kelso Beach, J. Irvine Brown Children's Park |
| Boat Launches (public & private) | 5 | RCA Boat Launch, West Side Boat Launch, East Side Boat Launch, GS Marina, Rainbow Boat Launch |

7.1.1 Recreation Facilities

For each recreational facility, frequency of use varies. For example, over 50% of survey respondents indicated they use the Bayshore Centre *once a month or less*. 35.5% of respondents indicated they use the Julie McArthur Regional Recreation Centre at least *once a week or more* and 37% use the YMCA fitness/aquatic facilities at *least once a week or more*.



Results of the online survey indicate that 34% of respondents participate in recreation and leisure programs outside of the City of Owen Sound. Respondents indicated they travel outside of Owen Sound to participate in hockey, softball/baseball, soccer, golf, skiing, broomball and hiking. While there is no clear area/activity that is pulling Owen Sound residents away from local facilities, towns such as Hanover, Meaford, Shallow Lake, Chatsworth, Desboro, Sauble

Beach and Wiarton were mentioned as where respondents travel to for other recreational opportunities.

Harry Lumley Bayshore Community Centre:

Opened in 1983, the Harry Lumley Bayshore Community Centre offers a wide range of facilities, amenities and services. The Bayshore Community Centre hosts numerous events throughout the year including hockey tournaments and concerts, providing services to the broader region in Grey County. The facility contains the J.D. McArthur Arena, a 2,800 seat spectator arena which is home to the Owen Sound Attack of the Ontario Hockey League.

Space is available for rent to permanent and occasional user groups and the general public for sport, recreational and cultural purposes, including birthday parties and workshops. There is also a walking track which is an important asset for Seniors in Owen Sound.

Julie McArthur Regional Recreation Centre:

Through a partnership between Owen Sound and the YMCA, the Julie McArthur Regional Recreation Centre was built in 2012 to serve Owen Sound and the wider region. The facility includes two NHL sized ice surfaces, outdoor amenities including soccer/football field and skate/bike park that are operated by the City, as well as the Family YMCA which includes a gymnasium, fitness/conditioning centre, cycle studio, fitness studio, meeting space, walking/running

track, a 25 metre eight lane pool and warm water pool, plus associated amenities.

The YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce supports the community of Owen Sound and Grey and Bruce Counties through a variety of services, including: Health, Fitness and Aquatics; Child Care; Employment Services; Community Initiatives; Resident and Day Camp; and Opportunities to Give.



Julie McArthur
Regional Recreation
Centre with the YMCA
of Owen Sound Grey
Bruce

This facility is operated under a Joint Operating Agreement between the City and Family YMCA. The City owns the facility and a portion of the building is leased to the Family YMCA. Through this partnership, the Family YMCA delivers many recreation programs for Owen Sound as well as the surrounding community (primarily fitness and aquatic programming). This multi-purpose, fully accessible recreation destination has altered the culture of fitness and recreation across Grey and Bruce Counties.

The YMCA is an independent charity and operates its Health, Fitness and Aquatic facility based on the fees it receives from members and

participants. The YMCA does not receive funding from the City for its operations. The YMCA must ensure it is financially sustainable in its operations, and therefore charges fees that cover the cost of its operations.

The Family YMCA averages over 5000 members, with over 1000 being seniors. YMCA membership is inclusive, welcoming all members of the community. YMCA memberships are a convenient and economical option for Owen Sound and regional residents seeking fitness and health opportunities.

A financial assistance program also helps to reduce barriers to participation. The monies raised through fundraising events and donations helps support over 900 people of all ages each year.

Currently, over 125 fitness classes are offered each week by the Family YMCA, and there are approximately 1200 daily usages of the YMCA facility.

Swimming lessons are a very popular service offered by the YMCA. There are approximately 650 people enrolled at any one time in a session of swim lessons throughout the year. In order to instruct this large number of swimmers, there are 34 full and part-time staff instructing and supporting each session of lessons.

While the YMCA has pool space to add more lessons, they are limited by the availability of certified instructors and lifeguards. As mentioned earlier, it is a challenge to continually replace staff/instructors as they often leave to attend college/university.

Training new staff to meet the demand for swimming lessons will continue to be a challenge for the YMCA.

Overall, survey respondents indicated they are satisfied with the quality and diversity of programs offered by the YMCA.

Programs offered by the YMCA include:

- **Fitness Programs:** Over 125 classes are offered weekly, including aquatic fitness (shallow, deep, gentle, joints in motion); cardio classes (gentle, sculpt, skip, step, triathlon and Zumba); strength classes (gravity, boot camp, assisted workout, body sculpt, core, tabata/high intensity interval training, instructors choice and workout of the week); cycle classes (cycle, ride and glide, gentle and triathlon); three mind and body classes (yoga, tai chi, Pilates fusion and stretch); Cardiac rehabilitation program;
- **Recreation Programs:** Basketball, Badminton, Pickleball, Floor Hockey, Craft/Lego Kids, Kids Club, PD Day programs, Holiday Camp, March Break Camp, Summer Play and Day Camps, Specialty Camps, Babysitting certification, Family Fun;

- **Aquatics:** Swimming Lessons for all ages (preschool, youth and adults), length swimming, recreational swimming, aqua therapy, aquatic fitness, school swim lessons, Owen Sound Aquatic Club, Special Olympics.

They YMCA's Mission is an integral component of Owen Sound's recreational landscape with a central mission to build a caring, healthy community by creating opportunities for all people to achieve personal growth in spirit, mind and body. The YMCA's website (<http://www.ymcaowensound.on.ca/>) is a great source of information on all YMCA services and offers a virtual tour of the Health, Fitness and Aquatic Facility.

Additional Recreation and Fitness Opportunities

In addition to the Family YMCA, a variety of private fitness facilities in the City/surrounding area offer fitness classes/programs, including: Velocity; Stone Tree Golf and Fitness; Georgian College's gym; A Woman's Journey; Anytime Fitness; Owen Sound Fitness and Training; Goodlife Fitness and various yoga, gymnastics and dance studios.

7.2 Parks, Open Space and Trails Assessment

The following table includes an updated analysis of parkland area for the City of Owen Sound. Using Geographical Information Systems data provided by the City and looking specifically at neighbourhood, community and city parks results in a total of **156.51 hectares** of parkland.

Table 7: Parkland Inventory

| Quadrant | Neighbourhood Parks | | Community Parks | | City Parks | |
|--------------|-----------------------------|-------------|-------------------------|--------------|---|--------------|
| | | Area (ha) | | Area (ha) | | Area (ha) |
| 1 | Maitland Park | 0.61 | Harrison Field | 1.30 | Kelso Park / Newash Park | 9.86 |
| 1 | Mary Miller Park | 0.30 | Kinsmen | 1.28 | Leader SRS Park / West Side Boat Launch / Getaway Skateboard Park | 1.40 |
| 1 | Soundview | 0.79 | St Julien Park | 1.19 | | |
| 1 | Tot Lot Park | 0.10 | Tom Williams Park | 1.45 | | |
| 1 | Westmount Park | 0.06 | | | | |
| TOTAL | 5 | 1.86 | 4 | 5.22 | 2 | 11.26 |
| 2 | Alexander Park | 0.41 | Timber McArthur Park | 15.55 | J.Irvine Brown Children's / Bayshore Comm. Centre | 5.84 |
| 2 | Ed Taylor Park | 0.79 | Duncan McLellan Park | 4.89 | Kiwanis Soccer Complex | 21.61 |
| 2 | | | Stoney Orchard | 5.25 | RCA Boat Launch | 0.75 |
| 2 | | | | | Victoria Park/ St George's Park | 15.34 |
| TOTAL | 2 | 1.20 | 3 | 25.70 | 4 | 43.54 |
| 3 | Blacks Park | 0.95 | Queen's Park | 1.22 | | |
| 3 | Charlie Kelly Park | 0.12 | | | | |
| 3 | Comme-r-ette | 0.25 | | | | |
| 3 | Cpl. James Mitchell Park | 0.43 | | | | |
| 3 | Evans Park | 0.09 | | | | |
| 3 | Stobbe Park | 0.10 | | | | |
| TOTAL | 6 | 1.94 | 1 | 1.22 | 0 | 0.00 |

| | | | | | | |
|--------------|-------------------|-------------|----------------|--------------|-------------------------|---------------|
| 4 | Bill Inglis Park | 0.30 | Garafraxa Park | 8.07 | Harrison Park | 18.92 |
| 4 | Centennial Towers | 0.99 | | | Harrison Park Extension | 34.18 |
| 4 | Owen Heights Park | 0.71 | | | | |
| 4 | Parkview | 0.65 | | | | |
| 4 | Pinecrest Park | 0.26 | | | | |
| 4 | Ryerson Park | 0.49 | | | | |
| TOTAL | 6 | 3.41 | 1 | 8.07 | 2 | 53.10 |
| | | | | | | |
| TOTAL | 19 | 8.41 | 9 | 40.21 | 8 | 107.90 |

| | Parks | Area (ha) |
|--------------------|-----------|----------------|
| GRAND TOTAL | 36 | 156.51* |

**Does not include unopened road allowance or Pottawatomi Conservation Area.*

Including regional parks, open space corridors and Greenwood Cemetery results in a total of 245.28 hectares, which is shown in Table 8 below. This table also shows the average size of each parkland class and the per capita ratio, based on Owen Sound's 2016 population.

Table 8: Parkland summary by park class

| Parkland Class | # of Sites | Supply (ha) | Avg. Size per Park (ha) | Per Capita Ratio* |
|---------------------|------------|---------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Neighbourhood Parks | 19 | 8.41 | 0.44 | 0.39 ha/1000 |
| Community Parks | 9 | 40.21 | 4.47 | 1.89 ha/1000 |
| City Parks | 8 | 107.9 | 13.49 | 5.07 ha/1000 |
| Regional Parks | 5 | 78.09 | 15.62 | 3.67 ha/1000 |
| Open Space Corridor | 2 | 10.67 | 5.34 | 0.50 ha/1000 |
| TOTAL | 43 | 245.28 | 39.35 | 11.61 ha/1000 |

**Based on a population of 21,341 (2016 Census)*

Table 9: Trails Inventory and Assessment (Source: Recreation Trails Master Plan, 2012)

| Trail | Distance (km) | Surface | Rating | Parking | Benches | Lighted | Comments |
|----------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|--------|---------|---------|---------|--|
| Mile Drive | .5 | Stone dust | Easy | Yes | No | No | Needs resurfacing in future |
| Orchard Park | 3.0 | Dirt | Easy | Yes | No | No | Hidden asset for forest trails. Extension to Timber McArthur in future |
| Fitness Trail | 1.2 | Stone dust | Easy | Yes | Yes | No | Possible extensions + paving |
| Eddie Sargeant | .2 | Pavement | Easy | Yes | No | Yes | |
| Harbour Walkway | 0.3 | Pavement and stone dust | Easy | Yes | Yes | Yes | Future snow removal |
| Weaver's Creek | 0.2 | Stone dust and boardwalk | Easy | Yes | Yes | No | Waterfall tour site |
| St. Mary's Cemetery | 0.3 | Dirt | Mod | Yes | No | No | Less used route |
| Freedom Trail in Park | 0.9 | Pavement and stone dust | Easy | Yes | Yes | Yes | Popular route in park |
| Top of the Hill loop | 1.0 | Dirt | Mod | Yes | No | No | Side loop to Mile Drive |
| Parkview Erosion Trail | 0.4 | Stone dust | Easy | Yes | No | No | New trail link to park |
| 5th Ave E to Fitness Trail | 0.4 | Dirt | Diff | Yes | No | No | Closed/Future Repairs |
| 9 Bends | 0.6 | Pavement | Easy | Yes | No | No | Popular connector to Harrison Park |
| 4th Ave W to 1st St W | 0.6 | Multi | Mod | No | No | No | Poor conditions due to erosion |
| Mill Dam | 0.2 | Pavement | Easy | Yes | Yes | Yes | Downtown crossing location |
| Kelso beach trails | 1.5 | Pavement and Stone dust | Easy | Yes | Yes | Yes | Popular trails starting point |
| Tom Thomson/CP Rail Line | 4.0 + | Stone dust | Easy | Yes | Yes | No | Starting at Bayshore and follows rail line. TTT leaves Rail bed at 26th street E |
| 14th Street W footpath | 0.1 | Grass | Mod | No | No | Yes | Residential connector/steep grade |
| 10th Street A W walk | 0.3 | Concrete | Easy | No | No | Yes | Sidewalk route bypasses 10th street W hill |
| Old Hospital Trail | 0.2 | Pavement | Easy | No | No | Yes | Residential Connector |
| West Rocks Access Trail | 0.5 | Rock and hard earth | Mod | Yes | No | No | Steep grade rugged trail opposite West Hill. Entrance to West Rocks |

| | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|---------------------------|------|-----|-----|-----|---|
| 7th Ave West/Merkel | 0.4 | Gravel and hard earth | Mod | No | No | No | Access to West Rocks Popular snowshoe and ski route, access to Bruce Trail |
| Black's Park Trails | 0.5 total | Hard earth | Easy | No | No | No | School route/future development |
| 5th St. W to 4th Ave W | 0.08 | Pavement | Easy | No | No | Yes | Residential route |
| 4th Ave W to 8th St W | 0.2 | Pavement | Mod | No | No | Yes | Residential route to downtown. Steep grade |
| Sydenham Walking Path West Side | 0.2 | Stone dust | Easy | Yes | Yes | Yes | Opposite library, fisherman's trail |
| Family Y trail East Side | 0.3 | Stone dust | Easy | Yes | Yes | No | Fisherman's trail along Sydenham |
| MacArthur Park | 0.1 | Pavement | Easy | No | No | Yes | Paved link to 5th Ave E below hill |
| St. Mary's Paved link | 0.2 | Pavement | Easy | No | No | Yes | Paved path at St. Mary's Church |
| Regional Recreation Centre Stairs | 0.2 | Stairs | Mod | Yes | No | Yes | Steep stair linking Recreation Centre to St. Georges Ball Park |
| Taylor Park Paved Route | 0.2 | Pavement | Easy | Yes | No | Yes | Paved link from Parkette to new 10th St extension. School route |
| 14th Ave E to 10th St extension | 0.2 | Pavement | Easy | No | No | Yes | New connecting route to 10th St extension and OSCVI |
| Heritage Place Trail | 0.4 | Stone Dust | Easy | Yes | No | No | Trail connects the mall to residential area of 9th Ave E |
| Tower Trails | 0.6 | Stone Dust and Hard Earth | Easy | Yes | Yes | No | Route to Centennial tower and Bruce Trail |
| Parkview Crescent Trail | 0.4 | Hard earth | Diff | No | No | No | Eroded and dangerous route to the fitness trail from Parkview Crescent |

Table 10: Trails in or Directly Adjacent to Owen Sound

| Name | Description |
|---|---|
| Bruce Trail | Bruce Trail The Bruce Trail runs along the Niagara Escarpment from Niagara to Tobermory, spanning more than 850km. |
| West Rocks Management Area | West Rocks Management Area Part of the Bruce Trail, there are 10km of hard-packed trails that link to Inglis Falls in the south and into the |
| Inglis Falls Conservation Area | Inglis Falls Conservation Area Part of the Bruce Trail, there are 7.5km of hard-packed trails of varying difficulty and topography. To the South is |
| CP Rail Trail (proposed) | CP Rail Trail (proposed) This is a proposed trail that brings a multi-use trail into Owen Sound from Dundalk along the abandoned CP rail |
| Tom Thomson Trail (under construction) | This is a new trail being developed between Owen Sound and Meaford by a volunteer group, with some assistance from the City. One completed, the trail – of which 4.7km are now in use – will travel through fields, wooded areas and country roads and will eventually connect Owen Sound’s many trails with the Georgian Trail, which begins in Meaford and continues to Collingwood. The trail currently runs from Owen Sound’s Harry Lumley Bayshore Community Centre north towards Hibou Conservation Area. |
| Freedom Trail (being formalized/improved) | The Freedom Trail (located between Harrison Park and Inglis Falls) is an existing trail that will soon be undergoing improvements planned by the City in conjunction with the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority. |
| Sarawak Rail Trail | This trail runs west from Kelso Beach, through flat farm land, up the escarpment, and then connects to the Keppel Rail Trail section of the Georgian Bluffs Trail and continues to Park Head. The trail is also accessible at the west edge of Owen Sound at Range Road. |
| Owen Sound Harbour | The harbour walkway is approximately 3km of asphalt and interlocking brick for use by both walkers and cyclists. It follows the harbour from Kelso Beach on the west to past the Bayshore Community Centre on the east. |
| Harrison Park | Contains a series of hard-packed natural paths internal to the Park, with linkages to the Bruce Trail. |
| Sydenham River | A hard-packed natural path that runs along the Sydenham River (and local streets) and connects Harrison Park to the Owen Sound Harbour pathway. |
| Various Bicycle Routes | Located throughout the city, these routes are either asphalt paths or follow less well-travelled roads. |
| Various Snowmobile Trails | There is also a system of snowmobile trails that are off-road for the most part throughout the City. There is also a by-law which prohibits snowmobiles on certain arterial roads. |

8.0 Implementation Strategy



8.1 Master Plan Goals and Implementation Strategy

Based on public input, stakeholder consultation and background research, a series of goals and action items have been established for the provision of parks and recreation facilities, programs and services in the City of Owen Sound. A guiding principle was also developed as an overarching goal for the Community Service Department and other service providers in Owen Sound:

To encourage residents of all ages to maintain physical, social and mental well-being through the provision and facilitation of a range of opportunities and choices.

These goals have been used to guide the development of this Master Plan and should be utilized for future decision-making in the City of Owen Sound. These goals are complementary, and do not take priority over another: they should be read and interpreted as a set, rather than as separate statements. However, responsibilities and timelines have been assigned to each action item in order to assist the City in prioritizing future work plans and priorities. More detailed responsibility (Specific divisions) would be determined by the lead City department. It is understood and expected that the City and community service providers will strive to achieve these goals through the various means available, taking into consideration the limits of municipal financial resources.

| | |
|--|--|
| 1. Accessibility & Affordability | Timeline: O = Ongoing S = Short-term (0-2 years) M = Medium-term (2-5 years) L = Long-term (5-10 years) |
| 2. Marketing & Communications | |
| 3. Partnerships & Collaborations | |
| 4. Desire for Indoor Turf Facility | |
| 5. Parkland Requirements & Acquisition | |
| 6. Recreational Asset Improvements | |
| 7. Programming | |
| 8. Service Delivery and Monitoring | |

1.0 Accessibility and Affordability

GOAL: To ensure community facilities, services and procedures enhance accessibility for all.

| ACTIONS | Responsibility | Timing (O/S/M/L) |
|---|--|------------------|
| a) Review rates and fees policies on annual basis to ensure that they continue to respond to community needs and promote access for all regardless of age, income level, culture, gender, and abilities. | Community Services Department / Committee | Ongoing |
| b) Consider expanding the core set of free programs that can be established to create a degree of universality and inclusiveness for all in Owen Sound (beyond free skates and swims). | Community Services Department through consultation with other recreational providers | Short-Medium |
| c) Create opportunities for increasing a sense of belonging among all groups by developing an Inclusion Policy for Owen Sound facilities. | Community Services Department and partner service providers | Ongoing |
| d) Establish an Affordable Access Policy to improve access to recreation programs for those whom fees are a barrier to participation. | Community Services Department and partner service providers | Short |
| e) Continue to implement accessibility plan at Julie McArthur Regional Recreation Centre and Bayshore Community Centre and review recreational facilities, parks and trails to identify ways to reduce barriers for people with disabilities where feasible. | Community Services Department and partner service providers (E.g. YMCA) | Ongoing |
| f) Coordinate with existing organizations (E.g. Teen Advisory Group at the Owen Sound Library) to ensure recreational facilities, parks and trails remain relevant and consistent with changing trends, and address the barriers to access and participation. City and community service partners should explore new ways to increase unstructured and drop-in activities for teens. The City should continue to provide activities such as free swims, as well as the skate and Bike Park, and outdoor rink. | Community Services Department and relevant partners (E.g. Teen Advisory Group) | Short |

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|---|--|----------------------|
| <p>g) Encourage seniors' organizations in Owen Sound to develop a senior's strategy that is relevant and consistent with changing trends, and identify the barriers to access and participation through engagement with non-users. Continue to provide wellness and active living programs for active seniors.</p> | <p>Community Services Department through partnership with Seniors' Groups (E.g. Active Lifestyles Centre Grey Bruce)</p> | <p>Short</p> |
| <p>h) Introduce intergenerational programming which would involve special events and physical activities that grandparent and grandchildren can participate in together.</p> | <p>Community Services Department with partners</p> | <p>Short-Medium</p> |
| <p>i) Consult with trail users to discuss year-round multi-use trails and determine opportunities to improve trail network connectivity.</p> | <p>Community Services Department with partners (E.g. Tom Thomson Trail Group)</p> | <p>Short</p> |
| <p>j) Ensure all activity rooms or facilities do not have specific 'label' (e.g. Youth or Senior's room) to maximize flexibility of available rooms and provide for cross-programming of existing space.</p> | <p>Community Services Department</p> | <p>Ongoing/Short</p> |
| <p>k) Investigate operations changes such as extending days and hours of operations at recreational facilities to support more accessible hours for facility users. Update hours where need exists.</p> | <p>Community Services Department</p> | <p>Short</p> |
| <p>l) Optimize existing operating hours by creating programs that attract persons who are faced with barriers. I.e. youth, persons with disabilities, new Canadians, seniors, parents and tots.</p> | <p>Community Services Department and service providers</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> |
| <p>m) Continue to avoid single use amenities when updating or planning for new spaces or facilities.</p> | <p>Community Services Department</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> |
| <p>n) Through facility updates, continue to encourage an atmosphere that feels welcoming by creating spaces for non-structured social and community engagement (E.g. more modular seating).</p> | <p>Community Services Department and service provider partners</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> |
| <p>o) Ensure that City-owned lands are protected for future community use to maintain livability and walkability.</p> | <p>Community Services Department</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> |
| <p>p) Continue to look for opportunities in the community to protect and secure parkland or other open space areas that have the potential to provide outdoor recreational program opportunities.</p> | <p>Community Services Department</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> |

2.0 Marketing & Communications

GOAL: Be a leader in user retention and growth through the implementation of strategic communication efforts.

| ACTIONS | Responsibility | Timing (O/S/M/L) |
|---|---|------------------|
| a) Coordinate an information session with relevant departments and divisions to share the outcomes and recommendations of this updated Master Plan. | Community Services Department | Short |
| b) Ensure the updated master plan is reflected in the City's Strategic Plan, Official Plan and other vision documents. | Community Services Department | Short |
| c) Continually update a comprehensive data base of key stakeholders and designate a staff person with the responsibility of keeping database current. | Community Services Department | Ongoing/Short |
| d) Conduct a review of best practices for promotion and marketing recreation and leisure programs and services. Select promotional approaches that are appropriate for Owen Sound and implement an updated promotion and marketing framework. | Community Services Department | Short |
| e) Continue to promote recreational facilities, parks, trails and events through social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.). | Community Services Department | Ongoing/Short |
| f) Carry out 'customer service' surveys every two years to strengthen relationships and engagement with recreational users. | Community Services Department and service providers | Short-Medium |
| g) Create and distribute quarterly newsletters to distribute information on recreational opportunities. | Community Services Department | Ongoing/Short |
| h) Create a customer-centred culture amongst staff that focuses on core values and expectations of the City as well as partnering organizations through the development of a customer service excellence training program for staff members. | All staff | Ongoing |
| i) Enhance the use of the City's 4 social media platforms: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn and others as new technologies are introduced. | Community Services Department | Short |
| j) Improve the access to information technology for visitors to recreation facilities by increasing the availability of online information from all divisions. | All departments | Short-Medium |

| | | |
|---|---|---------------|
| k) Introduce an online booking system for all recreational facilities that includes online transactions and registration. Ensure system is accessible through smart phones and tablets and information provided is consistent for all facilities (Include rates, contact, hours of operations, etc.). Identify ways to encourage resident/customer use of online transactions/bookings. | All departments, led by Community Services Department | Short |
| l) Adopt a Department wide advertising signage policy that permits access by potential partners, sponsors, businesses and community groups to advertising space in facilities where possible. | Community Services Department | Short |
| m) Allow community partners through negotiated agreements to access potential sponsorship revenues from facility and/or program signage (i.e. share revenue generation with Soccer, Baseball, Sport Council and other stakeholders when advertising campaigns are a result of joint efforts). | Community Services Department and partners such as local businesses or sports organizations | Short-Medium |
| n) Integrate customer service, marketing and communications in all staff meetings. | Community Services Department | Ongoing/Short |

3.0 Partnership & Collaborations

GOAL: Build capacity and promote healthy lifestyles for all ages through partnerships and collaboration.

| ACTIONS | Responsibility | Timing (O/S/M/L) |
|---|--|------------------|
| a) Continue to strategically explore and utilize both private and not-for-profit partnerships to deliver facilities and services wherever financially viable while ensuring standards of quality are being met. | Community Services Department and relevant partners (Business organizations and potential partners such as Family YMCA and Minor Soccer) | Ongoing |
| b) Establish principles and policies for each type of partnership the City engages in (E.g. public/public, public/private, and public/not-for-profit). | Community Services Department through discussion with Council and relevant Committees | Short |

| | | |
|--|--|---------------|
| c) Conduct regular evaluation of the City's partnership with the other service providers and partners. | Community Services Department and recreational service providers | Ongoing |
| d) Identify potential partners to help improve usage of underutilized parks/facilities. | Community Services Department | Short |
| e) Identify opportunities to engage partners and stakeholders to collaborate in assessing current program gaps and overlaps in order to maximize recreational options for users. | Community Services Department and recreational service providers | Short |
| f) Implement an award system for community leaders/partners who help deliver recreational and sport and/or promote healthy, active living in Owen Sound. | Community Services Department and recreational service providers | Short-Medium |
| g) Continue to investigate corporate marketing and sponsorship partnerships to fund facilities, programs and service enhancements. | Community Services Department | Short |
| h) Consult with ball groups to explore options for improving existing ball diamonds, the need for additional diamonds and/or repurposing of existing diamonds. | Community Services Department | Short-Medium |
| i) Strengthen stewardship activities and programming within parks by collaborating with a variety of community partners that demonstrate a long-term commitment to stewardship activities. | Community Services Department | Ongoing/Short |
| j) Review site-specific agreements and update or complete a reciprocal joint-use agreement with School Board's to guide future arrangements. | Community Services Department and School Boards | Short-Medium |
| k) Explore corporate marketing and sponsorship partnerships to fund facilities, programs and service enhancements. | Community Services Department | Short |

4.0 Desire for Indoor Recreation Facility

GOAL: Through consultation with stakeholders, assess need and financial feasibility for an indoor turf facility.

| ACTIONS | Responsibility | Timing (O/S/M/L) |
|--|--|------------------|
| a) The City should evaluate its involvement in an indoor turf facility based upon a business plan, feasibility study and financing strategy prepared by an interested party. | Interested party/stakeholders with Community Services Department | Short-Medium |
| b) The City and interested parties should consult with neighbouring municipalities (Georgian Bluffs and Meaford) to discuss regional need for indoor turf facility and potential partnerships. | Community Services Department with interested parties | Short |
| c) Support user groups to develop a working group/special committee and provide input from City Council and staff by liaising with the Community Services Committee | Interested User Groups with support from Community Services Department | Short |
| d) Undertake a detailed analysis of the current use of soccer fields in Owen Sound and determine key user groups through consultation with sports groups (Owen Sound Minor Soccer, Frisbee, lawn bowling, rugby, etc.) and additional partners such as School Boards | Interested party/stakeholders with Community Services Department | Short-Medium |
| e) Conduct review of best practices for developing indoor turf facilities | Community Services Department | Short-Medium |
| f) Perform analysis of future projections and confirm if there is need from Owen Sound and regional users for an indoor turf facility. | Community Services Department | Short-Medium |
| g) Consider potential locations for a future indoor turf facility, and provide relevant information to interested partners. | Community Services Department through consultation with interested user groups | Short-Medium |
| h) Consider creative partnership options (E.g. School Boards). | Community Services Department | Ongoing |

5.0 Parkland Requirements & Acquisition

GOAL: Update parkland policies to be consistent with current policy framework and continue to monitor parkland needs in the future.

| ACTIONS | Responsibility | Timing (O/S/M/L) |
|---|-------------------------------|------------------|
| <p>a) In the Downtown, East and West Harbour Planning Areas – and other areas of the City, should the need for additional parkland become evident – the City should look to secure parks and open spaces through various means including, but not limited to: dedication from development; acquisition through cash-in-lieu fees; partnerships with public or private organizations; public trusts/donations; restrictive covenants; easements; bonusing, etc. While it is preferred that these lands be in public ownership, where this is not possible, the City should seek to secure a right of access across these lands for public use.</p> | Community Services Department | Ongoing |
| <p>b) Update Parkland Policies in Official Plan based on recommendations of Section 6.4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specifically Policies 7.5.1.3, 7.5.2 and 7.5.3 as part of Five Year Review | Community Services Department | Short-Medium |
| <p>c) Update Parkland by-law to include the requirement for the conveyance of land for park purposes and cash-in-lieu as a condition of development or redevelopment.</p> | Community Services Department | Short-Medium |
| <p>d) Consider conditions/process for plan of subdivision to allow for front-end construction of parks (at site plan approval stage).</p> | Community Services Department | Short |
| <p>e) The Official Plan should be updated to include requirements for parkland through site plan development process in addition to the subdivision process. (Policy 7.5.3.2)</p> | Community Services Department | Short |
| <p>f) Update the Sydenham Heights Secondary Plan Area to include requirements for parkland and locations of future parks.</p> | Community Services Department | Short |
| <p>g) Explore partnership opportunities with the Hospital to develop public parks on surplus hospital lands.</p> | Community Services Department | Short-Medium |
| <p>h) The City should strive to maintain the minimum provision standards for neighbourhood parks (0.5 hectare/1000) and City Parks (1.5 ha/1000) as outlined in the Official Plan. This provision can be monitored through the development of future parks, and assessed for update at the next Master Plan Update.</p> | Community Services Department | Ongoing |

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|----|--|---|---------------|
| i) | When utilizing cash-in-lieu funds, preference should be given to spending it on park and facility upgrades and creating trail linkages within the subject lands' planning area. | Community Services Department subject to direction from Council | Ongoing |
| j) | Open space corridors that are required for the development of a linked trail system may be acquired as part of the City's dedication requirements through the development process. Alternative acquisition strategies for ensuring long-term public access of Open Space Corridors may also be pursued (E.g. negotiation, long-term lease arrangements, etc.). | Community Services Department | Ongoing |
| k) | Assess potential to determine park area as surplus lands and marketing the lands for sale. | Community Services Department subject to direction from Council | Short |
| l) | Lands designated "Hazard Lands" (as identified in the Official Plan) will not be considered as parkland dedication. | Community Services Department | Ongoing |
| m) | The Official Plan should be updated to include a policy that requires consultation with local school boards and public bodies when there are changes to parkland requirements and/or changes to the parks plan. | Community Services Department | Short |
| n) | The online inventory of municipal parks, open space, trails and facilities should continue to be updated to reflect capital improvements and enhancements over the Master Plans period (5 years). | Community Services Department | Ongoing |
| o) | Assess future use of public lands that have been used as parks (E.g. schools) through redevelopment and planning application processes. Encourage parkland to be required instead of cash-in-lieu. | Community Services Department subject to direction from Council | Ongoing/Short |
| p) | Continue to provide play structure parks throughout City that are within 500 metres walking distance (unimpeded by arterial roads or natural barriers). Parks to consider for adding play structures include: Timber McArthur Park, Stoney Orchard, Harrison Field, and Stobbe Park. | Community Services Department | Ongoing |
| q) | Consider the repurposing of sports fields/ball diamonds to transition use to multi-use parkland. Consider parks based on Council direction and data related to usage and bookings if applicable (sports fields). | Community Services Department subject to direction from Council | Short-Medium |

6.o Recreational Asset Improvements

GOAL: An integrated parks, trails and open space system that connects the community and creates recreation opportunities for all.

| ACTIONS | Responsibility | Timing (O/S/M/L) |
|---|-------------------------------|------------------|
| TRAILS | | |
| <p>a) The Trails Master Plan should be reviewed and updated based on this updated Master Plan. Key priority areas for improvements should be confirmed. Trails that were highlighted as requiring enhancements and updates in the Trail Master Plan should be reviewed, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harrison Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Trail link across Greenwood Cemetery into Harrison Park ii. Addition of a new loop(s) on eastern edge of Harrison Park (Ski Hill area east of the Fitness Trail) iii. Paving the Fitness Trail (Strong demand from stakeholders) iv. Construction of single track, hard earth loop along either east or west side of park – has this pilot project trail happened yet? • Stoney Orchard <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Establish stone dust links through McArthur Park to adjoin Stoney Orchard trail system to the Bayshore Community Centre and the JMRRRC. • McArthur Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Add stone dust trail through this park to link the Orchard property trails • Mill Dam <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Overall renewal of this trail is required (tree removal, some stonework) • Kelso Beach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Create single tract stone dust/paved trail along north bank of the Pottawatomie River from the Eddy Sargent Bridge to the lakeshore (will require control of phragmites – an invasive wetland grass) • Overall trail remediation (as suggested in Trails Master Plan) | Community Services Department | Short-Medium |

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| <p>b) As part of the updated Trails Master Plan, a Trails Implementation Strategy should be prepared to assist in identifying options and priorities for developing a comprehensive trails system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The document should include consultation with the public and affected stakeholders and include a phases plan for upgrading existing trails and infrastructure, acquiring new linkages, and developing new neighbourhood and community trails and routes. • The scope of the Strategy should address not only multi-use trails, but also cycling routes/bike lanes, snowmobile trails, cross-country skiing trails and historic walking tours, with consideration being given to support infrastructure, design standards, promotion and marketing, funding/partnership opportunities and cost implications. | Community Services Department through consultation with trail users | Short-Medium |
| <p>c) Through the process of updating the Trails Master Plan, consideration should be given to laying asphalt along the Spine trail that links to the Harbour Trail and to Harrison Park.</p> | Community Services Department | Short-Medium |
| <p>d) A continued emphasis on trail establishment is supported by trends and community interest. High priority should be assigned to multi-use trail development and improvements, particularly at the Tom Thomson Trail, the Fitness Trail and the Georgian Bluffs Rail Trail. Enhanced trail development will require additional funds and partnerships to support the maintenance and improvements, as well as continued efforts to secure abandoned rail corridors and harbourfront lands in partnership with other government agencies/departments/non-profit groups.</p> | Community Services Department through consultation with trail users | Ongoing |
| <p>e) Existing and future trails should be appropriately signed, with trail entry and access points identified. Local trails should be promoted through various means such as publications, brochures and websites. Direction relating to these aspects should be addressed in the proposed Trails Implementation Strategy.</p> | Community Services Department | Ongoing/Short |
| <p>f) Opportunities to include bike lanes or multi-modal linkages to arterial roads should be a priority for enhancing the active transportation network in Owen Sound.</p> | Community Services Department | Ongoing |
| <p>g) All development applications should be reviewed by the City with trail and pathway linkages in mind. Additionally, whenever road construction/reconstruction is planned, the City should include designated bike lanes.</p> | Community Services Department | Ongoing |
| PARKS & OPEN SPACE | | |
| <p>h) All park plans (Harrison Park, Victoria Park and Kelso Beach Park) should be reviewed and updated to ensure they are still relevant. Older plans (Harrison Park Master Plan) should be reviewed first.</p> | Community Services Department | Short |

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| i) | Usage levels of the City boat launches should continue to be monitored. | Community Services Department | Ongoing |
| j) | The City should consider options to transition some ball diamonds to new uses, and invest in significant improvements at Duncan McLellan Park (lighting, outfield/infield, dugouts). Consultation with ball groups will be needed to ensure improvements are appropriate and implemented where needed most. | Community Services Department through consultation with baseball groups | Short-Medium |
| k) | The City should continue to operate the outdoor pool at Harrison Park and continue to offer open swims. | Community Services Department | Ongoing |
| l) | The City should examine installation of additional lighting at the Kiwanis Soccer Complex subject to capital budget. | Community Services Department with partners | Ongoing/Short |
| m) | Local soccer demand should be accommodated through the phased expansion of the Kiwanis Soccer Complex. Desire for a new indoor turf facility should be taken into consideration for future expansions. | Community Services Department | Short-Medium |
| n) | Several school fields in the community are used to accommodate soccer practices and casual rentals. The City should continue to work with the school boards to maximize access to these fields, while maintaining reasonable standards of field quality and affordability. | Community Services Department through consultation with school boards. | Ongoing/Short |
| o) | The City should develop outdoor pickleball courts to reduce conflicts with tennis court use at Harrison Park. The City should also consider working with school boards to access tennis courts for pickleball usage (E.g. OSDSS and the City have an agreement to permit pickleball usage). Improvements to the tennis court/pickleball court at Harrison Park should also be considered. | Community Services Department through consultation with users and school board | Short-Medium |
| p) | The City should develop new agreements with all three School Boards to access gymnasiums for indoor use (e.g. volleyball and basketball). | Community Services Department through consultation with school boards. | Short-Medium |
| q) | Decisions relating to playground installation and removal should be made on a site-specific basis, in consultation with the community. | Community Services Department subject to Council direction and through consultation with community | Short |
| r) | Continue to implement the recommendations in the Harrison Park Master Plan with respect to campground improvements, as resources permit. | Community Services Department | Ongoing |

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| s) | Continue to implement the Kelso Beach Park Master Plan to restore permanent beach environment at the site. | Community Services Department | Ongoing |
| <h2>7.0 Programming</h2> <p>GOAL Support effective program delivery by facilitating partnerships and collaboration with community service providers and key stakeholders.</p> | | | |
| ACTIONS | | Responsibility | Timing (O/S/M/L) |
| a) | The City should continue to be involved as a direct programmer in areas where introductory level skills, instruction/training, broad appeal and affordability are key criteria and where there are no suitable non-municipal providers available to offer the services. This is the current approach to delivering soccer and hockey skills, and power skate. Effort should be made to avoid duplicating existing service provision. | Community Services Department | Ongoing |
| b) | Develop Allocation Policies for each recreational facility guided by the following criteria: (i) Equity; (ii) User profile; (iii) Function profile; (iv) Past performance; and (v) Economic Benefit to the Town. | Community Services Department | Short-Medium |
| c) | The City should maintain its role as a coordinator for facilitation of recreation as leisure activities. | Community Services Department | Ongoing |
| d) | The City and community service providers should explore ways to improve program coordination and provide complementary services with a view towards addressing gaps in delivery. | Community Services Department and recreational service providers | Ongoing |
| e) | Review Allocation Policies for each recreational facility annually to allow for more efficient and effective allocation of resources and to ensure facilities are meeting needs of users. | Community Services Department | Short |
| f) | The City should work with Seniors Groups and ensure continued support through facility provision. To reduce duplication of efforts, consideration should be given to combining both groups (Bayshore Community Centre and Harrison Park Seniors Drop-In Centre). | Community Services Department | Ongoing |

8.o Service Delivery & Monitoring

GOAL To deliver efficient services through effective management, policies, and partnership frameworks while continually monitoring the success of the Master Plan.

| ACTIONS | Responsibility | Timing (O/S/M/L) |
|---|--|------------------|
| a) The City should work to identify synergies in implementing the updated Recreation, Parks and Facilities Master Plan and the Cultural Master Plan. If there are conflicting recommendations between the two plans, this should be reconciled. | Community Services Department | Ongoing/Short |
| b) In an effort to reduce duplication and competition between service providers, the City should organize an annual workshop with all physical activity service providers to educate, synchronize programs, share resources, etc. | Community Services Department and recreational service providers | Ongoing/Short |
| c) A volunteer management policy, procedures and program should be developed to define and clarify the responsibilities and parameters of the City's role in assisting community volunteers. | Community Services Department and recreational service providers | Long |
| d) The City should continue to work collaboratively with adjacent municipal governments to ensure appropriate access to facilities and programs in Owen Sound for all residents in the area in a manner that is responsible to Owen Sound taxpayers. Recreation agreements should be considered in addition to the non-resident fee. | Community Services Department and neighbouring municipalities | Ongoing/Short |
| e) The City should establish a formal policy framework to assist in responding to special requests from the community with regard to recreation and parks, facilities and services. | Community Services Department | Short |
| f) Investigate collaborative models to explore improvements to the planning and delivery of recreational amenities and facilities in the Owen Sound catchment area and where possible coordinate with neighbouring municipalities to allow each community to leverage their collective assets and focus on creating amenities that serve Grey County. | Community Services Department and neighbouring municipalities | Short |
| g) The adjacent municipalities of Georgian Bluffs and Meaford should continue to be pursued as partners with the City of Owen Sound in municipal capital recreation projects that serve all area residents. The amount of contribution should be commensurate with the level of service provide and benefit derived. | Community Services Department and neighbouring municipalities | Ongoing |

| | | |
|--|---|---------|
| h) All organizations renting City of Owen Sound facilities should be continue to be required to report annually on the number of registered participants by municipality. This information should be included in each facilities' allocation policy. | Community Services Department and user groups | Ongoing |
| i) The City should continue to set aside 3% of revenues from facility rentals for capital projects and improvements. | Community Services Department | Ongoing |
| j) Undertake an annual review of the recommendations in the Master Plan as part of the municipal budgeting process, including a description of recent achievements and future objectives. | Community Services Department | Ongoing |
| k) Undertake a comprehensive update of the Recreation, Parks and Facilities Master Plan prior to the end of the 10 year timeframe of the Plan (2027). | Community Services Department | Long |

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