The Municipality of Chatham-Kent Parks and Recreation Master Plan

FINAL REPORT



October 2010

Municipality of Chatham-Kent

PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

Omit page ONLY in PDF format

Final Report

OCTOBER 2010

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ..... (i)

1. INTRODUCTION 1-1

1.1 Municipal Context 1-1

1.2 Master Plan Purpose and Scope 1-2

1.3 Parks and Recreation Master Plan Process 1-2

1.4 Parks and Recreation Master Plan Structure 1-3

2. MASTER PLAN FOUNDATION 2-1

2.1 Introduction 2-1

2.2 Master Plan Vision 2-2

2.3 Mission Statement 2-3

2.4 Guiding Principles 2-4

3. RECREATION SERVICE DELIVERY POLICIES AND STRATEGIES 3-1

3.1 Introduction 3-1

3.2 Service Delivery Policy Framework 3-1

3.3 Service Delivery Strategies 3-7

3.3.1 Partnerships and Joint Ventures 3-7

3.3.2 Volunteer Organization Capacity and Leadership Development 3-8

3.3.3 Multi-Use Strategies 3-9

3.3.4 Communication Strategies 3-10

3.3.5 Sport Tourism Strategy 3-11

3.3.6 Programming Themes and Directions 3-13

3.4 Service Delivery Policies 3-15

3.4.1 Community-based Governance and Management of Municipally-Owned Facilities and Venues 3-15

3.4.2 Community Partnership Fund 3-18

3.4.3 User Fee Policy 3-20

3.4.4 Individual User Financial Support 3-22

3.4.5 Joint Use Agreements 3-23

3.4.6 Community Use of Schools 3-23

3.4.7 New Program or Facility Development Initiatives 3-25

4. PARKS, OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION FACILITIES 4-1

4.1 Introduction 4-1

4.2 Parks and Open Space Framework 4-1

4.3 Parkland Classification and Development Profiles 4-3

4.3.1 Parkettes 4-3

TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONT'D)

4.3.2 Neighbourhood Parks 4-4
4.3.3 Community Parks 4-6
4.3.4 Municipal Parks 4-8
4.3.5 Trails Master Plan 4-10
4.4 Parks and Open Space Provisioning Levels 4-11
4.4.1 Provisioning Framework 4-11
4.4.2 Provisioning Levels 4-11
4.4.3 Parks and Open Space Acquisition Policies 4-12
4.5 Official Plan Policies 4-15
4.6 Fields and Outdoor Facilities Provisioning 4-17
4.6.1 Sports Fields Framework 4-17
4.6.2 Regional Outdoor Sports Venue 4-18
4.6.3 Baseball Diamonds and Soccer Fields 4-22
4.6.4 Outdoor Courts 4-23
4.6.5 Playgrounds, Pavillions and Skateboard Parks 4-24
4.6.6 Park Renewal Program 4-25
4.6.7 Facilities Allocation Policy 4-26
4.7 Recreation Facilities 4-28
4.7.1 Arenas / Multi-Use Recreation Centre 4-28
4.7.2 Swimming Pools 4-34
4.7.3 Splash Pads 4-35
4.7.4 Dog Parks 4-35
4.8 Multi-Use Facility Renewal Strategies 4-36
4.9 Chatham Community Complex Redevelopment 4-38

5. BEACH FRONT AND SHORELINE STRATEGIES 5-1

5.1 Shoreline Themes 5-1
5.2 Shoreline Facilities 5-2
5.3 Shoreline Programming 5-3
5.4 Rondeau Provincial Park 5-3
5.5 Wheatley Provincial Park 5-4
5.6 Mitchell's Bay 5-4
5.7 Clearville Park 5-5

6. ENERGY UTILIZATION AND CONSERVATION STRATEGIES 6-1

7. ACTION PLAN AND IMPLEMENTATION 7-1

7.1 Introduction 7-1
7.2 Implementation Themes 7-1

TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONT'D)

7.3 Policies and Strategies Integration 7-2
7.4 Community Development Model Transition 7-3
7.5 Implementation Framework 7-7
7.6 Evaluation Standards 7-16
7.7 Master Plan Review 7-17

Appendix I – Strategic Themes from the Situational Analysis Report
Appendix II - Recommended Future Parks and Recreation Studies

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Municipal Context



The Municipality of Chatham-Kent has a population of approximately 108,000 residents. It was a newly created municipality in 1998 through the amalgamation of twenty-three municipalities. This amalgamation brought together a mixture of rural townships, lakefront communities, villages, towns, Kent County and the City of Chatham.

These municipalities have been delivering parks and recreation services for more than fifty years at various levels. The City of Chatham had developed Memorial Arena and the Kinsmen Auditorium on Tweedsmuir Avenue for ice events and for large community events. Rural municipalities had built arenas, pools, ball diamonds, and developed Joint Use Agreements with their neighbouring communities to provide recreation service to large rural areas. The Municipality of Chatham-Kent now has a variety of venues including lakefront parks, two indoor pools in Wallaceburg and Blenheim, and ten arenas and eight outdoor pools across various communities. Since amalgamation the Community Services Division has been working to develop a variety of recreation services across the municipality, in response to changing needs and interests within the community.

Most recently the Division has developed and facilitated ten skate parks in different communities and two splash pads, one each in Mitchells Bay and in Wheatley. At the same time, two outdoor pools have been decommissioned. The Division has also completed feasibility studies related to a multi-use recreation facility in Chatham; the Tecumseh Park Master Plan, the Kingston Park Redevelopment and the Recreation Master Plan for the Parks in Mitchells Bay. At a strategic level, the municipality has completed the Community Strategic Plan and the Municipality of Chatham-Kent Official Plan.

During 2008-2009, the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Consulting Team has also participated with the Division on the relocation of the Chatham-Kent YMCA and indoor pool; a municipal evaluation of the Chatham-Kent Armoury in downtown Chatham; and the replacement of the Memorial Arena and Kinsmen Auditorium including the evaluation of alternative proposals. In the spring of 2009, staff considered the Recreational Infrastructure Canada program for the reinvestment and further development of arenas, parks and fields. This Master Plan is a continuation of the Municipal investment in parks and recreation service delivery.

1.2 Master Plan Purpose and Scope

The purpose of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan includes the following:

- To maximize the availability and quality of parks and recreation lands, facilities and programming that contribute to the quality of life and economic development of Chatham-Kent using the following directions:
    - To establish a vision, mission and guiding principles that will guide municipal decisions on its role, participation and investments in the development and delivery of parks and recreation services;
    - To establish policy frameworks and servicing strategies that will direct the planning, delivery and evaluation of parks and recreation services within Chatham-Kent for the next twenty years;
    - To create the framework for community engagement, leadership, and accountability by all service providers in contributing to the planning, delivery and evaluation of recreation and leisure services in Chatham-Kent;
    - To establish parks, open space and facilities service levels that respond to specific residents needs, Division and corporate strategic directions and financial capacity strategies;
    - To support the municipality in the development of ten year capital budget forecasts, updates of its Development Charges By-Law and related financial, operational and governance tools;
    - To provide an action and implementation plan that will guide community collaboration, development, decision making and service delivery strategies over the life of the Master Plan.

The scope of activities within the Parks and Recreation Master Plan is intended to be broad based providing overall direction to the parks, facilities and programming needs of the community. At the same time the plan addresses two specific interests related to:

- Beachfront and Shoreline strategies; and
- Energy utilization and conservation strategies for major facilities.

1.3 Parks and Recreation Master Plan Process

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan was prepared over four phases as follows:

- Phase 1 – Understanding the Community.
- Phase 2 – Engaging the Community.
- Phase 3 – Drafting the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
- Phase 4 – Finalizing the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

In support of the development of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, a comprehensive Situational Analysis was completed in January 2010 and is available under separate cover. It established the research, community consultation and analytical outcomes that were utilized in developing the Master Plan foundation, service delivery policy and strategies and parks, open space and facilities service levels. The Situational Analysis Report involved a range of technical analyses, trends assessments and a broad based community consultation program involving focus groups with community service providers, interviews with Councillors, a 500-unit household survey, public meetings and a series of related activities that allowed the community to express current and future perspectives on these services. More than 150 individuals participated in the various consultation activities.

1.4 Parks and Recreation Master Plan Structure

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan has been developed on five primary themes and two specific strategies. The themes start at a broad overview moving towards specific delivery strategies and service levels and then provides an action plan and implementation strategy to move towards the intended outcomes.

- **Section 2 – Master Plan Foundation**, provides the philosophical foundation and strategic directions for the Master Plan. It is built on a vision, mission statement and guiding principles reflecting the unique perspectives in Chatham-Kent.

- **Section 3 – Recreation Service Delivery Policies and Strategies**, provides direction to Council, staff and service delivery volunteer organizations on the future approach to service delivery. It establishes the policy foundation for Chatham-Kent's development, delivery and evaluation of parks and recreation services as well as the variety of delivery approaches and participation by the Municipality related to its roles, priorities and structure.

- **Section 4 – Parks, Open Space and Recreation Facilities**, establishes the requirements to provide venues for programming, and facilities throughout the municipality. A hierarchy of parks provisioning, open space and recreation facilities is identified. Recreation facilities including pools, arenas, and multi-use buildings are included in the recommendations.

- **Section 5 – Beachfront and Shoreline Strategies**, provides general direction for the acquisition, maintenance and operation of waterfront opportunities through the municipality of Chatham-Kent.

- **Section 6 – Energy Utilization and Conservation Strategies**, provides direction to reduce energy consumption, water conservation and potential energy production.

- **Section 7 – Action Plan and Implementation**, provides an implementation framework and related elements to guide the Master Plan's ongoing implementation, updating and positioning over the twenty year life of the Plan.

2. MASTER PLAN FOUNDATION

2.1 Introduction

This section of the Master Plan provides the philosophical foundation and strategic directions for the Plan. This foundation is built on a Vision, Mission Statement and Principles reflecting the unique perspectives in Chatham-Kent. They provide strategic direction for the investment, resourcing and decision making for the next twenty years to 2030.

The Chatham-Kent Council has developed strategic directions and goals for 2007 to 2010. It is important that the Parks and Recreation Master Plan be aligned with these strategic directions to support the achievement of the broader initiatives of the Municipality.

The following strategic directions relate to the overall development of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan:

Strategic Direction 1:

We will focus on our recreational and cultural opportunities through community engagement.

Strategic Direction 2:

We will support sustainable growth in business and industry with an emphasis on environmental technologies, knowledge-based industries and agri-business.

Strategic Direction 3:

We will diversify and grow Chatham-Kent's population by recruiting and retaining recent immigrants, newcomers, young professional and active retirees from major Canadian centres.

Strategic Direction 4:

We will be a municipality of quality services, effective structure and fiscal responsibility.

Strategic Direction 5:

We will lead the process of bringing partners together to enable a Chatham-Kent Strategic Plan.

2.2 Master Plan Vision

The Vision provides an overarching long term focus and inspires the energy, commitment and participation of all stakeholders to strive towards a common goal and outcome. The Vision offers strategic intent as to the general direction, investment priorities and a base for decision-making.

The following Vision has been developed for the Municipality of Chatham-Kent Parks and Recreation Master Plan for 2010 to 2030.

Master Plan Vision 2-1

Chatham-Kent will be a community where residents value and enjoy healthy, vibrant and engaged lifestyles through regular participation in recreation, parks, and open space activities.



The Vision for the Master Plan speaks to the importance of community health as an important value for all residents. The enjoyment of this value comes from regular participation in recreation activities. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan has the capacity and responsibility to make a significant contribution to this outcome. The Vision identifies the relationship between the value of health and the enjoyment of health through regular participation in a variety of settings, including recreation facilities, parks and open spaces.

2.3 Mission Statement

The Mission Statement speaks to the foundation and key elements of the Master Plan. In terms of its application, each strategy and operational decision associated with the delivery of parks and recreation services should align with the intent and direction of the Mission. The following Mission Statement has been prepared for the Chatham-Kent Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

The Master Plan cannot focus solely on what the municipality has the ability to undertake or provide, but relies on an integrated network of not-for-profit, conservation authority, school board, private sector, community college, YMCA and other service providers to ensure the broadest selection of leisure opportunities for residents. The Mission recognizes the importance of municipal investments in parks and recreation opportunities as indicators to other sectors to their investment in the broader economy of Chatham-Kent.

Master Plan Mission 2-2:

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan focuses all the community's parks and recreation abilities and resources towards the development of parks, recreation services and participation opportunities that enrich the life experiences of Chatham-Kent residents through:

- Increasing residents' health, vitality, personal development and sense of community, through recreation participation.
- Enhancing the capacity of community organizations as sustainable and vibrant contributors to recreation activities and venues.
- Supporting the renewal of and reinvestment in parks, recreation facilities and open space to ensure sustainable recreational venues.
- Improving economic development outcomes by investing in recreational programming and facilities.

The Mission Statement speaks to several levels of investments and outcomes. The first level speaks to the individual health, vibrancy and personal development of residents as the start for a strong Master Plan. The second element involves creating strong community organizations that operate and deliver sustainable programs and venues. The third level recognizes the opportunity to build on the existing resources and facilities. The fourth level speaks to a broader community outcome recognizing that individuals, community organizations and venues combine to create greater opportunity for economic development.





2.4 Guiding Principles

The following Principles have been prepared as the basis for directions, strategies and recommendations within the overall Parks and Recreation Master Plan. They also provide measures to evaluate the performance and success of the Master Plan. These Principles have two applications at this level of planning. First, they provide further definition for key components of the Mission. Second, they identify how the Plan and the community service providers need to interact with residents and participants and the forms of relationships that are needed in order to be successful.

The following Principles have been developed for the Chatham-Kent Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Master Plan Guiding Principles 2-3:

Corporate Strategic Alignment

Investments in parks and recreation services and facilities will align with and contribute to achieving the municipal strategic priorities and initiatives.

Shared Responsibility

Program development, service delivery, parks and facility investment, will be undertaken as a shared responsibility between the community and the municipality, using as a foundation, the ongoing contributions and skills of volunteers, professional staff, sponsors and related organizations.

Sustainability

The Master Plan will contribute to sustainable programs and facilities based on community, environmental and economic criteria to create an exceptional quality of life in Chatham-Kent.

A Balanced Array of Opportunities

The Municipality will foster a balanced array of recreational opportunities through collaborative strategies and partnerships to respond to the changing and evolving needs of residents and broader community aspirations.

Fairness and Inclusion

Services and facilities will ensure fairness and inclusion by encouraging and facilitating participation for all residents across ability, age, cultural, economic and geographic perspectives.

Distribution of Services

Services will be distributed across the Municipality on an equitable basis to ensure a broad base of participation at the community level.

Maximizing Facility Utilization

Achievement of maximum utilization of existing facilities is a priority before the development of new facilities, along with ensuring cost effective operations.

Reinvestment and Renewal

Future investments will continue to focus on upgrades, service enhancements and renewal of existing facilities as a priority before construction of new facilities. Where efficiencies are readily available in the development of new facilities, these can be measured against alternative renewable strategies.

Balancing Accessibility and Revenue Generation

Services will achieve a reasonable balance between facilitating broad-based public accessibility and generating revenues that support both community organization sustainability and align with municipal financial capacity.

Energy Utilization and Conservation

Operations and renewal of facilities will strive towards efficient energy use and investment in conservation measures to reduce the overall environmental footprint and energy costs for these facilities.

Natural Heritage Preservation and Enhancement

Parks and open spaces will conserve environmentally significant natural heritage features and strive to enhance these features through buffers and naturalization, be accessible to the public for passive and active activities where viable and contribute to the natural heritage character of the municipality.

Quality Services and Evaluation

Services will be delivered at a high quality and continually evaluated to determine community benefit, cost effectiveness and the achievement of stated outcomes.

Municipal Leadership

The Municipality will continue to provide the leadership role in the planning, coordination, facilitation and evaluation of parks and recreation services to ensure innovative delivery strategies through partnerships, joint ventures and direct delivery approaches.

3. RECREATION SERVICE DELIVERY POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

3.1 Introduction

This section, Recreation Service Delivery Policies and Strategies, provides direction to Council, staff and community service delivery organizations on the future approach and priorities to service delivery. The goal is to offer programs and services that respond to the existing and future recreation interests and needs of Chatham-Kent residents. The policies and strategies develop the framework of responsibilities and expectations needed to create a consistently high level of programming. The policies and strategies provide direction on selecting future activities, funding, organizational governance and the role of Division staff in relation to other departments, community organizations and not-for-profit service delivery groups.

Each sub-section includes a short overview providing the context for the ensuing Service Delivery Recommendation. The recommendations are intended to be implemented over the twenty-year life of the Plan. The implementation of these policies and strategies are prioritized and detailed in Section 7 – Action Plan and Implementation.

3.2 Service Delivery Policy Framework

Municipalities face increasing expectations to deliver a broader range of recreation services, often requiring sophisticated facilities, integrated recreation services delivery and long term capital and operating financial commitments. There are a growing number of groups wanting more unique activities at higher and higher quality levels.

Further defining service delivery, is the reality that participants have variable levels of engagement needs that require different levels of coaching, facility, programming, accessibility and time availability requirements:

- Competitive levels that focus on higher performance activities and training.
- Recreational / hobbyist levels that represent the majority of users who are looking for regular, recreational level participation opportunities.
- Tryout / experimental / new activity levels which involve users who participate occasionally, people trying out different interests or emerging, new activities finding their niche.

The service delivery framework establishes the principal role for the Division, in the planning, development, delivery and evaluation of recreation services in the community. It also helps to identify that the municipality is sharing service delivery responsibility with the community and recognize that the municipality's role is unique where staff have the skills, capacities, facilities and financial resources and related delivery factors which are not available to community organizations.

In support of the recommended policy framework, it will be important for the Community Services Division to actively work towards repositioning its role, focuses and priorities. What will become increasingly important in the future is enhancing and expanding the Division's community development role and capacities, including the possibility of decreasing some direct programming. The importance of the Community Development role is multi-fold:

- To actively work with community volunteers and voluntary organizations to both sustain and enhance their capacity to deliver recreation, culture and related programs for the community.

- To ensure the broadest possible array of recreation program availability, particularly considering that if voluntary delivery organizations were to contract or disappear, the Municipality could not begin to afford to deliver these programs, such as minor sports. Therefore, a healthy and growing voluntary services delivery sector is a more important point of investment for the Municipality than direct programs delivery which often requires subsidies.

- To engage the community to use all its skills and capacities, and to take leadership in the delivery of recreation programs and services they have an interest in.

- To capitalize and focus on the Municipality's strengths in services delivery related to facilities, parks, open spaces, research and planning and related activities, and to build services on the strengths of the community where they are best applied, which is recreation programming.

This recommendation represents a transition for the parks and recreation services delivered by the Division, moving away from revenue generation as its primary focus through direct program delivery which is often subsidized, to facilitating and partnering with the community to provide more sustainable and a greater variety of community-based recreation programs. To achieve this transition, the Community Services Division will need to undertake a comprehensive review of its direct programs delivery and related roles to determine where it could diminish or withdraw from direct program delivery, and support through facilitation, resourcing and other strategies, community volunteers and organizations' capacities to deliver these services. Examples that could be considered, involve summer camps, aerobics, some early years programs, etc. An even stronger aligned perspective could be undertaken over time with respect to utilizing the capacities of St. Clair College, the YMCA and others who offer similar programs related to gymnasium, aquatic, fitness and similar programming.

In order to undertake the proposed transition in roles and priority for the Division, a planned and well investigated assessment process needs to be undertaken so that no major gaps in programming evolve, resources are not lost and community capacity is effectively developed and built through transitional process to meet the desired outcomes.

The Municipality cannot be all things to all people. Community organizations often bring capacity, passion, technical skills and some different funding capabilities to program development and delivery. The Municipality, related to its limited investment resources, will be better served by focusing on its strengths, i.e.: facilities, parks, technical and community development supports, marketing, research and evaluation, with volunteers and community organizations delivering recreation programs within their areas of strength.

Service Delivery Recommendation 3-1: Recreation Services Delivery Policy Framework

Service Delivery Approach:

That community-based organizations represent the principal service delivery approach for recreation programs in Chatham-Kent. They represent the primary strategy for expanding the accessibility, affordability, variety and sustainability of the recreation programs available to Chatham-Kent residents.

That the Division undertake a three to five year process of assessing and transitioning its service delivery focus and priorities from revenue generation related to recreation programming, to Community Development initiatives via a community consultation and development process that invests in:

- Building community capacity and organizational sustainability to deliver both existing and a broader mix of new recreation and leisure programs.
- Developing systems of supports and services that enhance community organizations' governance capacities, marketing, volunteer recruitment and recognition and related activities.
- Facilitating access to venues and sites.
- Supporting grant applications, sponsorships and fundraising related activities.
- Providing common services where viable that support a broad range of community organizational needs, ranging from potential integration of registrations, volunteer recognition, marketing, training and development and related initiatives.
- Assessing current Division delivered recreation programs, relative to the ability for existing, new or enhanced community organizations to delivery these programs on a sustainable and qualitative basis.

Service Delivery Recommendation 3-1: Recreation Services Delivery Policy Framework Continued

Municipal Role:

Chatham-Kent will achieve its service delivery responsibilities through the planning, development, delivery and evaluation of recreation services based on the following hierarchy of municipal engagement and roles within its financial priorities and strategies as identified by Council.

1. Facilitation

- The Division will engage with community organizations to facilitate and support the development and delivery of recreation services by providing the following supports.
    - Technical programming;
    - Access to grants / financial support;
    - Providing data and information related to proposed programming;
    - Volunteer training and recognition;
    - Access to facilities, fields and open spaces;
    - Trends research;
    - Monitoring and evaluation of programs; and
    - Related strategies and supports.

2. Partnerships:

- The Municipality will enter into partnerships, joint ventures and related initiatives at variable levels of involvement that result in a shared responsibility for recreation services delivery, based on the following criteria.
    - The recreation interests of Chatham-Kent residents are realized;
    - There is a demonstrated need / demand for the proposed service;
    - Long term sustainability exists within acceptable risk parameters.

3. Direct Delivery:

- The Municipality will undertake the direct delivery of a recreation service where there is an established need and where facilitation and partnerships delivery strategies are not viable or available.
- Utilizing direct capital investment and annual budget support, the Division will provide recreation services using Municipal staff operating alone or in partnership with volunteers.

In considering various program requests, the Municipality must establish a process to give priority to various parks and recreation initiatives. The following recommendations establish a policy guide for the decision-making process to ensure the Municipality best meets the vision and mission for parks and recreation services as established in this Master Plan.

Service Delivery Recommendation 3-2: Prioritization Process

That Chatham-Kent adopt the following process to prioritize recreation services, focusing first on municipal residents as the primary users within the following framework:

1. **Support Council's Strategic Directions**

    - Recreation services that are primarily intended to support the strategic directions of the Municipality as identified by Council and as updated from time to time.

2. **Broad-based Participation:**

    - Recreation services that facilitate and encourage broad-based participation for all municipal residents at the recreational participation levels, and at regional and provincial competitive levels for children and youth.

3. **Inclusion:**

    - Recreation services that support accessibility linked to the recreation interests of specific groups, including those with disabilities, seniors, young children, youth, new Canadians and other identified groups.

4. **Competitive Participation and Events:**

    - Recreation services that support competitive, high performance participation, tournaments, events and related activities.

The following policy identifies the role of the Municipality with respect to the delivery of services. There are three elements related to leadership, direct involvement and program evaluation. These roles reflect the skill sets and resources available to staff and their ability to animate new organizations in the development and delivery of programming.

Service Delivery Recommendation 3-3: Municipal Role

1. Leadership:

The Community Services Division will have a leadership role in the integration, planning and evaluation of recreation services in Chatham-Kent, including:

- Needs and trends identification.
- Services evaluation; and
- Provision of community development supports to not-for-profit and community-based organizations, volunteers and initiatives.

2. Involvement

- The Community Service Division's involvement in recreation services delivery will be based on the following criteria:
    - Identification of a demonstrated need at reasonable participation levels;
    - Evidence of long term sustainability for the proposed recreation service;
    - Commitments to public accessibility and affordability criteria;
    - Participation by the Municipality at a scale matching the benefits to be achieved by participants and the community at large;
    - The use of a business case analysis to support municipal investments in recreation service initiatives;
    - Consistent with municipal cost recovery and revenue generation criteria.

3. Evaluation:

- The Community Service Division will establish an evaluation process, through data collection and performance evaluation, that will assess:
    - The value of the municipal role in service delivery strategies;
    - The measure of participation achieved relative to goals / targets;
    - The achievements obtained and their alignment to the vision and mission of the Master Plan and municipal strategic priorities.

3.3 Service Delivery Strategies

3.3.1 PARTNERSHIPS AND JOINT VENTURES

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent has a successful record of community use agreements for parks, facilities and services. These span a range of joint use agreements, exclusive park agreements, facility use agreements, community hall agreements and service contracts. The use of partnerships and joint ventures are seen as an effective and essential strategy that uses all the resources of the community, allows organizations and individuals with expertise to more effectively deliver service, expand opportunities within the community and potentially achieves greater cost efficiencies through economies of scale and coordinated delivery efforts. The Municipality of Chatham-Kent should actively maintain and enhance existing partnerships and service agreements; enter into new agreements where there is a demonstrated need; and develop new skills in terms of contract management, partnership evaluation and supervision, along with enhanced risk-taking frameworks regarding future collaborative initiatives via partnerships and joint ventures.

Partnerships and joint ventures are a powerful tool in expanding the availability of recreation programming in the community and in facilitating the community to take greater responsibility for a wider range of recreation programs that residents may wish to participate in. This strategy directly connects to the reality that the municipality cannot be all things to all people. Therefore, there is greater benefit if the municipality invests in community development in support of partnerships and other collaborative initiatives, versus undertaking a more limited range of recreation programs.

Service Delivery Recommendation 3-4: Partnerships and Joint Ventures

That Chatham-Kent continue to both lead and broaden the use and range of partnerships, joint ventures and related initiatives across the community where:

- A recreation need is identified and demonstrated.
- Community access, participation and affordability is assured.
- The partnership arrangement is financially sound and has reasonable long term sustainability.
- The municipal investment and scope of service reflects the benefits to be realized by Chatham-Kent residents.
- Ensure partnerships involve other municipal organizations, such as Chatham-Kent tourism, not-for-profit sector, community-based organizations, the private sectors and other institutions.

That the Division develop an expanded capacity to identify, forge and implement partnership opportunities, and to pursue additional collaborative initiatives through implementation of and investments in the recommended Division Community Development function and Service Delivery Policy. Such an approach needs to give active consideration to developing partnerships that are unique, beyond the current context of existing partnerships and using more innovative techniques, ranging from funding support to shared staffing, to marketing supports and other strategies.

That the Division maintain, strengthen and broaden partnerships with groups internal to the Municipality of Chatham-Kent, including Tourism Chatham-Kent, the Chatham-Kent Public Library, the Chatham Cultural Centre, Health and Family Services and other service providers to improve recreation service delivery.

That Chatham-Kent undertake a comprehensive review of its relationships, reciprocal agreements and partnerships with external agencies including the Chatham-Kent District School, the St. Clair Catholic District School Board, the Lower Thames River Conservation Authority, the Chatham-Kent YMCA, St. Clair College, the WISH Centre and other larger service providers to explore more innovative and shared integration and joint delivery possibilities that could be achieved by pursuing increasingly innovative partnerships. Such a strategy needs to focus on increasing public accessibility to recreation and related services, and on generating improved operational investment outcomes for all parties involved.

These initiatives could involve joint maintenance, exchanging operational services, integrated marketing, fee for service program delivery, repositioning of selected services, etc.

3.3.2 VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION CAPACITY AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Volunteers and volunteer organizations represent the core element in the development and delivery of recreation programs in Chatham-Kent. They are actively engaged at all levels of service delivery from minor sports to special events. The future program delivery direction within the Master Plan has identified an opportunity for Chatham-Kent to engage with community volunteers and their organizations to enhance their capacities and role in the future delivery of recreation programs. This policy direction builds on the participation of more than 250 volunteer organizations, service clubs, and sports organizations across the Municipality. A policy direction to enhance and build on these capacities is an important initiative to sustain recreation programming across the Municipality, as the Municipality is not in a position to replace these important services if the voluntary sector were to diminish.

Through the research and community consultation, community volunteers are recognized as extremely active and take pride in their services to the community. At the same time, it is recognized that not all communities have the capacity to develop and deliver programs. There are challenges with respect to continued leadership, financial resources, and increasingly complex volunteer accreditation requirements. The Municipality will need to provide staffing support in order to assist volunteer organizations to realize their capacities and to meet the needs of the people they serve. The Municipality must work from a principle of collaboration, support, respect, effective listening and other strategies that continue to forge and achieve outcomes that grow, sustain and actively engage the community. The following recommendations should be adopted to build capacity in the volunteer sector.

Service Delivery Recommendation 3-5: Volunteer Organization Capacity and Leadership Development

- That the Community Services Division recognize the voluntary sector as a vital partner in the delivery of recreation programming and that Division organizational capacities and resources be identified to support the existing and future service delivery role of volunteer organizations in Chatham-Kent through proposed Community Development in Recommendation 3-1.

- That the Division engage with all the volunteer organizations in a manner consistent with their individual capacities, experiences and approaches, recognizing that each organization will be at different levels of development and capacity, and therefore the level of supports they need will vary.

- That the Division formulate and deliver a governance and leadership development training initiative to support the ongoing viability, capacity and skills development of community organizations' program and administrative volunteers and their Boards.

- That the Division pursue the provision of common supports, such as program marketing, volunteer recruitment and training, program research and evaluation, and related perspectives that offer benefits to community organizations that are not available within their own resources.

- That Division annually undertake a volunteer and voluntary organization recognition program with respect to longevity of service, special program initiatives and community health benefits they achieve in order to develop enhanced community awareness of their contributions to the quality of life of the residents.

- That the Division, working in collaboration with community service delivery organizations, host one or two volunteer forums annually, inviting volunteers and community organizations to discuss trends and related research; share information on senior government grants; discuss municipal policy and funding directions; and seek input on service delivery needs, opportunities, policies and funding requirements.

- That the Division, working in collaboration with community service providers, develop a tool and a process to periodically assessing (every five to ten years) the health, future perspectives, positioning, viability, needs and capacities of individual community service providing organizations as an effective organizational development and sustainability strategy.

3.3.3 MULTI-USE STRATEGIES

Multi-use strategies identify opportunities for parks, buildings, and community investments to be used for various recreation program, sporting activities and community events. These venues often include active and passive parks, multi-use hall, arena and library combinations. Examples in Chatham-Kent include the Community Centre Complex on Tweedsmuir Avenue in Chatham, Stennet Park in Ridgetown and the Wheatley Area Recreation Complex.

Support for multi-use venues is based on the following key principles:

- Potential capital cost savings in the order of 10% to 25%.
- Significant potential for operational savings of up to 25%.
- Enhanced user satisfaction relative to convenience and visiting one site as an individual or family.
- Larger critical mass, visibility and community identification, along with improved marketing opportunities.
- Potential for enhanced facilities relative to their scope, quality, accessibility and the volumes of participation.

Service Delivery Recommendation 3-6: Multi-Use Facilities

That Chatham-Kent continue to utilize, and undertake wherever possible, the development of multi-use approaches in the renewal of existing and development of new services, facilities and parks based on the following criteria:

- Participant convenience and enhanced recreation experiences.
- Compatibility between the multiple uses being reasonably achievable and not conflicting.
- Operational economies of scale and capital cost savings; and
- Enhanced marketing opportunities.

3.3.4 COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

The Division's communication strategy will provide Chatham-Kent with an opportunity to increase participation in recreation programs and activities through various media. The purpose of a communication strategy is to provide the information on the value of participation in recreation, to increase participation rates, to promote community awareness and to encourage more healthy and vibrant lifestyles. An integrated communication strategy can also bridge gaps with targeted groups including seniors, teens, youth, people with special needs and new Canadians. Chatham-Kent, through various printed promotional material, public service announcements, the Chatham-Kent web portal and other media, can have a positive impact on participation and volunteer organizations at all service levels. An annual communication strategy also allows staff, not-for-profit and for profit service providers to collaborate in developing promotional themes and / or priorities for the upcoming year.

Service Delivery Recommendation 3-7: Annual Communication Strategy

That Chatham-Kent prepare and implement an annual communication strategy for the purpose of creating broader public awareness of recreation programming and facilities, to promote healthier lifestyles, and to encourage greater resident and visitor participation. The following activities are identified as elements for a communication strategy:

- Work collaboratively with the YMCA, Thames Campus of St. Clair College and the University of Guelph, Ridgetown Campus to prepare an integrated, semi-annual catalogue of recreation opportunities at all venues in Chatham-Kent.
- Engage all community service providers to promote their activities, registration and contact information in the program catalogue, on the website, etc.
- Promote opportunities for private sector recreation providers to advertise their programming opportunities in Chatham-Kent.
- Continue to promote a variety of program registration options, including internet, telephone, mail-in and in-person registration.
- Incorporate other communication tools as needed, including flyers in municipal water billings, taxes or seasonal flyers.
- Ensure special events, celebrations, milestones, new initiatives and connected achievements in recreation are spotlighted.
- Explore emerging digital communication tools, like social networking to reach younger potential audiences.

3.3.5 SPORT TOURISM STRATEGY

Sport tourism is an investment strategy that many municipalities have made or are considering. Facilities in Hamilton, London, Burlington, Windsor, Sarnia and other locations have been designed to accommodate large sporting events. Chatham-Kent should consider a sport tourism policy that targets the level of sport tourism that reflects the realistic range of facility and operational investments available to the Municipality. The emergence of a new YMCA and St. Clair College facilities, as well as the proposed ConEx and future recommendations on a twin pad arena with sizable seating and a soccer complex, establishes a basis to consider such an initiative in order to maximize use, revenues and community economic benefits. Before committing to facilities or programming for sport tourism, the Municipality needs to engage the public and sport interest groups in establishing reasonable expectations and investment return / economic impact potential.

Chatham-Kent has initiated several activities, including the recent international rugby tournament, the annual kite surfing competition on Mitchells Bay and various water related activities on Rondeau Bay. Fishing derbies, river-based events and other events exist or could evolve, The specific

details of a sport tourism policy are beyond the scope of a master planning process as it needs to be tailored to specific research and community consultation. In moving forward, the following opportunities should be considered:

- Sport tourism facilities and events should be integrated with local community use and support multi-use capacity.
- The investment horizon in sport tourism should be considered based on ten to twenty-year timelines and not be seen as a short term investment.
- A sport tourism policy should not result in a loss of current local community events / tournaments, and
- Investments in new or upgraded recreation and related facilities will need to consider the potential beneficial economic impact of sports tourism for the community as a whole and for individual sports organizations.

Expected benefits of a sport tourism policy are as follows:

- The net economic impact of the dollars spent by visitors on accommodation, food and related expenses.
- Raises the profile of the community through media attention that enhances the broader marketing of the community.
- Increases community pride in hosting special events and opportunities for volunteering;
- Creates fundraising opportunities for sponsoring community service providers and not-for-profit organizations.
- Enhances service provider programs and offerings, including enhanced technical capacities such as sport development, officiating, coaching, etc.

One of the central themes to a sports tourism strategy is the need for a collaborative approach, within the context of the two types of sport tourism initiatives:

- Annualized tournaments and events which currently represent approximately 90% of what occurs within Chatham-Kent.
- Bid-based events that could range from the Ontario Games, to OFFSA, to Seniors Games and many other regional and provincial opportunities, along with special events.

This collaborative approach requires support from Tourism Chatham-Kent, community sports organizations, facility and venue operators, the Municipality, potential corporate sponsors and community volunteers. Any sport tourism initiative is a collection of interested partners, and if any of the key partners are not available, then the sport tourism initiative's benefits will be impaired. What is important for Chatham-Kent, is to focus on its strengths, which currently would be its waterfronts and rivers, the new St. Clair College complex, the YMCA facility and some of its key sport fields across the Municipality. With the possible emergence of the ConEx facility, a future twin

pad and a soccer stadium, increased potential exists to not only enhance annualized tournaments offered by community organizations but also to pursue bid-based events.

The Municipality needs to take a leadership role in the development of a sport tourism strategy targeted at the strengths, reasonable opportunities and collaborative initiatives that Chatham-Kent can support. The development of the strategy will need to investigate the venues that provide opportunities to host, an inventory of current events, the community's history of events delivery, the interests of community organizations to pursue sport tourism strategies, the role that the Municipality and Tourism Chatham-Kent can deliver on a collaborative basis and a number of other key perspectives. Numerous municipalities have developed these strategies, and therefore, there would be opportunities to research and assess other similar initiatives in support of developing a Chatham-Kent Sport Tourism Strategy.

Sports Tourism is an economic-based initiative that has the potential, depending on venues and community capacities, to enhance employment opportunities, to bring increased net revenues to the community that support businesses, to increase facility / venue rental revenues and to develop a stronger foundation to improve venues and facilities quality and capacity levels.

Service Delivery Recommendation 3-8: Sport Tourism Strategy

That Chatham-Kent pursue the collaborative development of a Sport Tourism Strategy based on the following framework:

- Enter into a partnership with Tourism Chatham-Kent and community sports organizations for the development of a strategy.
- Identify and capitalize on the availability of primary venues, community organizational capacities, and destination and locational strengths.
- Identify the Municipality's capacity to deliver a Sports Tourism Strategy within an increasingly competitive environment.
- Ensure an appropriate strategy positioning for both annualized and bid-based initiatives.
- Develop governance, leadership, and investment frameworks that align with the strengths and opportunities in Chatham-Kent.
- Identify the potential range of benefits and outcomes that support both the strategy and the recommended investments that may emerge.

3.3.6 PROGRAMMING THEMES AND DIRECTIONS

Changing trends in demographics and recreational activities will shape future programming expectations of Chatham-Kent participants. The Situational Analysis recognized the increasing proportion of older adults and the stable proportion of youth population within a low population growth context of Chatham-Kent. At the same time, changes in societal expectations of work and

recreation can reduce the availability and commitment to regular exercise and sometimes increase the emphasis on more one time community events. With respect to new activities, extreme sports, such as skateboarding, BMX cycling, rock climbing and kite surfing, are evolving in Chatham-Kent. Also new activities, combining geographic information system technology with outdoor activities, create new events, such as geocaching and new forms of orienteering.

New programming themes and directions evolving out of the community consultation, focus group information and community survey included the following:

- An increasing interest in passive recreation activities, including walking, cycling and hiking on established trails.
- Low impact and non-competitive participation activities and programs for older adults, such as aquafit classes, yoga, low impact aerobics and similar activities.
- Opportunities for extreme sport participation for youth and young adults, including skateboarding, BMX cycling and similar activities; and
- Increasing emphasis on mass participation events, such as walking, running and cycling, often related to fundraising events or mass participation events.

Service Delivery Recommendation 3-9: Programming Directions

That Chatham-Kent consider the further development and expansion of recreation programming offered, primarily through partnerships with community service organizations or through direct delivery, as per the Service Delivery Policy for the following program areas:

- Increased information and organizational development that supports walking, hiking and cycling trail use in Chatham-Kent.
- Programming directed towards older adults, involving low impact exercising programs based on aquatics, yoga and low impact aerobics.
- Opportunities for extreme sports education, safety and programming related to skateboarding, BMX cycling and similar activities; and
- Development, promotion and partnerships in mass participation, municipal-wide or fundraising-based events in Chatham-Kent that support improved health, education and community spirit.

3.4 Service Delivery Policies

3.4.1 COMMUNITY-BASED GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT OF MUNICIPALLY-OWNED FACILITIES AND VENUES

Chatham-Kent enjoys a significant number of joint use agreements and volunteer organizations that manage parks and facilities at a variety of venues owned by the Municipality as a basis to deliver recreation programs. They provide an array of recreation services in many geographically dispersed venues. There is also varying levels of utilization, quality of services, programming scope and governance models.

The first consideration is the leadership change in community organizations. Input received from various community organizations who operate these facilities and venues through the consultation process indicated a general concern as to the ability of local groups to successfully recruit and retain leadership volunteers. In several situations, the volunteer operating group relied on a few individuals who are retired and there was concern as to who would replace these leaders over transitional periods.

A second consideration, from the municipal perspective, are concerns involving health and safety; consistency and continuity of these operations; fairness and equity to citizens; and the ability for tendering, financial, accounting and other accountability measures to be appropriately undertaken. Also evident, was the importance of local identity and "ownership" of facilities and programming, especially since many of the facilities have been developed via local fundraising and dedicated volunteer support over the years. While this commitment needs to be sustained and supported, it must also be recognized that there are strategic transitions occurring within the recreation service delivery field, regarding volunteer screening, accountability and public health and safety standards.

A third consideration is the variety of contracts that Chatham-Kent utilizes for the operation of various facilities, parks or open spaces. A review of these contracts in the Situational Analysis Report identified different levels of specificity and standardization. Both the not-for-profit groups and Chatham-Kent would benefit from a more comprehensive contract template that focuses on ownership and asset management and the benefits to be derived from not-for-profit service provider programs. The clarity of roles and functions should identify risks and management expectations related to these facilities.

The following recommendations evolve from a need to provide a governance model and community supports for not-for-profit organizations. The intent of these recommendations are as follows:

- To create a consistent and equitable recreation service delivery model across the Municipality.
- To ensure compliance with health and safety, tendering, financial accountability and other activities that have potential liability considerations for Chatham-Kent, volunteers and user groups.
- To respond to volunteer leadership challenges identified by local organizations in order to support long term consistency and continuity of service delivery.

- To clarify the role of Chatham-Kent and local volunteer leaders and organizations, allowing local groups to focus on services, programs and other activities while the Municipality focuses on asset management, health and safety, and related accountability perspectives.

Service Delivery Recommendations 3-10: Community-Based Governance and Management of Municipally-Owned Facilities and Venues

That Chatham-Kent develop a governance and management model for municipally-owned facilities and parks operated by community organizations as follows:

- That the Municipality be responsible for recreation venue and facility maintenance for all municipally-owned assets, including the management of all capital improvement projects.
- That local service clubs or not-for-profit service organizations continue to plan and operate recreation programs and venues in conformity with municipal policies and criteria, including health and safety, participant inclusion, accessibility, affordability and an integrated operations strategy.
- That a member of the Community Services Division represent Chatham-Kent on each of local service clubs or not-for-profit service organizations to provide coordination, communication, policy interpretation and related supports.
- That where a local not-for-profit organization is unable to continue its governance and management role, the Municipality undertake an evaluation as to whether another group is able to operate the venue or a direct delivery role by the Municipality should be undertaken.
- That Chatham-Kent establish a consistent user fee schedule for service charges and participation fees established by local not-for-profit organizations based on a user fee policy to be developed by the Municipality.

Service Delivery Recommendation 3-11: Community Service Contracts

That Chatham-Kent ensure a current valid contract exists for the operation of all municipally-owned venues and facilities, and that all contracts be reviewed and aligned with the following content:

- A preamble that identifies the parties involved and the benefits and services to be delivered through the agreement.
- Reinforces the Municipality's ultimate responsibility for effective asset management based on the ownership of the venue or facility.

- Use, scheduling and maintenance undertaken by the not-for-profit organization needs to conform to the following policy criteria and standards established by the Municipality for:
    - Risk management, alcohol, etc.;
    - Health and safety;
    - Insurance coverage;
    - Cleanliness;
    - Public access;
    - Fees, rates and charges;
    - Onsite advertising;
    - Accounting and reporting requirements.

That the contract identify details regarding capital and annual cost responsibilities between the parties and how revenues will be generated and shared, and the rates to be charged.

That the contract has detailed rates and performance clauses for both the Municipality and not-for-profit organization related to regular maintenance, scheduling limits, variety of permitted uses, and a regular performance review criteria. It should include a termination clause and conditions that can be used at the sole discretion of the Municipality. It should also;

- Identify a timeline for renewal, review of conditions and terms.
- Provide a detailed conflict resolution process.
- Establish an annual reporting requirement to Council on the recreation programming delivery and financial performance.

Service Delivery Recommendation 3-12: Recreation Activity Councils

That Chatham-Kent continue to support or form specialized activity councils as a means to generate community input relevant to these groups for the purpose of better supporting communications, assessing and reviewing programs and facilities and pursuing planning activities that improve access to community support services. These activity councils may include the following:

- Youth Council (continued support).
- Trails Council (continued support).
- Seniors Council. (continued support)
- Sports Councils.
- Active Communities

3.4.2 COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP FUND

Chatham-Kent currently offers community partnership funding for organizations interested in developing new programs or investments in recreation facilities. Through the consultation program with stakeholders, several organizations indicated the need for additional community partnership funding support to provide recreational services. These investments will help better utilize volunteers and voluntary governed organizations, and to sustain community development and organizational supports to provide these services. It should be recognized that additional investments in terms of Division staffing for community capacity building will be needed to in order to maintain a dynamic and sustainable community-based service delivery model.

This funding program should be located in the Community Service Division where community organization needs and capacity are best known by the reviewing group.

Service Delivery Recommendation 3-13: Community Partnership Fund

That Chatham-Kent sustain the community partnership funding program for community-based programming, facilities and event investments as a key service delivery and development strategy. That the Community Partnership Fund have the following targeted investment components:

- Funding support for youth ice, field, floor and other recreation facility use on a consolidated basis for all municipal recreation resources.
- Operational funding support for qualified recreation and sports organizations.
- Operational funding for special needs populations, including those with disabilities, new Canadians, seniors and related groups for community-based programming.
- Operational funding support for emerging recreation activities within the first three years of development after which future funding support would be derived from other appropriate categories.
- Opportunities to fund, with a funding cap, one time recreation initiatives consistent with the mission and principles of the Municipality and the Community Services Division.
- A capital funding support program for requests between $5,000 and $25,000. For requests greater than this amount, applications would be undertaken outside of the Community Partnership Fund.
- Operational funding for recreational events to a maximum of $10,000, after which further funding would be approved by Council on an individual basis outside of this program.

Service Delivery Recommendation 3-14: Community Partnership Fund Terms of Reference and Criteria

That Chatham-Kent undertake the development of a comprehensive Terms of Reference for the Community Partnership Fund related to community investment and development requests, including eligibility criteria and limits for each funding category based on the following principles and criteria.

- More than 80% of the requesting organization's participants are residents of Chatham-Kent.
- The requesting organization is clearly linked to Chatham-Kent in terms of its volunteer Board of Directors, is a non-profit entity and has been operating more than three years except for emerging recreation services.
- The recreation programming venues are located entirely within Chatham-Kent.
- The organization and its programming have been assessed as sustainable.
- Participation is open to Chatham-Kent residents without significant restrictions.
- An upset funding limit is established to ensure no one organization receives a disproportionate amount of the available annual funding.
- Preference is given to targeted populations in each funding category, including youth, teens, seniors, new Canadians and other individuals with barriers to participation.
- Organizations are able to identify the evident benefits of their recreation programs related to the vision, mission and principles of the Community Services Division and Chatham-Kent.

That the application process be developed to efficiently use the time required by the organization to prepare and request funding support by building on previous application materials and providing annual updates as to program outcomes.

That the grant process be flexible in determining how financial support is provided based on procedures that are most appropriate for the organization.

That the Community Partnership Fund be reviewed every three years relative to:

- Level of funding requests, availability and support funding delivered.
- Reassessment of thresholds, targets and limitations within the program.
- Changing trends and recreation need profiles.
- Organizational consultation and input on program enhancements.

3.4.3 USER FEE POLICY

Over the last number of years, there has been an increased focus on the development and application of user fee for municipal parks, recreation and leisure services. Municipalities continue to be under financial pressure due to service downloading from the provincial government, increasing infrastructure investment requirements, health and safety considerations and various other cost of service pressures. These influences have created the need to increase user fees as a way to limit tax increases. As a result, user fees have grown steadily often above rates of inflation, creating concerns related to fairness, equity, affordability and access. Several trends identified in the Situational Analysis Report are identified as follows:

- Increasing demand for preferred ice, floor and field times by adult users, especially as fees increase. These requests challenge the traditional expectation of youth-based allocation policies and youth having earlier ice times due to homework and sleep requirements.

- Concerns related to affordability, especially for families wanting to enroll their children in minor sports and other leisure programs. This is further intensified by the downturn in manufacturing impact on the Chatham-Kent economy. .

- Results of the community survey indicated significant decreases in participation rates of 40% and 61% if fees were increased 7% and 12% respectively; and

- The obstacles for emerging recreation programs to be able to initiate new activities when community organizations find the venue cost structure prohibitive.

Implementation of the Master Plan service delivery policy and organizational recommendations will directly influence Division operating costs and user fees. The user fee policy has links to other policy areas, specifically municipal investments related to recreation facilities and sports fields and fee subsidies to support low income and other disadvantage populations. These policies need to be integrated to ensure consistency, fairness and equity, and a user friendly implementation approach.

Service Delivery Recommendation 3-15: User Fee Policy

That Chatham-Kent undertake a comprehensive assessment and development strategy related to program services and facility user fees that results in:

- User fees that are based on a two part development strategy:
    - the full cost of service delivery, including direct costs, a Division overhead allocation and facility renewal / reinvestment surcharges;
    - the full cost being reduced (subsidized) by annual municipal investments that are based on need, sustainability, benefits delivered and funding availability.
- Fairness and equity amongst all user groups being established within the user fee model.

- The user fee model establishing coverage targets by service area, as well as for the Division as the foundation to establish fees and budgetary directions.

- Staged implementation of user fee strategies of up to five years where possible, to allow service organizations to adjust to user fee increases.

The intent of the user fee policy is to encourage broad based participation throughout the Municipality in achieving the vision of a healthy community. It is intended that all taxpayers have access to, can participate in and realize the benefits of recreational activities regardless of their ability, background or financial considerations. Fairness and equity are therefore key principles for the user fee policy's development. In support of user fee policy Recommendation 3-16 outlines a user fee development process.

Service Delivery Recommendation 3-16: User Fee Policy Development Process

That Chatham-Kent establish a comprehensive user fee policy based on the following principles:

- Development of a fair and equitable user fee model across groups, activities and locations.

- Maximum utilization of facilities.

- Maximum revenue generation from ancillary income sources, including concessions, naming rights, advertising and similar activities.

- A user fee policy that is transparent and easy for community organizations to understand.

- Cost effective facilities and program delivery by the Municipality.

That the development of the user fee policy ensures stakeholder consultation on its key principles and strategies.

That the user fee strategy incorporate market-based approaches to balance utilization levels and maximize income in high demand activities.

That the individual user fees be reviewed annually, and the fee policy and its structure be reassessed at least every three years to adjust the primary cost inputs as appropriate.

That policies on organizational and individual participant financial support not form part of the user fee policy, but rather be considered in accordance with specific recommendations on these topics in the Master Plan.

3.4.4 INDIVIDUAL USER FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The provision of individual program user fee support is important to reinforce the principles of inclusion, fairness and equity and the resulting personal well-being and healthy lifestyles for all residents. Most municipalities and minor sports programs have developed a financial subsidy program for individuals, families and other groupings who do not have the financial means to pay participant fees and who would benefit from participation in programs. These organizations reduce or waive fees in order to facilitate participation for low income families or other challenging circumstances. The Municipality manages the "All for Kids" program to address these principles of fairness and inclusion.

Through the Chatham-Kent community consultation program, a number of examples were provided of formal and informal approaches to ensure full participation by interested individuals. Chatham-Kent is in a position to work actively through its community development role, to identify these needs and to assist community organizations to ensure they have the capacity to support broader and more inclusive community access and participation.

Service Delivery Recommendation 3-17: Individual Participant Financial Support

That Chatham-Kent continue its involvement in providing individual participants financial support to access recreation programs for its directly delivered services based on the following principles:

- Identified benefit of participation to qualified individuals.
- A reasonable assessment of the financial or other limitations that prohibit participation.
- Selective monitoring of financially supported participants to ensure engagement and to assess benefits.

That individual participant financial support programs be positioned outside the user fee policy in order to separate individual financial subsidies from Division revenue generation targets.

That financial support offered to individual participants be aligned with their assessed capacity to fund portions of fees where applicable.

That the financial support programs be identified in formats and strategies that ensure awareness of this opportunity and be subject to annual budgetary approval.

That an annual report consistent with the Freedom of Information Act limitations be submitted to Council on the degree of participant financial support provided based on the following:

- Program and / or service.
- Full or partial fee contributions; and
- Individuals, families and age profiles supported.

That the Municipality actively promote and provide advice to not-for-profit community service providing organizations to develop a policy framework and the resources necessary to facilitate participation by individuals who have limited financial capacity for their programs.

3.4.5 JOINT USE AGREEMENTS

Joint use agreements create opportunities for the Municipality to provide service across organizational and municipal boundaries while sharing capital and operating costs. This effectively provides a higher level of service that might otherwise be possible if only one organization participated. For Chatham-Kent, this includes the Bothwell Area Sports Centre, Thames Campus Arena and the Tilbury Arena.

It is recognized that joint planning on a multi-municipality basis can be challenging and raise sensitivities between groups. However, with the cost of recreation services and facilities, abutting municipalities should consider whether an alternative delivery model that more intensively integrates these facilities will offer a higher quality and more cost effective recreation services. The goal is to maximize utilization, reduce the need for additional facilities and lessen overall capital and operating costs when the market functions differently than current service delivery models often based on municipal boundaries.

The Chatham-Kent YMCA has received funding commitments from the Municipality and other government levels. This commitment allows the YMCA to proceed to construction of its new facilities and indoor pool. This public investment must include access and affordability to all Chatham-Kent residents in terms of identified public access times, community organization access; joint marketing; and public access to lessons, programs and skills development.

Service Delivery Recommendation 3-18: Multi-Municipal / Multi-Organizational Approach

That Chatham-Kent pursue initiatives to maintain and enhance opportunities for multi-municipal and multi-organizational service delivery with neighbouring municipalities, St. Clair College, the YMCA, and other not-for-profit organizations by exploring opportunities for a more integrated service delivery model and implementation, that facilitates increased public accessibility to recreation programs and facilities and improves operational and capital investment results for all parties.

3.4.6 COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOLS

The community use of schools is a long established practice in Ontario and Chatham-Kent. These facilities include gymnasiums, resource rooms, outdoor sports fields, specialized facilities classrooms and related amenities. Sports fields on school sites often complement facilities found in park areas providing convenient access for recreation programming. Efforts should be made to maximize the use of existing school-based sports fields wherever feasible. However, this strategy must also recognize the limitations of such sports fields related to lower school board maintenance, fields of limited quality and potential land use conflicts related to lights, noise and ball intrusion onto private property. The Municipality should continue to explore with the local school boards the

opportunity for the Municipality and local service providers to access publically funded schools in order to provide more local recreation programming and reduce pressures for additional long term municipal investments in similar facilities and venues. The funding for public education and recreation is the same tax base, albeit these functions are provided through two distinct organizations. This common funding base supports greater community use of schools. Also involved is the increasing importance of the Provincial policy and funding support intended to significantly increase community use of schools, whereby some Boards, including Chatham-Kent District School Board, have assigned staff to achieve this outcome.

There is an increasing provincial and public focus on maximizing community use of all facilities, especially secondary school facilities with their gymnasiums, tracks, resource rooms, sports fields, etc. Communities are examining different approaches in order to maximize accessibility and use. These approaches include the Halton Region District School Board, where cities like Burlington maintain the outdoor venues but have full use of all the sports fields outside of school times.

A joint initiative takes considerable cooperation between municipalities, school boards and community groups. School boards need to be more flexible and open to community use, municipalities and community organizations also need to be flexible and make contributions that respond to some of the constraints school boards work within. This initiative could also consider St. Clair College with the development of its new field house. Whatever the educational institution, the Municipality needs to become proactive and more intense in facilitating recreation and community program access to educational facilities, including potentially becoming engaged in the reservation and allocation system as occurs in a number of other municipalities. This initiative will take considerable negotiations and the leadership from the Municipality. A coordinated approach between the Municipality and the school boards is required to facilitate community access avoid duplication, competition and confusion, for the after hours use of school grounds and facilities.

Service Delivery Recommendation 3-19: Community Use of Schools and Educational Facilities

That Chatham-Kent actively explore and develop strategies and protocols with local school boards and educational institutions that effectively and significantly increase community accessibility to school sites for recreation programming and sports activities as a key support for not-for-profit and Municipally delivered recreation services.

That these strategies explore all possibilities, ranging from reciprocal agreements to venue maintenance, to shared facilitation of access, to joint ventures related to facilities / venue development and management.

That where the Municipality makes a capital contribution in an education facility's development, the Municipality ensures it first negotiates a Community Access Agreement to ensure the Municipality's investment achieves appropriate public access, affordability and time frames that benefit the community, users and service providing organizations.

3.4.7 NEW PROGRAM OR FACILITY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

This Master Plan is a process that brings together research, community involvement and experience to identify recreation directions for the next twenty years. Master Plans do not typically deal with policy development and business plans for individualized new recreation programs or facilities due to the changing characteristics of the market and demand over the life of the Plan. Community growth patterns, recreation trends and the Municipality's financial resources will change over the course of this Master Plan's timeframe.

Before committing to new program or facility developments, Chatham-Kent should undertake a business case evaluation for each proposal. The Situational Analysis identified a number of business plans recently completed for facilities, programs and parks in Chatham-Kent. These business plans establish the decision-making framework for making sound investment choices for programs and facilities. The following elements should be included in business plans prior to Council consideration:

- Demonstrated need and demand profiles and market requirements for the new initiative.
- Alignment with Corporate Strategic Plans; the Master Plan's mission, vision and guiding principles; and related planning documents.
- Assessment of partnerships, joint ventures and not-for-profit development and delivery strategy alternatives.
- Identification of space and size needs, specialized equipment and conceptual designs.
- Evaluation of alternative development strategies in terms of reinvestment or redevelopment of existing parks, facilities or programs prior to investing in new resources.
- Capital cost estimates and funding sources.
- A three-year operating pro forma to identify potential revenues and expenses related to the new initiative.
- Governance and management plans; and
- Evaluation criteria and targets for participation, cost recovery and overall community benefits.

Service Delivery Recommendation 3-20: New Program or Facility Business Plans

That Chatham-Kent require a Business Plan completed by Division Staff for Municipal projects or completed by community organizations for other projects related to all new program or recreation facility proposals as follows:

- That any new facility major addition or renovation to existing facilities with a potential capital cost of greater than $250,000 or any new program initiation with an annual program operating cost of more than $50,000 be supported by a comprehensive Business Plan.

- That the Division direct the undertaking of Business Plans, seeking broad-based public consultation and community engagement, along with the not-for-profit organization or other partner input as appropriate.

- That the outcomes of the Business Plan, upon finalization and acceptance for the new program or facility, be incorporated into the ten-year capital budget forecast for the Municipality, related to timing, capital cost projections, municipal responsibility and service delivery.

- That capital cost projections be reviewed annually and re-incorporated into the Municipality's ten-year capital cost forecast in order to respond to:

    - The potential impact of inflation that may be not predicable or certain over time;

    - Potential changes to the facility design which are to be approved by Council; and

    - Opportunities for provincial or federal funding for new initiatives as emerge from time to time.

4. PARKS, OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION FACILITIES

4.1 Introduction

Parks and open spaces form the fundamental resource for the provision of parks and recreation services in the Municipality. Spaces include parkettes, neighbourhood and community parks, municipal wide resources and sports fields. Some sites have been identified for their environmental significance based on their unique habitat or species.

This section will provide classifications for each of the park types, policies for their function and provisioning levels across the Municipality. This material provides overall perspectives for the delivery of parks and open space followed by a specific policy framework for the Municipality.

4.2 Parks and Open Space Framework

The following framework develops the principles established in Section 3.4 of the Master Plan. They identify the connection between the guiding principles and provisioning for parks and open space. The Plan demonstrates connections from Vision and Mission Statement through the Guiding Principles and the implementation of each of the sections.



Parks and open spaces are the venues in which residents can enjoy healthy, vibrant and engaged lifestyles. These venues include passive enjoyment of parks and open space, active engagement in sports teams on fields and participation in community events at parks venues. Parks are also a tangible reflection of Chatham-Kent's commitment to improving economic development outcomes.

The variety and distribution of parks **allow for a balanced array of opportunities** where the facilities and programming in each park allows choices depending on the interests and capabilities of the participants. The purpose of the Plan will be to ensure opportunities for passive and active recreation in each of the significant parks.

Distribution of parks within the community will help to ensure equal access for all residents in the community to parkland. The focus will be on both urban centres intended for future growth and development and the maintenance of existing parks in other areas.

Maximum utilization of parks is intended to ensure that the community resources and investments in parkland are well utilized and match the changing interests and needs of the community. Use of existing open space and parks and opportunities for reinvestment will be considered prior to the development of new locations.

Natural heritage preservation and enhancement is a significant direction from the community and a growing trend across the province. Retention and development of natural heritage areas and enhancement is key to the parks and open space function.

Reinvestment in and ongoing renewal of parks and open spaces are an important component to match the changing interest and needs of the community.

Shared responsibility to maintain and operate several of the park venues recognizes the commitment of the community to its parks and open space areas. The Municipality has an opportunity to shape this shared responsibility and provide leadership to the community in fulfilling this role. The Municipality can establish the appropriate service levels and operating guidelines to ensure continued fair and safe operations.



Parks Recommendation 4-1: Parks and Open Space Framework

That Chatham-Kent adopt the following framework for the establishment, renewal, maintenance and operation of park and open space lands:

- That park locations provide a balance of recreation opportunities in each location based on the classification of the park.
- That parkland and open spaces generally be equally distributed across the Municipality to facilitate broad resident access with a focus on serviced communities identified in the Official Plan.
- That all parks be well utilized to meet community needs and be renewed prior to the establishment of new parks.
- That the Municipality consider naturalizing portions of existing parkland where appropriate.
- That the Municipality continue to accept community contributions for the maintenance and operation of parklands.

4.3 Parkland Classification and Development Profiles

The proposed parkland classification and development profiles are discussed in detail below. The information is summarized in recommendations for parkettes, neighbourhood parks, community parks and regional parks. Each park description includes basic requirements, access, area, service standard and location. These are the preferred criteria for future investments.

4.3.1 PARKETTES

Parkettes are small open space sites that provide venues for special commemorative events, passive rest areas and contribute to the community's urban design. Parkettes will continue to have an important ceremonial function, commemorating and celebrating various community contributions to Chatham-Kent, Ontario and Canada. These small venues also contribute resting or gathering places for passive activities.

Parks Recommendation 4-2: Criteria – Parkettes

Basic Facility Requirements	• Informal seating area. • Open turf area for play. • Park name and signage. • Waste receptacles. • Formal landscaped areas. • Native species plantings.
Optional Features	• Playground equipment. • Stage. • Electrical service. • Bike racks.
Access	• Walking. • Cycling. • Driving.
Service Area	• Urban area; or community.
Preferred Size	• 0.5 hectares. • May be part of larger venue.
Service Standards	• Passive and commemorative venue / park space. • High visibility.
Identity and Location	• Provide urban design function. • Highly visible to the community. • Recognizes community contributions.
Notes	• Often historically related to community and/or donation of land to the community. • May be operated by a local Legion or other community group.

The Municipality may consider disposal of parkettes that do not contribute to the overall hierarchy of parks services in the community. It is an acceptable practice, where parks are not well used and may create a nuisance for abutting property owners that these lands be sold to adjoining property owners, or separately as redevelopment opportunities. Proceeds from the sale of disposed properties should be allocated to the Parkland Reserve Fund.

Parks Recommendation 4-3: Surplus Parkland

That existing parkette locations of generally less than 0.5 hectares be retained where there is a strong commemorative value or they provide an important resting spot between residential and community destinations.

Where a parkette consists of remnant parcels with limited recreation infrastructure, facilities or function, the Municipality may consider the sale of such sites with the funds be reinvested in the same community in neighbourhood parkland.

4.3.2 NEIGHBOURHOOD PARKS

Neighbourhood Parks are the primary parks venues to satisfy the basic open space and recreation requirements of the Municipality. Neighbourhood parks traditionally serve one or two neighbourhoods with the recommended service radius of 600 metres to 800 metres for developed areas or walking distance of five to ten minutes. These parks accommodate both passive and active activities and serve all age groups within the neighbourhood. The preferred size of a neighbourhood park ranges 0.5 hectares to 2.0 hectares.

Programming within this classification is based on neighbourhood preferences but at a minimum should provide for passive activities, such as sitting, viewing, socializing and quiet reflection. Play areas for children should be provided for unstructured active play. The neighbourhood park may also include playing fields or play courts for more informal but active recreation and child or youth programmed activities. The location of the park should be central to a neighbourhood and within a safe convenient walking distance of most residences without the need to cross major streets in the community. It is preferable to link neighbourhood parks through community trails, school yards and other open space features, where possible.



Parks Recommendation 4-4: Criteria - Neighbourhood Parks

Basic Facility Requirements	• Playground equipment. • Informal seating area. • Open turf area for active play. • Provide shaded areas (with planting or shade structure) for passive recreation. • Park name and signage. • Waste receptacles. • Bike racks. • Native species plantings.
Optional Features	• Play courts. • Play fields. • Toboggan hills. • Horseshoe pits, etc. • Trail linkages. • May include onsite parking.
Access	• Walking. • Cycling. • Trails.
Service Area	• 600m to 800m radius or 5 to 10 minutes of walking, uninterrupted by major roads and other physical barriers.
Preferred Size	• 0.5 to 2 hectares.
Service Standards	• 1 hectare per 1000 population. • A balance of active and passive park spaces. • Minimum of two different street access locations. • Preferred street frontage of 50 metres, but not less than 40 metres. • Parking is on street for informal play fields. • Parking onsite where the fields are programmed.
Identity and Location	• Defined edges to distinguish from adjacent land use and provide extensive street frontage for safety and visibility. • Location to be central to the neighbourhood / local area it serves in a way that the service area is not interrupted by major roads and other physical barriers. • Screen park from negative adjacent land use impacts.
Notes	• Serves one or two neighbourhoods / local areas. • Location and facilities should be coordinated with elementary schools where the possibility exists.

4.3.3 COMMUNITY PARKS

Community Parks are larger park venues serving outdoor recreational needs of residents within a cluster of neighbourhoods. The preferred location is on major roads to provide easy access by walking, cycling, trails, cars and public transit and to reduce impacts on surrounding neighbourhoods. These parks are multi-purposed and offer both passive and active recreation areas for both programmed and non-programmed use. They offer year round recreational opportunities and may include major sports fields, community and specialized facilities, outdoor swimming pools and splash pads. Community parks can also provide a neighbourhood park function to the immediate residential area.

The size of community parks varies depending on the nature of the proposed facilities, but should be a minimum of 4 hectares to accommodate the array of recreational opportunities intended. The park should be well connected to the surrounding neighbourhoods in the form of walkways and community trails, connecting other destinations within the urban area.

Parks Recommendation 4-5: Criteria – Community Parks

Basic Facility Requirements	• Major playgrounds. • At least two competitive level play fields and one play court (basketball, ball hockey, tennis or multi-purpose), with considerations for lighting. • Seating area for viewing as appropriate. • Parking and parking lot lighting. • Provide shaded areas (with planting or shade structure) for passive recreation. • Provision of bike racks. • Park name and signage. • Waste receptacles. • Native species plantings. • Washrooms. • Fulfill requirements of a Neighbourhood Park.
Optional Features	• Additional play fields or courts. • Splash pads. • Toboggan hills. • Natural areas, horticultural displays. • Informal activity areas, e.g: horseshoe pits, etc. • Informal seating areas. • Open turf areas for play. • Concession, change and storage facility / facilities. • Trail connections and support facilities.
Access	• Walking. • Cycling. • Trails. • Cars. • Transit.

Service Area	• 1.6 to 2.6 km radius in urban areas.
Preferred Size	• Minimum of 4 hectares.
Service Standards	• 1 hectare per 1000 population. • Primarily active park spaces with the provision of passive spaces to fulfill the requirements of a neighbourhood park where applicable. • More than two street access points. • Minimum street frontage of 50 metres.
Identity and Location	• Defined edges to distinguish from adjacent land use and provide extensive street frontage for safety and visibility. • Location to be central to the community it serves and be accessible from a major road. • Screen park from negative adjacent impacts. • Screen neighbouring residences from negative park impacts (play court noise, lighting, etc.) where applicable.
Notes	• Serves identified communities. • Location and facilities should be coordinated with secondary schools where the possibility exists. • May attract visitors from other areas of the Municipality and outside the Municipality.



4.3.4 MUNICIPAL PARKS

Municipal Parks are important outdoor recreation venues and facilities that offer unique special purpose activities. They are normally located on arterial roads but may also be site specific or based on venue features or environmentally significant lands. Tecumseh Park at the joining of the Thames River and McGregor Creek is an example of a municipal park. The Tecumseh Park Master Plan provides an implementation strategy to enhance the municipal park setting. Municipal parks may also include sport tourism venues where a number of fields provide tournament venues for the municipality and attracts visitors from outside the municipality through sporting events. The size of municipal parks will vary depending on the function and purpose of the park and may include a range of indoor and outdoor facilities. The recommended criteria for municipal parks are shown in Recommendation 4-6. This provisioning standard of 3.0 ha per 1000 population is comparable to other municipalities in Southern Ontario and is consistent with trends towards larger park sites that include both active and naturalized areas.

Parks Recommendation 4-6: Criteria – Municipal Parks

Basic Facility Requirements	• Basic facility requirements to be determined on an individual use basis. • Park name and signage. • Waste receptacles. • Bike racks. • Native species plantings. • Parking.
Optional Features	• Parking lot lighting as required. • Major sports fields with lighting. • Washrooms as required. • Display information or guide to park facilities where applicable. • Visitor support amenities. • Trail connections and support facilities. • Major recreation facility structures and / or support facilities. • Seating / stadium seating.
Access	• Walking. • Cycling. • Trails. • Driving. • Public transit.
Service Area	• Serve the entire municipality and beyond.
Preferred Size	• Size varies depending on land features and base, facilities and venue purpose;
Service Standards	• 3 hectares per 1000 population. • More than three street access points.

Parks Recommendation 4-6: Criteria – Municipal Parks

	• Prominent street frontage greater than 50 metres.
Identity and Location	• Defined edges to distinguish from adjacent land use. • Location dependent on availability of lands and features these parks require.
Notes	• Recreational buildings, large and small. • Trails. • Cultural, civic and historical parks, memorials, monuments. • Public gardens, arboreta. • Cemeteries. • Conservation areas, wildlife, sanctuaries, natural areas. • River corridors. • Ecologically significant lands. • Attracts visitors from outside the Municipality.



4.3.5 TRAILS MASTER PLAN

Chatham-Kent has recently adopted a Trails Master Plan for the Municipality. The purpose of this Master Plan was to build on past and current trail development efforts and to provide a framework to guide the development and operation of trails in the short, medium and long term. The recommended trail network proposes the development of off-road and on-road trails from the existing 247 kilometres to 1,292 kilometres over a twenty year period.

The Trails Master Plan recommends a hierarchy of three trail systems. Municipal-wide Spine Trails will function as the skeleton of the network, accommodating high volumes of use and links to major destinations such as community centres, schools, commercial areas and tourist destinations. Local Trails will link to the municipal-wide trails and local points of interests or neighbourhood recreational loop trails. Finally, Special Use Trails would normally become a destination for specific user groups and are typically found in rural locations.

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan recognizes the trails network as an important recreation, transportation and tourism component for the Municipality. The development and use of trails is important in providing access from the community to the park venues and their ability to link various parks within the community. The relationship between the trails and the parks are two-fold. Firstly, the park system creates a destination for the start or end of a trail system. The park venues provide support locations for parking of vehicles, trail signage, rest stops, washrooms and related support facilities. The second component is a location for trails development. A number of existing community and local parks have local off-road trail loops within their boundaries. The opportunities to support trail connections and the development of local trails are identified in the recommendations for community and municipal parks. The future development of the trail network will focus on providing trail connections to park destinations, schools, community centres, recreation facilities and major sports fields for improved off-road access.

Parks Recommendation 4-7: Trails Master Plan Integration

That Chatham-Kent integrate the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and Trails Master Plan recommendations through the following directions:

- Adopt the hierarchy of trails for the Municipality including municipal-wide spine trails, local trails and special use trails to provide recreational opportunities to various age groups and forms of transportation.
- That trails development emphasize the connections of parks throughout the Municipality as an important means of providing a safe convenient form of park access.
- That local looped trail systems be incorporated into community and municipal parks as a component of the recreational activities for health and fitness.
- Where renewal and reinvestment is proposed in existing community park venues, that a trail system be considered as an important element of the renewal strategy.

- Where residential, commercial or industrial areas are being proposed or redeveloped, that consideration be given to the opportunities for a trail system through these areas connecting municipal parks and other destinations.

- That the Community Services Division prepare and distribute a community parks and trails map, both electronically and through printed materials, to inform residents of these opportunities, and to incorporate trail use opportunities in the Annual communications strategy.

4.4 Parks and Open Space Provisioning Levels

4.4.1 PROVISIONING FRAMEWORK

This section identifies the principles associated with providing parkland within the Municipality of Chatham-Kent. It establishes the principles, the provisioning levels and considers each of the six Wards in the Municipality with respect to parkland acquisition. This section will consider potential acquisition strategies to provide further rationalization of parkland within the community.

The parkland provisioning levels are intended to provide sufficient lands for recreation activities where use of the space is not scheduled and individuals and small groups enjoy outdoor activities and informal play spaces. There must also be sufficient parkland for programmed and scheduled field events including soccer, baseball and tennis. Finally there must be sufficient open space to create naturalized areas for conservation and preservation within the community. These three uses of park space ensure a balanced array of recreational opportunities.

Provisioning levels must also ensure an equitable distribution across the population and across each of the Wards in the Municipality. This distribution ensures that individuals and groups have equal opportunity to enjoy passive and programmed recreational activities. The provisioning levels are intended to meet the minimum requirements but variation will remain across the municipality based on historic parkland acquisition by former Municipalities.

The provisioning levels focus on the development and growth centres as identified in the Official Plan. The primary urban centres of Chatham and Wallaceburg will have the full scope and range of parkland provisioning. The second tier of urban centres, including Blenheim, Tilbury, Ridgetown, Dresden and Wheatley should each have at least one community park. The smaller urban centres with populations less than 1000 residents should have a minimum standard of one neighbourhood park.

4.4.2 PROVISIONING LEVELS

The Municipality has a parkland provisioning level of 3.43 hectares per 1000 population. This falls within an acceptable range of 2.5 to 4.5 hectares per 1000 population compared to other municipalities in the Province. This level includes Municipally-owned, Provincial Parks, school lands and other publicly owned sites. Municipally-owned park space levels have a range in each ward, from 1.5 to 6.3 hectares for every 1000 residents. The goal over the twenty-year period of the Master Plan is to have a minimum of 3.0 hectares of municipally-owned parkland per 1000 population and a minimum of 5.0 ha. of all parkland types in each Ward.

The Chatham Ward has a rate of 2.53 hectares of Municipally-owned parkland per 1000 population and should be increased to 3.0 hectares per 1000 population. Long term growth in Chatham is intended to be in the northwest and southwest quadrants of the urban area. As secondary plans are developed for these areas, a community sized park should be located in each of the two quadrants with a minimum area of 4 hectares each. These park locations are intended to provide service levels as described in the parkland classification framework in the previous section.

The Wallaceburg Ward has a rate of 2.58 hectares of Municipally-owned parkland per 1000 population and should be increased to a minimum of 3.0 hectares per 1000 population. Future residential designations north of the Sydenham River and south of Otter Creek support an expansion to Jaycee Park to provide a community park in the northeast quadrant of the community.

The South Kent Ward has the lowest rate of Municipally-owned parkland at 1.52 hectares per 1000 population. This Ward enjoys access to Rondeau Provincial Park which provides many neighbourhood park services and therefore additional Municipal lands are not needed. The focus of new parkland acquisitions through new residential development should be in the designated growth area of Blenheim to achieve a goal of 3.0 hectares per 1000 population in this community.

The remaining Wards of North Kent, East Kent and West Kent have Municipally-owned park provisioning levels of just under or above 5.0 hectares per 1000 population. West Kent Ward also enjoys access to Wheatley Provincial Park. There is no need for more Municipally-owned parkland to serve existing population in these Wards. As new development occurs in each of these Wards additional parkland will be acquired through the subdivision approved process to serve neighbourhood park functions.

Parks Recommendation 4-8: Parkland Provisioning Standards

That Chatham-Kent adopt the following parkland provisioning standards:

- Parkettes / Neighbourhood Parks standard of 1.0 hectare per 1000 population.
- Community Parks standard of 1.0 hectare per 1000 population.
- Municipal Parks, including conservation areas, provincial parks and other open space, standard of 3.0 hectares per 1000 population.

That Chatham-Kent pursue an increase in municipally owned parklands in the Chatham and Wallaceburg Wards to a level of 3.0 hectares per 1000 population over the life of the Plan.

4.4.3 PARKS AND OPEN SPACE ACQUISITION POLICIES

The following policies are intended to guide future parkland acquisition decisions by the Municipality. The purpose of these policies is to implement the Guiding Principles of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The Guiding Principles are intended to ensure effective and efficient use of municipal resources to achieve maximum benefit from municipal investment in parks, open space and trails.

Acquisition policies include a range of options available to the Municipality. They include park dedication as required in the Planning Act; purchase of former school lands for park purposes; donations from the community; acquisition of natural areas; and the direct purchase of parkland. The following subheadings provide an overview for each acquisition strategy. Each strategy should be used in context as opportunities arise throughout the Municipality.

.1 Dedication

Parkland dedication from the development or redevelopment of land in the community is based on provisions in the Planning Act. These provisions allow the Municipality to receive up to 5% of the residential development land for public park purposes or an equivalent value in funds. These lands should be suitable for desired park functions, including sports fields, playgrounds and ancillary buildings or trails. Where dedication occurs in new subdivisions, the preferred funding source for development of these lands with playground equipment, playing field infrastructure and other accessory features is subdivision development charges. Should the Municipality choose not to fund these improvements through development charges, additional capital budget amounts will be needed from general tax revenue.

.2 Former Schools Sites

Changing demographics are forcing school boards to consider closing elementary school sites across the municipality. The school board must offer these sites to the Municipality prior to disposing of them on the open market. The Municipality should evaluate the purchase of such sites based on how they match the Parks and Recreation Master Plan mission, guiding principles and specific recommendations.

The following criteria should be applied in these evaluations:

- Is there a community need for additional park space?
- Are the school lands adjacent to existing municipal park space?
- Do the lands have recreation diamonds or fields used on a programmed basis that are used by the community?
- Do the lands have sufficient visibility and road frontage to create an identified park?
- Can the school buildings be appropriately severed from the site and conveyed separately for other community uses or sale?

.3 Donations

In the past, parkland donations have been accepted by the Municipality as a legacy to a family or person who has passed away. While parkland donations should continue to be accepted by the Municipality, careful consideration of their role within the overall Master Plan directions and policies needs to be evaluated prior to acceptance. Acceptance of any parkland donations should be considered on the following criteria:

- The donations should have significant lot area to provide an acceptable range of activities;

- The location should be within a residential or commercial area where access is convenient and on a public street;

- The donation should serve one or more park and open space functions within the parkland hierarchy; and

- Donations should be accepted so that the lands may be sold at some future date and the proceeds placed into the Parkland Reserve Fund.

.4 Natural Areas

Based on a review of the existing parkland inventory, priority acquisition for parklands should include natural areas to reflect the importance of preserving and enhancing existing natural areas in the Municipality and parkland open space linkages between existing open space features, along existing waterways and connecting trail systems. Where these areas are subject to frequent flooding and are not suitable for development they can help form trail systems along the Thames and Sydenham Rivers through the urban areas and connecting to the rural areas.

Natural areas can be acquired through dedication, donation, conservation easements, municipal purchase and land trusts. These lands should not replace active recreation sites but create additional passive recreation venues. The Municipality has partnered with the Sydenham Field Naturalists for the purchase of Sycamore Woods. Chatham-Kent should continue to explore partnerships with this and other conservation groups such as the Nature Conservancy of Canada for natural area acquisition.

The Municipal Parkland Reserve Fund should continue to be a source for acquisition of natural areas and community parks within Chatham-Kent. This fund should be supported by an annual allocation of $50,000 per year and augmented by cash-in-lieu payments for small residential subdivisions and consent applications.

.5 Municipal Purchase

In some instances, the Municipality may identify the need to purchase additional parkland in response to a community need, changing demographics or a unique opportunity available to the Municipality. The purchase of additional lands should be based on the following criteria:

- Alignment with the Master Plan's mission and guiding principles;

- A demonstrated need for additional park space to meet community recreation interests;

- An evaluation of alternative parkland acquisition opportunities; and

- Availability and capacity to fund the parkland acquisition.

Parks Recommendation 4-9: Parkland Acquisition Policies

That Chatham-Kent adopt the following parkland acquisition policies:

- That parkland be acquired through Planning Act dedication provisions where lands are being developed or redeveloped for residential purposes.
- That former school sites be evaluated for purchase as parkland if they make a significant contribution to the provision of parkland in the community.
- That parkland donations be accepted where they have an appropriate size, location and contribution to the overall hierarchy of parkland in the community.
- That interest in natural areas be acquired through dedication, donation, conservation easement or land trust, to protect important natural features and create a passive park venue.
- That Municipal purchase of land for parks purposes be considered where there is an identified need and the lands align with mission and guiding principles of the Master Plan.

4.5 Official Plan Policies

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent Official Plan was approved on December 24, 2008 and includes policies related to parks and open spaces, purposes and acquisition. The following discussion provides recommendations regarding the hierarchy, provisioning, distribution, acquisition and planning within secondary plan areas for parks in the Municipality. Future amendments to the Official Plan should be considered through the five year Official Plan review process.

The existing Official Plan policies include a hierarchy of regional parks, community parks, district parks and neighbourhood parks. Based on a review of the existing park sizes, forms and functions, it is recommended that the hierarchy be amended to delete district parks. Community parks serve this function providing both passive and recreation areas for one or more neighbourhoods. Furthermore, Regional Parks should be renamed as Municipal Parks to identify their municipal-wide service function; particularly where they include sport tournament venues. An addition to the parkland hierarchy, are parkettes that offer passive recreation opportunities and ceremonial venues in many communities. These parkettes, located at prominent locations in the core areas, often have strong historical meanings and provide opportunities to enjoy watching day-to-day activities and add urban design features.

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent has identified opportunities for secondary planning in Chatham, Wallaceburg and several other primary urban centres. The Official Plan should be amended to establish objectives of at least one neighbourhood park per 5000 projected residents having a minimum area of 2.0 hectares, for any Secondary Plan, where the Secondary Plan areas anticipate a community population of 15,000 or greater, a minimum of one community park with an area greater than 4.0 hectares should be in the plan. The size of the community park may be reduced if

it is integrated with a school, and the school lands are available for public use during non-school hours.

The Official Plan should be amended to identify that a minimum of five percent of all plans of subdivision will be dedicated for parkland purposes or a dedication of one hectare per 300 dwelling units whichever rate is greater. Where the density of development exceeds twenty units per hectare, the rate of one hectare per 300 units should apply to achieve the greater amount of parkland.

Park linkages are intended to provide pedestrian, cycling and other off road movements at safe and convenient locations to travel between parks and other major destination points. It will be a policy of the Official Plan wherever possible to seek the dedication, donation or the creation of easements for the purposes of providing public access to these open space linkages. The focus of these linkage points will be natural corridors along the Thames and Sydenham Rivers, along transmission corridors, and along other drainage channels that may be suitable connections within and between community destinations and open spaces. These linkages will be in addition to any parkland dedication requirements.

The Official Plan recognizes that natural areas and open space areas located along the shores of Lake St. Clair and Lake Erie form an important community resource for passive and active recreational uses. It is the intent of the Official Plan not to duplicate existing available park space but to provide complementary parkland to lands available through the Provincial, and Federal Governments or Conservation Areas. The Municipality will work with other governments and agencies to achieve parks and open space for the recreation needs of the community.

Parks Recommendation 4-10: Official Plan Policies

That Chatham-Kent amend the Official Plan policies through the five year review by adding the following:

- That the Parks Hierarchy be amended by deleting District Parks and adding Parkettes; and by renaming Regional Parks as Municipal Parks.
- That at least one Neighbourhood Park (minimum 2.0 ha) be required per 5,000 new residents or one Community Park (minimum 4.0) be required per 15,000 new residents, through the land use planning or Secondary Plan approval process.
- That parkland be dedicated at the rate of 5% of developable lands or one hectare per 300 permitted dwelling units, whichever is greater.
- That the Community Services Division continue to work with Federal and Provincial Governments and Conservation Authorities in the delivery of parks and recreation services.
- That new parkettes or small parkland dedication of less than 0.5 ha be discouraged unless the community demonstrates a strong need for a commemorative park venue at the time of dedication.

4.6 Fields and Outdoor Facilities Provisioning

This section provides recommendations regarding baseball, soccer, tennis, basketball and playground equipment and picnic shelters provided throughout the Municipality. Based on a review of the existing facilities located across the Municipality, there is general recognition of sufficient capacity in all outdoor fields and facilities across the Municipality. Over the life of the plan there are opportunities to reposition these fields and facilities to better serve changing needs and interests of the population. Specific recommendations focus on the development of the neighbourhood, community and municipal service levels. The repositioning of some baseball fields to soccer fields and the repositioning of tennis / basketball courts to become multi-use courts for a wider array of recreational activities.

4.6.1 SPORTS FIELDS FRAMEWORK

Strategic direction by Council and community interest in sport tourism and competitive sports tournaments indicate an interest in a regional outdoor sport venue. The following framework sets out the three levels of outdoor fields to match the community service levels of neighbourhood, community and regional venues.

The Master Plan recommends three levels of baseball / soccer venues across the Municipality.

- **Level 1** is a **neighbourhood sports field venue**. This site is normally one diamond / field as a component of a larger neighbourhood park offering recreational sport experiences primarily for children and youth. Normally the neighbourhood level would not be lit nor have seating. The neighbourhood level sports field would be available in most communities across Chatham-Kent.

- **Level 2** is a **community sports field venue.** This level could have two or more diamond or full/mini fields either independently or as part of a larger community park. These sites provide both competitive and house league play. Fields may or may not be lit. Community level soccer venues should be provided in each of the primary urban centres being Chatham, Wallaceburg, Blenheim, Tilbury, Ridgetown, Dresden and Wheatley.

- **Level 3** is a **municipal sports field venue**. This site has four to five full size soccer fields or baseball diamonds of which one could be of stadium quality. One or more fields would be lit, having seating capacity and may be irrigated or have artificial turf. The location should be in or on the periphery of Chatham to provide access from across the region and to Highway 401. This level is described in Section 4.6.2. Regional Outdoor Sports Venue.

Outdoor Facilities Recommendation 4-11: Outdoor Field Framework

That Chatham-Kent adopt the following framework for outdoor fields service levels:

- Neighbourhood sports field venue (one field) serving recreational level programs and informal use.
- Community sports field venue (2 or more fields) servicing competitive and house league programs.
- Municipal sports field venue (3 or more fields) servicing competitive and sport tourism events.

4.6.2 REGIONAL OUTDOOR SPORTS VENUE

A Regional Outdoor Sports Venue is being recommended in response to increasing participation in soccer and the need for a large multi-field soccer venue in Chatham-Kent. This venue is intended to provide fields, washrooms, seating and field house facilities to accommodate Municipal and regional tournaments. This section will review the demand for soccer, availability of soccer fields, recent soccer investments in Chatham and future opportunities for soccer venues.

The demand for soccer is increasing significantly across Ontario and Canada. Since 2000 it has grown to over 500,000 registered youth soccer players in Canada both male and female. It now has the highest level of minor sports registration for any sporting activity in Canada. A 2004 Soccer Canada report projected more than 1,000,000 participants by 2010. In the Chatham Kent Ward, a 2007 report by the Chatham-Kent Community Services – Parks, Cemeteries and Horticulture, reinforced this trend identifying 2,600 participants in the Chatham Youth Soccer Association (CYSA) for 2006. They have had annual average increases of 8% in registration since 2001. There were 800 registrations in Wallaceburg and 245 registrations in Thamesville for 2007. The increase in participation will continue as more adults play soccer, increases in women's soccer and interest in World Cup soccer events.

There are 32 existing soccer fields in Chatham-Kent of which 9 are lit. This provides one soccer field per 3,375 population across the Municipality. In the Chatham Ward there are 16 fields, of which 4 are lit. This provides a higher rate of one soccer field per 2800 population in Chatham. In comparison the rates for fields in Southern Ontario cities average one field per 2200 population. Another provisioning rate is the number of fields per registered soccer players. A 2007 Waterloo Minor Soccer Study indicated an average of one field per 90 registered players. Based on the 2006 registration figures from CYSA there is a need for 14 additional fields in Chatham. Through the public meeting process additional soccer fields (one full and two mini's across) were also identified for Blenheim.

The Municipality has recently provided for two additional fields in Chatham. In 2007, the Municipality entered into an agreement with the Lambton Kent District School Board and Chatham Youth Soccer Association for the development of two full sized soccer fields (100m x 64m) on Keil Drive Chatham. This location is adjacent to the Chatham Christian School property which accommodates one full sized field and one practice field, which are available for Soccer Association use after school hours. Combined this initiative provides for three full sized soccer fields, one practice field, and a municipal tournament venue.

At the same time, the availability of soccer fields is being reduced with the loss of two soccer fields due to the expansion of the St. Clair College Healthplex and the possible loss of the field at the Chatham Community Complex on Tweedsmuir as part of the redevelopment due to the decommissioning of Kinsmen Auditorium and potential removal of the Memorial Arena.

Based on the growing demand in soccer participation and the loss of fields in Chatham a Regional Outdoor Sports Venue for soccer and possibly other fields is being recommended in the 5 – 10 year time frame. A regional soccer venue should include 4 – 5 soccer fields, including one at a stadium level, possibly developed with artificial turf. The stadium could host championship games for Chatham-Kent and have the potential to host regional/provincial level tournaments. The location would be in or on the periphery of Chatham to provide access from across the region and Highway 401. The site would need 12 – 15 ha of land for an independent site, depending on the number of fields developed, field configuration, park buffering from neighbouring uses, extent of field house design, seating, amount of parking, etc. The venue could also be designed to accommodate other outdoor fields such as baseball and football if a need is identified.

Another reason to support a regional outdoor sports venue is the opportunity for sport tourism. Opportunities and benefits of sport tourism are identified in Section 3.3.5 Sport Tourism Strategy. The needs identified in this section address local community use in Chatham and opportunities to hold municipal wide events. The sport tourism context is a higher level of sports competition, where the Municipality will evaluate the ability to collaborate across Municipal Departments, with volunteer organizations and community sports organizations to bring bid based events to Chatham-Kent.

Examples of regional competitive soccer venues in the City of London, City of Burlington, and City of Waterloo have complexes ranging in site area from one stadium field with seating, five regulation fields on 15 ha to a stadium level soccer field and 12 multi-sport fields, six baseball diamonds, four Olympic sized ice pads, multi-use trails and a golf course on 231 ha of land.

4.6.2.1 Integration of Regional Outdoor Sports and Arenas/Multi-use Venue

Experience in arenas/multi-use and soccer field venues with IBI Group and F. J. Galloway Associates Inc., has generally found a separation between the two indoor and outdoor sport venues in communities throughout southwestern Ontario. Sportsplex twin pad arenas and outdoor fields have distinctly different facility requirements. Arenas need enclosed buildings with electrical and mechanical capacity for ice making, regular ice cleaning, ventilation, dressing rooms, heated viewing areas, concessions, washrooms and ancillary uses. The facilities are often designed for year round use with continuous ice on one pad and indoor recreation or event activities on the second pad. The environment is highly managed, is costly to operate and requires daily staff resource and equipment inputs.

In comparison to a sportsplex, soccer field venues are highly weather dependant, operate seasonally and do not require as extensive infrastructure or facilities to operate and maintain.

Natural fields require weekly/ bi-weekly maintenance and seasonal capital investments; maintenance buildings are smaller or located off site; fields can function without seating areas; dressing rooms; washrooms and concessions. Furthermore, the sports are not directly related by shared building or field needs like hockey / figure skating or football / soccer.

Efficiencies in integrated site areas are related primarily to shared use of the land base for driveway access and parking areas. If the sportsplex has limited use during the soccer season the combined parking area can be used for soccer activities. If a new twin pad arena is developed in Chatham-Kent it is likely to be used all year because it is more efficient and is more attractive to users with two ice surfaces with more amenities. It therefore loses the benefits of shared use.

Opportunities for shared use of buildings and facilities are highly dependent on the integrated design of the fields and buildings. Firstly, the location of facilities in the building will have a preference for ice users versus the convenience of soccer users because they are the primary building users generating more revenue. Secondly, depending on the configuration of the site and the building, there may be a significant distances or barriers between the soccer fields and buildings limiting convenient access to facilities. These distances create lack of visibility from the fields, reduced use of the facility, safety concerns and related issues where the building is not positioned to serve the needs of the soccer users as a primary activity.

The difference in land area between an integrated soccer field design and independent soccer field design, assuming a four field venue, would be in the range of 1 – 2 ha or more, depending on the number and size of the soccer fields, site configuration and activity level at the sportsplex.

Potential Outdoor Sports Integration Benefits:

- Shared parking, driveways and access.
- Shared change rooms.
- Club office space for hockey and soccer teams.
- Maintenance equipment storage and access.
- Concession areas.
- Washrooms.
- Sports official rooms; and
- Sport tourism venue.

Potential Outdoor Sports Integration Constraints:

- Limits future expansion of the sportsplex for more pads; other multi-use activities; or the soccer fields.
- The sports are not directly related in terms of season or activity.
- The outdoor field activities may conflict with other indoor community events or other uses in the sportsplex.

- Difficulty in finding and securing a larger combined venue; and
- Size of the parking facility may not be reduced if the sportsplex has significant off season ice or floor use.

Based on experience and examples in other municipalities, twin pad arenas / multi-use recreation centre and soccer field developments are often on separate venues and site configurations. It is recognized there may be some advantages to an integrated sports venue for shared parking and facilities, they are heavily dependent on good building orientation and design to create effective shared use of the building facilities. There is no compelling reason to locate a regional outdoor sports venue on the same site as a twin pad area/ multi-use recreation centre.

Many of the same service uses, such as equipment storage, change rooms, washrooms and concessions, can be located to better advantage at an independent outdoor sports venue. Most importantly, a separation of the two sites would provide greater flexibility in design and opportunity for long term expansion of either the sportsplex to add integrated community facilities, (four ice pads, day care, library etc.) and to the soccer venue to add more sports fields. It is acceptable practice to locate the regional outdoor sports venue on a separate location in proximity to Highway 401 to offer good access across the Municipality.

Outdoor Facilities Recommendation 4 - 12: Regional Outdoor Sports Venue

That Chatham-Kent undertake the following investment in a regional outdoor sports venue:

- To develop a new regional outdoor sports venue adding to the existing soccer and outdoor field capacity in the 5 – 10 year time frame with the following potential features.
    - Four (4) – five (5) full size soccer fields on a 12 – 15 ha site.
    - One of the fields to be stadium level with irrigation, lighting, controlled entry bleacher seating and possibly developed with artificial turf.
    - Supporting features including park buffering, field house, washrooms, change rooms, concessions, officials/ club space and parking; and
    - Located in or on the periphery of Chatham to provide access from across the region and Highway 401.
- To initiate in 2012 a Business Plan and Site Selection analysis for the proposed Regional Outdoor Sports Venue focusing through the technical analysis and community consultation with users groups and the public on the following:
    - Primary uses for soccer fields with optional consideration for baseball, football or other outdoor field use.
    - Facility features related to field house, washrooms, concessions, parking and community space.

  - Capital and operation cost estimates and potential sources of funding or contributions in kind from government, institutional bodies or community fundraising.

  - Identifying a preferred site with a minimum 12 – 15 ha of land with appropriate topography, drainage, accessibility to the Municipality and access to municipal drainage, water and sewage services.

  - The benefits associated with developing the sports fields with the Arenas and Multi-use Centre or the alternative of constructing the regional outdoor sports venue independently.

  - Developing a conceptual site master plan and staging plan for the long term development of the project, ensuring sufficient lands for future growth, buffering, playgrounds, walking paths, parking and other amenities to support a regional outdoor sports venue.

- That a Community Steering Committee be established by the Division to support the Business Plan's development to undertake:

  - To work with staff and others on the Business Plan's project development, site analysis and related components.

  - To facilitate community consultation and communications on the project.

  - To organize and undertake community fundraising as the project evolves from concept to commitment.

  - To participate in the development of recommendations to Council.

- That the Community Steering Committee be established of nine to twelve people including up to nine residents and minimum of three municipal staff, to be organized around three subcommittees of site selection and design; fundraising; and communications.

- That the Community Steering Committee include a core group of representatives including outdoor field users, facility proponents, community organizations, residents at large and staff; and that any subcommittees be supplement by additional volunteer community representatives and staff.

4.6.3 BASEBALL DIAMONDS AND SOCCER FIELDS

Baseball is a well recognized activity throughout Chatham-Kent. Part of this popularity stems from proximity to the U.S. and professional teams in Detroit and Cleveland and the availability of baseball diamonds throughout the municipality. With seventy fields, of which twenty-nine have lighting, the provisioning is one field per every 1,550 residents. This is a significant servicing level and no demonstrated need for new baseball fields exists. Some fields may transition to soccer pitches where local demand is identified. The redevelopment of the Tweedsmuir Avenue lands if

Memorial Arena and the Kinsmen Auditorium are removed will create an opportunity to create a regional baseball venue expanding on the current investments and success of the Rotary Park ball fields. The provisioning standards should strive to achieve the neighbourhood, community and municipal venues as described in Recommendation 4-11.

There is increasing interest in soccer field use and development based on increasing youth soccer, some growth in women and men adult leagues and the changing make-up of immigrant population that have stronger connection to the sport. Recreation staff should continue to monitor the usage rates of baseball and soccer fields to determine if there are local needs to transition from baseball diamonds to soccer fields. Where appropriate baseball fields should be repositioned as soccer fields to accommodate changing interests in sports activities.

In response to identified needs in Blenheim one full size field and two mini fields across the full field are recommended for lands owned by the Municipality in the north east quadrant in the short term.

Outdoor Facilities Recommendation 4-13: Baseball Diamonds and Soccer Fields

- That Chatham-Kent continue to maintain the existing baseball and soccer fields where local house leagues for youth and adult programs demonstrate a sustainable number of participants.
- Where community interest through program registration shows an increasing need for soccer fields at the competitive and house league level that baseball fields be redeveloped for soccer use.
- That Chatham-Kent develop one full sized field in Blenheim and two mini fields across the full field in the short term.

4.6.4 OUTDOOR COURTS

The Municipality has twenty-two lit tennis courts and three unlit tennis courts. Across the Municipality, tennis courts have a provision rate of one per 4,300 residents which meets generally accepted standards of one tennis court per 5,000 population found in many municipalities across Ontario. In addition to the public courts, Union Gas operates three tennis courts in Chatham that are available through membership. Through the community consultation process there was limited interest in new outdoor courts while there was some interest in a indoor tennis venue. Indoor tennis is normally within the purview of private clubs and is not anticipated through a municipal provisioning approach.

There are eleven outdoor basketball courts in Chatham-Kent of which five are located in Chatham Ward and five in East Kent Ward. There is an opportunity to add basketball courts in Wallaceburg, North Kent, South Kent and West Kent Wards to balance the distribution of courts.

There is increasing use of tennis and basketball courts for alternative court activities including ball hockey, rollerblading and other court related activities. The Master Plan recommends continued investment and repositioning of purpose designed tennis or basketball courts to multi-purpose

courts to provide venues for a broader range of activities, higher usage rates, lower maintenance and investment costs, and greater opportunities for participation by the community.

Outdoor Facilities Recommendation 4-14: Outdoor Courts

That Chatham-Kent re-develop and invest in the following multi-use courts over the next five to ten year horizon.

- Add two new multi-use courts in each of Wallaceburg, North Kent, South Kent and West Kent to balance distribution in the medium term.
- Redevelop existing basketball courts into multi-use courts through the lifecycle renewal process in the long term.

4.6.5 PLAYGROUNDS, PAVILLIONS AND SKATEBOARD PARKS

Playground equipment, picnic shelters and pavilions offer an important outdoor facility for passive recreational and gathering places. Playground equipment should be renewed to match current standards for safety, creative play and physical activity criteria for children. Newly developing subdivisions or areas receiving young families should invest in playground equipment as part of all neighbourhood park features. Complementary picnic areas and pavilions are preferred features at the community level park venue. A larger site is required to accommodate the parking, washrooms and ancillary facilities that are suitable for gatherings and picnic shelters.

Playground equipment is available at the rate of one site per 1,300 residents. Picnic pavilions are provided at the rate of one per 2,400 residents. These provisioning standards allow sufficient availability and capacity within the municipality for these recreation uses. No new sites are proposed in the short term. In the long term, new playgrounds and pavilions should be provided in new neighbourhood parks at the rate of one playground per 1,300 residents and pavilions at the rate of one per 2,400 residents.

Chatham-Kent has invested in nine skateboard parks distributed throughout the Municipality over the last number of years. The overall provisioning standard is one skateboard park per 12,000 residents, with only one park located in Chatham. Another skateboard park is preferred in the Chatham area to provide a similar provisioning level available in the other Wards of the Municipality.

Outdoor Facilities Recommendation 4-15: Playgrounds, Pavilions and Skateboard Parks

That Chatham-Kent adopt the following approach for the reinvestment and renewal of outdoor facilities.

- That playground equipment be renewed on a lifecycle basis to meet current and evolving safety standards.
- That picnic pavilions be renewed on a lifecycle basis to provide facilities at all community and municipal parks.
- That existing skateboard parks be maintained and that one new skateboard park be built in Chatham Ward.
- That new playgrounds be provided at the rate of one per 1,300 new residents and new pavilions at the rate of one per 2,400 new residents.

Volleyball courts and lawn bowling venues were two additional outdoor facilities identified in the Master Plan. Lawn bowling is provided through a not-for-profit club in Chatham and North Kent. There was no identified interest in providing greater levels of service. There are three volleyball courts located in Chatham, Wallaceburg and North Kent. There was no indication through the community consultation process of the need for additional outdoor volleyball courts or lawn-bowling greens.

4.6.6 PARK RENEWAL PROGRAM

Increasingly, parks have been positioned similar to recreation facilities relative to the need for planned, periodic renewal. The need for planned renewal does not emerge solely from the impact of use on playgrounds, sports fields, benches, etc., it also emerges from the fact that at the neighbourhood and community levels, demographic changes and new activities for parks evolve. A need therefore exists to update parks to reflect the changing needs of their users and the characteristics of the areas they serve. This is a similar strategy as for recreation facilities where periodically the buildings need to be rehabilitated on a planned basis, which is often through lifecycle costing and facility renewal reserves.

Chatham-Kent has periodically undertaken master planning approaches to renew parks. Kingston and Tecumseh Parks represent two initiatives that are ongoing. For the Chatham Community Complex on Tweedsmuir Drive, there is a specific recommendation for a Master Pan that focuses on renewal of that particular venue.

From a long term perspective, the Division should develop a strategy to undertake renewal assessments of all its parks on twenty to thirty year cycles. New Master Plans should be undertaken when these assessments indicate significant change in user demographics, facility utilization and need, trends and related use and user perspectives are occurring. This strategy

represents a systematic approach to ensuring that parks are positioned to deliver services and benefits that are more continuously aligned with changing population demographics, needs and expectations of the neighbourhoods and communities they serve.

Outdoor Facilities Recommendation 4-16: Parks Rehabilitation and Renewal Program

That the Division develop and implement an ongoing and planned program of park rehabilitation and renewal to improve local parkland resources, address capital and maintenance needs, and to respond to anticipated demographic changes and planned land use intensifications / redevelopment through:

- Preparing a park rehabilitation / renewal process, associated design guidelines and community consultation processes.
- Identifying and prioritizing existing parks requiring rehabilitation based on the identified criteria.
- Developing park-specific rehabilitation / renewal plans, based on proposed changes to current park layouts, facilities, landscaping, accessibility improvements, capital costs, along with opportunities to reduce future capital and operating maintenance costs.
- On-going review of area demographics and planned developments, land use intensification changes, and population growth forecasts for each park's service area.
- Assessing partnerships and funding opportunities.
- Undertaking the park reassessment and renewal process on twenty to thirty cycles for each venue.
- Ensuring park renewal strategies are integrated with the Official Plan, the Development Charges By-Law, sustainability Provincial legislation such as the Ontarians with Disabilities Act; and other community planning initiatives.
- Giving consideration to Terrace Park as an initial candidate for the Park Renewal Program, along with other parks to be identified by the Community Services staff and the community.

4.6.7 FACILITIES ALLOCATION POLICY

The Division has a Facilities Allocation Policy for its arenas and related facilities. However, a similar policy does not exist for sports fields.

Allocation policies are widely utilized across municipalities to achieve several key outcomes:

- To fairly allocate facility capacities based on time of day and day of week access to achieve on equitable distribution of access across gender, ability and other criteria.

- To maximize facility utilization, particularly in light of the significant capital costs associated with increasing capacity when unused capacity may be available.

- To fairly share available capacity when the economic means are not available to increase facility resources.

- To provide an organized and consistent framework for the allocation of facilities amongst many interest groups, ensuring access is assigned to those groups whose users have been identified as a priority related to youth, those with disabilities, new Canadians, etc. based on a sound policy framework and criteria.

Allocation policies become increasingly important when there is growth in a particular activity, such as soccer, and where there may be different user perspectives relate to those who wish to play house league or those who wish to play competitive / travel sports. There are many variables involved in ensuring that there is an equitable approach to allocating available resources.

Outdoor Facilities Recommendation 4-17: Facilities Allocation Policy

That the Division undertake the development of a comprehensive Allocation Policy for its arenas, sports fields and other appropriate facilities and venues based on a consultation process that leads to the development of the following policy components:

- Developing key principles, by which the policy will be developed, implemented and evaluated.

- Identifying priority users based on the benefits to be derived, community needs and ensuring the best use of and outcomes from the public investments being made.

- Ensures fairness and equitable access by time of day and day of week, relative to gender, level of play, ability and other key user perspectives.

- Providing a process by which service delivery organizations can submit their access requests first, and then, using the Allocation Policy and process for each venue to provide a final allocation to the users on a timely basis before registrations for the succeeding season open.

- Ensuring maximum utilization of available facilities across seven days a week time frames.

- Creating opportunities for organizations utilizing similar venues to trade / exchange allocations to support sport tourism, coaching, sport development and other initiatives on a reciprocal basis.

- Having the ability to fairly incorporate and support service providers who are experiencing growth and / or those involved with emerging / new venue uses.

- Integrating facility utilization and facility planning activities to ensure that capacity utilization is tracked and becomes one basis upon which to consider future facility and venue capacity investments.

- Having an evaluation process within the Policy for a review, at a minimum of every three to five years, to determine it the Policy's principles, goals and intents are being realized.

4.7 Recreation Facilities

4.7.1 ARENAS / MULTI-USE RECREATION CENTRE

Chatham-Kent has ten arenas that are all single pad with various amenity, hall and other use configurations. Three of the sites are built to the ice surface standard of 85' by 200', one is larger, four have slightly smaller ice surfaces and two in Wallaceburg and Bothwell have the smallest ice surfaces. Area construction dates from 1949 in Wallaceburg to 1992 in Tilbury. Three of the ice pads are located in Chatham and the seven others are distributed throughout the Municipality. In terms of overall provisioning, there is one arena per 10,800 residents in Chatham-Kent, placing Chatham-Kent in the middle of service provision in comparison to surrounding municipalities, which are typically in the 8,000 to 15,000 range.

A review of the number of hours used from 2001 to 2007 showed an increase of 16.8% across the Municipality with an increase of 38.5% in Tilbury and a reduction in use of 7% at the Thames Campus Complex and for the William Erickson Arena. Overall, ice utilization ranged from 76.1% to 79.5% from 2001 to 2005. Prime time use rates in 2006 and 2007 show prime time usage ranging from 71% to 100%, with an average of just over 90% for prime time. Based on these standards, Chatham-Kent has sufficient ice capacity to reasonably serve existing needs and some limited increase in future needs.

Twin pad arenas have become the primary means to deliver indoor ice resources in communities across Ontario. There has been significant development of new twin pad arenas for several reasons:

- Potential annualized operational cost savings of up to 25% compared to operating two stand alone single ice pad facilities.

- Up to 25% reduction in capital costs in comparison to building two stand alone single ice pad facilities.

- Improved program operations for volunteer community organizations / service providers.

- Increased capacity and attraction related to sport tourism activities, such as youth and adult hockey tournaments, skating shows, off-season floor utilization and entertainment and related uses depending on seating capacity and facility amenities (lighting, audio and visual systems, etc.)

Twin pad facilities are being developed in most communities based on several key demand / use rationales:

- Continuing growth in girls and women's hockey.
- Lower than expected reductions in men's adult hockey due to the introduction of leagues for sixty and seventy year old age groupings.
- The sustainability of ringette in some areas.
- Growth in specialized uses, such as sledge hockey, master's skating, etc.
- Replacement of aged existing arena facilities in order to overcome significant operating cost inefficiencies and capital cost reinvestment needs related to both building code and OWDA requirements, energy use inefficiency and aged systems and building components.

Twin pad facilities, especially if they have sport tourism and entertainment capacities, typically have the following space profiles:

- Two ice pads of 85 feet by 200 feet.
- Ten to twelve dressing rooms to facilitate female participation and sport tourism needs;
- Two referee rooms to facilitate mixed gender refereeing teams.
- A combined large concession area and foyer.
- A tournament organizer's room that can double as a meeting room to support fifteen to twenty individuals.
- Often includes a program / meeting room that can support fifty to one hundred individuals.
- A warm viewing area for seniors, the disabled and others.
- Highly variable seating levels, ranging from no seats to one of the pads having 500 to 3,000 seats depending on junior team play, sport tourism and entertainment applications.
- Possibly a walking track and fitness rooms.

In many municipalities, there is also interest to link a twin pad arena facility with other community facilities, such as a community centre, indoor swimming pool, branch library, seniors centre, daycare / early years centre and other types of uses. This is undertaken principally due to the following perspectives:

- Increased operational and capital cost efficiencies.
- Creation of a single destination, multi-use perspective that supports user convenience, marketing and related features.

- Often results in enhanced facility quality and greater multi-use opportunities.
- Can be located on arterial or other roads with potential public transit links.
- Can be located close to commercial services to support sport tourism and other activities.

Another variable that needs to be considered when planning a major recreation facility development initiative is whether it is beneficial from operational, program, sport tourism, marketing and other perspectives, to also incorporate outdoor facilities such as soccer, baseball and other sports fields. There has been indication of future demand in Chatham-Kent for soccer which continues to grow at the youth level, and is anticipated to grow significantly over the next decade as more youth transition to adults and continue their participation in soccer within men's and women's adult leagues. Proposals have been identified by the Kinsmen Club and others for the possibility of developing a number of sports fields in conjunction with a major indoor recreation facility as a centralized recreation destination on a major travel route that would also have linkages to community trails, parks and open space and related features along with commercial services. The potential exists based on the site design to gain operating and capital economies of scale, such as the twin pad arena dressing rooms supporting season use of the sports fields, a large concession, reduced parking need, etc., depending on the use schedule of the twin pad in the non-ice core season.

From a community perspective, a number of major recreation facility proposals with both indoor and outdoor elements have been identified by the Kinsmen Club and various community proponents, some who have offered land for sale or as a donation in support of the development of such an initiative. Through the course of wide ranging discussions with respect to a ConEx facility, identification of the need for a new twin pad arena facility as a replacement for Memorial and Erickson Arenas, as well as an adjoining multi-use recreation component and outdoor field capacity has evolved as a significant community-supported project. Such an initiative would address a number of key considerations:

- Displaces the need for over $3 million in capital repairs and system replacements to the Memorial Arena, an investment that would not enhance capacity or quality but only address basic building requirements.
- Increasing interest in sport tourism relative to tournaments, skating shows, soccer and baseball events and related activities which cannot be hosted at this time or are less attractive to teams due to the limited quality of the facilities available.
- The potential loss of sports fields with the expansion of the St. Clair College field house.
- The ongoing challenges to secure regularized and scheduled recreation program and activity space for early years, seniors, teens, specialized programs for the disabled and general purpose programming that supports health, wellness and socialization benefits across various resident audiences.
- The aging perspective and capacity limitations of the Erickson Arena as an ice facility that will need significant reinvestment without any capacity or qualitative outcomes. It could be repositioned to address the growing interest in indoor soccer, lacrosse, roller hockey and other types of uses which could be undertaken on re-adaptive use basis within this facility.

- With the planned elimination of Kinsmen Auditorium, there will be some need for replacement program spaces for the early years, the limited recreational activity that occurs there and for the Kinsmen Fair, which a new multi-use recreation facility could both support and enhance.

The convergence of various community proposals, user trends, the presence of an array of aged and high re-investment requiring facilities, the loss of some sports fields and user and facility trends in sport and recreational activity, provides sound rationale to undertake a significant assessment and investigation into the development of a comprehensive, integrated recreation and sports complex to better serve the broad array of activity interests of Chatham-Kent residents.

Chatham-Kent is at a point in time, where it needs to consider major investments in recreation infrastructure in light of its significantly aged facilities and the lack of positive outcomes that major re-investments would result in, the impacts of losing some sports fields and the benefits that such facilities can contribute to employment and business economic development initiatives. Such a facility could also enhance resident quality of life experiences that attracts and retains residents, builds community volunteer capacities and organizational sustainability and contributes to a growing positive community spirit.

The key benefits that would be achieved through this significant investment, based on senior government and municipal funding support, as well as community fundraising, would involve the following:

- Significant contribution to broadening the array of leisure, recreation and wellness opportunities for Chatham-Kent residents.

- Provide a facility of contemporary quality, capacity and design that would encourage additional use and participation.

- Enhance the community's ability to pursue sport tourism events, on a more competitive basis.

- Eliminate aged facilities that have significant re-investment costs, will require additional investments to meet evolving Ontarians With Disabilities Act requirements and are inefficient in their operations, relative to energy, the environment, capacities, etc.

- Create a destination for recreation, sports and leisure within the community and a potential gateway / attraction upon entering the community.

- Provide for re-adaptive use of the Erickson facility that would extend the range of recreation activities that could be available by using existing infrastructure to support growth in boys, girls, men's and women's indoor soccer, lacrosse, roller and ball hockey, gymnastics and other potential users.

In addition to the above rationales, the potential exists to upgrade the twin pad arena facility to also have an entertainment capacity for travelling productions, concerts and related activities. This need has been identified by a number of proponents as there is limited opportunity in the community with the seating capacity necessary for the small to intermediate size entertainment and events market. Such an initiative would need to be further assessed relative to the upgraded investments required,

which would focus on enhanced seating volumes, lighting, sound systems and acoustics, some surface finishes and specialized support spaces.

Facilities Recommendation 4-18: Arenas / Multi-Use Centre

That Chatham-Kent undertake the following investment in its arenas and a multi-use centre based on timelines associated with need, funding availability and community support.

- To invest in selected existing arena buildings to achieve energy conservation; accessibility and equipment maintenance benefits.
- To develop a new twin pad arena facility that will replace the Erickson and Memorial Arenas with the following potential features:
    - Two ice pads of 85' x 200' with seating in one arena for approximately 200 individuals and the other arena up to 2,000 individuals, along with an appropriate number of dressing rooms, heated viewing areas, etc.;
    - Design parameters to be incorporated that would allow for the seating to be increased to 4,000 to 6,000 seats in total based on a future primary tenant and / or consistent larger seating event demand;
    - Develop within the arena a tournament / show operations room, a meeting room and related amenities;
    - Develop a year round indoor walking / running track;
    - Ability to consider two additional ice pads in the future if ice demand and sport tourism activities warrant and a centralized arena venue is preferred.
- To attach a multi-use recreation space to the twin pad arena of 10,000 square feet to 15,000 square feet to support early years, seniors, teens, people with disabilities and other specialized audiences, as well as appropriate space to support sport tourism, entertainment and a broad array of other recreational uses and programming.
- To initiate in 2010 a Business Plan and Site Selection analysis for the proposed twin pad arena and multi-use recreation space, focusing through the technical analysis and community consultation with user groups and the public, on:
    - Twin pad arena features related to number of dressing rooms and seating;
    - The primary uses and space configurations for a multi-use facility component;
    - Capital and operating cost requirements, as well as potential sources of funding from governments and community fundraising;

  - Identifying a preferred site location with 18 to 20 hectares (45 to 50 acres) if the outdoor sports fields are to be incorporated based on a site selection analysis;
  - The benefits associated with developing sports fields components with the recreation complex or, as an alternative, to develop a second site for a future sports fields complex development;
  - Incorporating a site master and staging plan for the long term development of the project, ensuring adequate lands for future growth, buffering and the provision of open space areas for walking, playgrounds and other amenities that would support both other outdoor recreational activities and people using the sports venue.

- That in support of the Business Plan's development, a Community Project Steering Committee be formed by the Division to directly or through subcommittees overtime, undertake:
  - To work with staff and others on the Business Plan's project development, site analyses and related components;
  - To facilitate community consultation and communications on the project;
  - To organize and undertake community fundraising as the project evolves;
  - To participate in the development of recommendations to Council.
- To undertake the re-adaptive development of Erickson Arena as a potential indoor active sports venue for indoor soccer, lacrosse, roller hockey and related activities.
- That a Community Steering Committee of nine to twelve people be formed involving up to nine residents and three municipal staff, which would also be organized around three subcommittees; site selection and design, fundraising and communications.
- That the Community Steering Committee include a core group of representatives involving facility proponents, user groups, community organizations, residents at large and staff, and that any subcommittees be supplemented by additional community representatives and staff.

The 2,000 seat recommendation has been based on the following rationales from municipal staff and consultation inputs:

- Capacity that supports the needs of the Chatham Maroons at reasonable peak attendance (playoffs).
- A size that would support shows, concerts, productions and sport tourism events that do not directly compete with facilities in Windsor, Sarnia and London.

- Provide for the ability to expand the arena seating in the future if warranted by achievement of an OHL or other team / use requiring a larger seating capacity.

- Adequate seating to ensure Chatham has a large seated venue for community uses and celebrations as a replacement for Memorial Arena, and which reflects a larger market population than when Memorial Arena was originally constructed.

- Respond to the preferred seating capacity identified by project proponents, such as the Kinsmen Club of Chatham, the Chatham Maroon Hockey Club, community sports groups and sport tourism proponents.

Seating of less than 2,000 would reduce current and future event and use opportunities for the community. Seating of over 3,000 is not viewed as economically justified unless a primary tenant, i.e.: OHL Junior A team exists and is signed to a reasonable facility rental contact. A 2,000 seat figure represents a feasible investment level for multi-use prospects, with expandability if a primary tenant or regularized higher seating use is achieved, sustained and is economically viable.

4.7.2 SWIMMING POOLS

Chatham-Kent has three indoor pools; the Gable Reese Pool in Blenheim, and Sydenham Pool in Wallaceburg are municipally-owned pools while the YMCA operates an indoor pool in Chatham. The standard of provisioning is one indoor pool per 36,000 Chatham-Kent population; is at the high end of provisioning when compared to other municipalities across Ontario. The YMCA is proceeding with the development of a new Chatham-Kent YMCA with an indoor 25 metre six lane pool that will enhance service levels by replacing an older pool facility.

With the Municipality investment in the new YMCA facility, there are opportunities to partner with the YMCA on aquatic programming for all resident needs. Existing outdoor pools in Dresden, Ridgetown, Thamesville and Tilbury can be maintained as community servicing venues. Energy conservation and efficiency measures are identified in Section 6.

Facilities Recommendation 4-19: Indoor Swimming Pools

That Chatham-Kent adopt the following strategies related to pools:

- Continue to operate and maintain Gable Reese and Sydenham Pools, and that the Municipality establish a public accessibility agreement for the new YMCA facility.

- Continue to monitor the rates of activities in terms of lessons, daily bathers and operating costs for Gable Reese and the Sydenham Pools to improve utilization levels.

- Retain existing outdoor pools in Dresden, Ridgetown, Thamesville and Tilbury for summer public swimming and swim lessons.

4.7.3 SPLASH PADS

Over the last ten years, splash pads have become an important seasonal recreation facility offering activities to children and youth. They are often widely distributed and can be situated in existing parks. New splash pads are often undertaken as part of parks renewal initiatives in the replacement of aging outdoor pools that need significant renovation. The popularity of splash pads has been identified through the community survey where the Mitchell's Bay splash pad is one of the best known and used parks in the Municipality. The popularity of splash pads is focused on the following key features:

- They do not require staffing or water filtration as there is no standing water resulting in significantly lower operating costs.
- Relatively easy to maintain.
- These venues appeal to young and older children in respect to a variety of activities, perspectives of imagination and family-based group outings potential.
- They can become a significant community attraction and support local special events.

Splash pads should be part of the recreation facilities for community parks in each of the seven primary urban centres. The following recommendation is made with respect to splash pads in the Municipality.

Facilities Recommendation 4-20: Splash Pads

That Chatham-Kent develop at least one splash pad in each of the primary urban centres pursuing the replacement of outdoor pool venues with a splash pad where alternative indoor pools are available in the urban centre.

4.7.4 DOG PARKS

Off-leash dog parks are a new form of park for residents to allow their dogs to run free within a fenced area of a park in an urban setting. These parks are appropriate for Chatham-Kent and Wallaceburg but may not be necessary for rural locations where residents take their dogs to outdoor fields for exercise. These parks have relatively low capital costs, while maintenance costs will be slightly higher than standard park use. There may be additional education and enforcement tasks around a new activity in the Municipality. One temporary dog park that has been created in John Waddell Park in Chatham Ward has been well received and will likely become permanent in the near future.

Facilities Recommendation 4-21: Off-Leash Dog Parks

That Chatham-Kent make the existing temporary dog park permanent and initiate the development of one additional off-leash dog park in Chatham and one off-leash dog park in Wallaceburg in the next three to five year timeframe.

4.8 Multi-Use Facility Renewal Strategies

Chatham-Kent has three categories of multi-use facilities. These include a Municipal-wide facility, multi-purpose rooms and meeting rooms. A Municipal facility is located in Chatham at the Kinsmen Auditorium. The renewal of this facility is addressed under a separate report presented to Council in 2009. It recommended the closing of this venue owing to high costs and limited flexibility for the building use, and replacement with a ConEx Centre proposed at the former Wheels Inn site.

The second level of multi-use facility are 33 multi-purpose rooms at eleven locations available for use by municipal organizations and rental to the public. Between 2006 and 2007, rentals for the multi-purpose rooms increased by some 43% across the Municipality. This may be in part, due to reductions in rental rates. Multi-purpose rooms provide venues for a large array of recreational and community uses. Many of the venues are legacy locations from the 1998 amalgamation process. Based on the rental rates ranging from a low of ten hours at Erieu to a high 9,452 hours in Blenheim, there is significant variation in demand across the Municipality. There has been no identified need, either through the community consultation process, community survey or in the utilization rates to suggest new multi-purpose rooms are required.

The third level of multi-use facility are meeting rooms at eleven communities, available for small group meetings and instruction. Between 2006 and 2007 rentals increased overall by almost 25% across the municipality. This may be the result of reduced rental rates. There was no identified need through the community consultation process or community survey for new meeting rooms. When new recreation facilities are proposed, consideration should include meeting room space for volunteer and non-profit organizations.

Notwithstanding the availability of these multi-purpose rooms and meeting rooms, there may be requirements to improve handicapped accessibility for an aging population; improvements to meet health and safety requirements; increased energy efficiency; and a better relationship between fees for service and quality of the space.

The following recommendation is intended to establish a process by which staff and Council can monitor and reposition the multi-purpose rooms and meeting rooms within the Municipality.

Facilities Recommendation 4-22: Multi-Use Facilities Renewal Strategy

That Chatham-Kent adopt the following strategies for multi-use facilities:

- Enhance the existing lifecycle process built into the annual budget by considering the replacement cost and the remaining useful life of its meeting and multi-purpose rooms in order to generate continuous and adequate rehabilitation resources.

- Continue to undertake Building Condition Study reports on major facilities every ten years, and that the renewal of a facility is a preferred alternative and that recommendations of the study be incorporated into the capital works budget for the municipality.

- Identify the primary urban centres as priority locations for the investment and renewal in multi-purpose rooms or meeting rooms, including Chatham, Wallaceburg, Blenheim, Ridgetown, Dresden, Tilbury and Wheatley.

- Adopt the following process with respect to the renewal, reinvestment or disposal of multi-purpose facilities or meeting rooms:

    - Reinvest in multi-purpose rooms that are integrated with other buildings or sites used for recreational, educational or other aligned purposes;

    - Reinvest in multi-purpose sites that are aligned with other programming and clearly identified needs.

- Retain sites that have highest occupancy rates, handicapped accessibility, have received investments and upgrades in the last five years; have an identified organization that has demonstrated a sustainable commitment to the ongoing programming, operation and financial support for the multi-purpose room.

- Ensuring multi-use facilities and renewal strategies are integrated with the Official Plan, the Development Charges By-laws. Provide Legislature such as the Ontarians with Disabilities Act sustainability and other community initiatives.

4.9 Chatham Community Complex Redevelopment

The Chatham Community Complex is located on Tweedsmuir Avenue West, in the southern portion of the Chatham Ward. This 7.0 hectare site includes the Memorial Arena, Kinsmen Auditorium, two baseball diamonds and a soccer field. It is also home to the annual Kiwanis Fair.

One aligned municipal project and one significant recommendation within this Master Plan are directly associated with the Complex and could impact the future activity profile and facility focus of this site. The first involves the Municipality's decision to pursue a ConEx facility that would replace the Kinsmen Auditorium and Council's approved recommendation for the demolition and decommissioning of that facility. The second consideration is the recommendation within this Master Plan to replace the Memorial and Erickson Arenas with a new twin pad facility and to decommission and demolish the Chatham Memorial Arena.

As a result of these two potential strategies, this large park and recreational venue would be significantly impacted as the two major indoor facilities, which also have significant parking areas, would be removed from the site creating unique opportunities for alternate and re-adaptive uses. The removal of these facilities may not be concurrent depending on if and when these two projects proceed.

In light of the potential removal of these facilities, and the significant portion of the overall venue that they represent, it is recommended that a Site Master Plan be undertaken for this site in its entirety to fulfill the following outcomes:

- Identify outdoor activities that could make re-adaptive use of the current indoor facility land areas, such as additional baseball fields, a splash pad and other relevant participant opportunities.

- Develop a Site Master Plan that maximizes the size, orientation and configuration of the existing sport field facilities that have been developed over time based on the park space available and now could be improved as the overall site configuration changes.

- Develop an integrated Plan for key amenities within the overall venue related to joint parking, concession and washroom facilities, paths / walkways, trail connections and other elements that could be provided on a integrated venue basis.

Facilities Recommendation 4-23:
Chatham Community Complex Redevelopment

That Chatham-Kent undertake the development of a comprehensive Site Master Plan for the Chatham Community Complex on Tweedsmuir Avenue West, focusing on the following key transitions and opportunities:

- Opportunities for adaptive reuse of the site for sports fields, a splash pad and other outdoor recreation uses based on the potential removal of the Kinsmen Auditorium and / or the Memorial Arena over time.
- Assess the current space, orientation and configuration of the existing ball and soccer fields and improve as appropriate to meet contemporary design standards.
- Consider the possible transition of the soccer field to the proposed new soccer venue in the future.
- Development of common amenities for parking, washrooms, concessions, etc., to service the entire venue on an integrated basis.

5. BEACH FRONT AND SHORELINE STRATEGIES

The purpose of beachfront and shoreline strategies is to recognize the recreation opportunities for the community on lands owned by the Municipality of Chatham-Kent. On Lake Erie, there are seven beaches identified in Chatham-Kent including Rondeau Provincial Park, Wheatley Provincial Park, the municipal parks including Clearville Park, Getty's Beach, Laverne Kelly Memorial Park and Terrace Beach Park. On Lake St. Clair, there are two sites, a municipal park of Mitchell's Bay and Willow Beach on Walpole Island forming part of the Walpole Reserve. In addition to lakefront property, the Municipality enjoys over 170 kilometres of shoreline along the Thames, Syne and Sydenham Rivers. Combined these waterfront resources offer significant and unique recreation opportunities in Chatham-Kent.



5.1 Shoreline Themes

Protecting the shoreline is the first theme of the shoreline strategies. These shoreline and riverfront features represent significant cultural and natural heritage features. There is growing public interest in Chatham-Kent to maintain and preserve significant and sensitive natural features located along waterfront properties. These environmental features contribute to the establishment of a healthy and sustainable environment.

The second theme for the shoreline strategies is recreation venues. These shoreline venues are important destinations for passive and active recreation. They are venues for bird watching, walking, hiking and enjoying scenic views over the water. They can be important venues for community events, family reunions or for participative fundraising events.

The third theme of the shoreline strategies is to provide facilities access, docking and service to watercraft. Shoreline venues are important contact points for watercraft of all types including large pleasure boats, fishing boats, canoes, kayaks, sailboats and extreme sports such as kite surfing. Chatham-Kent has extensive boating dock facilities in Wallaceburg and Chatham. These docks and parks are used for a number of important tourism events, such as WAMBO in Wallaceburg featuring a variety of antique cars, boats, model toys and related antiques. Combined, the three themes of increased environmental protection, opportunity for passive recreation destinations and venues for boat launch and docking, make the beachfront and river shorelines an important element for recreational service delivery. The following recommendations identify land, facilities and programming strategies for beachfront and shoreline interaction in Chatham-Kent.

Shoreline Strategy Recommendation 5-1: Shoreline Ownership

That Chatham-Kent continue to retain ownership of all beach and shoreline properties, as an important venue for recreation activities and community asset.

That portions of these lands, where suitable, be naturalized with local plant species to reinforce their natural heritage value and reduce parkland maintenance costs.

That Chatham-Kent assemble additional shoreline properties along the lakes and the rivers within the Municipality where they are offered for sale and they abut municipally-owned lands, in order to provide future opportunities for expanded waterfront venues and additions to the trail network.

That Chatham-Kent facilitate the donation of land or the establishment of conservation easements in accordance with Planning Act legislation and the tax credits derived from these easements for beachfronts and shorelines.

5.2 Shoreline Facilities

Provision of facilities at waterfront venues should offer primary convenience, health and safety features related to parking, garbage disposal, picnic shelters, washrooms, change rooms and water rescue equipment. Where larger events occur, temporary facilities can be provided at the venue.

Investing in dockage or marina facilities should focus on maintaining the existing infrastructure. Declines in boating activities related to the high cost of fuel and challenges related to cross border US/Canada travel, discourages significant sustained use of the existing boating infrastructure. Boat launch facilities could be focused on water access for motor boat day trips and other self propelled watercraft. The infrastructure should have limited maintenance and operational requirements for special events.

Shoreline Strategy Recommendation 5-2: Shoreline Facilities

That Chatham-Kent continue to maintain and invest in convenience, health and safety features facilities at waterfront venues, including parking, garbage facilities, washrooms, signage and waterfront safety equipment to generally support unsupervised, passive recreation and waterfront event opportunities.

That Chatham-Kent continue to work with the Chatham-Kent Health Unit to monitor shoreline water quality and the posting of information on the internet site as well as public service announcements related to lake or river water contamination.

5.3 Shoreline Programming

Recreational programming at shoreline locations should focus on community events, environmental awareness, participation and waterfront related sporting events. Partnering with community organizations, the Conservation Authority or the Provincial Parks, Chatham-Kent could provide municipally-owned venues for interpretative walks, educational events and fundraising activities. This form of programming is consistent with the passive or special events focus of the waterfront venues. The shoreline venues are not well suited for weekly programmed events. Swim lessons are not well suited for waterfront venues because of variable water quality and temperature and weather conditions.

Shoreline Strategy Recommendation 5-3: Shoreline Programming

That Chatham-Kent promote shoreline venues as destinations for participation; community and fundraising events, such as walking, hiking or cycling, historic watercraft exhibits; and related activities linking such parks with recreation and tourism events.

That sporting events, such as kite surfing, fishing derbies, and related activities, continue to be supported and promoted at shoreline venues as opportunities for residents and visitors to participate in water-based activities.

5.4 Rondeau Provincial Park

Rondeau Provincial Park covers some 3,000 ha of land on the shores of Lake Erie in South Kent. There are 260 campsites, a visitor's centre, picnic and day use areas and two playgrounds. Park activities include hiking with six trails for a total of twenty-seven kilometres; cycling trails from three to twenty-three kilometres along old roads; a boat launch for fishing and canoeing; and eight kilometres of sandy shallow beach along the lake front and 0.5 kilometres of beach on the bay side. The area is part of the Carolina Forest and provides an excellent opportunity for birding during the migration periods.

Rondeau Park is a tourist attraction in Chatham-Kent. At the same time the park offers local recreation activities for residents in Shrewsbury and surrounding areas. The park and recreation venues offer opportunities for the Municipality to partner with the Province to promote the recreation attributes of the park for both local and visitor use of the site. There may also be opportunities for municipal programming for summer activities and special events.

Shoreline Strategy Recommendation 5-4: Rondeau Provincial Park

That Chatham-Kent partner with Rondeau Provincial Park for the recreation promotion through the Community Services Division and Tourism Division identifying the park as an important tourist and recreation destination in the Municipality.

That the Park be promoted for unique wildlife and birding opportunities associated with the Carolinian Forest; for outdoor education; and fishing.

5.5 Wheatley Provincial Park

Wheatley Provincial Park comprises some 208 ha of land located south and east of the community of Wheatley on Lake Erie. The park provides over 220 campsites, three playground areas, picnic areas and day use. It has hiking trails, a 3.2 kilometre canoeing loop, 1.6 kilometres of sand beach and a Carolinian woodlot. Community development in Wheatley backs onto the park and it provides and important local and tourist destination at the west end of Chatham-Kent. There are opportunities for the Municipality to partner with the Provincial park in providing both recreation and tourist destination services. There may be facilities within the park that can be used for Municipal programming such as outdoor education, bird and wildlife viewing, and water-based programming on the shoreline.

Shoreline Strategy Recommendation 5-5: Wheatley Provincial Park

That Chatham-Kent through the Community Services Division and Tourism Division promote Wheatley Provincial Park as a local and tourist recreational venue for hiking, cycling, bird watching and related passive recreation uses.

That the Municipality enter into discussions with the Parks Manager for preferred access to Wheatley Provincial Park by local residents through reduced fees and improved municipal access.

5.6 Mitchell's Bay

Mitchell's Bay located on the west shore of Lake St. Clair and includes three municipally-owned recreation venues. They include Mitchell's Bay Beach, Memorial Park and Mitchell's Bay Marina. This section will focus on Mitchell's Bay Marina based on its public-private partnership and venue as a tourist destination. This part of Mitchell's Bay offers some of the best sport fishing in all of southern Ontario due to the shallow lake bed and excellent fish habitat. Mitchell's Bay Marina provides 250 seasonal and transit boat slips; eight boat launch ramps and over 150 campsites. The location is a walking distance to Mitchell's Bay Beach with a children's water park facility, beach access, playground equipment, volleyball courts and related beach amenities. Combined these municipal facilities create an excellent tourist and resident venue for recreational activities.

Mitchell's Bay Marina has been leased to a private operator for the ongoing maintenance, operations and investment in the campground. The municipality should monitor performance of the Marina annually for activity levels; and quality of service.

Shoreline Strategy Recommendation 5-6: Mitchell's Bay Marine Park

That Chatham-Kent promote Mitchell's Bay Marine Park as an important tourist venue in Chatham-Kent. The Community Services Division may consider summer programming at Mitchell's Bay Beach to complement activities at the marina for visitors. That the Municipality promote sport-fishing in Mitchell's Bay.

5.7 Clearville Park

Clearville Park is located on the Lake Erie shoreline in East Kent Ward and is owned by the Municipality. The total area is 31.7 ha comprised of 11.4 ha of seasonal and transient campgrounds, 2 ha of public beach and the remaining 18.3 ha is a natural wooded area. The beachfront provides a boat launch, swimming, day use and picnic areas and a beach access. The operation of the campground is intended to be a self-supporting not-for-profit association of campers. This is an example of a Municipal not-for-profit partnership. There have been recent improvements to the sewage treatment system in the campground. There was a significant loan in excess of $500,000 to be paid back by the operation of the campground. Moving forward a more formally recognized campground management group should be established for the maintenance operation and programming in the campground.

Shoreline Strategy Recommendation 5-7: Clearville Park

That Chatham-Kent establish a formal Parks Management Board for the maintenance, operation and programming of Clearville Park within the following framework:

- That the Board adopt a governance model to ensure accountability and formal decision-making practices.
- That the Board work with facilities staff in the development of an annual budget, debt repayment, establish fees, park regulations, and related decision-making responsibilities.
- That the Park operate as a not-for-profit organization for the purpose of providing seasonal and transient camping.
- That the Community Services Division continue to maintain the Clearville Beach picnic pavilion, washroom and beach facilities for the purposes of providing general public access and that the campground maintenance be the responsibility of the Park's Board.

6. ENERGY UTILIZATION AND CONSERVATION STRATEGIES



An important component of the Master Plan is the energy utilization and conservation strategy for the arenas and swimming pools in Chatham-Kent. Integrated Engineering, conducted site visits to all arenas and swimming pools, spoke with staff, and recorded existing equipment and operating systems to identify opportunities to reduce energy utilization and conserve water and energy. This study is consistent with arena / pool management trends across Ontario and community interest in conserving power and resources and reducing costs.

Implementation of energy saving and conservation strategies can have the following outcomes:

- Reduce costs for electrical, heating / cooling fuel and water consumption in the range of 5% to 15%.
- Potential reduction in staffing where energy management functions are automated.
- Reduced impact on the environment and CO_2 emissions.
- The Community Services Division can take a leadership role in Municipal energy management; and
- Potential to produce energy through installation of solar panels on large facility roof tops and other energy production options.

The following recommendations are divided into two parts. The first part addresses best practices and operational efficiency and conservation strategies. The second part addresses capital improvements, reinvestment and new building construction as it relates to energy efficiency and resource conservation.

Energy Utilization Recommendation 6-1
Energy Conservation Best Practices

That Chatham-Kent adopt best practice measures for arenas and swimming pools to reduce energy consumption and increase conservation measure, related to maintaining ice surfaces, water temperatures and lighting and heating levels through automated systems to reduce electrical energy demands, through the following:

Arenas:

- Reduce flood water temperatures.
- Continue to discharge snow from the ice making machine outside the building as permitted.
- Reduce heating in unoccupied viewing areas.
- Allow ice temperature to rise -1ºC to -2ºC overnight.

Pools:

- Continue to install high efficiency pool heaters as the need arises.
- Use pool blankets for outdoor pools and consider other heat and water saving technologies.
- Ensure water is re-circulated from the pool through the filters.

Energy Utilization Recommendation 6-2:
Renewal and Reinvestment Strategies

That Chatham-Kent continue investments in the following replacement of equipment, motors and related facility equipment selecting energy efficiency components

- Reduce water consumption through the installation of low flow showers and faucets, and the replacement of toilets with low flow / dual flush systems.
- Install high efficiency fluorescent T5 fixtures for replacement lighting.
- Add controls for lighting, heating and ventilation for spectator areas with timers and motion sensors to reduce energy inputs.
- Review and upgrade insulation of building shells, and all domestic water piping to reduce energy demands.

Energy Utilization Recommendation 6-3: Energy Use in New Construction

That Chatham-Kent adopt Leadership in Energy and Environment Design (LEED) standards of silver or higher for all new recreation facility development. This should include high efficiency heating, lighting and water conservation equipment.

Energy Utilization Recommendation 6-4: Renewable Energy Production

That Chatham-Kent explore opportunities for renewable electrical energy production with the installation of solar panels on large roof tops of recreation and municipal facilities.

That the Municipality explore renewing pool water heating systems using roof mounted solar heaters at outdoor pools.

7. ACTION PLAN AND IMPLEMENTATION

7.1 Introduction



The following material outlines the action plan and implementation framework for the various specific recommendations that collectively form the Parks and Recreation Master Plan for the Municipality of Chatham-Kent. The implementation strategy recognizes that some of the dimensions will evolve based on additional information or will need to be amended as events, policies, funding or other considerations evolve in the operating environment.

This section is divided into implementation themes around the master plan foundation, parks and recreation service delivery and parks, open space and recreation facilities investments. The specific timing and priority of specific recommendations are summarized in Tables based on priority over time. The last section of the implementation strategy identifies program evaluation standards for the implementation of the Master Plan.

7.2 Implementation Themes

Throughout the course of the research, consultation and Master Plan's development, several key themes emerged that influence the implementation and future outcomes of the Master Plan recommendations. These themes include the following:

- Chatham-Kent has a strong legacy of community involvement in program delivery, facility development and operations and fundraising. There is a recognized need to continue supporting community and not-for-profit organizations in their ongoing service delivery role through strong Division leadership. There needs to be a balance between the revenue generation and recreation service delivery in cooperation with non-profit groups. These investments will lead to continued and sustainable not-for-profit organizations in the municipality.

- Chatham-Kent has a significant number of facilities, parks, and recreation venues originating from the previously amalgamated municipalities. These parks and facilities offer parks and facilities access but will need renewal and reinvestment moving forward. Renewal in facilities and parks is an important implementation theme over the life of the Master Plan.

- Finally, there is a need for flexibility in the Plan to respond on a timely basis to continuing changes in the area of health care, environmental sustainability, evolving municipal government responsibilities, an aging population and a culturally diversifying population. The Master Plan recommendations and implementation approach must be considered in the context of on-going change within the Municipality's operating environment.

7.3 Policies and Strategies Integration

An important consideration for the implementation of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan is the integration with other policy and strategy initiatives within the Division and the municipality ranging from the Municipality's Strategic Plan, the development of a ConEx Centre, the Trails Master Plan and other related perspectives. The Master Plan does not stand alone as do any of the other initiatives in the Municipality. Therefore the Division will need to develop leadership and action to ensure that all the planning, policy and direction setting recommendations are effectively integrated, both in terms of their outcomes and the specific actions and processes.

The following points represent some of the key areas of potential integration with the Master Plan.

- Chatham-Kent Council has developed strategic directions and goals for the Municipality. These strategic directions include recreational and cultural opportunities; sustainable growth in business and industry; diversifying and growing the municipal population; fiscal responsibility in bringing partners together to effect change in Chatham-Kent.

- The Chatham-Kent Official Plan has recently been adopted and identifies community strategic initiatives around health, economy, environment, heritage, leadership and learning. Specific recommendations around recreational trails and pedestrian linkages, recreational area policies and objectives to promote and facilitate a system of walking / cycling trails are closely linked to the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The Master Plan recommendations help to support implementing the Chatham-Kent Official Plan.

- The Infrastructure Renewal Program supported by the provincial and federal governments is another key strategy to ensure that all new or upgraded facility initiatives are fully integrated with the capital improvement and retrofitting strategies of the municipality. This strategy needs to focus on upgrades to meet requirements of the Ontarians With Disabilities Act, improved energy conservation and water usage, reducing operating costs and maximizing use and revenues to sustain the community's long term benefits of their initial investments in facilities.

- The Municipality enjoys access to Lake St. Clair and Lake Erie, providing significant opportunities for recreation and tourism development in southwestern Ontario. The amenities at Mitchell's Bay, Rondeau Provincial Park and Wheatley Provincial Park, offer opportunities for tourist destinations. New facilities, such as the ConEx Centre, a potential twin pad arena/ multi-use complex and a regional outdoor sports venue, will add to the Municipality's tourist potential within the Master Plan.

- One of the strategic transitions identified within the Master Plan is the movement of the Community Services Division into a strong more visible partnership development and community support role as the first order of involvement in any specific recreation service. In this role, the Division would act to identify community needs, organization partnership opportunities, become a potential partner and a support resource for not-for-profit service delivery organizations. Within the wider context the Division could direct private for profit organizations to selected service delivery initiatives. Furthermore the Division will be a strong supporter facilitating and reviewing recommendations on service delivery, community investment funding, partnerships and related Master Plan recommendations.

These and other current and future policy and strategy initiatives need to be considered within the context of implementing this Master Plan. In some cases the Master Plan will be a significant influence on other policies and strategies while in other cases it will be shaped by these external strategies. Regardless of the impact the need to ensure that all various initiatives are linked and integrated is an important implementation task the Division will need to ensure is identified, practiced and evaluated on an ongoing basis.

7.4 Community Development Model Transition

One of the most significant strategic directions and policy changes proposed within the Parks and Recreation Master Plan for Chatham-Kent involves an increased focus on and resourcing of a Community Development function to both sustain and enhance the ongoing organizational capacities, services and volunteer work of community service providing organizations. This strategic direction calls for the possible reduction of the Municipality's role in the direct delivery of recreation programs, not necessarily facilities and venues, with an increasing role for the Community Services Division relative to providing capacity building and organizational, marketing and other supports to community service providers. This transition has been identified based on three key perspectives that have emerged from the research for and the proposed policy frameworks within the Master Plan:

- The importance of community service providers and their ongoing sustainability in the current and future development and delivery of recreation services for the residents of Chatham-Kent.

- The fact that the Municipality cannot be all things to all people in the direct delivery of recreation services, particularly in an operating environment where the range of recreation and leisure activities continues to expand both in terms of the number of activities available and the different levels of participation (developmental, recreational, elite).

- Strategic concerns expressed relative to the sustainability of volunteerism within the community service provider organizations as a result of changes in demographics, volunteer preferences, roles, and the increasing amount of reporting and administrative work for volunteers that is of a less interesting perspective.

Sustaining a rich diversity of recreation programs across the geographical expanse of Chatham-Kent is a significant principle within the Master Plan and investment in resident quality of life. Volunteer, community-based organizations are the primary deliverers of many of these programs, ranging from the YMCA, to minor sports groups, to cultural organizations, to community organizations who operate municipal parks and other facilities, to a host of other service providers large and small. The Parks and Recreation Master proposes a series of policy recommendations that collectively address various components of a partial transition in role for the Municipality relative to becoming increasingly focused on Community Development support versus direct program delivery as a means to increase participation opportunities and accessibility on a more sustainable basis.

The Policy Recommendations in Section 3 of the Master Plan, that in part address various dimensions of this strategic transition, are:

- **Recommendation 3-1** Recreation Services Delivery Framework.
- **Recommendation 3-4** Partnerships and Joint Ventures.
- **Recommendation 3-5** Volunteer Organization Capacity and Leadership Development
- **Recommendation 3-10** Community-based Governance and Management of Municipally- Owned Facilities and Venues.

This strategic initiative is a transitional strategy that over several years and with community consultation, will reposition the Community Services Division to be more focused on community organizations / service providers capacity building and sustainability as the primary means for delivering recreation programming in Chatham-Kent. Such a transition will result in the need to undertake evaluations of current Divisional direct delivery activities and determine what programs and services may be transitioned to existing, enhanced or renewed community service providing organizations. Within these transitions, the current direct delivery staffing and funding resources could then be repositioned for investment in the enhanced Community Development role as outlined in the various Policy Recommendations of Section 3.

Recommendation 7-1: Community Development Model Implementation

That the Principles supporting the Community Development Model's implementation be:

- To transition to a more shared responsibility relationship between the community and the Municipality in the delivery of parks, recreation and related services.
- To maximize the use of all the community's resources and assets to achieve a more balanced and as wide an array of recreation participation opportunities as possible for Chatham-Kent residents.
- To enhance the capacities and sustainability of community service providing organizations as the primary providers of recreation programs in Chatham-Kent.
- To reduce the dependency on / expectations of the Municipality for directly delivered recreations programs.
- To strengthen the presence and capacity of volunteers and volunteer organizations by investing in volunteer recruitment and skills development, satisfaction, recognition and their interest in serving their community.

That the Municipality undertake the following activities / steps in supporting the transition to a broader Community Development role for the Community Services Division, based on a three to five year transitional program as follows:

- Over the first two years of the Master Plan's implementation, the Division assess each of its directly delivered recreation programs as follows:
    - Current and future trends and participation potential, as well as future demand profiles compared to demographic and other market changes.
    - Identification and assessment of possible existing community service providers that could offer each recreation program in whole or in part, or the potential of expanding an existing or creating a new community service provider organization to undertake delivery.
    - Identification and analysis of the benefits and the risks of a transition of a recreation program to a community service provider / partner.
    - Evaluate each directly delivered recreation program as to its priority and suitability for transition to a community service provider / partner.
- Over the first two years, to undertake a comprehensive consultation program with all service providers in the community, to ascertain the following Community Development support interests and needs:
    - Governance and organizational development supports that they feel would benefit their long term sustainability and effectiveness as a services provider.
    - Programming, operational and volunteer supports that would enhance the quality and effectiveness of their programs and volunteer development activities.
    - Areas of interest they may have in participating in the delivery of recreation programs currently provided by the Municipality.
    - Capacity building, organizational and program support needs that they may have in assuming direct delivery of programs currently provided by the Municipality.
- By the end of year two, develop a Programs Transition Plan involving:
    - Identification of directly delivered recreation programs that are candidates for transition to community service providers, identifying necessary supports and conditions.
    - Identification and development of a Community Development Supports Program that best meets the current and future capacity building and organizational development needs of community services providers as a basis to facilitate their growth, quality of services, sustainability and effective use of volunteers.

- Development of a minimum of two staff roles to support the Community Development initiative and its priorities that focus on:
  - Supporting community organizations that deliver recreation, sports / sports tourism, and manage and or operate municipally-owned facilities and related services
  - Supporting community organizations that deliver recreation, sports / sports tourism, and manage and or operate municipally-owned facilities and related services.
  - Supporting community organizations that deliver arts, culture, heritage, special events and festivals, environment, trails and related services.
- Allocations within the annual Municipal budget process of funding to support both staff roles, as well as the resourcing of the Community Development Supports Program related to the hosting of training, educational, governance and trends forums and materials; communications and marketing; volunteer development; and related activities and investments.

That the functional roles of the Division and staff positions include active participation in and development of:

- Program and capacity building supports, including marketing, program development; facility access; partnership development both with the Municipality and other service providing organizations; identification of and support for grant opportunities; services amalgamations; program / service evaluation, pricing and finances, and related activities.

- Leadership and co-ordination in support of increased volunteer participation and engagement involving recruitment, training, placement, recognition and other aligned benefits.

- Service planning and coordination initiatives amongst the various service providing organizations, both within the assigned area of service and between the two service areas to ensure the effective integration and maximum utilization of all the resources available.

- Provision of needs assessment, programs and services evaluations, trends analysis and longer term strategic planning and related service delivery supports for recreation and aligned programs in Chatham-Kent.

- Ongoing provision of governance and organizational development training, monitoring and related supports based on the needs of an organization at any time in its life cycle, as well as potential active participation in supporting community organizations that are experiencing challenges in pursuing their Mission, in determining their future or sustaining their viability.

7.5 Implementation Framework

The recommendations of the Master Plan have been developed around the following themes in the Master Plan:

- Master Plan foundation including the Vision, Mission Statement and Guiding Principles.
- Recreation service delivery policy and strategies around municipal role, partnerships, sport tourism, governance and community engagement and community use of schools.
- Parks, open space and recreation facilities in terms of provisioning levels, classifications, twin pad arena and regional outdoor facility.
- Beachfront and shoreline strategies related to Lake Erie and Lake St. Clair and the rivers.
- Energy utilization and conservation strategies.



Combined these recommendations offer more than fifty discrete implementation and action strategies to be undertaken by the municipality.

These recommendations are summarized in the following tables by priority A, B and C, beginning with Recreation Service Delivery, then Parks and Open Space and Recreation Facilities and ending with Shoreline and Energy Conservation recommendations. Table 7-1, Priority A; Table 7-2, Priority B; Table 7-3, Priority C/D recommendations. The chart form of the Implementation Plan identifies the recommendations, outlines priority and timelines, provides a rationale, municipal or community responsibility, estimated capital costs, funding source and performance measures. The purpose of the tables are to assist the Community Services Division, other related Departments and the community, to initiate the necessary leadership, project identification, planning process, financial planning and related tasks to advance these recommendations forward through the life of the Plan.

The priority codes used in the Tables denotes three, 3 year timing increments and the final increment of 12 years beyond 2018: A-2010 to 2012, B-2013 to 2015; C-2016 to 2018; D-2018 to 2030.

It is important to note that the first position title identified in the municipal / community responsibility holds the responsibility to initiate and drive the policy, strategy and implementation of the project to completion. The following identified parties are needed to be engaged in the implementation approach.

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent has recently appointed a General Manager, Community Services, with responsibility for parks and recreation. This position is identified as having an important responsibility for many of the implementation initiatives along with the Director, Community Services who heads up the Division. The General Manager will provide strategic direction and corporate support for the Division's implementation of the Master Plan. The Director will have the lead responsibility for many of the implementation initiatives particularly regarding the repositioning of the Division in Service Delivery.

Recommendation 7-2: Implementation Priorities

That Chatham-Kent adopt the following implementation priorities: Table 7-1 Implementation Priority A, Table 7-2 Implementation Priority B and Table 7-3 Implementation Priority C and D, setting out priorities, timing, costing and responsibilities for implementation of the Master Plan recommendations.

Table 7-1
Municipality of Chatham-Kent

Implementation Priority A

Recommendation		Priority / Timing	Rationale	Municipal / Community Responsibility	Estimated Capital Cost	Funding Source	Performance Measure
3-1	Recreation Services Delivery Policy Framework: Reposition the Division	A-2010	• Build community capacity and organizational sustainability • Enhance community organizations' governance, marketing, volunteer recruitment • Transition from revenue generation to community development process	• Director, Community Services • Parks and Recreation Division	N/A	N/A	
3-2	Prioritization Process: Adopt a process for recreation services	A-2010	• Support Councils Strategic Directions • Broad-based resident participation • Inclusion of those with disabilities, seniors, young children and new Canadians	• Director, Community Services • Parks and Recreation Division	N/A	N/A	
3-3	Municipal Role: Leadership, Involvement and Evaluation as the key Municipal Responsibilities	A-2011-2013	• Provide leadership for integration planning and evaluation of recreation services • Provide direct program delivery where there is a demonstrated need with long term sustainability • Establish an evaluation process of data collection and performance evaluation	• Director, Community Services • Parks and Recreation Division	$30,000-$55,000 to be confirmed	Municipal Capital Budget	Repositioning to be fully in place by 2013
3-5	Volunteer Organization Capacity and Leadership Development	A2011-2013	• Enhance capacity of community organizations • Sustain a strong core of volunteer leaders • Provide for leadership, financial and accreditation requirements	• Director, Community Services • Leadership of Community Organizations • Parks and Recreation Division	$20 - $30,000	Municipal Capital Budget	Number of sustainable Community Organizations
3-7	Annual Communications Strategy: Awareness, Health Promotion and Participation	A-2011-ongoing	• Raise public awareness of recreation programming and facilities • Promote healthier lifestyles • Encourage greater public participation	• Parks and Recreation Division • Community Partners	$25,000 for new initiatives	Municipal Capital Budget	Increase in number of non-profit and partner groups
3-9	Programming Directions: Older Adults; Extreme Sports and Mass Participation	A-2011-ongoing	• Respond to changing population demographics • Adjust to changing recreation expectations • Introduce new activities in response to societal shifts in interests	• Parks and Recreation Division • Partners and Community Organizations	N/A	N/A	Number of programs added
3-13 and 3-14	Community Partnership Fund and Terms of Reference: Support and Consistency	A-2010	• Develop new programs or recreation facilities • Better utilize volunteers and community organizations • Recognize the need for increased community capacity • Establish a fair and consistent evaluation practice for grant applications	• Manager, Community Partnership Fund • Related Community Organizations	$25 - $50,000 annually	Municipal Capital Budget	Number of successful community initiatives
3-17	Individual Participant Financial Support : Continue support and position outside Community Services	A-2012-ongoing	• Reinforce the principles of inclusion and fairness for recreation access • Encourage healthy lifestyles	• Director, Community Services • Other Related Divisions	N/A	N/A	Number of individuals who received support Change in health for supported individuals
3-19	Community Use of Schools and Educational Facilities: Increase the use of other facilities.	A-2011-2012	• Increase community access to schools for recreation programming • Create Community Access Agreements with Municipal Capital contributions to achieve public access	• Director , Community Services • Related Educational Organizations	To be determined	Municipal Capital Budget	

Table 7-1
Municipality of Chatham-Kent

Implementation Priority A

Recommendation		Priority / Timing	Rationale	Municipal / Community Responsibility	Estimated Capital Cost	Funding Source	Performance Measure
4-1	Parks and Open Space Framework: Adopt the Framework	A-2010	• To provide a balanced array of parkland opportunities • To ensure maximum utilization of park space • To provide for a distribution of park space across the municipality	• Manager, Parks, Cemeteries and Horticulture	N/A	N/A	Adoption of the framework
4-2 4-3 4-4 4-5 4-6	**Park Criteria: Adopt the criteria** Parkettes Surplus Parkland Neighbourhood Parks Community Parks Municipal Parks	A-2010	• To identify facility requirements for all scales of parks • To identify service areas, standards and preference size for all parks • To establish criteria for the sale of surplus parkland	• Manager, Parks, Cemeteries and Horticulture	N/A Variable for sale of parkland	N/A	Adoption of the criteria
4-8	Adopt the Parkland Provisioning Standards	**A-2011** and B-C 2014-2020	• To establish minimum levels of parkland available per population • To identify areas needed for additional parkland	• Director , Community Services • Manager, Parks, Cemeteries and Horticulture	Purchase of additional park space at $100,000 to $150,000 per ha	Development Charges Municipal Budget	Number of park hectares acquired
4-9 .1 .2 .3 .4 .5	Adopt the Parkland Acquisition Policies Dedication of Parkland Former School Sites Acquisition Donations of Parkland Natural Areas Acquisition Municipal Purchase of Parkland to Meet Local Needs.	A-2012 ongoing	• To establish policies and procedures for the appropriate acquisition of parks • To guide the types of location of new park acquisition • To establish criteria for the acquisition of new park space • To align the new park acquisition with other guiding principles of the master plan	• Director, Community Services • Manager, Parks Cemeteries and Horticulture	N/A Market Value for School Sites N/A Market Value of Non-Developable Land Variable	Municipal Capital Budget Parkland Reserve Fund Donations	Number of hectares of additional parkland
4-11	Adopt the Outdoor Fields Framework	A-2011	• To establish a framework for outdoor field service levels	• Manager Parks Cemeteries and Horticulture	N/A	N/A	
.2	Initiate a Business Plan	A-2012	• Promote sport tourism • Identify the size, number of fields, facility provisioning, and programming requirements • Obtain commitments from community organizations	• Tourism Chatham-Kent • Soccer Community Groups		Federal / Provincial Grants Community Fundraising Sponsorships	
4-13	Adopt Baseball and Soccer Fields Provisioning Levels	A-2010	• Provide a transition from baseball to soccer field when there is a demonstrated need • Add a new soccer full size field and two mini fields across the full sized in Blenheim	• Director, Community Services • Manager, Parks, Cemeteries and Horticulture	$200,000 to transition a baseball to a soccer field $400,000 for a new full size soccer field	Parkland Reserve Fund Fundraising	
4-17	Outdoor Facilities Allocation Policy: Prepare and adopt the policy	A-2012	• To fairly allocate facilities for equitable distribution • To maximize facility utilization • To provide a consistent framework for allocation of facilities	• Manager, Recreation Programs	$25,000	Municipal Capital Budget	
4-18 .3	Arenas / Multi-Use Centre: Investment and Business Plan Business Plan and Site Selection	A-2010	• Business Plan provides capital and operating cost requirements and funding sources		.3 $40,000		

Table 7-1
Municipality of Chatham-Kent

Implementation Priority A

Recommendation		Priority / Timing	Rationale	Municipal / Community Responsibility	Estimated Capital Cost	Funding Source	Performance Measure
.4	Project Steering Committee	A-2010	• Steering Committee provides user impacts, consideration and communication opportunities				
4-19	Indoor Pools: Maintain and Monitor Use Rates	A-2011	• Maintain indoor pools for recreational swimming, lessons, fitness and competition • Maintain outdoor pools for summer recreation and lesson swimming	• Manager, Recreation Programs	N/A	N/A	Numbers of registrants, fitness and competitive swimmers
5-6	Mitchells Bay Marine Park: Promote Park and Consider Programming at the Beach	A-2012	• To promote Mitchells Bay as an important tourist and fishing attraction in Chatham-Kent	• Manager, Recreation Programs	N/A	N/A	
6-1	Adopt Energy Conservation Best Practices	A-2010 ongoing	• Reduce facility operating costs • Reduce environmental impact	• Manager, Recreation Facilities	N/A	N/A	Reduction in energy and water costs
7-1	Community Development Model Implementation	A-2010-2012	• Importance of Community Service Providers • Municipality cannot be all things to all people • Concerns expressed around sustainability of volunteerism	• Director, Community Services • Community Services Managers • Related Community Organizations	N/A	Municipal Budgets	Recognition by the Community of the Community Division's supportive role
7-2	Adopt Implementation Priorities	A-2010	• Council Adoption of the Implementation Framework to support Staff and Municipal Investments	• Director, Community Services	N/A	N/A	
7-4	Master Plan Review	**A – Annually** B - 2015 C - 2020	• Keep the Master Plan current • Monitor Programs and capital works • Identify emerging trends and priorities	• Community Service Managers • Director, Community Services • General Manager, Community Services	Annually – Managers 2015 - $25,000 2020 - $35,000	Municipal Budget	Public Use and Satisfaction with Parks, Facilities and Programs

Table 7-2
Municipality of Chatham-Kent

Implementation Priority B

Recommendation		Priority / Timing	Rationale	Municipal / Community Responsibility	Estimated Capital Cost	Funding Source	Performance Measure
3-4	Partnerships and Joint Ventures: Lead Community Organizations and Broaden the Range of Venues	**B-2013** C-2016	• Engage capacity of not-for-profit and for profit organization for service delivery • Create greater cost efficiencies for service delivery • Expand the availability of recreation programming in Chatham-Kent	• Director, Community Services • Community Partners • Other Divisions as appropriate • Parks and Recreation Division	Variable depending on participation rates		
3-6	Multi-use Strategies: Continue to Use and Undertake This Strategy	B-2013-2016	• Potential capital cost savings of 10% to 25% • Operational cost savings of up to 25% • Enhanced user satisfaction • Larger visibility and community identification	• Parks and Recreation Division • Other Divisions required	N/A	N/A	
3-8	Sport Tourism Strategy: Pursue Collaborative Development with Other Divisions	B-2013-2016	• Economic benefit of money spent by visitors • Raises community profile through media attention and broadens community marketing • Creates fundraising opportunities for community service providers	• Parks and Recreation Division • Tourism Chatham-Kent • Community Partners	$50,000 - $75,000	Municipal Capital Budget	Number of Sport Tourism Events held annually; number of participants annually.
3-10	Community-based Governance and Management of Municipal Facilities: Develop a Model Approach	B-2013-2016	• Create a community service delivery model across the municipality • Ensure compliance with health and safety, accounting and management practices • Clarify the role of the Municipality and local volunteer leaders	• Director, Community Services • Manager Recreation Facilities • Community Organizations	$30,000	Municipal Capital Budget	Nature of new agreements with a community organization
3-11	Community Service Contracts: Develop New Contracts for all Municipal Venues	B-2013-ongoing	• Identify programming, financial and capital commitments by community organizations • Identify rates and performance clauses for maintenance, scheduling and variety of permitted uses	• Director, Community Services • Manager Recreation Facilities	Various	Municipal Capital Budget	Number of new and renewed contracts
3-15 and 3-16	User Fee Policy and Development Process: Undertake an Assessment and Stakeholder Consultation.	B-2013-2016	• Establish fairness and equity between user groups • Establish revenue / cost, coverage targets for the facilities and services • Create user fees on a market-based approach to balance utilization rates and maximize increase in high demand activities	• Director, Community Services • Manager Recreation Facilities • Related Community Organizations	$25,000	Municipal Capital Budget	
3-18	Multi-Municipal Multi-Organizational Approach: Maintain and Enhance this Strategy	B-2013-2015	• Improved recreation service availability • The greater cost efficiencies for the municipality • Higher quality facilities based on a broader market • Reduced capital investment	• Director, Community Services • Related Community Services Managers • Partner Organizations	N/A	N/A	
3-20	New Program or Facility Business Plans: Required for New Recreation Facilities and Programs.	B-2013-2015	• Establish a decision making framework for program and facility investments • Evaluation of community benefits in recreation, health and participation • Assessment of partnerships and joint ventures • Establish a capital budget and cost projections • Identify funding sources	• Director, Community Services • Community Organization Proponents	Variable depending on application	N/A	
4-7	Trails Master Plan Integration: Ensure Parks and Trails Connections.	B-2013	• Identify connections between parks and trails • Ensure trails are an important component of community and municipal parks renewal • Promotion of trails through the Parks and Recreation Department	• Manager, Parks, Cemeteries and Horticulture	N/A		Kilometers of new trails integrated into the parks
4-8	Adopt the Parkland Provisioning Standards	A-2011 and **B**-C 2014-2020	• To establish minimum levels of parkland available per population • To identify areas needed for additional parkland	• Director, Community Services • Manager, Parks, Cemeteries and Horticulture	Purchase of additional park space at $100,000 to $150,000 per ha	Development Charges Municipal Budget	Number of park hectares acquired
4-10	Official Plan Policies: Process and Approve Amendments to the Plan	B-2014	• To revise and update current Official Plan policies related to municipal parks • To identify the rate of parkland acquisition • To identify the minimum provisioning levels for parkland	• Manager, Planning Division • Manager, Parks, Cemeteries and Horticulture	N/A	N/A	Adopt and approve Official Plan amendments
4-14	Adopt Outdoor Courts Provisioning Levels	B-2013-2015	• To establish minimum court accessibility across Chatham-Kent	• Manager, Recreation Facilities	N/A		

Table 7-2
Municipality of Chatham-Kent

Implementation Priority B

Recommendation		Priority / Timing	Rationale	Municipal / Community Responsibility	Estimated Capital Cost	Funding Source	Performance Measure
.1	Two (2) New Courts in Wallaceburg, North Kent, South Kent and West Kent	B-2013-2015	• To provide multi-use courts under serviced areas of Chatham-Kent	• Manager, Recreation Facilities • Community Organizations	$25,000 per court for eight new courts $200,000	Parkland Reserves Funds Fundraising Lifecycle Renewal Funding	
4-15	Adopt Playgrounds, Pavilions and Skateboard Parks Renewal Program	**B**-C 2014-2020	• To maintain and upgrade playgrounds to meet health and safety standards	• Manager, Recreation Facilities	$20,000 per playground and renewal $5,000 per picnic shelter renewal	Lifecycle funding	
.1	Build One New Skateboard Park in Chatham	B-2014	• To provide a skateboard park for underserviced areas in Chatham Ward	• Community Organizations	$250,000 skateboard park		
4-16	Adopt Parks Rehabilitation and Renewal Program	B-2014 ongoing	• To respond to changing community demographics • To replace out of date facilities, layouts • To respond to accessibility requirements • To align with changing municipal priorities for recreation services	• Manager, Recreation Facilities	$250,000 annually $25,000 per park	Municipal Capital Budget	Number of parks renewed annually
4-18	Arenas / Multi-Use Centre: Investment and Business Plan	B-2013-2015		• Director, Community Services • Manager, Recreation Facilities • Project Steering Committee • Community Organizations and User Groups	.1 $18 to $22 million .2 $3 to $5 million $2 to $3 million site acquisition and servicing	Development Charges User and Surcharges Government Funding Fundraising	
.1	Twin Pad Arena	B-2013-2015	• Potential to reduce annualized operational cost by 25% • Up to 25% reduction in capital costs • Increased capacity for sport tourism and tournaments				
.2	Multi-Use Recreation Space	B-2013-2015	• Multi-use facilities provide user convenience and enhanced facility quality				
4-20	Splash Pads: Build six new pads	**B**-D-2013-2020	• Create water play opportunities for children in primary urban centres (6) • Replacement of outdoor pools with splash pads provides a cost efficient and safe water feature	• Director, Community Services • Manager, Recreation Facilities	$350,000 per splash pad Six pads $2.1 million	Fundraising Municipal Capital Budget	
4-21	Off-Leash Parks: Retain Temporary and Build One New in Chatham and Wallaceburg	**B**-C-2013-2016	• Meets identified interest and trends for urban parks for dog runs; Chatham (2) and Wallaceburg (1)	• Manager, Parks, Cemeteries and Horticulture	$40,000 per park Three parks $120,000	Municipal Capital Budget Fundraising	
4-22	Multi-Use Facility Renewal: Adopt the Strategy for Renewal	B-2014	• Facility upgrades and meet changing expectations • Improved accessibility for aging population • Improved energy efficiency • Building Condition Reports to identify priority needs	• Director, Community Services • Manager, Recreation Facilities • Community Organizations	$25,000 to $50,000 per facility	Municipal Lifecycle Reserve Funding Fundraising Municipal Capital Budget Government Grants	
4-23	Chatham Community Complex Redevelopment : Complete a Master Plan	B-2014	• Reposition the lands vacated by the auditorium and arena with new community-based recreation opportunities • Identify investments best suited for this location	• Manager, Parks, Cemeteries and Horticulture	$50,000	Municipal Capital Budget	

Table 7-2
Municipality of Chatham-Kent

Implementation Priority B

Recommendation		Priority / Timing	Rationale	Municipal / Community Responsibility	Estimated Capital Cost	Funding Source	Performance Measure
5-1	Shoreline Ownership: Retain and Expand Municipal Ownership	**B**-C-2013-2020	• Retain public access to waterfront lands	• Director, Community Services • Manager, Parks, Cemeteries and Horticulture	N/A	N/A	Hectares/ Kilometres of Shoreline purchased
5-2	Shoreline Facilities: Maintain and Invest in Naturalized Features and Convenience Infrastructure	B-2013-2020	• Naturalize some shoreline areas to add natural heritage value • Reinvest in facilities that support convenience, health and safety of shoreline activities	• Manager, Recreation Facilities	$100,000 annually	Municipal Capital Budget	Hectares of shoreline naturalized Sites Renewed
5-3	Shoreline Programming: Promote Venues for Community and Sporting Events	B-2013	• To promote shorelines for passive recreation activities and special events	• Manager, Recreation Programs	$25,000	Municipal Capital Budget	Number of venues renewed
5-4	Rondeau Provincial Park: Enter Into Partnership With the Park	B-2013	• To provide access for residents and promote the park as a tourist destination	• Chatham-Kent Tourism	N/A	N/A	Increases in the number of visitors to the Provincial Parks
5-5	Wheatley Provincial Park: Promote Park for Tourist and Local Use	B-2013	• To provide access for residents and promote the park as a tourist destination	• Chatham-Kent Tourism	N/A	N/A	Increases in the number of visitors to the Provincial Parks
5-7	Clearville Park: Establish a Parks Management Board	B-2013	• To create a not-for-profit organization for the management of the park	• Manager, Recreation Facilities	$25,000	Municipal Capital Budget	
6-2	Renewal and Reinvestment in Equipment with Energy Efficient Features	B-2013 ongoing	• Reduce water and energy costs and improve building conditions	• Manager, Recreation Facilities	$50,000 to $100,000 per facility ($1 million)	Municipal Capital Budget	Reduction in water and energy consumption
6-3	New Construction: Adopt LEED Silver Standards	B-2013	• Take a leadership role in energy management	• Manager, Recreation Facilities	$100,000 additional cost	Municipal Capital Budget	LEED certification of projects
6-4	Renewable Energy Production: Explore Opportunities for Energy Production	B-2013	• Create a potential revenue source for energy production	• Director, Community Services • Manager, Recreation Facilities • Related Departments	$100,000 plus depending on system	Debt Financing	Revenue Produced / Energy Saved
7-3	Adopt Evaluation Standards	B-2013	• Measure outcomes of investments in Parks, Facilities and Programs for the Division	• Director, Community Services • Community Services Managers	N/A/	N/A	Public Use and Satisfaction with Parks, Facilities and Programs
7-4	Master Plan Review	A–Annually **B- 2015** C-2020	• Keep the Master Plan current • Monitor Programs and capital works • Identify emerging trends and priorities	• Community Service Managers • Director, Community Services • General Manager, Community Services	Annually – Managers 2015 - $25,000 2020-- $35,000	Municipal Budget	Public Use and Satisfaction with Parks, Facilities and Programs

Table 7-3
Municipality of Chatham-Kent

Implementation Priority C and D

Recommendation		Priority / Timing	Rationale	Municipal / Community Responsibility	Estimated Capital Cost	Funding Source	Performance Measure
3-4	Partnerships and Joint Ventures: Lead community organizations and broaden the range of venues	B-2013 **C-2016**	• Engage capacity of not-for-profit and for profit organization for service delivery • Create greater cost efficiencies for service delivery • Expand the availability of recreation programming in Chatham-Kent	• Director, Community Services • Community Partners • Other Divisions as appropriate • Parks and Recreation Division	Variable depending on participation rates		
3-12	Recreation Activity Councils: Maintain existing and create new Councils as needed	Ongoing **C-2016-2018**	• Generate inputs into programming activities • Improve community access to support services	• Manager Recreation Programs	$10,000	Municipal Capital Budget	The establishment of one or more councils
4-8	Adopt the Parkland Provisioning Standards	A-2011 and B-**C 2014-2020**	• To establish minimum levels of parkland available per population • To identify areas needed for additional parkland	• Director , Community Services • Manager, Parks, Cemeteries and Horticulture	Purchase of additional park space at $100,000 to $150,000 per ha	Development Charges Municipal Budget	Number of park hectares acquired
4-12 .1	Regional Outdoor Sports Venue 4 – 5 New Fields	**C**-D-2015-2020	• All soccer field capacity in the municipality • Create an opportunity for municipal and regional tournaments	• Director , Community Services • Manager, Parks, Cemeteries and Horticulture	$2.5 million to $4.0 million depending on amenities	Parkland Reserve Funds Municipal Capital Budget	
4-14 .2	Adopt Outdoor Courts Provisioning Levels Redevelop existing courts into multi-use courts	C-2016-2020	• To create a wider range of activities for residents on multi-use courts		$10,000 per court for 22 renewals to multi-use courts	Parkland Reserves Funds Fundraising Lifecycle Renewal Funding	
4-15	Adopt Playgrounds, Pavilions and Skateboard Parks Renewal Program	B-**C-2014-2020**	• To maintain and upgrade playgrounds to meet health and safety standards	• Manager, Recreation Facilities	$20,000 per playground and renewal $5,000 per picnic shelter renewal	Lifecycle funding	
4-20	Splash Pads: Build six new pads	B-**D-2013-2020**	• Create water play opportunities for children in primary urban centres (6) • Replacement of outdoor pools with splash pads provides a cost efficient and safe water feature	• Director, Community Services • Manager, Recreation Facilities	$350,000 per splash pad Six pads $2.1 million	Fundraising Municipal Capital Budget	
4-21	Off-Leash Parks: Retain temporary and build one new in Chatham and Wallaceburg	B-**C-2013-2016**	• Meets identified interest and trends for urban parks for dog runs; Chatham (2) and Wallaceburg (1)	• Manager, Parks, Cemeteries and Horticulture	$40,000 per park Three parks $120,000	Municipal Capital Budget Fundraising	
7-4	Master Plan Review	A–Annually B- 2015 **C-2020**	• Keep the Master Plan current • Monitor Programs and capital works • Identify emerging trends and priorities	• Community Service Managers • Director, Community Services • General Manager, Community Services	Annually – Managers 2015 - $25,000 2020-- $35,000	Municipal Budget	Public Use and Satisfaction with Parks, Facilities and Programs

7.6 Evaluation Standards

Through the Master Plan process the parks, recreation services, and facilities have undergone a significant evaluation. The community-wide survey outcomes are in the Situational Analysis Report in Section 5, Community Consultation. Moving forward, the Division should take the outcomes and questions developed through this random community survey as a starting point for future Division evaluations. These questions can add to the current statistical information and utilization rates that the Division has adopted to show changes over time.

At the five and ten year anniversary dates the Municipality may consider revising and reissuing the community survey undertaken as part of this Master Plan. This would provide significant yardsticks as to the community recognition, involvement and satisfaction with the various community recreation facilities.

On an annualized basis the Municipality should continue to measure participation rates, utilization rates, the number and quality of facilities and parkland available to the community.

With respect to the major involvement in community development, evaluation standards related to number of volunteer organizations, number of volunteers, new programs or facility initiation by not-for-profit organizations are all important measures of Master Plan implementation and evaluation.

With respect to facilities, initiating studies and obtaining Council direction with respect to the proposed twin pad arena, multi-use complex and the regional outdoor sports venue are significant milestones for the implementation of the Master Plan.

With respect to shoreline strategies, the number of special events and permits issued for the use and activities at the municipal parks would be an important indicator of success in creating recreation and tourist destinations. Investments in energy and water conservation at pools and arenas could be measured by reductions in electrical and heating costs as well as reduced water usage to evaluate the benefits of these initiatives.

Recommendation 7-3: Evaluation Standards

That the Community Services Division continue to collect data on the utilization rates of all recreation facilities, outdoor playing fields, sports registrations and related data.

That the Municipality conduct a community survey for Parks and Recreation to evaluate public use and satisfaction with parks facilities and programs at the 5 and 10 year anniversary dates of the Master Plan.

7.7 Master Plan Review

Ongoing review and updates will be needed to maintain the Parks and Recreation Master Plan relevant and focussed for all constituents. Annual internal reviews are required as part of the Division's mandate. Significant updates are required at the five and ten year anniversary where the Municipality would undertake consolidation of initiatives and programs and a public consultation process.

Recommendation 7-4: Master Plan Review

That Chatham-Kent undertake the following Parks and Recreation Master Plan review process:

- Annual reviews on projected completion dates and other points, with a resetting of dates and related tasks, plus updating of potential projects and policy considerations as they evolve within the operating environment;
- A five-year review which would include a substantial updating and integration of projects in conjunction with the five year increments of the Development Charges By-law starting in 2015. This would allow for consolidation of any previous changes and clarification of capital funding available from the Development Charges By-law for the next five year period;
- A ten year anniversary review which would likely involve broader public consultation and related activities to position the Master Plan for its second ten year planning term, reflecting new and emerging priorities, directions and trends of the next decade.



APPENDIX I

Strategic Themes

1.0 STRATEGIC THEMES

The following section summarizes the key observations and conclusions that emerged from the technical review, consultation and research activities related to the preparation of the Situational Analysis Report. This section also consolidates the material into a set of trends and strategies that provide an important basis for the preparation of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

1.1 Community Development Profile and Demographics

Section 2, Community Development Profile and Demographics of the Situational Analysis provides important community context for the Master Plan. It identifies the major urban and municipality centres and describes the physical scale and characteristics of the community. Furthermore this section identifies population change and characteristics. Finally it provides direction as to future growth in the communities and opportunities for investment in parks and recreation services and facilities. The following points highlight the major conclusions of this section. A detailed analysis can be found in the Situational Analysis Report.

- Chatham-Kent is a single tier municipality with a large geographical area creating significant distances between urban service centres.

- Historically there is a strong recreation service connections between Chatham-Kent and the neighbouring communities to the west, east and north.

- Chatham is located generally at the centre of the Municipality and Wallaceburg is located to the northwest. They are the predominant urban centres.

- The Official Plan identifies the primary urban centres as Chatham, Wallaceburg, Blenheim, Tilbury, Ridgetown, Dresden and Wheatley and as the centres for future urban growth.

- The overall projected increase in population from 2006 to 2031is 5200 persons representing a 4.6% increase over the twenty-five year period (0.18% annually). This is a low population growth rate and is not expected to create significant increased demand for facilities, programs or parkland.

- The age cohort projections for 2031 show an increase in proportion in the older age cohorts above 50 years of age. There will be continued demand for passive recreation activities catering to older demographics and likely greater interest in walking, exercise programming and passive recreation activities.

- The age cohort projections show generally stable populations in the 19 and under age categories supporting the continued investment in active recreation facilities, such as sport fields, arenas and related sport facilities.

- In comparison to Ontario as a whole, Chatham-Kent has a substantially smaller proportion of recent immigrants and visible minorities.

- The median income for persons in the municipality is slightly less than the Provincial average and may indicate that programming could be more price sensitive.

- The number of households with children was slightly less than the Provincial average which may reduce the need for child and youth related needs. The number of lone parent families at 15% is consistent with the proportion of lone parent families in the Province.

- The majority of new development and housing stock in the municipality is low density, single dwelling units.

1.2 Parks and Recreation Service Delivery

The following points highlight the existing parks and recreation service delivery model in Chatham-Kent. This information provides baseline context on the role and responsibilities of the Division, community groups and the various forms of service delivery. This section also describes existing recreation agreements, the municipality's funding model and an overview of the programming in Chatham-Kent. Details of parks and recreations service delivery are found in Section 4 of the Situational Analysis Report.

- There are twenty-six agreements with various sports groups, organizations and companies. They include three joint use agreements, eight facility use agreements with one or more organizations and six exclusive use agreements for parklands in the municipality.

- The net annual investment by the Municipality has ranged from $2.4 million in 2006 to nearly $3.5 million in 2009. This is an increase of 43.9% in net expenditures. The per capita investment has grown from $22.16 per resident to $31.67 over the same period. This represents an increase in per capita costs of 42.9% based on limited population growth over the review period.

- There are four functional areas that collectively constitute over 90% of the net municipal investment requirements in this service area. These are aquatics, which ranged from 21% to 27% per year of the net operating deficits; programs, which ranged from 18% to 20% of the deficits; parks maintenance which ranged from 18% to 25% of the net deficits; and horticulture, which ranged from 16% to 21% of the operating deficits. All functional areas within the budget operate on a net deficit basis except for concessions.

- Horticulture and parks have limited opportunities for revenue generation as they are typically more of a public good, while aquatics and programs are typically larger revenue generating areas, though aquatics in most municipalities requires significant public funding support. There is no access to community centres for programming.

- The Municipality offers a range of programming over summer, fall, winter and spring seasons. The predominant program is aquatics, representing 107 or 55.7% of total programming. The other two types include sports / fitness and recreation with 16.7% in sports and 27.6% in recreation.

- Programming is focused on pre-school and children's programming representing over 65% of all programming in the Municipality.

- The focus of the programs is in the urban area of Chatham, with 73 or 38% of all programs, while South Kent with the Gable Reese Pool has 72 programs or 37% of total programs.

- The service delivery model is based on the municipality providing facilities and maintenance and some direct program delivery. Community volunteers deliver many children and youth sport programs. The municipality focuses resources on higher capital and operating cost elements involving land and facilities.

1.3 Parks and Facilities Resources and Utilization

The following points identify the key existing parks and facilities available to the Division, community organizations and the public in Chatham-Kent. These parkland and facility venues create the opportunities for recreation programs. An important part of this section, are the utilization rates, measured in participants, hours or population to identify the need for new parks or facilities. This section also includes an energy efficiency study completed for both the arena and pools in the Municipality. A detailed description is found in Section 3 of the Situational Analysis.

- Chatham-Kent has 370.7 hectares of municipal parkland at 195 park locations. This provides a rate of 3.43 hectares of parkland per 1000 residents. This rate compares favourably to other similar sized municipalities in Ontario.

- Significant natural heritage areas owned by federal and provincial governments and the Conservation Authority comprise 2,298 hectares of land in the Lake St. Clair Marsh Lands, Wheatley Provincial Park and Rondeau Provincial Park and a number of Conversation Authority venues. These contribute significant passive open space opportunities for the community.

- The municipality operates ten arenas with varying sizes, capacity and amenities. The provisioning standard of one arena per 10,800 persons is at the high end of provisioning standards for Ontario.

- The Municipality has two indoor pools at Wallaceburg and Blenheim, plus the indoor YMCA Pool in Chatham. The provisioning of one indoor per 36,000 residents is at the high end of the provisioning standards across the Province.

- The Municipality has seven outdoor pools and two splash pads providing servicing to the community.

- There are seventy baseball diamonds of which 40% have lights. There is a concentration of baseball facilities with twenty-one diamonds in Chatham with more than half dedicated to minor baseball.

- There are a total of thirty-two soccer fields in the Municipality with a concentration of sixteen fields in Chatham. Five pitches are dedicated to Chatham Minor Soccer.

- There are twenty-five tennis courts of which eight are lit courts. The tennis courts are concentrated in Chatham.

- The total number of arena hours used has been increasing since 2001 by 16.8%. The highest increase in use rate was at the Tilbury Arena at 38.5%, while small decreases were shown at the Thames Campus and William Erickson Arenas.

- The arena ice utilization rate from 2001 to 2005 averaged from 76.1 to 79.5% of all available hours. Prime time use rates in 2006 and 2007 ranged from 71% to 100 % with an average just over 90%. Based on these standards, Chatham-Kent has sufficient ice capacity to reasonably serve existing and some future ice needs.

- Gable Reese Rotary Pool in Blenheim has had a 4.8% increase in the total number of bathers since 2006. Wallaceburg Sydenham Pool has had a decrease in the total number of users of 28.8% since 2006.

- The total number of bathers at outdoor pools has decreased by 33.6% from 2006 to 2008 with an average of 82 bathers per day in 2008.

- The utilization profile for pools is as follows: the outdoor pools was 97% public swim; Wallaceburg Pool 76.4% public swim; Gable Reese Pool had a more balanced utilization profile with 53% public swim, 17% fitness, 15% lane swims, 10% lessons and 5% club swims.

- Summer day camp participation rates from 2005 and 2008 showed a decrease of 10.5%. Summer playground participation rates dropped 33.5% from 2005 to 2008, representing 301 participants. There is considerable variability in participation rates from year to year at various locations.

- The Kinsmen Auditorium and multipurpose rooms had decreases in utilization from 2006 to 2007 of 13.5%, representing 368 hours. Multipurpose room facility use increased from 2006 to 2007 by 43.4% representing over 7800 hours. Meeting room facility use increased by 24.9% from 2006 to 2007, representing over 1500 hours increase.

- The Arena Energy Efficiency Study was completed in the spring 2009 identifying best practices for arenas, low cost energy saving measures and high cost measures to improve efficiencies and cost savings at these facilities. Recommendations included best practices, reducing heat loss, adding electronic controls and timers to reduce energy consumption and capital investments in heat recovery equipment and higher efficiency motors.

- The Pools Energy Efficiency Study in the spring of 2009 undertook a review and inspection of all indoor and outdoor pools. Recommendations referenced best practices to reduce energy consumption at pools and recommended energy efficiency measures including the installation of solar water heating.

1.4 Community Consultation

Community consultation is an important part of the parks and recreation Master Plan process. The consultants and staff undertook a number of public meetings, interviews, focus groups and a random public survey to identify the community's existing recreational activities, the facilities they used, the satisfaction with the use of these facilities and future expectations. These comments are summarized in the following bullets and detailed descriptions can be found in Section 5 of the Situational Analysis Report.

- The overall satisfaction with parks, facilities and programs is mixed with just over half giving parks good or excellent scores. Recreation programs and facilities had equal numbers of good and poor ratings.

- Those who lived in Chatham were more likely to give low scores than the surrounding communities. Participation rates at arenas is highest, 25% followed by soccer fields and public pools at 20% and baseball fields at 14%. Activity rates for children were highest in the South and East Wards and generally lowest in the Chatham ward.

- The key findings with respect to pools and splash pads indicated the Mitchell's Bay splash pad had received the highest use at 21% followed by Gable Rees Rotary Pool and the Sydenham Pool. Many pools had relatively low use at 4% or less. One in four respondents said they would like to use a new splash pad if it were built in Chatham.

- With respect to communications, some 37% were not aware of the Chatham-Kent Recreation Guide which is the primary source of registration and information for programming.

- Results of the community survey indicated significant decrease in participation rates of 40% and 61% if fees were increased 7% and 12% respectively.

- The two key investment strategies identified were to invest more to keep current facilities up-to-date and secondly, greater investment in trails for walking and cycling.

2.0 Trends and Strategies

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent parks and recreation programming and services occur within a wider context of the region and Ontario. The following points highlight trends in parks and recreation services as well as evolving strategies across Ontario to deliver these services. Chatham-Kent has the opportunity to benefit from successful programming parks and facilities initiatives elsewhere in the province. These trends and strategies identify opportunities for the

Chatham-Kent Parks and Recreation Master Plan to shift the emphasis on parks services. The following points highlight the key trends and strategies and can be found in Section 6 of the Situational Analysis Report.

- Key trends related to sports activities, which are one of the traditional bases of parks and recreation services delivery, were as follows:
    - Increased participation of females in sports, particularly related to girl's and women's adult hockey, soccer and other areas;
    - Expected total growth in soccer at both the youth and adult levels;
    - Increased interest in extreme sports and specialized sports, such as year-round outdoor ball hockey, more skateboarding facilities, etc.;
    - Some declines in baseball, racquet sports and related activities;
    - Potential interest in culturally-related activities, such as cricket.
- Ever increasing expectations amongst users relative to facility quality, driven both by consumer and fee expectations, as well as what is being developed in other communities. This has significant capital and operating cost implications.
- The increasing merger of sport and cultural tourism with parks and recreation services facilities and operations as one of the key rationales and points of investment.
- An increasing interest in the environment and the conservation of key environmental features, such as water / wetlands, woodlots, ravines, etc., which often brings additional lands and management responsibilities to a municipality.
- An increasing emphasis on energy efficient facility and venue designs, using LEED Standards as a baseline.
- The growing importance and value for arts, culture and heritage as part of a healthy and creative municipality and in support of changing resident values and population characteristics.
- The increasing integration of community, health, education, social and policy services relative to holistic servicing strategies, often led by health units and both public and community-based social service providers.
- The increasing sophistication, emphasis on and impact of user fees and rental rates development relative to how they are prepared, their fairness and equity, transparency; and the ability to develop them in a meaningful and consistent way.
- The growth in market segmentation and services differentiation between recreational use, higher skill interests and other types of uses that define different market niches and varying types of expectations and levels of needs amongst participants.
- The increasing role of not-for-profit, private sector and community organizations in the delivery of leisure services and the potentially changing role of municipalities with a greater emphases on facilitation and community development.
- The growing use of partnerships, joint ventures and community engagement as a basis to facilitate services development and delivery.

- The increasing use of a wider array of capital and operating financial sources to support services delivery, including corporate sponsorships, community fundraising, senior government grants, etc.

- The increasing emphasis on the evaluation of services delivery to ensure that the right services are being delivered within the appropriate frameworks and with the desired outcomes.

- The increasing emphasis on multi-use facilities and the potential to use more of the community's facilities in terms of institutions, schools, clubs / associations, etc.

- The growing emphasis to balance the need for the rehabilitation of aging facilities in conjunction with the development of new facilities, along with the importance of ensuring adequate resourcing for ongoing capital facility maintenance, renewal and serviceability.

- An aging population profile is evolving, but there will not necessarily be an absolute decline in youth numbers. Therefore, a need to have a more balanced services delivery focus that moves beyond a primary youth orientation focus.

- The ability to address, both through the principle of inclusiveness and participation, the needs and impacts of a changing ethno cultural mix within the population. A mix that will have other types of interests based on their traditions and experiences, as well as will want, in some areas, to adapt to Canadian leisure activities. Education, communications, engagement and focused contact with these communities represent important strategy considerations.

APPENDIX II

Recommended Future Parks and Recreation Studies

Appendix II
Action and Implementation: Recommended Future Parks and Recreation Studies

Priority and Year	Recommendation	Report / Study	Estimated Cost 2010 Dollars
A – 2010	4-18	Arenas / Multi-Use Centre Business Plan and Site Selection	$40,000
B – 2013 – 16	3-8	Sport Tourism Strategy	$50,000 - $75,000
B – 2013 – 16	3-10	Community-based Governance and Management of Municipal Facilities	$30,000
B – 2013 – 16	3-15 and 3-16	User Fee Policy and Development Process	$25,000
B – 2014	4-23	Chatham Community Complex Redevelopment Master Plan	$50,000
B – 2013	5-7	Clearville Park Management Board Implementation	$25,000
B – 2015	7-4	Master Plan Review	$25,000
C – 2020	7-4	Master Plan Review	$30,000