



THE MUNICIPALITY OF
LAMBTON SHORES

October 2018





The Municipality of Lambton Shores

Recreation & Leisure Services Master Plan Update

**Adopted by Municipality of Lambton Shores Council
on October 2, 2018**

Prepared by:



Acknowledgements

Municipality of Lambton Shores Council

Mayor Bill Weber	Councillor Ronn E. Dodge, Ward 4
Deputy Mayor Doug Cook	Councillor Rick Goodhand, Ward 5
Councillor Dave Maguire, Ward 1	Councillor James Finlay, Ward 6
Councillor Dan Sageman, Ward 2	Councillor Jeff Wilcox, Ward 7
Councillor Gerry Rupke, Ward 3	

Thank you to all that have participated in this Recreation & Leisure Services Master Plan Update. We appreciate the time and input provided by our partners, stakeholder groups and residents who participated in the RLSMP Update's open houses, survey and interviews. A special thanks is extended to members of the Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee and Municipality of Lambton Shores Staff that provided oversight and feedback throughout the RLSMP Update process. The collective efforts of all involved has resulted in a document that will provide guidance to the Municipality of Lambton Shores as it plans and delivers parks, recreation and cultural services over the next 10 years and beyond.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	i
The Master Plan's Strategic Framework	1
Purpose of the Update	2
A Vision and Mission for Recreation & Leisure in Lambton Shores	3
Methodology	4
Alignment with Key Documents	6
Master Plan Organization	7
How to Read the Master Plan's Actions	8
Planning Context: Research & Consultation	9
Community Profile	10
Overview of Key Trends	15
Consultations with the Community	22
Strategic Directions	34
1 Become a Leading-Edge Municipality	35
2 Support for Volunteers	40
3 Establishing Positive Relationships	44
4 Supporting Municipal Staff	48
5 Success in Municipal Leadership & Community Development	53
6 Increasing Awareness of Local Resources & Opportunities	56
7 Facilitating a Range of Recreation & Leisure Services	59
8 Embracing Arts, Culture & Heritage	68
9 A Functional & Sustainable Parks System	74
Appendices	90

Appendices

Appendix A: Glossary of Terms

Appendix B: Background Documents Reviewed

Appendix C: Online Survey Tabulations

Appendix D: RLSMP Launch Event & Conference Notes

Appendix E: Recreation Facility Assessments

Executive Summary

The Municipality of Lambton Shores has been guided by the Recreation and Leisure Services Master Plan (RLSMP) since its approval by Municipal Council in 2011. The Municipality has now updated the RLSMP in response to changes in community demographics, trends, interests and preferences that have occurred since the RLSMP was first prepared.

This 2018 RLSMP Update reviews the assessments and recommendations from 2011, factoring new research and input received through a new community engagement program. The RLSMP Update provides direction in planning facilities, programs and services pertaining to recreation, parks, and culture services. In doing so, the Municipality will be in a position to respond to residents' needs, both now and for the next ten years.

The vision for recreation and leisure services reflects consistent themes that guided the previous RLSMP. For the updated RLSMP, the following vision statement has been developed:

Lambton Shores' natural beauty and agricultural heritage lead us to
ACTIVE, HEALTHY, CULTURALLY VIBRANT and COMMUNITY-DRIVEN lifestyles.

The Master Plan contains 50 recommendations spanning municipal delivery of parks, recreation and culture facilities and services. A key tenet of the Master Plan is continuing to support a community development model that provides facilities and services in collaboration with local agencies, institutions, not-for-profit and private sector partners, and community volunteers.

The following synopsis summarizes the top ten priorities for the Municipality of Lambton Shores to implement in the coming years (not presented in any particular order of priority or timing).

1. The Municipality should continue to **be a facilitator of recreation and leisure opportunities** through the provision of space and other appropriate supports to the community sector.
2. Engage the Lambton Kent District School Board (LKDSB) as **part of the planning process for the new Kindergarten to Grade 12 school in Forest**. Discussions should involve how the Municipality can facilitate adequate and affordable public access to shared spaces such as gymnasiums, theatre/auditorium, youth centre, program rooms and/or sports fields possibly through negotiated financial or operating agreements with the LKDSB.
3. As part of the Grand Bend Community Health Centre's proposed facility expansion plans, **collaborate with the CHC** to explore ways in which the Municipality can facilitate this development to be a multi-service community hub.
4. Develop **annual communications plans** that address key messages to target audiences (e.g. families, youth, seniors, etc.) and the communication media best suited to do so (e.g. Community Guide, newsletters, the municipal website, social media and word of mouth).
5. Create a summer student position (paid or volunteer) to assist the Community Services Department with content creation and information sharing **using modern digital and print media platforms**.
6. Undertake a **Trails Master Plan** (or Active Transportation Master Plan) that guides the ongoing development of the on-road and off-road trails system in Lambton Shores. Consideration should be given to creating connections with County/Provincial trail networks as well as enhancing connectivity along waterfront trail routes.

7. Construct the following **outdoor recreation facilities** in the following settlement areas:
 - a. **Port Franks:** a spray pad, preferably located at the Port Franks Community Centre (developed with a funding/fundraising partner).
 - b. **Thedford:** an X-Park/skateboard park (potentially at the Thedford Village Green and contingent upon securing a funding/fundraising partner) and basketball court.
 - c. **Forest:** a basketball court (location to be determined).
 - d. **Ipperwash:** a playground structure (location to be determined).
8. Create an **Arts, Culture & Heritage Committee** to provide citizen-based guidance on local matters pertaining to this sector in Lambton Shores.
9. Convene regular roundtable meetings (at minimum once each year) with the arts and culture sector to identify issues and gaps, discuss strategies and solutions, and explore other matters with a view of **strengthening relationships and coordination of the arts and cultural offerings** in the Municipality of Lambton Shores.
10. Develop a **Public Art Policy** that outlines the benefits of public art, a process through which public art is selected, and the importance of recognizing local artists.



The Master Plan's Strategic Framework

Purpose of the Update

The Municipality of Lambton Shores has been guided by the Recreation and Leisure Services Master Plan (RLSMP) since its approval by Municipal Council in 2011. In December 2017, the Municipality initiated an update to the RLSMP in response to a number of changes in community demographics, trends, interests and preferences that have occurred since the plan was first prepared.

The 2018 RLSMP Update reviews the assessments and recommendations from 2011 through a current lens, factoring new research and input received through a renewed community engagement programme. The purpose of the RLSMP Update is to provide direction in planning facilities, programs and services pertaining to recreation, parks, and culture services. In doing so, the Municipality will be in a position to respond to residents' needs, both now and for the next ten years.

The Vision for Recreation & Leisure Services in Lambton Shores

**Lambton Shores' natural beauty and
agricultural heritage lead us to active,
healthy, culturally vibrant and
community-driven lifestyles.**



A Vision and Mission for Recreation & Leisure in Lambton Shores

The Vision and Mission Statements guide needs assessments and decision-making as they relate to the RLSMP Update. Both statements expressed in the 2011 RLSMP continue to be consistent with core themes expressed through the consultations with the public, Municipal staff and Council. The Vision Statement, however, has been adjusted to reflect a more contemporary style as input received through the consultations suggested a preference for a more concisely stated Vision.

Vision Statement

Lambton Shores' natural beauty and agricultural heritage lead us to active, healthy, culturally vibrant and community-driven lifestyles.

Mission Statement

Lambton Shores values its parks, recreation, arts, culture and heritage resources which enable our residents to lead healthy, enjoyable, and environmentally responsible lifestyles. Our Staff, in collaboration with community partners, will provide a wide range of recreation and leisure choices with the goal of keeping our residents active, engaged, inspired, cohesive, and proud.

Methodology

Scope

The RLSMP Update guides the Municipality of Lambton Shores' decision-making with respect to parks, recreation and culture opportunities. Spanning the years 2018 to 2028, the scope of the RLSMP Update encompasses programs, services and facilities related to indoor and outdoor recreation, parks and open spaces, and arts and culture.

The Municipality's Terms of Reference states that the process requires:

- Reviewing and updating recommendations from the 2011 RLSMP;
- Undertaking public consultation to identify emerging trends/issues; and
- Updating the timing and resource implications associated with implementing action items

Accordingly, the 2018 RLSMP Update involves a thorough review of the previous plan's recommendations and the assessments rationalizing them. The Update is carried out in light of the Municipality's progress in implementing actions from the 2011 RLSMP, the current planning context and input received through the community consultations this time around.

It bears noting that the comprehensive review has resulted in a number of recommendations being carried over from the initial plan. **As the current work constitutes an Update, the 2011 RLSMP and the assessments within it should continue to be referenced where such recommendations have been carried forward.** Only where assessments have substantially changed based on current factors have they been brought in to the RLSMP Update. It should also be noted that certain other recommendations having been modified or removed entirely as a result of current trends, best practices, municipal needs, and the ability of the Municipality to implement those recommendations.

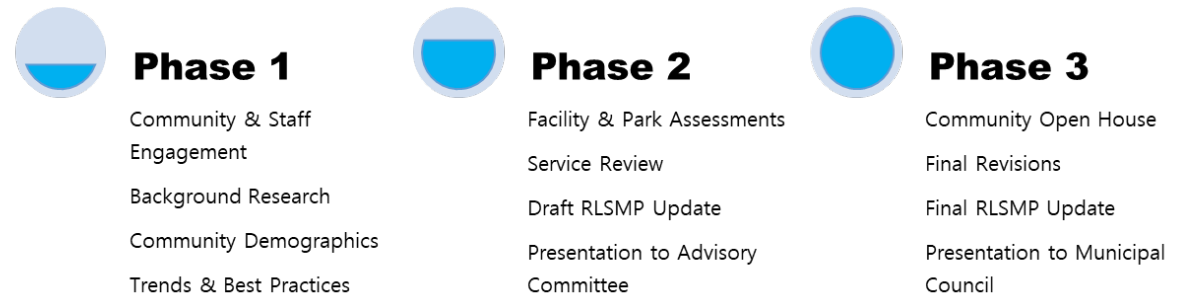
Planning Process

The RLSMP Update is based on several inputs and is prepared through three distinct phases (Figure 1). The first phase culminated into a Research and Consultation Report that summarized results from the community engagement program, the socio-demographic profile of Lambton Shores, and general trends in recreation and leisure. The Research and Consultation Report also provides an overview of Lambton Shores' parks, recreation, and culture services as they exist today.

The second Phase of the Master Plan Update process included facility and park assessments and a review of existing recreation and leisure service offerings. The third phase involves testing recommendations with the Steering Committee, Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee, Municipal Council, and the community prior to finalization of the RLSMP Update.

The Master Plan Update is intended to be consistent with other related plans, policies and procedures in place for the parks, recreation, and culture system unless an update or change in direction is required. It is not the intent of this Master Plan Update to duplicate methodologies or assessments of other long-range or location-specific planning documents but rather to ensure that synergistic elements are of prime consideration so that the Municipality continues to make decisions in an integrated and holistic manner.

Figure 1: The Master Planning Process



Alignment with Key Documents

A number of supporting background documents were reviewed to ensure that the RLSMP Update is consistent with, and takes into account, other key documents and their relevant findings. The RLSMP Update will have regard for other strategic documents at all levels of government including the Planning Act, Canadian Parks and Recreation Association's Framework for Recreation in Canada, and the Lambton Shores and Lambton County Official Plans. Several other background documents have been reviewed to establish the planning context associated with the Master Plan Update.

These documents are broad in scope and include information regarding population growth, land use patterns, facilities, programs, and other municipal elements. Information contained within these documents is used to provide baseline content for the RLSMP Update. A list of background documents that have been reviewed as a part of the planning process can be found in **Appendix B**.

Master Plan Organization

The Strategic Framework

Provides an overview of the Master Plan's purpose, strategic orientation, methodology and scope.

Planning Context

Demographic profile of Lambton Shores' population; key trends that influence recreation and leisure services; and a summary of the community consultation programme.

Strategic Directions

Provides assessments and actions pertaining to key topic areas in the delivery of municipal parks, recreation and leisure services.

How to Read the Master Plan's Actions

A table at the end of each Strategic Direction Section summarizes the recommendations from that section. Recommendations are designed to be implementable, actionable, and specific to Lambton Shores. The streams are categorized into the following: **Parks, Trails, Beach & Open Space Strategies (PTBO)**, **Culture & Recreation Facilities and Service Strategies (CRFS)**, **Financing, Management & Staff Strategies (FMS)**.

R #	Strategic Direction	Stream	Timing	Resource Implications
	Describes the action / recommendation to be undertaken	Aligns with one of the Master Plan's three primary streams (PTOB, CRFS or FMS)	Describes the anticipated timeframe of implementing the action	Describes the implications to the Municipality that are associated with implementation of the action (e.g. financial, staffing, etc.)

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

- Short-Term → 2019 to 2022
- Long-Term → 2026 to 2029
- Medium-Term → 2023 to 2025
- Ongoing → 2019 to 2029 (i.e. the entire planning period)

Timing assignments have been based upon present municipal conditions, however, they are subject to change as the Municipality implements the Master Plan. For example, timing may be adjusted based upon population growth being realized at a rate that is different than envisioned in the RLSMP Update, municipal budget availability or constraints, staffing resources, etc.

Resource implications are considered to be preliminary estimates. Costs associated with the actual implementation of recommendations will be determined through annual budgeting exercises, and are subject to further refinement through municipal business planning exercises. Any costs identified in the RLSMP Update are stated in 2018 dollars.



Planning Context: Research & Consultation

Community Profile

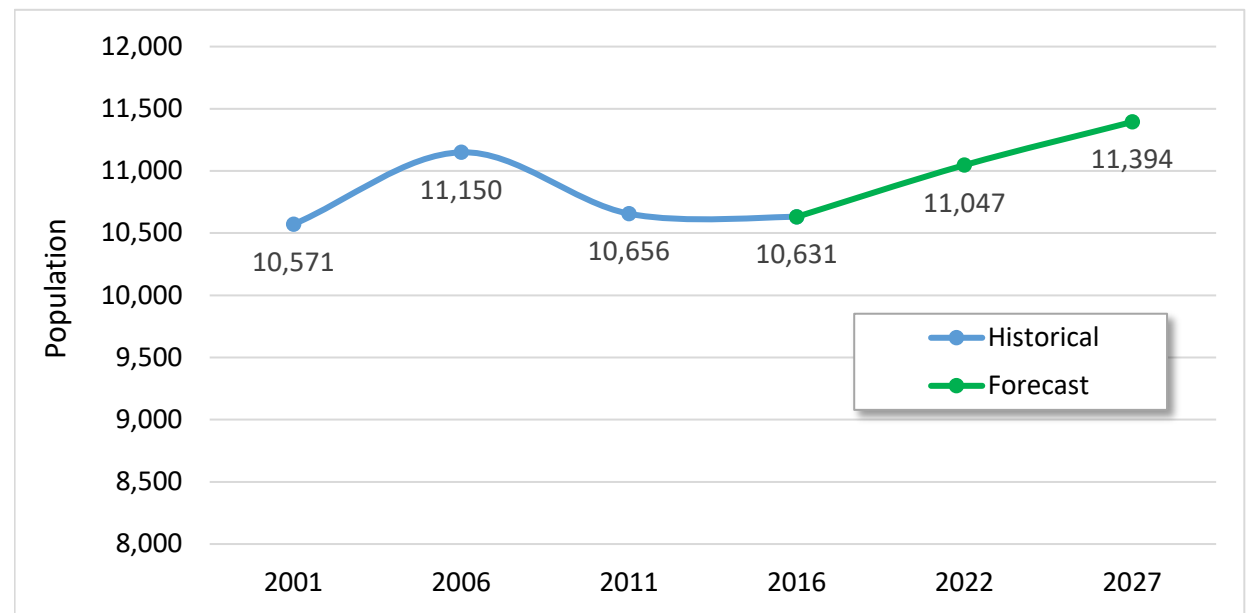
Historical & Forecasted Populations

According to the 2016 Census of Canada, Lambton Shores' population of 10,631 was very similar to the 2011 Census but represents a 5% decrease (approximately 500 persons) since the year 2006. Despite the decrease in the permanent resident population, Lambton Shores is experiencing growth in residential development. The total number of dwellings in the Municipality increased by 235 units over the last 10 years, amounting to a 3.5% rate of growth since 2006.

As the Municipality is home to a tremendous number of seasonal residents, the fair-weather influx of people is almost equal in size to full-time dwellers. While Census data does not include seasonal residents in population counts, these persons can have a significant impact on Lambton Shores' parks, recreation, and culture services.

Nevertheless, it bears noting that the 2016 Census population is substantially less (over 4,100 persons) than what was forecast at the time the 2011 RLSMP was prepared. Furthermore, the recently prepared Lambton Shores Development Charges Background Study forecasts the

Figure 2: Historical & Projected Population of Lambton Shores, 2021-2027

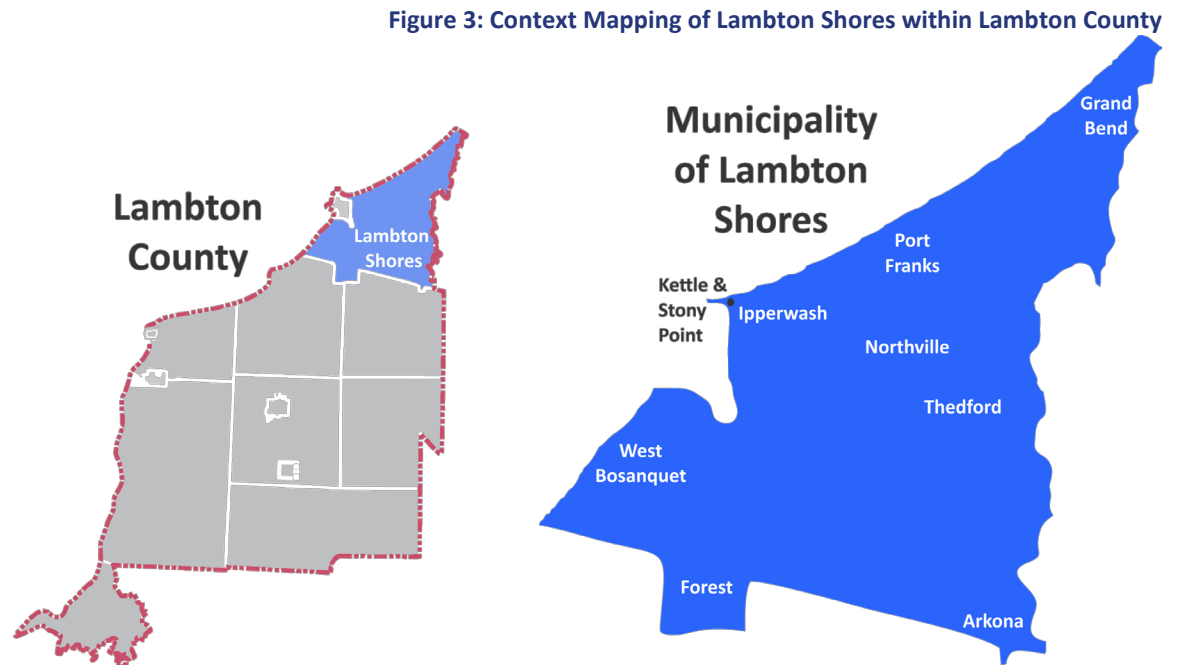


Note: Reflects permanent population

Source: Statistics Canada Census 2001-2016; Development Charges Background Study, 2017

population to grow 6.4% by the year 2027 to reach a total of 11,394 residents.¹ This means that the population growth forecast is also much less than what was envisioned during the preparation of the previous master plan; as such, population-related pressures were originally expected to be much greater when the 2011 RLSMP was developed. **The revised growth forecasts used for the RLSMP Update's comprehensive review thus results in growth-related needs being more conservative as compared to the 2011 RLSMP.**

Grand Bend and Forest are the two largest settlement areas in terms of population size, respectively accounting for 25% and 21% of the Municipality's total population. Of the urban communities in Lambton Shores (Arkona, Forest, Grand Bend, and Thedford), only Arkona and Grand Bend have experienced population growth in the last 10 years. Grand Bend, has experienced a population increase of 32.5% since 2006, an annual growth rate of 2.9%. This is contrasted by a steady population decline in Thedford of 8.9% over the last 10 years.



¹ Municipality of Lambton Shores. November 2017. Development Charges Background Study. Prepared by BM Ross.

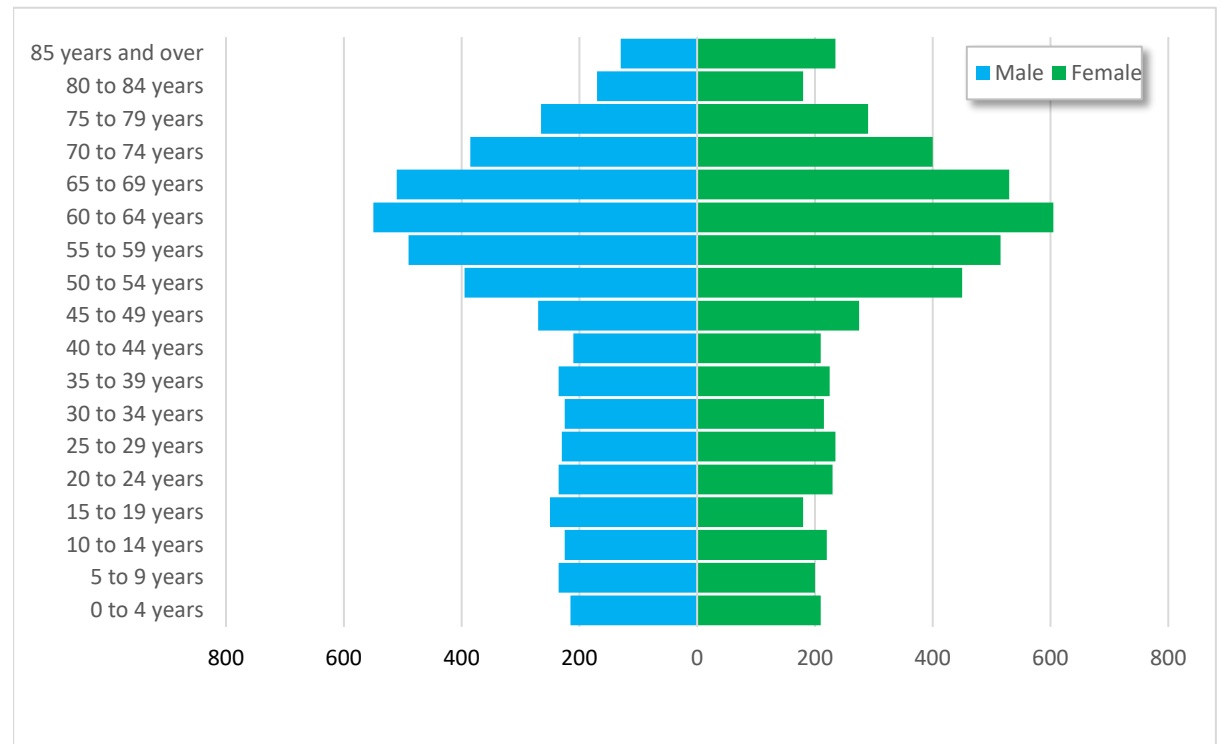
Age Composition

A substantial portion of population growth in Lambton Shores is expected to come as a result of retirees moving into the area, especially as seasonal residents. The population pyramid in Canada is shifting and Lambton Shores is an excellent example of the new distribution. The Baby Boomer population is moving into the older adult and senior age cohorts while young family sizes are much smaller than in the past. This has resulted in an inversion of the pyramid, as shown in Figure 4.

The median age of residents in the Municipality of Lambton Shores is 54.7 years, an increase of 2.3 years since 2011, and 5.3 years since 2006. This equates to an aging of just below 10% in the last decade. The

median age in Lambton Shores is significantly higher than both the County of Lambton (46.1 years) and the Province of Ontario (41.3 years). This demographic shift indicates that older adults and seniors are aging in place as well as moving into Lambton Shores and thus their unique parks, recreation, and cultural needs will need to be considered through this Master Plan Update.

Figure 4: Lambton Shores Population Pyramid, 2016



Source: Statistics Canada Census, 2016

Cultural Diversity

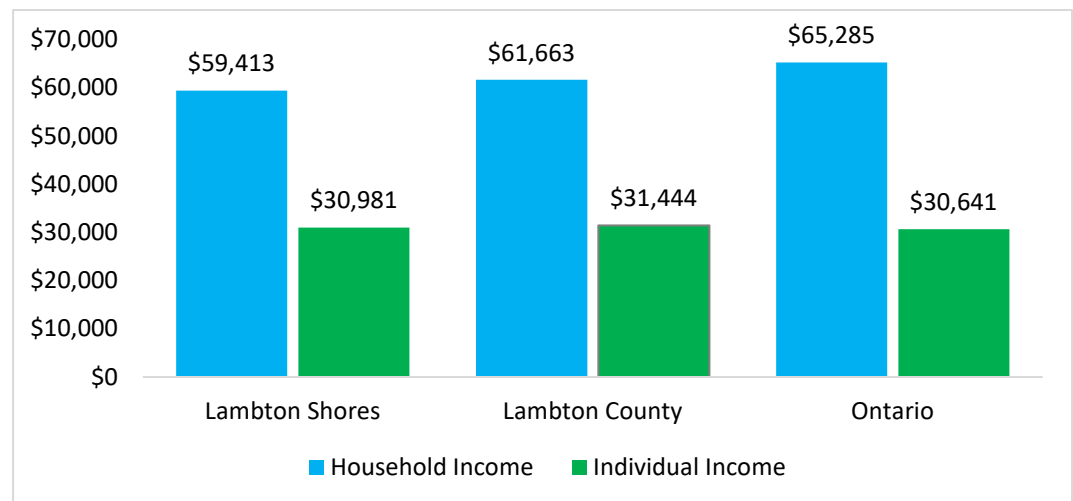
The national and provincial trend of increasing immigration is expected to ripple into Lambton Shores over time. One-in-ten Lambton Shores' residents are immigrants to Canada, nearly three-quarters of whom arrived before 1981. The proportion of immigrants in Lambton Shores is comparable to Lambton County (9.9%), but significantly lower than the province (29%). Although only 2% of Lambton Shores' population identifies as a visible minority, this is an increase from the 2006 rate (1%). As a result, it is reasonable to expect that Lambton Shores' population base is slowly becoming more culturally diversified and the population change may eventually require new or additional parks, recreation, and cultural facilities and programming over the longer term.

The percentage of residents who identify North American Aboriginal origins has grown to 3.9%, the same proportion as the province. The Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point First Nation community borders Lambton Shores and may generate some additional demand for local recreation and leisure services, over and above the programs and service offerings available through the First Nation.

Income & Education

According to research, participation in physical and social pursuits is often linked with higher levels of income and education. The median 2015 income² of

Figure 5: Median (after tax) income in Lambton Shores (household and individual)



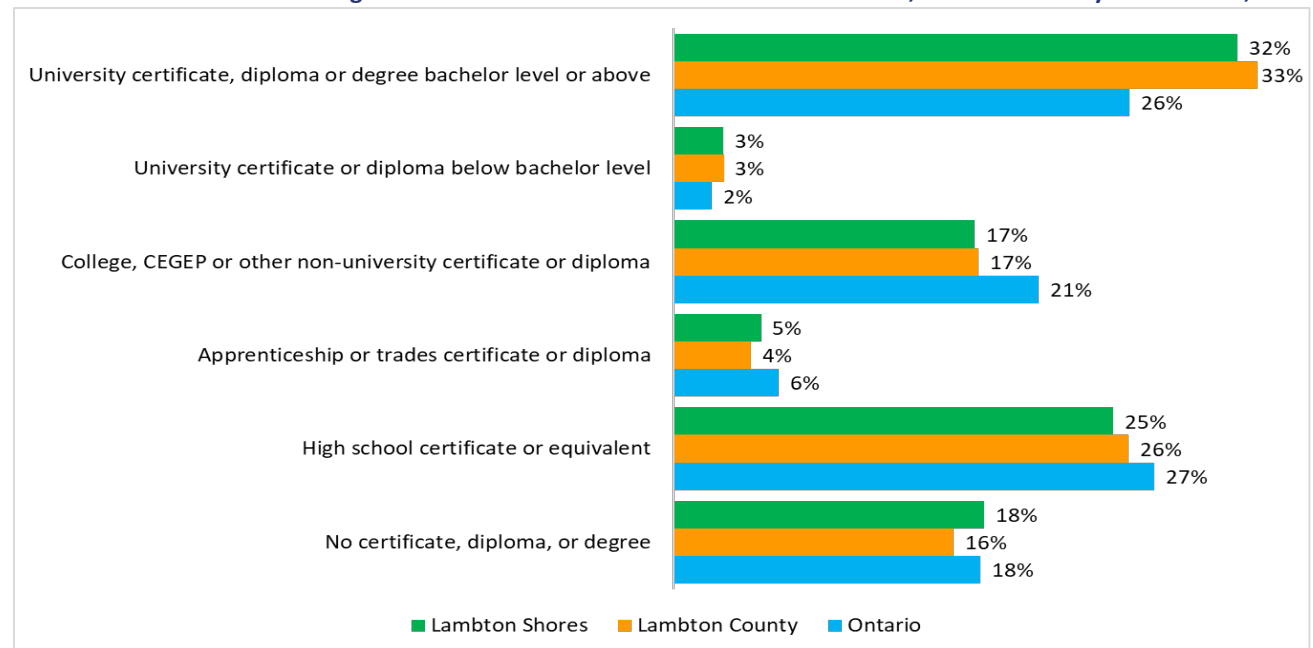
Source: Statistics Canada Census, 2016

² Note: all income amounts described above are in after-tax 2015 dollars

census individuals in Lambton Shores was \$30,981, comparable to both Lambton County and the Province of Ontario. Contrastingly, the median household income in the Municipality was \$59,413. This amount is slightly lower than the County (\$61,663) and significantly lower than the Province (\$65,285). This could suggest that leisure participation in Lambton Shores may be lower than average based solely on level of income and/or reflective of the aging population, including retirees.

The level of education attained can also impact participation rates, with many studies correlating increased participation levels with higher degrees of education. A review of 2016 Census data reveals that Lambton Shores is on par with educational attainment across the County and Province. Both Lambton Shores and Lambton County had similar rates of college, CEGEP, or other non-university diplomas (17% each), although this figure is slightly lower than the provincial attainment rate (21%). However, completion of a diploma or degree at bachelor level or above was higher in Lambton Shores (32%) than in the Province as a whole (26%). This data suggests that overall, the Municipality may expect participation rates to be generally in line with provincial averages on the sole basis of educational attainment.

Figure 6: Educational Attainment in Lambton Shores, Lambton County and Ontario, 2016



Source: Statistics Canada Census, 2016

Overview of Key Trends

Trends in Participation

Physical Inactivity

Canadians are no longer as active as they once were; the prevalence of physical inactivity can result from an individual's tendency to participate in sedentary activities such as using the internet, playing video games, and watching television. The Canadian Health Measures Survey (2014-2015) found that only 8% of children and youth ages 5 to 17 met the current guidelines for physical activity of at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity per day while 18% adults met their current guideline of 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity per week.

It was also found that activity levels tend to decrease with age. In an aging Municipality such as Lambton Shores, it is critical to provide opportunities for older adults and seniors to remain active for the duration of their lives.

Lack of Free Time

The busy lifestyle of many Canadians makes it difficult to find time for physical activity throughout the week. The Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute found that the proportion of Canadians (age 20 and older) who are considered active had increased slightly from 49% of individuals in 2003 to 53% in 2013.

Barriers to Participation

There are three commonly identified barriers to participation: information, economics, and geography. If a potential participant acquires all three, they should theoretically be able to access facilities, programs, and services. Access in this case describes the ability to:

- a) **Information:** knowing what facilities, programs and services are available;
- b) **Economics:** being able to afford participation (i.e., registration fees, equipment costs, time, etc.); and
- c) **Geography:** having transportation options, either by living in close proximity or the ability to travel to further destinations.

With the continued emergence of technology, information has the ability to provide a wealth of knowledge on available opportunities, but it also may be daunting and overwhelming for some. Many potential participants in recreation and leisure pursuits may be unaware of the multitude of facilities and programs available right in their community. It is critical that Municipalities as well as private service providers share information and promote programming so that all residents may benefit from the services available.

There are countless costs associated with participation in recreation and leisure. The economic considerations for a potential participant might include: registration fees, equipment costs, transportation costs, and time available to commit to structured programs, to name a few.

When determining which facilities and services will be offered by any municipality, geographic distribution is a key consideration. Many potential participants are limited by geography. The barriers to participation might include: proximity or distance to recreation and leisure facilities, limited transportation options, and/or ability to travel independently. To help mitigate the geographic barrier municipal service offerings should be distributed throughout the community as equitably as possible (a more difficult task in a large urban/rural community such as Lambton Shores).

Enablers of Participation

In response to these barriers, recreation and leisure services should be affordable, convenient, and unstructured to enable greater participation.

Multiple studies have found that higher household incomes are associated with increased participation in social and physical pursuits. Therefore, it is important for the municipal sector to find ways to provide affordable programs and services to those less economically fortunate. Some of the alternative programming options that are being used to alleviate the economic burden of participation include: subsidy programs, drop-in options (versus registered long-term commitments), and sponsored free programs.

Although limited free time and the desire to engage in restful activities may be appealing to some, there are strategies that the municipal sector can employ to encourage residents to participate in recreation and leisure at one's convenience. Activities that are unstructured and/or drop-in offer busy residents with convenient opportunities to participate. Additionally, multi-purpose facilities provide opportunities for all ages, interests, and abilities to meet their needs at one location.

Flexible, convenient and affordable program and facility options provide opportunities to further engage Lambton Shores' residents in parks, recreation, and cultural activities.

Trends in Service Delivery

Partnerships

Partnerships and strategic collaborations allow communities to efficiently and effectively utilize resources while benefitting from vast expertise found within the community, whether through private corporations, volunteers, other municipalities, or government partners and agencies.

One example of a successful partnership agreement in Lambton Shores is the YMCA operation of the Suncor Wellness Centre at the Shores Recreation Centre. Through this partnership, the municipality provides the capital funding and the facility space, while the YMCA operates the day-to-day activities and programming. The most successful partnerships are derived from common objectives and utilizing skills and strengths of each group in delivering access while sharing responsibilities and minimizing costs. Resource sharing helps to ensure the long-term viability of Municipal facilities and programs.

Volunteerism

The provision of parks, recreation and cultural programming relies heavily on volunteers in Lambton Shores (a common approach as in other municipalities). Volunteer groups support local teams and programs and are critical to the operation and delivery of high quality services. In the 2013 National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating, 44% of Canadians participated in some form of volunteer work, which was a decrease from 47% reported in 2010. Declining volunteerism is a consistent trend in many municipalities as many groups are struggling to retain volunteers.

Older adults are primarily the most active volunteer group, however, many in this age group will soon move on from volunteering (due to age, health, other interests, etc.) resulting in more pressures on park, recreation and cultural opportunities in Lambton Shores. Volunteer retention and recruitment strategies are integral components of continued programming success in the Municipality. Some example strategies used to recruit or support volunteers include keeping in contact through a database, hosting recruitment sessions, and ensuring volunteers are provided with adequate support and training. Engaging youth as volunteers and 'community leaders in training' is also important. In the future, it will be critical to engage youth in volunteer work so they can succeed older volunteer members. The requirement for secondary school students to attain a minimum of 40 hours of volunteering in order to graduate is a resource that can be further tapped in this

respect. One of the Action Objectives from Council's Strategic Plan and Vision is Support for Volunteers. Through this, Lambton Shores plans to clarify support for volunteers and organizations in the community.

Engaging Persons with Disabilities

In 2012, the Canadian Survey on Disability reported that approximately 3.8 million Canadians were living with a disability which equated to 13.7% of Canadians and 15.4% of Ontarians at the time. While the number of persons with disabilities in Lambton Shores has not been quantified, applying the provincial average to Lambton Shores' 2016 population suggests that approximately 1,637 residents could have some form of disability. Given these statistics and the aging of the population, it is important that Lambton Shores consider universal design and barrier-free features wherever possible to maintain inclusivity and remove barriers to participation.

Lambton Shores' Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2017-2019) outlines strategies to identify, remove, and prevent barriers throughout the Municipality. Lambton County employs a similar document, the 2014 Accessibility Plan, to ensure all municipalities in the area are accessible for all.

Trends in Facility Design

Multi-Functional Facilities

In an era of user convenience and cost recovery, municipalities are centralizing multiple facilities across fewer sites. There is a growing expectation that facilities contain something for everyone, rather than being designed for singular use. Co-location of complementary facility components often creates convenient, centralized activity centres and generates operating efficiencies. The provision of high-quality, multi-use and multi-generational facilities encourages physical and social engagement among all age groups, while also creating opportunities for sport or cultural tourism at a regional scale.

Within multi-functional facilities there is demand to offer a variety of programs and services requiring that facilities need to be able to adapt to changing or evolving program/activity needs. An example of this is

multiple sport lines painted on a gymnasium floor. This is a cost-effective and easy way to offer multiple programs without additional stand-alone facilities. The emerging sport of pickleball has been accommodated in many municipalities by repurposing (painting or taping lines) existing indoor gymnasiums or outdoor tennis courts.

Parks can also be designed in a manner that they become “outdoor community centres” offering a variety of recreation and cultural activities and spaces within a single setting. Similar to the previously discussed lack of free time and demand for drop-in activities, parks can provide residents with the space to freely program their time. Municipal parks are more often being used for social gatherings (i.e., picnics, BBQs) and unstructured free play.

Multi-purpose facilities help to address time constraints and mitigate pressures that keep people away from physical activity. However, one drawback of multi-purpose facilities is that they are inherently centralized compared to smaller neighbourhood facilities, increasing the need for more distant users to drive, rather than being able to bike or walk.

The population of Lambton Shores is aging and as a result there is demand for multi-generational facilities and programs. All of the multi-use options listed above create opportunities for residents of the Municipality and their families and/or household members with opportunities to travel to recreation destinations (community centres, gymnasiums) and be active together. Centres such as the Legacy Centre and The Shores are excellent municipal examples of multi-functional design.

Active Transportation

Active transportation is defined by the Public Health Agency of Canada as any form of human-powered transportation (i.e. walking, cycling, etc.) for utilitarian and leisure purposes. In addition to its apparent economic and environmental benefits (e.g., reduced motorized vehicle use, road congestion, and greenhouse gas

emissions, lower road maintenance costs, etc.), there are many other inherent benefits to active transportation, particularly with regards to human health. For example, it is effective in combating chronic diseases related to physical inactivity and obesity and has also been found to heighten community and social vibrancy by encouraging compact developments and more livable communities where people are more likely to have personal contact with each other.

Opportunities for active transportation are largely dependent on the proximity between residential areas and community destinations, as well as corridors that can be leveraged for active transportation purposes (e.g. bike lanes, walkways, recreational trails, etc.). Research has shown that residents in rural areas are less likely to use active transportation methods given the spatial distribution of destinations and the lack of supporting infrastructure (e.g. sidewalks), resulting in a greater reliance on automobiles. However, in Lambton Shores, many of the residents live in or near urban settlement areas, creating opportunities to enhance active transportation networks and connecting key destinations in Lambton Shores. It is also noted that the community survey and other consultations conducted for this Master Plan Update indicated a strong desire for additional municipal focus on active transportation such as trails, walkways, etc.

Consultations with the Community

This Section summarizes findings from community consultations undertaken to date as well as an overview of the Municipality's socio-demographic profile, including details regarding population growth trends that have implications on the provision of parks, recreation, and culture facilities, programs and services. In addition, this section contains a number of key trends that are occurring across the province and region that could influence the provision of parks, recreation and cultural opportunities in Lambton Shores.

Community Engagement

A number of tasks have been employed during the initial input phase of the RLSMP Update. The Consultant has conducted an extensive review of background research and community demographics, analysed existing supplies of recreational and culture resources, and carried out extensive consultation with local residents, user groups and representatives from the Municipality of Lambton Shores. Specifically, the consultation program has employed the following tasks:

- a) **Community Survey:** An online survey was available from January 18 to February 9, 2018 (530 responses).
- b) **RLSMP Launch Event and Conference:** A public launch event for the RSLMP Update was hosted on February 7, 2018, allowing residents to learn about the project and engage in plan development.
- c) **Interviews with Agency Partners:** A series of stakeholder interviews were conducted by the Consultant throughout January and February 2018. Representatives from various organizations, clubs, and agencies associated with parks, recreation and culture were invited to attend. These sessions provided an opportunity for key user groups to voice their concerns, share their experiences, and engage in discussion with like-minded organizations.

- d) Internal Consultation & Engagement:** A variety of interviews and meetings were undertaken with Municipal Council, Senior Management, and the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee to better understand Lambton Shores' existing parks, recreation and cultural programs and facilities and to help envision how the Recreation and Leisure Services Master Plan Update can evolve to continue to support them. These interactions enabled the Consultant to better understand local complexities and garner advice for best practices moving forward.
- e) Public Open House:** A public open house to present the Draft RSLMP Update was held on September 28, 2018, allowing residents to review the plan and provide their opinions prior to finalizing the document. The Draft RLSMP was also posted on the Municipality's website to allow written feedback from residents.

Each opportunity for input brings a unique perspective to the plan. Consultation analysis compares this feedback with other factors such as demographics, trends and participation levels that was utilized to arrive at recommendations. The results included herein represent the thoughts and opinions of those who were consulted and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Consultant and/or the Municipality of Lambton Shores.

Community Survey

The RLSMP Update included an online community survey to engage Lambton Shore's community members in the planning process and to better understand various expectations related to parks, recreation and culture in the Municipality. Web links were advertised using print and digital means in local municipal buildings, on the Municipal website (www.lambtonshores.ca/reports) as well as municipal social media platforms and word of mouth. The survey was active from January 18 to February 9, 2018, and gathered 530 responses in total.

This section summarizes key findings of the community survey and excludes 'Don't Know' and non-responses. To reference tabulated data, please refer to Appendix C. Given that this was a self-administered survey, the

sample of the Municipality's population is not random and, therefore, cannot be directly compared with the statistically significant survey that was undertaken through the 2011 RLSMP. As with other consultation tools, the survey findings should be factored within the context of other community input and assessment methodologies.

Participation in Parks, Recreation, and Culture Activities

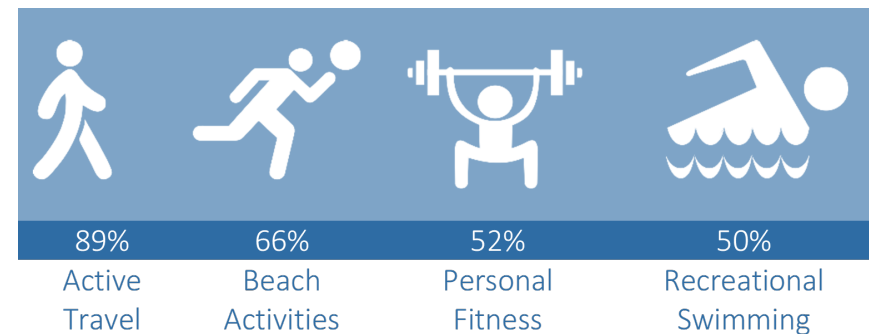
Respondents were asked which recreational or leisure activities they, or someone in their household, had participated in within the last 12 months; this may have included activities available in Lambton Shores, or elsewhere.

The most commonly listed activity was "active travel" such as walking or jogging (89%). The second-most popular pursuit was participation in beach activities (66%) followed by personal fitness (52%), and recreational swimming (50%). All of the top ten recreation and leisure activities were unstructured or self-scheduled; consistent with participation trends observed across the province.

Public beaches were the most commonly selected location for participation in leisure activities (57%), followed closely by public parks or facilities within the Municipality (51%). The third most commonly listed place to participate in leisure pursuits was at home (46%).

The Shores Recreation Centre in Forest was the municipal community centre visited most often by survey respondents, with 36% having used it in the last year. The Legacy Centre in Thedford was the second most popular community centre with 28%, while one-fifth (20%) visited the Port Franks Community Centre. Conversely, 29% of survey respondents did not visit a Lambton Shores community centre in the last 12 months.

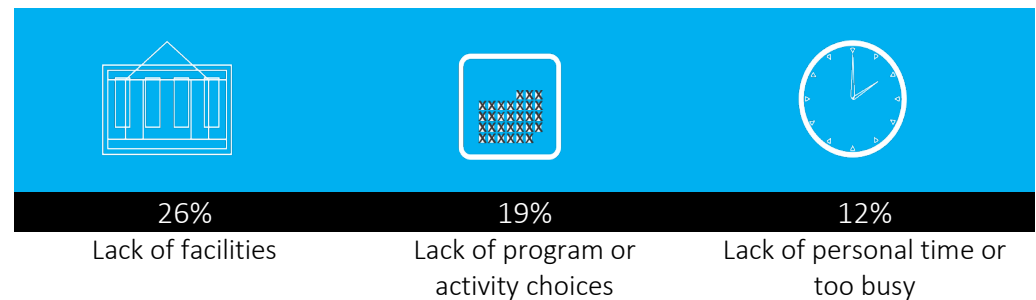
Figure 7: Most Popular Parks, Recreation, and Culture Activities, last 12 months



Two out of three respondents visited Grand Bend Beach making it the most visited municipal park. The second and third most commonly visited park locations were Grand Bend Marina (43%), and Lions Park (24%).

When asked if they were able to participate in recreation and leisure activities as often as they would like, the community was evenly divided. Half of the survey respondents said yes (51%) while the other half said no (49%). Among all respondents (n=489), the top barriers to participation were cited as being a lack of facilities (26%), a lack of program/activity choices (19%), and lack of time/too busy (12%).

Figure 8: Reasons Why People Cannot Participate in Recreation and Leisure Activities



The parks and recreation needs of households are not all being met within the Municipality of Lambton Shores. Over one third indicated that all (9%) or most (31%) of their needs were met within the community, while another one-third stated about half (32%), and nearly one-quarter (22%) said only some of their needs were met locally.

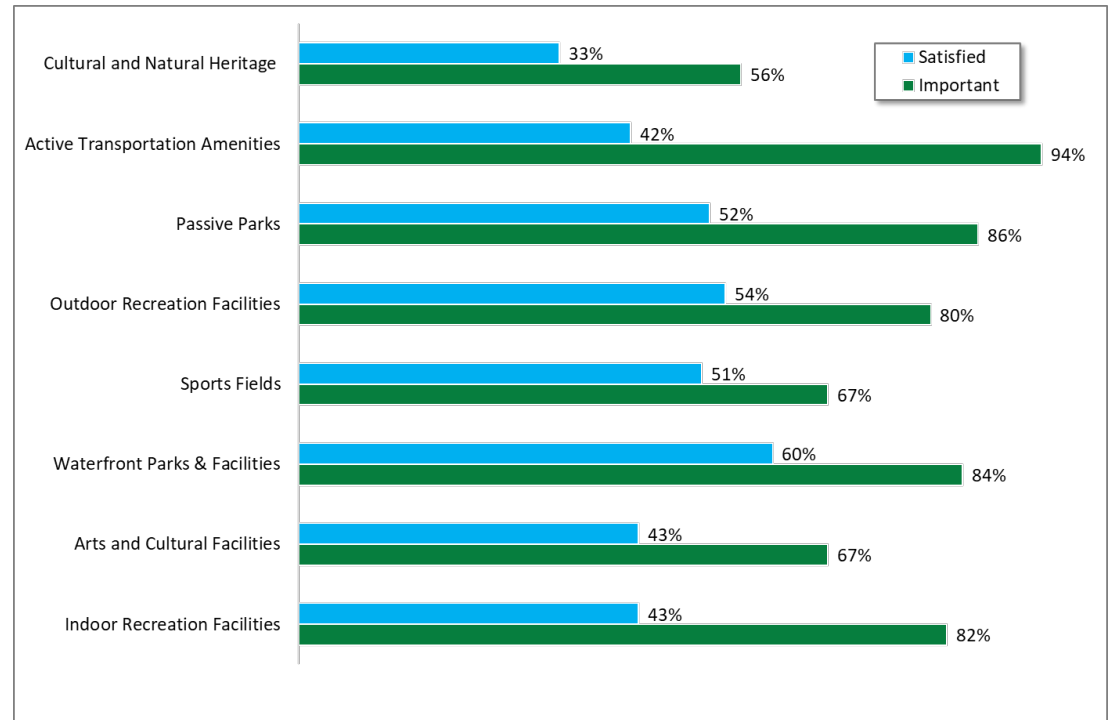
Survey respondents were asked to indicate which activities they chose to participate in outside the Municipality, and where they travelled to do so. The most visited destinations were other parts of Ontario (n=233) and London (n=128).

Half of survey respondents indicated that the park/facility/program is not available in Lambton Shores, and that was their primary reason for participating in another location. Approximately one-fifth (21%) indicated that they travelled elsewhere because they felt "connected" to the other community or used to live there, and another approximately one-fifth (21%) believe the quality of the park/facility/program elsewhere is superior.

Importance and Satisfaction

To gauge public interest in parks, recreation and culture, and to evaluate their level of satisfaction, places and spaces were grouped into eight major categories. Overall, respondents indicated high levels of importance for parks and recreation opportunities, with slightly less importance places on arts and culture. Levels of importance are significantly higher than levels of satisfaction across all eight categories, indicating that gaps in expectations exist (i.e., needs may not be met). The most significant discrepancy is the gap between importance of active transportation amenities (94%) and satisfaction with those amenities (42%), which suggests that this should be an area of focus for the Municipality.

Figure 9: Importance and Satisfaction with Various Components of the Recreation & Leisure System

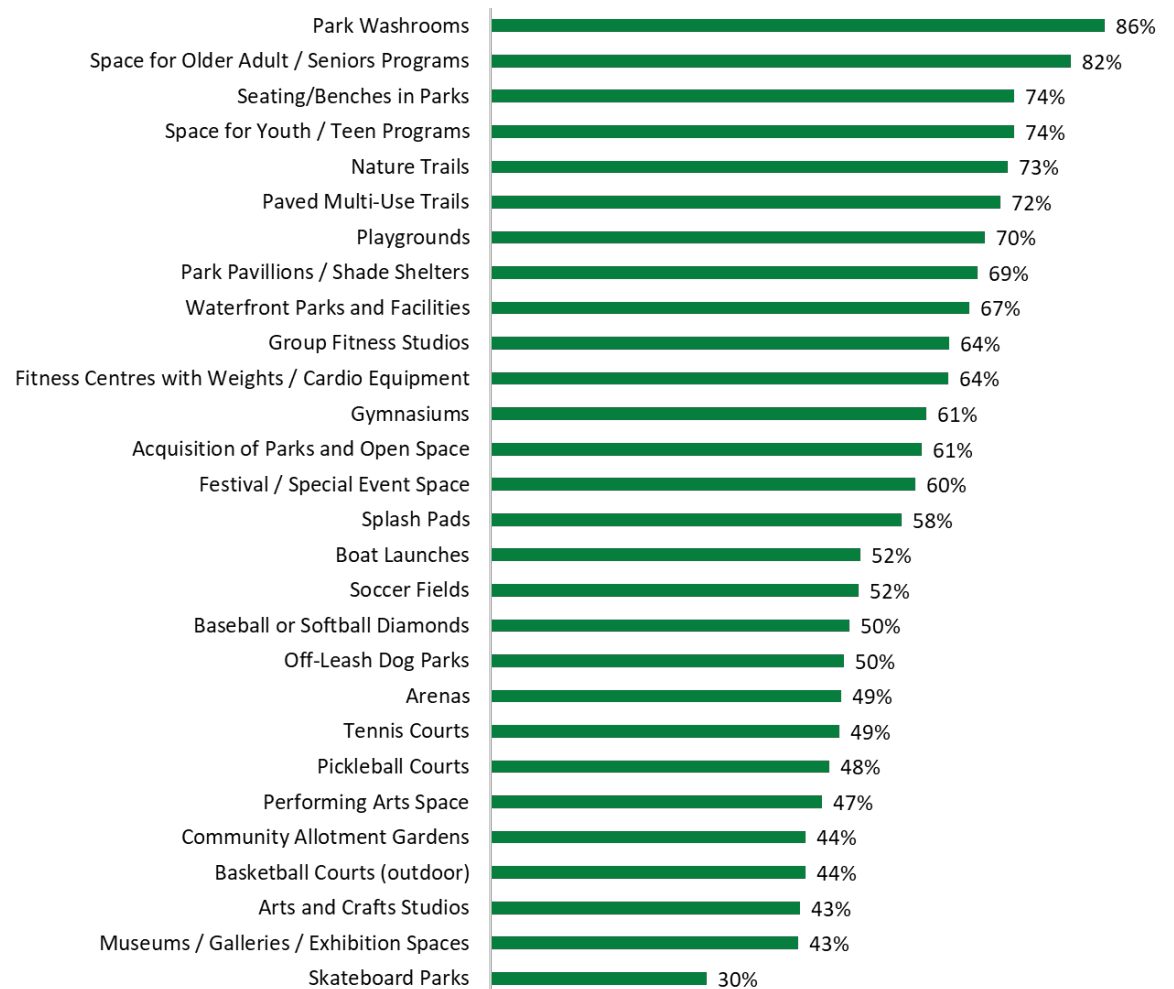


Investment & Improvement

Two-thirds of survey respondents indicated that there are parks and recreation facilities or activities that they would like to see offered, but do not currently exist in the Municipality. A broad range of recreation and leisure opportunities were requested by contributors in response to this. The top five responses were: fitness facility (n=92), swimming pool (n=89, includes both indoor and outdoor suggestions), indoor walking track (n=41), a community centre/hub (n=55, 32 of these requests specifically indicated Grand Bend), and additional ice pads (n=31, 17 indoor and 14 outdoor).

To assess the willingness of Lambton Shores' residents to invest in parks, recreation, and cultural amenities, the survey asked how strongly respondents support additional spending to improve the number and quality of existing facilities. Support features for parks were among the highest rated facilities such as park washrooms (86%), seating/benches in parks (74%), and park pavilions/shade shelters (69%).

Figure 10: Facilities for which Lambton Shores Residents Strongly Support Additional Spending



This speaks to a need to design parks to be more comfortable, and that respondents may be using parks for more passive activities. Other high-priority activities were age-specific spaces and programming for older adults/seniors (82%) as well as youth (74%). Similar to the importance and satisfaction question, active transportation remains high on the list as nature trails and paved multi-use trails received 73% and 72% support, respectively.

Other spaces that garnered high levels of support were facilities that can be used by people of all ages and abilities with a particular focus on health and wellness (e.g., group fitness studios, fitness centres with weights and cardio equipment, gymnasiums, etc.), while individual activities and specialized cultural facilities ranked lower (e.g., arts and crafts studios, museums/galleries/exhibition spaces, skateboarding). Consistent with trends in leisure participation, the majority of facilities that were supported for additional spending tended to be more casual, self-scheduled activities.

Agreement

Survey respondents reported high levels of agreement with statements regarding the priority (82%), geographic distribution (70%), and maintenance levels (67%) of parks and recreation facilities in Lambton Shores. Statements that received the lowest levels of agreement related to feeling informed about local recreation events and activities (37%) and arts and cultural events and activities (34%). A similarly low level of agreement was found in relation to community needs being met by Municipal parks and recreation services (33%). Survey respondents placed a much higher value or priority for parks and recreation facilities compared to arts and cultural facilities.

Two out of three residents in Lambton Shores feel they are not well-informed about local recreation and leisure events and activities. For the purpose of improved information sharing and ensuring that residents needs are being met, the survey also asked respondents to indicate the best way to connect with them. The Municipality of Lambton Shores website was the most common response (64%), followed closely by social media platforms (Facebook/Twitter 60%), and via email (53%). It is noteworthy that the Municipality is presently investigating ways to refresh its digital communication strategies.

Profile of Survey Respondents

The majority of survey respondents (77%) were permanent residents of Lambton Shores, while 14% were seasonal residents, 1% were unsure, and 7% were not residents of the Municipality. Seasonal resident and non-resident respondents most commonly identified as being from communities in southwestern Ontario.







Of survey respondents permanently residing in Lambton Shores, almost half (48%) live in Grand Bend, just below one-fifth were from Forest (18%), 10% from Port Franks, 7% from rural areas, 6% from Ipperwash, 4% from Arkona, 4% from Bosanquet, and 3% from Thedford.

Figure 11: Level of Agreement with Pre-Established Statements about Recreation and Leisure in Lambton Shores



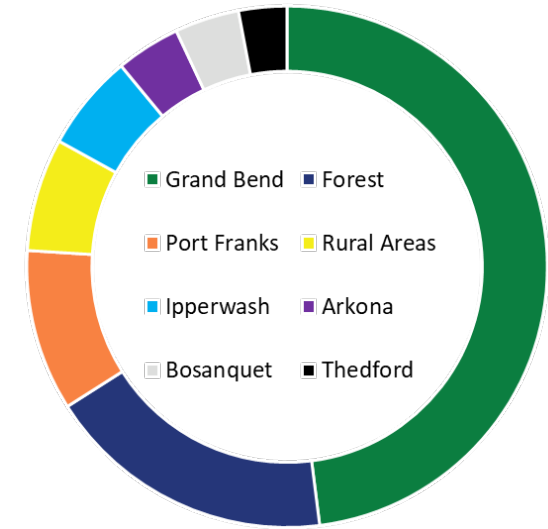
When compared to the 2016 Canadian Census information for the Municipality of Lambton Shores, households with young children and teenagers were more likely to fill out the survey, while seniors were under-represented. The average household size of survey respondents was 3.1, which is higher than the average Census household size in Lambton Shores of 2.2 persons. This is consistent with a survey response with a higher percentage of households with younger members (children and teenagers).

Table 1: Summary of Responding Households

Children 0-9	Youth 10-19	Adult 20-34	Mature Adult 35-54	Older Adult 55-69	Senior 70+
					
Responding household					
11%	13%	13%	22%	31%	9%
8%	8%	13%	21%	30%	19%
2016 Census					

The largest proportion of survey responses came from older adults between the ages of 56 to 65 years (35%) and those aged 66 to 75 years (23%). A considerable number of responses were also provided by adults aged 26 to 35 years (11%), 36 to 45 years (14%), and 46 to 55 years (14%). There were limited responses from young adults aged under 25 years (1%) and seniors aged 76 years or older (3%).

Figure 12: Distribution of Survey Respondents



Launch Event and Conference

To introduce the Master Plan Update and seek opinions from the general public and local stakeholder organizations, a Launch Event and Conference was held at the Legacy Centre in Thedford on February 7, 2018. The event was advertised through posters in municipal buildings, via email to stakeholders and community groups, on the Municipal website (www.lambtonshores.ca/reports) as well as municipal social media platforms and word of mouth.

The event was well attended with approximately 50 people participating. It opened with a presentation that provided an overview of the Master Plan Update's purpose, details of the project scope and process, and to review trends in recreation and leisure. Common themes heard during the discussions that followed are listed below, while a detailed summary is found in **Appendix D**.



- A need for more information sharing among the various organizations and agencies to provide details on recreation and leisure opportunities for residents and visitors.
- Demand for community hubs and space to be active indoors through all seasons, with particular focus in Grand Bend.
- The desire for an indoor walking track with specific requests from residents in Grand Bend.
- Continued focus on developing public-private partnerships to offer a variety of programming options and facility locations.
- Placing an importance on ensuring that Municipal facilities (e.g., parks, waterfront, green spaces, and built structures) are accessible, easy to walk to, and connected to the communities around them.

Interviews with Agency Partners

Semi-structured interviews were used to engage key agency partners and create awareness of the RLSMP Update. Interview sessions were held in January and February 2018 and engaged a variety of organizations to capture the multitude of uses and unique opportunities for the Municipality's recreation and leisure services. Agencies were made aware of the sessions via email invitation. Interviews were held in person at Lambton Shores' municipal office in Northville or over the phone, according to interviewee availability and preference.

The purpose of these interview sessions was to provide a forum for partner agencies to voice their needs and concerns, share experiences with like-minded individuals, and to discuss priorities and opportunities to be considered in the RLSMP Update. Each session was targeted to a particular audience based on service/organizational offerings and interests. The Consultant spoke to representatives from local conservation authorities, Pinery Provincial Park, the YMCA of Southwestern Ontario, and local Community Health Centres.

The following is a summary of the overall themes from agency partner discussions:

- Strong support for continued involvement in partnerships and interest in expanding programming and service options to better meet the needs of residents.
- Agency partners recognize that transportation is an issue for many users of their programs and hope that through continued partnership they will be able to expand programming to reach further into Lambton Shores' communities.
- Information sharing is critical to ensure that residents and visitors are informed and engaged in recreation and leisure services in the Municipality.
- Agency partners are interested in exploring more outreach type programs and services with the Municipality to meet the needs of residents (e.g., similar to the conservation authority's delivery of environmental education in local classrooms).

Municipal Council & Staff Engagement

In early 2018, at the start of the public engagement process, a series of internal consultation sessions were facilitated with members of Municipal Council and Staff. These interviews provided an opportunity to share issues and concerns, perceived opportunities, visions and priorities relating to recreation and leisure services in Lambton Shores. To ensure candid discussions, interviews were conducted with the understanding that the Consultant would internally consider all responses as part of developing the Master Plan Update, and that feedback provided by Council and Staff would be collectively presented by grouping topics into common themes to be integrated throughout the RLSMP Update process.

Draft Recreation and Leisure Services Master Plan Review

A public open house was hosted on Tuesday, August 28, 2018 in Thomas Hall at the Legacy Centre in Thedford. The open house enabled participants to review hard copies of the master plan, view display boards highlighting key components of the plan, and provide comment via sticky notes, comment sheets, and/or conversations with Municipal Council, staff and the consultants. Interested residents were able to submit comments on the draft Master Plan for two weeks following the open house. The following is a summary of feedback received at the open house and via email submissions:

- Strong support for the Community Health Centre's proposed development in Grand Bend.
- Desire for a municipal swimming pool facility in Lambton Shores. Some residents are seeking a place to participate in: swimming lessons, lane swimming, recreational swimming, and aquatic fitness.
- Demand for community space/programming in Ipperwash, should appropriate land become available.
- Continue to focus on connectivity of trails and cycling routes throughout Lambton Shores.

The draft RLSMP was available for download from the Lambton Shores website and was also provided to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee and Municipal staff for review prior to final submission to Council.



Strategic Directions

1 Become a Leading-Edge Municipality

The 2011 Master Plan advanced the objective for the Municipality to be a leading provider and facilitator of quality facilities and services by employing best practices, being innovative and creative, and embodying principles of inclusivity and fiscally responsibility. This objective remains relevant today and into the future, with many of the noted considerations having been reinforced through what was heard through community consultations and research conducted through this Update.

The RLSMP Update re-visits the primary points of emphasis associated with Strategic Direction #1. With maturation of the Community Services Department, certain elements of the 2011 Master Plan have now become engrained as part of the organizational culture. As such, the RLSMP Update condenses the Strategic Direction to be “Leading-Edge” into the following themes.

- The Role of the Municipality in Delivering Leisure Services
- Leadership, Innovation and Effectiveness
- Regular Strategic Planning

The Role of the Municipality in Delivering Leisure Services

Over the past decade, Lambton Shores has refined and solidified its role as facilitator of leisure services through the provision of space and appropriate supports to the community. Investments in community grant programs, parks and recreational infrastructure have improved opportunities for community providers to deliver their own programming. Notable examples include the Community Grant and Vibrancy Fund, development of the Rotary Stage (completed with significant contributions from the community), and the hiring of an Administrative Assistant for Recreation & Leisure Services which has increased the time of the Recreation & Leisure Services Facilitator to focus on core responsibilities including strengthening relationships with the Municipality's agency and community partners.

Key Accomplishments

- Continued enhancement of the “Facilitator of Services” model
- Development of an Online Booking System
- Creation of a Sports Field Allocation Policy

The Municipality's role as facilitator is representative of an "indirect" model of service delivery. Indirect service delivery typically involves:

- Community-Based Sports Leagues: Volunteer community organizations develop the sport within guidelines provided by National and Provincial sport governing bodies. A relationship with the Municipality exists to rent spaces, assist groups in developing governance and administration, promote the activities, and ensuring compliance with legislative and Municipal requirements.
- Volunteerism and Partnerships: The Municipality has partnership agreements and relationships with multiple groups and associations to aid in the delivery of recreation and leisure, culture, and special events. Partnerships are used to benefit the public interest as they are aligned with community priorities. Each partner brings value to the relationship and collective services are enhanced. There is a fiscal benefit in most cases, mostly through cost containment, as it would be costly for the Municipality of this size to directly provide sports leagues or leisure programs.

Municipal Council and Staff re-affirmed their satisfaction with, and desire to continue an "indirect" model of service delivery based upon the RLSMP Update consultations and other recent processes such as the 2017 Organization and Workplace Review Report. Further, there is no indication from Municipal Staff, community groups or findings from this RLSMP Update that critical programming gaps exist. As such, the Municipality should continue to act as a facilitator of leisure services over this current master planning period. In the event that a program gap is identified, direct provision of the program should only be considered after exhausting all options to find a partner that could deliver it, and after rationalizing the benefits and costs of the Municipality delivering the program.

Leadership, Quality Assurance & Innovation

The 2011 Master Plan discussed principles of leadership, quality assurance, organizational effectiveness, performance measurement and excellence in customer services. These topic areas have been consolidated under a theme of “Leadership, Innovation & Effectiveness” to reflect the progress that has been made in the Municipality since that time, with the following points noted.

- **Leadership:** The Municipality strives to be a high performing organization through the leadership provided through the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer and the various Departmental Directors. Improved inter-departmental collaboration has been noted and observed, and this integrated planning approach continues to be promoted so that service delivery is aligned and cohesively coordinated.
- **Quality:** The Municipality’s strong maintenance efforts and regular renewal of parks and community facilities results in quality places being available to residents and visitors. While the Municipality continues to be awarded designations such as Blue Flag for beaches and marinas and has had ongoing success in Communities in Bloom competitions, a lean departmental structure and following through on commitments to community development have prevented further exploration of other quality assurance standards. As such, the recommendation from 2011 to explore new quality assurance programs has not been brought forward (though may be revisited if additional staffing resources are added to the Department).

To aid in decision-making, Staff regularly educate themselves about emerging trends and best practices through working within the SWORFA group and other means of professional development. Policies and procedures are reviewed as needed to ensure that they remain current and are updated when they are deemed to no longer embody best practice.

- **Customer Service & Innovation:** The Municipality continues to strive towards delivering exceptional customer service to residents and visitors alike. The Municipality has also been open to exploring new technologies to improve internal efficiencies, effectiveness and outreach by updating its booking system (online booking now available) and updated interface for Recreation and Leisure Services on the Municipal website.
- **Performance Measurement:** As part of the Department's growth over the past decade, performance measurement has become engrained within internal culture that strives for service excellence. While it has not yet implemented a set of quantifiable targets and performance measures that can gauge the efficiency and effectiveness of services, this remains a recommendation to strive for. Having a set of targets articulated will provide the Municipality with consistent indicators that can be compared month-to-month and year-over-year.

Regular Strategic Planning

Regular strategic and long-range planning is an important exercise that ensures that the Municipality is well positioned to respond to unforeseen or anticipated circumstances. By being well prepared, consistent and high-quality services can be provided in a cost-effective and sustainable manner, which is a common trait of the most successful Departments and leisure service providers. Community Services Department staff review progress being made in implementing the RLSMP to inform annual capital and operating plans, a practice that should continue moving forward.

It is recommended that the Municipality undertake an Update to the Master Plan after five years to not only track progress made on implementation but also ensure that the Actions and their supporting assumptions remain appropriate for that future time. Doing so will also help inform other planning exercises such as Development Charge studies and long-range capital and operating plans.

Actions & Implementation

	Strategic Direction	Stream	Timing	Resource Implications
R1	The primary role of the Municipality should continue to be as a facilitator of leisure opportunities through the provision of space and other appropriate supports to the community sector.	FMS	Ongoing	Staff time and financial resources dependant on quantity of spaces and services.
R2	Continue to explore new technologies that will improve the delivery of leisure services, particularly those that are aimed at improving internal performance and customer service.	FMS	Ongoing	Staff time and financial resources to monitor new technologies and implement them, if feasible.
R3	Explore new and innovative ideas and opportunities for marketing and communications.	FMS	Ongoing	Staff time to develop marketing and communications tools.
R4	Continue to review Departmental policies and procedures, to ensure relevancy to current community and operational requirements.	FMS	Ongoing	Staff time.
R5	Establish a simple set of quantifiable targets and performance measures that can gauge the efficiency and effectiveness of services, which are offered by the Municipality.	FMS	Short-Term	Staff time to develop, implement and review success in achieving annual performance measures.
R6	As part of the Municipality's sports field allocation policy, user groups should be required to provide participant data to adequately plan for facility access.	FMS	Ongoing	Staff time to collect, organize and review participant data.
R7	Maximize synergies within the Community Services Department and the rest of the Municipality through joint planning, integrated communications and sharing of resources.	FMS	Ongoing	Staff time to ensure coordination and communication with other departments.
R8	Undertake a comprehensive review and update to the Recreation and Leisure Services Master Plan after five years.	FMS	Medium-Term	Consultant fees (\$60,000)

2 Support for Volunteers

Recognizing the important contributions of its dedicated volunteer base, the Municipality has worked with local volunteer organizations to ensure their efforts can be sustained over time. Acting upon recommendations contained in the 2011 RLSMP, the Municipality has organized meetings to discuss specific topics (e.g. Tourism Conference in 2017), provided a comprehensive listing of volunteer groups on the Municipal website, and are willing to connect groups/facilitate meetings where requested. The Municipality also updated its Volunteer Recognition Policy to provide for individual and group awards.

Volunteerism in Canada

Released in January 2015, Statistics Canada published a Spotlight on Canadians: Results from the General Social Survey. The section focused on volunteering and charitable giving in Canada found that 12.7 million people in Canada did volunteer work in 2013. This equates to 1.96 billion hours of volunteer work – equivalent to about 1 million full-time jobs!

The General Social Survey found that many volunteerism statistics mirrored those seen in the general population of Canada. The population of volunteers is aging; in 2004 only 23% of volunteers were aged 55 and older compared to 28% in 2013. Volunteers are becoming more educated with 39% of volunteers aged 25 to 64 holding a university degree, representing an increase of 4% since 2004. Finally, the survey found that despite high reports of hours volunteered, the general volunteer rate was lower than recorded in previous surveys (44% of people aged 15 years and older).

Volunteerism in Lambton Shores

Local volunteers help community groups deliver programs and services throughout Lambton Shores and are the backbone of community-based leisure service delivery system. Many attendees at the RLSMP Update Launch

Key Accomplishments

- Updated the Volunteer Recognition Policy to include both individual and group awards
- Workshops held to assist volunteer groups with social media
- Meetings ongoing to help establish potential partnerships and build connections between volunteer groups



Event and participants in stakeholder consultation indicated that their organization is strongly supported by volunteers but for many, their volunteer bases have been stagnant for some time. Historically, volunteers contributed significant amounts of time and energy to support local recreation and leisure service offerings. Unfortunately, participation across Ontario and Canada is waning due to what has been described as “time poverty”. People are increasingly pressed for time and volunteerism is suffering in response to this. It is critical for service providers to recognize the tremendous contribution of these dedicated individuals and seek opportunities to recruit and retain participants.

The Evolving Role of Volunteers

In the past, older adults, seniors, and retirees were targeted groups for volunteer recruitment but now with increased mobility and opportunities to travel, the traditional demographic is spending fewer hours in volunteer roles. Conversely, what was once seen as a way to give back to the community has evolved into opportunities for youth and newcomers to develop skills for future employment and entry into the labour market. Many new volunteers are seeking something in return for their investment of time donated. This may include things such as a tax refund, in-kind exchanges, access to programs, sign off on volunteer hours, learning and skill development, to name a few.

In response to the evolving role of volunteers, service providers (both municipal and community-based) should reframe their volunteer positions and descriptions to make them more engaging and enticing. Volunteer positions should be adjusted from tasks considered to be menial/unfulfilling and instead be transformed into modern positions such as social media outreach or direct service delivery for skilled volunteers.

Recruiting, Retaining & Recognizing Volunteers

Many volunteers are seeking reciprocity in their relationship with service provider organizations. To encourage participation and retention, volunteers should be provided with opportunities to assist with tasks that interest

and excite them. It is important to match the needs and interests of volunteers with those that best suit the organization they are serving. Volunteers should not only assist with administrative tasks but also support program and service delivery. This will require substantial training and support to ensure success for both sides of the volunteer-organization relationship.

As many recreation and leisure service providers are government-based or not-for-profit agencies, it is sometimes difficult to find resources to support volunteer training and development. In response to this, multiple service providers could pool resources and share in training sessions that would be beneficial to all organizations (e.g., accessibility, harassment, or customer service training). One best-practice example of this regionally is a partnered training opportunity provided to summer camp councillors in London, Ontario. In recent years, summer staff hired by the City of London, YMCA of Western Ontario and the Boys and Girls Club of London were invited to attend a large-scale training session called “all kids in camp” which provided training focused on inclusion for campers in each organization. Through this collaborative effort, staff and agencies were able to benefit from shared costs associated with facility rentals, trainers, and staff resources.

Volunteers are more likely to continue participation if they feel comfortable, knowledgeable, and supported in their roles. For example, a new or even long-time volunteer will be less willing to return to an environment that makes them feel uncomfortable or stressed. When various levels of staff and service areas are committed to engaging with volunteers it helps them to feel a sense of belonging with the organization, therefore increasing retention of valuable and well-trained participants.

When provided with opportunities for development in service areas that they enjoy and feel appreciated, volunteers can be incredible ambassadors for organizations. Service providers should recognize the value of volunteerism through participation in events such as National Volunteer Week (usually held annually in April – details provided by Volunteer Canada), host internal volunteer appreciation events, or provide small tokens of thanks as appropriate.

Service provider organizations need to take and make time to commit to volunteers. Coordinators should communicate and work with the existing volunteer base to build off of resources, share training opportunities, and demonstrate how much volunteers are valued by the organization. Providing volunteers with leadership training can also encourage them to volunteer longer or take on a broader range of responsibilities.

Actions & Implementation

	Strategic Direction	Stream	Timing	Resource Implications
R9	Continue to support the volunteer sector in Lambton Shores through appropriate community development and capacity building initiatives.	FMS	Ongoing	Staff time and financial resources.
R10	Engage youth by providing "Leader in Training" or "LIT" volunteer opportunities. The Municipality should collaborate with local day camp operators to support this. The LIT role could be similar to a camp councillor, providing support to both camps and staff as necessary. Volunteer training and recruitment should be facilitated by the Municipality with placement coordinated by the service providers.	FMS	Short-Term	Staff time to develop a program in collaboration with local service providers.
R11	Continue to host annual volunteer forums and volunteer recognition events to engage, empower and recognize the local volunteer sector.	FMS	Ongoing	Staff time and financial resources to organize and administer events.
R12	Convene training opportunities for local volunteer organizations aimed at organizational effectiveness, capacity building, etc. potentially hosted in collaboration with major agencies or organizations that also rely upon volunteers.	FMS	Ongoing	Staff time to plan training and collaboration with volunteer organizations.

3 Establishing Positive Relationships

In order to ensure unique, cost-effective and quality services are available in Lambton Shores, the Municipality seeks out strategic partnerships that represent the interests of the public. This philosophy is just as important today as it was when the Master Plan was first developed in 2011. As such, the RLSMP re-affirms support for the topic areas and recommendations relating to the need to proactively pursue partnership opportunities when they arise as well as having a standardized approach to evaluating future requests for collaboration.

Partnerships in Delivering Services

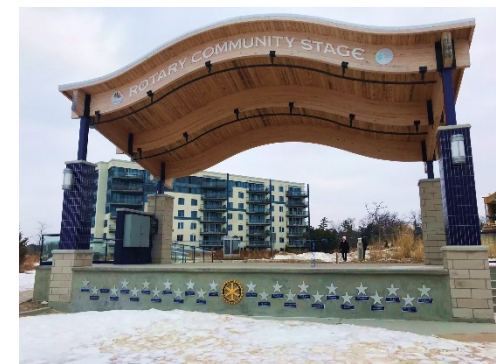
Consultations held for the RLSMP Update reinforce that key partners view themselves and others as integral parts of the local leisure system by complementing the strengths of each other as opposed to duplicating efforts. Certain community organizations have also been proactive in exploring their own creative arrangements, with examples being coordination among different service clubs as well as a number of agencies and associations coming together in Grand Bend (e.g. the Community Health Centre and a citizen's coalition).

Examples of potential partners (and expansion/continuation of existing partnerships) in Lambton Shores include, but are not limited to:

- Upper tiers of government (e.g. Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, Lambton Heritage Museum, Lambton County Library, etc.);
- Adjacent municipalities and Kettle and Stony Point First Nations;
- St. Clair Region and Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authorities, and other environmentally-focused organizations;
- Lambton Kent District School Board and the St. Clair Catholic District School Board;

Key Accomplishments

- Development of the Rotary Community Stage in partnership with the Rotary Club of Grand Bend
- Proactively meeting with partners to revisit agreements prior to their expiration



- Non-profit organizations such as the YMCA, the Community Health Centres, United Way, etc. (some of whom already have a relationship with the Municipality); and/or
- Local stakeholders such as service clubs, minor sports and recreation providers, arts and cultural groups, community associations, BIAs, etc.; and/or
- The private sector (e.g. fitness providers, sporting groups, local theatres, etc.) and local land owners.

The community has benefitted from a strong partnership with the YMCA through the space and programming offered by that organization. It is understood that community use of schools has its benefits and challenges though there is an opportunity to explore joint construction and/or use of space in the new K-12 super school that is being planned in Forest.

A Standardized Approach to Evaluating Partnerships

The most successful partnerships are derived from common objectives (e.g. environmental conservation, community improvement, physical activity, heritage interpretation, trail development, etc.), maximizing the strengths of each other in delivering access and programming to parks and trails, and mitigating risks (e.g. costs, liability, etc.). Maximizing the resources of each party is seen as a beneficial way to increase the amount of publically accessible parkland and leisure space provided that the public interest is maximized and that agreements fulfill the desired objectives of the Municipality and its partners.

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

- first and foremost, that the proposed partnership is consistent with the municipal mandate and philosophies;

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

A standardized approach to evaluating partnerships continues to be advanced given the ability to demonstrate consistent and transparent decision-making. As mentioned, consultations have yielded strong support for partnerships between the Municipality and others in order to deliver a well-rounded leisure services system. Through the implementation of the Community Grant and Vibrancy Fund as well as work in developing an off-leash park policy, it is understood that the Municipality has established a foundation through which a partnership evaluation framework could be formalized.

Actions & Implementation

	Strategic Direction	Stream	Timing	Resource Implications
R13	<p>Engage the Lambton Kent District School Board (LKDSB) and St. Clair Catholic District School Board (SCCDSB) in the planning and provision of joint campuses for schools, parks and municipal facilities.</p> <p>In the short-term, the Municipality should participate in the LKDSB's planning and development process for the new Kindergarten to Grade 12 school in Forest. At a minimum, discussions should involve how the Municipality can facilitate adequate and affordable community-based access to shared spaces such as gymnasiums, theatre/auditorium, youth centre, program rooms and/or sports fields possibly through negotiated financial or operating agreements with the LKDSB.</p>	FMS	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>(Short-Term for LKDSB school in Forest)</p>	Staff time to liaise with the school boards and discuss potential access arrangements.
R14	Requests for facilities and services that are not part of the Municipality's core mandate should be evaluated based on anticipated municipal role, quantifiable measures of demand and costs to the Municipality, and other long-term implications prior to decision whether or not to partner in the public interest.	FMS	Ongoing	Staff time to review and evaluate facility and service requests.
R15	Develop a standardized process or framework for evaluating and responding to requests for partnerships, with the view of maximizing public interests. Standardized operational agreements with the community are preferred over informal agreements to ensure that obligations of all parties align with corporate and departmental priorities.	FMS	Short-Term	Staff time to evaluate and respond to partnership requests.
R16	Regularly meet with partners to discuss implementation of partnership agreements, and where necessary, revisit and/or strengthen agreements to maximize benefits to all parties and the general public.	FMS	Ongoing	Staff time to monitor and discuss partnerships and other outstanding issues.

4 Supporting Municipal Staff

The Municipality sets out to provide appropriate supports to the Departments and staff involved in the delivery of recreation and leisure services. Lambton Shores continues to have a talented workforce of staff that take pride in their work and are committed to enhancing the quality of life in their community. This Strategic Direction is reinforced through the RLSMP Update given continued role of the Municipality as a facilitator of leisure services and use of the community development model, elements that require a properly trained and engaged staff team. It is noted that the Municipality recently completed an Organization and Workplace Review (OWR)³ that focused upon staffing requirements and thus the RLSMP Update aligns with the findings of that work.

Organizational Structure

Lambton Shores is made up of four departments: Administration, Community Services, Finance, and Fire and Emergency Services. All four departments are under the direction of the Chief Administrative Office through which key decisions are considered for approval by Municipal Council. With respect to the delivery of recreation and leisure services, the Community Services Department is the primary point of contact, though other departments/divisions may have an influence in certain areas (e.g., finance, planning, and building).

Community Services is responsible for the delivery of a wide range of municipal services including water supply and distribution, wastewater collection and treatment, roads, sidewalks, streetlights, parks, playgrounds, beaches, marinas, community centres and areas, and municipal cemeteries. In addition, the Department oversees solid waste management services.

Key Accomplishments

- Completion of an Organization and Workplace Review in 2017
- Addition of the Administrative Assistant for Recreation & Leisure Services
- Addition of the Special Events & Marketing Coordinator (contract)
- Creation of staff-centred policies regarding anti-violence and customer behaviour

³ Municipality of Lambton Shores. 2017. Organization and Workplace Review. Prepared by Bill Winegard and John Armstrong.

Specifically reflecting on the Department's commitment to recreation and leisure services, it seeks to:

- Promote participation in organized and non-programmed forms of sport and recreation through the provision of appropriate facilities and services;
- Enhance awareness and vibrancy of local arts, culture and heritage resources by recognizing their importance, embracing their creative benefits and providing them with the necessary tools in which to succeed; and
- Provide an interconnected network of parks and trailways that offer opportunities for active and passive forms of leisure and also contribute to ecological health on a local, regional and global level.

As of January 2018, the Community Services Department employed 27 full time staff and recruits part-time and seasonal workers to fulfill responsibilities of the Municipality when warranted. For example, lifeguards, harbour masters, harbour attendants and beach staff would be employed during the warm-weather months while their counterparts would work in arenas through the winter.

The OWR report recommends the following for facilities and parks staff within the Community Services Department:

- *The assignment of a manager to oversee Facilities and Parks across the whole municipality is endorsed*
- *No increase is anticipated in the complement (7) of permanent Facility/Parks operators*
- *Judicious additional use of contractors and casual employees is anticipated in order to make best use of permanent operators' time and talent, and to minimize the siphoning off of roads operator time into facilities/parks work*

- *A distinction needs to be made between roads operators and facilities/parks operators with respect to job description, recruitment, certifications, and training*
- *The current system of two lead hands corresponding to the two arenas is endorsed, while the creation of a third Facilities/parks lead hand position for Grand Bend should be considered in the longer term*
- *The current position of "Facilitator of Recreation and Leisure Services" is to be renamed "Facilitator of Community Partnerships and Initiatives" to reflect its evolution, and is to be physically and organizationally closer to the CAO*
- *The current contract position of Marketing/Tourism Assistant is anticipated as a full-time permanent position, also close to the CAO and reporting to the Facilitator position*

The Role of Staff in Delivering Recreation & Leisure Services

Volunteers and community partners should be a focus of the Community Services Department as the Municipality takes leadership in building and fostering community capacity to provide programming and resources. This may include assisting with and/or providing training to staff to support them in their roles and help make community participation a reality.

Municipal staff are also well-positioned to help support community recreation and leisure service by assisting with provision of space and resources for community gatherings, town events or open houses. A significant component of this involved communication and sharing of information and resources with local community partners. One example of how staff can help strengthen delivery of services and participation in programs and events is through events like a service provider open house. Although not a direct provider of programming, Municipal Staff could bolster participation through promotion and partnership agreements.

Supporting Municipal Staff

The Municipality has made excellent progress in implementing a number of the 2011 Master Plan's recommendations under this Strategic Direction.

- **Staff Resourcing:** The Municipality recently completed an Organization and Workplace Review (OWR)⁴ that focused upon staffing requirements which addresses the previous recommendation to support facilities and services with appropriate staff resources.
- **New Positions:** The creation of the Administrative Assistant and the Special Event & Marketing Coordinator.
- **Staff Development:** an annual budget allocation has been established to provide opportunities for staff development through training and professional development. On an ongoing basis, the Municipality should employ online and in-person learning opportunities for topics such as the Framework for Recreation in Canada, industry trends available through organizations such as Parks and Recreation Ontario, community development and engagement strategies, compliance with legislative requirements, etc.
- **Policy Support:** existing policies have been supplemented by new policies regarding anti-violence and customer behaviour.

A previous recommendation to add a Horticulturist/Forester position is brought forward once again given the Municipality's commitment to beautification and creation of leading-edge, high quality outdoor spaces. This position would not only aid the Municipality in the design of new parks and the redesign of aging parks, it would also be a point of contact for community-based groups that contribute towards beautification and

⁴ Municipality of Lambton Shores. 2017. Organization and Workplace Review. Prepared by Bill Winegard and John Armstrong.

environmental sustainability thereby reinforcing the community development approach. A horticulturist/forester would also have the expertise to liaise with agency partners such as the Ministry of Natural Resources & Forestry, Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority, and St. Clair Region Conservation Authority to coordinate and advance municipal objectives relating to forestry and/or ecology.

Actions & Implementation

	Strategic Direction	Stream	Timing	Resource Implications
R17	Implement the 2017 Organization and Workplace Review as it pertains to the Community Services Department.	FMS	Ongoing	Staff time
R18	Create a Horticulturist/Forester position to ensure that parks are designed/redesigned, constructed and maintained to a high-quality standard while advancing the Municipality's interests relating to forestry and environmental sustainability.	FMS	Medium-Term	Horticulturist/Forester (Full Time)
R19	The Municipality, through Council and staff, should assume a leadership role in building the capacity of the local community to deliver recreation and leisure services by facilitating access to space, coordinating the delivery of municipal and community-based programs, and providing financial supports as necessary.	FMS	Ongoing	Staff time, capital and operational support depending upon the type and scale of initiatives conducted over time.
R20	Identify the needed skills and competencies, provide opportunities for staff development through training and professional development, and identify departmental and individual training plans.	FMS	Ongoing	Staff time and financial resources (variable) depending on the number and type of professional development.
R21	Formalize a "Code of Conduct" that governs the staff and volunteer approach to work.	FMS	Short-Term	Staff time to develop the Code of Conduct

5 Success in Municipal Leadership & Community Development

As a facilitator of leisure services, the Municipality's approach to community development remains a critical aspect of advancing the mandate of the Community Services Department. The ability of community organizations, volunteers and residents to provide services is essential to delivering the services and events that are found in Lambton Shores. As has become standard practice, the Municipality regularly seeks input from the community during the development of plans and budgets to ensure community groups and residents can contribute ideas that can help strengthen internal capacities and the awareness of leisure opportunities.

Community Development Model

While the Municipality strongly supports the community development approach in principle, a formalized community development model has not yet been implemented. As noted in the 2011 Master Plan, the varying degrees of expertise, organizational capacity and operating characteristics of community providers in Lambton Shores has resulted in different relationships that the Community Services Department has with its partners.

A standardized community development initiative would offer a structured method of involving community groups to develop and deliver recreation services and programs. Typically, a community development approach stimulates partnerships, networks and collaboration at all levels of program design and delivery. Furthermore, shared decision-making between municipal staff and key stakeholders helps to foster a degree of ownership and empowerment amongst community partners. As Lambton Shores grows and the demand for increased programming expands, community organizations could assume a more significant role in certain aspects of the Municipality's recreation and leisure services system. Applying the principles of a community development approach would strengthen the Community Services Department's relationship with its partners and increase community capacity. For the community development approach to be effective, appropriate Municipal resources (e.g. financial, staffing, services in-kind, etc.) need to be devoted in order to maximize relationships that will be

Key Accomplishments

- Community Consultation has occurred as part of budgeting and development plans
- Currently working with local Community Health Centres on collective impact

developed with groups. Another 2011 Master Plan recommendation to assist groups to develop operational and performance measurement templates should be pursued to help groups improve their internal service delivery practices (and through doing so, their internal capacity to remain sustainable over the long-term).

Integrated Service Delivery Approach

The previous Master Plan advanced an Integrated Service Delivery approach, something which is common practice among municipalities large and small, and those that employ a direct or indirect service delivery model. The Municipality in conjunction with the local Community Health Centres have undertaken work on collective impact which will be useful in informing integrated service delivery approaches. Leveraging the power of the collective organizations operating within Lambton Shores is a major part of the community development model and a critical aspect of the Municipality's role as a facilitator of services.

With the Grand Bend Community Health Centre exploring an expansion and role within a community hub, Municipal participation in that planning process would be an ideal way to explore the integrated service delivery approach. It would also allow the Municipality to determine its role and resource implications associated with such a project, should the vision for the Grand Bend Community Health Centre come to fruition.

Actions & Implementation

	Strategic Direction	Stream	Timing	Resource Implications
R22	Encourage a Community Development Model through engagement and provision of appropriate supports (e.g., financial, logistical, expertise, etc.) as a means to empower the Lambton Shores community, continually develop their internal capacity, and enhance their capacity to sustainably deliver programs and services in the long-run.	FMS	Ongoing	Staff time and financial resources, allocations determined through business planning.

	Strategic Direction	Stream	Timing	Resource Implications
R23	Assist groups in developing templates that can track operational measures such as capacity and fill rates, patron satisfaction, financial performance, etc. as a means to improve their internal service delivery practices.	FMS	Ongoing	Staff time and financial resources, allocations determined through business planning.
R24	Regular consultation and engagement of the community is recommended during strategic planning and other key initiatives being undertaken by the municipality, in order to ensure that groups have the opportunity to contribute ideas and/or resources in achieving a holistic, yet pragmatic approach to community development.	FMS	Ongoing	Staff time to consult with the community.
R25	Articulate an Integrated Service Delivery approach that uses the existing expertise to think collectively about community issues and priorities, develop solutions together, avoid duplication, maximize existing resources and is meaningful to the work of the Departments and the service delivery needs of the residents. Ongoing participation in the planning process for the Grand Bend Community Health Centre's expansion and community hub proposal is recommended as a way to further explore the Integrated Service Delivery approach.	FMS	Short-Term	Staff time.
R26	Provide needed training and ongoing support to the appropriate levels of staff on the introduction, principals and mechanisms of integrated service delivery.	FMS	Medium-Term	Staff time.

6 Increasing Awareness of Local Resources & Opportunities

Communicating with the Community

The Municipality's staff play an integral role in the dissemination of information and resources within Lambton Shores. Residents often look to civic employees to inform them of opportunities to participate in recreation and leisure services. Additionally, service providers and agencies within the municipality appreciate awareness of municipal events and opportunities to pool resources and coordinate schedules.

Respondents to the online survey indicated that less than half (38%) of residents feel well-informed about local recreation events and activities and a similar rate (35%) feel well-informed about local arts and cultural events and activities. The relatively low response indicates a gap in knowledge among the public which may contribute to decreased participation. Similarly, attendees at our launch event lamented that they too felt unaware of all the amazing opportunities Lambton Shores has to offer.

Communication Methods

One method of information sharing and communicating directly with the public is through community open houses or engagement forums. During stakeholder consultation and our launch event many local organization expressed interest in participating in an open house where vendors would have an opportunity to showcase their offerings. Such an event would encourage service clubs, organizations, and agencies to promote local businesses, programs, and events.

The Municipality publishes a Community Guide highlighting various things to see and do while visiting or living in Lambton Shores. In addition to a spotlight on specific activities and locations to visit, the guide encourages participation in events (through planning or volunteers) as well as activities (recreation or leisure pursuits).

Key Accomplishments

- Social Media Policy in place
- Building brand guideline
- Developing a marketing and communications plan
- Recipient of a Rural Economic Development (RED) Grant for marketing and promotion
- Working with local partners to support the Healthy Kids Community Challenge



Providers of leisure services (public, private, and non-profit) educate the public and influence the degree of participation. As a result of this, mutual benefits can be obtained through a coordinated approach to service provision. Simple tasks such as allowing for display of brochures and posters within facilities and promotion of local events help to build strong, healthy, and engaged citizens.

As a guideline, consistency in interdepartmental communications is key to effective information sharing and public awareness of opportunities. Having one key personnel to ensure clear and consistent messaging is recommended. For example, recreation and leisure services should be aware of road works scheduled in close proximity to a municipal park prior to scheduling a community event. Ongoing clear communication is required for seamless delivery of municipal services.

The Municipality should continue to build upon existing knowledge and resources. Lambton Shores has a variety of well-established communication tools including the municipal website, newsletters, posters, and word of mouth through community champions. Building upon the successful award of a Rural Economic Development (RED) Grant, the Municipality should continue to invest in economic development and promotion of local resources.

In response to growing demand for more information in a variety of digestible formats (particularly targeted to youth), the Municipality should create a summer student position (co-op) to assist with content generation and information sharing. This role should begin in the spring allowing time for preparation of materials and strategies to share resources and continue throughout summer allowing for ongoing promotion of programming and events. Working under the Facilitator of Recreation & Leisure Services, and alongside the Special Events & Marketing Coordinator, the summer student would be responsible for utilizing existing Lambton Shores' marketing materials and integrating information from a variety of sources. For example, the student could work with local volunteers or youth groups to create videos on the basics of sports, and highlight different parks, facilities or service providers. The role would also be responsible for taking photos at facilities



and events throughout the municipality, and establish schedules for timely social media posts, newsletters, posters, and email blasts. Social-media based posts could use hashtags or weekly challenges to encourage community participation in summer-long or ongoing initiatives.

Actions & Implementation

	Strategic Direction	Stream	Timing	Resource Implications
R27	Ensure that all Municipal staff are aware of corporate objectives and key services which can be disseminated to the customer by increasing interaction between all levels of staff (i.e., from management to the front line and between all staff operation depots).	FMS	Ongoing	Implementation through current roles, responsibilities and workloads.
R28	Develop annual communications plans that address key messages to target audiences (e.g. families, youth, seniors, etc.) and the communication media best suited to do so (e.g. Community Guide, newsletters, the municipal website, social media and word of mouth). This communications plan should also look at cross-promotion of messages between the Municipality and user groups, as well as any information sharing opportunities between all stakeholders in recreation and leisure service delivery.	FMS	Ongoing	Staff time to develop the communications plan.
R29	Create a summer student position (paid or volunteer) to assist the Community Services Department with content creation and information sharing using modern digital and print media platforms.	FMS	Short-Term	Summer Student (Part Time or Volunteer)

7 Facilitating a Range of Recreation & Leisure Services

Throughout Lambton Shores are places for members of the community to gather for social, leisure or other functions. These spaces allow the Municipality and community providers to offer a wide range of organized and unstructured activities.

Equitable Access to Recreation & Leisure Services

The Municipality of Lambton Shores is committed to providing equitable access to recreation and leisure services throughout the community. A multitude of barriers influence the ability of residents to participate in leisure pursuits, some of which include: lack of time, limited disposable income, lack of awareness, etc.

In order for most potential participants to gain full “access” to recreation and leisure services, they need to have: 1) economic access (affordability of costs associated with participation); 2) geographic access (ability to travel to programs/facilities or participate in their home neighbourhood); and 3) information access (knowledge of what is available, when, and where).

Economic Access

Ability to pay for registration, equipment, or transportation can be significant barriers to participation in recreation and leisure activities. Some methods of minimizing these barriers include the establishment of subsidy policies and offering a wide range of low-to-no cost programs within facilities. Although the Municipality does not directly provide recreation programming and thus influence fee levels, it may be able to provide support to operating agencies through grants, access agreements, subsidies, approved rental rates, etc. that allow those providers to reduce their costs and/or pass on savings to the customer. Future outreach and communication efforts should focus on methods to remove or decrease the effect of these barriers, specifically

Key Accomplishments

- Spray pads installed in Forest, Thedford and Arkona
- Constructed the Forest X-Park
- Rebuilt tennis courts at Esli Dodge Conservation Area and included pickleball lines
- Major renewal of Utter Park in Arkona



for low-income or marginalized populations. This may include promotion and dissemination of information regarding programs and subsidies offered by non-government organizations.

Geographic Access

RLSMP Update consultations frequently identified that the large geographic territory covered by the Municipality is sometimes a barrier for residents, particularly those that do not have regular access to a vehicle (e.g. certain youth and older adults, persons with lower incomes or disabilities, etc.). The Municipality has strived to provide parks and/or indoor leisure facilities within its settlement areas as a means to address geographic distribution.

It also recognizes that certain services are more “walk-to” in nature whereas more financially intensive ones are “drive-to” as it would not be possible to provide major recreation and leisure infrastructure in all areas of Lambton Shores. Indoor recreation and leisure activities are anchored by two major complexes (the Shores and Legacy Centre), which are supplemented by smaller and local community assets (e.g. halls and smaller parks) distributed throughout the rest of the municipality.

The Municipality should continue to enhance locally based opportunities to strengthen neighbourhoods and provide a variety of services to various settlement areas. Additionally, the Municipality should explore opportunities for outreach and satellite programming within existing facilities and partnerships.

The Municipality should explore options to retrofit existing facilities to accommodate additional use through provision of support amenities (e.g., appropriate floor surface for exercise, kitchenettes, storage space, etc.) therefore enhancing the utility of neighbourhood-scale facilities. Existing parks can similarly be adjusted to support multiple sports of activities outside of traditional registered sport leagues.

From a Municipal investment perspective, it is important to distinguish the difference between capital investment in “walk-to” or neighbourhood facilities and other large premier facilities such as high-quality sports fields, arenas, gymnasiums, etc. Premier facilities should be co-located with one another (e.g., as a sports complex) to maximize efficiencies and return on investment.

Information Access

Lack of knowledge or information about available opportunities is a major barrier to participation. The Municipality updated the Lambton Shores website to become more user-friendly and easy to navigate; this will assist with the ability to learn more about recreation and leisure in the community.

To support dissemination of information to as many potential users as possible, recreation and leisure opportunities should also be shared through a variety of mediums on an on-going basis. Regular promotion initiatives should include: program/event/facility descriptions; dates, times, and addresses; cost to participate; and equipment or skills required (if applicable). If potential participants are well-informed they will be more likely to make an effort to participate in activities within the Municipality.

Finally, the Municipality should be a resource for promotion of the benefits of participating in recreation and leisure throughout life regardless of age, ability, income, location, or interest. Lambton Shores is already involved in and aware of some information sharing and health promotion initiatives such as the Healthy Kids Community Challenge, among others.

Targeting Key Markets

Children & Youth

Children and youth are a key demographic for encouraging participation in recreation and leisure activities. The 2016 Census found that 8% of the population was represented by children ages 0-9 and another 8%

represented by youth 10-19. Amassing 16% of the total population, it is critical that local children and youth be engaged in program planning and delivery whenever possible.

As was discussed previously, children and youth are limited by their independent mobility and as such the Municipality should attempt to ensure that programs are equitably distributed throughout the municipality so that children and youth in all settlement areas have access to programs and services within a walkable or bikeable distance.

The Municipality of Lambton Shores' greatest contribution to a local child and youth network of service providers, safe spaces, and programs is that of a community facilitator. The Municipality should continue to build upon existing relationships or explore establishment of new ones with recreation service providers to better meet the needs of children and youth in Lambton Shores. One opportunity to enable youth in planning is to support development a program for collaboration with older adults and seniors to work with youth to share knowledge and skills.

Some examples of other partner agencies to connect with include: Southwestern Ontario *in Motion*, Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Huron, Grand Bend Optimists Club, Ausable Port Franks Optimists, Optimist Club of Forest, United Way of Sarnia Lambton, and the YMCA of Southwestern Ontario (build upon existing).

Older Adults & Seniors

Similar to demographic trends across the Province and Country, the population of older adults (aged 55 – 69 years) and seniors (aged 70+ years) is growing. These populations account for almost half (49%) of Lambton Shores' resident base.

One of the most significant participation shifts since the 2011 Master Plan was completed has been a renewed focus on health and well-being, particularly among older adults and seniors. While the majority have different

interests than traditional recreation (low-impact activities, social interaction, etc.), these groups are not limited by age but rather ability. Some older adults are still willing and able to participate in higher impact forms of physical activity and are passionate about doing so.

The Municipality has supported development of some senior-focused programming such as indoor pickleball and public access walking track use and should continue to build upon these offerings. Community consultation revealed that programming at the Community Health Centre in Grand Bend is so popular and successful that they have reached capacity. The trend of older adults and seniors interest in physical fitness is expected to continue and as a result the Municipality is encouraged to collaborate with community partners to provide opportunities for increased programming targeted to these age groups.

Culturally Diverse Populations

It is reasonable to expect that diversity will increase as the population grows and this may generate a shift in demand for non-traditional programming such as bocce or cricket. Engaging newcomer populations or those from diverse cultural backgrounds to support their recreation and leisure interests should be a focus of the Community Services Department's future planning.

Persons with Disabilities

The Municipality of Lambton Shores provides a range of inclusive and barrier-free opportunities for participation through programming, service support, and barrier-free facilities.

As a community facilitator and liaison, the Municipality should continue to be proactive in training staff and volunteers to support residents and participants with disabilities.

To ensure success and thoughtful consideration for residents and visitors with accessibility concerns, the Municipality should continue to consult with the Accessibility Committee of Lambton Shores on relevant planning and design initiatives.

Recreation Facility Needs

Appendix E notes that the Municipality of Lambton Shores supply of indoor and outdoor recreation facilities is well positioned in relation to the size and age structure of the population, and the limited population growth that is forecasted over the next ten years. However, there is opportunity to enhance the level of service provided to the community by utilizing the Municipality's role as a facilitator of services by exploring strategic partnerships with other community facilities that are, or may be built by agency partners.

In 2017, the provincial government approved funding for a new public school in Forest that will consolidate certain elementary schools and a secondary school at one location. In June 2018, the Lambton Kent District School Board tendered the design of the new school with the intent of construction starting in spring 2019. Since the last RLSMP was prepared, there have been plenty of precedents set with joint development of community and school facilities. Most commonly are examples of joint construction projects that result in shared use of gymnasiums but other projects between municipalities and schools have also collaborated on sports fields, auditoriums/theatres, youth space, and multi-purpose program space. The Municipality should engage the Lambton Kent District School Board in its design work to determine if community access to certain facilities can be negotiated. Doing so is consistent with RLSMP Update Recommendation R13 and the Municipality's Official Plan that "encourages the development of agreements between the Municipality and other organizations, such as public service clubs or school boards, for the increased utilization of space and facilities such as open space, gymnasiums, or buildings, in order to serve the residents."

RLSMP Update consultations have generated substantial discussion for the need for a community centre to serve the Grand Bend community. It may not be feasible or fiscally possible for the Municipality to construct

and operate additional community centres based upon its current infrastructure levels and limited population growth. However, the Municipality's strength lies in its ability to be a facilitator through community development and thus there are a couple of notable strategic opportunities that exist that could potentially add indoor community space.

The first notable opportunity lies with the proposed development/expansion of the Grand Bend Community Health Centre. The Province has been advocating community hubs and there may be opportunity to leverage funding if the merits can be demonstrated and the planned expansion can be positioned as a multi-service community hub. In the event that the Community Health Centre can secure funding and chooses to engage the Municipality (discussions with the CHC through the RLSMP Update suggest that they are open to doing so), the Municipality should investigate the merits of any involvement as it relates to supporting local health and fitness programming. Current public spaces for fitness programs in Lambton Shores have limited capacity and the proposed community hub could help fill the need for additional community space, particularly in the Grand Bend area. The Community Health Centre's future planning for community hub programs and services should include collaboration between local health and fitness program providers and the Municipality to ensure the community is provided with consistent and high-quality program options. Both the CHC and the YMCA have indicated a willingness to work with the Municipality and each other through discussions held for the RLSMP Update and previous planning projects.

With respect to outdoor facilities, the supply and distribution of sports facilities including sports fields (soccer, baseball/softball) and hard surface courts is sufficient to meet needs over the next ten years. The Municipality should focus on investment in outdoor recreation amenities that support casual/unstructured use such as playgrounds, spray pads, and wheeled sport parks (e.g., BMX, skateboard, etc.). Specific facility recommendations include installing playground equipment in Ipperwash, constructing basketball courts in Forest and Thedford, and completing the spray pad strategy by providing one in Port Franks. Additional

resources should be dedicated to development of an additional X-park/skateboard park to serve the demand from local youth Thedford. This includes: identification of an appropriate site, public consultation, site design, and future installation (pending success previous phases and securement of a funding partner).

Actions & Implementation

	Strategic Direction	Stream	Timing	Resource Implications
R30	In conjunction with local service providers, continue to explore programs aimed at reducing financial barriers to participation, including barriers for transportation and equipment.	FMS	Ongoing	Staff time.
R31	Work with community partners (e.g., Community Health Centres, YMCA of Western Ontario) to increase access and availability, and address gaps in youth and seniors' programming throughout Lambton Shores.	FMS	Ongoing	Staff time and financial resources, allocation determined through business planning.
R32	Connect with support agencies to engage newcomer populations in community consultation initiatives to accommodate their recreation and leisure interests.	FMS	Short-Term	Staff time.
R33	As part of the Grand Bend Community Health Centre's proposed facility expansion plans, collaborate with the CHC to explore ways in which the Municipality can facilitate this development to be a multi-service community hub.	FMS	Short-Term	Staff time and financial resources, allocation determined through business planning.
R34	Continue to prioritize accessibility for persons with disabilities. This includes staff and volunteer training and support, consultation with the Accessibility Advisory Committee, inclusive service options, and barrier-free park and facility design considerations.	FMS	Ongoing	Staff time and financial resources, allocation determined through business planning.

	Strategic Direction	Stream	Timing	Resource Implications
R35	Formalize Sports Field Design & Maintenance Standards to articulate levels of service for different classifications of fields (e.g. lit versus unlit, premier fields versus standard fields, etc.). Sports Field users should be engaged in the development of these Standards in order to define roles, responsibilities, expectations and the pricing structure/level of cost recovery associated with higher quality design and maintenance efforts.	FMS	Medium-Term	Staff time.
R36	Construct a spray pad in Port Franks, preferably located at the Port Franks Community Centre in conjunction with a funding or fundraising partner.	CRFS	Medium-Term	\$150,000 to 300,000 depending upon size/scale
R37	Construct a basketball court in each of Thedford and Forest.	CRFS	Short-Term (Thedford) Medium-Term (Forest)	\$80,000 (\$40,000 per court)
R38	Construct a playground in Ipperwash if a suitable location can be acquired/determined.	CRFS	Short-Term	\$75,000 to 150,000 depending on size/scale
R39	Construct a minor skateboard park in Thedford (potentially at the Thedford Village Green). Prior to development, confirm its feasibility based upon: a site analysis and selection process; design that considers input from youth and the general public; and ability to secure a funding or fundraising partner.	CRFS	Short-Term	Minor Skateboard Park (\$50,000)

8 Embracing Arts, Culture & Heritage

Over the past ten years, the Municipality and its community partners have showcased the vibrant arts, culture and heritage sector that exists in Lambton Shores. The RLSMP Update explores opportunities to improve synergies that currently exist between the Municipality and organizations that deliver arts and cultural opportunities in Lambton Shores in a manner that benefits and engages the resident base.

Policy Support

The value of the creative sector is something that should be strengthened and celebrated whenever possible. Exposure to culture provides inspiration for new ideas and innovative ways of thinking and doing. Not only does culture contribute to quality of life, it supports economic development in Ontario's communities. This has been recognized by multiple levels of government including the Government of Canada through a landmark report prepared by the Harcourt Commission and the recent Creative Canada Policy Framework, as well as the Ontario Culture Strategy.^{5,6,7} These documents, along with many others, help to promote participation in and appreciation for arts, culture and heritage throughout the nation, province, and within communities.

Since the Harcourt Commission's recognition of culture as a core component of sustainability, more and more municipalities have approached cultural planning in a strategic manner. Culture has become a greater part of municipal land use planning, economic development, community improvement and revitalization processes. Furthermore, many communities in southwestern Ontario have cultural plans in place in order to create a shared vision and establish strategic priorities aimed at advancing the arts and cultural sector within a municipality.

Key Accomplishments

- Rotary Community Stage was built at Main beach in Grand Bend in 2016 and is now in operation
- Expanded the Community Grant program to include the Vibrancy Fund in 2014
- Promotes the County of Lambton's Creative Community Fund



⁵ Government of Canada. From Restless Communities to Resilient Places: Building a Stronger Future for All Canadians. 2006. Final Report of the External Advisory Committee on Cities and Communities.

⁶ Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport. The Ontario Culture Strategy: Telling our stories, growing our economy. 2016.

⁷ Government of Canada. Creative Canada: Policy Framework. 2017

The 2011 RLSMP started the process of guiding arts and cultural services in Lambton Shores, and this Update provides a review of municipal progress.

The Existing Cultural Landscape

The Municipality of Lambton Shores is rich with diversity in landscapes, peoples, and cultures. Through these the Municipality aims to celebrate stories together through shared experiences. Lambton Shores is home to a wide variety of celebrations and events such as film and food festivals, Canada Day celebrations, musical performances and so much more. There are plenty of opportunities within the municipality to experience local heritage, appreciate the arts, and share cultures.

Although the Municipality of Lambton Shores does not directly own or operate purpose-built cultural facilities, there are a number of museums, galleries, and theatres within its communities; many of these receive financial, administrative, and/or promotional assistance from the Municipality. Furthermore, a number of Lambton County Library branches are co-located with municipal facilities (e.g., Thedford, Port Franks, Arkona, and Grand Bend).

Figure 13: Arts and Cultural Facilities in Lambton Shores

Art Galleries	Lambton Shores is home to numerous art galleries and studios		
Museums	Arkona Lion's Museum	Forest Lambton Museum	Lambton Heritage Museum
Theatres	Huron Country Playhouse Huron Shores Community Concert Hall	Kineto Theatre	The Forest Amphitheatre
Libraries	Arkona Library Port Franks Library	Forest Library Thedford Library	Grand Bend Library

Source: Municipality of Lambton Shores Website (accessed June 2018)

Local Celebrations and Festivals

Arts, culture and heritage are celebrated throughout the year with special events held by the Municipality, often supported by local businesses and dedicated volunteer groups. Below is a listing of some of the most popular events hosted in Lambton Shores. This is not a comprehensive list and there are many others that contribute to the overall celebration of arts, culture and heritage in the municipality.

- Lambton Film and Food Festivals
- Grand Bend and Area Studio Tour
- Lambton Fall Colour & Craft Festival
- Canada Day Celebrations
- Paint Ontario
- Summer Concert Series
- Ipperwash Maple Festival
- Beachfest

Community Development in the Arts and Culture Sector

The Creative Sector is thriving in Lambton Shores and this Master Plan Update provides an opportunity to support it even further. Based on an assessment of current provision of space and services for arts, culture, and heritage in Lambton Shores it is not recommended that the Municipality seek to provide any additional spaces or offer programming directly. This is reinforced by the RLSMP Update consultations where community survey results and the Launch Event findings reflect community support for arts and culture facilities but not necessarily as an area of priority. Notwithstanding this, there are multiple opportunities for the Municipality to support the efforts of local artists and organizations.

The arts, culture and heritage sectors have long leveraged the “power of the collective” often borne out of a sheer need to survive at a time when senior levels of government were reducing investments and funding to those areas. The Municipality’s role as a facilitator of services and adoption of the community development model is ideal to advance sustainability in the local creative sector. In a time of constrained budgets and

heightened fiscal policies, it is difficult for any one organization to meet the arts and cultural needs of the community.

Fortunately, the Municipality has a strong arts and cultural support system made up of dedicated community organizations that assist with fulfilling this role. If provided with the appropriate support, the community-based delivery model has a greater ability to provide quality services, as well as generate internal growth and stability. The Municipality and the community can also collaborate with other agencies and levels of government to maximize delivery potential if the means to communicate and share ideas can be effectively implemented.

It is to the great advantage of the Municipality and its arts and cultural community to work together in facilitating and coordinating the development of local cultural resources and creative activities, in order to holistically represent the wide variety of interests and better define a collective sense of place through the arts and cultural sector. At minimum, annual roundtable discussions between the Municipality and providers of arts and cultural programs, services, special events, and festivals should be convened to identify and discuss issues and gaps, brainstorm strategies and solutions, and other matters with a view of strengthening the coordination of arts and cultural offerings in the Municipality. The recommendation from 2011 Master Plan to form an Arts, Culture & Heritage Committee continues to be advanced to provide guidance (and would function similarly to the Recreation Advisory Committee).

Promoting Arts and Culture

Awareness of community-based arts and cultural programs, special events, and festivals must be developed in a manner that reaches residents and visitors, particularly as the lack or absence of information was commonly identified as a barrier to participation. One of the general themes from RLSMP Update consultations was that Lambton Shores has a variety of arts and cultural opportunities, but very few people are aware of the offerings. Many attendees at the Launch Event identified a desire to share knowledge and resources around arts, culture, and heritage offerings in the municipality.

The 2010 Recreation and Leisure Services Master Plan recommended strengthening promotion of arts and culture, and the Municipality has acted upon that recommendation. The Lambton Shores website has a dedicated landing page for arts and culture highlighting the various galleries, museums and theatres in the municipality. In the future this page could be further developed or support links to external websites promoting events and programs offered throughout Lambton Shores and Lambton County.

Arts, culture and heritage in Lambton Shores should be celebrated and shared with visitors and residents as often as possible. Continued support for this sector should include information sharing, public displays of local art, and event facilitation. A couple specific ideas from the Launch Event included bus tours of local venues or partnership events coordinated between multiple businesses (e.g., a dinner event hosted at a museum or gallery).

As a facilitator of recreation and leisure services, the Municipality should continue to ensure arts, culture and heritage are emphasized within Lambton Shores. The development of a Public Art Policy continues to be recommended given the high-quality streetscape and park developments that the Municipality has pursued in its major settlement areas. Similarly, reflecting Lambton Shores' Indigenous and post-European history through the recreation and leisure services should continue to be explored.

Some feedback received through the RLSMP Update consultation process to make use of the Esli Dodge Conservation Area for more special events such as concerts, similar feedback was received for the 2010 Master Plan. The idea has its merits, particularly as a way to showcase a settlement area of Lambton Shores that is not typically associated with such activity to the extent that other communities may be. However, the recent investment in the Rotary Community Stage may suggest that programming and events be targeted to that area for the short-term to ensure its viability. Positioning Esli Dodge Conservation Area to hold quality events would require infrastructure-related improvements and until the use of Rotary Community Stage is better defined, capital investment at Esli Dodge Conservation Area may be premature. That being said, Esli Dodge

Conservation Area would provide a different level of amenity and scale than that of the Rotary Community Stage, therefore, if an organization(s) comes forward with a proposal and/or funding to improve the amphitheatre then the Municipality should consider doing so.

Actions & Implementation

	Strategic Direction	Stream	Timing	Resource Implications
R40	Create an Arts, Culture & Heritage Committee to provide citizen-based guidance on local matters pertaining to the arts, cultural and heritage sector in Lambton Shores.	CRFS	Short-Term	Staff time.
R41	Convene regular roundtable meetings (at minimum once each year) with the arts and culture sector to identify issues and gaps, discuss strategies and solutions, and explore other matters with a view of strengthening relationships and coordination of the arts and cultural offerings in the Municipality of Lambton Shores.	CRFS	Ongoing	Staff time.
R42	Develop a Public Art Policy that outlines the benefits of public art, a process through which public art is selected, and the importance of recognizing local artists.	CRFS	Medium-Term	Staff time.
R43	The design of new parks and redesign of existing parks should contemplate the ability to facilitate arts and cultural activities, where appropriate, and promote Lambton Shores' Indigenous and Post-European history where possible.	PTBO	Ongoing	Variable financial resources depending upon type and scale of designs implemented.

9 A Functional & Sustainable Parks System

Parks and open spaces are valued by the residents of Lambton Shores. The Municipality invested in its parks system over the past decade through the addition of new parks (e.g. Forest X-Park), redevelopment of existing parks (e.g. Thedford Village Green), and the addition/improvement of various park-based amenities within them. RLSMP Update consultations revealed that residents are happy with the existing parks system but would appreciate additional investments to acquire new parks and improve facilities and amenities within them.

Supply & Classification System

The Municipality of Lambton Shores maintains a total of 23 active parks, beaches and marina areas equalling 52 hectares of parkland (including 7.7 hectares leased from the Esli Dodge Conservation Area). This equates to a provision rate of 4.9 hectares per 1,000 residents based on the 2016 Census population of 10,656.

Park and facility mapping for Lambton Shores is currently in the process of being updated as part of Municipal website improvements. This will allow the Municipality to better track inventories and demonstrates progress on a recommendation from the 2011 Master Plan.

Table 2: Inventory of Municipal parks, beaches, and waterfront facilities

Arkona CC Park	Grand Bend Lions Park	River Road / Alberta Street Park
Coultis Park	Klondyke Sports Park	Rotary Civic Square
Crescent Street Parkette	Legacy Centre Park	Shipley's Grove & McRae Park
Eilber Street Park	Optimist Children's Park	Sphere Park
Frances Drive Park	Pleasure Park	Thedford Village Green
Grand Bend Beach	Port Franks CC Park	Utter Park
Grand Bend Marina	Port Franks Marina	Whyte Park

Note: Esli Dodge Conservation Area (7.77 ha) is leased from a Conservation Authority

Key Accomplishments

- Parkland mapping has been improved and updated through municipal website updates
- Trails Feasibility Study for Port Franks and Ipperwash was completed in 2017
- A Grand Bend Research and Consultation Initiative was undertaken in 2010-2011 and recommendations from that plan were incorporated in the Grand Bend Beach Use Policy

Table 3: Overview of Lambton Shores Municipal Parkland Classification System

Major Parks	<p>Major parks are intended to provide a broad range of active and passive recreational opportunities, and will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • incorporate environmentally significant natural areas wherever feasible; • provide large open areas which can facilitate active sports activities; • provide for low intensity passive recreational activities easily accessible to residents throughout the Municipality; and • be located on or near an Arterial Road or Collector Road wherever possible.
Community Parks	<p>Community parks will provide outdoor recreation facilities serving several residential neighbourhoods within the Municipality, provide a focal point for community activities, and will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide for active recreational activities predominantly; • be accessible to the neighbourhood and where possible subdivision plans should incorporate walkways to new or existing parks; • incorporate elements of the natural environment wherever feasible; • be located on a Collector or Arterial Road; and • be integrated with a school playing field if possible, where shared use of parkland can be facilitated.
Neighbourhood Parks	<p>Neighbourhood parks will generally consist of small children's play facilities at the neighbourhood level and greenbelt areas that serve individual neighbourhoods within a community, and will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be centrally located within a neighbourhood and accessible to pedestrians; • provide opportunities for minor recreational activities; • provide opportunities for passive enjoyment of the environment; • be located in conjunction with an elementary school, where feasible, in which case no physical barriers shall be created to separate complementary facilities; and • be located on a Collector or Local Road.

Source: 2011 Recreation and Leisure Services Master Plan

The Municipality's Official Plan contains provision guidelines for parkland acquisition, including the need for any multiple unit residential development over 25 units to incorporate private parkettes and encouraging the development of agreements with organizations (e.g., school boards, public service clubs, etc.) to promote the use of non-municipal open space and facilities for recreation purposes. The Official Plan also outlines acceptable uses and locations for Major Parks, Community Parks and Neighbourhood Parks, but does not currently contain provision standards for these classifications or municipal parkland in general. The Official Plan also outlines permitted uses for the Lakeshore area, including conservation, parks, public and private open space, beaches and associated recreational activities, similar recreational uses, and public works.

In addition to the Municipality's parks, there are a number of non-municipal areas which can be accessed by residents including (but not limited to):

- **Esli Dodge Conservation Area** has been designed as an amphitheatre for plays and concerts, with a variety of amenities including playground equipment, picnic areas, a pavilion, washrooms, open green space, tennis courts, parking, a man-made lake and island, and walking paths.
- **Pinery Provincial Park** provides 6,330 acres of parkland, including flora and fauna, coastal dunes, the largest protected forest in Southwestern Ontario, a globally rare Oak Savanna ecosystem, 10 kilometres of beach, 10 nature trails and 38 kilometres of ski trails. There are 1,000 campsites and 12 yurts available for rental at the park, as well as a general store, restaurant, visitor's centre, and gift store.
- **Rock Glen Conservation Area** is owned and maintained by the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority and includes the Arkona Lions Museum and Information Centre, a 10.7-metre-high waterfall, trails, boardwalks, and a scenic lookout. The Conservation Area also has public washrooms and two picnic pavilions.

Parkland Needs

The 2011 Master Plan recommendation of 4.0 ha of parkland per 1,000 residents remains applicable for Lambton Shores. Many comparable municipalities employ a similar standard to better understand the proportion of parkland available to residents. The actual varies considerably depending upon factors such as: population size, distribution, and density; geographic land area of the municipality; and the availability of public access to parks and natural areas located on Crown, Conservation Authority, School Board or privately held lands.

Table 7 evaluates the current supply of parkland and incorporates the impact of anticipated population growth on that supply. The current supply is expected to meet the provision standard of 4.0 ha/1,000 for the foreseeable future. This is a significant deviation from the population and parkland needs estimated included in the 2011 Plan. The Municipality has not yet experienced the population growth projected during the last phase of assessment and as a result supply remains sufficient. That being said, this does not preclude the Municipality from considering acquisition or disposal of parkland given appropriate circumstances.

Table 4: Parkland Supply and Needs, Lambton Shores

Parkland	2016	2022	2027
Forecasted Population	10,656	11,047	11,394
Supply*	51.8	51.8	51.8
Parkland Provision Target	4.0 hectares per 1,000 permanent and seasonal residents		
Provision Rate (ha/1,000)	4.9	4.7	4.5
Parkland Needed	42.6	44.2	45.6
Surplus / Deficit (ha)	+9.2	+7.6	+6.2

*Supply includes 44.1 hectares of municipally-owned parkland 7.7 hectares leased from Esli Dodge Conservation Area

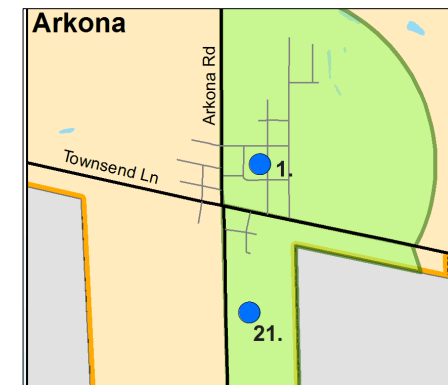
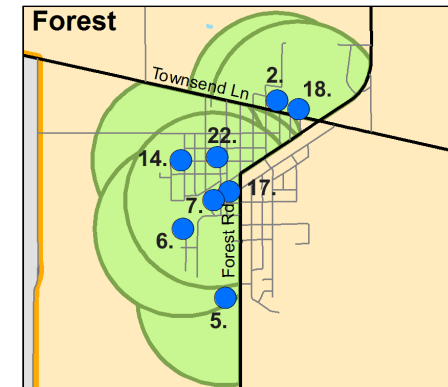
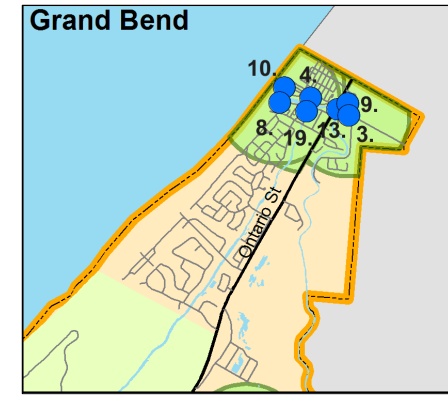
Parkland Distribution

As was discussed in the 2011 RLSMP, the Municipality should encourage access to some form of Major, Community, or Neighbourhood Park typology within an 800-metre radius of major residential areas within the urban settlements (about a ten-minute walk time). Major pedestrian barriers such as rivers, highways, rail lines, etc. would need to be factored into the service radius as it is not reasonable or feasible for people to cross them.

Figure 14 shows that Lambton Shores still has strong distribution of parkland throughout the urban settlements. Some of the gaps identified in the previous RLSMP (e.g., south-east Forest, west Arkona, and southern Grand Bend) remain but many are serviced by alternate spaces. Despite some identified gaps in parkland provision, most settlement areas in Lambton Shores are well-served by a combination of public, school board, conservation authority, and privately-owned parks and open spaces.

While it may not always be possible to improve parkland supplies in established neighbourhoods as they are already built-up, the Municipality has a greater ability to acquire parkland in growing communities and new subdivisions through the development process or land acquisition.

Figure 14: Map of Parkland Distribution in Lambton Shores



Trails System

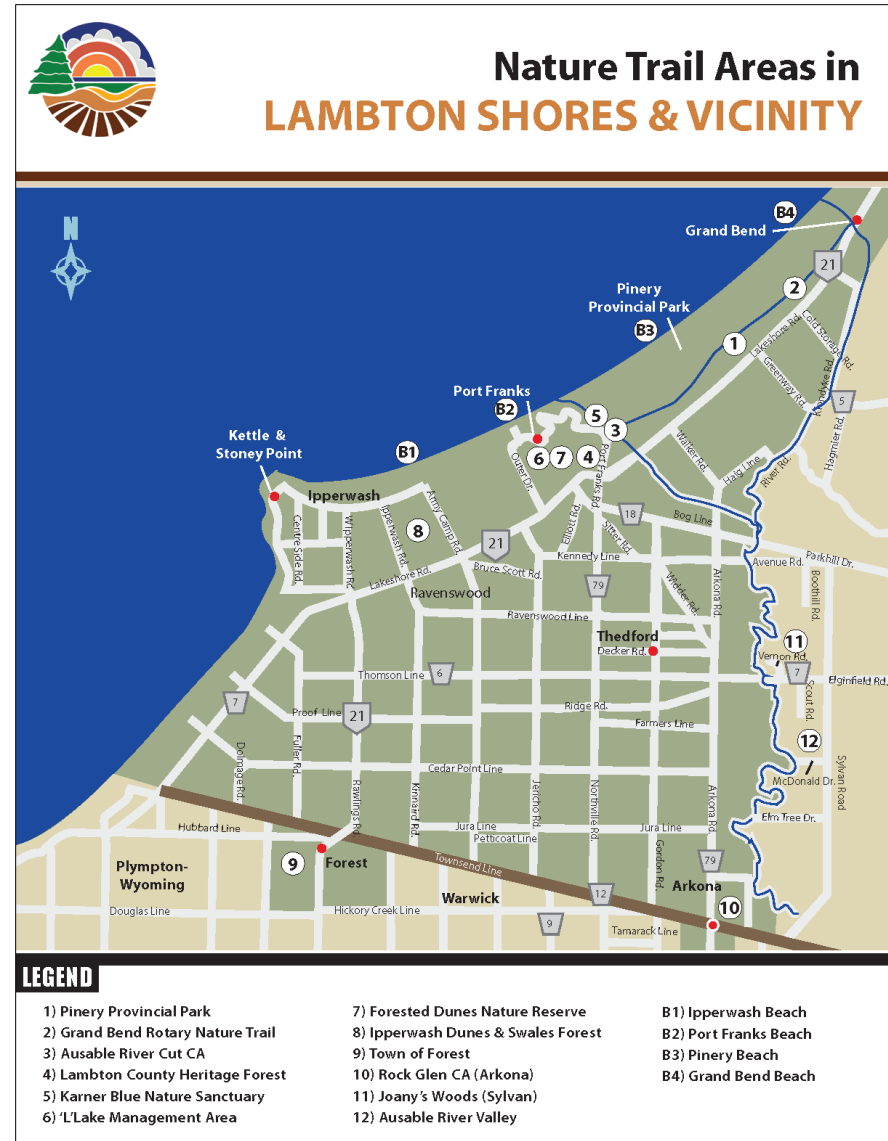
There are numerous trail systems located in the municipality of Lambton Shores, two of which are owned and maintained by the municipality and they are described in detail in Table 8. In 2017 the Municipality hired a consultant to produce a Feasibility Study and Preliminary Design Report for Port Franks and Ipperwash Trail Construction. This study includes details on existing conditions, preliminary designs, a strategic plan and budget updates intended to build a connection between the two communities. This is an excellent step toward a comprehensive and connected trails network throughout Lambton Shores.

The public consultation program revealed strong public interest in the use of municipal trails for activities such as hiking, walking, jogging, cycling, and cross-country skiing. Walking or jogging was the most popular recreation and leisure activity reported through the community survey with a participation rate of 89% in the last year. Additional investment was strongly supported by survey respondents with 73% support for nature trails and 72% support for paved multi-use trails.

The County of Lambton and a local interest group (Lambton Shores Nature Trails) also help to maintain trails, provide mapping, and details of various routes and pathways throughout the Municipality. The Municipality of Lambton Shores is part of the Great Lakes Waterfront Trail Network and is currently working with the Provincial Ministry of Transportation to close gaps/address challenge areas along local highways (Highway 21). To further develop the existing trails network, the Municipality should work in coordination with local interest groups and the County to develop a Trails/Active Transportation Master Plan to guide long-term development of trail routes throughout all of Lambton Shores.

Table 5: Overview of Lambton Shores Network of Public Access Trails

Forest Walkway Trail	2.7 kilometres long, beginning at the Rotary Civic Square and linking with the Esli Dodge Conservation Area
Grand Bend Rotary Trail	Runs along Highway 21 in Grand Bend, providing 9 kilometres of paved trail for biking, walking or running, and offers excellent opportunities to observe wildlife and various plant species.
Port Franks Trail System	11 kilometres of trails that extend through wetlands and forested dunes, providing opportunities for walking and hiking – County of Lambton owned and maintained
Grand Trunk Trail	4 kilometres of trail along an abandoned rail line. The flat gravel surface extends 2 kilometres to Brush Road and returns 2 kilometres back to the start.
Additional Trails	There are 10 nature trails and 38 kilometres of ski trails within Pinery Provincial Park, as well as trails within Rock Glen Conservation Area, also trails in Ipperwash Dunes and Swales – none of which are Municipally-owned



Source: Lambton County Trails, 2012

Waterfront & Beach Areas

Lambton Shores' waterfront is one of the Municipality's most valuable assets and an important part of the parks system. With regard to beach areas, the Municipality owns and operates the Grand Bend Beach though residents and visitors are also able to access the waterfront through the Ipperwash Beach, the Pinery Provincial Park (Crown lands), several private beaches, as well as a riverfront and waterfall at the Rock Glen Conservation Area (under the purview of the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority). In addition, the Ausable River flows through the Municipality, spilling into Lake Huron in Port Franks. The River serves as a venue for recreation by providing boat access to Lake Huron through the Port Franks Marina. Both the Port Franks Marina and the Grand Bend Marina allow access to the waterfront, with slips for both visiting and local boats, as well as public boat launches, public washrooms and other amenities. The Municipality operates two public boat launches through the Grand Bend Marina and at the Port Franks Marina, amounting to a service level of one launch site per 5,300 residents.

As a waterfront community, boating and aquatic leisure activities are very popular, particularly during peak tourism season in July and August. Community consultation revealed that there is significant demand for additional public water access, including parking for vehicles and trailers (where appropriate). According to the RLSMP Update community survey, two-thirds of respondents participated in beach activities in the last 12 months, ranking as the second most popular recreation and leisure activity. Other popular waterfront or beach activities were canoeing, kayaking, paddle boarding (38%) and boating (35%). Boat launches received support for additional investment from just over half (52%) of survey respondents, while 67% supported additional spending on general waterfront parks and facilities. Open-ended or written-in responses to the survey and launch event included a number of requests for additional waterfront access (e.g., boat launches, flat-water activity entry points, etc.) and improved maintenance of public beaches (Ipperwash, in particular).



Many attendees at the Launch Event supported investment in boat launches and waterfront access, particularly for flat-water activities such as canoeing and kayaking. Additional consultation revealed that vehicular congestion around Grand Bend's boat ramp can be problematic and requires directional signage or traffic mitigation measures. It is recognized that the Municipality is developing a design for the reconstruction of River Road which will consider improvements to vehicular and pedestrian traffic in this area.

Active leisure pursuits are becoming increasingly popular, especially in municipalities with seasonal populations such as Lambton Shores. There is growing demand for waterfront recreational activities such as parasailing, stand up paddle-boarding and boating. Lambton Shores is fortunate to have access to scenic waterfront and beach areas at a variety of locations throughout the Municipality, as a result it is expected that there will be significant demand for water sports and aquatic programming. The Municipality currently holds dockage agreements for seadoos and parasailing to accommodate this demand, and is recommended to continue to doing so provided that associated usage does not negatively affect the experience of other beach and waterfront users.

Natural Heritage Areas

Lambton Shores has a number of significant ecological areas, particularly riparian zones along the creek systems draining into Lake Huron. Many municipalities are making efforts to provide passive areas that incorporate native plant species, conserve woodlots, and ensure that certain areas of new active parks remain in a natural state. With the interest in outdoor recreation, many municipalities are also designing parks to include provisions for bird watching, wildlife viewing and capitalizing on eco-tourism opportunities. The natural heritage system is an important component of the Municipality of Lambton Shores' open space system. The core components of the natural heritage generally consist of:

- Significant woodlots;
- Wetlands and lakes;

- Watercourses and valleylands;
- Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSIs);
- Significant areas of flora and fauna; and
- Areas containing endangered species (vegetation, amphibians, wildlife, etc.).

Attendees at the launch event expressed interest in promotion of Lambton Shores' natural heritage by installing signage along trails and in parks to explain the local flora and fauna and encouraging ecological tourism in the area.

Parkland Acquisition Strategies

Parkland Dedication

There are several provincial and municipal regulations, policies, and guidelines governing the acquisition and location of parkland, with the *Planning Act* and the Lambton Shores Official Plan being the primary tools for implementation.

Under the authority of the Ontario Planning Act, the Municipality of Lambton Shores Official Plan prescribes conveyance for park purposes in residential areas at 5% of land or 1 hectare per each 300 dwelling units proposed (or cash-in-lieu thereof). With respect to industrial / commercial lands, a 2% conveyance (or cash-in-lieu thereof) is articulated and should continue to be collected. It is recommended that when additional parkland is not required, cash-in-lieu should be collected based upon the cost of land prior to building permit(s) being issued (i.e., when land is fully serviced in order to maximize cash-in-lieu received).

Passive lands (e.g., woodlots, valley lands and/or hazard lands) should continue to be obtained by way of opportunity rather than through the parkland dedication process, as is the Municipality's right under the Planning Act (this is reinforced through the Municipality's Official Plan parkland dedication policies). Research suggests that environmental policies mandated through various municipal, regional and provincial channels

should be sufficiently strong to protect many of these areas from development. The Municipality's Official Plan also provides for development restrictions if areas are classified as hazard and environmental protection areas (EPAs) or if they are adjacent to defined wetlands, areas of natural and scientific interest (ANSIs) and environmentally sensitive areas (ESAs).

Parkland Design & Amenities

The 2011 RLSMP outlined a variety of considerations for the design, operation and programming of parks and open spaces. Each of sub-sections described in the past remain critical aspects of the planning process and as such have been briefly described below with some adjustments to account for current trends in parkland usage and design.

Design & Operational Considerations

Parkland design should be multi-purpose and able to accommodate use by a multitude of users from all age-cohorts in a variety of seasons. While there is some benefit to purpose-built parks (i.e., Skateboard/BMX park) for use by their dedicated participants, many residents appreciate the convenience of inter-generational and multi-use parks and facilities.

Examples of parkland (re)development design considerations may include:

- a connected pathway or circular walking trail around the perimeter or throughout;
- common comfort amenities to enhance the user experience include public washrooms, pavilions, shelters, picnic areas, garbage cans, etc.;
- spaces for both active (e.g., sports, exercising) and passive (e.g., socializing, reading) recreation and leisure activities; and

- amenities for all users including: children (e.g., play equipment, open space, spray features); youth (e.g., sports fields, hard surface courts); adults, and seniors (e.g., outdoor exercise equipment, walking paths, seating, shade).

Community Beautification

Investment in community beautification and horticulture can help encourage civic pride and participation in outdoor leisure activities. Strategic installation and cultivation of native plant species can also support growth of supportive insect and animal species helping to create a beautiful and unified local ecosystem.

Lambton Shores has celebrated tremendous success through the Communities in Bloom competition in recent years, winning provincial, national and international titles. The Municipality continues to participate in varying degrees and hopes to build upon past successes.

Safety

Participant safety should remain a key consideration of park design, although framed a little differently than in the past. Experts in the field of child and youth health and wellness are encouraging children to get outside, reduce sedentary behaviours, and engage in “risky” play. Recent research has proven that children are more active, have improved cognitive and physical function, and learn how to participate more safely when given opportunities to challenge themselves through play. In practice, this suggests that new or updated playground equipment should incorporate climbing, jumping, and navigation opportunities.

Traditional safety considerations such as adequate lighting, unobstructed pathways, and high levels of visibility, among other CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) principles still remain paramount.

Environmental Integration

Lambton Shores is fortunate to be geographically located within Carolinian forest, the Ausable Gorge, freshwater costal dunes, and a globally rare Oak Savanna ecosystem. The Municipality should continue to incorporate natural heritage areas and install interpretative signage within the parks system so that residents are exposed to natural features and can facilitate their awareness of key environmental topics.

Accessibility, Comfort & Other Amenities

Municipal parks should be accessible to all: barrier free, low-to-no cost, easily identified, and evenly distributed throughout the various settlement areas. To encourage use by a variety of users, parks should offer support amenities such as washrooms, electrical outlets, benches, shade, picnic tables, etc. In response to the 2011 Master Plan's recommendations regarding these features, many of the existing permanent washrooms facilities have been updated or will be in the near future in addition to installation of portable washrooms where deemed appropriate and necessary.

Signage

The Municipality of Lambton Shores is in the process of updating signage to ensure a clear, identifiable, and consistent brand can be seen throughout the various parks and natural areas. Signage design and installation is guided by the Municipality of Lambton Shores Signage Master Plan (2017). This process will help park users (both residents and visitors) to recognize municipal parks and establish a parkland aesthetic to generate a sense of place. Interpretative and wayfinding signage can also help to build knowledge of local parkland connectivity, destinations, and the natural heritage features.

Actions & Implementation

	Strategic Direction	Stream	Timing	Resource Implications
R44	The provision of parkland should be targeted at a rate of 4.0 hectares per 1,000 residents, further subdivided according to the type of park whereby Major Parks are targeted at a rate of 2.0 hectares per 1,000 while Community and Neighbourhood Parks are targeted at a rate of 1.0 hectares per 1,000 residents, respectively.	PTBO	Ongoing	Standard operational implications associated with parkland acquisition and maintenance costs.
R45	Continue to target the provision of parkland within 800 metres of major residential areas located in the primary settlement areas (free of major pedestrian barriers such as waterways, highways and major roads, rail lines, etc.).	PTBO	Ongoing	Implementation through current roles, responsibilities and workloads.
R46	Maximize parkland dedications received through the land development process, or cash-in-lieu thereof, in accordance with the Ontario Planning Act.	PTBO	Ongoing	Implementation through current roles, responsibilities and workloads.
R47	Undertake a Trails Master Plan (or Active Transportation Master Plan) that guides the ongoing development of the on-road and off-road trails system in Lambton Shores. Consideration should be given to creating connections with County/Provincial trail networks as well as enhancing connectivity along waterfront trail routes.	PTBO	Ongoing	Consultant Fees (\$50,000)
R48	The Municipality should continue to design parks that incorporate natural, indigenous vegetation features in order to foster an appreciation for such areas and maintain crucial ecological functions (e.g., dune grass, Carolinian forest, etc.).	PTBO	Ongoing	Implementation through current roles, responsibilities and workloads.

	Strategic Direction	Stream	Timing	Resource Implications
R49	Through the Official Plan review, the Municipality should adopt a policy that states parks should be at least 1.2 hectares in size, unless otherwise deemed appropriate.	PTBO	At the time of an Official Plan Review or Update	Implementation through current roles, responsibilities and workloads.
R50	Future design of parkland should consider: operational efficiencies; community beautification; safety; environmental integration; accessibility, comfort and other amenities; unstructured recreation areas; and signage.	PTBO	Ongoing	Standard operational implications associated with parkland acquisition and maintenance costs.

Appendices

Appendix A Glossary of Terms

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

Culture includes the arts, cultural industries and heritage resources. As per Ontario's Culture Strategy, it is a community's past, present, and future that fosters awareness of local creative knowledge, skills and talents.

Leisure is a combination of all recreation, cultural, creative, intellectual and social activities that a person or group pursues in their free time for the purposes of personal satisfaction and development.

Parks refer to lands owned, leased, and/or managed by the Municipality that are developed and maintained primarily for active or passive recreational use by the community. Parks typically contain built recreational or community amenities (such as sports fields, playgrounds, cenotaph, etc.) and are used for both organized and unorganized activities. In Lambton Shores, three classes of parks are defined within the Official Plan and are acquired through various means, including dedication under the *Planning Act*.

Trails represent linear parcels of parkland used for travel, often by foot, bike, cross-country skiing, inline skating or horseback riding. Trails often run through a naturalized environment, providing opportunities for appreciating flora and fauna, and may be paved, dirt (unpaved), grass or utilize other materials such as wood chips or gravel. In Lambton Shores, both paved and unpaved trails are available.

Beaches are shorelines that are made up of sand, stones, gravel or other forms of rock, and beaches are formed over time by the constant ebb and flow of the water. The Municipality of Lambton Shores owns and operates one beach (Grand Bend Beach), but residents and visitors make use of Ipperwash Beach, Pinery Provincial Park Beach and private beaches as well.

Open Space Lands are intended to provide for the protection and conservation of systems and to recognize other pockets of land requiring protection from development (e.g., hazard lands, environmental protection lands, environmentally sensitive areas, etc.). In general, open spaces allow for the provision of: physical and visual linkages within the Municipality; pedestrian and bicycle paths; connections between parks and open spaces; and access to valleys and waterfront areas.

Acronyms

RLSMP: Recreation & Leisure Services Master Plan

CRFS: Culture & Recreation Facilities and Service Strategies (contained in Actions & Implementation Tables)

FMS: Financing, Management & Staff Strategies (contained in the Actions & Implementation Tables)

PTBO: Parks, Trails, Beach & Open Space Strategies (contained in the Actions & Implementation Tables)

CHC: Community Health Centre

LKDSB: Lambton Kent District School Board

SCCDSB: St. Clair Catholic District School Board

MNRF: Ministry of Natural Resources & Forestry

Appendix B Background Documents Reviewed

- **Municipality of Lambton Shores** Recreation and Leisure Services Master Plan (2011)
- **Municipality of Lambton Shores** Official Plan
- **Municipality of Lambton Shores** Feasibility Study and Preliminary Design – Port Franks and Ipperwash Trail Construction (2017)
- **Municipality of Lambton Shores** Development Charges Background Study (2017)
- **Municipality of Lambton Shores** Council's 2015 – 2018 Action Plan (2015)
- **Municipality of Lambton Shores** Grand Bend Beach Research and Consultation Initiatives (2011)
- **Municipality of Lambton Shores** Ipperwash Community Design Plan (2015)
- **Municipality of Lambton Shores** Port Franks Community Design Plan Update (2015)
- **Municipality of Lambton Shores** Registration Numbers
- **Municipality of Lambton Shores** Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2017-2019)
- **Lambton County** Cultural Plan (2010)
- **County of Lambton** Official Plan
- **County of Lambton** Background Report No. 9 Culture and Heritage (2015)
- **Grand Bend Community Improvement Coalition** Discovery (Phase 1) Report of the CIC Community Centre and Outdoor Rink Feasibility Project (2015)
- **Canadian Parks and Recreation Association** A Framework for Recreation in Canada (2015)

Appendix C Online Survey Tabulations

- 1 In the past 12 months, which of the following recreational or leisure activities have you or anyone in your household participated in, in Lambton Shores or elsewhere? By participation, we mean situations where you or a member of your household actively participate (which does not include attending an event or watching others), either at home or in public.

Activity	#	%
Walking or Jogging	471	89%
Beach Activities	349	66%
Personal Fitness such as Aerobics, Yoga or Weight-training	276	52%
Swimming (Recreational)	265	50%
Dog Walking (on or off leash)	235	44%
Festivals or Fairs in Parks	205	39%
Use of Playground Equipment	203	38%
Canoeing, Kayaking, Paddle Boarding	199	38%
Boating	187	35%
Use of a Splash Pad	171	32%
Performing Arts (e.g. music, drama, dance)	166	31%
Ice Sports such as Hockey, Ringette or Skating	166	31%
Family or Community Picnics in Parks	145	27%
Bird Watching	128	24%
Gymnasium Sports such as Basketball, Volleyball or Badminton	99	19%
Baseball or Softball	87	16%
Organized Seniors Programs (e.g. luncheons, cards, special interest courses)	80	15%
Visual Arts (e.g. pottery, drawing)	79	15%
Swimming (Instructional or Aquafit)	76	14%
Soccer	62	12%
Organized Youth / Teen Programs (e.g. summer camps, youth club)	51	10%
Pre-School or Children's Programs (e.g. Early Years, drop-in)	50	9%
Tennis	48	9%

continued...

Activity	#	%
Pickleball - Indoor	43	8%
Pickleball - Outdoor	40	8%
Curling	35	7%
Basketball - Outdoor	34	6%
Volleyball - Outdoor	32	6%
Skateboarding	20	4%
Shuffleboard	19	4%
BMX Biking	12	2%
Football or Rugby	3	1%
None of the above	4	1%
Cycling (on-road)	0	0%
Cycling (off-road)	0	0%
answered question	530	

- 2 Where does your household primarily participate in recreation and leisure activities?
(select up to three responses)

Location	#	%
Public beach	294	57%
Public park or facility in the Municipality of Lambton Shores	261	51%
At home	237	46%
Conservation Area, Provincial/National Park	150	29%
Lakes and Rivers	150	29%
Private recreation facility or club	104	20%
Public park or facility in another municipality	90	18%
School	34	7%
Other (please specify)	0	0%
answered question	512	
skipped question	18	

- 3 Which of the following community centres have you or members of your household used in the past 12 months?
(select all that apply)

Facility	#	%
The Shores Recreation Centre (Forest)	185	36%
Legacy Centre (Thedford)	145	28%
Port Franks Community Centre	125	24%
Grand Bend Recreation Centre	100	20%
Kimball Hall (Forest)	98	19%
Grand Bend Art and Youth Centre	45	9%
Arkona Seniors Centre	21	4%
Thedford Village Complex	21	4%
Arkona Community Centre	16	3%
Have not visited a Lambton Shores' community centre in the past 12 months	150	29%
answered question	512	
skipped question	18	

- 4 Which of the following parks have you or members of your household used in the past 12 months? (select all that apply)

Municipal Parks	#	%
Grand Bend Beach	336	66%
Grand Bend Harbour	220	43%
Grand Bend Lions Park	124	24%
Port Franks Community Centre Park	104	20%
Grand Bend - Optimist Children's Park	104	20%
Forest - Esli Dodge Conservation Area	104	20%
Port Franks Marina	73	14%
Forest - Coultis Park	56	11%
Forest - Rotary Civic Square	54	11%
Klondyke Sports Park	50	10%
Thedford - Legacy Centre Park	48	9%

Municipal Parks	#	%
Arkona - Utter Park	41	8%
Forest - Pleasure Park	35	7%
Arkona Community Centre Park	32	6%
Thedford Village Green	24	5%
Forest - Shipley's Grove & McRae Park	18	4%
Forest - Whyte Park	16	3%
Forest X-Park	7	1%
Other (please specify)	0	0%
Have not visited a Lambton Shores' park in the past 12 months	41	8%
answered question	512	
skipped question	18	

- 5 Are you and members of your household able to participate in recreation and leisure activities as often as you would like?

Response	#	%
Yes	247	51%
No	242	49%
answered question	489	
don't know	23	
skipped question	41	

6 Why are you and members of your household not able to participate in recreation and leisure activities as often as you would like?

Response	#	%
Lack of recreation facilities	125	52%
Lack of program / activity choices	92	38%
Lack of personal time / Too busy	61	25%
Activity not offered at a convenient time	31	13%
Lack of information / Unaware of opportunities	32	13%
Lack of money / Too expensive	24	10%
Health problems / Disability / Age	14	6%
Lack of transportation / Park is too far away	13	5%
Lack of parks	5	2%
Lack of child care	2	1%
Language / Cultural Barrier	0	0%
Not interested in participating in recreation pursuits	1	0%
Other (please specify)	0	0%
answered question	240	
don't know	1	
skipped question	290	

7 Generally, what proportion of your household's parks and recreation needs are met within the Municipality of Lambton Shores?

Response	#	%
All (100%)	42	9%
Most (67-99%)	150	31%
About Half (34-66%)	155	32%
Some (1-33%)	119	25%
None (0%)	17	4%
answered question	483	
don't know	23	
skipped question	47	

8 What two activities do you or members of your household participate in most frequently outside of Lambton Shores?

Open-ended

9 Where do you primarily participate in these activities?

Location	#
Other Parts of Ontario (beyond Lambton County)	233
London	128
South Huron	64
Sarnia	54
Bluewater	43
Plympton-Wyoming	28
United States	23
Strathroy	16

10 Why does your household participate in these activities outside of Lambton Shores? (select up to three responses)

Response	#	%	Response	#	%
Park/facility/program is not available in the Municipality	202	50%	Closer to home	53	13%
"Connected" to other community / used to live there	84	21%	Less expensive	38	9%
Quality of park/facility/program is superior	85	21%	Don't know	28	7%
Closer to home	53	13%	Other	0	0%
Tournaments / Special Events / travel teams	39	10%			
Park/facility/program not available at the preferred time	38	9%			
answered question	408				
skipped question	122				

- 11 Are there any parks and recreation facilities or activities that your household would like to see offered in Lambton Shores that do not currently exist?

Response	#	%
Yes	314	85%
No	54	15%
answered question	368	
don't know	102	
skipped question	162	

- 12 What facilities or activities would your household like to see offered in Lambton Shores that do NOT currently exist?

Response Summary	#
Fitness Facility (e.g., studio, weights, cardio, classes)	92
Pool (includes both indoor and outdoor)	89
Track (any request for indoor walking facility)	41
Community Centre* (e.g. event spaces, meeting rooms, etc.)	55
Trails (for walking, hiking, cross country skiing, etc.)	28
Dog Park	23
Pickleball	18
Ice Pads (17 indoor, 14 outdoor)	31
Cycling (trails, road signs, programs, user groups)	13
Boating (launch sites, water access, programs, etc.)	10
Culture (facilities and programs)	9
Beaches (cleanliness, amenities, etc.)	8
Splash Pad	7
Child and Youth (spaces and programs)	7
Other (less than five requests)	2
answered question	303

*32 of these requests indicated Grand Bend specifically

13 In general, how important are the following items to your household?

Statement	Very Important		Important		Neither Important or Not Important		Not Important		Not At All Important		Total	Don't Know
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	#
Indoor Recreation Facilities	232	51%	140	31%	48	11%	21	5%	14	3%	455	1
Arts and Cultural Facilities	120	27%	181	40%	103	23%	27	6%	17	4%	448	3
Waterfront Parks and Facilities	233	52%	142	32%	53	12%	10	2%	6	1%	444	1
Sports Fields	132	31%	158	37%	82	19%	40	9%	18	4%	430	4
Outdoor Recreation Facilities	185	42%	171	39%	61	14%	17	4%	9	2%	443	2
Passive Parks	224	50%	162	36%	50	11%	9	2%	2	0%	447	3
Active Transportation Amenities	295	65%	129	29%	21	5%	4	1%	2	0%	451	2
Cultural & Natural Heritage	85	19%	167	37%	148	33%	35	8%	11	2%	446	4
answered question	460											
skipped question	70											

14 Thinking about those facilities that currently exist in the Municipality of Lambton Shores, what is your level of satisfaction with the following?

Statement	Very Satisfied		Satisfied		Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied		Not Satisfied		Not At All Satisfied		Total	Don't Know
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	#
Indoor Recreation Facilities	68	16%	129	30%	84	20%	102	24%	41	10%	424	30
Arts and Cultural Facilities	28	7%	164	40%	159	39%	51	12%	7	2%	409	41
Waterfront Parks and Facilities	69	16%	203	47%	104	24%	54	12%	5	1%	435	16
Sports Fields	27	7%	194	51%	135	35%	26	7%	2	1%	384	52
Outdoor Recreation Facilities	40	9%	204	48%	115	27%	54	13%	9	2%	422	29
Passive Parks	51	12%	183	43%	130	31%	50	12%	10	2%	424	25
Active Transportation Amenities	36	8%	156	36%	107	24%	119	27%	21	5%	439	13
Cultural & Natural Heritage	18	5%	130	33%	200	51%	38	10%	5	1%	391	51
answered question	458											
skipped question	72											

- 15 To what degree do you oppose or support the Municipality spending additional public funds on building or improving the following parks and recreation facility types? Please consider that additional funding might require property tax increases.

Parks & Recreation Facilities	Strongly Support		Support		Neither Oppose nor Support		Oppose		Strongly Oppose		Total	Don't Know
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	#
Park Washrooms	174	40%	202	47%	46	11%	6	1%	3	1%	431	4
Space for Older Adult / Seniors Programs	181	42%	178	41%	57	13%	14	3%	5	1%	435	5
Seating/Benches in Parks	106	25%	215	50%	91	21%	13	3%	4	1%	429	7
Space for Youth / Teen Programs	139	33%	182	43%	87	20%	14	3%	3	1%	425	11
Nature Trails	134	31%	179	42%	89	21%	21	5%	3	1%	426	4
Paved Multi-Use Trails	117	27%	192	45%	82	19%	23	5%	13	3%	427	4
Playgrounds	99	23%	200	47%	104	24%	17	4%	5	1%	425	5
Park Pavilions / Shade Shelters	98	23%	198	47%	103	24%	18	4%	7	2%	424	8
Waterfront Parks and Facilities	108	25%	185	43%	99	23%	26	6%	11	3%	429	6
Group Fitness Studios	135	32%	144	34%	105	25%	32	7%	12	3%	428	5
Fitness Centres with Weights / Cardio	144	33%	139	32%	103	24%	32	7%	15	3%	433	7
Gymnasiums	111	26%	153	36%	113	27%	33	8%	12	3%	422	9
Acquisition of Parks and Open Space	90	21%	169	40%	121	29%	31	7%	9	2%	420	7
Festival / Special Event Space	71	16%	192	44%	128	30%	32	7%	10	2%	433	7
Splash Pads	84	20%	162	39%	122	29%	35	8%	16	4%	419	7
Boat Launches	93	22%	132	31%	144	34%	35	8%	17	4%	421	12
Soccer Fields	49	12%	173	41%	169	40%	24	6%	5	1%	420	9
Baseball or Softball Diamonds	49	12%	166	40%	168	40%	28	7%	5	1%	416	10
Off-Leash Dog Parks	110	26%	105	25%	129	30%	52	12%	27	6%	423	10
Arenas	74	17%	138	33%	128	30%	58	14%	25	6%	423	7
Tennis Courts	43	10%	167	40%	172	41%	27	6%	9	2%	418	10
Pickleball Courts	84	21%	121	30%	169	41%	25	6%	9	2%	408	23
Performing Arts Space	66	16%	136	32%	170	40%	39	9%	12	3%	423	10
Community Allotment Gardens	54	13%	136	33%	178	43%	35	8%	13	3%	416	13

Parks & Recreation Facilities	Strongly Support		Support		Neither Oppose nor Support		Oppose		Strongly Oppose		Total	Don't Know
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	#
Basketball Courts (outdoor)	41	10%	150	36%	191	45%	33	8%	7	2%	422	10
Arts and Crafts Studios	48	11%	139	33%	186	44%	34	8%	13	3%	420	10
Museums / Galleries / Exhibition Spaces	38	9%	149	35%	184	44%	39	9%	12	3%	422	11
Skateboard Parks	31	7%	99	24%	190	46%	72	17%	24	6%	416	12
Other high priorities (please specify)	0		0		0		0		0		0	0
answered question	447											
skipped question	83											

16 Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

Statement	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neither Agree nor Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Totals	Don't Know
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	#
You can easily access Municipal parks and recreation services from where you live.	54	13%	249	58%	68	16%	45	10%	14	3%	430	5
The Municipality's parks and recreation facilities are well maintained.	40	10%	251	60%	83	20%	40	10%	7	2%	421	14
Investment in parks and recreation facilities should be a high priority for Lambton Shores' Council.	156	36%	199	46%	60	14%	9	2%	5	1%	429	4
Investment in arts and cultural facilities should be a high priority for Lambton Shores' Council	54	13%	134	32%	169	40%	56	13%	11	3%	424	8
The Municipality's parks and recreation services are effective in meeting the needs of all ages, including teens and older adults.	29	7%	112	28%	131	32%	102	25%	30	7%	404	26
Community fundraising should be used to help offset park and facility improvement costs.	66	16%	210	50%	111	26%	24	6%	8	2%	419	10
My household feels well informed about local recreation events and activities	24	6%	137	32%	146	34%	97	23%	20	5%	424	11
My household feels well informed about local arts and cultural events and activities	17	4%	129	31%	164	39%	95	23%	17	4%	422	11
answered question	436											
skipped question	94											

- 17 What is the best way for the Municipality to inform you about its parks, recreation and culture services?
(select all the apply)

Communication Options	#	%
Municipality of Lambton Shores website	278	64%
Facebook / Twitter	262	60%
Email	231	53%
Newspaper	161	37%

Communication Options	#	%
Posts / Flyers	127	29%
Newsletter	122	28%
Other (please specify)	0	0%
answered question	437	
skipped question	93	

- 18 Please provide any additional comments you may have regarding the Municipality of Lambton Shores' parks and recreation system.

Detailed open-ended responses have been considered throughout the development of the RLSMP update but verbatim comments have not been included in this summary file.

- 19 How many people, including yourself, live in your household?

	#
Mean	3.1
Median	2
Mode	2
answered question	430
skipped question	100

20 Please indicate the total number of people within your household that fall into the following age categories.

	#	%			
Under 10 years	137	11%	35-54 years	272	22%
10-19 years	160	13%	55-69 years	389	31%
20-34 years	161	13%	70 years or older	117	9%
			Total persons	1236	N/A
			answered question	426	
			skipped question	104	

21 How old are you?

	#	%		#	%
25 years or younger	3	1%	56 - 65 years	146	35%
26 - 35 years	47	11%	66 - 75 years	96	23%
36 - 45 years	60	14%	76 years or older	12	3%
46 - 55 years	59	14%			
			answered question	423	
			skipped question	107	

22 Are you a resident of the Municipality of Lambton Shores?

	#	%
Permanent Resident	336	77%
Seasonal Resident	62	14%
No	31	7%
Unsure	5	1%
answered question	434	
skipped question	96	

23 If you are a seasonal resident of the Municipality of Lambton Shores, in which community do you permanently reside?

OPEN ENDED	#	OPEN ENDED	#
London	10	International	5
Waterloo Region	7	Neighbouring Counties	4
Greater Toronto Area	5	Other	10
		answered question	44
		skipped question	N/A

24 If you are not a resident of the Municipality of Lambton Shores, in which community do you reside?

OPEN ENDED	#	OPEN ENDED	#
South Huron	10	International	5
Bluewater	8	Neighbouring Counties	4
Plympton-Wyoming	5	Other	10
Parkhill	2	answered question	44
Other	4	skipped question	N/A
		answered question	29
		skipped question	501

25 Which of the following settlement areas is your residence located in?

	#	%	OPEN ENDED	#	%
Arkona	12	4%	Ipperwash	22	6%
Bosanquet	15	4%	Port Franks	33	10%
Forest	61	18%	Thedford	9	3%
Grand Bend	164	48%	Rural Area	24	7%
			answered question	340	
			skipped question	190	

Appendix D RLSMP Launch Event & Conference Notes

1 What do you **like most** about the parks, recreation, and culture services offered to the residents of Lambton Shores?

- **Waterfront Parks & Amenities:** residents enjoy the ability to frequent places such as Pinery Provincial Park, Grand Bend Rotary Stage, and Grand Bend Marina.
- **Trails:** attendees commonly identified participation in walking, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, hiking, running, cycling, etc. There was specific mention of the Rotary Trail, Lambton Shores Nature Trails (organization).
- **Recreation:** Residents are pleased with the quality and maintenance of their local recreation facilities, sports fields, parks, and playgrounds. Some attendees specifically mentioned that they are proud to host regional and provincial events such as the Silver Stick Hockey Tournament at local arenas.
- **Culture:** attendees were very satisfied with recent investment and promotion of arts and cultural events in the Municipality such as weekly performances at the Rotary Stage, events held at the museum, and programming available at the Arts Centre.
- **Services:** Municipal staff were found to be very helpful and attendees truly appreciate volunteers in community for their contributions to sports and programming
- **Partnerships:** thankful for operations provided by organizations such as the YMCA, conservation authorities, and Community Health Centres

2 How can the Municipality better meet the **parks and outdoor recreation needs** of your household?

- **Trails** are very popular in the community. Attendees suggested more signage to assist with information sharing and wayfinding along the trails. The signs could also be used for eco-tourism or environmental awareness (i.e., identification of various species). Other supplemental requests for trails included expansion of the paved shoulder for cycling and access to year-round washroom facilities (particularly in Port Franks and Ipperwash).
- Local residents also suggested investment in an **off-leash dog park**. It was identified that many seniors in Lambton Shores are dog owners and that a place to bring their pets would provide them with social interaction and a reason to get outside and stay active.
- Municipal **park/outdoor recreation facilities** were also a common topic of discussion. Many attendees requested additional play equipment, outdoor fitness stations, and hard surface courts for pickleball and/or tennis.
- From an **outdoor aquatics** perspective: there were multiple requests for an outdoor swimming pool for a variety of uses (e.g., swimming lessons, lane swimming, aquatic fitness, etc.)
- **Waterfront access** was also in high demand with multiple residents requesting a space to launch flat-water or self-propelled watercraft such as stand-up paddle boards, canoes, etc.
- Residents also suggested installation of an **outdoor artificial ice pad** or **skating trail**

3 How can the Municipality better meet the **indoor recreation needs** of your household?

- Community Health Centre is too small and users have outgrown the space. Residents would like community hub to still provide some health care support for seniors
- **Additional times/spaces** for indoor recreation activities such as pickleball, exercise classes, etc.
- More **public-private partnerships** to help provide adequate indoor recreation and leisure activities in Lambton Shores. Residents are willing to pay for quality programming available in the community.
- **Community Centre or Hub** in (specific requests for Grand Bend), ideally including a pool, walking track, and studio/multi-purpose space. Should also include meeting rooms, gym/exercise equipment, indoor walking, studios for classes, teaching kitchen, and social area.
- Consideration of primary users in **facility design** (accessibility, flooring for fitness classes, etc.)
- Indoor recreation and leisure opportunities **distributed throughout the Municipality**, especially during winter months when travel is difficult and outdoor activities are not available

4 How can the Municipality better meet the **arts and cultural needs** of your household?

- **Engage children and youth** in arts and culture through **programming** and day camps focused on interests such as music, drama, theatre, or culture
- If a community hub were to be established it should include a **library** as well as an **arts and cultural** space large enough for art classes, pottery, woodworking, painting, photography, etc.
- More summer music at the beach, more indoor programs through winter
- More **promotion** of arts and cultural programming and events or tours to various locations to encourage residents and visitors to engage in existing opportunities, this includes neighbouring aboriginal cultural facilities at Kettle and Stony Point.
- Residents would love more **access to arts and cultural facilities** in the Municipality such as the Huron Country Playhouse, Kineto Theatre, Rotary Band Shell, Forest Amphitheatre, etc.
- Seek **partnership opportunities** with local private businesses (winery, museums, etc.) to host cultural events or festivals. This might include paint nights, movie nights, comedy shows, dinner theatre, etc.

5 **Overall**

- Awareness and information sharing is key. Residents would request something like a weekly highlight of programs and facilities (especially during winter months)
- Promote Lambton Shores as a whole (not community-specific)
- Provide opportunities for youth in the community to be active
- Residents are limited by transportation when programs are in other settlement areas (not a far drive but winter roads are unsafe and not all have access to private vehicle)

Appendix E Recreation Facility Assessments

Outdoor Recreation Facility Needs Assessments

Park Amenities

The Municipality of Lambton Shores provides a wide variety of park amenities which are of tremendous value to the overall outdoor leisure and recreation system. They are distributed throughout the various communities within Lambton Shores and each support parks for a variety of purposes (e.g., seating for sports fields, shelters for picnic areas, etc.). Table 4 provides an inventory for such amenities provided by the Municipality.

Table 6: Inventory of Selected Park Support Amenities

Facility Type	Inventory	Locations
Covered Pavilions	7	Coultis Park; Grand Bend Lions Park; Klondyke Sports Park; Port Franks Community Centre; Port Franks Marina; Utter Park
Concessions	5	Coultis Park; Klondyke Sports Park; Shipley's Grove & McRae Park; Utter Park; Grand Bend Beach (Coultis & McRae are not currently operational)
Picnic Areas	13	Crescent Street Park; Eilber Street Park; Grand Bend Lions Park; Klondyke Sports Park; Legacy Centre Park; Optimist Children's Park; Port Franks CC Park; Port Franks Marina; Shipley's Grove & McRae Park; Sphere Park; Utter Park; Whyte Park; Wight Park

One of the key topics of discussion during the launch event was demand for additional permanent (four-season) washrooms facilities in Lambton Shores parks, particularly along the trails network. Park washrooms ranked highest of all facility types on the community survey garnering 86% support for additional spending. Third ranked was seating/benches in parks (74%) while 8th was pavilions/shade shelters (69%).



Just over one-quarter (27%) of survey respondents reported that they had used parks for family or community picnics in the last 12 months and 39% indicated that they attended festivals or fairs in the parks.

As was discussed in the trends section of this report, public parks offer respite to many and opportunity to get outdoors for activity or socialization. Particularly as older adults and seniors strive to remain active as they age, it is important for municipalities to provide structures to support a combination of active and passive use of parks. This includes additional investment in comfort or support amenities such as washroom facilities and shade structures. In addition to the ongoing washroom facility upgrades and growing complement of portable toilets the Municipality should monitor usage and demand for support amenities in parks. All outdoor facility (re)development designs should include installation of amenities such as tables, seating, and shade structures.

Indoor Recreation Facility Needs Assessments

Indoor recreation facilities remain an integral part of recreation and leisure services in Lambton Shores, and the Municipality currently provides eight such spaces with a range of amenities suitable for small or large gatherings. They are distributed throughout the various settlement areas of the Municipality and each provide unique facility and programming options. Recreation facilities provided by non-municipal organizations are excluded, although they are recognized for their contributions to the local recreation system throughout the Master Plan Update assessments and are referenced where applicable.

Indoor Leisure Facility Inventory

Facility	Supply	Location / Comments
Ice Pads	2	Legacy Centre; The Shores Recreation Centre
Gymnasias	2	Grand Bend Recreation Centre; The Shores Recreation Centre
Meeting Venues	12	Arkona CC (2); Arkona Seniors Centre (1); Grand Bend Recreation Centre (1); Kimball Hall (2); Legacy Centre (1); Port Franks CC (2); The Shores Recreation Centre (2); Thedford Village Complex (1)
Seniors' Space	1	Arkona Seniors Centre
Kitchen Facilities	5	Arkona Seniors Centre; Grand Bend Recreation Centre; Kimball Hall; Port Franks CC; Thedford Village Complex; Legacy Recreation Centre
Walking Track	1	The Shores Recreation Centre
Library Branches*	5	Arkona CC; Forest Public Library; Grand Bend Recreation Centre; Legacy Centre; Port Franks CC
Fitness Centre*	1	The Shores Recreation Centre (YMCA)

*Note: Library branches are operated by the County of Lambton Libraries and the fitness centre is operated by the YMCA.

Arkona Community Centre



This facility has a **community room** with a capacity of 50 persons, ideal for small classes, cards and bridal/baby showers. In addition, there is a **meeting room** with a capacity of 30 persons. The **Arkona Library** (operated by the County of Lambton) is also located within the Community Centre.

Arkona Seniors Centre



The Arkona Seniors Centre includes a **multi-purpose room** with a capacity of 60 persons, as well as a **small kitchen facility**. This municipally-owned facility is leased to the Arkona Seniors Club.

Grand Bend Recreation Centre







Located at Grand Bend Public School, the municipally-owned components are a **gymnasium** that is available for public use (capacity 200 persons), and a **community room** with a **small kitchen** and a capacity of 40 persons. The Grand Bend Public Library (operated by the County of Lambton) is also located in the Recreation Centre.

Kimball Hall



This facility contains a **community hall** with a **kitchen** and **stage** and a capacity of 400 persons, and a **meeting room** with a capacity of 25 persons. This municipally-owned facility is leased to the Optimist Club of Forest.

Legacy Centre		<p>This facility, the former Thedford Bosanquet Community Centre, was undergoing a major renovation during the 2011 plan and since re-opened. The Legacy Centre has a full-sized (180' x 80') ice pad with a capacity of 600 spectators, a community hall (capacity 210 persons) with retractable wall, and a Public Library branch. The Legacy Centre also houses Bosanquet Small World Nursery School.</p>
Port Franks Community Centre		<p>This facility includes Optimist Hall and the West Wing, which can be combined to form one large hall for weddings and dances, etc. The Optimist Hall has a capacity of 240 persons and includes a kitchen, bar area and PA system. The West Wing has a capacity of 149 persons and includes a small kitchen. The Community Centre is also home to the Port Franks Public Library (operated by the County).</p>
The Shores Recreation Centre		<p>The Shores has an NHL-sized ice surface which has a capacity of 1,000 persons (1,200 persons for concrete pad without ice). The arena walls have acoustic siding which increases sound quality. There is a free access walking track, full-sized gymnasium, concession, two board rooms (capacities of 40 persons and 10 persons), municipal offices, and a Wellness Centre that is operated by the YMCA.</p>
Thedford Village Complex		<p>This facility has one meeting room with a capacity of 70 persons and includes a small kitchen.</p>

Ice Sports

The Municipality of Lambton Shores currently supplies two ice pads, each located at the Legacy Centre in Thedford and the other at The Shores Recreation Centre in Forest. This results in a provision rate of one ice pad per 5,300 residents. Both arenas are equipped with spectator seating, change rooms, concessions, and storage spaces.

Reports from Hockey Canada indicate that participation in minor hockey has steadily declined across Canada and Ontario. The decline in hockey participation (as well as figure skating to an extent) is being driven by a number of factors including, but not limited to, the escalating costs of equipment and travel, greater concerns over safety, and the aging of the population across the country. The increasing cost of renting ice is also a common concern among user groups in many communities.

In the context of national and provincial trends, however, municipalities have employed various strategies to cope with shifting arena needs and underutilized ice pads. Such strategies include, but are not limited to, amendments to ice allocation policies, enhancing programming to promote learn-to-skate and sport safety, subsidies to reduce the cost to participate, and sometimes the repurposing of ice pads (i.e., indoor sports once ice is removed).

The community engagement program identified demand for additional ice-based activities, although some of the demand was for outdoor ice surface(s), not only those available indoor at municipal arenas. Half (49%) of community survey respondents indicated support for additional investment in arenas, and 31% had participated in ice sports such as hockey, ringette, or skating in the last 12 months.

It is understood that the two arenas have capacity to accommodate additional bookings, particularly in the shoulder hour periods prior to 5pm and after 10pm. The arenas are also in good condition as The Shores is fairly young in its lifecycle while the Legacy Centre underwent a major reconstruction in the time since the

2011 RLSMP was first prepared. Combined with regional availability of arenas in area municipalities such as South Huron and Bluewater along with stagnating population growth and aging among permanent residents (who are most likely to use arenas given they are living in Lambton Shores during the winter), the existing arena supply is well positioned to meet needs over the next ten years and thus no new arenas are required in Lambton Shores.

With respect to curling, the Forest Curling & Social Club leases space from the Municipality at the former Forest Arena where the club has had a presence for decades. That facility houses four curling ice sheets that are available for rental, as well as a club room containing a kitchen, lounge and bar. With 7% of survey respondents reported participation in curling and most municipalities in Ontario no longer constructing and operating their own curling facilities, the Municipality should continue with its leasing model in Forest.

Aquatics & Fitness Centres

Although there is not a municipal indoor pool, the Municipality of Lambton Shores offers ample outdoor aquatic opportunities during the summer season with the four splash pads and Grand Bend Beach. Through consultations, desires were again expressed for an indoor aquatic facility, however, Municipal provision cannot be justified due to the significant cost involved with construction and operation relative to the small and dispersed population base, as well as competition with indoor pools at private properties.

The Shores Recreation Centre contains a fitness centre that is operated by the YMCA of Southwestern Ontario. The fitness centre contains cardio and weightlifting equipment, an indoor walking track (around the upper level of the arena that is available to the general public), and the YMCA delivers group fitness classes and personal training.

The emphasis being placed on personal health is resulting in growing participation across Ontario for physical fitness activities. This is translating into increasing use of private and public-sector fitness services including

active living programming centred on general health and wellness, cardiovascular training and mobility/stretching (e.g., aerobics, yoga, Pilates, etc.). Group fitness programming is one of the fastest growing segments of the sector, more so than traditional weight-training, given that these programs are designed to be fun, social activities.

Personal fitness activities such as aerobics, yoga, or weight training were the third most popular recreation activity, with 52% of survey respondents having participated in the last year. The community survey also found strong support for additional spending on these facilities garnering 64% each for both group fitness studios and fitness centres.

With the recent closure of the private fitness centre in Grand Bend there may be pent-up demand for a fitness facility in the community. A number of residents contributing input to the RLSMP Update indicated that they have been utilizing services offered at the Community Health Centre, but that the facility is too small to meet the needs of area residents. Others noted that although there are other fitness centres located within Lambton Shores it can be difficult, particularly during winter months, for residents to travel outside of their home communities to access indoor recreation. Past discussions with the YMCA have indicated that while its membership levels in Forest have been growing, the market is becoming increasingly competitive with the emergence of low cost discount chains and a growing number of specialized fitness and yoga studios.

That being said, the YMCA has expressed an interest in further exploring partnership opportunities to provide fitness (and possibly aquatic) services in Grand Bend. Recognizing that the Grand Bend Community Health Centre is currently exploring facility expansion possibilities, the Municipality's role as a facilitator of space would be best suited to determining how it could play a part in creating a multi-service community hub in the event that the CHC secures funding to proceed with its project. As the project lead, the CHC has indicated a willingness to work with the Municipality and involve it in its planning process. The ability to involve the YMCA in such a

project is worthy of exploring, thus the Municipality and prospective partners should collaborate as part of a CHC facility development project.

Gymnasiums

The Municipality of Lambton Shores currently supplies one gymnasium at The Shores Recreation Centre that is jointly programmed by the YMCA. Additionally, the community has access to the gymnasium located within the Grand Bend Recreation Centre / Grand Bend Public School during non-school hours.

Gymnasiums provide space to facilitate a wide assortment of indoor sports and recreation activities that require open space, a hard surface and high ceiling. Gymnasiums are effective in facilitating drop-in and organized activities such as volleyball, basketball, pickleball, fitness classes and other active programming. Various non-recreational activities can also be accommodated such as craft and vendor shows, gatherings and other events.

Three out of five survey respondents (61%) reported support for additional spending on gymnasium facilities, while one out of five (19%) had participated in gymnasium sports in the last 12 months. Community consultation inputs included options for use of gymnasium spaces (particularly in the Grand Bend community) to provide group fitness classes or dedicated seniors activities. The Municipality should continue to be engaged in the planning processes for both the Forest school and Community Health Centre as potential sites for additional gymnasium access in the municipality.

Multi-Purpose Rooms

The Municipality provides 12 meeting spaces, five of which include kitchen facilities. This is a service level of one meeting room per 900 residents, and one kitchen space per 2,126 residents. Table 6 details all multi-purpose rooms/meeting spaces. Lambton Shores is also home to three branches of the Royal Canadian Legion (Thedford, Grand Bend, and Forest) that provide space capable of hosting community events and programs.

Table 7: Multi-Purpose Rooms in Lambton Shores

Multi-Purpose Rooms	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arkona Community Centre (2) Arkona Seniors Centre (1) * Grand Bend Recreation Centre (1) * Grand Bend Art Centre (1) * Kimball Hall (2) * 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legacy Centre (1) * Port Franks Community Centre (2) * The Shores Recreation Centre (2) Thedford Village Complex (1) *

Note: *indicates kitchen facility on site

Historically, stand-alone community spaces were constructed as small single-purpose facilities generally for passive activities (such as social gatherings and meetings). The construction of stand-alone facilities is generally discouraged in current facility planning exercises due to a number of factors such as programming limitations, operational costs, and other variables.

Multi-purpose spaces and meeting rooms are typically incorporated within facility designs as complementary spaces to other facility components as they can accommodate a broader range of uses, including community programs to supplement rental revenues. Many of the multi-purpose spaces within the Municipality's facilities are examples of co-locating multiple recreation facility components to facilitate cross programming opportunities, while achieving efficiencies in maintenance and management.

Multi-purpose rooms and/or community meeting spaces were not a primary discussion point throughout community consultations but may serve as satellite locations for fitness and social programming to help alleviate pressures on existing facilities, specifically the CHC programs.

Age-Specific Activity Spaces

The Municipality of Lambton Shores currently supplies one dedicated seniors space at the Arkona Seniors Centre that is leased to and operated by the Arkona Seniors Association. The Municipality does not provide

any dedicated youth program spaces although the Grand Bend Art Centre does provide programming for youth out of the youth centre building in Grand Bend.

Older Adults

There were over 5,200 permanent residents in Lambton Shores' ages 55+ recorded in 2016, an increase of over 7% compared to five years prior. As the Municipality's population ages, it is important for older adults to remain engaged in healthy active lifestyles. Centres for older adults/seniors are typically geared towards adults 55+, with the goal of supporting healthy habits and socialization for older adults through a range of social, health, recreational and educational activities and programs. As a result of the many physical and social benefits produced by older adult centres, these important community assets are generally regarded as an important part of the health care and recreation sectors.

Almost 40% of Lambton Shores' 55+ population (2,000 persons) lives in Grand Bend. In fact, Grand Bend's 55+ population grew at nearly five times the rate of the Municipality's 55+ population, meaning that area is drawing a significant population of older adults. The Grand Bend residents contributing feedback expressed a desire for older adult-oriented space; assuming a conservative 15% participation rate in Grand Bend could suggest over 300 potential 55+ participants in that community alone.

Best practices, however, are moving away from the construction of stand-alone seniors centres as more current generations of older adults (largely younger Baby Boomers) continue to prefer participating in inter-generational settings. With the RLSMP Update determining that the Municipality does not need to construct major indoor facilities over the next ten years, it would not be feasible for the Municipality alone to construct older adult space.

That being said, the fitness assessment has advanced the notion of a community-driven multi-service hub concept involving the Grand Bend Community Health Centre in the event that it is able to secure funding for

its desired expansion. As part of those discussions, the Municipality should explore how it may contribute to this partnership.

Youth

The provision of dedicated community space and/or priority-based spaces for youth offers a number of benefits, particularly given that they are often considered as under-represented segments of the population. There is currently no dedicated youth space in Lambton Shores, but the YMCA, Grand Bend Art Centre, and Optimists Clubs provide youth programming in the Municipality. This age group has specific needs and desires, resulting in the need to ensure that youth spaces and programs are designed to respond and adapt to a variety of interests. Research has revealed that youth prefer unorganized and self-structured activities, prompting the emergence of drop-in youth spaces that allow users to engage in their desired activities on their own schedule. These spaces also function as a safe environment to facilitate positive reinforcement to combat concerns surrounding mental and physical health among youth.

Public consultation initiatives revealed a desire to support youth activity in the community while encouraging residents with young families to remain in the area. Just 10% of survey respondents reported household participation in youth/teen programs in the last 12 months (e.g., summer camps, youth clubs), while three-quarters (74%) of respondents indicated support for additional investment in youth and teen programming. Older adult and seniors programs received similar levels of participation and support with 15% reporting participation in the last year, and 82% support for additional spending on programs. 2016 Census data records fewer than 900 youth and teens (ages 10 to 19) in Lambton Shores, 12% fewer than compared to the year 2011.

As with the previous discussion regarding older adults, the Municipality's focus should not be on the development of additional stand-alone youth centres but instead facilitating discussions between agency and community partners to determine if youth/teen-oriented space can be aligned with a non-municipal facility

development such as an expansion of the Grand Bend Community Health Centre or as part of the new Kindergarten to Grade 12 school in Forest.

Outdoor Recreation Facility Needs Assessments

The municipality provides a wide range of outdoor recreational facilities, which will be considered through the master planning update process including those described below.

Outdoor Leisure Facility Inventory

Facility	Supply	Location / Comments
Soccer Fields	7	Klondyke Sports Park (2 mini and 3 full LIT/UNLIT); Port Franks CC Park (1); Shipley's Grove & McRae Park (1)
Ball Diamonds	8.5*	Coultis Park (1 lit); Grand Bend Lions Park (1lit); Legacy Centre Park (1 unlit); Shipley's Grove & McRae Park (1 lit); Utter Park (2 lit)
Tennis Courts	7	Port Franks CC Park (2); Whyte Park (1); Esli Dodge CA (4) – these are owned by LS
Play Structures	13	<u>Traditional</u> : Arkona CC Park; Coultis Park; Grand Bend Lions Park; Legacy Centre Park; Optimist Children's Park; Pleasure Park; <u>Creative</u> : Klondyke Sports Park (accessible); Port Franks CC Park (inclusive); Thedford Village Green; Utter Park; Grand Bend Beach
Splash Pads	4	Kaeden Brown Foundation Splash Pad (Arkona); Forest Civic Square Spray Pad; Grand Bend Beach Splash Pad; Thedford Village Green Splash Pad.
Skate Parks	3	Grand Bend Lions Park; Port Franks CC Park; Forest X Park
Basketball Courts	2	Arkona CC Park (full); Grand Bend Lions Park (full)
Lawn Bowling	4	Forest Community Memorial Community Centre (4 lanes operated by the Forest Lawn Bowling Club)

Facility	Supply	Location / Comments
Bocce Courts	3	Grand Bend Lions Park
Boat Launches	2	Grand Bend Marina; Port Franks Marina
Covered Pavilions	7	Coultis Park; Grand Bend Lions Park; Klondyke Sports Park;; Utter Park; Port Franks Marina; Port Franks Community Centre
Concessions	5	Coultis Park; Klondyke Sports Park; Shipley's Grove & McRae Park; Utter Park; Grand Bend Beach
Picnic Areas	13	Eilber Street Park; Grand Bend Lions Park; Klondyke Sports Park; Legacy Centre Park; Optimist Children's Park; Port Franks CC Park; Port Franks Marina; Shipley's Grove & McRae Park; Sphere Park; Utter Park; Whyte Park; White Park

*Lit diamonds are assumed to be equivalent to 1.5 unlit diamonds due to more hours being available for play

Sports Fields

The Municipality of Lambton Shores currently supplies seven soccer fields (5 full, 2 mini) for a provision rate of 1:1,500 residents. It also provides 5 lit ball diamonds and 1 unlit diamond that contribute 8.5 unlit equivalent diamonds (with lit ball diamonds providing the equivalent of 1.5 unlit ball diamond due to the ability to utilize the diamonds into the later evening hours), equating to a provision rate of 1:1,250 residents.

The Municipality's supply of sports fields has not changed since the 2011 RLSMP. Both baseball and soccer are traditional Canadian activities that have experienced stable popularity for decades, despite some fluctuating popularity and participation in recent years. It is expected that both sports will experience an increase in popularity with recent success of professional soccer and baseball teams in the province.

Discussions with staff, Council and the public were generally supportive of field sports such as baseball and soccer but identified that there are opportunities for improvement of existing facilities. Examples noted included the repair/replacement of existing seating at fields, and clear direction on responsibilities associated with care and maintenance of sports fields.



Half of survey respondents indicated support for additional investment in sports fields (52% soccer fields, 50% ball diamonds). Both soccer and baseball/softball ranked mid-way on the list of activities that residents had participated in within the last 12 months, with 12% and 16% participation, respectively.

The provision standards in the 2011 RLSMP remain appropriate for Lambton Shores' current situation given a similar population level, the aging that has occurred in the population and an understanding that groups are generally able to meet their needs at existing fields. Applying those provision standards would mean that the Municipality's current supply of sports fields will meet the needs over the next ten years.



Table 8: Type and Location of Municipal Sports Fields in Lambton Shores (2018)

Field Type	Park/Facility Name	Full (lit)	Full (unlit)	Mini	Total
Soccer Fields 1:1,519	Klondyke Sports Park		3	2	7
	Port Franks Community Centre Park		1		
	Shipley's Grove & McRae Park		1		
Ball Diamonds* 1:1,250	Coultis Park	1			8.5
	Grand Bend Lions Park	1			
	Legacy Centre Park		1		
	Shipley's Grove & McRae Park	1			
	Utter Park	2			

Note: Each lit field is equivalent to 1.5 unlit fields due to extended hours of play

Hard Surface Courts

Lambton Shores supplies seven **outdoor tennis courts**, four of which are located at Esli Dodge Conservation Area, two at Port Franks Community Centre Park, and one at Whyte Park. This equates to a service level of 1 tennis court per 1,500 residents.

Tennis is also a popular Canadian sport, experiencing a resurgence in popularity throughout the province possibly as a result of Canadian player success on the professional circuit. A sport that has strongly emerged since the 2011 RLSMP is pickleball, which is also played on hard surface courts (though with a smaller playable area than a tennis court) and is typically played by older adults and seniors. While the Municipality does not have any purpose-built **pickleball courts**, permanent lines are in place on tennis courts at the Port Franks and Esli Dodge Facilities. Additionally, indoor pickleball is played at the Shores Recreation Centre (permanent lines), Port Franks Community Centre, and Grand Bend Recreation Centre.

Both tennis courts and pickleball courts received support for additional spending from half of survey respondents (49% tennis, 48% pickleball). Just below one-tenth of survey respondents stated that they had participated in tennis (9%) or pickleball (8%) in the last 12 months. Many attendees at the RLSMP Update launch event also supported investment in hard surface courts, with many requesting installation of outdoor pickleball facilities.

The 2011 RLSMP's provision target of 1 tennis court per 5,000 residents continues to reflect best practice in relation to comparable municipalities, level of interest, and industry standards. Given this provision target, the current supply of seven tennis/pickleball courts is sufficient to meet community needs and no further installation is recommended.

The municipality also provides two full-size **basketball courts**, one each at Arkona Community Centre Park and Grand Bend Lions Park. Basketball courts are predominantly used by youth and young adults for pick-up

recreational play. Basketball courts are flexible outdoor recreation facilities as they can accommodate many informal and unstructured activities that require a large, hard surface. Compared to other sports such as hockey, basketball is easy to learn, affordable to play, and can be enjoyed with one person or in small groups. Some municipalities have begun painting multi-sport lines on these courts or re-purposing them as ice pads in the winter to create multi-purpose play courts.

Basketball courts ranked fairly low on the community survey list of facilities, garnering only 44% support for additional spending from survey respondents. Very few survey respondents (6%) reported playing outdoor basketball in the last 12 months and there was little to no discussion around basketball courts during other consultation initiatives. Basketball courts are generally provided at a rate of 1 court per 800 youth residents (ages 10-19 years), which would mean the current supply of two full-sized basketball courts is sufficient to meet this demand. However, as walk-to facilities serving a target population where many do not have access to a vehicle, geographic distribution is important. As a result, the Municipality should target provision of a basketball court (either as a half or full court template depending upon the site ultimately chosen) within the major settlement areas. On this basis, it is recommended that two new basketball courts be constructed in Forest and Thedford; possible locations for these courts include Whyte Park, the new school in Forest (in partnership with the school board), and Legacy Centre Park.

Playgrounds

The Municipality of Lambton Shores supplies 13 play structures, amounting to a service level of 1:800 residents. The Municipality employs traditional and creative play structures; traditional structures include elements such as swings, slides, climbers, etc. whereas creative structures allow more opportunities for interaction with the equipment and focus on inclusive or accessible features.

Playgrounds serve as neighbourhood-level amenities that benefit early childhood development and foster cognitive and social skills and encourage physical activity. Playgrounds are typically provided within a reasonable walking distance (usually 800 metres or a 10 minute walk) of built-up residential areas, without having to cross major barriers such as arterial roads, railways, and waterbodies.

Risky play and outdoor playgrounds are becoming more popular encouraging children and youth to take more risks through climbing, exploring, moving vigorously, and creating their own activities using their imagination. These styles of play are popular in the U.K. and U.S.A., and are gaining traction in Canada. This may be beneficial for children across the County, particularly given that the 2016 ParticipACTION report card identified that the over-protection of children (due to the perceived need to ensure that they are healthy and safe) is negatively impacting their ability to be physically active and develop valuable skills.

Playgrounds received a high level of support (70%) for additional spending. Use of playground equipment was one of the highest-ranking activities (38%) that survey respondents had participated in within the last 12 months. Many attendees at the launch event also supported investment in play equipment throughout the Municipality. Many residents mentioned that they would like to see multi-generational features such as a pathway or outdoor fitness equipment around site perimeters so that adults can be active while children play.



Application of an 800-metre service radius shows fairly good distribution of playground equipment throughout Lambton Shores. The only gap identified is in the Ipperwash area; as a result, it is recommended that the Municipality explore feasibility of installing play equipment to support residents of the area. This recommendation is further supported by the Ipperwash Community Design Plan (2016). Otherwise, the municipality should monitor ongoing development of the new school in Forest and evaluate how access to school board-owned play structures may influence availability. This will require the Municipality to remain aware of any land acquisition opportunities or work with others in the community to develop a shared access playground site (including agencies and/or local organizations that may have available open space in Ipperwash).

Table 9: Type and Location of Playground Equipment in Lambton Shores, 2018

Traditional (8)		Creative (5)
• Arkona Community Centre Park	• Optimist Children's Park	• Grand Bench Beach
• Coultis Park	• Pleasure Park	• Klondyke Sports Park (inclusive)
• Grand Bend Lions Park	• Port Franks Marina	• Port Franks C.C. Park (inclusive)
• Legacy Centre Park	• Esli Dodge CA	• Thedford Village Green
		• Utter Park

Spray Pads

There are four spray pads in the Municipality of Lambton Shores (a term often used interchangeably with "splash pads"), equating to a service level of one per 2,700 residents. These consist of the Kaeden Brown Foundation Splash Pad in Arkona, the Forest Civic Square Spray Pad, Grand Bend Beach Splash Pad, and Thedford Village Green Splash Pad.

Spray pads are a cost-effective option as they do not require staffing and are easily integrated into most park settings. They are highly sought-after amenities for young families seeking affordable, accessible and social opportunities to cool down on a hot day. Many attendees at the Master Plan launch event indicated that they would love to see more spray pads installed in the municipality to support inter-generational free play (many have families visiting with young children). Use of a spray pad was among the top ten activities that residents



had participated in within the last 12 months, with 32% of survey respondents reporting use. Spray pads similarly received strong support for additional public spending with 58% of respondents willing to invest.

It is recommended that a smaller-scale spray pad be constructed at the Port Franks Community Centre if a funding partner comes forward. In doing so, children living in and visiting all of the major settlement areas in Lambton Shores will benefit from an equitable distribution of waterplay facilities. Upon the development of a spray pad in Port Franks, this will conclude full implementation of the spray pad strategy advanced in the 2011 RLSMP.

Skateboard/Bike Parks

The Municipality of Lambton Shores provides three Skateboard/Bike Parks at the Grand Bend Lions Park, Forest X-Park, and Port Franks Community Centre Park. Together, these facilities equate to a Municipal service level of one per 300 youth between the ages of 10 and 19 who constitute the primary users of these facilities.

Action sports were once considered a fad but have since gained traction and are recognized as an affordable, unstructured activity making it appealing to children and youth. Given the target demographic, these parks experience peak demand during after school and weekend hours. These activities have recently experienced more mainstream growth with children starting to participate at younger ages (5 years+) and developing beginner skills, while older children and youth often attempt more technically difficult and challenging maneuvers.

There was little discussion of skateboard or BMX parks during community consultation other than satisfaction with the recently completed Forest X-Park. Few survey respondents indicated participation in skateboarding and BMX biking with only 4% and 2% participation within the last 12 months, respectively. Skateboard parks ranked lowest on the list of 28 recreation facilities to be considered for public investment, with only 30% support for additional spending.



The Municipality has been approached by a local youth group seeking installation of a skateboard park in Thedford. It has been put forward that the recently constructed splash pad site (Thedford Village Green) is a preferred location. It is recommended that the Municipality undergo a site analysis, design, and public consultation process. Should the initial planning stages be successful and a funding partner be secured (e.g., youth group or others raise a portion of the funds to build the park), it is recommended that the Municipality construct a skateboard park in Thedford to meet demand from the community.

Other Outdoor Recreation Spaces

Lawn Bowling & Bocce

The Municipality of Lambton Shores currently provides four lanes at Coultis Park that are operated by the Forest Lawn Bowling Club (not owned by the Municipality). A similar service level is provided for bocce courts with three available at Grand Bend Lions Park. Lawn bowling and bocce are niche activities, popular among older adults and seniors as low-impact activities that encourage social interaction. No further provision of lawn bowling or bocce facilities is recommended.

Off-leash Dog Parks

The Municipality of Lambton Shores does not currently provide an off-leash dog park. Results from public consultations indicate that there is local demand, with a number residents that participated suggesting that it would be well-used. Pet ownership for older adults and seniors encourages going outdoors and supporting social interaction which helps to foster healthy lifestyles of residents. According to the community survey, half of respondents support investment in off-leash dog parks and 44% had participated in dog walking (on or off leash) in the last 12 months.

Off-leash areas are often created in cooperation with an affiliated organization that is willing to take responsibility for operation and enforcement. If approached by a community organization, consideration of

dog park development should include significant community consultation and a feasibility study should be undertaken to better understand costs of development and operation. Site selection is also a critical component of off-leash dog parks. Some things to consider include: proximity to residential areas; minimum land size; availability of a support organization; as well as comfort and support amenities, for example.

Community Gardens

The Municipality of Lambton Shores currently provides three community gardens on Municipal property (Port Franks, Forest, and Grand Bend). These are plots of land specifically dedicated to horticultural plantings and are provided in partnership with community organizations. Survey respondents reported 44% support for investment of additional public funds in community allotment gardens, ranking them 24th of 28 facility types.

Given limited public request for additional community gardens, the Municipality should monitor usage and demand for these facilities prior moving forward given that community interest and the ability of a community organization to assume a leadership role is needed for successful implementation.