Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula

PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

Final Report

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in association with Gamsby and Mannerrow ENGINEERS
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Executive Summary

The Parks & Recreation Master Plan provides guidance and direction to the Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula with respect to planning of the parks and recreation system. The Master Plan articulates a number of recommendations, all of which are summarized in Section 7, that will be considered for implementation over a ten year period (to the year 2021). These recommendations are aimed at maximizing the way in which the Municipality delivers parks and community recreation facilities to local residents, in partnership with community stakeholders and volunteers.

The implementation of the Master Plan will rely upon Municipal Staff to prioritize the findings and incorporate them into the ongoing delivery of municipal services. Staff will be required to establish a strategic implementation approach with Council based upon available resources and funding.

The Master Plan is built upon a number of critical inputs, including a review of local demographics, trends and best practices, evaluation of existing parks and recreational assets, and considerable consultation with Municipal Staff, local stakeholders and the general public. Consultations undertaken through this process included:

- Separate surveys of both residents and stakeholder groups;
- Community Search Conference;
- Key informant interviews;
- Written submissions;
- Two Public Information Sessions; and
- Presentations to Municipal Council.

All inputs have been analysed in conjunction with each other, and have been integrated with comprehensive needs assessments carried out to rationalize the need for facilities and services. The following paragraphs highlight key findings of the Parks & Recreation Master Plan.

Embracing a Community Development Approach

The Municipality’s current role as a provider of physical space, through parks and facilities, will continue so that it can leverage the strength of the community sector to provide programs and services, some of which can be delivered out of municipal parks and facilities. Some ways in which to empower community groups to deliver services over the long-term include:

- Promote an Asset Based Community Development approach through engagement and provision of appropriate supports.
- Developing and renewing partnerships with local groups, School Boards, and other levels of government to provide access to parks and recreational opportunities that exist within Northern Bruce Peninsula.
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- Encouraging local groups to participate in a Volunteer Management Strategy to establish relationships and sharing of information, discuss ways to recruit and retain volunteers, and provide options for training and recognizing the efforts of local volunteers.
- Consider hiring an Administrative Assistant to conduct community development and outreach activities with local stakeholder and volunteer groups (recognizing that the cost of this position would be far less than having the Municipality directly provide programs and services itself).
- Creating a Recreation & Cultural Services Guide to promote local and regional awareness of leisure opportunities provided by the Municipality and its community partners.

Providing Needed Facilities & Parks

In 2008, the Community Centre Arena Network Group (CCANG) was formed and evaluated the need to expand the Lion’s Head & District Community Centre. As a result of this work, a more detailed examination into the possibility of expanding the facility was undertaken through the Parks & Recreation Master Plan. Through this process, it was deemed that the primary concern of the Lion’s Head & District Community Centre pertained to its conformity to barrier-free accessibility standards and significant capital outlay would be required to adequately address issues. Based on this concern, a number of suggestions have been advanced for the consideration of Council to address sentiments brought forward by CCANG as well as repositioning the Community Centre to be a key focal point for the Municipality as a whole, in line with best practices in facility design and construction:

- Improving overall circulation and barrier-free accessibility for patrons, including the addition of new arena dressing rooms at grade.
- Integration of a theatre/auditorium that would be geared to accommodate higher level productions geared to the performing arts.
- Integration of multi-purpose spaces to accommodate a variety of programs, functions, and services.
- Including older adult and senior space to potentially replace the aging Friendship Club building and allow cross-programming opportunities with other components geared to wellness, arts, reading, etc.
- Providing a wellness studio to allow community-based active living programming (e.g. aerobics, fitness classes, yoga, etc.) to take place, in response to the need for services geared to adults and the "new" generation of active seniors.
- Consideration of a relocated library branch, if supported by Bruce County Public Library.

Two conceptual options have been prepared by G.M. Diemert Architect Inc., as shown in the following pages. These concepts are for illustrative purposes only in order to allow the Municipality to undertake further study to determine public support, feasibility, ultimate design (e.g. size and configuration), and financial implications associated with proceeding with such an initiative.
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While the proposed expansion of the Lion’s Head & District Community Centre represents the most notable recommendation from a capital and programming perspective, other needs have been identified across the Municipality including:

- Providing 1.4 hectares of new parkland by the year 2021 to meet the needs associated with anticipated population growth.
- Exploring ways to increase public access to waterfront areas, through utilization of existing unmaintained shoreline parcels owned by the Municipality or acquiring new lands.
- Investigating ways, where appropriate, to improve the amenity level of existing parks while balancing fiscal responsibility associated with any increased capital outlays or maintenance costs (possibly working with local communities to coordinate fundraising or volunteer efforts required to make enhancements a reality).
- Improving the existing basketball court in Tobermory and constructing a new basketball court in Lion’s Head.
- Consider providing splash pad facilities in Tobermory and Lion’s Head to provide unstructured opportunities for children and potentially align with economic development objectives.
- Finding ways to improve connectivity, functionality and comfort of the local trails system by undertaking a comprehensive Trails Master Plan.
1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Study Context

Located in the County of Bruce, the Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula was formed in 1999 through an amalgamation and municipal restructuring process. Although the Municipality is mostly rural, the County Official Plan identifies two secondary urban settlement areas consisting of Tobermory and Lion’s Head, along with the Hamlet of Ferndale. These three communities are the focal point for new residential development, though growth in Ferndale would be contingent upon the extension of municipal servicing to this community.

Figure 1: Regional Context of the Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula

Northern Bruce Peninsula affords a rich and diverse range of recreation activities and local attractions, many of which are popular with residents and tourists alike. From high quality marinas and parks, to the availability of multi-use trails and strong community-based programs, there is something to do for people of all interests across all four seasons. In order to effectively manage the Municipality’s parks and recreation services, a framework is needed to guide decision-making and make sound investments (in terms of human, social and financial capital) through long-range strategic planning.
The purpose of the Parks & Recreation Master Plan is to serve as a strategic policy document for future planning and development of both parks and recreation facilities and services within the Municipality. As defined by the project’s Terms of Reference, the Master Plan defines user ‘needs’ and identifies what the Municipality should consider providing, reflects the current and future recreational and park needs of the Municipality, and consider a four-season approach to recreation. The development of the Master Plan included a broad examination of parks and recreation opportunities that exist in the Municipality, gathered stakeholder feedback to identify aspirations and gaps, and developed an action framework pertaining to future facility needs. The planning period spans a ten year period, examining needs until 2021.

1.2 Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference states that the major goal of the project is to “develop, design and produce a fiscally responsible Master Plan for our parks and recreation facilities/services.” The Terms of Reference identifies that the scope of the Master Plan will entail:

i. Guiding the Parks & Recreation department over the next five and ten year periods in the area of recreation and leisure services, facility development and management, and administration of the parks and recreation function. This is addressed in Sections 3, 4 and 5 of the Master Plan.

ii. Undertaking a comprehensive public consultation process. This is addressed in Section 2 of the Master Plan.

iii. Reviewing existing studies and information previously undertaken. This is integrated throughout the Master Plan.

iv. Undertaking a review of the Lion’s Head Arena and provide preliminary designs for additional dressing room space and amenities. This is addressed in Section 4 of the Master Plan.

v. Developing a strategy for the provision of all classifications of recreational land use and open space to meet current and future needs, including urban waterfront areas. This is addressed in Section 5 of the Master Plan.

vi. Identifying indicators which will impact future program planning and service development based on demographics and trends. This is addressed in Section 3 of the Master Plan.

vii. Investigating potential alternate service delivery options in specific geographic, age specific, or activity specific areas. This is addressed in Section 3 of the Master Plan.

viii. Analyzing current levels of service to identify core priorities. This is addressed in Sections 3, 4 and 5 of the Master Plan.
1.3 Methodology

The preparation of the Recreation Services Plan flowed through three distinct phases. The Consulting Team has conducted an extensive review of background research and community demographics, analysed existing supplies of recreational resources, and carried out an extensive consultation with local residents, user groups and representatives from the Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula. This was followed by comprehensive needs assessments of local parks, facilities and the way in which services are delivered to the community.

Needs have been assessed using a combination of local and regional trends, application of market-driven service level standards (pioneered and tested by MONTEITH BROWN PLANNING CONSULTANTS), input received through consultations, and with the timing and resource implications to the Municipality in mind. Recommendations have been developed and are provided throughout the Master Plan, along with an indication of their suggested timing and resource implications.

Timing of recommendations has been assigned by three key periods within the ten-year master planning horizon:

- Immediate Action → 2012 to 2016
- Long-Term Plan → 2017 to 2021
- Ongoing → over the entire planning period

Timing assignments have been based upon present municipal conditions, however, they are subject to revision as the Municipality implements the Master Plan. For example, timing may be changed based upon population growth being realized at a rate that is different than envisioned in this Plan, municipal budget availability or constraints, staffing resources, etc. To ensure that recommendations align to future circumstances, an update to the Master Plan is recommended after five years have elapsed while reviewed annually during the municipal budgeting process.
1.4 Report Organization

The Parks & Recreation Master Plan is organized as follows:

Section 1: Introduction
Provides an overview of the Master Plan's purpose, methodology and organization.

Section 2: Community Consultations
Outlines and evaluates the public's perceptions of the current state of recreation in Northern Bruce Peninsula as well as future needs, opportunities and challenges as identified through the focus group consultations with key stakeholders.

Section 3: Service Delivery Priorities
Contains strategies aimed at improving the way in which the Municipality facilitates the delivery of parks and recreation services with its community partners.

Section 4: The Need for Recreation Facilities
Assesses the current supply of outdoor and indoor recreational facilities, while identifying future needs for these facilities.

Section 5: Enhancing Local Parks
Evaluates parkland requirements to meet the current and future population base.

Section 6: An Effective Trails System
Provides a high-level overview of local trails and their role within the active transportation network.

Section 7: Implementation
Articulates how the Parks & Recreation Master Plan should be implemented and monitored.
2.0 COMMUNITY CONSULTATIONS

Community consultation is a key component of the planning process as it provides insight into the perceived needs of the public, stakeholders, staff and members of local government. Combining locally collected data with an analysis of national and provincial trends provides a solid foundation upon which the Parks & Recreation Master Plan was built. The Plan has utilized a number of consultation tools, with public meetings planned for later stages of the process.

Consultations provided valuable input regarding strengths, challenges, needs and concerns of Northern Bruce Peninsula residents. Findings from consultation efforts were carefully considered for assessments of parks and recreation needs. Please note that the information presented is specific to each consultation tool and has not been considered in the context of other research or consultation initiatives (i.e. consultation findings are not to be interpreted as recommendations but simply as foundational elements to establish themes moving forward).

2.1 Resident Survey

To assist in the preparation of the Master Plan, a community survey was made available through the Northern Bruce Peninsula website in September and October 2011. The survey collected information on the attitudes of the respondents towards various aspects of parks and recreation activities, usage, facilities, opinions, and priorities. The Municipality publicized the survey through their website and through a radio ad. A total of 82 surveys were completed. Because this was a self-administered survey, most questions do not have a full complement of responses, as some respondents chose to skip some questions; instances of non-response have been removed from the data analysis.¹

Respondents were asked whether anyone in their household participated in specific recreation and leisure activities in the past 12 months. Similar to other communities, walking and hiking for leisure is ranked as the most popular activity with 98% of respondents having participated in the past year. This is followed by swimming (83%), cycling or mountain biking (55%), canoeing/kayaking (52%), boating/sailing (51%), and aerobics, fitness or weight-training (51%), among others. Through surveys conducted in other communities, walking and hiking for leisure, and swimming tend to rank highly in municipalities; these are ranked first and second in Northern Bruce Peninsula. It is worth noting that the nine most popular activities (seen in the following figure) that are generally unstructured activities that are flexibly scheduled; trends suggest that self-scheduled, unorganized activities are growing in popularity.

¹ With any voluntary survey, a level of bias is likely to exist given those with an interest in parks and recreation (such as families with children and teens) are more likely to complete the survey, as they have a greater stake in the improvement of leisure facilities and services. Furthermore, with the survey being available primarily on the Municipality’s website, those without ready access to a computer were not as likely to complete it; however, two surveys were completed by hand and submitted to the Municipality. Since the survey not a random sampling of Northern Bruce Peninsula residents, it is not statistically significant, nor is it representative of the Municipality’s overall population. Although some opinions are likely overstated, the survey is effective at identifying general levels of interest and prioritizing needs.
To assess where respondents feel municipal resources should be allocated, they were asked which facilities should be allocated additional public funds (either for new construction or improvements to existing facilities). Responses were provided on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means 'don’t spend' and 5 means 'definitely spend' additional public funds.

As shown in the following figure, the top two facility types are both trails, and are tied at 67% support from respondents; unpaved nature trails, and paved multi-use trails. Residents of Northern Bruce Peninsula, a Municipality known for its trails, have indicated that there is desire for additional funds to...
be spent on both paved and unpaved trails. This is closely followed by beaches, indoor swimming pools, parks and open space, fitness centres, and playgrounds. Furthermore, four of the top five facility priorities are for non-programmed outdoor facilities, a trend that was previously noted.

Figure 3: Highest Priorities for Investments in Facilities

Lastly, respondents were asked to rank a series of statements based on their level of agreement. Based on respondents who ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ with each statement:

- 70% identified that parks and recreation services should be a high priority for Council;
- 64% of respondents identified that their household is satisfied with the level of service provided by the Municipality with respect to parks and recreation;
- 62% of respondents indicated that their household is aware of the parks and activities available in the area; and
- 39% identified that the travel distance to parks and recreation activities is reasonable.
2.2 Community Search Conference

A community search conference was conducted by the Consulting Team on September 20, 2011 at the Northern Bruce Peninsula Municipal Office. The purpose of the search conference was to provide a venue within which members of the community could share ideas, listen to the perspectives of others and work together to identify pressing needs and think about creative solutions. All members of the community were invited to participate in this meeting, which was attended by approximately 22 people, representing a number of community organizations, as well as members of the Project Steering Committee and members of Council.

Participants value a broad range of characteristics in the Municipality, but most of all, participants value Northern Bruce Peninsula’s community spirit. Participants appreciate the gifts the natural environment offer in Northern Bruce Peninsula, including its beauty, wildlife, clean water, dark skies, open spaces, forests, trails, and beaches.

Also admired are the Municipality’s low population density, friendly people, health care, education, recreation, and sense of belonging. The adjacent graphic illustrates the most commonly valued elements of the Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula, based on key words used to respond to this question (the larger the text, the more frequent the mention).

When asked how to improve indoor recreation facilities and programs in Northern Bruce Peninsula, the three highest answers was to create multi-use spaces, top ten areas in Ontario, and to construct a new year-round multi-use facility. Other high priority items were a swimming pool, improvements to the existing Lion’s Head Arena and Community Centre, an auditorium, a meeting hall, and a fitness centre. For outdoor recreation, new and improved multi-use trails were the top priority for participants at the search conference and there was a considerable discussion towards what uses could be
accommodated by those trails, including; walking, biking, ATVs, horses, cross-country skiing, snowmobiles, and snowshoeing. Additional priorities include a splash pad, access point for small boats, updated playground equipment, ball diamond improvements, and rock climbing.

2.3 Stakeholder Survey

A stakeholder group survey was created to gather information from community groups regarding participation statistics, organizational mandate, facility usage and needs, future requirements, and ways to increase volunteerism. Stakeholder groups were selected by Municipal staff and had the option of receiving the survey on paper or digitally and were asked to submit the completed document either online or on paper. Surveys were then forwarded to the consultants for analysis. In all, 24 surveys were completed and returned to the Municipality. The survey was a combination of qualitative and quantitative questions, with responses from the groups considered throughout the Parks & Recreation Master Plan. Some key themes that emerged included:

- 50% of groups are able to attract enough volunteers while 33% are not (a discussion on volunteerism is discussed in greater detail in Section 3 of the Master Plan);
- 63% of groups stated that they do not require additional access to existing parks and facilities;
- 58% of groups do not require access to new parks or facilities, while 13% do (a discussion on existing and needed facilities is discussed in greater detail in Section 4 of the Master Plan);
- 50% of groups indicated a willingness to contribute financially towards improvements to parks and facilities, most likely through fundraising.

2.4 Key Informant Interviews

In September 2011, a number of interviews and workshops were held with members of Municipal Council and Staff, and other stakeholders with a vested interested in parks and recreation. Given the personal and/or confidential nature of these communications, individual responses have not been reproduced but rather, key concerns, ideas and themes have been integrated into the assessment stages of the planning process to supplement recommendations arising from the analyses.

Additionally, the Draft Master Plan was presented to Council at a regularly scheduled meeting held on December 19, 2011. Comments were considered through the process of revising this document.
2.5 Written Submissions

The Municipality has received written submissions, primarily through email communications, from a few residents. Topics have typically pertained to the need for improved walking and cycling trails, as well as enhancing open spaces with more amenities (particularly along waterfront areas).

2.6 Public Information Sessions

Two public information sessions were held on February 15, 2012 at the St. Edmunds Community Centre in Tobermory and the Municipal Offices in Lion’s Head. A total of 23 people attended the Tobermory session and 18 people attended the Lion’s Head session. Following a public presentation, attendees were given the opportunity to ask questions of the Consultants and Municipal Staff, as well as the opportunity to fill out comment sheets.

The following is a brief summary of the key themes provided by attendees and those submitting comments in the weeks following:

- General support was stated for concentrating multiple uses at individual locations, so that people can have a multi-use, multi-generational, multi-seasonal park and facility experience in a manner that is cost effective.
- Integration of an older adult/seniors space and other facilities into the Lion’s Head & District Community Centre was generally supported.
- The need to improve existing parks and facilities, such as sports fields, basketball and tennis courts, boat launches, etc. was expressed
- The large geographical boundary of the Municipality poses challenges for certain individuals who must drive in between urban settlement areas or travelling from rural areas to reach parks and recreational opportunities.
- General support for children’s and youth-oriented facilities to ensure opportunities exist for those already living here and possibly attracting new families to relocate to the Municipality.
- Requests for improved signage, including directional and interpretive signs, for parks and facilities.
- There was general support (particularly from stakeholder and user groups) with respect to adding a staff position whose focus would be on community development, recognizing that cost concerns associated with the hiring of an additional staff position could be outweighed by having groups fill any program gaps for needed services.
3.0 Service Delivery Priorities

In Northern Bruce Peninsula, the provision of parks and recreation services is shared between a number of parties. The Municipality provides parks and facilities, supporting these assets with Staff who manage and maintain them. Local community and volunteer groups also provide a range of facilities and programs, while other governmental agencies such as the Ministry of Natural Resources and Parks Canada also have a strong regional presence with respect to park and recreation-based opportunities.

Each entity brings its own set of expertise and efficiencies in delivering specific services that benefit the broad spectrum of residents. This Section explores regional and national trends in relation to what is happening in Northern Bruce Peninsula to determine how the Municipality can continue to successfully encourage the availability of a wide range of services that are required to meet local needs over the next ten years.

3.1 The Need for Parks & Recreation Services

Parks and recreation services provide individuals with numerous physical, health, psychological, economic and environmental benefits that are indicators of a high quality of life. Not only does participation in recreation offer opportunities for a healthy lifestyle, it also facilitates greater cognitive development, self-esteem, social interaction, economic spending, conservation of natural lands, and community vibrancy.

Today’s work-oriented, fast-paced digital age is filled with sedentary activities and physical inactivity, a growing trend notably prevalent among youth and children, often leads to high levels of obesity and chronic disease. The trend of obesity has become to be known as the “new smoking”, where many Canadians are eating towards an unhealthy lifestyle and as many as one-third of Canadians who are obese or overweight suffer from heart disease, stress on the bones such as the knees and spine, diabetes, blood clots, cancer, and other weight-related health problems. Although obesity is a growing problem in Canada, many surgical operations to reduce weight or restrict diets are not covered by OHIP; this encourages local level governments to promote healthy lifestyles and recreation opportunities through master plans, the provision of parkland, and programs as effective means of combating obesity.²

² A report entitled Obesity in Canada, prepared by Public Health Agency of Canada (2011), finds that nearly 6% of young children (ages 2-5) and 9% of children (ages 6-17) are obese. The risk of obesity increases with age where nearly one in four Canadian adults are considered to be obese, and over 60% of all Canadians are obese or overweight.
3. SERVICE DELIVERY PRIORITIES

Other initiatives have recently been undertaken to reduce obesity at all age groups at a provincial and municipal level. Starting this summer, the Province is removing junk foods and vending machines in high school cafeterias to reduce the risk of obesity among youth. Municipalities, including Northern Bruce Peninsula, have been taking steps towards promoting healthy lifestyles by encouraging recreation and physical activities as well as establishing trails and bike routes to link destinations and reduce the reliance on automobiles and utilize alternative forms of transportation.

By focusing efforts on facilitating healthy lifestyles, the Municipality recognizes that it has a role to play in providing venues for physical activity and social interaction. Through amalgamation, it has inherited a legacy of parks and recreational infrastructure that serve the dispersed base of local residents. Population growth has resulted in additional pressures being placed upon existing infrastructure, while new population growth (although modest, particularly among the permanent population) will continue to generate new demands for facilities and services. This is exacerbated by aging infrastructure, evidenced locally by the Lion’s Head & District Community Centre, Rotary Hall, and various other community halls.³

Figure 4: Historical Growth Trend & Forecasted Permanent Population, 1981-2021

As shown in the preceding figure, the Municipality has grown by about 1,100 permanent residents (40%) over the past twenty-five years. While this is considerable proportional growth, in terms of absolute numbers the rate of growth is quite modest at 44 persons per year on average. Future growth is anticipated to be even more limited, with aging population trends creating a situation where the population will stagnate at 3,933 permanent residents between 2016 and 2021. With only 115 new permanent residents forecasted over the next ten years (0.3% average annual increase), the growth-related demand for parks and most facilities over the master planning period is expected to remain on par with present levels of need.

³ Parks & Recreation Ontario’s Ontario Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Study (2006) identified that 30-50% of recreation facilities in Ontario are near the end of their useful life. These pressures have been somewhat alleviated through the Recreational Infrastructure Canada program that was launched as an element of Canada’s Economic Action Plan in May 2009 to provide funding for construction-ready infrastructure projects (the Fendall Ball Diamond is an example of a project that qualified for this funding program).
A unique circumstance that occurs in Northern Bruce Peninsula pertains to peak pressures placed on its parks and facilities (particularly waterfront infrastructure such as beaches, boat launches, etc.) due to the significant number of seasonal residents and tourists that come to the area during the summer months. The County of Bruce is an internationally known tourist destination that attracts visitors year-round. In particular, the area attracts seasonal residents who live in the County for an extended period of time during the year, but have a primary home elsewhere. 2006 Census data for Northern Bruce Peninsula suggests that of its 4,870 private dwellings, 3,140 households are not occupied by “usual residents” thereby implying that the number of non-permanent residents (of which seasonal populations are included) could be as much as twice that of the permanent population. This stresses the impact that seasonal residents have in Northern Bruce Peninsula, as peak pressures are generated in the summer months (even beyond what is necessitated by the local population due to tourism), while surplus capacity is often present during the winter.

3.2 The Municipality’s Role in Parks & Recreation

The “business” of parks and recreation service delivery is rapidly evolving, which means that municipalities and their Departments must be flexible in adopting methods to manage and control their day-to-day activities to remain progressively positioned. Successful parks and recreation organizations recognize that management and operating techniques must be revised over time in response to shifts in corporate culture or changes in market conditions.

Since amalgamation, Northern Bruce Peninsula has taken a pragmatic, business-oriented stance with regard to its recreation services by generally acting as a ‘facilitator’ (rather than a provider) of services through the provision of spaces that the community-based organizations can utilize for programming. This has been a fairly cost effective approach where rental revenues are allocated against facility operations and maintenance, while the Parks & Recreation Department has been able to lean in terms of staffing despite the expansive geographic boundary of the Municipality. Furthermore, the presence of a large Provincial and National Park system has alleviated pressures on the Municipality to provide public parkland for recreation compared to other communities.

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4 Additionally, the County of Bruce estimates that there are 66,000 permanent residents and 29,000 seasonal residents, adding 44% more people [http://www.brucecounty.on.ca/business.php].
While this approach has minimized net operating subsidies (relative to other business models that are oriented to direct municipal program delivery), the Municipality's approach has also generated a heavy reliance on the community to provide needed services to residents of Northern Bruce Peninsula. While community-based program delivery out of municipal space is common across the province for certain facility types (notably sports field and arena programs), some municipalities choose to directly provide programs to specific markets (e.g., fitness or arts and culture) recognizing that there is a business case to support investment in supplementary facilities and staff. Many municipalities also facilitate programming through clearly defined strategic partnerships, working with organizations such as the YMCA or private-sector groups to deliver certain services.

Corporate decision-making aligns with the Municipality's Strategic Plan\(^5\) that is presently being reviewed to guide the new term of Council. The Strategic Plan articulates a number of Priorities that bear relevance to many operational aspects within the Parks & Recreation Department, and will be summarized throughout the Master Plan. It is important for the Master Plan to align, to the greatest degree possible, with the Strategic Plan so that decision-making is tied to a logical, rational planning framework. The table on the following page articulates the four Strategic Priorities that are identified in the Strategic Plan, with a particular focus on the supporting actions that pertain to the delivery of parks and recreation services.

Based upon the Strategic Plan and historical service delivery model for the Parks & Recreation Department, the Municipality's role in providing parks and recreation falls under two primary categories:

- Municipal CORE Services; and
- Municipal NON-CORE Services.

There are also COMMUNITY-BASED Services, the role of which is fulfilled through the community and volunteer sector, as will be discussed later in this Section.

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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Strategic Priority</th>
<th>Specific Actions Relevant to the Parks &amp; Recreation Master Plan</th>
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| 1) To maintain a well managed and fiscally responsible municipal government | • Continue initiatives that recognize and support a well trained and highly motivated workforce  
• Open lines of communication with citizens through newsletter, customer satisfaction surveys  
• Foster a culture of quality customer service in all areas of the corporation through improved effective and efficient services and open communication  
• Establish customer service standards  
• Development and implementation of a human resources strategic plan which will include issues such as competitive compensation, training and development, recruiting, succession planning, incentive and staff recognition programmes  
• Continued enhancement of the Municipal website  
• Develop a management philosophy |
| 2) To conserve and protect our natural environment while encouraging well-managed growth | • Lead by example through energy consumption reduction at Municipal facilities and the use of Municipal vehicles  
• Support and promote regular environmental monitoring programmes  
• Protect natural, cultural and heritage features |
| 3) To enhance the health, safety and education of our community | • Ensure public safety considerations are integral to community planning  
• Development of recreational programming  
• Development and promotion of barrier-free activities for all ages within the community |
| 4) To develop and promote recreational opportunities | • Explore opportunities from the province relating to culture and recreation  
• Enhance and promote Municipal cultural and recreational facilities  
• Support local area associations to promote and develop all season trails  
• Improve local recreation facilities such as the arena, ball parks and community centres  
• Assess recreational programmes such as skateboard parks, basketball courts and playgrounds  
• Develop a Recreation Master Plan  
• Evaluate current and future use needs of Municipal facilities |
| 5) To encourage citizen involvement | • Promote information services, volunteering, group partnerships, resource networking, recognition of people and services  
• Recruit volunteers and foster volunteerism  
• Recognize the dedication and commitment of local volunteers |
| 6) Develop and implement economic development strategies for the Municipality | • Recognition of tourism as a significant economic driver of the Municipality  
• Identification of Municipal wide signage and streetscapes  
• Improve the pedestrian experience |
Core & Non-Core Services

Core Services for the Municipality and its Parks & Recreation Department primarily consist of the provision of parks and recreation facilities that serve target markets. At present, this comprises active and passive parkland along with core facilities such as the arena, community centres, marinas, and the Lion's Head Campground (note: the municipal airport also falls under the Parks & Recreation Department purview, though this is not considered to be a recreational facility in the context of this Master Plan).

In addition to providing/constructing parks and recreational infrastructure, the Municipality has a core responsibility to operate and maintain its portfolio of assets. This requires both financial and human resources, thus a third core responsibility for the Municipality is to provide staffing support to operate its parks and facilities. Funding and staffing are discussed in greater detail later in this Section.

Non-Core Services are facilities, programs or services that the Municipality may provide to address gaps in the local service delivery spectrum. For example, a situation may arise where a specific type of program/service may be needed to fulfill important needs, however, it is not a Core Municipal service and cannot be provided externally by a community sector interest. In this event, the Municipality would rationalize whether meeting the program gap aligns with the Municipal mandate and its ability to fund/operate the initiative with fiscal responsibility in mind.

Entry into providing Non-Core Municipal services may also be rationalized for programs and services where the Municipality is the best suited agency to provide them. Furthermore, facilities, programs and services that offer significant revenue-generation potential are also Non-Core services that may be considered particularly where they do not compete with the community or private sector.

Non-Core Municipal services should only be considered to ensure a broad range of choice in recreational programming, where a third party is unable to satisfactorily address local needs. As such, the Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula will have to strategically evaluate where the community or private sector has not been able to address market demands. The Municipality should update and annually review its current community program inventory in order to understand “gap” areas. By doing so, business planning exercises can be undertaken to determine the feasibility of direct municipal provision, being cognisant that program delivery will require additional human and financial resources; this means the Municipality would need to define its intended level of cost-recovery to either an accepted level of subsidy or net gain (whether through user fees or alternative funding streams). The degree of cost recovery would vary for each service ultimately considered, with the Municipality basing its decision on whether or not to enter a new program market based on its desired level of cost recovery.
RECOMMENDATIONS

1) The Municipality should continue to be a ‘facilitator’ of parks and recreation services by focusing its core responsibilities upon the provision and operation of parks and recreation facilities that are presently under the municipal purview.

**Timing:** Ongoing (2012-2021)
**Resource Implications:** None anticipated beyond current financial and staffing allocations

2) The Municipality should only consider entry into new facilities, programs or services when gaps exist that cannot be met by the external providers, if the Municipality is the best agency to provide the facility or service, if the facility or service aligns with the Municipality’s mandate, and/or if the financial impacts of municipal entry are justifiable and ensure fiscal responsibility.

**Timing:** Ongoing (2012-2021)
**Resource Implications:** Variable financial and human resources depending upon type of facility, program or service provided

Financial Impacts of Fulfilling the Municipal Role

While the need for parks and recreational services is well justified, these types of infrastructure are typically capital-intensive from a construction and operational perspective. These are facilities and spaces that generally serve residents for decades, and are thus not only “one-time” expenses but in fact ongoing investments. Funding for local facilities has largely come from municipal and community contributions (e.g. taxes, debentures, capital reserves, fundraising, etc.) as well as grants from federal and provincial governments (e.g. RINC funding was recently leveraged for improvements at Ferndale Park). Historically, Northern Bruce Peninsula has not had a high rate of residential and commercial development, which in turn has limited the ability of the Municipality to generate revenues from new assessments, and thus places pressures to find alternative ways for funding.

The Municipality does benefit from high waterfront assessments which contribute substantially to the tax base, and thus alleviates financial pressures associated with its otherwise modest population base. That said, a measure of equity needs to be balanced, particularly with seasonal residents who may not place as much pressure on fiscally-intensive indoor facilities as these people generally reside in Northern Bruce Peninsula during the summer months. While Municipal taxes contribute a great deal towards the operation and delivery of facilities, user fees are seen as a way to limit impact on the tax rate.
Despite their roles in recovering costs for the Municipality, user fees can create concerns relating to affordability and fairness in accessing services while potentially negating intrinsic benefits generated by subsidization. A financial assistance program could assist households who would be most adversely impacted by the need for the Municipality to recover its costs. All funding options remain viable choices and should be explored, however, business planning must be continue to be undertaken to ensure fiscal responsibility and sustainability over the long term.

Experience gleaned in other municipalities suggests that there are very few recreation facilities that tend to generate profits. These ‘enterprise’ facilities (e.g. golf courses, some fitness centres, etc.) are beneficial in that they do not typically require a subsidy, however, as ‘money-makers’ the private sector is generally also involved, implying that these municipalities choose to compete with their private sector. Conversely, ‘Subsidized’ facilities tend to be community centres, indoor aquatic facilities, gymnasiaums, etc. through which revenues do not cover costs, resulting in net operating deficits that are covered through municipal funding allocations.

‘Full-Cost Recovery’ facilities are generally those which a municipality seeks to break-even (or incur a marginal profit or loss). Arenas are excellent examples of full-cost recovery, with revenues primarily generated through ice rental fees. That said, it is difficult for single pad arenas (such as the Lion’s Head Arena) to fully recover their costs as the hourly cost of operation typically exceeds the ice rental fee. With twin pad arenas, cost-recovery is much more common since mutual operating costs (e.g. staffing and other overheads) is shared between two pads which are charging an ice rental fee that covers the hourly cost of operation. The Municipality has been creative in looking for alternative revenue streams for the arena by leasing out concession operations and the admission room to community groups; though the revenue is minimal (about $3,400 in total per year), they are operating costs that do not have to be borne by the Municipality.

The Municipality should adopt a set of principles aimed to guide full-cost recovery efforts and a separate set of principles guiding targeted subsidization efforts. For facilities that are intended to move towards full cost recovery (e.g. the arena), user fees would be incrementally increased to account for increases in operating costs of the facilities, capital cost outlays for maintenance work on older facilities, as well as costs to eventually construct new facilities or upgrade or add to existing facilities. For targeted subsidization of facilities that cannot be expected to cover their operating positions (e.g. community halls), creative ways of funding will need to be explored. While revenues from taxation are the most common approach, developing partnerships with groups to assume greater responsibilities in operations and maintenance should be encouraged in exchange for lower rental costs.

Continuing to allocate sufficient resources to reserve funds is also critical to meet capital demands of infrastructure and ensure that scheduled maintenance/improvements can be undertaken to keep the quality of assets high. The Municipality presently has a number of capital reserve funds for its parks.

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6 The Municipality generally subsidizes a number of user groups, as evidenced by the fact that many facilities have annual operating expenditures which exceed their respective revenue streams. Similarly, the provision of public parkland is subsidized due to the very fact that parks are intended to be free, thus posing little or no opportunity for cost recovery. The Municipality generally accepts that subsidization of facilities and parkland provides intrinsic (i.e. not financially measurable) benefits such as improved quality of life, health, fun, etc.
and recreation infrastructure, as shown in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reserve Fund</th>
<th>Current Balance</th>
<th>Annual Contributions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parks Reserve Fund</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>No set annual contributions through capital budgeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lion's Head Arena Reserve</td>
<td>$87,000</td>
<td>No set annual contributions through capital budgeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lion's Head Campground Reserve</td>
<td>$188,000</td>
<td>Dependent upon campground’s financial performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lion's Head Marina Reserve</td>
<td>$130,000</td>
<td>No set annual contributions through capital budgeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lion's Head Dock Reserve</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>No set annual contributions through capital budgeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tabormary Marina Reserve</td>
<td>$21,000</td>
<td>No set annual contributions through capital budgeting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

3) Set minimum annual contribution amounts to Capital Reserve accounts in order to ensure that infrastructure can be developed and maintained in a manner that meets community needs and expectations with respect to provision and quality.

*Timing:* Ongoing (2012-2021)

*Resource Implications:* Annual capital contributions to be determined according to facility needs, replacement costs and municipal financial capacity.

**Human Resources Required to Fulfill the Municipal Role**

Like most municipalities, Northern Bruce Peninsula utilizes a centralized organizational structure, whereby a number of Departments (including Parks & Recreation) report to the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer, through which key decisions are considered for approval by the elected municipal Council. The adjacent figure illustrates the reporting structure for the Parks & Recreation Department, who presently takes the primary lead in delivering recreation services though other Departments also have an influence in certain aspects (e.g. finance, public works, capital planning and budget development, etc.).

The Parks & Recreation Department appears to be sufficiently organized to handle facility operations for the Municipality. It is recognized, however, that there is a heavy load that is placed upon the Facilities Supervisor in terms of operation and maintenance across the Municipality and all of its assets (i.e. arena, parks, sports fields, community centres, campground, marinas and the airport). The Facilities Supervisor is supported by the Community Centre Foreman, Airport Manager and the Harbour Masters to operate these.
units, as well as a seasonal maintenance crew for summer-time parks operations.

Staffing enhancements could be made on the customer service/liaison side of the equation as the Facilities Supervisor is the primary contact with user groups. While the Facilities Supervisor would continue to be engaged with groups, administrative support would allow the Facilities Supervisor to shift priorities and concentrate additional time towards facility operations (given that facilities are dispersed over a large territory). An Administrative Assistant would be able to outreach with community groups on a regular basis, field questions, and generally promote community development to allow the Municipality to remain as a ‘facilitator’ of programs and services (rather than becoming a ‘provider’).

Moving forward, the role of Departmental staff will be fairly similar with regard to the provision and ongoing operation of municipal facilities. As previously discussed, the Municipality’s indirect service delivery role through capacity building of local groups (through community development) will be enhanced and complimented by a new role of potentially providing non-core municipal services. It is safe to assume, due to this shift in both corporate mentality and customer expectations that the role of the Municipality and its staff will grow in the development and delivery of parks and recreation services. Furthermore, with a new and growing role, combined with an increasingly sophisticated base of customers, a greater complexity within the municipal operating environment can be expected. The Municipality will need to be in a position where it is able to respond to a changing operating and legislative’ environment by ensuring that it has appropriate staff resources that can monitor and respond to future trends and circumstances. As discussed in later in this Section, a need exists for integrated planning and other team-based approaches in order to effectively deliver programs, facilities and services to the community. This would involve other Departments in the planning of new services (e.g. Treasurer would provide insight into capital and operating constraints, the County’s Planning Department could provide information into zoning or building code requirements, etc.).

For the Municipality to make informed decisions, deliver high quality facilities and services, and provide excellent customer services, its staff needs to be up-to-date on best practices in how to do their jobs effectively and efficiently. With regard to the staff complement, the Municipality has a screening process in hiring new employees (e.g. qualifications and experience required to do a job), though it is equally important to recognize that existing employees often benefit from professional development initiatives and finding alternative methods to “doing what has always been done.” As such, the Municipality should continue to look at professional development opportunities, ranging from on-the-job training, seminars, symposiums and conferences, etc. as a means to improve internal skill sets and capabilities, and to provide a supportive professional network. While there are financial

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* Continue initiatives that recognize and support a well trained and highly motivated workforce
* Development and implementation of a human resources strategic plan which will include issues such as competitive compensation, training and development, recruiting, succession planning, incentive and staff recognition programmes

MUNICIPAL STRATEGIC PLAN. 2008

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7 There are over 100 legislative acts governing the delivery of parks and recreation services
implications associated with staff development, the return on investment can be high if the employee(s) are able to deliver on their roles and responsibilities in a more efficient manner.

The Department will soon be in a position where a number of existing staff are approaching retirement. This is a common issue in many municipalities as the Baby Boomer population (who have comprised a vast majority of the workforce) conclude their professional careers. A strategy will need to be in place to determine the Municipality’s course of action to replace retiring workers, considering factors such as internal promotion, hiring from outside the organization, re-evaluating job descriptions of existing positions, and / or placing greater reliance on outsourcing and consulting services, etc. To mitigate this effect, the Municipality should also look at cross-training staff to work in different Departments in order to cover core responsibilities.

To this end, it is recommended that the Municipality undertake a comprehensive Staffing Review & Succession Planning Exercise for the Parks & Recreation Department in order to ensure that it is in an optimal position to continue to deliver its recreation services effectively. Consistent with the Corporate Strategic Plan, this process would rationalize the costs of adding new staff versus re-assigning responsibilities (recognizing that expertise for certain tasks may require new positions), while planning for future staffing needs in anticipation of retirements.

RECOMMENDATIONS

4) Ensure that Municipal parks and recreation facilities are adequately staffed with appropriate staff resources. As part of this process:

- Undertake a Staffing Review & Succession Planning Strategy to proactively position the Municipality to respond to growth and complexity within the parks and recreation system by creating appropriate staffing standards and succession plans.
- Provide professional development opportunities to Municipal Staff in order to ensure that they possess up-to-date training and skills to carry out their job responsibilities in a manner that maximizes customer satisfaction and operational efficiencies.
- Consider the addition of an Administrative Assistant to assist the Facilities Supervisor with outreach activities to local community and volunteer groups, in order to position the Parks & Recreation Department more effectively to promote community development and remain as a ‘facilitator’ of services.

Timing: Immediate Action (2012-2016)

Resource Implications: Variable depending upon the net gain (or loss due to retirements) in the number of staff over time, as determined through the Staffing Review & Succession Planning Strategy. Note that costs may be offset through gains in efficiencies, customer satisfaction levels, and lower opportunity costs mitigated through community development.
Customer Service

Consumers of public recreation services are more sophisticated and demanding than ever before. Northern Bruce Peninsula, which is a primary destination for seasonal residents as well as retirees coming from highly urbanized areas, is already observing enhanced expectations. Patrons of recreation facilities and program participants seem to be expecting new degrees of service treatment that is well beyond traditional norms. This trend will continue to be increasingly prevalent as newcomers arriving to the Municipality from larger urban areas seek the high quality, convenient programs and facilities that they have grown accustomed to.

A well managed, quality-focused customer service system is a fundamental component of an effective service delivery system. Top performing parks and recreation departments acknowledge this by allocating sufficient resources as well as an appropriate number of well trained staff to fulfill the service expectations of their clientele. It is imperative to understand customer needs in order to satisfy their parks and recreational demands. The way in which a patron is treated by staff is often perceived to be just as important as the quality of the facility or program that they are using. Consequently, progressive organizations are placing greater emphasis on their ability to meet their patrons’ service expectations, while also realizing that the consistent delivery of quality customer service is a planned activity that must be carefully managed and effectively coordinated. They recognize that they must devote at least as much time on the “people side of the business” as they do on the technical and procedural aspects of providing facilities and services.

RECOMMENDATIONS

5) Regularly explore ways in which to enhance the way that services are being delivered to customers, with a continued focus on quality. As such, the Municipality should be willing to explore new approaches and technologies that will aid Staff in their ability to administer the high quality customer services that residents now associate with municipal facilities and programs.

Timing: Ongoing (2012-2021)

Resource Implications: Staff time and potential costs/cost-savings associated with implementing new customer service delivery systems
Utilizing Targets & Performance Measures

In order for the Municipality to track and quantify areas of success, the use of quantifiable targets and performance measures is encouraged to identify how delivery of its services can be improved. Implementing quantitative metrics creates a process whereby operational transparency results from the delivery of recreation services, and eventually programs, as staff have accountability in meeting targets and desired outcomes in their respective areas of focus. Similarly, the strong community sector presence in Northern Bruce Peninsula can also benefit by adopting targets and measures to improve their services, allowing the Municipality to benchmark external community-based delivery in the context of its own expectations; the result is a collaborative process where all stakeholders have an interest in achieving targets for the betterment of their patrons, and ultimately the stakeholders themselves.

Performance measures generally consist of four primary components:

- Inputs are the resources which are required to provide recreation services (e.g. the number of full-time staff equivalents per service type, the budget allotment for each service, or the square footage or number of hectares per service type).

- Outputs are the performance of the service, as compared to its service standard (e.g. the number of participants or users per service type, parks and trails visits, program visits, number of trees maintained, or the square footage of horticultural displays).

- Efficiencies are generally the cost per service type (e.g. the cost per hectare of open space maintained, the annual cost per beach visitations, cost per square footage of property maintained, or the cost per resident per service type provide an indication of efficiency year-over-year).

- Effectiveness is generally measured through customer satisfaction or relativity to the anticipated opinion from local residents (e.g. overall satisfaction with leisure services can be measured every two years, or if the public opinion changes with regard to the anticipated level of service are factors that can be used to assess how effective the Municipality has been doing in delivering services).

The Municipality already has a basic performance measurement system in place, such as annually tracking facility utilization and reviewing financial information. Supplementing existing benchmarks with performance measure articulated above will allow Staff to understand local trends in municipal and community-based delivery of services. Creating a digital database of performance statistics from
year to year would allow for easier tracking and reporting. Furthermore, as part of the allocation and capital planning process all organized users of municipal facilities (notably minor and adult sport leagues using sports fields, arenas, etc.) should be required to provide registration data so that the Municipality is able to monitor participation trends of various activities in order to allow for effective facility planning and equitable allocation for facility access.

RECOMMENDATIONS

6) Establish a simple set of quantifiable performance measures that can gauge the efficiency and effectiveness of parks and facilities which are offered by the Municipality. These measures can be refined and expanded upon over time to respond to changing consumer expectations and Departmental operating practices.

Timing: Immediate Action (2012-2016)

Resource Implications: Staff time and potential costs/cost-savings associated with implementing new customer service delivery systems.

3.3 The Role of the Community & Volunteers

Volunteers are essential to the operation of many of the Municipality’s parks and recreation services, including special events and programs for children. Volunteers are the backbone of Northern Bruce Peninsula’s community-based service delivery system, and the Municipality recognizes the tremendous contribution of these dedicated individuals. From sport and recreation to arts and culture, local volunteers devote a significant amount of their time towards helping community groups deliver programs and services to residents.

Volunteers for the Municipality’s popular events have been an essential component in providing quality services while remaining affordable to users, participants, and the community. There are challenges, however, that have been expressed by volunteers who have participated in this master planning process. Many of the issues, such as volunteer burn-out, insufficient funding, and declining numbers, are similar to experiences in other communities across the country. While the 2007 National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating has indicated that volunteerism is rising slightly, experience in several communities suggests that many leisure organizations still face challenges in
finding volunteers. One key result of the national survey was that the most volunteer hours were associated with the sports and recreation sector. A key area of concern, however, was that the average number of volunteer hours is decreasing.

It is important for both the Municipality and its community groups to find ways to recruit, retain, and sustain the number of volunteers in the community. According to one particular study, under half of current volunteers stated that they approached an organization by themselves to become involved, though once they joined, they provided more of their time than those who did not approach an organization on their own. The report also stated that one of the barriers to volunteering was that people were not asked to do so, which would suggest that the Municipality and local groups would benefit from communicating their need for volunteers to the public-at-large in order to target residents who are unaware of opportunities but would otherwise be willing to help.\(^8\)

It is important that the Municipality, in consultation with its volunteers, come up with locally-driven strategies aimed at encouraging volunteer participation in Northern Bruce Peninsula. The development of a ‘Volunteer Management Strategy’ is encouraged to address topics such as recruitment and retention, selection, training, supervision and recognition. The Volunteer Management Strategy is a tool to coordinate the roles of local volunteers, service clubs and other organizations by providing a framework to operate within, in partnership with the Municipality. This is especially important given that the Parks & Recreation Master Plan continues to advocate an ‘indirect’ approach to providing services and thus the Municipality will have to rely on its community to address program gaps rather than having to do so itself.

Furthermore, local volunteer-based groups are well established in the community and benefit from ample experiences of sustaining themselves, particularly after amalgamation of the Municipality. If these groups can organize and share resources within themselves, efficiencies can be attained that support the delivery of sustainable programming over the long run. It is, therefore, in the interests of the Municipality to explore ways in which to facilitate the sharing of information and resources between volunteer groups through initiatives such as annual volunteer forums, building the Municipality’s existing database of local volunteer groups to encourage volunteer-based networking opportunities, developing information tools (such as a Volunteer Fact Sheet), etc. In this way, the Municipality acts as the liaison between groups but also achieves community development objectives. Furthermore, the Municipality could explore the development of a regional volunteer database (i.e. for Bruce County or surrounding municipalities) in conjunction with a regional partner(s).

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3. Service Delivery Priorities

Finally, it is important not only to support volunteers but also recognize their efforts and achievements in the community. For example, many municipalities host annual banquets, barbeques, and other types of events to show their appreciation for volunteers. Other municipalities have taken such recognition events one step further to customize recognition to specific sectors of the community (such as volunteers in minor sports, arts and culture, service clubs, etc.). The number one barrier to volunteerism is a lack of time which can lead to volunteer ‘burn-out’ and frustration, though in tandem with other supports, recognition can help in making their efforts feel wanted and worth the commitment while also bringing awareness to the community at large.

RECOMMENDATIONS

7) Undertake a Volunteer Management Strategy with the assistance of local community organizations to address specific challenges identified by local volunteers such as recruitment, retention, training and recognition.

Timing: Immediate Action (2012-2016)

Resource Implications: Staff time and/or Consulting Fees to lead and prepare the Volunteer Management Strategy

8) With a view towards community development, facilitate the sharing of information between local volunteer organizations to build their internal capacities and in turn reduce their reliance upon the Municipality to provide supports.

Timing: Ongoing

Resource Implications: Staff time to facilitate sharing of information (could be a responsibility of the proposed Administrative Assistant for the Parks & Recreation Department)

3.4 Integrated Delivery of Services

Asset Based Community Development

Earlier in this Section, it was identified that the Municipality and the community sector have a role in providing parks and recreation services. As a facilitator of activity through the provision of space, the Municipality relies upon the community to deliver needed programs. With this role, it is important for the Municipality to encourage community-based providers to have longevity in their operations by providing resources (e.g. knowledge, staff assistance, funding, etc.) in a manner that promotes community development.

In an effort to streamline resources and focus on priorities in government, many models have emerged; the most successful being the models that recognize the ‘power of the collective’ – staff departments, community partners and agencies working together to address pressing community issues. This collective approach is considered as an ‘Integrated Service Delivery Model’ to a certain degree. Staff would still look after their respective responsibilities in their departments and to deliver

Parks & Recreation Master Plan
MONTEITH BROWN PLANNING CONSULTANTS | Gamsby and Mannerow Engineers
on service mandates, but at the same time work collectively with other departments and agencies to address specific initiatives. For an Integrated Service Delivery System to be successful, the community must have a strong internal capacity to sustainably provide programs and services over the long term. It is, therefore, in the Municipality’s interest to facilitate a community development approach so that organizations and volunteers grow to a point where they can function autonomously and with minimal support from external agencies.

Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) is an approach that focuses on capacities of organizations, rather than their deficiencies, to address their needs; a relevant analogy is as simple as viewing the “glass being half full” or “half empty.” The intended result of ABCD is to empower the community to create positive outcomes for themselves. For ABCD to be initiated, an understanding of local assets is required; assets, in this sense, refer to the collection of people, groups, institutions and their collective infrastructure (e.g. whether built structures such as schools, parks, or outcomes such as businesses, citizen’s associations, etc.). Assets are thus a broad range of physical, institutional and knowledge-based resources which need to be mapped to define the “building blocks” of the community. Combined with community engagement (e.g. outreach, awareness, etc.), the goal of ABCD is to strengthen communities and enable residents to take responsibility in enhancing their own quality of life, which then leads to a greater quality of life for all.

The Parks & Recreation Department is encouraged to take the lead of facilitating Asset Based Community Development. This may be achieved by implementing an ABCD approach as part of the service priorities and Recommendations contained within the Parks & Recreation Master Plan and then use this as a model for the other Departments to follow. By bringing interested and skilled staff persons to the table, finding a common ground, becoming focused in addressing common issues, and developing creative solutions, all parties involved can collectively aim to strengthen and enhance the effectiveness of service delivery in Northern Bruce Peninsula.

RECOMMENDATIONS

9) Encourage an Asset Based Community Development approach through engagement and the provision of appropriate supports as a means to empower the local community to build on their strengths, develop their internal capacity, and sustain community-based program delivery over the long-term.

Timing: Ongoing (2012-2021)
Resource Implications: Staff time to liaise with groups, provide supports (e.g. human or financial), etc.
Community Use of Schools

Devoting efforts to strengthen the relationship between the Municipality and its local school boards should continue to be a priority area of focus for Northern Bruce Peninsula. The Education Act permits joint agreements between School Boards and municipalities to allow use of school facilities for recreational, athletic, cultural, educational or community purposes (e.g. such as the community is able to access the soccer field at Bruce Peninsula District School). Schools have long been used for community activities (e.g. for their sports fields, gymnasiums, resource areas, etc.), though escalating costs has led to recent challenges. This has led to frustrations where many people view schools as “sitting empty” while groups struggle to find spaces to deliver cost-effective programs. The Municipal Official Plan (Section 3.5.4) states that “the establishment of future parkland shall, wherever feasible, be coordinated with the School Boards, Parks Canada and other community users in order to achieve the integration of facilities and to maximize the recreation opportunities and use of the facility.”

Discussions held with the Bluewater District School Board’s (BDSB) Outreach Coordinator through the Master Plan process indicate that the Board is highly willing and committed to working with partners to maximize community use of schools. The BDSB states that only a few stakeholders (badminton, arts, and an indoor walking group) use the school in Lion’s Head while no community activities are booked in Tobermory. The BDSB believes that better communication with the Municipality and residents could increase bookings, and is open to ideas from the Municipality on how to improve awareness and utilization. For example, the BDSB has an online booking process for its facilities, something that the Municipality could potentially advertise in its publications or website. Similarly, creative opportunities to increase community access should be considered in collaboration with the BDSB including, but not limited to, developing reciprocal agreements, sharing costs for instructors or programmers, etc.

Due to their very nature, schools are distributed across the Municipality and can provide opportunities for outreach or satellite services, particularly to peripheral residential areas. Municipal staff should continue working with school boards to remain apprised of potential school relocations or closures which may pose an opportunity for the Municipality to adaptively reuse vacated school properties for recreational and cultural uses, particularly those with sports fields, gymnasiums, arts/crafts rooms, etc.

RECOMMENDATIONS

10) With respect to the Community Use of Schools initiative, continue to build relationships with the Bluewater District School Board to find ways in which to increase affordable community access to school facilities such as gymnasiums, meeting rooms, and sports fields to address needs without duplicating spaces that already exist in the Municipality. Reciprocal agreements, maintenance agreements, funding agreements, etc. should be explored at a minimum.

Timing: Ongoing (2012-2021)

Resource Implications: Staff time (e.g. between the proposed Administrative Assistant and the School Board’s Outreach Coordinator) to liaise with school boards, other resources variable upon type of agreement(s) negotiated
Partnerships

Parks and recreation opportunities are provided by a number of parties in addition to the Municipality. Organizations such as school boards, conservation authorities, non-profit organizations, and certain private providers offer access to parks, natural areas and recreation activities throughout Northern Bruce Peninsula. Organizations that assist the Municipality with providing recreation and leisure services include the minor sports associations, service clubs, seniors clubs, and various others. To maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of the Municipality’s parks and recreation services, all parties involved would benefit from a holistic approach to acquiring, developing and maintaining parks and recreation opportunities.

Emerging consumer demands and shifting economic conditions have caused many communities to pursue partnership approaches that dramatically differ from traditional service delivery mechanisms. Partnerships, alliances and collaborative relationships of varying types are required in today’s economy to effectively and efficiently provide for the leisure needs of citizens. Collaborative agreements with schools, places of worship, social clubs, user groups, etc. in the Municipality can be extremely effective in delivering sustainable and fiscally responsible recreation services to the community. Facilitating partnerships with external service providers and maximizing on the internal strengths of the community will allow the Municipality to provide the best possible service to its residents, while embodying a multi-use approach to facility and service delivery. With the Municipality’s willingness to be a facilitator of services through the community, it has established a number of partnerships with its community providers, although many of them are through informal arrangements and historical affiliations.

Examples of potential partners in Northern Bruce Peninsula should include, at a minimum:

- Upper tiers of government (e.g. Parks Canada, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Ministry of Natural Resources, County of Bruce, etc.);
- Adjacent or nearby municipalities (e.g. South Bruce Peninsula, Owen Sound, Georgian Bluffs, etc.);
- Environmentally-focused organizations such as the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority;
- Educational institutions such as the Bluewater District School Board, Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board, Bruce County Public Library, etc.;
- Local stakeholders such as service clubs, minor sports and recreation providers, arts and cultural groups, festival organizers, seniors’ centres, community associations, BIA, etc.;
- Non-profit organizations such as Big Brothers and Sisters, United Way, Community Health Centres, etc.; and / or
- The private sector (e.g. fitness providers, sporting groups, local theatres, etc.) and local land owners.
The most successful partnerships are derived from common objectives (e.g. environmental conservation, community improvement, physical activity, heritage interpretation, trail development, etc.), maximizing the strengths of each other in delivering access and programming to parks and trails, and mitigating risks (e.g. costs, liability, etc.). Maximizing the resources of each party is seen as a beneficial way to increase the amount of publically accessible parkland provided that the public interest is maximized and that partnerships fulfill the desired objectives of the Municipality and its partners. The trend towards integrated park provision is growing with the realization that many landholders (municipalities and communities included) cannot do it alone.

There are a number of criteria that must be considered prior to establishing a relationship and a partnership with a third party wishing to introduce a new level of service with municipal assistance. At a minimum, the Municipality will have to consider:

- first and foremost, that the proposed partnership is consistent with the municipal mandate and philosophies;
- that there is a role for the Municipality to play in the provision of the program or service;
- whether there is a quantifiable or justified need for the service in the community;
- that the service can be sustainably accommodated within the Municipality’s long-term capital and/or operating resources;
- whether the partner is sufficiently capable / qualified (e.g. financially, staffing, internal expertise, etc.) to be able to deliver the service over the long-term, and in compliance with legislated policies and municipal standards;
- the level of risk (e.g. financial, liability, etc.) and how this will be managed by the partner or the Municipality;
- whether the partner can provide the service on a sole source basis; and / or
- agreeing upon terms, conditions, standards, and responsibilities for all parties involved.

After partnerships are developed and agreements are formalized, it is important that the Municipality regularly meet with its partners to discuss successes and challenges of the partnership and, where necessary, revisit and strengthen the agreements to ensure that a dynamic process exists to respond to changes and public preferences. For example, a representative of the Parks & Recreation Department (e.g. the proposed Administrative Assistant) could arrange monthly meetings with partners.
to discuss not only the effectiveness of the partnership agreements but also as a means to continually understand local trends and needs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

11) Requests for facilities and services that are not part of the Municipality’s core mandate should be evaluated based on anticipated municipal role, quantifiable measures of demand and costs to the Municipality, and other long-term implications prior to deciding whether or not to partner in the public interest (as discussed in Recommendation #2). As part of this process, the Municipality should develop a standardized process or framework for evaluating and responding to requests for partnerships, with the view of maximizing public interests.

Timing: Ongoing (2012-2021)

Resource Implications: Staff time develop standardized partnership evaluation framework and evaluate requests for partnership

3.5 Providing Inclusive Opportunities

Providing residents with equitable opportunities to access parks and recreation services should continue to be a goal that the Municipality strives towards. With people faced with barriers such as lack of time, limited disposable income, disabilities, unawareness of available activities, communication challenges, etc. it is important to provide inclusive opportunities to ensure choices are available.

In every community, there are certain households which face barriers to participation by the very fact that they are ‘under-represented’ through traditional means of engagement. Some of these households may include marginalized populations, those with lower incomes or disabilities, those living in remote or highly rural areas, youth or the elderly, or newcomers9 to Canada.

Regardless of what makes a person or household under-represented, the key to stimulating their participation and involvement lies in engagement, which in turn leads to

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9 Less than 1% of the Municipality’s population (30 residents) arrived to Canada prior to 2001 and less than 1% (25 residents) are recorded as a visible minority, which is significantly lower than the provincial average recorded by the 2006 Census, where 23% of the population is a visible minority. Although the proportion of visible minorities is lower than the provincial average, current national immigration and population growth trends suggest that the level of ethnic diversification will increase.
understanding. By involving under-represented populations, the increased diversity of customer needs may lead to the emergence of "non-traditional" activities, thus suggesting the flexibility in the design, function, and provision of certain recreation services to be a key consideration in park development.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

12) Provide a training program for staff to gain the skills and competencies needed to fully engage under-represented populations, including through marketing techniques that ensure (among other things) that plain and clear language is utilized in all future reports and publications. Expand this training to include staff, community groups and volunteer representatives.

*Timing:* Ongoing (2012-2021)

*Resource Implications:* Staff time, training costs

**Addressing Barriers Related to Accessibility**

Under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), a barrier is defined as anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including physical, architectural, informational, technological, communicational, attitudinal, or policy/practice barrier(s). The AODA states that municipalities, as well as businesses and organizations, will have to meet certain accessibility standards in the five following areas:

- customer service;
- transportation;
- information and communication;
- built environment; and
- employment.

The range of recreation services for people with disabilities has increased significantly in recent years. Providing residents of all ages and abilities with opportunities to 'play' is important in achieving inclusivity among all. Furthermore, research suggests that youth with special needs who participate in recreation activities are more likely to do well in school, have higher self-esteem and good social skills, and are less likely to be involved in criminal activity.10 The Municipality works collaboratively with a number of agencies and associations who offer recreation and

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cultural services and opportunities to persons with disabilities.

Unfortunately, people with disabilities still face considerable barriers (e.g., transportation, cost, etc.) when it comes to participating in recreation and cultural activities. The household survey found that 16% of the sample was unable to participate in recreational activities due to mobility or health-related issues (as well as older age). Staff and volunteer training is necessary to provide a better understanding of the breadth of disabilities that people are confronted with and the barriers they face.

Thus, it is critical that the Municipality strengthen its existing approach to understanding the needs, further develop programs and services, explore partnerships and evaluate service effectiveness when seeking to include persons with disabilities. The Municipality takes accessibility very seriously, and regularly prepares Accessibility Plans led by a working group (furthermore, the Deputy Clerk also serves as the Municipality's Accessibility Coordinator). The Municipality is largely compliant with the AODA though improvements could be made at certain community centres. The Accessibility Plan, in fact, references a number of improvements that should be undertaken at municipal facilities such as the Lion's Head Marina and Campground, community centres, parks, etc. For example, wheelchair access is available at the Lion’s Head Community Centre, however, it is relegated to the upper level and reaching the hall is accessed via an inconvenient route through the kitchen (the basement change rooms are completely inaccessible for those with major mobility constraints).

A potential increase to the number of persons with disabilities (in line with population growth, aging trends, etc.) requires staff to ensure that the Municipality continues to be compliant, work with like minded support groups, and continue to increase participation among those with disabilities. Similarly, community recreation services providers will also need to be cognisant of the needs of persons with disabilities. The Municipality should work with groups to ensure that access policies are in place, which not only includes affordability but also barrier-free and special needs considerations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

13) Continue to work with community-based accessibility representatives and service providers to ensure that local recreation facilities and programs are accessible to those with disabilities and special needs.

Timing: Ongoing (2012-2021)
Resource Implications: Staff time to liaise with the community on accessibility matters

14) Continue to implement improvements to parks and recreation facilities as recommended through the Municipal Accessibility Plans, to ensure conformity to local accessibility standards and provincial legislation.

Timing: Ongoing (2012-2021)
Resource Implications: Capital costs, as determined for specific improvements undertaken
Overcoming Barriers Related to Affordability

Past studies have shown that a household’s level of income is proportional to participation in recreation and leisure, especially in organized team sports. A household’s level of income can thus become a significant barrier to participation in leisure pursuits due to the cost of participating in recreation activities (such as structured and unstructured recreation programs and services). This is especially problematic among young, single-parent or economically disadvantaged households as older, established households typically have more disposable income to spend on leisure activities.

Communities are, therefore, facing increasing pressures to provide more affordable programs and subsidies to promote participation among all user groups. Statistics Canada has identified that between 1980 and 2005, the top 20% of Canadian full-time earners saw median earnings rise by 16.4%, contrasted by the bottom 20%, within which median earnings fell by 20.6%. Median earnings by the middle 20% remained constant.

The term ‘working poor’ has been put forward in recent years to describe the financial situation of many Canadians who have a job but do not have any additional funds beyond paying for life necessities (due to increasing cost of living). Cases of obesity are also more commonly found among residents with a lower socio-economic status (14%) compared to residents with a higher income (11%)\(^{11}\), reinforcing the need to provide opportunities for parks and recreation activities to lower-income households. Exploring other partnership opportunities with the non-profit and private sectors to increase access to various parks and recreation activities may alleviate barriers to participation for lower income households.

**Figure 5: Median Incomes in the Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula, 2005**

The 2006 Census found the Municipality’s median income for all private households to be $44,607, considerably lower than the provincial average of $60,455 and is low among the other municipalities.

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in Bruce County (only Arran-Elderslie had a lower median income). Based upon income alone, lower participation rates may be correlated with income statistics in Northern Bruce Peninsula. This may imply that the need for affordable recreation opportunities should be provided to engage those with financial barriers through the provision of subsidized and no-fee activities to represent an opportunity for recreation participation among all residents in the Municipality.

With focus placed upon facilitating community-based programming, the Municipality may mandate that groups have access policies in place if they are to use municipal parks and facilities to deliver their programs; the Municipality could also consider providing groups with the tools to offer affordable and inclusive programming opportunities through a variety of means such as grants, subsidies on certain operational items (e.g. rental rates, advertising, direct subsidization of program costs, etc.). Such tools will need to be explored further in consultation with the community while a continued focus is needed to reach out to low income families and remove barriers to participation. The benefits to the community and the individual are worth the investment of time and funding.

RECOMMENDATIONS

15) Work with community-based providers to ensure that there is a range of low-to-no cost activities available to meet the recreational needs of households with lower incomes. The Municipality should also explore the creation of low income assistance programs with community sponsors to increase access.

Timing: Ongoing (2012-2021)

Resource Implications: Staff Time and/or subsidies fees to explore and implement financial assistance programs for recreation services

3.6 Targeting Core Markets

The Municipality, just as all other communities, is made up of a number of core market groups who have specific recreational interests. As discussed previously, examples of core markets could include households with different levels of income, ethnicity, physical ability, etc. Other core markets can be defined based on servicing residents of a certain age, as age plays a factor in the types of activities pursued and needed.

The demographic profile of the Municipality is changing, like many communities, which is creating needs that are different from those observed in the past. Age plays an important role in determining the types of recreation activities that are pursued by residents. For example, children and teens are more likely to participate in active pursuits such as organized soccer or baseball, whereas older adults have a greater propensity to participate in unstructured activities such as walking and hiking.

According to the 2006 Census, the Municipality’s median age of 53.9 years is significantly older than
both the provincial median of 39.0 years and the County median of 45.1 years, while the Municipality’s overall population is aging at a rapid rate as evidenced by an increase in its median age of 51.7 years in 2001; this ‘greying’ population is a common demographic trend that is being observed across Canada, and Northern Bruce Peninsula’s population can be expected to continue to age accordingly throughout the foreseeable future.

The Municipality’s age distribution is generally well-balanced between the Children, Youth, Young Adults and Seniors cohorts. The largest age group is Mature Adults (35-54) who make up 30% of the Municipality’s overall population, a significant fact since these residents will move into the older adult market segment over the next few years, thereby increasing pressure and generating added recreation demands for this market. This is not to say that older adults should be the primary area of focus for future parks and recreation delivery; continued population growth will result in higher needs across all age groups.

Figure 6: Municipality Population Distribution by Age Group, 2006 and 2021

Source: Statistics Canada, 2006; Ontario Ministry of Finance, 2011
The following pages discuss some core markets in greater detail. It should be noted that it is difficult to understand exactly what programs exist in the community without a comprehensive inventory of community-based services (something that is beyond the scope of the municipally-oriented Parks & Recreation Master Plan). A key responsibility of the proposed Administrative Assistant, discussed earlier in this Section, could be to develop and continually update an inventory of community-based recreation services to allow the Municipality to understand where gaps may exist.

**Addressing the Needs of Children & Youth**

Children, in the context of the Parks & Recreation Master Plan, are those ranging from 0 to 9 years of age. According to the 2006 Census, there were 235 children in this age group who constitute 9% of the population; by 2021, it is anticipated that there will be 387 children representing nearly 12% of the overall population. There are a range of programs available through community-based providers and other levels of government that serve the needs of this age group, including but not limited to outdoor swimming lessons, minor sports, summer camps, etc. The following pages contain some key facility assessments specific to meeting the needs of children.

Youth are considered to be between the ages of 10 and 19; in 2006, there were 405 individuals comprising this market segment in the Municipality, comprising 13% of the population; by 2021, this market is expected to see little growth with 438 youth projected though their proportion of the total population will decrease to 11%. As with the children’s market, there are a range of community-based programs available for youth, albeit they are more limited. Examples of programs include, but are not limited to, outdoor swimming lessons and minor sports. Furthermore, there is a faith-based organization in Lion’s Head known as The Hub Youth Centre that offers drop-in youth activities (though this group is planning to reconfigure its existing space to target a range of ages from children to adults). Youth are often a challenging demographic to serve from a programming standpoint, largely due to the diverse range of interests and activities demanded by this cohort. Furthermore, interests of 10-14 year olds tend to be much different than those in the 15-19 age group.

The following pages contain some key facility assessments specific to meeting the needs of children and youth.

**Playgrounds**

A total of 5 playgrounds are provided in Northern Bruce Peninsula. Elementary schools may also provide play structures that may be used by residents after school hours, thus their ability to serve specific neighbourhoods is recognized. Typically, playgrounds are found in areas of residential concentrations. As a result, the provision of playgrounds varies between urban and rural communities. In urban communities (such as Tobermory, Lion’s Head and Ferndale, which are defined as Secondary Urban Areas and Hamlets in the County Official Plan), playgrounds are ideally available within walking distance of major residential areas. Conversely, low population densities and aging populations in more rural or remote communities result in an undefined service level for playgrounds, usually placing them on a case-by-case basis after considering the number of children and if there is
an opportunity to integrate playgrounds into appropriate parks (usually serving a ‘community or municipal level’ function).

Looking specifically at Tobermory, Lion’s Head and Ferndale, an appropriate level of coverage would be to have one playground located within 800 metres (approximately a 10 minute walk) unobstructed by major pedestrian barriers such as highways, watercourses and other natural hazards. In Tobermory, the playgrounds at School Bell Park and Maple Golf Crescent Park would adequately serve this entire community. Similarly, the playground at Ferndale Park would provide sufficient coverage to the existing residential areas, although it is a goal of the Official Plan to potentially re-designating Ferndale to become a growth area (upon integration of servicing), thus any new future growth would require a re-examination into park and playground needs to serve any future populations. For the Lion’s Head community, the playground at the Beach generally serves the community. As a result, no new playgrounds are recommended over the next ten years in the urban settlements.

With respect to the rural communities, playgrounds are provided at Pike Bay Park and Dunks Bay Beach. Provision of new playgrounds in the rural settlements is not recommended at this time given the aging demographics and the capital and operational impacts that playgrounds in these remote locations would have upon the Municipality. That said, if an interested community is willing to raise all or a portion of the cost of playground equipment, the Municipality should be receptive to the thought and evaluate whether it is feasible to accommodate the request (e.g. considering availability of land, capital maintenance funds, staffing, etc.).

The Municipality inspects and maintains its existing playground stock to ensure conformity to safety guidelines for construction and maintenance. This is a practice that should continue to occur, along with the Municipality’s focus on playground renewal when funding becomes available (for example, there are some playgrounds containing pressure-treated wood structures, which may need to be phased out). In line with new accessibility requirements, the Municipality should ensure that its playgrounds integrate barrier-free components wherever possible in order to provide inclusive opportunities for children of all abilities.
Splash Pads

The Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula currently does not provide any splash pads, though as there are a number of outdoor aquatic opportunities associated with the municipal beaches and abundant access to lakes in the region. Splash pads have largely replaced outdoor pools as the norm for leisure-based outdoor aquatic experiences. They cater to a smaller market (children) than would an outdoor pool but the key advantage of splash pads lies in their cost efficiencies and the element of fun that they bring, relative to a pool. Splash pads generally require a smaller capital investment in construction (depending upon the design and size), though the real savings are achieved by removal of direct staffing costs (no lifeguards, minimal water testing), and they are not susceptible for mosquito breeding (relevant due to recent outbreaks of West Nile Virus) as there is no standing water. With splash pads, water can be metered and discharged into a storm sewer, treated and recycled, or reused as ‘grey water’ for municipal operations (e.g. irrigation). In addition, splash pads can be triggered by a user rather than running constantly, thus reducing water waste.

With less than 250 children (ages 0-9) in the Municipality, the local market would be constrained to support a splash pad facility (these facilities typically require a threshold of about 3,000 children to justify their provision). That said, the Municipality has a significant seasonal market during the summer months comprised of tourists and seasonal residents, many of whom bring children. As such, the Municipality could possibly justify the provision of a splash pad as part of an economic development approach to provide a level of amenity in one or both of the secondary urban areas. It is recognized that splash pads were not identified as high priorities in the consultations, though it is noted that adults constituted the majority of respondents. Furthermore, the provision of outdoor aquatic experiences is seen as a way to respond to the identified need for aquatic facilities, while providing a level of service that is much more cost effective than developing a municipal indoor aquatics centre (somewhat helping to reduce pressures for local aquatic activities as a whole).

Based upon the merits of providing splash pad facilities, it is recommended that the Municipality provide splash pads in both of the secondary urban areas (i.e. Tobermory and Lion’s Head). This strategy is justified on the basis of geographic distribution and the significant distance between the two secondary urban areas; while geographic distribution is not always the reason to duplicate service provision (i.e. it does not necessarily imply that each community needs a facility, particularly if it is capitalistically or operationally intensive), the costs of splash pad provision can be scaled to the degree of the municipal budget availability and supplemented through community fundraising.
The first facility should be provided in the short-term while the second splash pad would be provided in the medium-term. Prior to providing the second splash pad, careful study is required to determine the success and utilization rate of the first splash pad, while ensuring that the provision of a new facility will not undermine the sustainability of the other. It would be up to the Municipality to ultimately decide what community to locate the first facility in, though the decision should be based upon sound business planning and alignment to economic development objectives. Splash pads are viewed as a community destination and complement major parks, waterfront areas or beaches. Based upon this criteria, there appear to be a few plausible options to consider for the provision of a new splash pad, notably Lion’s Head Beach (given its family-oriented focus and proximity to outdoor aquatic opportunities in the bay), Lion’s Head & District Community Centre, or School Bell Park (for the latter two, the presence of washrooms at the adjacent community centres is ideal for young children).

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

16) If supported by business planning and alignment to economic development objectives, the Municipality should consider providing splash pads in Tobermory and Lion’s Head (the second splash pad should be considered at a future time depending upon available funding and a justification of need).

*Timing:* Immediate Action (2012-2016) — first splash pad; Long-Term Plan (2017-2021) — second splash pad

*Resource Implications:* Capital and operating costs will vary upon design, scale and water system employed

**Youth Space**

The Municipality currently does not own or operate any dedicated youth spaces. Although the population of youth in Northern Bruce Peninsula is expected remain fairly consistent due to aging trends, the importance of providing engaging, interesting and safe opportunities for youth is important in all communities. The facilitation of positive choices through the provision of spaces (both indoor and outdoor) is seen as a core component of healthy development of local youth.

Due to the spatial distribution of a limited number of youth in the Municipality, it would not be feasible to recommend a municipally operated youth centre. Instead, there are two primary courses of action for the Municipality to address the need for youth-oriented spaces. First, the Municipality should look at its existing supply of assets to determine how to make spaces more flexible to accommodate youth activities that would be delivered by the community sector. For example, there may be ways to optimize meeting rooms to integrate amenities appealing to youth (e.g. adding portable components such as a small stage and portable audio system for ‘jam nights’ or poetry readings, installing a television to show movies or connect video games, etc.).
The second way to address youth needs is to work with youth-serving organizations, such as The Hub or local service clubs, to determine what their individual needs are and whether there is a municipal role to play in providing assistance. The Municipality should also consider partnering with the school boards to utilize the schools in Northern Bruce Peninsula to encourage additional after-school programming; for example, surplus space at a local school could be utilized by a community group and the Municipality may provide financial or administrative support to serve as an intermediary between the community group and the public school board (with the view towards Community Development to ensure that the community group can grow sustainably on its own).

RECOMMENDATIONS

17) Consult with youth-serving agencies and school boards to evaluate how existing municipal, institutional and community-based facilities can be enhanced or adapted to better meet the needs of local youth

Timing: Ongoing (2012-2021)

Resource Implications: Costs will vary by facility and types of services offered

Basketball Courts

One full basketball court is provided by the Municipality, located at School Bell Park. This court is in a state of disrepair and is considered to be unusable for any degree of quality play; at the time of writing, the backboard is broken and the hard surfaced area allocated to basketball is of insufficient size (being located very near to the fence and partially allocated as a seating area). This provides opportunity solely for shoot-around rather than game-play.

Basketball is generally considered to be a growing sport, typically popular among youth ages 10-19. In past experience, demand for outdoor basketball courts has been high and they are easily incorporated into neighbourhood-level parks, thus allowing pedestrian and bicycle access which
are primary modes of travel for youth. The provision target of 1 basketball court for every 800 youth age 10-19 is applied to evaluate local needs. With the number of youth projected to remain around 400 over the next ten years, the population data suggests that the Municipality does not require basketball courts over the life of this Parks & Recreation Master Plan.

Since basketball courts are typically favoured by youth, it is important to ensure that they can be accessed as “walk-to” outdoor recreation facilities to provide opportunities for drop-in, unstructured recreational use. As a result, considering spatial distribution of facilities is as important as applying the population-based standard; it is suggested that each secondary urban area (defined in the Official Plan as Tobermory and Lion’s Head) have at least one basketball court. To meet this need, it is suggested that the Municipality reconfigure the existing basketball court at School Bell Park to better facilitate a more optimal level of play (i.e. ensuring equipment and surfacing is of sufficient quality), while a court should be considered in Lion’s Head, potentially at the Beach or at the Community Centre. Similarly, Ferndale Park could be a potential location particularly if it develops as a secondary urban area (though it is unlikely to be used by youth in Lion’s Head residents due to distance and need to travel on a highway route). It should also be noted that the Municipality may rely on school courts to supplement existing and recommended courts (though school courts are often not geared to satisfy game-play due to configuration and quality of courts as well).

A new form of hard surface court is emerging in many municipalities, known as ‘multi-use courts’ which can accommodate a range of different activities. In fact, it is the intent of the School Bell Park court to function as a venue for basketball and skateboarding meaning that the Municipality recognizes the multi-use nature of hard surface courts. The key is to design the courts to be able to sufficiently accommodate play while minimizing user conflicts, something that is achieved by involving users (e.g. youth) in the design process and collocating compatible uses in these templates (e.g. basketball and ball hockey, tennis and pickleball, etc.). These courts are well suited to meet unstructured neighbourhood level needs of residents just ‘looking for something to play.’ Any new court that is constructed should consider how to accommodate multiple uses.

RECOMMENDATIONS

18) Repair and re-orient the existing basketball court at School Bell Park to encourage a higher quality of play and potentially other uses. A second multi-use court oriented to basketball should be provided in Lion’s Head, while a third court may be considered at the time if/when residential growth in Ferndale warrants it.

Timing: Immediate Action (2012-2016) – Tobermory School Bell Park and Lion’s Head; Long-Term Plan (2017-2021) – Ferndale

Resource Implications: Costs will vary by facility and types of services offered
Skateboard Parks

Over the past several years, skateboarding has demonstrated sustained longevity and appears to have become a mainstream pursuit among youth and some young adults. Popular among children and youth, skateboarding has become increasingly popular, creating a high demand for skateboard parks provincially. Skateboard parks can meet the needs of both the Municipality’s residents and visitors, while also reducing damage to municipal infrastructure and private property where skateboarders and BMX users may frequent due to lack of a better venue.

The Municipality currently provides a skateboard park that is integrated with the basketball court at School Bell Park. This skatepark does not contain any specific features but is rather a plain hard surface court, sufficient to meet the needs of beginner-level skateboarders. Skateboard parks are typically viewed as urban facilities, usually provided where a threshold of about 5,000 youth between the ages of 10 and 19 exists. While the Municipality has only about a tenth of youth population needed to support a major skateboard park, the number of seasonal residents and visitors may bolster demand slightly. Despite the youth population threshold identified for these facilities, it is important to recognize that providing the opportunity to skateboard or BMX is justification enough to warrant such a facility (even after recognizing low priorities placed on these facilities during the Master Plan’s consultations, which largely comprised feedback from adults). A skateboard park can be scaled to be responsive of the limited market, and does not have to be designed as the highly expensive facilities found in large urban centres. As discussed in the splash pad assessment, a skateboard/BMX park can also be viewed in an economic development context as the sports relate well to the “adventure tourism” opportunities that are available locally.

To truly gauge the need for a skateboard park, it is recommended that the Municipality develop one new facility in the short-term. This skateboard park should be developed and tested as a pilot project, and as such should be designed to contain smaller-scale modular components that could be removed if usage is minimal (potentially converting it to a hard surface court if unsuccessful for skateboarding). Consideration should also be given to incorporating BMX elements into the design. This facility would be most appropriate in a secondary urban area such as Tobermory or Lion’s Head, be located in a highly visible location, and accessible by a local trail or pathway route.

In the interim period if / when this facility is developed, the Municipality should consider the provision of ‘skate zones’ which are geared to beginner level skateboarders and consist of one or two simple components (such as a rail or a curb) integrated into the overall park design. These basic features are easily integrated into existing parks, increase the availability of skateboarding options, and may introduce the activity to younger age groups.
RECOMMENDATIONS

19) If supported by business planning and alignment to economic development objectives, the Municipality should develop a skateboard park in Tobermory or Lion’s Head on a trial basis. This skateboard park should be designed with the input of local youth, particularly the skateboarding community, to ensure that design is responsive to users while encouraging greater community buy-in and utilization of the facility.

Timing: Immediate Action (2012-2016)
Resource Implications: Costs will vary depending upon size and amenity level

Addressing the Needs of Older Adults & Seniors

Many members of the ‘Baby Boomer’ demographic (generally between the ages of 45 and 64) are quickly reaching retirement age, contributing to a significant ‘greying’ of the population and placing greater demand for activities aimed at older adults. This generation may be shifting away from traditional seniors’ activities and towards more active recreation, seeking quality wellness and active living opportunities such as lawn bowling or walking. The ‘new senior’ will typically be wealthier and more physically active than those in previous generations. Similar to the rest of Ontario, Northern Bruce Peninsula’s population is aging with 30% and 35% of the Municipality’s population in 35-54 and 55+ cohorts, respectively. This implies that the already significant number of older adults and seniors in the community can be expected to increase substantially as the Baby Boom generation reaches their retirement years. In fact, regional age distribution patterns for Bruce County show that the segment of the population aged over 55 will increase from 37% to 43% over the next ten years.

Seniors in Northern Bruce Peninsula have access to a number of traditional leisure activities through community-based service providers such as local service clubs, arts and cultural groups, etc. Programs and services range from organized social gatherings, exercise, arts and cultural activities, clinics and day programs. Some groups make use of their own facilities, while others lease municipal buildings such as the Friendship Centre or individual community halls. Aging populations are now generating demands for parks and recreation services that were previously not considered due to the great focus that was placed on children’s programming. Today’s older adults and senior (i.e. 55+) population has been observed to be more physically active than past generations, seeking recreation activities, active living, and a greater variety of arts and cultural choices. As such, the needs of older adults are expected to continue to place pressures upon programmed and non-programmed spaces for sports
and social activities (such as chess, aerobics and fitness, open fields, etc.), as well as attractive features such as fountains, gardens, landscaped areas, and seating.

The Municipality's supply of community halls is deemed to be sufficient enough to warrant no new seniors centres being constructed over the master planning period. Instead, the Municipality should focus efforts on improving key community halls to accommodate a wider range of programming oriented to older adults. For example, integration of wood-sprung flooring could allow for certain types of active living programs (e.g. tai chi, pilates, dance, etc.) while incorporating sinks or storage could facilitate arts and cultural programs. The intent would remain for the community sector to deliver the actual services, therefore, working with seniors groups and community-based providers is encouraged to understand their needs, while also encouraging the community to fundraise for certain improvements to ensure that costs do not unsustainably impact the municipal budget.

With respect to the Lion's Head Friendship Club facility, expansion to the Lion's Head Community Centre presents an opportunity to integrate the older adult space into the community centre itself. This would bring many benefits for the Municipality and the Friendship Club, since overhead costs (such as staffing, maintenance, utilities, etc.) could be centralized into one building. Furthermore, older adults and seniors could benefit from the presence of multi-purpose rooms and the recently upgraded kitchen to deliver a wider range of programs to their members. Pursuing this course of action would necessitate that overall accessibility of the Lion's Head Community Centre be increased to meet the needs of those with mobility restrictions (accessibility will become increasingly important with the aging population, whose health may necessitate barrier-free considerations in design).

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

20) In order to meet the needs of older adults and seniors, regularly consult with local seniors organizations to understand how existing municipal, institutional and community-based facilities can be enhanced or adapted to better meet their needs. Through this, the Municipality should consider:

- Enhancements to the Municipality's stock of multi-purpose rooms to see how these spaces can be flexibly adapted and improved to meet the needs of older adults.
- Potential integration of the Lion's Head Friendship Club building into the overall Lion's Head & District Community Centre to create efficiencies in operation and program delivery.

**Timing:** Ongoing (2012-2021) – Consultation and exploration of enhancements; Immediate Action (2012-2016) – Integration of the Friendship Club building into the Community Centre

**Resource Implications:** To be determined through design and business planning exercises for respective community halls.
Emerging Markets

Increasing levels of socio-economic and ethnic diversity in communities facilitates the evolution of recreation, leisure and cultural needs. As mentioned earlier, evolving family structures and ethnic diversification generates demands for "non-traditional" needs which should be considered if the goal is to increase physical activity and social interaction.

Many cultures see recreation and leisure as a family event and are inclined to do activities together. Growing diversity also creates the need for a wider range of activities and facilities, such as skateboarding, lacrosse, curling, tai chi, etc., which can place pressures on parks and facilities, particularly with respect to maintenance, space, and infrastructure (e.g., picnic tables, washrooms, gazebos, etc.) within the Municipality. Newcomers to Canada are frequent users of parks and other public spaces as they are an ideal location for social gatherings which are often a chosen activity for larger, multi-generational immigrant families.

According to Statistics Canada, 10% (570 persons) of Northern Bruce Peninsula’s population consists of immigrants, the majority of whom arrived prior to 1991. The majority of the Municipality’s population over the age of 15 is third generation Canadians or greater (74%) with 11% of the population being second generation Canadians. This denotes that the majority of Northern Bruce Peninsula’s population is well established in Canadian culture and can generally be expected to seek traditional recreation programs and services.

As a result of diversification, communities have also been faced with a growing emphasis on non-traditional and non-structured activities. Municipalities have seen increasing popularity in a variety of open space sports such as Ultimate Frisbee, rugby, bocce, lawn bowling, etc. The popularity of emerging passive outdoor recreation activities such as hiking, bird watching, and casual cycling will also encourage demand for passive parks and open spaces. Extreme/non-traditional sports such as skateboarding are also expected to experience continued growth and support given high participation rates among youth and children found across Ontario.

Undoubtedly, the Municipality will be pressed for additional indoor and outdoor facilities which are not currently part of the municipality’s traditional service mandate, or do not have sufficient demand to warrant a specific recommendation in the Parks & Recreation Master Plan. The Municipality, however, must be prepared to appropriately respond to future requests. These demands may arise for existing activities / facilities or for those that evolve according to future trends and preferences. Examples may include, but not be limited to: bocce courts, cricket pitches, fields for Ultimate Frisbee, multi-media arts venues, etc.

When requests are brought forward for investment in non-traditional, emerging and/or non-core municipal services, the Municipality should evaluate the need for these pursuits on a case-by-case basis. This should involve an examination into (but not be limited to):

- Local / regional / provincial trends pertaining to usage and popularity of the activity/facility;
3. Service Delivery Priorities

- examples of delivery models in other municipalities;
- local demand for the activity / facility;
- the ability of existing municipal facilities to accommodate the new service;
- the feasibility for the Municipality to reasonably provide the service / facility as a core service and in a cost-effective manner;
- the willingness and ability of the requesting organization to provide the service if provided with appropriate municipal supports.

In this way, the Municipality can evaluate whether there is a municipal role to be played in providing the service in relation to quantified market demand and cost-effectiveness of such services, while also identifying potential strategies to address long-term need for such requests should a sufficient level of demand be expressed. An evaluation/rationalization process similar to that proposed through Recommendation #11) would be undertaken to determine whether municipal entry into a non-core service is warranted.

'Spreading the Word'

Information on facilities and services provided by the Parks & Recreation Department is communicated most effectively through the Municipal website, where a webpage listing all of the municipal facilities can be accessed. There are presently no hard copy brochures or recreation services guides that compiles all facilities and services offered in the Municipality. Instead, there are a selected number of printed brochures specific to individual parks and facilities. The Municipality also relies heavily upon tourist-related agencies to disseminate information about local parks, trails, facilities and services.

Under a separate link on the Municipal webpage is a listing of all community organizations operating in Northern Bruce Peninsula; links to certain groups are available if they have a website of their own. To better inform residents of available parks, facilities and community organizations, the Municipality should create a Recreation & Cultural Services Guide that can be distributed to local residents or be made available online. This will also allow the Municipality to keep track of community organizations and the services that they provide, thereby creating a better understanding of gap areas.

While there are costs associated with publishing a Guide, the payback may be worth it if the Municipality is able to create awareness of its parks and facilities, and increase utilization levels. Furthermore, listing community organizations and their contact information is a relatively low cost endeavour and can meet community development objectives advanced throughout this Master Plan. Costs can also be controlled by going with a simplistic design template (although care should be taken to ensure that the Guide is visually attractive), while selling advertising or charging a nominal
fee for listed organizations can generate some income to offset publishing and distribution expenses. The Guide can then also be posted as a PDF on the Municipal webpage and allow residents to find information about municipal facilities and services all in one place.

RECOMMENDATIONS

21) Create a Recreation & Cultural Services Guide that compiles information about all municipal and community-based opportunities that are available in Northern Bruce Peninsula. The Guide should be made available in both hard copy and digital formats.

Timing: Immediate Action (2012-2016)

Resource Implications: The proposed Administrative Assistant would create and regularly update the Guide, publishing and distribution costs that may be offset by revenue streams such as advertising

Signage

Signage is an important element of the corporate communications and branding strategy. Having the Northern Bruce Peninsula logo on a high quality sign can attain a number of benefits including:

- Promoting awareness among all residents that they are part of the larger Municipality, in addition to the communities in which they reside.

- Communicating the corporate brand, carrying consistency throughout the Municipality, and form part of the tourism infrastructure.

- Informing residents and visitors that the property is in fact public parkland and not private land, avoiding confusion about access.

- As the first impression of the park, residents and visitors view signs as an indicator of the quality of the local parks and open space system as a whole – a high quality sign can lead to people perceiving the park to also be of high quality.

- Signs develop a sense of place and combined with good urban design, can create unique districts and foster aesthetic development, while also improving wayfinding among residents and visitors.

- Provide interpretive information that connects a user to the park and encourages the person to take further interest in their surroundings.

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MONTEITH BROWN PLANNING CONSULTANTS I Gamsby and Mannerow Engineers
A good sign is clear, attractive and designed in context to its surroundings (in this case, parks and open spaces). Signs should clearly state the names of parks and trails, provide an address for emergency purposes, and/or state the names of any local organization that helped to fundraise for the park or trail. The Municipality should also explore the use of technology in its signage, notably at community centres which could benefit from digital displays that could advertise events or services, while creating a perception that facilities are progressive and modern.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

22) Ensure adequate signage exists at all parks, trailheads and recreation facilities. These signs should be consistent in design and be restored or replaced when they deteriorate.

*Timing*: Ongoing (2012-2021)

*Resource Implications*: Standard costs of constructing and maintaining signs, though staff time may be required to develop a sign template for consistent application throughout the Municipality.

### 3.7 An Opportunity for Economic Development

**Economic Development**

The provision of parks and recreation services ties into the Municipality's overall sense of place. While the core recreational mandate of the Municipality is to stimulate physical and social activity by providing parks and facilities (for community-based delivery), such services impact economic development and other priority areas for the Municipality (such as contributing to environmental health, creating lively streetscapes, attracting new residential and employment growth, etc.).

The provision of facilities and services that increase the quality of life are highly sought amenities when seeking new residents and employers for the community. Businesses, both large and small, tend to evaluate the potential employment pool as well as the civic opportunities available to its employees when choosing to locate in a community. Communities which are interesting, affordable, have natural beauty, and a strong creative sector have been found to be attractive to employers and new residents alike, while the provision of facilities such as arenas, theatres and parks all greatly contribute to a decision to relocate to a
community. As a result, the provision of such facilities can help attract new businesses (e.g. manufacturing plants, company headquarters or satellite offices, etc.), highly demanded professionals (e.g. doctors, entrepreneurs), and new residential growth.

While outside of the scope of the Parks & Recreation Master Plan, economic development and tourism must be guided by a collective vision and an identity, of which parks, recreation and culture will form a part of. The tourism infrastructure must be considered holistically (i.e. not just recreation and culture) as a number of supporting services are required such as evening entertainment, overnight accommodation, etc. Economic development and tourism should emphasize the importance of enhancing and marketing municipal facilities in order to bring new residents and visitors to the community.

Promotion of Tourism

The provision of high quality parks, trails and facilities are a way to draw visitors and participants from external markets through sport, tournaments, festivals and special events, nature-based and historical experiences, and urban tourism. As such, the local parks and recreation system contributes greatly to tourism potential of the Municipality. For example, linking a municipal trail system to external networks (e.g. the Bruce Trail) can encourage users to pass through the Municipality, tournaments at the existing sports fields bring sport tourism dollars, while arts and cultural activities may bring overnight guests seeking experiences associated with creative and vibrant communities.

Promoting tourism requires exploring ways to improve awareness of the local resources to visitors. To encourage visitors and tourism, municipalities and communities often assess opportunities provided by their parkland and trail systems, as well as through the provision of high quality facilities and services that become destination points. While parks may not generate significant revenues and profits, they are often a destination for visitors, and provide a venue to host festivals and special events.
Assessing the potential for promoting parks and open spaces as tourist destinations has become a growing trend and allows municipalities to showcase high quality parks and open spaces to draw participants and spectators from external markets. The promotion of existing community and sporting events, cultural heritage and other events that are held in local parks and open spaces, while continuously seeking new opportunities, is beneficial in advancing tourism objectives. Building on existing visitor information resources (e.g. facilities in Fenwick and Tobermory) in partnership with groups such as the Chamber of Commerce could also enhance awareness of recreational opportunities available for tourists and residents alike.

**The Importance of Festivals & Special Events**

Communities often seek “multiplier effects” from both tourism and local spending when facilitating festivals or special events. In addition to generating tourism revenue, holding these events in the outdoors, such as within parks or open spaces, has become popular for attracting new and frequent patrons, creates a sense of local pride among residents and volunteers, builds community values, and stimulates physical and social activity by offering a variety of leisure opportunities. Festivals and special events provide opportunities to boost funding through partnerships and volunteers, as well as provincial and federal assistance.

With the help and support of the community and volunteers, the Parks & Recreation Department celebrates arts, recreation, and culture through a number of festivals each year. Maintaining a variety of festivals and special events while seeking new and creative opportunities, assists in developing creative capacity within a community, sustain a sense of community pride, and plays a role in the corporate branding and marketing efforts of a community. While local festivals require certain resources from Municipal Staff (e.g. setup and takedown, garbage collection, etc.), the value and benefits brought about are certainly recognized. There will be an onus the festival groups to ensure that they are contributing the required resources (both volunteer time and financial) and position their events in a manner that evolves with local interests.
4.0 THE NEED FOR RECREATION FACILITIES

4.1 Sports Fields

The only soccer field in Northern Bruce Peninsula is located on property owned by the Bluewater District School Board, at the Bruce Peninsula District School; there are no soccer fields owned or operated by the Municipality. Due to its low equipment costs, international appeal, and high fitness requirements, soccer is a very popular sport amongst today’s younger generations. The web survey undertaken for this Master Plan found that 16% of respondents have participated in soccer within the past twelve months, ranking it eleventh out of the twenty-six activities queried.

Typically, soccer field needs are assessed using market-driven standards that consider the number of participants using local soccer fields (in the range of 1 field per 80 players). This market-based approach would not suffice in Northern Bruce Peninsula as there are presently no organized soccer programs, as local residents playing the sport would make use of programs in the Town of South Bruce Peninsula (e.g. through Sauble Beach Minor Soccer). The market for soccer is fairly small, given that the Census records fewer than 650 residents under the age of 19 (minor soccer is the primary market).

Using a more traditional per capita approach, most municipalities provide soccer fields in the range of 1 field per 2,500 to 3,500 residents. Based upon this application, the existing and forecasted population (expected to reach just below 4,000 residents by the year 2021) would be sufficiently served by the field at Bruce Peninsula District School. That being said, a municipal soccer field may be justified if two variables are satisfied: 1) if community access to the existing school field is lost, for whatever reason; and/or 2) if a local provider(s) delivers organized programs and attracts more than 80 registrants. A comprehensive soccer field needs assessment should be undertaken prior to any development of a municipal soccer field, potentially through a five year Update to this Parks & Recreation Master Plan. The Municipality also has a vacant field next to the Tobermory Meeting Place that has been used as a soccer and baseball field in the past; the use of this land may be considered in any upcoming assessments should needs warrant new sports fields in the future.
4. The Need for Recreation Facilities

The Municipality currently has two lit ball diamonds, located at School Bell Park and Ferndale Park. For the purposes of this Master Plan, each lit diamond is assumed to allow 50% more playable hours (due to evening use) than an unlit equivalent; therefore, the Municipality is considered to have 3 unlit diamond equivalents.

The web survey undertaken for this Master Plan found that 13% of respondents have participated in ball within the past twelve months, ranking it twelfth out of the twenty-six activities queried. Typically, the amount of registered players is utilized to determine the facility usage requirements. However, no input was received from any local baseball organizations, so registration and usage information for baseball diamonds is generally unknown. As such, a target of 1 ball diamond per 4,000 residents has been established for this Master Plan. Given the current population, one diamond would suffice to meet the needs of the current and forecasted population by the year 2021, thus the present supply is sufficient to accommodate needs over the master planning period.

RECOMMENDATIONS

23) While no new sports fields are recommended over the master planning period due to limited market demand, needs should be re-evaluated every five years through Updates to the Parks & Recreation Master Plan. Instead of capital investments in new facilities, the Municipality should maximize the playing experience afforded at its existing supply of sports fields, maintaining them in a manner that facilitates a high quality of play for user groups and the general public.

Timing: Ongoing (2012-2021)

Resource Implications: Operational costs associated with maintenance

4.2 Tennis Courts

With regards to tennis, trends research is generally mixed. Some trends suggest that the aging baby boom generation could boost demand for the sport due to their increased interest in active living opportunities, while other studies have found that tennis is not growing as a sport. Experience also suggests that the interest in tennis varies greatly between municipalities and can be influenced by the existing level of service and ethnic composition. The unstructured and unprogrammed nature of tennis may bode well for future participation as the sport can be accommodated within a busy lifestyle; for this reason, courts that players can walk to are preferred as are multi-court venues (two or more hard surface courts) due to the increased maintenance efficiencies. In addition, some tennis organizations in the province have taken a proactive approach to increasing participation through programs aimed at children and youth. In Northern Bruce Peninsula, 9% of web survey participants reported participation in tennis, ranking seventeenth of twenty-six queried activities.
There is one municipal tennis court located at School Bell Park in Tobermory; in addition community access is permitted at two tennis courts that are located at Bruce Peninsula District School in Lion’s Head, after school hours. From the perspective of geographic distribution, tennis courts in the Municipality are distributed sufficiently among the secondary urban settlements. Tennis courts are typically provided at a rate of 1 court per 5,000 residents, implying that the Municipality currently has an adequate supply of courts with one owned by the Municipality and two by the school board. As such, no new tennis courts are recommended over the master planning period. If demand for tennis courts is generated in the future, the Municipality could explore partnership agreements with the private sector to meet this need; the Tobermory Lodge, for example, has two tennis courts that could potentially be explored for community access.

4.3 Arenas

The Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula owns and operates one arena at the Lion’s Head & District Community Centre. The ice rink measures 185’ x 85’, supported by five lower-level change rooms plus a referee’s room, and spectator seating for 400 persons. This aging facility appears to be in fairly good condition, likely a result of the Municipality’s diligent maintenance efforts.

Arenas tend to be provided at a service level of 1 ice rink per 700 registered arena users or 12,000 population. With a collective membership of 316 reported by local arena users responding to the Master Plan’s stakeholder survey\(^2\) and a population forecasted to remain just below 4,000 residents, no new ice rinks are recommended in Northern Bruce Peninsula over the master planning period. Sufficient capacity is also evidenced by the availability of prime time ice rental opportunities as well as the fact that the aging population will not be expected to generate major demands for ice time, particularly during the evening hours.

Instead of developing a new arena, the Municipality should continue to focus on improving its existing facility. In 2010, a Parks, Recreation & Facilities Report provided recommendations to expand the Lion’s Head & District Community Centre, through three construction phases, the first of which largely involves arena enhancements. A number of structural and mechanical upgrades were proposed that remain worthy of consideration; the most notable recommendations in the context of the 2010 Report pertained to the addition of six new dressing rooms and creating a new entrance on the south-west corner of the building.

\(^2\) Groups reporting membership figures include Bruce Peninsula Minor Hockey (250 players), Peninsula Panters Oldtimers Club (31 members), and the Lion’s Head Figure Skating Club (35 skaters).
4.4 Curling

The Lion’s Head Arena & District Community Centre is partially utilized for curling on a weekly basis during the curling season, with the Lion’s Head Curling Club offering programs oriented to both youth and adults. Recent national studies estimate that between 1% and 3% of the Canadian Adult Population participates in curling\(^\text{13}\). In recent years, many clubs in Canada have sought to increase their membership through the introduction of junior programs that have reached out to the community and local schools; this continues to be a key strategy for the Canadian Curling Association. A local youth curling program is offered after school at the Lion’s Head Arena, targeting increased participation and younger members.

Curling in Canada, however, has experienced a decline in participation over the past two decades, which has caused a number of curling clubs to close. Curling can be considered a niche activity that, because of its relatively small membership base, makes it more susceptible to fluctuations in market and sport trends. Given available capacity at the Lion’s Head Arena, the Lion’s Head Curling Club is expected to be able to continue to offer their programs over the master planning period. As such, the Municipality should continue to allocate appropriate times to curling at its arena rather than constructing and/or operating a dedicated curling facility (something that would represent a new level of service). Should the Curling Club or other enthusiasts be interested in developing a local facility jointly with the Municipality, the notion may be entertained by encouraging the interested party to submit a business plan articulating capital funding opportunities, operational responsibilities, access to the general public, etc. prior to making a decision (evaluated as per discussions relating to non-core services and partnerships articulated earlier in this Master Plan).

4.5 Community Centres & Halls

Community Centres

Communities are moving away from single-purpose, stand-alone facilities in favour of multi-use facilities that integrate numerous activities and offer economies of scale with respect to construction, maintenance, staffing, scheduling, etc. Multi-use facilities are often designed with flexible spaces and the potential to expand in order to easily respond to changing trends and demands of future users. In addition, the ability to offer cross-programming opportunities and their responsiveness to the ‘time crunch’ make them an attractive ‘one-stop shopping’ destination. In some municipalities, there is a growing trend of locating a number of other services at larger complexes, such as municipal offices and bill payment kiosks, community supports and resources (e.g., employment centres, counselling services, food distribution, etc.), library services, healthcare (e.g. walk-in clinics, physiotherapy, etc.).

\(^{13}\) The 2009 Physical Activity Monitor published by the Canadian Fitness & Lifestyle Research Institute indicates that 27% of Canadians participate in sport, of which 4% participate in curling – this translates to approximately 1% of the entire Canadian population. Conversely, data from the Print Measurement Bureau estimates the curling market to be 2.8% of the entire Canadian population (as of 2008).
4. The Need for Recreation Facilities

Figure 7: Distribution of Municipal Community Centres & Halls

Indoor Facilities
1. Ferndale Information Centre
2. Ferndale Community Hall
3. Lindsay Hall
4. Lion's Head Arena & District Community Centre
5. Lion's Head Friendship Club
6. Lion's Head Marina Building
7. Rotary Hall
8. Stokes Bay Community Centre
9. Tobermory Community Centre
10. Tobermory Meeting Place

Map notes:
- Municipal Boundary
- 5km Arena & District Community Centre Service Area
- 2km Community Hall Service Area
- National/Provincial Park
- Cape Croker & Saugeen Hunting Ground

See inset A, B, and C for detailed locations.
In Northern Bruce Peninsula, there are two major community centres (there also a number of community halls, discussed later in this subsection). St. Edmunds Community Centre combines a visitor information centre with a large auditorium and kitchen, along with the outdoor amenities at School Bell Park. The Lion’s Head & District Community Centre combines an arena with an auditorium and kitchen.

In 2008, a Community Centre Arena Network Group (CCANG) was formed to evaluate the need to expand the Lion’s Head & District Community Centre. As a result of this work, a more detailed examination into the possibility of expanding the facility was undertaken through the Parks & Recreation Master Plan. Through the Master Plan, a number of facility-based considerations have been recommended, the majority of which could pertain to the Lion’s Head & District Community Centre, including:

- Improving the overall circulation and accessibility of the arena, including replacement of the lower-level arena dressing rooms;
- Integrating the Friendship Club into the facility;
- Considering options to incorporate library space, wellness studio, performance space, and/or additional multi-purpose rooms.

With the above in mind, the Municipality retained G.M. Diemert Architect Inc. to develop some preliminary sketches to supplement this Master Plan. Two concepts have been developed, as shown on the following pages, to illustrate how the Community Centre could be expanded. It should be noted that the components and space configuration illustrated herein are solely conceptual, thus the Municipality will need to undertake further study to confirm that the spaces are feasible from a capital and operating cost perspective as well as the size of the spaces. The adjacent site plan illustrates how each option would fit onto the current Lion’s Head & District Community Centre property, while also considering parking requirements at a cursory level; Concept #1 is shown in pink while Concept #2 is shown in blue.
Large-scale infrastructure, such as community centres, has major impacts on the environment. Integrating sustainable design principles that promote energy efficiency, water conservation, “green” technologies, etc. is highly desirable, though the costs of being “green” must be carefully balanced. While no new major capital projects have been recommended through the Parks & Recreation Master Plan (apart from expansion of the Lion’s Head & District Community Centre), it is important that the Municipality continue to assume a leadership role in local sustainability planning and undertake various initiatives to improve green efficiencies. For example, municipal community centres should be evaluated for conformity to best practices in reducing energy consumption, integrating low-flow plumbing and high-efficiency lighting features, utilizing solar and/or geothermal energy for electricity and heat, and assessing the insulation and heat retention capacity of buildings. Given the abundant natural beauty and focus on the environment, such objectives would dovetail nicely in positioning the Municipality as a leader in the promotion of alternative energies, and complement its ‘Dark Skies Community’ objectives.

RECOMMENDATIONS

24) Expand the Lion’s Head & District Community Centre to include:
   - Improved circulation and accessibility for facility patrons, including new change rooms for the arena
   - Older adult and seniors space to replace the aging Friendship Club building
   - Wellness studio for active living opportunities (non-equipment based space)
   - Library branch (pending confirmation through further study)

   Timing: Immediate Action (2012-2016)
   Resource Implications: To be determined through subsequent feasibility, design, and business planning studies

Community Halls & Meeting Rooms

The Municipality, through amalgamation, has inherited a number of single-purpose community halls that are dispersed throughout Northern Bruce Peninsula. On one hand, the community benefits from having well distributed multi-purpose program space as it provides residents with conveniently located, competitively priced facilities (as compared to private facilities such as hotels, social clubs, etc.) for a variety of gatherings, celebrations and meetings. This space is equally essential to the delivery of community programs directly provided by community organizations including local senior’s groups, minor sports, cultural groups, etc. These halls can often be focal points of community activity, offering abilities to deliver programs and services to rural populations that do not reside in the larger secondary urban areas. On the other hand, community halls tend to be used for a homogenous range of uses such as gatherings, buck and does, etc. and are costly to operate from a Municipal perspective due to low rents and high capital maintenance and utility costs.
Maximizing existing community spaces to accommodate a wider variety of uses is a preferred approach to providing the public with access to new multi-purpose program space. The Municipality should continue to make use of its existing assets and invest in appropriate upgrades in order to ensure that a sufficient distribution of rental and program delivery spaces exist. Prior to any investment in existing facilities, the municipality will need to assess the costs of carrying out any improvements and rationalize this expense through a cost-benefit evaluation. For example, such spaces could be used for a greater degree of outreach programming delivered by the community (e.g. youth and older adults programs, studio-based fitness opportunities, etc.), therefore ensuring that these spaces are multi-purpose yet actively programmable is an important part of evaluations undertaken to upgrade.

The construction of new single purpose halls, however, should be discouraged in favour of providing multi-purpose spaces within multi-use facility templates. These spaces are easily incorporated in the facility design and can provide a great deal of community benefit at a low marginal cost associated with construction of the larger facility. Consolidation of the Friendship Club building into the Lion’s Head & District Community Centre would represent such an approach. Similarly, the recreational function of the Rotary Hall in Lion’s Head is deemed to be redundant and could be integrated into an expanded Lion’s Head & District Community Centre. That said, Rotary Hall is a unique facility in the Municipality given its age though in its current antiquated state, the Municipality will have to make a decision whether to improve this facility for a non-recreational use (e.g. for arts and cultural use given its historical ambiance and availability of the stage), whether to lease or sell the building to a community/private sector organization willing to operate it, or whether to divest of this asset. As such, the Municipality will have to undertake future study to determine what, if any, role that Rotary Hall will play in the future.

For other community halls, improvements will need to be considered on a case-by-case basis. For example, the Municipality leases halls such as the Tobermory Meeting Place and the Ferndale Community Hall to external providers; these facilities should continue to be maintained to their standard level of upkeep and the Municipality would be receptive to suggested improvements from the tenants by evaluating how to cover the costs (e.g. tenant investments, adjusting rental rates, etc.). For other community halls, their respective communities should be encouraged to take on a greater role in operations of the facility (largely through funding and general upkeep) to minimize strains on the Municipality to provide such a level of service and ensure their longevity to serve the communities into the future.
The 2010 Parks, Recreation & Facilities Report proposed a banquet hall with 500 person capacity at the Lion’s Head & District Community Centre as part of a third phase construction. The Municipality presently has a number of large meeting rooms including the auditorium adjacent to the arena (212 person capacity) and the St. Edmund’s Community centre auditorium (357 person capacity). The various community halls also have capacities for between 50 and 100 persons. Given that sufficiently large halls already exist in the municipal supply, as well as competing private sector facilities in local hotels and lodges, a second banquet hall at the Lion’s Head & District Community Centre is not recommended at this time. It is unlikely that the Municipality would be able to recoup its capital and operating investments for this type of space without some form of contributions from the community (the amount of which would need to be determined through business planning).

RECOMMENDATIONS

25) Investigate, on a case-by-case basis, the ability of existing municipal community halls and other program spaces to accommodate a broader range of uses in order to maximize their usage and deliver outreach programming to more remote communities of Northern Bruce Peninsula. As part of this process, the Friendship Club building should be integrated into an expanded Lion’s Head & District Community Centre.

Timing: Ongoing (2012-2021); Immediate Action (2012-2016) – Friendship Club integration
Resource Implications: To be determined through business planning, architectural designs, etc.

26) The recreational function of Rotary Hall duplicates functions that are offered by the Lion’s Head & District Community Centre. The Municipality should initiate a process to determine whether Rotary Hall should be maintained and/or enhanced for non-recreational uses, whether to transfer operational responsibility to a community group, or if the Municipality should divest itself of the facility.

Timing: Immediate Action (2012-2016)
Resource Implications: To be determined through business planning, architectural designs, partnership agreements, etc.
4.6 Indoor Pools

There are no indoor aquatic facilities owned by the Municipality, though there are private sector pools such as at the Tobermory Lodge or the Red Bay Lodge (in Mar). The closest public indoor pools would be located in Owen Sound. It is noted that the Municipality organizes outdoor swimming lessons at the Lion’s Head Beach.

Indoor aquatic centres can offer a community the ability to provide a popular recreational activity that can be pursued by residents of all ages, either through structured programming or informal drop-in opportunities. They are beneficial in waterfront communities by providing controlled environments for learn-to-swim to lifeguarding skills, while also responding to the needs of older adults (particularly if designed as warm-water therapeutic pools). Such facilities, however, come at a great cost as they are highly expensive and require significant capital and operational outlays. In fact, municipal indoor aquatic centres are virtually assured of running an operational deficit from year to year, even in the largest of markets (generally requiring annual subsidies between $100,000 and $400,000 depending upon the type of pool and the market that it serves). The decision to construct indoor aquatic facilities in communities is generally made from the perspective that intrinsic value (i.e., community benefit that everyone should have the opportunity to learn to swim) will outweigh financial losses.

Given the limited population base of the Municipality, it would not be financially sustainable to operate an indoor pool. Instead, the focus of the Municipality should be to explore partnership opportunities with the private sector, notably the Tobermory Lodge and/or the Red Bay Lodge. While there are many examples with non-profits (e.g. YMCA, Boys & Girls Club, etc.), there are far fewer with for-profit enterprise. Sometimes, a private operator will independently offer swimming lessons as a community service, but do not tend to offer regular public swims as this is a cost to the operator. A regional private sector example occurs in the form of a major enterprise, being the Plunge aquatic facility operated by IntraWest in the Town of The Blue Mountains, who permit public access through a set fee schedule applicable to all users (regardless of where they reside, though there is differentiated pricing for peak and non-peak periods). This type of arrangement is more common than minor enterprises such as local hotels and fitness clubs. That said, if public access can be negotiated at a local business, programming can be organized by the Municipality in a similar fashion as for its outdoor swim lessons or facilitated through a community-based provider.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

27) Explore partnerships with private sector providers of indoor aquatic facilities rather than constructing a municipally owned and operated pool, using the partnership framework advanced in this Master Plan as a means to minimize risk and the operating burden that an indoor pool would place on the Municipality if it were to operate such a facility itself.

_Timing:_ Immediate Action (2012-2016)

_Resources/Implications:_ To be determined through the discussions and agreements developed with the private sector.
4.7 Gymnasiums & Fitness Studios

The Municipality currently does not provide gymnasium space; instead, the community can access gymnasium space at local schools under the Province's Community Use of Schools initiative. Provision standards tend to vary for gymnasiums, ranging anywhere from one gymnasium per 30,000 to 50,000 residents, although there are smaller communities who have chosen to provide this level of service. As with the discussion surrounding the indoor aquatics assessment, gymnasiums can provide intrinsic benefits to a community by providing opportunities for physical activity, year-round sport and recreation activities, and programs which are geared to a range of interests and ages. A gym is also ideal for certain cross-programming initiatives though it is best co-located with facilities such as pools, youth and seniors centres, fitness centres, etc. In Northern Bruce Peninsula, the only cross-programming opportunity would likely be associated with dry-land training for arena users given the small market for field sports. As discussed in the partnership assessment of the Master Plan, it may be more cost-effective for the Municipality to explore a formalized reciprocal agreement (or another pact) in conjunction with the school board, the end goal being to minimize rental costs to user groups (see Recommendation #10).

In terms of fitness, a limited private sector presence exists through a personal trainer that utilizes the Tobermory Meeting Place, as well as a fitness centre in Lion's Head. Many communities have different philosophies when it comes to operating a municipal fitness centre; some choose not to compete with the private sector, while others provide equipment-based facilities supplemented with programming. For the Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula, entry into equipment-based fitness services would represent a new level of service, and is thus not recommended at the present time. Instead, the Municipality should continue to facilitate community-based delivery of fitness programs (as it does at the Meeting Place) by integrating a wellness studio into the Lion's Head & District Community Centre. This would contain simple elements such as a woodsprung floor, mirrors, etc. but would not contain equipment such as weight-training or cardio machines. The wellness studio could be used for active living opportunities (e.g. tai chi, yoga, aerobics, etc.) that would complement other proposed spaces in the facility such as the Friendship Club programs for older adults and seniors.

The trend towards indoor walking is becoming more popular, though indoor tracks can be costly to build given that they usually encircle a gymnasium or ice rink. The Municipality should continue to encourage indoor walking as is currently done with the daily walking group at the St. Edmunds Community Centre and winter usage at the Bruce Peninsula Public School, potentially expanding these programs by working with the schools and other community-based providers of space to improve access and/or amenity levels for such users.

Furthermore, the Municipal supply of community halls and meeting rooms should be explored for their ability to be enhanced to accommodate community-based fitness programs. This should be done as recommended earlier in this Section, through a case-by-case examination of these facilities.
4.8 Libraries

While a detailed assessment of library space needs is beyond the scope of the Parks & Recreation Master Plan, the 2010 Parks, Recreation and Facilities Report suggested that a library branch would be an ideal component to the Lion’s Head & District Community Centre. As such, a brief analysis of library needs has been undertaken, however, it is cautioned that the Municipality should undertake a more comprehensive assessment of library needs prior to making any critical decisions with respect to the local library system.

The County of Bruce is responsible for library services in Northern Bruce Peninsula, and rents space in Tobermory and Lion’s Head from the Municipality to deliver its services. The Tobermory branch is approximately 1,650 square feet in size while the Lion’s Head branch is about 1,200 square feet in size. A commonly accepted service level for library space is 0.6 square feet per person in a municipality; based upon this standard, the forecasted 3,933 residents projected for the end of the master planning period would require 2,360 square feet of library space. Again, it is emphasised that the per capita target needs to be verified through a comprehensive library study.

With 2,850 square feet of existing library space in Northern Bruce Peninsula, space requirements would be satisfied over the master planning period. On this basis, no new library space would be needed and thus justification on this alone would not warrant a branch at the Lion’s Head & District Community Centre. That said, relocation of the library from its current location to the Community Centre may be justified on the basis of creating a multi-use facility through which the library could benefit users of the proposed older adult and seniors space, as well as caregivers whose children are attending arena activities (such as hockey practices or figure skating lessons); this may also allow the Library to increase its utilization and potentially deliver new programming to the community. The existing library space on Main Street would be vacated and used for alternative purposes. Prior to undertaking a relocation, the Municipality will have to confirm this direction after consulting with the County of Bruce and the general public, as well as understanding the cost-benefit involved with construction and relocation of the Lion’s Head branch.

RECOMMENDATIONS

28) In collaboration with the County of Bruce, the Municipality should undertake a cost-benefit assessment of relocating the Lion’s Head library branch to the Lion’s Head & District Community Centre. This would ideally form part of a County-driven Library Master Plan.

Timing: Immediate Action (2012-2016)
Resource Implications: To be determined through future study
5.0 Enhancing Local Parks

Access to parkland and natural areas is something that is highly valued by Canadians, from both urban and rural parts of the country. From National Parks that span hundreds of hectares to small neighbourhood parks in urban areas, the affinity for the outdoors is evident as demonstrated by park usage, participation, recreation services, and the desire to live close to green space.

The role of parkland and trails within the urban fabric is immense. Depending upon their size and function, parks have multiple applications and can act as:

- facilitators of “placemaking” and high quality urban designs;
- catalysts for community improvement and revitalization;
- hubs for special events and social interaction;
- venues for physical activity, whether for programmed or spontaneous usage;
- educators and stewards of the natural environment; and
- spaces for family gatherings and relaxation.

The increasing integration of “places” and “destinations” through urban design seeks to create comfortable, connected and sustainable streetscapes. The role of parkland and trails is essentially tied to these objectives as such spaces function as hubs for social and physical activity, while increasing the overall attractiveness of any given area (provided they are designed with aesthetics and functionality in mind). While park and trail development can increase the attractiveness and marketability of new areas, parkland and trail redevelopment can similarly act as a catalyst for improving quality of life and revitalizing existing areas.

As such, the importance of the parks and open system as an asset cannot be understated. The Municipality offers a number of parks and open spaces to encourage physical and social activity, wellness, and informal use opportunities, all of which are paramount considerations in the design of local parks in order to encourage use and facilitate activity levels. Through the various parks, beaches and trails, there are opportunities for unstructured usage as well as community based programming such as swimming, day camps, scouts, fairs and festivals, etc.
This Section examines the Municipality’s current parkland and open space supplies, policies, acquisition methods, and future parkland requirements. Parks provide the land base that supports many recreation amenities and their continued provision and enhancement is required in order to achieve the vision and recommendations of the Parks & Recreation Master Plan. Specifically, this assessment:

- Examines relevant park and open space issues and opportunities, including needs and gaps;
- Reviews the parkland hierarchy outlined in the Official Plan (2010); and
- Identifies future parkland needs and acquisition priorities and methods.

### 5.1 Parkland Classification and Supply

Defining a hierarchy within a parks and open space system is important to directing many aspects of intended park usage, such as size, form, function and/or amenity. Primary considerations of the parks system as a whole include (but are not limited to):

- Planning the appropriate function and use for each park;
- Achieving a satisfactory distribution and quantity of parks to provide access to residents and maintain the integrity of the natural heritage system; and
- Ensuring a high degree of “walkability” and ability to access parks by forms of active transportation.

The County Official Plan does not contain a formal parkland classification system. A park classification system that addresses a range of different types and characteristics of parks and open spaces should be developed to guide the development, acquisition and management of existing and future parks. To supplement a hierarchy of parks, it is suggested that the Municipality adopt a recommended standard of 4 hectares per 1,000 residents for total municipal parkland.

It is recommended that the Municipality implement standards for different park types, based on the size and types of uses that occur within them. The following new definitions are proposed:

- **Neighbourhood Parks** – primarily serve the immediate neighbourhood, may contain a combination of active and passive opportunities in a minimum size of 0.5 hectares.
- **Community Parks** – serving the broader community, provides active playing fields and children’s play
facilities in a minimum size of 4 hectares.

- **Open Spaces** — parks and beaches intended for passive recreational use, containing no active recreation facilities.

- **Linear Park** — passive parks designed to function as ‘green corridors’, linking communities and ecosystems together. This classification may also account for transportation or utility right-of-ways contained within parkland that are not necessarily usable leisure space.

### Table 2: Supply of Municipality Maintained Parkland

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Park Name</th>
<th>Size (ha)</th>
<th>Provision Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neighbourhood Park</td>
<td>Provision Level: 0.4 ha/1,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lindsay Cenotaph Park</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lion’s Head Cenotaph Park</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maple Golf Crescent Park</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pike Bay Park</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobermory Cenotaph Park</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Neighbourhood Parks</strong></td>
<td><strong>1.64</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Park</td>
<td>Provision Level: 1.1 ha/1,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ferndale Park</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lion’s Head Beach Park*</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Bell Park</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Community Parks</strong></td>
<td><strong>4.20</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Space</td>
<td>Provision Level: 2.2 ha/1,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunks Bay Beach</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hobsons Harbour Beach</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandy Beach Park</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stokes Bay Park</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunset Park</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Open Spaces</strong></td>
<td><strong>8.51</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Supply</strong></td>
<td><strong>14.35</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overall Provision Level</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.8 ha/1,000</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* includes Memorial Gardens and the Lion’s Head Campground

Notes: provision level is based on an estimated 2011 population of 3,818. Excludes lands leased for boat launches.

The Linear Park classification may also be of benefit to address the Municipality’s vast trail network and the public’s desire for additional trail facilities. Such parks could also link communities together, such as how the Bruce Trail currently functions between Tobermory and Lion’s Head (and beyond).

In total, Northern Bruce Peninsula owns and maintains 14.35 hectares of parkland, translating into 3.8 hectares of parkland per 1,000 persons based upon the estimated 2011 population of 3,818. These parks are distributed across the Municipality, as shown in the figure on the following page.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

29) In collaboration with the County of Bruce, create a parkland classification system in the Official Plan to guide the planning, design and management of the parks system.

**Timing:** Immediate Action (2012-2016)

**Resource Implications:** Staff time
Figure 8: Distribution and Service Area of Municipality Maintained Parks

Parks & Open Spaces
1. Dunks Bay Beach
2. Dyer's Bay Boat Launch
3. Fenwick Park
4. Hobsons Harbour Beach Park (Eastnor Park)
5. Lindsay Cenotaph Park
6. Lion's Head Beach / Memorial Gardens
7. Lion's Head Campground
8. Lion's Head Cenotaph Park
9. Maple Golf Crescent Park
10. Pike Bay Park
11. Sandy Beach Park
12. School Bell Park
13. Stokes Bay Boat Launch
14. Stokes Bay Park
15. Sunset Park
16. Tobermory Cenotaph Park
5.2 Parkland Needs

As noted earlier in this Section, the Master Plan has defined an overall parkland target of 4.0 hectares per 1,000 persons; to assist in determining the types of parks required, provision targets for each classification of parkland in the Municipality (these are consistent with historic service levels).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neighbourhood Parks</th>
<th>0.5 hectares per 1,000 persons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Parks</td>
<td>1.5 hectares per 1,000 persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Spaces</td>
<td>2.0 hectares per 1,000 persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Parkland Requirements</strong></td>
<td><strong>4.0 hectares per 1,000 persons</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Using these targets as the basis of assessing the quantity of municipal parkland, the Municipality is presently deficient in the overall provision of parkland and significantly deficient in neighbourhood parks. The table below illustrates how the parkland service level will affect the need for future parkland assuming no new parkland is added to the supply.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>3,818</td>
<td>3,933</td>
<td>3,933</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Neighbourhood Park Provision Standard</strong></td>
<td>0.5 ha / 1,000 persons</td>
<td>0.5 ha / 1,000 persons</td>
<td>0.5 ha / 1,000 persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbourhood Parkland Supply</td>
<td>1.64 ha</td>
<td>1.53 ha</td>
<td>1.53 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbourhood Parkland Required</td>
<td>1.91 ha</td>
<td>2.00 ha</td>
<td>2.00 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deviation from Proposed Target</td>
<td>-0.27 ha</td>
<td>-0.36 ha</td>
<td>-0.36 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community Park Service Level</strong></td>
<td>1.5 ha / 1,000 persons</td>
<td>1.5 ha / 1,000 persons</td>
<td>1.5 ha / 1,000 persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Parkland Supply</td>
<td>4.20 ha</td>
<td>4.20 ha</td>
<td>4.20 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Parkland Required</td>
<td>5.73 ha</td>
<td>6.00 ha</td>
<td>6.00 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deviation from Proposed Target</td>
<td>-1.53 ha</td>
<td>-1.80 ha</td>
<td>-1.80 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Open Space Provision Standard</strong></td>
<td>2.0 ha / 1,000 persons</td>
<td>2.0 ha / 1,000 persons</td>
<td>2.0 ha / 1,000 persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbourhood Parkland Supply</td>
<td>8.51 ha</td>
<td>8.51 ha</td>
<td>8.51 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbourhood Parkland Required</td>
<td>7.64 ha</td>
<td>7.87 ha</td>
<td>7.87 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deviation from Proposed Target</td>
<td>+0.87 ha</td>
<td>+0.64 ha</td>
<td>+0.64 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OVERALL PARKLAND TARGET</strong></td>
<td><strong>4.0 ha / 1,000 persons</strong></td>
<td><strong>4.0 ha / 1,000 persons</strong></td>
<td><strong>4.0 ha / 1,000 persons</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OVERALL PARKLAND SUPPLY</strong></td>
<td>14.35 ha</td>
<td>14.35 ha</td>
<td>14.35 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OVERALL PARKLAND REQUIRED</strong></td>
<td>15.27 ha</td>
<td>15.73 ha</td>
<td>15.73 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DEVIATION FROM PROPOSED TARGET</strong></td>
<td>-0.92 ha</td>
<td>-1.38 ha</td>
<td>-1.38 ha</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

30. To meet the parkland needs associated with forecasted population growth, a total of 1.4 hectares of parkland will be required by the year 2021, primarily in the form of Community and Neighbourhood level parks.

**Timing:** Ongoing (2012-2021)

**Resource Implications:** Standard costs of parkland acquisition (depending on the value of land and how it is obtained) and maintenance.
5.3 Waterfront Areas

Beaches

The Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula is a waterfront community, bounded on three sides by Lake Huron and Georgian Bay. A total of five municipally maintained parks (referred to as open spaces in the earlier in this Section) are shoreline properties; these beaches and open spaces are not supervised, with the Municipality maintaining these passive properties on an as-needed basis. The Municipality also owns a number of unmaintained waterfront lands that are not presently used for park purposes. There are also several other points of access to the water for swimming from privately held lands and areas owned by the provincial and federal governments.

Demand for beaches is generally high across the province, however, usage is largely impacted by quality of sand and water, safety (i.e. water currents, availability of lifeguards, etc.), supporting amenities (e.g. change rooms, retail, etc.) to name but a few. Municipal beaches tend to be highly valued and can form an integral part of a waterfront system. The Municipality may consider the provision of additional beach areas, possibly through the waterfront park acquisition process and potentially developing appropriate unmaintained parcels that it owns (to be determined on a case-by-case basis).

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 31) Continue to explore opportunities to acquire shoreline waterfront lands situated to provide public access to Lake Huron and Georgian Bay.

Timing: Ongoing (2012-2021)

Resource Implications: Standard costs of parkland acquisition (depending on the value of land and how it is obtained), redevelopment of existing unmaintained parcels and maintenance.
Marinas/Boat Launches

The Municipality’s marinas and boat launches play an important role in accessing the waterfront. Marina facilities are provided in Lion’s Head and Tobermory; the lands are leased from the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans, with the Municipality responsible for operating the harbours. The Lion’s Head Marina contains an administration building with shower and washroom facilities for boaters, public washrooms, a meeting room and a lounge. It provides a total of 210 slips, the majority of which are seasonal and thus allows the Municipality to better forecast how much revenue they can generate. On the other hand, the Tobermory Marina is predominantly geared to transient slips (50 in total) that presents a greater budgeting challenge due to uncertainty of use in any given year, though the facility is generally successful given the volume of traffic passing through this area. Both marinas are overseen by seasonal Harbour Masters employed by the Municipality, who report to the Facilities Supervisor.

There are also a couple of boat launches (small craft harbours) that are provided at Stokes Bay and Dyers Bay, both of which are leased from the federal government. These launches provide additional opportunities to access the water, particularly for those living in the central rural communities between Tobermory and Lion’s Head.

A comprehensive review of existing marina operations falls beyond the scope of the Parks & Recreation Master Plan, thus the Municipality should evaluate ways to enhance its supply of boat launches and slips by undertaking a marina study. This study should evaluate the market (i.e. the demand, or latent demand, for the existing marina services), whether there is a need to expand marina buildings (e.g. adding washrooms, common areas, etc.) and the number of slips, as well as the feasibility and costs associated with any undertakings. If unable to do such a study in-house, the Municipality should tender the study to a qualified professional or community group (e.g. local marine use associations).

RECOMMENDATIONS

32) Undertake a Marina Study to investigate the need and costs associated with expanding the number of slips, the marina building, marketing efforts, and/or the staffing allocation.

*Timing*: Ongoing (2012-2021)

*Resource Implications*: Consulting Fees (approximately $35,000, depending upon qualifications of the professional firm or community organization)
5.4 Acquisition Policies, Guidelines, & Strategies

There are several provincial and municipal regulations, policies, and guidelines governing the acquisition and location of parkland, with the Ontario Planning Act\(^4\) and the County of Bruce Official Plan being the primary tools. The County Official Plan prescribes conveyance for park purposes in residential areas at 5% of land, while developments for commercial and industrial areas is utilized at 2% and cash-in-lieu may also be accepted as prescribed by the Planning Act. Cash-in-lieu should be considered for areas that do not require additional parkland; the County Official Plan establishes criteria for the acceptance of cash-in-lieu payments in substitute for parkland, whereby cash-in-lieu is taken where:

- a sufficient quantity of parkland already exists to serve the needs of the developing area;
- the Municipality wishes to combine the parkland dedications of a number of small developments in order to provide one large park;
- any parkland that is conveyed is of inadequate size or configuration to function effectively as a park; or
- conveyance of parkland would render a development as not being feasible.

There may also be opportunities to acquire lands in urban areas if commercial, industrial, or institutional lands become available for sale. For example, if a local school board considers closure and sale of underutilized or aging schools, the Municipality should consider the acquisition of such property for the purposes of utilizing it as parkland, or possibly capitalizing on the school facility itself for programming (e.g., gymnasium, multi-purpose space, and/or renovating to include other needed facilities). The County’s Official Plan supports this idea as it encourages co-ordinating with local school boards to integrate facilities in order to better serve its residents.

RECOMMENDATIONS

33) Evaluate opportunities to acquire parkland in gap areas identified throughout new and existing communities, using tools such as:

- Conveyance of parkland, as permitted through dedications under the Planning Act.
- Alternatives acquisition mechanisms such as municipal purchase, lease, land swaps, etc. as appropriate.

**Timing:** Ongoing (2012-2021)

**Resource Implications:** Standard costs of parkland acquisition and maintenance (no capital dollars would have to be expended for parkland conveyed under the Planning Act)

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\(^4\) The Planning Act (R.S.O., 1990) establishes a framework for the dedication of parkland, requiring lands that are dedicated to the Municipality, or purchased by the Municipality using cash-in-lieu, to be used for “park or other public recreational purposes”, that not only includes land acquisition, but also the erection or repair of buildings and the acquisition of machinery.
5.5 Park Design and Amenities

Design & Operational Considerations

The design of active and passive parks should also incorporate elements that cater to social interaction, wellness, and individual physical activity, through features such as exercise/stretching stations, personal reflection/meditation gardens, vertical differentials along pathways (i.e., hilly terrain, stair zones with associated wheelchair ramps), etc.

In selecting potential park sites, a number of factors will influence the decision-making process including, but not limited to:

- topographical and geological considerations;
- potential to protect ecological functions, wildlife and native plant species abutting parks;
- location and access to the area, particularly relative to other land uses;
- the ability to support the desired recreational infrastructure;
- visibility/public frontage; and
- potential for trail or natural system linkages.

New and replacement parks and trails infrastructure should continue to be designed and constructed on a cost-effective basis, meaning that all infrastructure, elements, and facilities installed should generally be selected based on locally available replacement parts and services and should utilize a standard agreed-upon selection of component parts to support ease of maintenance and repair. Examples include the use of standard benches, playground equipment and light fixtures for which parts are readily available through local manufacturers. Any use of non-standard materials and equipment (such as might occur in ‘special’ parks) is to be based on a full understanding and justification of the operational ramifications and cost increases that will accrue to the relevant municipal department.

The provision of ‘purpose-built’ landscapes which provide a special role to the citizen and park user are beneficial to engage the sensory and functional elements of the park. For example, providing experiential/healing gardens, customizing designs for skateboard parks, and barrier-free playgrounds all appeal to a particular sense or ability. In addition, the inclusion of end users in the design of these facilities will help to promote long-term feelings of ownership and ongoing usage patterns. Incorporation of public art into the future design of public and private spaces is encouraged in order to facilitate civic pride and create local identity at key points in the parks system.

Presently, the influx of tourists and seasonal residents creates peak pressures on parkland and maintenance efforts cannot always keep up. Furthermore, as the population grows and new facilities and services are provided, the Municipality will need to ensure that ongoing quality controls remain at satisfactory levels. The need for operating resources (e.g., staff, equipment, etc.) will be required to keep pace with added demands for a bolstered leisure delivery system. Ensuring quality is an utmost priority to ensure that residents and users are satisfied with municipal services, thereby engaging them.
to participate and use parks, facilities and programs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

34) Continue to design parks that engage the public as a means to promote a healthy and active lifestyle, and facilitate civic pride. Low cost designs can be achieved by using locally available equipment, where appropriate.

Timing: Ongoing (2012-2021)
Resource Implications: Standard costs of parkland acquisition and maintenance

Comfort, Convenience & Safety

Ensuring that parks and recreation facilities provide attractive and comfortable experiences to the user is paramount in ensuring successful utilization and attracting a broad range of use. The most successful parks tend to be those which are identifiable as community gathering points by residents, safe, fun and offer a variety of uses.

Once inside a park, patrons often look for a number of convenience and comfort-based features depending upon their intended use. In non-programmed or passive parks where social activities such as picnicking, family gatherings, cultural events, etc. are taking place, patrons would be looking for amenities such as treed areas and shade structures, picnic tables or pavilions, and washrooms (either permanent or temporary). For example, the popularity of Sunset Park as a passive area for relaxation could warrant provision of picnic tables, garbage cans, etc. Such amenities are also beneficial in strategic locations along major trail routes and at trail heads. Similarly, patrons at active parks such as sports field complexes may be looking for similar amenities as well as features such as designated seating, change rooms, and concessions. There is an inherent cost to creating a comfortable park; therefore, municipal investment may be strategically directed to those parks which are intended to function as premier destinations for gatherings and events.

Ensuring that parks are accessible will encourage a wide range of users. In this context, the term accessible can refer to spatial distribution and ability/preference of the resident using the park. For example, locating parks along trail routes, adequate vehicular parking, providing spaces for unstructured play or gatherings, incorporating barrier free designs, etc. are considerations that will serve the needs of a broad range of users. Due to the geographic expanse of the Northern Bruce Peninsula, it is imperative that connectivity and active transportation are key considerations as means
of promoting low cost and un-programmed recreation opportunities.

Regarding more active use parks, wherever possible, the Municipality should cluster the same type of playing fields together to increase a sense of form and function. Larger parks should also include washrooms, electrical outlets, benches and safe, pedestrian-friendly pathways. The Municipality currently provides washroom facilities (permanent or portable) at a number of popular park sites. Permanent or portable washrooms are generally provided at parks where major sporting facilities (e.g., soccer fields, ball diamonds) are located and along trails; however, no washrooms have been identified along any trails in the Municipality. It is recommended that the Municipality continue to provide permanent or portable washroom facilities at heavily utilized parks and strategically add washroom facilities along trails running through Northern Bruce Peninsula.

While the Municipality enjoys a relatively low crime rate compared to other municipalities, particularly larger and urbanized communities, it is still important to recognize that perceived safety concerns can be a barrier to certain households. Parks and trails (as well as indoor facilities) should continue to be designed/redesigned with patron’s safety in mind. The application of CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) and other design principles is a good start. For example, high volume areas should be appropriately lit (remaining cognisant that safety considerations need to be balanced with the Municipality’s commitment towards being a ‘Dark Skies Community’), the number of limited visibility areas should be minimal, and neighbourhood-level parks should be designed so that surrounding streets have visibility into the park, thereby discouraging illicit activities. The local police departments are also a good resource to consult with in any design projects, providing the Municipality with the opportunity to ensure safety is considered prior to implementing any given design and minimizing the need to redesign spaces after the fact.

Maintenance of parks and open spaces is now accepted in the industry as a key component of perceived safety in parks and in deterring inappropriate behaviour. Maintenance efforts also apply to safety in terms of an injury prevention perspective. The Municipality’s existing playground replacement program should continue to be a high priority to ensure ongoing maintenance and replacement activities are conducted in a timely manner. Similarly, the Municipality should continue its diligent efforts in ensuring sports fields and hard surface courts are maintained to a high level of quality; a simple fear of spraining an ankle on an uneven surface or tripping over a crack can lead to potential users avoiding facilities altogether.

RECOMMENDATIONS

35) Municipal parks should be designed to maximize user comfort, convenience and safety as appropriate. At a minimum, parks should employ principals of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design, as well as integrate comfort amenities such as washrooms, benches, shade areas and signage at appropriate locations.

Timing: Ongoing (2012-2021)
Resource Implications: Standard costs of parkland development and maintenance
Unstructured Recreation Areas

A greater emphasis should be placed on providing more informal space in new parks in order to promote unstructured and organized activities, as well as emerging interests. Time-pressed individuals are seeking areas where they can enjoy park uses at their own convenience. Informal play fields have been observed to be popular, particularly at the neighbourhood-level for activities such as pickup field sports, playing musical instruments, kite flying, sunbathing, etc. The Municipality also provides picnic tables and pavilions at a number of parks (e.g., Lion’s Head Beach, Ferndale Park, etc.) which offer a venue for gatherings. Picnicking has been observed to be a use that is re-emerging in popularity, largely driven by the desire for family leisure opportunities. The key to the success of unstructured recreational areas is the flexibility that is afforded for the types of uses that can be pursued. These types of parks can bring people together to participate in physical activity, festivals and special events. Community Parks are ideally suited to contain unstructured areas for recreation, although a neighbourhood park is also a place for unorganized activities, albeit at a smaller scale.

Public Spaces

The use of public spaces has become increasingly popular and growing in demand in a number of communities. High quality urban spaces face the greatest demand for socialization and passive unscheduled recreation and cultural activities; therefore, recognizing the importance in not only supplying the appropriate spaces to the community, but ensuring these spaces are flexible in design and maintained allow parks and open spaces to remain suitable for a range of uses. Public spaces should be inviting, accessible, bright, safe, and designed on a human scale. Redeveloping underutilized sites and brownfields in urban areas to public open spaces have also been an increasing trend found in communities throughout Ontario.

Community groups and other stakeholder often desire public spaces as the location to hold community programs and special events (Amphitheatre or Pavilion) in parks, urban settings or other open spaces. Integrating parks and open spaces in urban areas such as downtowns or main streets have also become a key component in providing liveable urban spaces for communities to come together, while also softening the streetscape with green amenities.

Multi-Use Parks & Multi-Season Usage

There is a growing demand that parks contain something for everybody, rather than being designed solely for singular uses. While single use parks still have merit in appropriate locations (e.g. sports field complexes where turf quality is not diminished by heavy use by non-sporting events), parks that provide opportunities for a range of ages, family types, and abilities are viewed as spaces for inclusive leisure activity. Furthermore, there has been a considerable trend towards participation in non-programmed (spontaneous) outdoor activities such as pick-up sports, musical “jam” sessions, picnicking, family gatherings, special events, etc. In this sense, parks can be viewed as “outdoor community centres” that combine a number of programmed and non-programmed uses.
As with community centres, the public has developed high expectations with regard to the quality of parks and are seeking innovation and comfort (i.e. outdoor kiosks, washrooms, drinking fountains, concessions, parking, benches, shade structures). Furthermore, the lack of time trend is leading people to seek “one-stop shopping” destinations where multiple activities can be pursued at the same time, eliminating the need to spend time travelling in between destinations for individual and family activities.

While the majority of park usage occurs in the summer months, many communities are creating year-round opportunities within their park and recreation service delivery systems. For example, multi-season trail developments may facilitate hiking opportunities during the summer and cross-country skiing during the winter. Similarly, recreational infrastructure such as hard surface courts (e.g. tennis or basketball) can be flooded during the winter to provide outdoor ice skating while integrating berms or hills can be used for tobogganing. Multi-season use of outdoor facilities that are designed to be used for specific seasons may, however, reduce the lifespan of infrastructure. Designing parks and open spaces to function as multi-seasonal facilities in the Municipality can provide year-round destination and physical activity to residents.

Positioning parks to be year-round destinations is a way to maximize physical activity goals while also marketing the Municipality to be a year-round destination for seasonal residents and tourists. Strategic tree planting and landscaping can create wind buffers to offset the winter wind chill and blowing, while ensuring that major trailways and internal park walking circuits are free of snow in order to facilitate greater use. While there are inherently costs associated with winter maintenance, the benefit to the community is the availability of no-to-low cost activities throughout the year. The number of popular trails (such as the Bruce Trail and Lindsay Tracts, as well as seasonal snow mobile trails) contributes toward a number of multi-seasonal recreational opportunities.

5.6 Natural Heritage

The importance of environmental protection is increasingly recognized by society. As people become more aware of the benefits of environmental protection, demand for passive settings that connect people to nature is increasing. Communities are placing a greater emphasis on the ‘development’ of passive park space (e.g., woodlots, prairie grasslands, flower gardens, civic gathering spaces, etc.), often times ensuring that a portion of new active parks remains in a more natural state. A well connected park system will also allow users to access parks using alternative forms of transportation,
thereby reducing the need for vehicular parking.

In recent years, the trend to integrate natural features into park settings has been increasing, as environmental protection becomes increasingly recognized by society. The Municipality offers a number of parks, waterfront areas, and open spaces that incorporate natural environment features and allows residents to get involved with local environmental initiatives. Many communities are making efforts to provide passive areas that incorporate natural heritage areas, native plant species, conserve woodlots, and ensure that certain areas of new active parks remain in a natural state. With the interest in outdoor recreation, many communities are also designing parks to include provisions for bird watching, wildlife viewing and capitalizing on eco-tourism opportunities.

Naturalized park spaces (whether by ‘maintaining’ or ‘returning’ a site to its natural state) are becoming more popular and are consistent with many of the principles related to environmental stewardship. Naturalization typically involves reduced grass cutting and pesticide use, as well as the planting of native species, which should be accompanied by a public education program to create awareness in the community of the environmental benefits of this approach. Interpretative signage can also help in appropriate areas to help park patrons understand the significance of indigenous or significant plants and habitats. By facilitating education, interest and understanding of natural processes, many municipalities promote a philosophy that is aligned with overall sustainable development and shifting thinking away from the way cities are traditionally built through sprawl.

Stewardship initiatives are not only intended to educate the public at large, but also to improve the ecological functions at a macro-scale by maximizing ecological contributions found in naturalized parks as well as the traditional active/manicured parks often found in urbanized areas. Stewardship objectives can also be facilitated through the incorporation of sustainable design features into parkland developments. For example, green infrastructure such as onsite stormwater ponds, bioswales, pervious trails and parking areas can enhance ecological functions. Increasing tree cover/canopies, as well as creating “urban forests” and engineered wetlands through parkland can also be an effective design tool which creates carbon sinks, offers shading to park users and surrounding residences, provides habitat opportunities for select wildlife, and contributes to naturalization or reforestation objectives. Furthermore, incorporating energy efficiency (e.g. LEED certification) and water conservation measures into park design (as well as any onsite building structures) can contribute to the overall greening of the community and showcase leadership in addressing environmental issues. The Municipality’s commitment to the ‘Dark Skies Initiative’ is another example of local stewardship.

Given the natural function of the parks system, the Municipality’s parkland inherently plays a key role in the protection of natural landscapes and allows for the interpretation of key features through
signage. By incorporating natural heritage areas within the Northern Bruce Peninsula's parks system, residents are exposed to natural features and can facilitate their awareness of key environmental topics.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

36) Design parks that incorporate natural, indigenous vegetation features in order to foster an appreciation for such areas and maintain crucial ecological functions.

*Timing*: Ongoing (2012-2021)

*Resource Implications*: Standard costs of parkland development and maintenance

Working with the Provincial & Federal Governments

There are a number of conservation and preservation areas located in or close to Northern Bruce Peninsula through the provincial and federal parks system that afford access to natural areas and play a key role in the protection of important ecosystems. The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Parks Canada are the major authorities present in the Municipality.

Although these government agencies maintain jurisdiction over their respective properties, they contribute parks and open spaces, as well as associated programming, to the general public. The Municipality does not have control over parks planning or program delivery as it relates to the non-municipal parks, however, it recognizes their contributions; for example, within provincial and national parks are a number of recreation facilities such as swimming areas, mountain biking trails, areas through which day camps can be offered, etc.

In order to avoid unnecessary duplication of facilities, the Municipality should continue to work closely with both levels of government to remain apprised of planned recreation amenities within conservation lands. For example, opportunities to connect municipal trail routes to those contained within the broader parks system is encouraged to collaboratively work towards attaining an interconnected trail system (much in the way the Bruce Trail has developed), while public swims or canoe rentals could be arranged through partnership agreements. Such collaboration on programming can encourage understanding and stewardship of natural areas.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

37) Work closely with the Ministry of Natural Resources, Parks Canada, Department of Fisheries & Oceans, and other environmentally-focused agencies to coordinate capital projects while exploring opportunities to partner in the provision of environmentally-oriented initiatives.

*Timing*: Ongoing (2012-2021)

*Resource Implications*: Staff Time (could be a responsibility of the proposed Administrative Assistant for the Parks & Recreation Department)
6.0 AN EFFECTIVE TRAILS SYSTEM

6.1 Active Transportation

Active Transportation refers to human-powered modes of travel which are intended for recreational or utilitarian purposes (i.e. non-motorized travel for the purposes of accessing all aspects of daily life). While the most common forms of active transportation are walking and cycling, other examples include running, skateboarding, in-line skating, kayaking or canoeing, skating, snowshoeing or cross-country skiing, and use of non-mechanized wheelchairs. Support for active transportation is an identified priority and outcome of a number of governmental and non-governmental agencies.

The provision of “active transportation” infrastructure is a logical complement to parks and natural areas, though the latter contingent is contingent upon a comprehensive understanding and careful management of carrying capacities in sensitive areas. Active transportation forms a critically important part of an efficient and sustainable transportation system by reducing the number of motorized vehicles on the road, which in turn reduces road congestion and greenhouse gas emissions (particularly during peak hours), consumption of land required for road-based infrastructure, as well as the amount of capital expended on road construction and maintenance.

The provision and utilization of active transportation choices brings a number of benefits to individuals and their environment, notably by shifting travel from automobiles to non-motorized modes and thereby improving elements of human health pertaining to:

- **air and water quality** by minimizing vehicular emissions such as carbon dioxide, ground level ozone, etc. which positively contributes to ecological and human health;
- **increasing physical activity** which has positive health effects such as reducing levels of obesity and chronic diseases (such as diabetes, heart disease, etc.);
- **community and social vibrancy** by encouraging compact developments and more liveable communities where people are more likely to have personal contact with each other; and
- **financial well-being** by reducing expenditures on gasoline and certain other vehicular costs (such as parking, less frequent oil changes, etc.), as well as health care (which benefits society as a whole through lower taxes).

In addition to geographical dispersion, there are a number of other challenges to encouraging active transportation choices not the least of which is Ontario’s highly varied climatic and weather conditions. Whether in the form of rain, snow, or extreme heat or cold, peoples choices will differ particularly if active transportation routes are not designed for multiple seasons or are not adequately shielded from the elements. Other barriers include the convenience factor of using a car (e.g. time saved, ability to easily load and transport goods, etc.) and a lack of connectivity and infrastructure (e.g. lack of bicycle lanes or bike racks, unconnected or unmaintained trails or sidewalks, absence of comfort amenities such as shade or benches, and simply the fact that communities tend to be
designed with the perspective of automobile use). It is also important to recognize that persons with health issues or disabilities may not be as inclined to choose active transportation due to any physical limitations they may have, thus accessibility must be a central consideration in design.

Active transportation opportunities can be maximized by providing the necessary infrastructure that facilitates safe, comfortable and convenient usage. As such, the County and its municipalities would benefit from increasing their emphasis on active transportation choices and highlighting importance of sidewalks, trailways, and bicycle routes at a minimum. A number of municipalities in Ontario have completed Pedestrian & Cycling/Active Transportation Master Plans (e.g. Dufferin County, Towns of Oakville and East Gwillimbury, etc.).

Northern Bruce Peninsula recognizes the importance of walking and promoting physical activity, evidenced through the Bruce Trail and other linkages. Trail development has been shown to promote physical activity, healthy lifestyles, encourage social gatherings and community development, and provide open spaces for members of the community to enjoy the natural environment while preserving natural heritage features of the Municipality. In addition to the benefits of trail development, experiences in other communities suggests that the development of supporting amenities (such as the provision of accessibility, washrooms, rest areas, and wayfinding signage) may also encourage usage of local trails. It is recognized that the Municipality does not own or manage any trail lands, therefore, it would be a matter of working with local trail groups to find ways in which to enhance their routes.

6.2 Community Trails

Providing an interconnected system of parks and open spaces is an important component of human health and ecological function. As many parks are considered to be “destinations”, ensuring that they are accessible can go a long ways in encouraging people to visit them. Linking parks by trails, sidewalks, bicycle paths and roads provides choices for people to travel to these areas while creating infrastructure for commuter, utilitarian and recreational uses. In Northern Bruce Peninsula, the Municipality does not own or maintain any formal trail routes, rather it works with external trail providers (such as the Bruce Trail Conservancy, other levels of government, etc.) to facilitate the availability of local trail connections.
Trails are often desired features in a community, especially in new subdivisions where potential buyers factor in the type and extent of the trail system into their decision. Trails are a cost-effective method to increase physical activity levels and support positive interaction between the community and the natural environment. In 2001, a survey conducted by the Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Institute found that 28% of respondents stated that a lack of pleasant places to walk or bike is a barrier to participation. In addition to trails gaining in popularity, a 2005 study from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that “creating or enhancing access to parks led to a 26.5% increase in the percentage of people exercising more than 3 times per week.”\(^{15}\) The provincial government released a report indicating that “growing research points to a number of land-use components that influence human activity, facilitate health and mental well being and promote social interaction and inclusion, including: layout, design, connectivity and maintenance of sidewalks, roads and non-motorized transportation, paths and trails.”\(^{16}\) The trend of providing trails as a core service in most communities is one that may serve as a positive factor in the promotion of physical activity, including purposeful use of trails to link the three communities within the Municipality, access work, shopping, and schools.

Through parks and recreation master planning exercises undertaken across Ontario, walking is often cited as the most popular leisure activity while trails are often identified as some of the most pressing recreational infrastructure needs. As age increases, so too does the propensity to identify walking as a favourite leisure time activity. This bodes well for future demand given that Northern Bruce Peninsula’s older adult population is expected to grow substantially over the next decade, as the Baby Boomer generation passes through the mature stage of their lifecycle.

There are three major trail networks in the Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula.

- The Bruce Trail spans the length of the Municipality, running south from Tobermory and generally following the Georgian Bay shoreline. The Bruce Trail contains a number of secondary linkages (side trails) throughout Northern Bruce Peninsula.

- The Bruce Peninsula National Park has a number of trails, many of which are connected to the Bruce Trail. These include the Cyprus Lake Trail with a link to the Grotto, and the Singing Sands Trail.

- The Lindsay Tract contains a series of multi-use trails within a 7,000 acre forest.

As shown in the following figure, the Bruce Trail offers an excellent north to south linkage throughout the Municipality, however, it is situated on the east side of Northern Bruce Peninsula. In the absence of major east-west trail connections, the west side of the Municipality (i.e. along the Lake Huron shoreline and towards the interior) have gap areas. It is noted that a snowmobile trail runs north-south throughout the central portion of the Municipality, however, this is a seasonal route as it spans a number of private properties such as agricultural lands for winter use.


Parks & Recreation Master Plan
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6. AN EFFECTIVE TRAILS SYSTEM

Figure 9: Trail System

Note: Snowmobile trail is solely dedicated to motorized use (i.e. no walking, cross-country skiing, etc.) and are only available for use during the winter season.
Trends research and surveys undertaken in other communities indicate that walking is one of the most popular leisure activities. The web survey undertaken for this Study, found that 98% of respondents participated in walking and hiking for leisure, the most popular activity in the past 12 months. 55% of respondents also participated in cycling and mountain biking, ranking as the third most popular activity. Support for trail development is high among household survey participants, who ranked unpaved nature trails and paved multi-use trails (67% support for each respective type) as the highest priority needs in the Municipality.

As age increases, so too does the propensity to identify walking as a favourite leisure time activity overall. The increasing age of the average user will influence the types of activities one chooses, often reducing the intensity of the activity (i.e., switching from jogging to brisk walking). Youth and younger adults are also well served by trail systems when engaging in more strenuous walks, jogging or bicycling activities. As such, trails are an especially flexible and responsive type of facility as they permit un-programmed fitness or active living opportunities for all ages, particularly adults and older adults. With the senior population in the Municipality expected to increase, the need for trails in Northern Bruce Peninsula will become of greater importance.

Trails are as much of a recreational facility as arenas, parks and sports fields. They are multi-seasonal facilities, particularly if they can accommodate winter activities such as cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, etc. and returning to designated hiking / cycling trails in the spring, summer and fall months. The Municipality should continue to encourage the provision of quality trail facilities by making multi-use, multi-seasonal trail development a high priority.

Trails should be seen as a key facility type that promotes sustainability through the protection of areas of environmental interest and significance, encouraging physical activity and promoting active transportation opportunities (e.g., walking, biking, hiking, inline skating, cross country skiing, running, etc.). For example, the provision of a variety of trail types (e.g., nature trails, soft surface and paved trails, and on-road trails, etc.) are all important in a leisure and active transportation trail system. Regularly evaluating ways to improve connectivity through new trail development while ensuring that existing trailways are well maintained (so that users do not avoid utilization due to poor trail conditions) should be areas of focus for the Municipality.

To achieve goals of connectivity, partnerships with organizations such as the Bruce Trail Conservancy, provincial and federal governments, the County of Bruce and private land owners should be encouraged to assist with the provision and maintenance of high quality, connected trails and pathways. Consultation with residents and stakeholder grounds also indicated improvements that could be made to such as increasing trail amenities associated with walking and hiking such as informative brochure boxes, interpretive signage and wayfinding mass, dog waste stations, garbage
and recycling bins, and rest areas. Stakeholder groups also suggested improving trail maintenance and accessibility, especially for the senior age group. Additionally, improving trail linkages throughout the Municipality provides users with recreational opportunities and promotes the use of active and alternative forms of transportation.

The focus on active transportation has been increasing in recent years due to awareness of the health benefits of physical activity as well as the rising cost of transportation (driven largely by the rising price of fuel). Communities are now attempting to incorporate active transportation infrastructure in the hopes of providing users with a way to access employment and essential services that does not necessarily involve driving, which is particularly important in a community within which public transportation is not available. Linking communities together through a network of unpaved and paved multi-use trails serves a basic transportation need as well as a leisure purpose that is beneficial for residents ranging from the everyday commuter to park enthusiast.

To accurately determine the trail needs in the Northern Bruce Peninsula with regard to its role in trail development, the Municipality should undertake a Trails / Active Transportation Master Plan to address trail needs through long-range planning for the local trails system.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

38) The Municipality should undertake a Trails / Active Transportation Master Plan that establishes a comprehensive and systematic framework that defines the vision and addresses needs through long-range planning for the local trails system. At a minimum, this Master Plan should consider:

- Potential trail connections to community, inter-municipal and external trail networks;
- Incorporating principles of active transportation within the development of the trails network in order to ensure that the system functions from both a utilitarian and a recreational perspective;
- Comforts and ease of access through the provision of park and interpretive signage and brochure boxes, benches, trail distance markers, lighting, parking, washrooms and rest areas;
- Integration of various modes of travel on trail routes throughout the year such as pedestrian, bicycle, cross-country ski, inline skating, etc.; and
- Roles of the Municipality and various trail-related stakeholders in providing and maintaining trails.

*Timing: Immediate Action (2012-2016)*

*Resource Implications: Consulting Fees (approximately $40,000)*
7.0 IMPLEMENTATION

7.1 Next Steps

The Parks & Recreation Master Plan provides guidance and direction for decision-makers involved with the planning of the Northern Bruce Peninsula’s parks and recreation system. Municipal Staff will be required to establish a strategic implementation approach with Council based on available resources and funding. The recommendations then can be prioritized over the life of the Master Plan, and should be used for reference for capital planning and related planning exercises.

In order to attain and maintain operational excellence, care must be taken to ensure that long-range planning is supported by short-term monitoring. In essence, this implies planning for the future while consistently understanding the current circumstances and context of the community. For the Parks & Recreation Master Plan, this would imply that the Municipality track progress made on implementing the Recommendations contained in this document and review them when new information (such as 2011 Census data, updated population forecasts, or a new Corporate Strategic Plan) becomes available. The Municipality should annually review the progress made on implementing the Master Plan’s recommendations, as part of the capital and operating budgeting exercises, while also utilizing the identified Performance Standards to evaluate whether to revisit priorities.

Regular strategic and long-range planning is an important exercise that ensures that the Municipality is well positioned to respond to unforeseen or anticipated circumstances. By being well prepared, consistent and high quality services can be provided in a cost-effective and sustainable manner, which is a common trait of the most successful Departments and leisure service providers. Senior management prepare annual plans that are aligned with strategic priorities and are held accountable to achieve targets and initiatives. Lastly, it is strongly recommended that an Update to the Parks & Recreation Master Plan be undertaken after five years to track progress made on implementing Recommendations and ensuring that supporting assumptions remain appropriate for that future time.

RECOMMENDATIONS

39) Track progress made on implementing the Recommendations contained in the Parks & Recreation Master Plan through its annual budgeting processes.

Timing: Ongoing (2012-2021)
Resource Implications: Staff Time to review and report progress

40) A review and update to the Parks & Recreation Master Plan is recommended after 5 years to ensure that Recommendations remain relevant in the context of future population characteristics, preferences, and needs.

Timing: Long-Term Plan (2017-2021)
Resource Implications: Consulting Fees (approximately $60,000)
7.2 Summary of the Master Plan’s Recommendations
(in order of appearance)

SERVICE DELIVERY PRIORITIES

1. The Municipality should continue to be a ‘facilitator’ of parks and recreation services by focusing its core responsibilities upon the provision and operation of parks and recreation facilities that are presently under the municipal purview.

   **Timing:** Ongoing (2012-2021)
   **Resource Implications:** None anticipated beyond current financial and staffing allocations

2. The Municipality should only consider entry into new facilities, programs or services when gaps exist that cannot be met by the external providers, if the Municipality is the best agency to provide the facility or service, if the facility or service aligns with the Municipality’s mandate, and/or if the financial impacts of municipal entry are justifiable and ensure fiscal responsibility.

   **Timing:** Ongoing (2012-2021)
   **Resource Implications:** Variable financial and human resources depending upon type of facility, program or service provided

3. Set minimum annual contribution amounts to Capital Reserve accounts in order to ensure that infrastructure can be developed and maintained in a manner that meets community needs and expectations with respect to provision and quality.

   **Timing:** Ongoing (2012-2021)
   **Resource Implications:** Annual capital contributions to be determined according to facility needs, replacement costs and municipal financial capacity

4. Ensure that Municipal parks and recreation facilities are adequately staffed with appropriate staff resources. As part of this process:

   - Undertake a Staffing Review & Succession Planning Strategy to proactively position the Municipality to respond to growth and complexity within the parks and recreation system by creating appropriate staffing standards and succession plans.

   - Provide professional development opportunities to Municipal Staff in order to ensure that they possess up-to-date training and skills to carry out their job responsibilities in a manner that maximizes customer satisfaction and operational efficiencies.

   - Consider the addition of an Administrative Assistant to assist the Facilities Supervisor with outreach activities to local community and volunteer groups, in order to position the Parks & Recreation Department more effectively to promote community development and remain as a ‘facilitator’ of services.

   **Timing:** Immediate Action (2012-2016)
Resource Implications: Variable depending upon the net gain (or loss due to retirements) in the number of staff over time, as determined through the Staffing Review & Succession Planning Strategy. Note that costs may be offset through gains in efficiencies, customer satisfaction levels, and lower opportunity costs mitigated through community development.

5. Regularly explore ways in which to enhance the way that services are being delivered to customers, with a continued focus on quality. As such, the Municipality should be willing to explore new approaches and technologies that will aid Staff in their ability to administer the high quality customer services that residents now associate with municipal facilities and programs.

Timing: Ongoing (2012-2021)
Resource Implications: Staff time and potential costs/cost-savings associated with implementing new customer service delivery systems

6. Establish a simple set of quantifiable performance measures that can gauge the efficiency and effectiveness of parks and facilities which are offered by the Municipality. These measures can be refined and expanded upon over time to respond to changing consumer expectations and Departmental operating practices.

Timing: Immediate Action (2012-2016)
Resource Implications: Staff time and potential costs/cost-savings associated with implementing new customer service delivery systems

7. Undertake a Volunteer Management Strategy with the assistance of local community organizations to address specific challenges identified by local volunteers such as recruitment, retention, training and recognition.

Timing: Immediate Action (2012-2016)
Resource Implications: Staff time and/or Consulting Fees to lead and prepare the Volunteer Management Strategy

8. With a view towards community development, facilitate the sharing of information between local volunteer organizations to build their internal capacities and in turn reduce their reliance upon the Municipality to provide supports.

Timing: Ongoing
Resource Implications: Staff time to facilitate sharing of information (could be a responsibility of the proposed Administrative Assistant for the Parks & Recreation Department)

9. Encourage an Asset Based Community Development approach through engagement and the provision of appropriate supports as a means to empower the local community to build on their strengths, develop their internal capacity, and sustain community-based program delivery over the long-term.
7. IMPLEMENTATION

Timing: Ongoing (2012-2021)
Resource Implications: Staff time to liaise with groups, provide supports (e.g. human or financial), etc.

10. With respect to the Community Use of Schools initiative, continue to build relationships with the Bluewater District School Board to find ways in which to increase affordable community access to school facilities such as gymnasiums, meeting rooms, and sports fields to address needs without duplicating spaces that already exist in the Municipality. Reciprocal agreements, maintenance agreements, funding agreements, etc. should be explored at a minimum.

Timing: Ongoing (2012-2021)
Resource Implications: Staff time (e.g. between the proposed Administrative Assistant and the School Board’s Outreach Coordinator) to liaise with school boards, other resources variable upon type of agreement(s) negotiated

11. Requests for facilities and services that are not part of the Municipality’s core mandate should be evaluated based on anticipated municipal role, quantifiable measures of demand and costs to the Municipality, and other long-term implications prior to deciding whether or not to partner in the public interest (as discussed in Recommendation #2). As part of this process, the Municipality should develop a standardized process or framework for evaluating and responding to requests for partnerships, with the view of maximizing public interests.

Timing: Ongoing (2012-2021)
Resource Implications: Staff time develop standardized partnership evaluation framework and evaluate requests for partnership

12. Provide a training program for staff to gain the skills and competencies needed to fully engage under-represented populations, including through marketing techniques that ensures (among other things) that plain and clear language is utilized in all future reports and publications. Expand this training to include staff, community groups and volunteer representatives.

Timing: Ongoing (2012-2021)
Resource Implications: Staff time, training costs

13. Continue to work with community-based accessibility representatives and service providers to ensure that local recreation facilities and programs are accessible to those with disabilities and special needs.

Timing: Ongoing (2012-2021)
Resource Implications: Staff time to liaise with the community on accessibility matters
14. Continue to implement improvements to parks and recreation facilities as recommended through the Municipal Accessibility Plans, to ensure conformity to local accessibility standards and provincial legislation.

   **Timing:** Ongoing (2012-2021)
   **Resource Implications:** Capital costs, as determined for specific improvements undertaken

15. Work with community-based providers to ensure that there is a range of low-to-no cost activities available to meet the recreational needs of households with lower incomes. The Municipality should also explore the creation of low income assistance programs with community sponsors to increase access.

   **Timing:** Ongoing (2012-2021)
   **Resource Implications:** Staff Time and/or subsidies fees to explore and implement financial assistance programs for recreation services

16. If supported by business planning and alignment to economic development objectives, the Municipality should consider providing splash pads in Tobermory and Lion’s Head (the second splash pad should be considered at a future time depending upon available funding and a justification of need).

   **Timing:** Immediate Action (2012-2016) – first splash pad; Long-Term Plan (2017-2021) – second splash pad
   **Resource Implications:** Capital and operating costs will vary upon design, scale and water system employed

17. Consult with youth-serving agencies and school boards to evaluate how existing municipal, institutional and community-based facilities can be enhanced or adapted to better meet the needs of local youth

   **Timing:** Ongoing (2012-2021)
   **Resource Implications:** Costs will vary by facility and types of services offered

18. Repair and re-orient the existing basketball court at School Bell Park to encourage a higher quality of play and potentially other uses. A second multi-use court oriented to basketball should be provided in Lion’s Head, while a third court may be considered at the time if/when residential growth in Ferndale warrants it.

   **Timing:** Immediate Action (2012-2016) – Tobermory School Bell Park and Lion’s Head; Long-Term Plan (2017-2021) – Ferndale
   **Resource Implications:** Costs will vary by facility and types of services offered
19. If supported by business planning and alignment to economic development objectives, the Municipality should develop a skateboard park in Tobermory or Lion’s Head on a trial basis. This skateboard park should be designed with the input of local youth, particularly the skateboarding community, to ensure that design is responsive to users while encouraging greater community buy-in and utilization of the facility.

*Timing*: Immediate Action (2012-2016)
*Resource Implications*: Costs will vary depending upon size and amenity level

20. In order to meet the needs of older adults and seniors, regularly consult with local seniors organizations to understand how existing municipal, institutional and community-based facilities can be enhanced or adapted to better meet their needs. Through this, the Municipality should consider:

- Enhancements to the Municipality’s stock of multi-purpose rooms to see how these spaces can be flexibly adapted and improved to meet the needs of older adults.
- Potential integration of the Lion’s Head Friendship Club building into the overall Lion’s Head & District Community Centre to create efficiencies in operation and program delivery.

*Timing*: Ongoing (2012-2021) – Consultation and exploration of enhancements; Immediate Action (2012-2016) – Integration of the Friendship Club building into the Community Centre
*Resource Implications*: To be determined through design and business planning exercises for respective community halls

21. Create a Recreation & Cultural Services Guide that compiles information about all municipal and community-based opportunities that are available in Northern Bruce Peninsula. The Guide should be made available in both hard copy and digital formats.

*Timing*: Immediate Action (2012-2016)
*Resource Implications*: The proposed Administrative Assistant would create and regularly update the Guide, publishing and distribution costs that may be offset by revenue streams such as advertising

22. Ensure adequate signage exists at all parks, trailheads and recreation facilities. These signs should be consistent in design and be restored or replaced when they deteriorate.

*Timing*: Ongoing (2012-2021)
*Resource Implications*: Standard costs of constructing and maintaining signs, though staff time may be required to develop a sign template for consistent application throughout the Municipality
RECREATION FACILITY NEEDS

23. While no new sports fields are recommended over the master planning period due to limited market demand, needs should be re-evaluated every five years through Updates to the Parks & Recreation Master Plan. Instead of capital investments in new facilities, the Municipality should maximize the playing experience afforded at its existing supply of sports fields, maintaining them in a manner that facilitates a high quality of play for user groups and the general public.

Timing: Ongoing (2012-2021)
Resource Implications: Operational costs associated with maintenance

24. Expand the Lion’s Head & District Community Centre to include:
   - Improved circulation and accessibility for facility patrons, including new change rooms for the arena
   - Older adult and seniors space to replace the aging Friendship Club building
   - Wellness studio for active living opportunities (non-equipment based space)
   - Library branch (pending confirmation through further study)

Timing: Immediate Action (2012-2016)
Resource Implications: To be determined through subsequent feasibility, design, and business planning studies

25. Investigate, on a case-by-case basis, the ability of existing municipal community halls and other program spaces to accommodate a broader range of uses in order to maximize their usage and deliver outreach programming to more remote communities of Northern Bruce Peninsula. As part of this process, the Friendship Club building should be integrated into an expanded Lion’s Head & District Community Centre.

Timing: Ongoing (2012-2021); Immediate Action (2012-2016) – Friendship Club integration
Resource Implications: To be determined through business planning, architectural designs, etc.

26. The recreational function of Rotary Hall duplicates functions that are offered by the Lion’s Head & District Community Centre. The Municipality should initiate a process to determine whether Rotary Hall should be maintained and/or enhanced for non-recreational uses, whether to transfer operational responsibility to a community group, or if the Municipality should divest itself of the facility.

Timing: Immediate Action (2012-2016)
Resource Implications: To be determined through business planning, architectural designs, partnership agreements, etc.
27. Explore partnerships with private sector providers of indoor aquatic facilities rather than constructing a municipally owned and operated pool, using the partnership framework advanced in this Master Plan as a means to minimize risk and the operating burden that an indoor pool would place on the Municipality if it were to operate such a facility itself.

Timing: Immediate Action (2012-2016)
Resource Implications: To be determined through the discussions and agreements developed with the private sector

28. In collaboration with the County of Bruce, the Municipality should undertake a cost-benefit assessment of relocating the Lion’s Head library branch to the Lion’s Head & District Community Centre. This would ideally form part of a County-driven Library Master Plan.

Timing: Immediate Action (2012-2016)
Resource Implications: To be determined through future study

PARKLAND NEEDS

29. In collaboration with the County of Bruce, create a parkland classification system in the Official Plan to guide the planning, design and management of the parks system.

Timing: Immediate Action (2012-2016)
Resource Implications: Staff time

30. To meet the parkland needs associated with forecasted population growth, a total of 1.4 hectares of parkland will be required by the year 2021, primarily in the form of Community and Neighbourhood level parks.

Timing: Ongoing (2012-2021)
Resource Implications: Standard costs of parkland acquisition (depending on the value of land and how it is obtained) and maintenance

31. Continue to explore opportunities to acquire shoreline waterfront lands situated to provide public access to Lake Huron and Georgian Bay.

Timing: Ongoing (2012-2021)
Resource Implications: Standard costs of parkland acquisition (depending on the value of land and how it is obtained), redevelopment of existing unmaintained parcels and maintenance

32. Undertake a Marina Study to investigate the need and costs associated with expanding the number of slips, the marina building, marketing efforts, and/or the staffing allocation.

Timing: Ongoing (2012-2021)
Resource Implications: Consulting Fees (approximately $35,000, depending upon qualifications of the professional firm or community organization)
33. Evaluate opportunities to acquire parkland in gap areas identified throughout new and existing communities, using tools such as:
   - Conveyance of parkland, as permitted through dedications under the Planning Act.
   - Alternatives acquisition mechanisms such as municipal purchase, lease, land swaps, etc. as appropriate.

   **Timing:** Ongoing (2012-2021)
   **Resource Implications:** Standard costs of parkland acquisition and maintenance (no capital dollars would have to be expended for parkland conveyed under the Planning Act)

34. Continue to design parks that engage the public as a means to promote a healthy and active lifestyle, and facilitate civic price. Low cost designs can be achieved by using locally available equipment, where appropriate.

   **Timing:** Ongoing (2012-2021)
   **Resource Implications:** Standard costs of parkland acquisition and maintenance

35. Municipal parks should be designed to maximize user comfort, convenience and safety as appropriate. At a minimum, parks should employ principals of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design, as well as integrate comfort amenities such as washrooms, benches, shade areas and signage at appropriate locations.

   **Timing:** Ongoing (2012-2021)
   **Resource Implications:** Standard costs of parkland development and maintenance

36. Design parks that incorporate natural, indigenous vegetation features in order to foster an appreciation for such areas and maintain crucial ecological functions.

   **Timing:** Ongoing (2012-2021)
   **Resource Implications:** Standard costs of parkland development and maintenance

37. Work closely with the Ministry of Natural Resources, Parks Canada, Department of Fisheries & Oceans, and other environmentally-focused agencies to coordinate capital projects while exploring opportunities to partner in the provision of environmentally-oriented initiatives.

   **Timing:** Ongoing (2012-2021)
   **Resource Implications:** Staff Time (could be a responsibility of the proposed Administrative Assistant for the Parks & Recreation Department)
38. The Municipality should undertake a Trails / Active Transportation Master Plan that establishes a comprehensive and systematic framework that defines the vision and addresses needs through long-range planning for the local trails system. At a minimum, this Master Plan should consider:

- Potential trail connections to community, inter-municipal and external trail networks;
- Incorporating principles of active transportation within the development of the trails network in order to ensure that the system functions from both a utilitarian and a recreational perspective.
- Comforts and ease of access through the provision of park and interpretive signage and brochure boxes, benches, trail distance markers, lighting, parking, washrooms and rest areas.
- Integration of various modes of travel on trail routes throughout the year such as pedestrian, bicycle, cross-country ski, inline skating, etc.; and
- Roles of the Municipality and various trail-related stakeholders in providing and maintaining trails.

*Timing*: Immediate Action (2012-2016)
*Resource Implications*: Consulting Fees (approximately $40,000)

**IMPLEMENTATION**

39. Track progress made on implementing the Recommendations contained in the Parks & Recreation Master Plan through its annual budgeting processes.

*Timing*: Ongoing (2012-2021)
*Resource Implications*: Staff Time to review and report progress

40. A review and update to the Parks & Recreation Master Plan is recommended after 5 years to ensure that Recommendations remain relevant in the context of future population characteristics, preferences, and needs.

*Timing*: Long-Term Plan (2017-2021)
*Resource Implications*: Consulting Fees (approximately $60,000)