

REDISCOVER OUR PARKS

PARKS & OUTDOOR RECREATION MASTERPLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A twenty year vision

2015 to 2035



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Rediscover Our Parks the City of Windsor's Parks and Outdoor Recreation

Master Plan: A living document that guides the direction of the park system and its operational management for the next twenty years. This document reviews and analyzes the existing park system and will outline opportunities and constraints, strengths and deficiencies to move forward with a vision, strategies, goals and objectives to ensure and preserve a healthy parks and open space system for the future.

Windsor is currently in a transitional stage of its parks evolution, and although the plan's direction is for a twenty year period, it will be necessary to conduct regular reviews on an as needed basis to assess progress and make amendments to the plan where adjustments may be necessary based on current information.

As part of the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Master Plan process the Parks Department has undertaken a number of studies to update the background data including; a preliminary park inventory, preliminary amenity inventory, benchmarking, playground audit, and initial public consultation.

Public parks offer outdoor quality of life options for Windsor residents by providing both active and passive recreation opportunities, as well as access to natural settings. City parks, open spaces and recreational trails offer a variety of opportunities for people to gather, formally or informally; to socialize; play; learn; or just relax in an outdoor environment.

City parks and open spaces contribute to the well-being of both physical and psychological health of the people that use and live near them. They strengthen communities both physically and economically, by making neighbourhoods more attractive places to **"live, work and play"**. The benefits are without limits. Whether formally developed or left natural, parkland offers park users venues for recreational and cultural activities. Aside from the ecological health that 'Green Infrastructure' offers, in the form of parkland, it also facilitates improved quality of life in various forms.

Rediscover Our Parks is a parks and outdoor recreation master plan that provides benefits and opportunities which effectively aligns with the themed goals of proposed *City of Windsor 20 Year Strategic Vision* including :

- **Local economic development**
- **City image & brand**
- **Strengthened innovative strategies to support neighbourhoods and districts, and**
- **Responsible, balanced fiscal and services choices**

The unique history and distinctive development and redevelopment patterns of Windsor, frame an interesting challenge for the community in expanding and maximizing the value of parks, recreation facilities and open spaces necessitates flexibility in the park spaces, to serve the needs of current residents without jeopardizing the ability of new residents to help shape the community as well.

Vision; "To provide a robust parks and recreation experience for all to enjoy"

"Rediscover Our Parks" espouses the City of Windsor's Strategic Plan which states; *"A healthy and sustainable environment represents a balance between human activities and natural features and functions. In order to attain this balance, Council will enhance the quality of Windsor's natural environment and manage development in a manner that recognizes the environment as the basis of a safe, caring and diverse community and a vibrant economy"*. Through a 20 year vision with regular review to monitor its progress and accomplishments in achieving this vision for the provision of a robust Parks and Recreation services in the City.

- *To make parks accessible, enjoyable and useful to bring people back into our parks*
- *To Promote our city as a great place to live, work and play*
- *To be environmentally and fiscally responsible in our stewardship and management of our parks and natural resources*
- *To Promote Healthy active living for all*
- *To align with the City's Strategic Vision and Official Plan by updating what is important to our park and outdoor recreation users*

The scope of the Parks Master Plan addresses the present and potential demographics as modeled by both local and national perspectives.

While *Rediscover Our Parks* recognizes gaps or issues that need to be addressed to ensure an acceptable level of service is provided to the community, it also identifies potential opportunities for immediate implementation within a five year program. The master plan makes recommendations as strategic directions for action and future studies; to be detailed with the specifics in order to meet the priorities of Council and the citizens of Windsor.

It is important that the city remains competitive and reflects a community that offers sustainability of these elements in an efficient yet vibrant manner, to ensure a positive experience for the residents and visitors. This study addresses and makes recommendation on emerging methods and procedures that can be put into practice, as well as identify those area where further investigation is necessary to ensure a healthy and robustly diverse landscape of parks and recreation services.

To fulfill the objectives outlined in the Mission of the Parks Master Plan, it was necessary to conduct a high level of consultation practices in variety of delivery programs in order to capture the widest possible audience, to retrieve the greatest input within the time period allotted.

MISSION: *"To sustainably develop and maintain parkland and recreational activities with our natural and cultural resources; fostering economic growth within the city, while cultivating a quality of life for diverse, healthy, active and livable neighbourhoods."*

BACKGROUND

Rediscover Our Parks takes into account the existing political, physical and social fabric of the community to help provide background for strategic direction to formulate an action plan. Described in this section are the geographic, social and economic factors that are impacting the community, as well as the physical characteristics embodied by both the built and natural environments.

To maintain a strong relationship with the surrounding communities including the City of Detroit, it is essential that the City of Windsor include, and reinforce connectivity from a natural and recreational perspective.

The Official Plan recommends a balanced active transportation system that includes all traditional forms of transportation, as well as alternate development patterns to include and emphasize; pedestrian, cycling, and other forms active transportation to improve environments.

One major goal of the City's transportation objectives it ensure that any new development or infrastructure alterations near or within significant natural areas, especially those with identified or potential 'species at risk', designated Provincially Significant Wetlands; and the protection of areas of natural heritage features. The development of the Herb Grey Parkway has set precedence for the protection of the natural significant lands in the city, impacting the potential growth of the parkland inventory with preservation of natural forest prairies and wetland habitats; greatly expanding the profile of the City's natural heritage.

In 2002 the Essex Region Conservation Authority identified that the natural resources of Essex County were reduced to 3% of all wetlands and 5% of all forested areas; *the lowest percentage of any region in all of Ontario*. Through combined efforts of ERCA, the City of Windsor and other municipalities in Essex County, the total percentage of forest cover in the county increased to 8.5% in 2012. ERCA's goal is to achieve a 12% cover for the Region.

The City of Windsor's parks and trails system is closely tied to the historical growth and development of the city. At the time of Incorporation of the City of Windsor in 1854, the establishment of city parks was becoming a predominant pressure to reduce the

negative impact of industrial towns and provide 'elegant' open green space in new North American cities. This movement came to be called the Garden Cities Movement. Early maps of the City of Windsor from this time demonstrate that a notion of developing Windsor as a Garden City was evident with the proposal for two core area parks. The first official public park in the City established in 1906, with a 5.3 acres parcel of undeveloped land just south of the core area.

During the 1920's and 1930's many of the city's most prominent parks were established including, Jackson Park, Mic Mac Park, and Memorial Park. During this time period a proposal was made to link the Border Cities of Windsor, Walkerville, Ford City, Sandwich and Ojibway, with a green belt to provide an environmental green corridor for the area's citizens. Though never fully realized, elements of that plan still exist today and constitute the basis for some of the recommendations found in this master plan.

While the 1950's to 1970's saw great plans for the Notarization of Ojibway, Little River Corridor and parkland along the Detroit Riverfront, much of the implementation did not occur until the Council adopted the Culture and Recreation Master Plan in 1989, which has been the principle document guiding parkland development in the City of Windsor. Since then the city's park system has grown to 209 parks with just under 2,400 acres (960 ha) of which 1,061 acres (430ha) are in natural landscape settings, providing opportunities for both active and passive recreation.

Rediscover Our Parks is an update to this document focusing on current and potential parkland and outdoor recreational opportunities to expand the overall experience for citizens.

PARKLAND SUPPLY

As of 2015 the City of Windsor's open space system consists of 209 parks and natural areas, 2 golf courses, 1 cemetery, 2 Provincial Nature Reserves. The standard for parkland supply in the Official Plan is 4.05 ha/1000 persons; well above the World Health Organization's standard of green space for a healthy city (1.5 ha/1000persons) and the Canadian National Standard of 2.79 ha/1000 persons.

The current Parkland supply city-wide is identified as 4.65 ha/1000 persons, demonstrating a healthy city. However, the parkland is not distributed equally in all City Wards or Planning Districts. Due to larger tracks natural heritage lands the overall number is slightly skewed. Many of the older mature Planning Districts have deficiencies in their Parkland Supply which fall below the National Standard and three of them, City Centre, Walkerville and Fontainbleu fall close to or below the standard established by World health Organization. The recommendations in this master plan identify the need and opportunities to increase public parkland to help provide access to open green space in the Planning Districts with deficiencies.

Regionally, very little of the cultural and natural heritage value has been lost due to a respect for the achievements that the city has made in this area, over the Legacy of the Parks System. The City currently has approximately 655 hectares of natural and naturalized parkland within the greenway system inclusive of municipally and provincially owned public open space, with roughly 90% being indigenous environments. These parks are primarily located in the far eastern and far western ends of the city, with a scattering of smaller vestiges of natural forest being preserved throughout the south central areas of the City.

Windsor has an award winning waterfront, providing a variety of recreational activity associated with the river, as well as habitat for many fish and aquatic birds. In cooperation with the Ministry of Natural Resources and ERCA, the City has been able to provide water access in the form of marina, rocky beaches and natural habitats where appropriate. Development along this section of the riverfront is governed by The Central Riverfront Implementation Plan (CRIP); a living document with established design principles and guidelines as standards to direct the future development of parkland, open space, built environments, as well as pedestrian and cycling circulation throughout this ribbon of parks.

The *Official Plan* classifies public open space in two categories; Community / Regional Parks and Neighbourhood Parks. While distribution across the city is adequate, providing green space within 0.8km of all residences, there is a **deficit** of **22.22ha** in neighbourhood parkland and a **surplus** of **144.38ha** in community/regional parkland. For the most part,

any neighbourhood and community/regional park deficiencies identified are a result of parks being undersized for the population that they serve. The undersized parks make the provision of space for a variety of activities difficult to accommodate. Gaps and deficiencies of neighbourhood and community/ regional park land can be addressed through the consolidation or acquisitions of open space lands as opportunities arise.

The two park classification system found in the Official Plan also display several weakness in delivering equitable recreational opportunities to the citizens of Windsor and visitors to the community:

CHALLENGES

- *Current OP designation creates a very broad array of park types in this classification resulting in confused priorities with respect to level of service.*
- *Breadth of diversity does not facilitate equity in level of service between park types.*
- *Deficit of parks in 7 of 10 wards due to uneven distribution.*
- *Demand of organized sports fields is maintenance intensive.*
- *Operating costs require prioritization of services leaving some parks underserved resulting in a negative perception by users.*
- *Many do not have trees or means of shade.*
- *Low annual budget for the volume of parks.*
- *Life cycle costing is not reflected in preservation of amenities found in many regional parks.*

In an effort to provide better and more efficient level of service **Rediscover Our Parks** makes the following recommendation for reclassification of parks in the *Official Plan*:

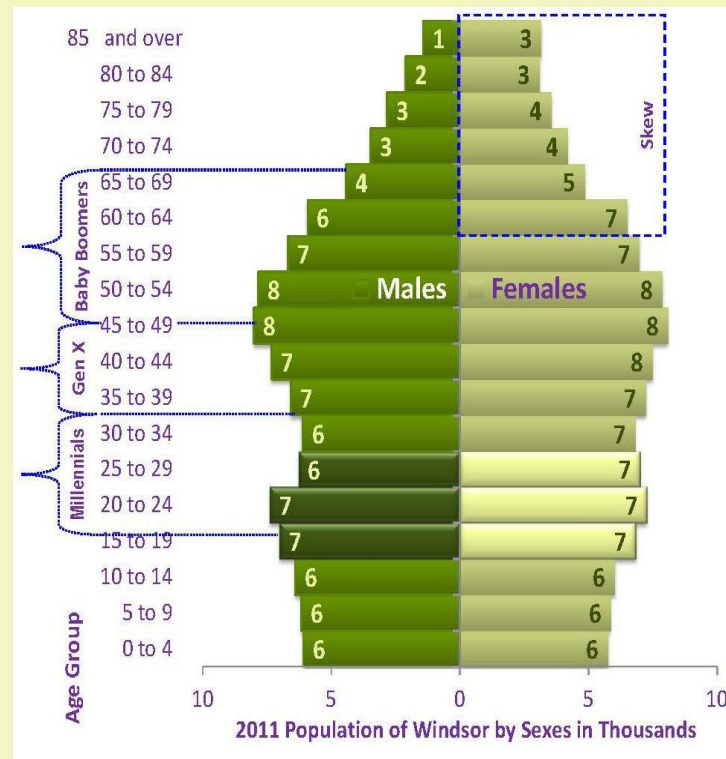
- *Neighbourhood*
- *Community*
- *Regional*
- *Natural*
- *Recreationways*

Within these broader classifications, sub-classifications will be necessary to further define level of service

TRENDS & NEEDS

In the 2015 Regional Economic Outlookⁱ, it has been identified that the economic recovery of this region has and will be very slow, but steady; especially in the Windsor Census Metropolitan Area (CMA). Moderate economic growth in the region is foreseen in residential forecasts for both housing starts and property values, due to the highly favorable retirement prospects for people from the other areas of Canada, primarily the GTAⁱⁱ. Many of the City of Windsor's parks and recreation facilities are utilized by the abutting municipalities. Therefore with each five year review of the Parks Master Plan, updated census information will be taken into consideration for moving the various phases of the 20 year plan forward.

The 2011 census for Windsor demonstrates a predominantly mature community. Both the average and median age of the city is listed at 40.2 years and the dominant age group is 45-49 years. With diminishing numbers in the younger Gen Xers and Millennials, combined with people living longer, in twenty years there is the potential of the Windsor population pyramid becoming more evenly distributed across all age groups. From a Parks and recreation perspective, this becomes a formidable challenge as there is no dominant age group to consider. Therefore, it will be important to address this broad diversity in the ages when considering any proposed development in parks or recreation and culture programming.



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

Recreation is embracing a broader definition given the diversity of North Americans today. Embracing this philosophy, the Province of Ontario has recognized that;

“... recreation and parks improve physical and mental health, reduce health care costs, provide positive lifestyle choices for youth at risk contribute to independent living among older adults and develop improved self-image.”ⁱⁱⁱ

Windsor offers a rich variety of parks and year-round leisure activities, from passive parks, to sports venues and iconic places along the Riverfront to stroll and watch passing lake vessels, or view the Detroit skyline. With the Provincial Legislation of Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2006 (AODA), Windsor Parks Department has been actively complying to ensure that the open spaces in the Parks System provide the necessary amenities and access to ensure inclusivity of both persons with disabilities and age related deficiencies. In the various public consultations held by the Parks Department the need to focus on an aging yet very diverse population were evident.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Generic goals for the Strategic Directions are as follows:

- TO PROMOTE THE RICH LEGACY OF THE CITY PARKS THROUGH MARKETING OF PARKS AND PROGRAMMING OF SPECIAL EVENTS, AND TO COMMEMORATE THE EVENTS THAT HAVE HELPED ESTABLISH OUR PARKS SYSTEM FOR ALL TO REDISCOVER.
- TO CONTINUE WITH ON-GOING RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE 1989 CULTURE AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN
- TO PROVIDE BETTER MARKETING OF PARKS TO ENGAGE THE PUBLIC.
- TO CONTINUE AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO PROVIDE RECREATION AND PARKLAND BASED ON THE RECREATIONAL NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY, BY MAINTAINING REGULAR INTERACTION BETWEEN PARKS AND RECREATION AND THE COMMUNITY.

Nine Guiding Principles provided direction for the second consultation process, in which questions were constructed to determine how the Parks Department would address those Principles in detailed analysis of the parks and recreational services.





ACCESSIBILITY & INCLUSIVITY

STRATEGIC DIRECTION #1: To recognize and respond to the needs of a diverse population of citizens, making parks that are accessible for all people, all ages and those with special needs.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1.01	Place added focus on the construction of any park amenity or recreational paths within City Parks to comply with "PART IV.1 DESIGN OF PUBLIC SPACES STANDARDS (<u>ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT</u>) of the <u>Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005.</u> "
1.02	Implement playground replacement strategy as per Council direction B40-2015 based on the " <u>Playground Audit</u> ".
1.03	Establish pilot sites for non-traditional natural play elements and environments to establish uniqueness and to align with emerging trends.
1.04	Review current and proposed splash pad locations and criteria for development throughout the city to ensure adequate coverage.
1.05	Work with neighbourhood communities including area youth and seniors to determine their specific interests in recreation activities, play, exercise and programming for designing park amenities at the inception of any park redevelopment plan.
1.06	Collaborate with all <i>School Boards</i> to determine where efforts and resources can be aligned to provide recreation facilities in both parks and school grounds to accommodate the needs of the community.
1.07	Incorporate outdoor exercise fitness stations along multi-use trails in parks where appropriate to maintain healthy activity for all.
1.08	Focus on recreational activities and facilities for the aging population.

1.09	Adopt the " <u>Age-friendly Windsor Action Plan</u> " recommendations into the parks standards including:
	a) Establish Wi-Fi hot spots in parks where appropriate.
	b) Promote age-friendly design in parks to ensure that pedestrian access is safe and universal.
	c) Provide pathways into parks for seniors and those with mobility issues to access.
	d) Review and identify current park washroom locations and their existing infrastructure to determine where washroom facilities need to be upgraded and new facilities located for future development (i.e.: Within Regional or Community Parks).
	e) To identify locations for wheel chair charging stations.
1.10	To protect and enhance access to floral displays at Coventry Gardens, Dieppe Park and Jackson Park as our premier floriculture and horticultural display parks.
1.11	Prepare a ' <u>Redevelopment Plan</u> ' in collaboration with the <i>City's Accessibilities Officer</i> to assess the condition and compliance of municipal park pathways, trails as well as beach and riverfront access from an <u>AODA</u> perspective in all parks.
1.12	Collaborate with <i>Transportation Planning</i> to review the " <u>B.U.M.P.</u> " To provide recreational pathways and trails that promote continued linkages across the city and connections with surrounding municipalities.
1.13	Continue the <i>Community Living Mentorship Partnership</i> program to provide opportunities for meaningful work experience for persons with disabilities.
1.14	Provide ongoing consultation with immigrant communities to determine their needs.
1.15	Provide <i>First Nations'</i> consultation on any natural lands and naturalization processes or display garden commemorating heritage of indigenous peoples of the area as required by the " <u>Provincial Policy Statement 2014</u> ".



COMMUNICATIONS & PARTNERSHIPS

STRATEGIC DIRECTION #2: Building parks and recreational solutions through open and transparent communication for the whole community.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

2.01	As continuous community involvement plays a key role in the longevity of parks, encourage the establishment of " <u>Adopt-a-Park</u> " partnerships with community organizations and groups to assist in the sustainability of parks.
2.02	Encourage and facilitate support for volunteer efforts in park stewardship and outdoor recreation activities such as; park restoration and renewal opportunities.
2.03	Encourage the establishment of partnerships with private and community organizations as sponsors including: - Agencies - Boards - Committees, and - Friends Groups to help promote parks and trails, as destinations, through sponsorship of park development, park stewardships and outdoor recreation activities.
2.04	Establish partnerships with the organized sports community to assist the City of Windsor in providing the best sports opportunities available in the region.
2.05	Maintain the " <u>Recreation Activity Guide</u> " and use multiple types of communication and social media to promote recreational opportunities in parks and outdoor recreation areas.
2.06	Work with Communications Department to provide better marketing of parks through various media formats to engage the public.



HEALTH & WELLNESS

STRATEGIC DIRECTION #3: To create a complete parks system that responds to the environmental well-being of our communities, as well as providing recreational experiences that promote healthy active living.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

3.01	Recreational activities for active healthy living should focus on self-guided opportunities through the promotion of fitness stations and park design.
3.02	Work with the <i>Windsor/Essex Community Garden Collective</i> and other interested partners to provide opportunities for community gardens where there is demand at selected sites within the city as per the " <u>Community Gardens Policy</u> " in order to: a) Promote sustainability through urban agricultural projects, b) Education of sustainable gardening practices c) Establish demonstration gardens and other forms of urban agriculture.
3.03	Provide equal opportunity access to natural areas and experience of wildlife throughout the city based on the " <u>AODA</u> ".
3.04	Access to drinking water be provided in select, highly active Community and Regional Open Spaces within the Parks Greenway System.
3.05	Determine shade targets through <i>Forestry and Environmental Services</i> as a follow-up to the Shade Audit for all parks in the Parks Greenway System as well as rights-of-ways in order to provide healthy shaded access throughout the city and help offset the impact of climate change.
3.06	Prepare redevelopment plans for Sandpoint Beach to accommodate the needs of the community and establish it as a " <u>Blue Flag Beach</u> ".



SUSTAINABILITY

STRATEGIC DIRECTION #4: To create and maintain parks and recreational opportunities in an environmentally responsible manner, to ensure their longevity for future generations.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

4.01	Protect and promote existing natural areas and provide connections where available.
4.02	Promote naturalization where warranted to create buffers and connections to natural areas in consultation with the community.
4.03	Identify and review parks or portions of parks for naturalization and establish appropriate management strategies with public consultation.
4.04	Collaborate with ERCA to provide performance and management strategies for all natural parks and naturalized areas including: a) Fish habitat along riverfront lands b) Watershed management areas c) Prairies d) Woodlots
4.05	Create a performance and management plan to determine high priority natural park such as: - Peche Island - Spring Garden ANSI - Ojibway Nature Complex - The Airport Swamp Woodlots
4.06	Prepare standards for the establishment of urban wildlife habitat to; a) Accommodate expansion of the natural areas to help facilitate better management of species at risk, habitat for urban wildlife and opportunity for nature related recreation for people. b) Establish a protocol for succession control in managed natural and naturalized areas to deter the establishment of exotic and aggressive naturally invasive species. c) Place a high priority on sustainability and ecological integrity in managing vegetation, using native plants where possible, especially for restoration of disturbed areas, and naturalization projects.

4.07	Identify drainage issues in the Parks Greenway System and areas where flooding is an issue for residents to determine if strategies promoted by the <u>"Environmental Master Plan"</u> (such as Low-Impact-Design and green infrastructure) can be used to accommodate storm water to help mitigate flooding.
4.08	Protect the quality of life for future generations; establish an <u>"Urban Forestry Management Plan"</u> for the Parks Greenway System and public right-of-ways by conducting a full tree inventory of all city-owned trees and return to the industry standard through maintenance and funding to ensure that our urban forest remains sustainable.
4.09	Naturalize underutilized parks (in whole or part) or those with poor drainage to enhance biodiversity while addressing level of service.
4.11	Establish a <u>'Policy for 'No Mow' Areas'</u> .
4.12	Work with other civic departments to revise <u>"Parking Lot By-Law"</u> to allow <u>'Low-Impact-Design'</u> in parks to reduce storm water impacts.
4.13	Revisit the <u>"Official Plan"</u> with the <i>Planning Department</i> to offer green infrastructure bonuses for parkland development in subdivisions (especially in Sandwich South Planning District).
4.14	Continue active involvement with the <i>Planning Department</i> in the development of the <u>"Sandwich South Secondary Plan"</u> to ensure that Parks and Recreational spaces are established to promote physical connectivity for pedestrian and active transportation through an ecologically diverse <u>'Biodiversity Gateway'</u> by extending Little River Corridor to the Herb Grey Parkway and the Ojibway Nature Complex.
4.15	That The City of Windsor coordinate a stewardship project with ERCA in order to secure <u>Priority Natural Significant Lands</u> such as Ojibway Shores, Sandwich South Planning District and any other opportunities where natural features exist to improve the natural heritage system in the City.
4.16	Apply under criteria ix and x of the nomination process of UNESCO to establish the Ojibway Nature Complex of parks as a <u>'UNESCO Heritage Site'</u> , through the assistance of the Friends of Ojibway Prairie and ERCA, based on the universal natural significance of the properties.



PARK DIVERSITY

STRATEGIC DIRECTION #5: To provide different types of parks and recreational experiences distributed evenly throughout the city.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

5.01	Adopt the re-classification of parks as outlined in this master plan and update the <i>"City of Windsor's Official Plan"</i> .
5.02	Update the <i>"Official Plan"</i> in collaboration with the Planning Department to make certain that any new infrastructure, utilities and services abutting parkland is coordinated through the <i>Parks Department</i> to ensure appropriate service to parks.
5.03	Update the <i>"Zoning By-Law 8600"</i> in collaboration with the Planning and Building Departments to align with the proposed re-classifications.
5.04	Prepare a <i>'Manual of Park Design Standards'</i> for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Each classification and sub-classification - Standard design details (eg. amenities, pathways, plant materials and field layouts) - Specifications, and - Compliance with <i>"AODA"</i>
5.05	Identify the key parks that would serve as community hubs.



CONNECTIVITY

STRATEGIC DIRECTION #6: Parks and trails shall continue to play an important role in the city parks system, ensuring that the linkages to and from parks, as well as between parks remain accessible and serve the greater Windsor community.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

6.01	Identify, prioritize and establish new trails to improve connectivity throughout the city.
6.02	Collaborate with <i>Transportation Planning</i> to update the <i>"B.U.M.P."</i> to promote trail connections for neighbourhoods.
6.03	To review opportunities to provide cyclists with safe routes through or adjacent to parkland instead of along major traffic routes.
6.04	Review and discuss options with the railways on routes which may be abandoned in the future to provide opportunities for recreational multi use-trails and commuter cyclists.
6.05	Strengthen all north-south connections to the Detroit River.
6.06	Work with and establish partnerships to obtain formal access for the development of recreational trails where appropriate on non-city owned lands, e.g., Devonwood, utility corridors and private land parcels.
6.07	Include environmental considerations in the planning of major new trails through natural areas, and design trails to minimize environmental impacts.
6.08	Develop trail heads and staging areas with the appropriate amenities for users including; way finding and interpretation.
6.09	Amend the <i>"Adopt-a-Park Policy"</i> to include an <i>'Adopt-a-Trail'</i> Program.
6.10	Prepare and <i>"Adopt-a-Trail"</i> management plan that builds upon methods used in other jurisdictions' best practice models.
6.11	Update design standards on well used trails through areas with high environmental values to keep people on trails and to protect the resources.



SAFETY

STRATEGIC DIRECTION #7: Parks facilities and recreational programming in the city shall provide safe, clean, and attractive environments for all users.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

7.01	Work with the <i>Police Services</i> to communicate and implement " <u>CPTED</u> " principles in parks to increase levels of safety while addressing a balance between aesthetic and environmental considerations.
7.02	Establish a ' <u>Policy for Park and Trail Lighting</u> '.
7.03	Establish a ' <u>Policy for Emergency Call Buttons</u> ' within parks and along trails.
7.04	Develop a ' <u>Parkland Encroachment Policy and Procedure</u> ' to enforce and educate the public regarding encroachment into city parks and open space.



EFFICIENCY

STRATEGIC DIRECTION #8: To successfully develop, maintain and enhance parks and recreation facilities in a balanced cost effective manner.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

8.01	Review and update the 2012 park disposition list.
8.02	That in areas of deficient park open pace a strategy be developed to identify and acquire property suitable for the parkland.
8.03	Investigate opportunity to acquire lands from school boards, railways or other underutilized sites in the city for parks purposes as they become available to offset areas which demonstrate a deficiency in parkland.
8.04	Actively explore alternative funding mechanisms such as sponsorships from businesses, individual donors, partnerships, grants and gifting can be made directly for parkland purposes
8.05	Encourage donation (i.e. bequeathing, estate settlements, in-trusts) of land for parks purposes based on the " <u>Donation Policy (M20-2013)</u> ".
8.06	That the <i>Parks, Recreation and Culture Departments</i> undertake a " <u>Sports Needs Analysis</u> " in conjunction with community and sports facilities users looking at consolidation opportunities more immediately for the east end of Windsor and ultimately city wide.
8.07	Review and develop designated areas in parks for skateboarding facilities throughout the city.
8.08	Review and develop designated areas in parks for spray pads throughout the city.
8.09	Review and develop a sport court strategy for the whole city to determine appropriate locations.
8.10	Review and develop an outdoor swimming facilities strategy to ensure adequate access for all users.
8.11	Adopt a policy with <i>Asset Management</i> that establishes level of service for the maintenance and operation of parks.

8.12	Establish a ' <u>Management Plan</u> ' for each city park and open space.
8.13	Develop ' <u>Park Design Standards</u> ', and adoption of policies to improve and reduce maintenance costs, while achieving an aesthetically pleasing environment for each park type.
8.14	Standardize park maintenance and level of service, as well as lifecycle costing by formalizing <i>Parks Operations</i> inspection and management standards as " C.I.T.E. " based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Classification and location of the park – setting, ranging from very natural to urban. - Infrastructure – type, age, condition, replacement cycle. - Type and amount of use – numbers of people, demographics served, times of highest use. - Environmental characteristics – sensitivity of vegetation and wildlife, amount of shade from trees provided.
8.15	Review the current <i>City Forestry's Tree Nursery</i> and determine its needs and identify an appropriate location in order for forestry to maintain an acceptable level of service and a reliable source for Carolinian tree species as well as boulevard trees.
8.16	Establish and adopt an ongoing GIS referenced AutoCAD based data inventory in collaboration with <i>Asset Management</i> and <i>Geomatics</i> of all park assets including the purchase of computerized digital systems and equipment as needed to capture assets within the park system.
8.17	Establish a labelling protocol for interpretation and communication of the horticultural and biodiversity of the plant material found in select premier natural and horticultural parks.
8.18	Review the " <u>Parks Bylaw</u> " for updates on a five-year basis.



EXPERIENCE

STRATEGIC DIRECTION #9: To provide vibrant and memorable community spaces which foster a positive and unique sense of place.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

9.01	Establish <i>Neighbourhood Parks</i> and a stronger community focus by providing opportunities for social gathering and a sense of pride in the community.
9.02	Park design to be in character with the type of park, its location and setting and operational management practices.
9.03	Establish a ' <u>Policy and Procedures for Public Consultation</u> ' when soliciting any development in parks.
9.04	That park development include areas of open turf where appropriate, to facilitate unorganized sport play.
9.05	Review outdoor picnic facilities to ensure appropriate distribution throughout the city.
9.06	Undertake a ' <u>Feasibility Study</u> ' in collaboration with the <i>Windsor-Essex Sports Organizations</i> to determine the needs for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) artificial sports fields b) sports dome
9.07	Implement the restoration, rehabilitation and conservation proposals for Willistead Park, of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the <i>Parks Gates and Perimeter fencing</i>. b) the <i>South Parterre Garden</i>. c) the <i>Queen Victoria Diamond Jubilee Fountain</i>. d) an <i>Urban Arboretum</i>. in a phased approach as per the park concept plan.

9.08	Amalgamate <i>Parks Forestry and Horticultural Operations</i> to centralize parks services at Jackson Park to:
	a) Relocate of the <i>City's Greenhouses</i> from Lanspeary Park to Jackson Park.
	b) Create a true ' <i>Botanic Garden</i> '.
	c) Investigate and develop a <i>Display Greenhouse</i> for year-round demonstration and horticultural programs.
	d) Investigate the potential collaboration with <i>Schools Boards</i> and the <i>Community Garden Collective</i> for horticultural training at the facility.
	e) Formalize an ' <i>Urban Arboretum</i> '.
	f) Provide year-round interest with activity through a ' <i>Festive Winter Lights Display</i> ' and an outdoor ' <i>Skating Rink</i> '.
	g) Update the " <i>Jackson Park Master Plan</i> ".
9.09	Work collaboratively with <i>Local Organizations</i> such as horticulturalist and artist groups to help promote, educate and enhance the public's experience when visiting parks. (for example: guided tours, workshops and interpretation)
9.10	Protect and increase access to and along the <i>Riverfront Parks</i> .
9.11	Identify popular marine-based recreation areas within city parks and establish ' <i>Marine-based Recreation Design Guidelines</i> ' that meet the needs of the community to provide access for non-motorized water-based activities, e.g., boating, paddle boarding, kayaking, swimming, walking, sitting, and picnicking.
9.12	Identify popular fishing areas along Riverfront Parks and establish ' <i>Recreational Fishing Design Guidelines</i> ' that meet the needs of the community.
9.13	Ensure that the phased development projects are carried out as per the " <i>Central Riverfront Implementation Plan 2001</i> " taking into consideration the " <i>2014 Public Consultation Update Report</i> ".
9.14	Work with <i>Recreation and Culture</i> for the management of sculptures found along the riverfront, as per the " <i>Maintenance Management Manual</i> ".

9.15	Undertake a study to replace the ' <i>Charlie Brookes Memorial Peace Fountain</i> ' at Reaume Park for redevelopment options in consultation with the community.
9.16	Identify the impacts of special events on our parks and work in collaboration with <i>Special Events Coordinators</i> to determine appropriate locations.
9.17	Investigate the addition of park infrastructure that would support special events as potential revenue generators. (examples: special displays at a botanic garden, or long-term event in a park)
9.18	Create a ' <i>Policy on Weddings in Parks</i> ' in collaboration with <i>Recreation and Culture</i> including specified locations and fees.
9.19	Determine locations within <i>Community Open Spaces</i> and <i>Regional Open Spaces</i> to establish dog parks.
9.20	Evaluate the environmental impacts of dogs in parks and work with stakeholders to establish ' <i>Policies and Procedures for Off-Leash Dog Parks</i> '.
9.21	Create a ' <i>Dog Park Information Package</i> ' downloadable form the City's website.

ACTION PLAN

REDISCOVER OUR PARKS is a higher level document identifying the needs and recommendations for consideration in both Parks Capital and Parks Operational Budgets for the next 20 years. While the recommendations contained within are for the higher level, they provide direction for a Supplemental Action Plan to be completed for Capital and Operating Budget considerations.

That Action Plan will detail each recommendation with internal departmental staff requirements, external agencies who may be involved in the implementation, priorities for consideration

Following review and endorsement by the Environment, Transportation and Public Safety Standing Committee, on July 4, 2016, Windsor City Council through Council Resolution Number CR440/2016 ETPS 392 unanimously approved without revision, **REDISCOVER OUR PARKS**, as the Official Parks and Outdoor Recreation Master Plan. As this is a twenty-year plan, the Action Plan will establish timeframe and order of magnitude cost estimates for completion of individual recommendations, to assist with future Operational and Capital Budgetary considerations.

NOTES

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

¹ Ibid. pg 6.

¹ Parks and Recreation Ontario; *Recreation and Parks: Essential for Quality of Life*, 2008; pg 4.

- i Ontario Chamber of Commerce: *Regional Economic Outlook: Windsor-Sarnia*, 2015. pg 1
- ii Ibid. pg 6.
- iii Parks and Recreation Ontario; *Recreation and Parks: Essential for Quality of Life*, 2008; pg 4.



Rediscover Our Parks

2015-2035

