

CHAPTER 3 – TRENDS & NEEDS



ECONOMY OF THE CITY OF WINDSOR

Unlike other Canadian Cities whose economic outlook is more dependent on the larger Metropolitan area of Toronto, Vancouver, Montreal and Calgary, Windsor's economy is strongly linked to the economic health of the Detroit Metropolitan Area. Until recently, much of the economy had focused on the automotive industry and the spin-off manufacturing sector. The recent economic downturn of 2008-2009 which saw the automobile manufacturers facing bankruptcy protection in the United States caused a devastating decline in the economy of Detroit. With the decline in Detroit, the supporting manufacturing operations in Windsor also suffered, leaving Windsor with a higher unemployment rate than the rest of the region.

POTENTIAL GROWTH /DECLINE /TRANSITION

Windsor is identified by the Ontario Chamber of Commerce as part of the Windsor-Sarnia Economic Region. In the 2015 Regional Economic Outlook¹, it has been identified that the economic recovery of this region has and will be very slow, but steady; especially in the Windsor Census Metropolitan Area (CMA). The report recognizes contributing macro-factors as; the depreciated Canadian dollar, faster U.S. economic growth, and lower oil prices. In the Windsor CMA these factors bode well, especially with the proposed International crossing of the Gordie Howe Bridge, which is anticipated to improve and expand the commercial transportation-warehousing and cargo logistics network in the region, as well as modestly impact the local manufacturing infrastructure.

Another area where it is anticipated that improvement will be experienced is in the regions agricultural/horticultural production sector. The area sits on some of the best farmland in the country. Many climate change models demonstrate the Windsor-Essex area as benefitting from a slight increase in temperatures and longer growing seasons. These two factors, combined with well established greenhouse industry for vegetables and flower production, as well as commercial wineries, promotes the opportunity for increased farming and export operations in a region.

Moderate economic growth in the region is foreseen in residential forecasts for both housing starts and property values, due to the highly favorable retirement prospects for people from the other areas of Canada, primarily the GTAⁱⁱ. The aging demographic will force a slowdown in labour force growth, resulting in a decline in the unemployment rate. Though much of the Windsor-Sarnia Region will experience a decline in the population growth, the report suggests that the Windsor CMA's population will actually rise 0.7% in 2016 and maintain an annual population growth of 0.1%. By comparing the various models forecast in the report (see Appendix XX), it is expected that the population of Windsor CMA will remain relatively unchanged (between 0 to 8,800 people) over the next 20 years. Both the Town of LaSalle and the Town of Lakeshore Official Plans are projecting significant increases in their populations during this period.



SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHICS

Understanding the demographics and socio-economic composition within each planning area contributes to assessing park needs, along with the recreation and cultural needs of the communities within the city. The total population of Essex County in 2006 was 393,402 and decreased to 388,782 according to the 2011 census data. The City of Windsor's population comprises 54.2% of the county's population with 210,891 in the 2011 census; a density of 1,441.3 persons per square kilometer. The census shows a small population decrease of 2.6% since 2006, however much of that population has remained in the Windsor Census Metropolitan Area, namely the Town of LaSalle and Town of Lakeshore, which displayed increases in population for 3.6% and 3.9% respectively. Many of the City of Windsor's parks and recreation facilities are utilized by the abutting municipalities. Therefore with each five year review of the Parks Master Plan, updated census information will be taken into consideration for moving the various phases of the 20 year plan forward.

NATIONAL TRENDS

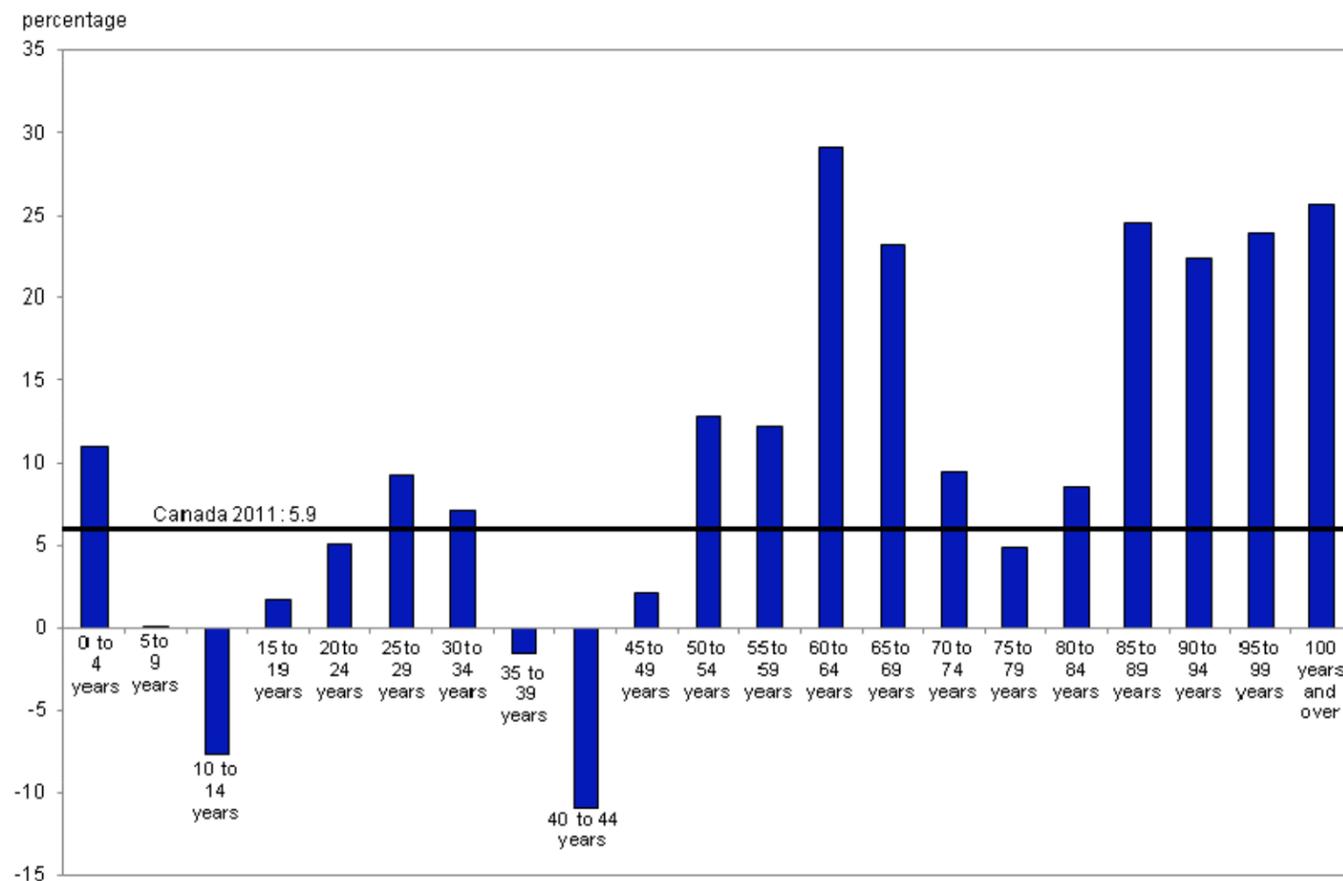


Figure 3-1: National demographic trend by age from 2006 to 2011 Census Data

Between the last two censuses (2006 to 2011) it was identified that the rate of growth in the senior population of Canada is growing. Seniors, aged 65 and over, constitute a record high 14.8% of the overall Canadian population; a 14.1% increase in the last five years. Conversely, the rate of growth in children 14 years and under has only grown 0.5%. However, children aged 4 years and under saw the highest growth rate for this age group since the 1946 to 1964 'Baby Boomer' generation. Though this holds some hope for a future increase in population of younger children, it is too early to tell. In the past 90 years the population has fluctuated especially within recession and depression years, which saw a sudden drop in the number of younger children. Those living in that time period were not afforded with the types of medical services which are offered today. As a result the number of centenarians in Canada rose 25.7% in the last 5 years, the second most rapidly growing age group after the first wave 'Baby boomers' who are now in the 60-64 age group represented in Figure 3-1.

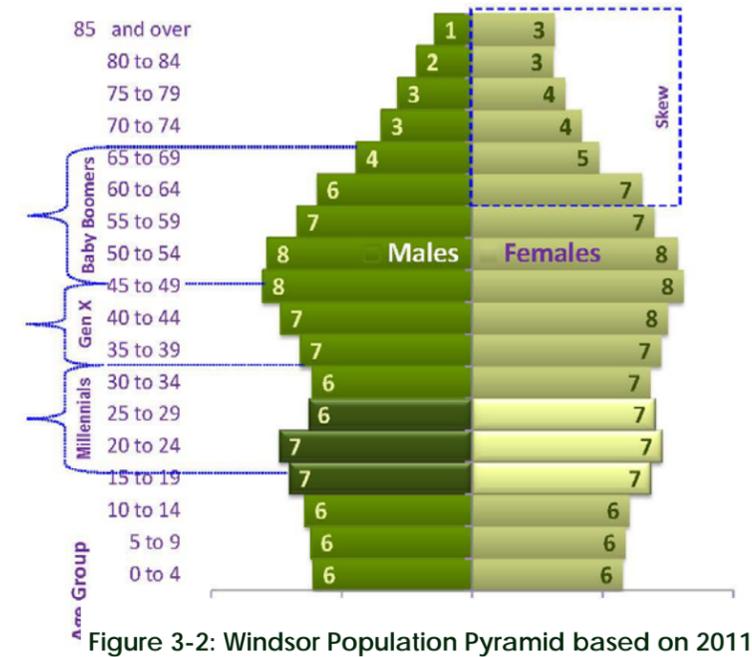
In 2011, census data showed for the first time that there were more people aged 55 to 64, typically the age group where people leave the labour force, than aged 15 to 24, typically the age group where people enter it. Further analysis demonstrates that these national demographic trends are typical for both the Province and the Windsor CMA.

The analysis of the census cites that seven of the 10 municipalities with the highest proportion of seniors were in British Columbia. This could possibly be due warmer climate that coastal B.C. cities offer. With climate change and the potential of rising temperatures in Southern Ontario, there is a potential that the Windsor-Essex region could experience an even greater influx of people in their retirement years moving here from other regions of the country.

WINDSOR CMA TRENDS

The 2011 census pyramid for Windsor demonstrates a predominantly mature community. Both the average and median age of the city is listed at 40.2 years and the dominant age group is 45-49 years. Combined with diminishing numbers in the younger Gen X and Millennial generation, the city is poised to see less of the traditional healthy pyramid with a large number of children below 15 years of age and a small number of older persons in their retirement years. This type of desired population pyramid was last seen in the city between 1961 and 1966. By the 1971 census the narrowing of the younger age group bands had started with a slight bulge occurring in 1986 when the Baby Boomers were starting to raise families (also known as the 'Echo' generation). Should the trend continue and as people are living longer, in twenty years there is the potential of the Windsor population pyramid becoming more evenly distributed across all age groups.

From a Parks and recreation perspective, this becomes a formidable challenge as there is no dominant age group to consider. Therefore, it will be important to address this broad diversity in the ages when considering any proposed development in parks or recreation and culture programming.



District	Population	Dominant Age group	Percentage under 15 years	Percentage over 55 years	Official Language Mother Tongue	Person density per sq km
City Centre	9,852	50 - 54 yrs	13%	33%	55%	4692.59
Walkerville	17,909	45-49 yrs	17%	24%	69%	3556.49
South Central	9,052	45-49 yrs	15%	25%	73%	2936.93
Riverside	22,675	50-54 yrs	13%	37%	80%	2874.07
East Windsor	20,294	45-49 yrs	17%	27%	84%	2492.94
University	11,755	20-24 yrs	13%	25%	71%	2315.02
South Windsor	16,749	45-49 yrs	18%	32%	70%	1978.17
Fontainebleu	11,673	45-49 yrs	16%	33%	74%	1922
Roseland	18,740	40 - 44 yrs	20%	26%	61%	1869.41
South Cameron	9,770	10 -14yrs	23%	21%	46%	1858.44
South Walkerville	6,217	50-54 yrs	15%	32%	85%	1631.24
Sandwich	10,590	20-24 yrs	18%	23%	71%	1565.34
East Riverside	10,655	35-39 yrs	18%	30%	67%	1546.98
Forest Glade	18,080	55-59 yrs	18%	27%	66%	1510.84
Devonshire	8,721	40 - 44 yrs	29%	21%	71%	1126.93
Remington	5,550	45-49 yrs	17%	29%	66%	1031.45
Malden	1,582	45-49 yrs	14%	31%	69%	192.19
Walker Farm	80	40 - 44 yrs	14%	35%	90%	37.61
Sandwich South	877	50-54 yrs	14%	34%	75%	34.3
Ojibway	164	20-24 yrs	11%	32%	73%	25.56
City WIDE	210,891	45-49 yrs	18%	27%	71%	1441.3

Table 3-1: Relevant Demographic from 2011 Census Data for Windsor by Planning District

Statistical demographic information in Table 3-1 demonstrates that the city-wide demographics are relatively universal through all planning districts, with a few exceptions. There are five districts where the dominant age is bordering on the traditional retirement age. Both City Centre and Riverside have well established seniors' apartment complexes, mostly along Riverside Drive. The other three districts are predominantly single-family residential. Therefore there is an obvious need to address the recreational needs of seniors in these areas.

Districts in the western half of the city are where the dominant age is younger than 25 years. This could likely be attributed to the presence of both the main Campuses of the University of Windsor and St Clair College. South Cameron has the lowest dominant age group in the city and one of the highest percentages of children less than 15 years of age. Notably it is also the district with highest percentage of people whose mother tongue is not one of the two official languages of Canada; implying an area of interest to immigrating families to set up residence.

RECREATIONAL TRENDS

Recreation is embracing a broader definition given the diversity of North Americans today. Windsor offers a rich variety of parks and year-round leisure activities, from passive parks, to sports venues and iconic places along the Riverfront to stroll and watch passing lake vessels, or view the Detroit skyline. A recent survey in the United States, conducted by Sasaki and Associates, identified that people’s fondest memorable experiences are associated with outdoor places, either on streets or in public parks. Similar to responses seen from both public opinion surveys for the Parks Master Plan, when present, waterfront areas constitute the primary favourite open place. ⁱⁱⁱ Similarly, outdoor public areas where community-focused events and attractions are encouraged were second. The study also found that 40 percent of city dwellers supported greater investment in larger parks with both “passive and adventurous activities”. (see Appendix ‘J’)

The National Recreation and Parks Association is the leading non-profit organization in the United States with membership from around the globe. The NRPA is dedicated to the advancement of public parks, recreation and conservation. In their 2015 Field report several trends were identified as key ensuring a sustainable and successful parks and recreational program in municipalities. Those trends are as follows:

“TREND 1: PROGRAMS ARE KEY TO GREAT PARK ATTENDANCE. ... When there are programs in parks attendance is stronger...”

TREND 2: THE PERCEIVED VALUE OF DISTRIBUTED SERVICES RESULTS IN AGENCY FUNCTIONS ASSIGNED TO VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS. ..., when a single department carries out all the park and recreation responsibilities, operations are most effective. ...

TREND 3: AGENCIES ARE PIONEERING NEW FUNDING METHODS... Getting creative to maximize this demand and bolster your revenue can be critical. In fact, during the recession those agencies and special districts that invested in revenue-producing facilities fared better than others. ...

TREND 4: INFRASTRUCTURE DEFICIT MEANS YOU’LL HAVE TO FIGHT HARDER FOR PUBLIC DOLLARS.... discuss park needs and how you provide innovative solutions to the infrastructure challenge.

TREND 5: WALKABLE CITIES DRAW MILLENNIALS, FUELING A SUBURBAN EXODUS. ...The Millennials are here and ... are drawn to walkable environments with cultural amenities. ”

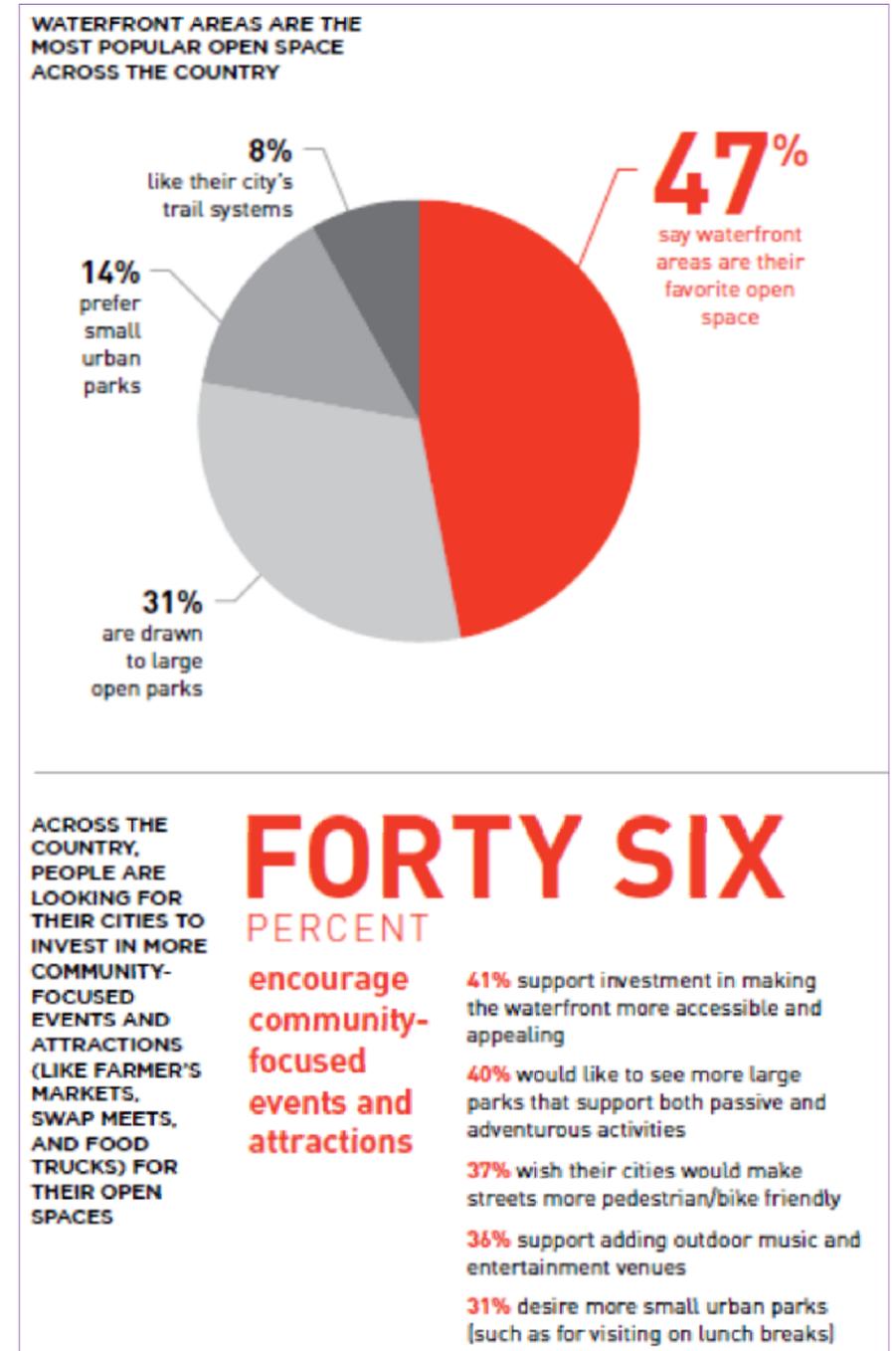


Figure 3-3: Sasaki Study on Recreational Trends

NATIONAL TRENDS

A recent Canadian Parks and Recreation Association Study to establish a Framework for Recreation nation-wide is entitled *Pathways to Wellbeing*^{iv}. In the document, it was clearly defined that “*Recreation has the potential to address challenges and troubling issues such as obesity, decreased contact with nature, and inequities that limit recreation opportunities for some population groups.*”^v The vision of the framework is three-fold, focussing on the well being of the individual, the community as a whole, as well as the environment in which recreation happens, whether natural or man-made.

The Framework presents an opportunity to return to traditional paths and forge new ones that will ensure recreation’s continued relevance and leadership in the journey to wellbeing by emphasizing five primary goals for successful recreational programming in Canadian municipalities, including:

- *ACTIVE LIVING: FOSTERED THROUGH PHYSICAL RECREATION*
- *INCLUSION AND ACCESS: FOR POPULATIONS THAT FACE CONSTRAINTS IN PARTICIPATING IN RECREATION*
- *CONNECTING PEOPLE AND NATURE: IDENTIFYING RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES*
- *SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENTS: BOTH PHYSICALLY AND SOCIALLY THAT ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION TO BUILD STRONG, CARING COMMUNITIES*
- *RECREATION CAPACITY: BASED ON GROWTH AND SUSTAINABILITY OF FIELD RECREATION*

These goals are broad and serve as direction for the establishment of guiding principles for this Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Pathways to Well Being also identified challenges and opportunities related to four areas that will have impact on recreational trends in Canada; demographic changes, health, economic inequities, and social connectedness.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES

The primary demographic trend in Canadian urban areas that will impact recreation is the fact that many cities are aging in population. The desire to “age in place” is more common than in previous years and people are trending towards staying at home and seeking recreation in their familiar surroundings. As a result the proportion of seniors to children is seeing a decline in children in many communities.

Secondly, as Canada has evolved into a country of choice for people emigrating from their home countries, Canadian cities are seeing a greater diversity in culture. Also, the aboriginal populations of Canada are showing a faster growth in young people. This offers a potential for a rich diversity in people with different recreational ideals. Cities have an opportunity become more diverse with cultural identities, yet will need to respond to the unique challenges of inclusivity and diversity in recreational programming.

Statistics indicate that 80% of Canadians live in cities^{vi}, leaving them isolated from nature in many cases. While urbanization offers opportunities related to density, it challenges cities with the ability to provide recreational open space where people can experience a high quality of life, both socially and environmentally.

A RENEWED DEFINITION OF RECREATION

“Recreation is the experience that results from freely chosen participation in physical, social, intellectual, creative and spiritual pursuits that enhance individual and community wellbeing.”

HEALTH CHALLENGES

Modern life, climate change and urban living have precipitated some negative trends in health that can be partially addressed with both passive and active recreational opportunities, including:

- Risk behaviours such as sedentary living, and risk factors for disease such as obesity
- Chronic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease
- Mental health concerns such as depression and youth suicide.

ECONOMIC INEQUITIES

According to employment Canada, from 1995 to 2011 Canadians are 40.9% poorer due to a reduction in after tax income.^{vii} This especially affects lower income earning families, visible minorities (who emigrate from poorer economic countries) and youth. Recreational expenses are seen as a luxury item over standard cost-of-living expenses.

SOCIAL CHALLENGES

Rapid changes associated with increasing inequities, persistent unemployment, rapid development, the use of social media instead of face-to-face interaction, and the loss of traditional supports have compounded feelings of isolation for many people, and has negatively affected civic involvement, social connectedness, community engagement and social cohesion.

Aside from the challenges there are many economic reasons identified in the framework for encouraging investment in recreation as seen in Figure 3.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH INACTIVITY

Though not mentioned in the study, the issue with children and youth inactivity is reaching unprecedented levels nation-wide. "Screen time," television, video games and the internet has dramatically increased. Children are pursuing less active forms of recreation that will likely be continued throughout the course of their lives.

Consultation including children can determine what types of facilities, programs and activities will encourage them to get out and play. Providing safe, convenient, family-oriented recreation can encourage outdoor play.

The Economic Case For Investing In Recreation



Figure 3-5: Economic Case for Investing in Recreation from Pathway to Wellbeing: a Framework for Recreation in Canada 2015

Figure 3-4: Seniors pole walking along trail at Navy Yard Park in Amherstburg



PROVINCIAL TRENDS

In a 2008 document prepared by Parks and Recreation Ontario, with the support of the Provincial Government, the use and benefits of local government involvement in providing parks and recreation services was measured. The study illustrates local governments' role in providing social and community development through recreation and parks services, and how they can benefit the community at large.

“Research has shown that recreation and parks improve physical and mental health, reduce health care costs, provide positive lifestyle choices for youth at risk contribute to independent living among older adults and develop improved self-image.” ^{viii}

The study concurs with both National and North American trends that childhood obesity is a growing concern, and Ontario residents are looking to resolve this through active outdoor recreation.

The study was conducted through phone surveys of 1058 people, covering an equal number of men and women, and a broad cross-section of locations in the province, as well as socio-economic status. The results were compared with the previous study on same subject completed in 1996. In summary the following observations were made by the report:

1. Leisure is highly treasured by Ontario residents and has surpassed work in importance

- While this is important, the report also concluded that people find it more difficult to find time to participate in leisure activities, even though they recognize that overall health and happiness benefits.

2. Parks provide the immediate and most opportunities to achieve the benefits of recreation

- Parks are readily available and within close walking distance, making them more likely to be used.
- Parks provide more personal recreational benefits such as; places for children to play, personal exercise, relaxation, and access to nature.

3. Recreation services for public participation is increasing

- Parks and recreation activities provide social benefit; including building community spirit, emotional health, and quality of life.

4. Ontario residents depend on local government provided recreation

- In comparison to other forms of public and privately sponsored recreation, local government recreation was closely equal to personal recreation with family and friends.
- Recreation in parks use is equally spread across all ages and significantly important until late in life.
- Most Ontario residents (67%) are willing to pay more taxes for upgraded public recreation services.

5. Community benefits immensely from public recreation in parks

- Recreation and parks boosts social cohesiveness and quality of life, health and wellbeing, and fosters healthy children.
- A vast majority (98%) of people believe parks and recreation services are essential services provided by municipalities, and
- Losing a public park or recreational facility would have a significant negative impact, including a reduction in; quality of life, emotional well-being, community cohesiveness and opportunities for physical activity, entertainment and children-oriented fun.
- Recreation is an antidote to crime and vandalism.
- Recreation contributes to environmental awareness and stewardship.

Recreation and Parks Rights of Ontarians

Every citizen in Ontario has the right and freedom to:

• **Participation**

Participate in safe, affordable and quality recreation programs that are in harmony with the diversity of the community.

• **Active Living**

Be physically active through participation in both organized and informal sport and recreation activities.

• **Access to Nature and the Outdoors**

Experience nature and access open spaces within their communities.

• **Enriching Experiences**

Experience the arts, cultural, heritage, sport and recreation activities in their communities.

• **A Welcoming and Inclusive Community**

Be included in activities that build strong communities, engaged citizens and a healthy family life.

• **Engagement**

Be engaged in the planning of recreation and parks in their communities and to participate in volunteer activities.

The report cites two areas of concern that can be considered important in the City of Windsor. These areas include traditional people at risk; those living below the poverty line and those living with disabilities. The Province has recognized the ***Recreation and Parks Right for all Ontarians***. Everyone in Ontario has a right to quality, accessible, and inclusive recreation and parks services in their communities – services that are essential for the health of Ontarians, the quality of life in our communities, and the sustainability of our environment. Recreation and parks can help us to overcome the significant challenges facing our communities today, including physical inactivity and the rising cost of health care, a rise in youth violence, and the protection of our environment.

FADS

In 2006, The City of Windsor adopted the Facility Accessibility Design Standard (FADS) prepared by Designable Environments through the Windsor Accessibility Advisory Committee, as a policy to comply with the Provincial Legislation. FADS provide guidelines for the development of both interior and exterior barrier-free environments. Any development within city parks has been completed within those guidelines, especially with respect to universal design for parking lots, pathways and trails, bench and picnic table design placement and space allotment, shelters, washrooms and playgrounds.

LOCAL TRENDS

Windsor’s recreational outlook is strongly parallel to the observations outlined in the global, national and provincial trends. With an aging population, active adult programs (e.g. Zumba, Tai Chi, Yoga, Cross-training) are the largest growing area of recreation. There are increasing requests to use Parks for these programs. Many adults benefit from nature or outdoor connections such as walking through parks whether they are in a natural setting, along the riverfront or through the gardens at Jackson Park or Coventry Gardens. As adults are more health conscious, there are more demands for active programs, with a focus on overall well-being (e.g. Restorative Yoga, Healthy Back). With the baby-boomer population retiring, there are more active seniors who are demanding an increase in alternative activities such as Pickleball (both Indoor and Outdoor).

There is still a desire to learn within the aging population as well as the new-comers to the city. This calls for more interest in both “educational” leisure activities, as well as more “cultural” leisure activities for all ages. (e.g. “Learn to” programs, music lessons, community gardening and nature strolls, etc).

Traditional sports are still strong, along with a growing demand for a diversification of sports including:

- Cricket,
- Disc Sports (Ultimate football/ Disc golf).
- Swimming continues in an upward trend for all ages
 - Aqua fitness,
 - length swims
 - swim lessons

Recreation is experiencing an increased demand for quality programming (i.e. High 5 training and certification for leaders of children’s programs). While there had been a dip in attendance at City day camp programs when a number of free programs were offered by other groups, there has recently been a strong return to the city programs, with parents more focused on safety and quality.

Both Recreation Attendants and the Parks Master Plan Survey identified an increase in requests for drop-in children’s programming in Parks. It indicated high participation in free programs that level the playing field (e.g. after school programs, sponsored recreational swims, outdoor facilities such as tennis courts, basketball courts, play features, splash pads). When the activity is free for all users, it encourages a broad mix of users participating together regardless of income level and ability.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Consultations were conducted in an open forum manner throughout the City in late 2013 and early 2014 at various locations in each of the Wards. At those meetings feedback surveys were distributed to determine the level of satisfaction with the current parks in their neighbourhoods. During that period and for 6 months following, residents were also able to complete the survey on line. (see Appendix 'K') for a detailed results) Through the assistance of the Windsor Essex Local Immigration Partnership, surveys were also completed by the new immigrant community to allow for their involvement in the public consultation process, since many use a language other than English as their primary way of communication. (see Appendix 'L' for a detailed results)

After compilation and analysis of the results from this initial public consultation a second public information session was held at Devonshire Mall on the weekend of June 13 and 14, 2015 to review the findings of the Ward level consultations with the public, and to present the direction that Parks Master Plan was heading. Again, feedback surveys were distributed as well as a new on-line survey that included aspects of recreational programming. The on-line survey closed on August 31, 2015, two months later than intended, due an overwhelming interest by the community and support from the local media for participation. (see Appendix 'M' for a detailed results) Key observations of each of the public surveys are summarized below.

WARD LEVEL OPEN HOUSES

Participants were asked to complete a survey after viewing the boards and speaking with staff. Results at the Ward level open houses were similar to the Provincial survey of 2008, with some area specific issues and items being addressed. To assess a direction for the Master Plan, participants were asked to provide input on how the parks system could be improved upon. Though most responded that maintenance was the key issue, it is important to note that a focus on improvement for personal recreation and family-oriented activity would be beneficial. The summarized results of that survey are as follows:

WARD LEVEL OPEN HOUSES KEY OBSERVATIONS:

- In general people use parks as a group or as a family outing.
- 90.9% responded that they feel safe when visiting parks and recreation facilities.
- While the majority feel parks are well maintained and clean, it is the highest priority for go forward objectives.
- A majority of users visit parks as part of their daily exercise and fitness routine.
- Play areas and children's activities are of primary importance.
- The amenities, uses and programming in parks are to be diverse and equitable.
- When asked about the physical accessibility of parks and recreational facilities, the response was consistent with 63.4% finding parks accessible and convenient and 69.6% finding recreational facilities accessible and convenient.
- Multi-Use Trails for Walking and Jogging by far seem to be the most important amenity that Windsorites use and want more of.
- One comment made by several respondents on how to improve parks and recreation facilities was to improve bus service to and from City Parks and Recreation Facilities.

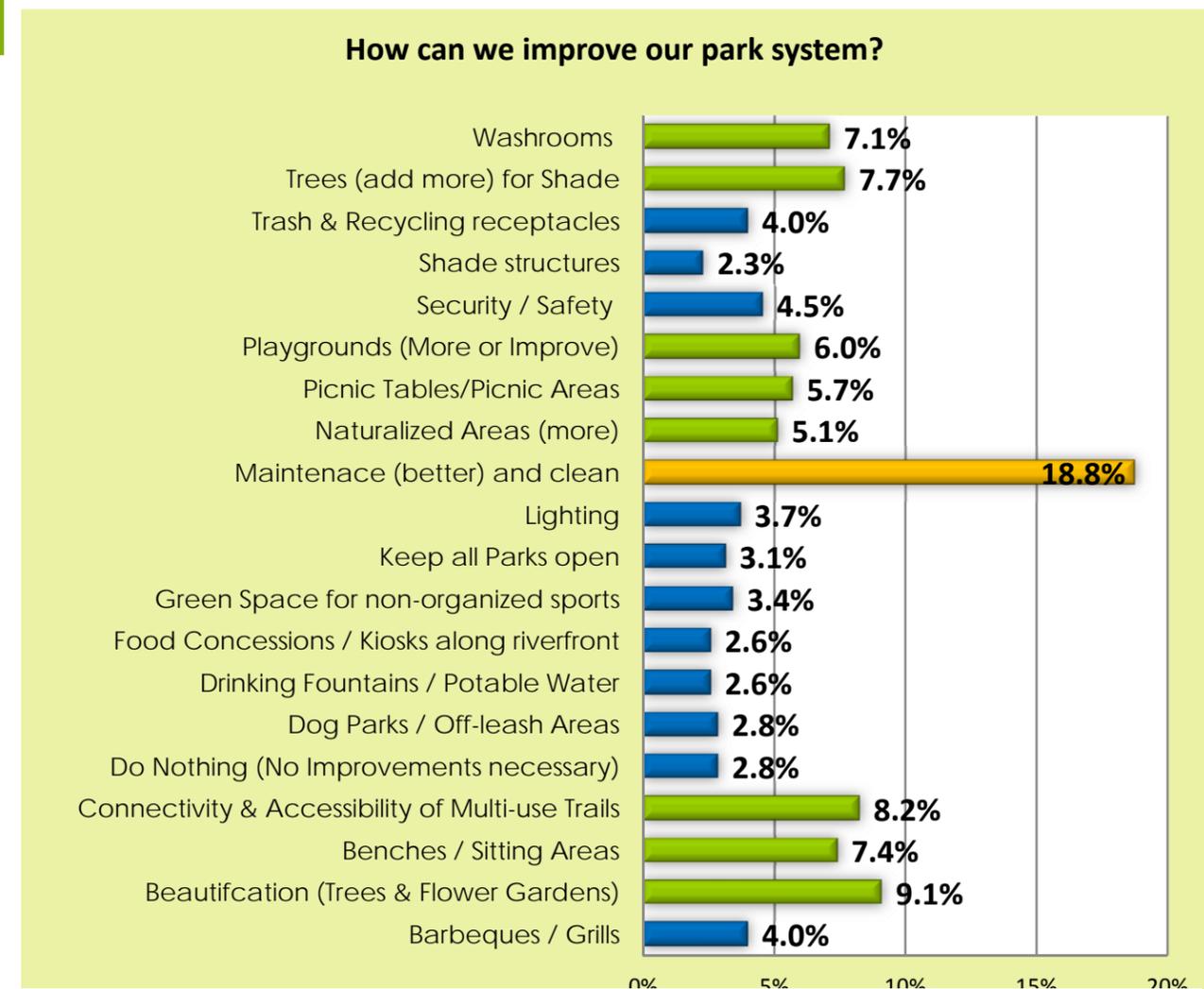


Figure 3-6: Results from open ended question from Ward level parks master plan survey asking where the Parks system can be improved?

WINDSOR ESSEX LOCAL IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIP

Recognizing that one of the largest growing populations in the City of Windsor is that of the multi-cultural community, new immigrants from various cultures were surveyed on their use patterns of parks recreational services, through the assistance of the Windsor Essex Local Immigration Partnership. The new immigrant populations were provided with a copy of the Original On-line Survey as an English language lesson. As a follow-up to the surveys, a workshop was also conducted at the main branch of the Windsor Public Library on December 9, 2014. Presentation boards were translated into the 4 main immigrant languages (Arabic, French, Spanish and Traditional Chinese) to identify the process and purpose of the Parks & Recreation Master Plan. In all, 124 surveys were completed with an additional 15 surveys received from the Unemployment Help Centre who were assisting this demographic.

The submissions included postal codes to determine the general area where participants lived. Though all but one Ward (10) were represented, the majority (63%) were from Ward 8, where there is a significant lower income housing development. It is understandable, as many new immigrants arrive with very little means and look for accommodation where they can be assisted. When looking at the top five favoured parks, this is evident. The results are somewhat skewed as Meadowbrook Park only appears as a favourite in this population. This is a result of a large number of respondents from Ward 8, and possibly from the geared-to-income housing in the Meadowbrook area. As mentioned the low economic means likely trends the community to use the facilities, which are more local. Of the 21 parks mentioned as favourites, 63% were located within the ward where the respondents lived.

KEY OBSERVATIONS:

- The results indicate that the strong family-oriented recreational activity of parks and recreation facilities are seen as socializing venues. Of the 21 parks mention as favourites, 63% were located within the ward where the respondent lived. ^{ix}
- On the issues of safety, cleanliness, maintenance, and accessibility, participants in this demographic population responded with an overwhelming positive rating.
- The most important parks and recreational amenity was walking and multi-use trails (46.8%). Playgrounds (22.3%) and Basketball Courts (11.5%) placed a distant second and third place respectively.
- While no recreational activity stood out in this population, the top 4 tended towards individual activity with a social component to them (Swimming, Children's Play Activity, and Walking or Jogging). The only item in the top 4 that was a team-oriented activity was soccer.
- In suggestions to improve the current park system, participants in this demographic were fairly consistent with the general population, citing both maintenance and beautification as the top two items, along with picnic areas, washrooms, playgrounds and benches in the top six items.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- *Review and develop an outdoor swimming facilities strategy to ensure adequate access for all users.*
- *Review outdoor picnic facilities to ensure appropriate distribution throughout the city.*
- *To protect and enhance access to floral displays at Coventry Gardens, Dieppe Park and Jackson Park as our premier floriculture and horticultural display parks.*

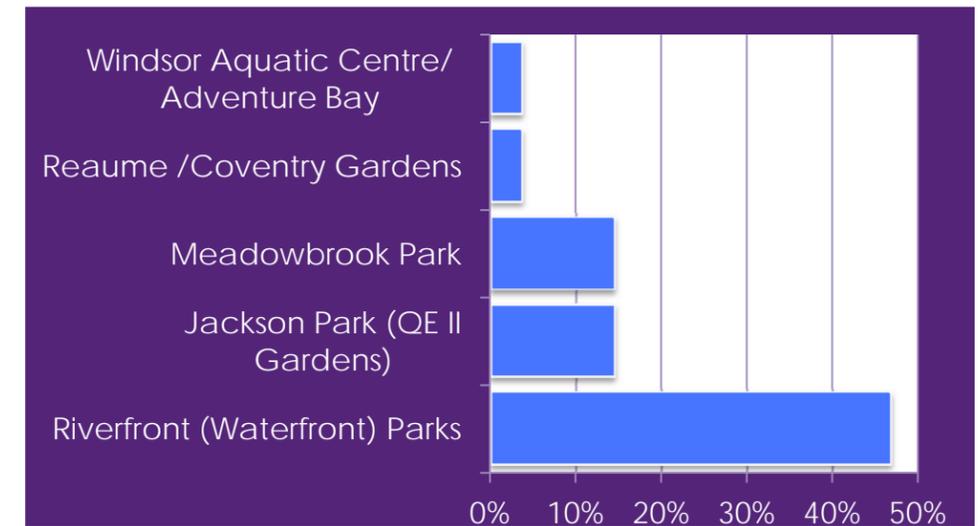


Figure 3-7: Top 5 Parks favoured by the multicultural community

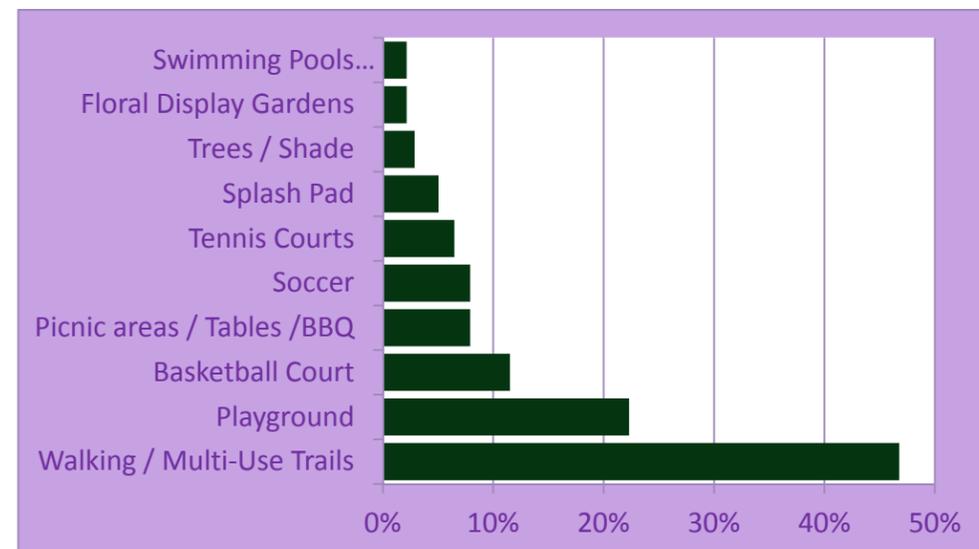


Figure 3-8: Top Amenities favoured by the multicultural community

SECOND PUBLIC CONSULTATION

As a follow-up to the initial Master Plan Survey, a second public consultation was conducted at Devonshire Mall on June 13 and 14. This public venue was used in order to capture a wide audience from around the entire city. At this public consultation, poster boards were presented explaining the master plan process, the timeline for delivery, why the master plan was important as well as results and observations from the first series of open houses.

While the first open houses were conducted to assess the wants and desires of the public, the second public consultation was conducted to provide results and observations from the Ward level open houses and focus on direction for the master plan. Information was made available both at the Mall and on-line for the public to review. In total 332 completed surveys were received.

- 21 On site at Devonshire Mall
- 43 Mailed in after the public information session
- 32 Returned through the Ojibway Nature Centre
- 236 On-line through Survey Monkey

In order to establish an approval rating on the current delivery system of our parks, respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with their nearest park. In general people are satisfied, however the largest number of responses were “somewhat” satisfied at 38%. Almost an equal amount expressed some level of dissatisfaction (36%). This indicates that there is room for improvement in the majority of the parks and facilities.

To determine the area where the dissatisfaction was coming from, respondents were also asked about barriers to use of the park closest to the respondents. 59% indicated that there were no barriers that prevent them from using the park more often. Of those that responded that there was an issue, five basic items were suggested, with an opportunity for the respondents to provide other areas that might be creating a barrier to their enjoyment of the park. Of the five suggested comments, **Lack of Amenities was selected the highest by 57% of respondents.** *Lack of Trails, Lack of Shade and park does not offer what the respondents needed* were all equally selected by approximately 1 in every 3 people.

Of the detailed issues provided by respondents, a lack of accessible picnic tables was the greatest issue at 14%. 6% to 8% of those that responded to this question, suggested that the lack of, or the condition of sports courts, dog parks, play equipment, and washrooms, as well site specific drainage issues were creating barriers to use.

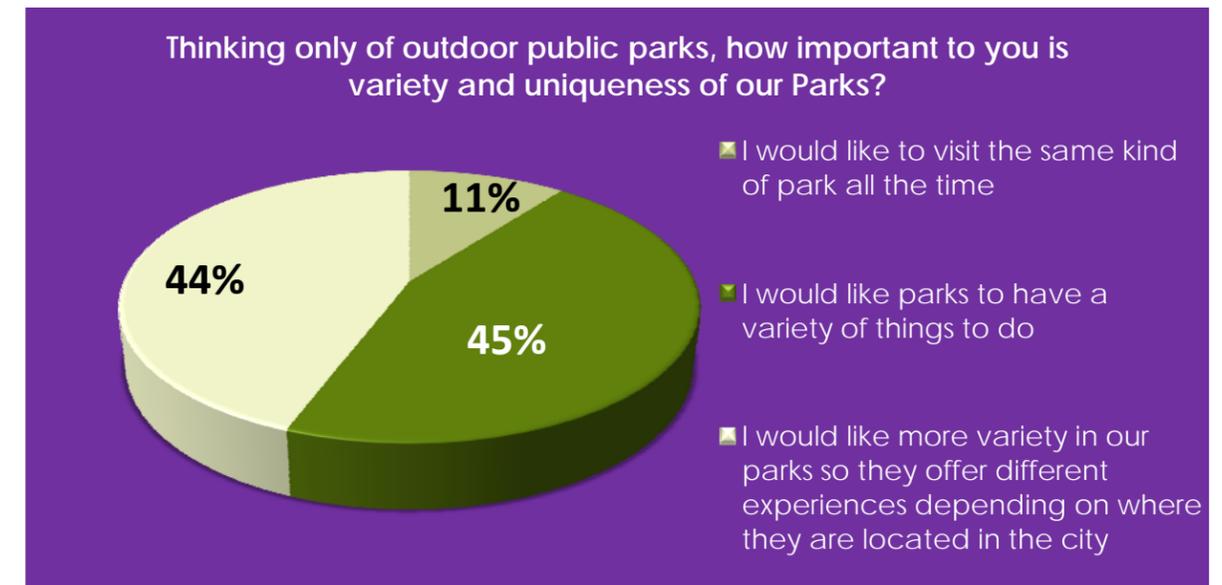


Figure 3-9: Importance of parks



SECOND PUBLIC CONSULTATION KEY OBSERVATIONS

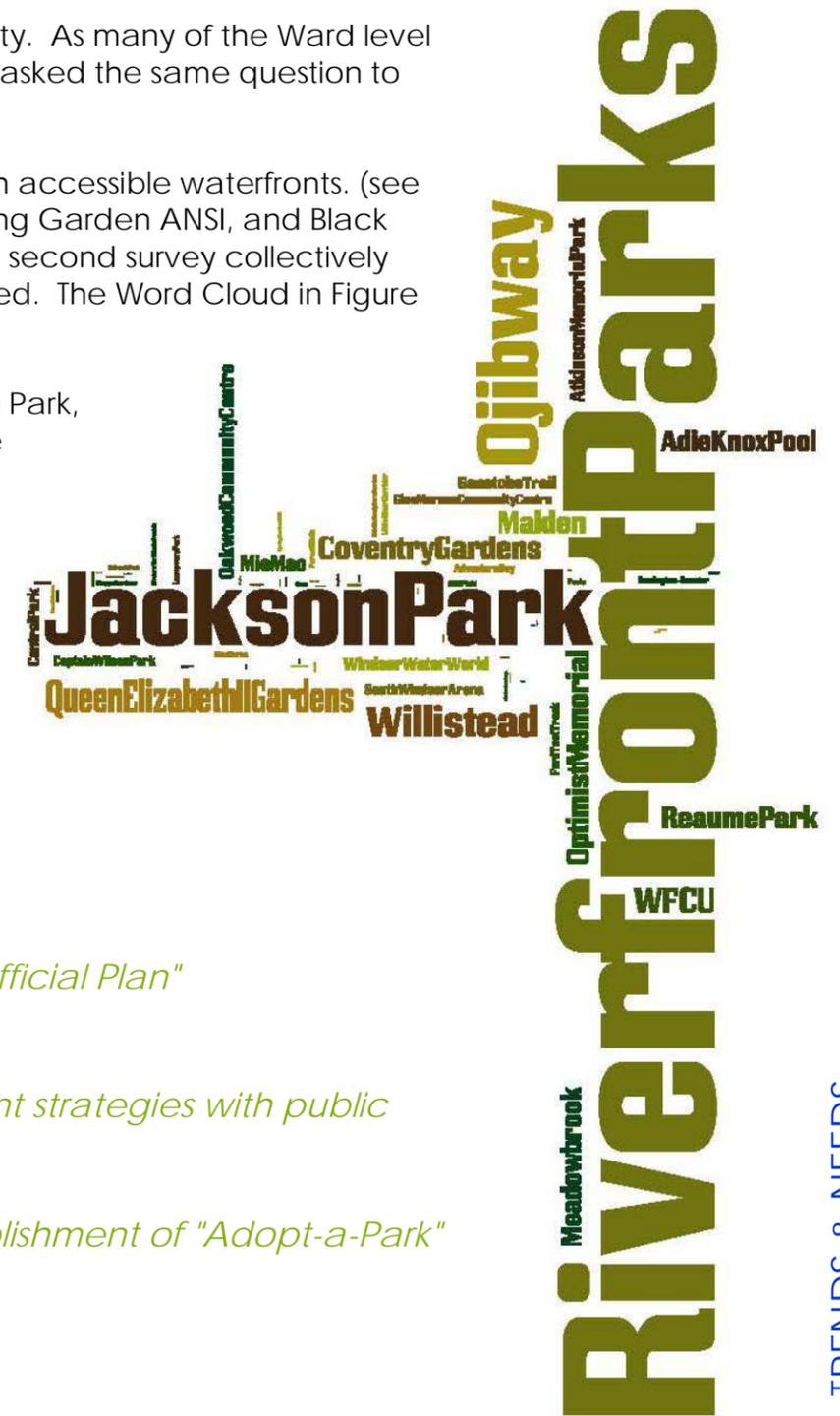
- Incorporation of multi-use trails, pathways, benches and shade trees would provide the best resources for inclusion of children, youth, seniors and persons with disabilities.
- Trails were again seen as very important however, the current condition of trails and connectivity between parks by trails was seen as lacking acceptable conditions.
- While three of every four respondents said they felt safe in city parks, there was generally a disclaimer that recommended some improvement of safety features.
- Parks and outdoor recreation provide benefit to personal well-being and can be achieved through:
 - *Shelters for picnics, gatherings and outdoor concerts.*
 - *Multi-use trails and interconnectivity between parks for bicycles and pedestrian.*
 - *Access to drinkable water.*
 - *Trees for shade and better air quality.*
 - *Internal pathways in parks.*
 - *Community gardening.*
 - *Exercise equipment or programmed exercise activity.*
- Unique experience and for parks to provide a variety of things to do when visiting them was highlighted.
- Positive experience is directly related to accessibility, inclusivity and health/recreational well-being.
- Diverse amenities options to be provided in their parks.
- Consolidation of services to create stronger, more diverse recreation opportunities at the community scale.
- Some level of naturalization such as 'No Mow' areas in parks to attract urban wildlife, and make parks more efficient and sustainable for future generations.
- Partnerships, volunteerism, and adopt-a-park programs such as "Friends of a Park", were seen as beneficial opportunities for efficiency, sustainability, and marketing of parks.
- While social media is becoming more acceptable forms of communicating parks and recreation activities, the desire for traditional methods such as the Parks and Recreation Activity guide is rated equally as important as a method of communication, especially with the elderly.
- Top priorities for the next 10 years were:
 - Naturalization and protection of natural areas.
 - Interconnection of parks and recreation spaces through bike and multi-use trails.
 - Re-establishing Neighbourhood parks as the primary focus to the community.

Figure 3-10: Observation deck along Central Riverfront Lands

Respondents in both the initial and secondary surveys were asked to identify their favourite park or recreation facility in the city. As many of the Ward level open houses were conducted in the winter of 2013-2014, the secondary survey which was conducted in the summer of 2015 asked the same question to ensure that the results reflected an accurate response.

The Riverfront Parks were listed as the most favoured parks. This correlates with the Sasaki observations on American cities with accessible waterfronts. (see Appendix 'M'). The second survey was conducted during the summer months, and Ojibway Nature Complex (including Spring Garden ANSI, and Black Oak Heritage Forest) tied with the Riverfront as the highest park preferred by respondents. As the results from the first and the second survey collectively represent both winter and summer use, as well as a specific emerging population, the popularity information has been merged. The Word Cloud in Figure 3-11 represents the total results of the favourite parks in the city from the combined surveys.

Combined, the city's Riverfront Parks are by far the most appreciated and favoured by citizens throughout the year. Jackson Park, and Ojibway Nature Complex represent the two polar opposites in parks; one being a formally planted floral garden and the other is a natural park. Both have a passive recreational character in common and are rated roughly equally. The next dominant park is Willistead which is well known and offers year-round activity for passive recreation. Meadowbrook, Optimist Memorial, Adie Knox Pool, Reaume Park, Coventry Gardens, Malden Park and WFCU make up the next group by popularity. This group of parks and facilities are located throughout the city and are key regional or community sites that offer the entire City some form of recreational activity. A focus on these parks may be necessary to ensure that their popularity is maintained and their merits be considered for other parks within parks system.



KEY OBSERVATIONS:

- 1) Riverfront and Jackson Park are the City's most valued Park assets
- 2) Parks within close proximity (walking distance) are favoured by residents
- 3) Parks with special amenities are preferred by residents

RECOMMENDATIONS

- *Adopt the re-classification of parks as outlined in this master plan and update the "City of Windsor's Official Plan"*
- *Establish a 'Management Plan' for each city park and open space*
- *Identify the key parks that would serve as community hubs.*
- *Identify and review parks or portions of parks for naturalization and establish appropriate management strategies with public consultation.*
- *Establish a 'Policy for 'No Mow' Areas'.*
- *As continuous community involvement plays a key role in the longevity of parks, encourage the establishment of "Adopt-a-Park" partnerships with community organizations and groups to assist in the sustainability of parks.*

Figure 3-11: Word cloud of most favoured parks and Recreational facilities in the City of Windsor's Parks System

STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

Several meetings were held with stakeholder and special interest groups to collect individual demographic populations' opinions on direction for the parks and recreation master plan. The purpose of the Stakeholder & Public Information Consultations was to:

- ✓ *To inform of the findings from the previous consultations.*
- ✓ *To demonstrate an analysis of what direction those findings are leading the Parks & Recreation Master Plan Process.*
- ✓ *To receive detailed input for further Master Plan Development.*
- ✓ *To ensure inclusivity in the recommendations.*

In each situation, a PowerPoint presentation was provided demonstrating the current situation of the parks system as well as initial observations from the first Ward level surveys. Participants at each stakeholder meeting were asked the following questions:

1. *What do you value most in Parks & Recreation?*
2. *What city park or facility best suits the particular needs of your community? And Why?*
3. *What can the City Parks Department do to make your population feel more welcome in Parks and Recreational Facilities?*

A feedback survey was distributed at each meeting to gather more detailed comments that would help participants to *Rediscover Our Parks*. (see Appendix 'N' for a detailed results)

ORGANIZED SPORTS

Organized sports groups were invited to attend a special public meeting which focused on their needs and desires related to the current parks and facilities in the City of Windsor. The meeting was held at the Collavino Hall at the WFCU Centre in the evening of June 19, 2014. Nineteen different organizations attended, providing information on scheduling, quality of the amenities offered by the city, opportunities, constraints and needs.

- The majority of Sports Organizations that use the Recreational Sports Fields in Windsor have either kept equal (33.3%) or increased enrolment (61.1%).
- Sports Organizations are moderately satisfied with the allocations of the fields for practices and games. Each organization was helpful by expressing areas for improvement and methods to achieve them. Most sports organizations utilize the fields at the same peak times from May to Mid-September.
- Nearly all of the organizations identify that the availability of washroom facilities near the fields is the most important amenity that parks can offer, followed by parking, and quality of the fields. (i.e. drainage, irrigation, and turf quality)
- The greatest innovative suggestion to encourage youth involvement was for the City to develop a Youth Sports Village in partnership with the various organizations that would house numerous sports under one roof, or Multi-use Facility. This was further qualified by organization preferring centralized fields (i.e. Mic Mac baseball and Ford Test Track soccer) rather than scattered throughout neighbourhood parks.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- *Undertake a 'Feasibility Study' in collaboration with the Windsor-Essex Sports Organizations to determine the needs for:*
 - *a) artificial sports fields*
 - *b) sports dome*
- *That the Parks, Recreation and Culture Departments undertake a "Sports Needs Analysis" in conjunction with community and sports facilities users looking at consolidation opportunities more immediately for the east end of Windsor and ultimately city wide.*
- *Establish partnerships with the organized sports community to assist the City of Windsor in providing the best sports opportunities available in the region.*



Figure 3-12: Jackson Park Lawn Bowling Greens



Figure 3- 13: MicMac Park Baseball Diamonds

WINDSOR ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

On July 8, 2015, Parks staff met with the Windsor Accessibility Advisory Committee. The committee members were cognisant of the fact that the city complies with the AODA standards established by Provincial Legislation, but provided specific requests to be included.

The primary focus for members is access. Of particular note was access to the waterfront resources especially the sandy areas (Sandpoint Beach). In follow-up discussions with the Windsor Essex Community Health Unit (WECHU) the Blue Flag Beach program was identified as a potential to address this objective.

Further, clear definition of paths and functions is of importance, especially for those with visual deficiency impairments. The main concern to be addressed is the manner in which the riverfront edge is temporarily disrupted due to events and fishing activity. Strong delineation between the surfaces and activities was emphasized, as well as reducing the potential for other users to create obstacles. (i.e. moving picnic tables into the pedestrian right-of-way)

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- *Prepare a 'Redevelopment Plan' in collaboration with the City's Accessibilities Officer to assess the condition and compliance of municipal park pathways, trails as well as beach and riverfront access from an AODA perspective in all parks.*
- *Identify popular fishing areas along Riverfront Parks and establish 'Recreational Fishing Design Guidelines' that meet the needs of the community.*
- *Prepare redevelopment plans for Sandpoint Beach to accommodate the needs of the community and establish it as a "Blue Flag Beach".*



CITY OF WINDSOR DIVERSITY COMMITTEE

On June 23, 2015, Parks staff met with the Windsor Diversity Committee. Several ideas were suggested by the committee of which the following were identified as most prominent.

- Place in which to unwind, meditate; that is clean, peaceful and well maintained.
- Shelter, washrooms, safety.
- Cycling and walking paths/trails.
- Heritage, historical.
- Place to meet people.
- Picnic areas.
- Important to have a fair and equitable distribution of parks throughout the City.
- Area for "pole walking".
- Accessible amenities.
- Drinking fountains.

Individual committee members did express the notion of specialty gardens with both cultural and heritage value associated with them. In follow-up meetings, committee representatives from both the First Nations and Chinese communities provided request for placement of gardens that represent their cultures (medicine wheel and Chinese garden respectively).

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- *Create a true 'Botanic Garden'*
- *Provide First Nations' consultation on any natural lands and naturalization processes or display garden commemorating heritage of indigenous peoples of the area as required by the "Provincial Policy Statement 2014".^x*

WINDSOR ESSEX COMMUNITY HEALTH UNIT

Parks staff met with representatives on two separate occasions to review issues in environmental health and opportunities for access to healthy recreational activities that could be addressed through the master plan. Many of the issues and opportunities have been discussed in the Benefits of Parks and Recreation section found in the Introduction.

The two main issues that were discussed were access to recreation in order to provide health and well being of individuals and issues of environmental related-health.

Suggestions included the Blue Dot Movement by David Suzuki (see Appendix 'O') and the Blue Flag Beach Campaign (see Appendix 'P').



Figure 3-14: Community Garden at Drouillard Road

WINDSOR/ESSEX COMMUNITY GARDEN COLLECTIVE

In 2014, the City established a Community Garden Policy with The Collective and mapped potential sites through-out the City (see Figure 3-15) based on potential need, water supply, and parking facilities. Outside of the downtown there are two main areas with great demand.

On October 16, 2015 City staff met with members of the Windsor/Essex Community Garden Collective (The Collective) which is a network of community gardens and urban agriculture projects located throughout Windsor and Essex County. The Collective currently operate 21 community gardens in the County, ten of which are in the City of Windsor on municipally owned parks and vacant lots.

Within the 10 City owned parcels, The Collective currently supports 350 families and 25 youth with their gardening needs by providing this horticultural-based recreation form. Immediately there is a need to expand in the City Centre Planning District with 36 more plots at Wigle Park and 25-50 garden plots being proposed at Mitchell Park.

KEY OBSERVATIONS:

- Primary need is in the urban centre as many of those users are of cultural ethno backgrounds that traditionally farm in their places of origin; for seniors, or those who have little expendable income gardening provides a relatively inexpensive social and recreational opportunity.
- Two sites to be considered are in the west end. Previous attempts in the west end have been met with difficulty as there had been very little focus on organization, thus resulting in failed attempts.
- One new site at Roseville Gardens Park to support abutting schools, and a desire by 100+ families in the neighbouring housing complexes.
- There is currently little to no demand east of the Little River Corridor and south of the E.C.Row Expressway.

RECOMMENDATION:

- *Work with the Windsor/Essex Community Garden Collective and other interested partners to provide opportunities for community gardens where there is demand at selected sites within the city as per the "Community Gardens Policy".*

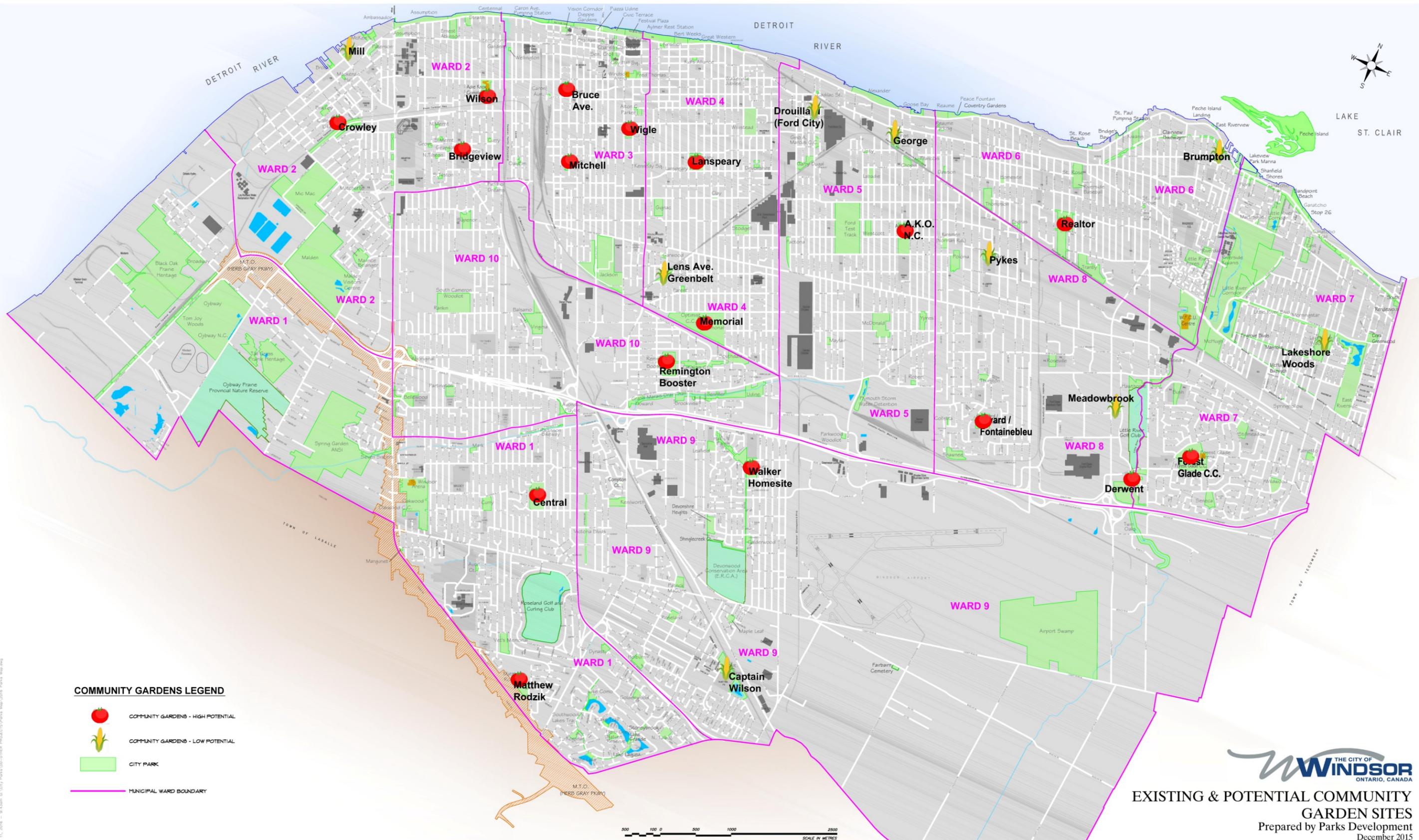


Figure 3-15: Map of existing and potential community garden sites based on criteria established in the Community Garden Policy


EXISTING & POTENTIAL COMMUNITY GARDEN SITES
 Prepared by Parks Development
 December 2015

WINDSOR ESSEX COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE

On July 30, 2015, Parks staff met with the Windsor Essex County Environmental Committee. The committee members stressed the needs for recognition and implementation of environmental sustainability in parks with an emphasis on the biodiversity of the types of parkland that is offered in the City. As one of the driving forces of the committee, ERCA followed up with individual comments and suggestions after the formal meeting.

ERCA

On October 16, 2015, Parks Department met with members of the Essex Region Conservation Authority (ERCA) to discuss opportunities for ERCA and the City to work together to help improve the Natural Heritage System within the city. The vision of *Rediscover Our Parks* and ERCA's mandate were seen as compatible in the sense that the two are essentially methods to stewardship of the environment. Following a series of surveys and public input, ERCA established its own Strategic Plan 2011-2016 which focuses on:



- Connect
- Engage
- Collaborate
- Discover

In summary it was determined that parks essentially have two functions in the City. The first is to provide recreational opportunities for the public. The second function is to provide livable urban environments by helping to filter out pollution, reduce storm water runoff through natural systems, reduce heat island effects caused by hard surfaces especially asphalt, and to help moderate the impact of climate change through shade in summer months.

Many parks in the City's Greenway System of Parks have lost their use and need to be repurposed. Some of those may provide opportunity to provide a better connection with the residents and nature, through Low Impact Design (L.I.D.) which allow parks to become green infrastructure, reducing the burden of storm water on the sewer system. L.I.D. also helps to reduce the risk of flooding by holding water until the civic storm systems have been purged of any heavy rain events. Green Infrastructure is a growing trend in cities as a stewardship method to counteract climate change and the increased frequency of heavy storms.



RECOMMENDATIONS:

- *Collaborate with ERCA to provide performance and management strategies for all natural parks and naturalized areas including:*
 - *a) Fish habitat along riverfront lands*
 - *b) Watershed management areas*
 - *c) Prairies*
 - *d) Woodlots*
- *To identify drainage issues in the city parks system and areas where flooding is an issue for residents to determine if low impact design and green infrastructure strategies can be used to accommodate storm water and help mitigate flooding.*
- *Revisit the "Official Plan" with the Planning Department to offer green infrastructure bonuses for parkland development in subdivisions (especially in Sandwich South Planning District).*
- *Work with other civic departments to revise "Parking Lot By-Law" to allow 'Low-Impact-Design' in parks to reduce storm water impacts.*
- *That The City of Windsor coordinate a stewardship project with ERCA in order to secure Priority Natural Significant Lands such as Ojibway Shores, Sandwich South Planning District and any other opportunities where natural features exist to improve the natural heritage system in the City.*

INTERNAL STAFF

In order to address the efficiency of the parks and outdoor recreation provided, it was important to consult with front line staff that engages the public on a regular basis. Parks operation staff was asked three main questions:

- 1. What are the biggest issues today?*
- 2. What do feel is the greatest Impact over the next 10 – 20 years?*
- 3. What Resources are needed? (i.e. Human, \$, Equipment , etc...)*
- 4. What feedback is your staff in the field receiving from users?*

PARKS OPERATIONS

Many of the issues that were presented dealt with parks operations staff not having the human resources to maintain all the parks, especially sports fields, with the current expected level of service. Drainage issues, especially in the sports fields of older parks have become a dominant issue. The area has over the last few years experienced extreme weather events including; heavy snow storms, rain and heavy winds. These are all issues identified as related to climate change. While no empirical data is available as to what the final change will be, it is understandable that the current resources are insufficient to manage the existing situation of parks and sports fields.

Over the next 10 to 20 years, parks operations staff cited several issues as playing a fundamental role in the ability to provide an acceptable level of service to the community for recreational purposes.

- **Changing demographics** of the community including aging population, changing trends of sports and recreation, and an uncertainty of any real increase in population.
- **Physical limitations of existing parks** including aging infrastructure, inability to expand due to current development.
- **Future demands with respect to Level of Service** including , impact from the parkway upon completion, other departmental projects with impacts on parks operational staff, and future legislation with respect to parks operations.
- **Environmental and health issues** including chemical vs. natural pest control, invasive species, and climate change especially with severe weather events.
- **Economic issues** related to parks development and operations including, source of materials, risk prevention and mitigation, insurance, increasing material costs and expenses for specialized labour and training of existing staff, especially in the fields of forestry and horticulture to comply with future legislation.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- *Establish and adopt an ongoing GIS referenced AutoCAD based data inventory in collaboration with Asset Management and Geomatics of all park assets including the purchase of computerized digital systems and equipment as needed to capture assets within the park system.*
- *Update the "Official Plan" to make certain that any new infrastructure, utilities and services abutting parkland is coordinated through the Parks Department to ensure appropriate service to parks.*
- *Continue the Community Living Mentorship Partnership program to provide opportunities for meaningful work experience for persons with disabilities..*
- *Adopt a policy with Asset Management that establishes level of service for the maintenance and operation of parks.*

OJIBWAY NATURE CENTRE

The Ojibway Nature Staff provide services for all the indigenous forests and prairies as well as naturalized areas of the city. Included in this service is interpretation, management of natural areas and consultation on the issue of species of risk, endangered species research and management, as well as permitting processes of invasive species control along with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry. The primary area with the Nature Centre's control is that of the Ojibway Nature Complex. Much of the success comes from the assistance of Friends of Ojibway Prairie, ERCA and other volunteers. While the site managed by the centre is of natural significance to the city it is also recognized as one of the most significant and biologically diverse areas in Canada.

KEY OBSERVATIONS

- **Species at Risk** is the main focus of the staff at the centre. Climate change and reduced habitats threaten the biodiversity that is characteristic of Windsor and Essex County.
- **Work load** is an issue as the Centre is operating with a reduced staff of 3 people.
- **Constant pressure from development** to expand into the natural areas, as well as impacts from abutting development on natural areas. This is partly due to inappropriate or non-updated Zoning in areas that are maintained as natural habitats.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- *Prepare standards for the establishment of urban wildlife habitat to:*
 - a) *Accommodate expansion of the natural areas to help facilitate better management of species at risk, habitat for urban wildlife and opportunity for nature related recreation for people.*
 - b) *Establish a protocol for succession control in managed natural and naturalized areas to deter the establishment of exotic and aggressive naturally invasive species.*
 - c) *Place a high priority on sustainability and ecological integrity in managing vegetation, using native plants where possible, especially for restoration of disturbed areas, and naturalization projects.*
- *Apply under criteria ix and x of the nomination process of UNESCO to establish the Ojibway Nature Complex of parks as a UNESCO Heritage Site, through the assistance of the Friends of Ojibway Prairie and ERCA, based on the universal natural significance of the properties.*

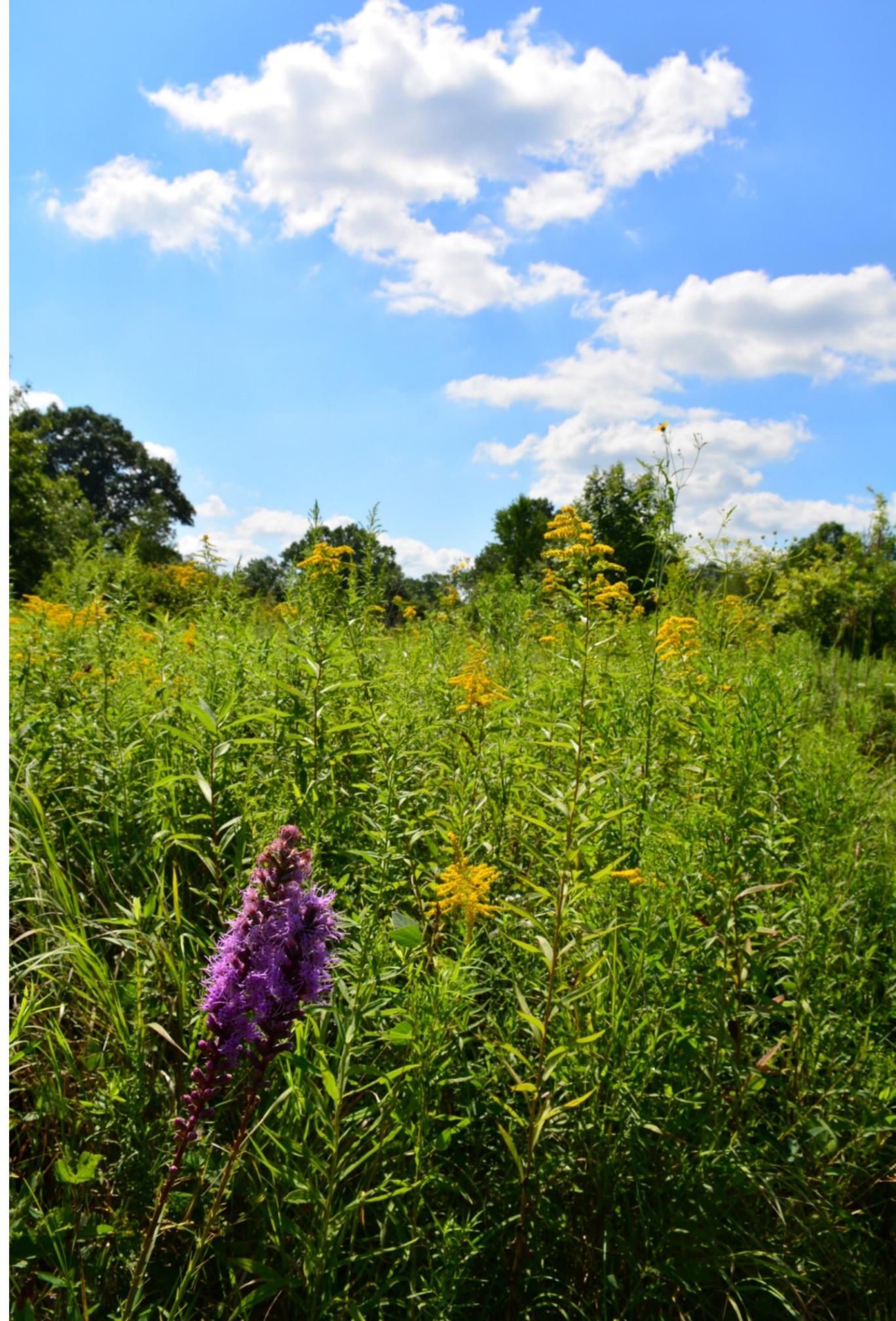


Figure 3-16: Ojibway Nature Complex - Ojibway Prairie Provincial Nature Reserve



PARKS FORESTRY

With a back log of tree maintenance of over 15 months, tree care in our parks definitely takes a back seat to the care of trees along the right of way. This is because there is a perceived notion that there is a greater risk with trees along right of ways than trees located in parks. Trees located along right of ways are surrounded with an abundance of targets such as parked cars, driveways, homes, sidewalks, pedestrians etc. While most legal claims are related to personal property damage from falling trees along rights-of-ways, it should not be misconstrued that there is not a similar risk in parks due to older and weakened trees. The tolerance and neglect of trees in parks is often greater because the trees are situated in open grassy areas. However, we know from the public surveys that users enjoy the trees and people are generally attracted to trees in parks for shade, picnics etc.

KEY OBSERVATIONS

Aside from the aging tree population in the city there were several other items identified by the Forestry Staff which will have impact to parks over the next 10 to 20 years including:

- **Loss of shade canopy** in parks due to pathogen loss such as the Emerald Ash Beetle (EAB). Due to the extremely rapid progression of the beetle through the urban forest, partly caused by the over-abundance of ash trees in the city, it was impossible to implement a reforestation program to replace the trees lost.
- **Limited financial resources** constrain the ability of forestry to provide adequate maintenance of trees after they are planted. This results in the use of a limited palette of trees which could result in another loss comparable to the EAB infestation due to a lack of diversity.
- **Climate Change**, even moderate, will impact the urban forest by reduced planting windows due to extreme climate conditions. As Windsor is on the cusp of two plant hardiness zones (6 & 7) it is likely that the plant species which do well today may not be able to survive in warmer climates. Other species may need to be considered for the future.
- **Lack of suitable trees in the local industry** causes availability issues and magnifies the issue of reduced diversity. The potential loss of the City's Tree Nursery due to the expansion of the east end pollution control plant will have further negative impacts on this available supply of trees for forestry services in parks and roads.
- **Natural area programming** strives for locally grown and indigenous plant species. While these species are appropriate for parks, they often do not survive the harsher urban environments (i.e. Street trees, plazas, salt sprays, arid environments etc.). Protection of the natural forests is environmentally

Figure 3-17: City Forestry Operations

important and use of exotics in street tree application can create competition for indigenous trees, however exotics have a place. Careful management and routine maintenance of these trees can curtail their invasiveness into more natural areas.

- **Current and Pending Legislation** requires that staff are appropriately trained and certification is updated. Accessing qualified staff can be a challenge as many tend to look for work where the economic outlook is more stable. Risk however does not share that desire. Having knowledgeable staff and resources along with an appropriate planting and maintenance program will help to mitigate any risks.
- **Achieving shade ratios** by implementing protocols for parks planting programs will also help to mitigate risk as environmental health risks becomes more prevalent an issue. The Windsor/Essex Health Unit has conducted heat island and shade studies in both city parks and school playgrounds and assessed that lack of shade in public spaces creates a risk for people with respect to certain forms of cancer. Shade from trees provides a refuge for park users to limit exposure to the sun.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- *Protect the quality of life for future generations; establish an "Urban Forestry Management Plan" for the Parks Greenway System and public right-of-ways by conducting a full tree inventory of all city-owned trees and return to the industry standard through maintenance and funding to ensure that our urban forest remains sustainable.*
- *Determine shade targets through Forestry and Environmental Services as a follow-up to the Shade Audit for all parks in the Parks Greenway System as well as rights-of-ways in order to provide healthy shaded access throughout the city and help offset the impact of climate change.*
- *Review the current City Forestry's Tree Nursery and determine its needs and identify an appropriate location in order for forestry to maintain an acceptable level of service and a reliable source for Carolinian tree species as well as boulevard trees.*



Figure 3-18: Jackson Park – Queen Elizabeth II Sunken Gardens

HORTICULTURE – BOTANIC GARDENS

As stewards of the premier parks within the city, and as a follow-up to the survey results from public consultations (especially the new immigrant community) management staff from Horticulture Division provided consultation with the parks staff to identify any issues to be addressed and observations for better service to community.

Key Observations

Interpretation of plants is lacking. Horticultural staff feel that the city is lacking in a true botanical garden which would provide interpretation of the biodiversity of plants that are grown in the City of Windsor. While the premier parks are pleasant to look at they lack interpretive signage and information for the public to learn about the plants being planted, often leading to staff expending time explaining and demonstrating the how plants grow. This public service is important however it does impact the amount of time that staff can tend to their daily horticultural chores.

Demographics of the users in the premier horticultural parks is primarily elderly who need to be provided with rest areas to sit on a more routine basis. While some of the premier parks have ample seating, it is often located away from trails, in the sun, or not where people will get the best view of the horticultural exhibits. Similarly, this demographic requires access to washroom facilities more often; however there is a lack of accessible washroom facilities in many of the premier horticultural parks.

Vandalism whether intentional or a result of the misuse of the facilities (especially along the Riverfront parks) has become the primary area for maintenance by horticultural staff. Most of the vandalism associated with skateboarders has been noted to happen in the winter months when there is less activity in the parks and less for user to see and experience.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- *Amalgamate Parks Forestry and Horticultural Operations to centralize parks services at Jackson Park to:*
 - a) *Relocate of the City's Greenhouses from Lanspeary Park to Jackson Park.*
 - b) *Investigate and develop a Display Greenhouse for year-round demonstration and horticultural programs.*
- *Establish a labeling protocol for interpretation and communication of the horticultural and biodiversity of the plant material found in select premier natural and horticultural parks.*

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

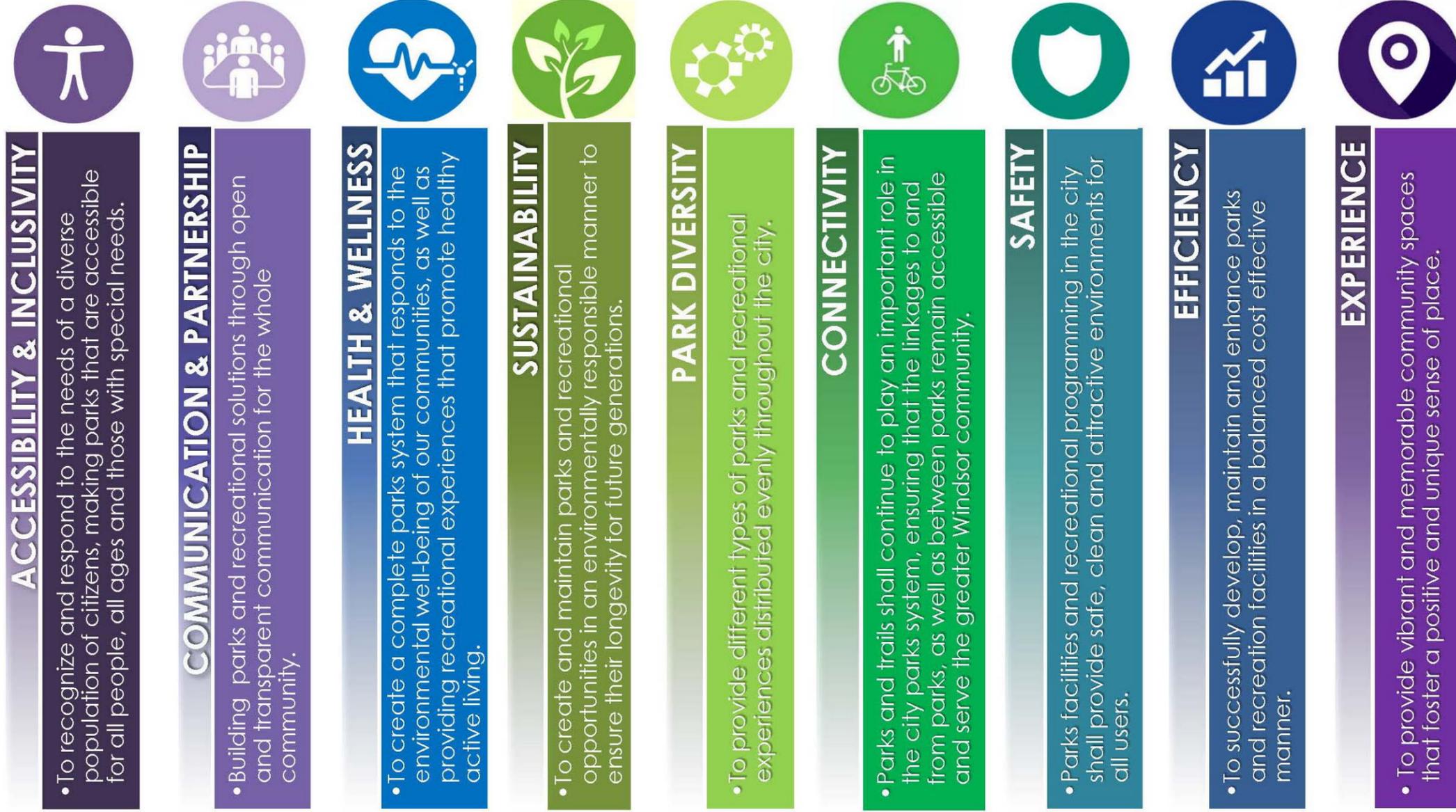
On several occasions the parks staff met with staff from the Planning Department on opportunities that relate to parks and the master plan process. The Planning Department is governed by the Official Plan and the Planning Act. As previously mentioned the Official Plan has been under a review process and will be updated by the Parks Master Plan. Consultation with the Planning Department demonstrated support for preliminary proposals of re-classification of parks to help assist with improved levels of service to the community. The planning department has been working with the Province on establishing policy for natural resources of wetlands. With the development of the Herb Gray Parkway, it was established that in the western half of the city, there are several areas where wetland conservation is a key issue. Parks, through the Ojibway Nature Centre and the City Naturalist, can provide an integrated approach to conservation of these lands and preserve this natural heritage area.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- *Update the "Official Plan" to make certain that any new infrastructure, utilities and services abutting parkland is coordinated through the Parks Department to ensure appropriate service to parks.*
- *Continue active involvement with the Planning Department in the development of the "Sandwich South Secondary Plan".*
- *To protect and promote existing natural areas and provide connections where available.*
- *To promote naturalization where warranted to create buffers and connections to natural areas in consultation with the community.*

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The information gathered from the initial consultations developed direction by which the following Guiding Principles were established.



These Nine Guiding Principles provided direction for the second consultation process, in which questions were constructed to determine how the Parks Department would address those Principles in detailed analysis of the parks and recreational services. They also, provided a focus on the recommendations found in the strategic directions to *Rediscover Our Parks*.

Figure 3-19: Guiding Principles

END NOTES

ⁱ Ontario Chamber of Commerce: *Regional Economic Outlook: Windsor-Sarnia*, 2015. pg 1

ⁱⁱ Ibid. pg 6.

ⁱⁱⁱ Sasaki; *The State of the City Experience*; Sasaki outlines the results of a survey of 1,000 people who both live and work in one of six dynamic US cities—Boston, Chicago, New York, Austin, San Francisco, and Washington DC.; pp 6- 7.

^{iv} A Framework for Recreation 2015: Pathways to Wellbeing, January 2015

^v Ibid. pg 7.

^{vi} Statistics Canada, 2011 census data. www.statcan.gc.ca/tables-tableaux/sum-som/l01/cst01/demo62a-eng.htm. Accessed August 2014.

^{vii} Employment and Social Development Canada. Calculations based on Statistics Canada. Table 202-0703 - Market, total and after-tax income, by economic family type and after-tax income quintiles, 2011 constant dollars, annual, CANSIM (database). In *Indicators of Well-Being in Canada*. www4.hrsdc.gc.ca/.3ndic.1t.4r@-eng.jsp?iid=22. Accessed September 2014.

^{viii} Parks and Recreation Ontario; *Recreation and Parks: Essential for Quality of Life*, 2008; pg 4.

^{ix} When looking at the top five favoured parks the local needs are evident. The results of the survey were somewhat skewed as Meadowbrook Park only appears as a favourite in this population. This is a result of a large number of respondents from Ward 8, and possibly from the geared-to-income housing in the Meadowbrook area. As mentioned the low economic means likely trends the community to use the facilities which are more local.

^x Ontario, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, *Provincial Policy Statement*. 2014. (Toronto: Queens Printer for Ontario, 2014. (Council No 107/2014). (Section 1.2.2. : Planning authorities are encouraged to coordinate planning matters with Aboriginal communities)), pg12.