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TO:	CHAIR AND MEMBERS COMMUNITY AND NEIGHBOURHOODS COMMITTEE MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 13, 2011
FROM:	WILLIAM COXHEAD, DIRECTOR OF PARKS AND RECREATION COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT
SUBJECT:	INTRODUCTION TO THE PARKS AND RECREATION STRATEGIC MASTER PLAN AND 2009-2010 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

RECOMMENDATION

That, on the recommendation of the Director of Parks and Recreation, with the concurrence of the Executive Director of Community Services, the following report **BE RECEIVED** for information purposes.

PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER
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- Community Led Park Projects – 2010 Update (June 13, 2011)
- Charter for Recreation and Parks in Ontario (August 23, 2010)
- Parks and Recreation Strategic Master Plan Update (November 23, 2009)

BACKGROUND

PARKS AND RECREATION IN LONDON

In 2009 the City updated its Parks and Recreation Strategic Master Plan. This Plan provides overall direction and guidance for making decisions about parks and recreation programming, public-use facilities and infrastructure (parks and recreation facilities) and investment in the community. It identifies what the City provides and sets out how we contribute to strengthening neighbourhoods and improving community and personal benefits by creating opportunities for residents to lead healthy, socially-active lives. The Plan guides the work of Parks and Recreation, Neighbourhood and Children’s Services, Parks Planning and Design and Facility Design and Construction divisions.

In 2010 Council endorsed the Ontario Charter for Recreation and Parks that sets out a common vision and community goals to help strengthen community vitality. London is committed to this vision as it reinforces the primary principles of our own Master plan. The Charter states that:

“Everyone in Ontario has a right to quality accessible and inclusive recreation and parks services in their communities – services that are essential for the health of Ontarians, the quality of life in our communities and the sustainability of our environment.”

This vision reinforces the primary principle of our Master Plan that the system affords all Londoners, regardless of age, ability, culture, income or neighbourhood, the opportunity to participate in, and share in the benefits of the City’s parks, facilities and recreational opportunities.

PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide City Council with an overview of the Parks and Recreation Strategic Master Plan and to share many of the projects and initiatives that have been undertaken to enhance the value of parks and recreation in our community since the Plan update in 2009.

Following is a brief overview of the System Wide Recommendations (initiatives that cut across all service categories) and the Service Level Recommendations including highlights of key accomplishments. A full list of accomplishments can be found in Appendix A.

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It is the intention that future activities and accomplishments of the Master Plan will be shared in yearly reports to Council.

2009-2010 HIGHLIGHTS

SYSTEM WIDE RECOMMENDATIONS

Service Excellence

The Master Plan commits the City of London to service excellence. Civic administration strives to provide and enable programs and services that are meaningful, produce benefit to participants and the community and are delivered effectively with a commitment to continuously improve the level of service.

<p><i>Highlights</i></p> <p><i>In 2010 Neighbourhood and Children's Services conducted a program operation and business process review of community centres and senior's centres in order to improve service delivery and better meet the needs of the community.</i></p> <p><i>Implementation of the new Pricing Framework for Facility Rentals began in January 2009 with a simplified pricing structure which allowed for consistency in setting rental pricing for gymnasiums and meetings rooms.</i></p>

Communications / Engagement

The Master Plan recognizes that meaningful programs and services cannot be provided without accurate, relevant and accessible information as well as open, regular dialogue with the people in the City. The Plan recommends improvements in ways information is shared, the community is engaged and collaborative opportunities encouraged.

<p><i>Highlights</i></p> <p><i>Implemented the Minimum Public Notification Requirements and Public Participation Framework for Recreation Facilities and Parks Projects in January 2009. This policy provides clear direction to civic administration on how best to keep the public informed and provide opportunities for participation of stakeholders and residents who may be affected by, or have a vested interest in, a recreation facility or parks project. Since then notification practices have been enhanced and public engagement has improved.</i></p> <p><i>Several City of London website improvements have been made over the past few years: online booking of tee times, checking of arena availability, new Aquatics webpage, new Neighbourhoods webpage and updated Storybook Gardens webpage. As well a skateboard facebook page was successfully launched in 2009 and is now used as a way to engage users in discussions of design and upgrades of skate parks.</i></p>

Access and Equity (Services for All)

A guiding principle of the Master Plan is Accessibility and Affordability. The City therefore seeks to provide programs, services, facilities and opportunities that are accessible, affordable and inclusive of all residents. The Plan directs staff to address barriers to participation by providing financial subsidies, staff training on inclusion, developing programs that meet the needs of underserved groups.

<p><i>Highlights</i></p> <p><i>Camps on TRACKS was created by Thames Valley Children's Centre (TVCC) as a classroom-based peer mediated social skills program and introduced to one City of London day camp in 2010. The program was redeveloped by staff from the City, TVCC, and Fanshawe College, with a recreation program focus. TRACKS teaches peers to successfully interact with campers with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and other disabilities, along with other social challenges (shyness, children whose first language is not English, etc.) It is essentially a program that teaches children how to be a good friend and improves the social interactions for all campers. Due to the program's success in 2010, all 2011 City summer camp staff and staff from many other camp providers in London were trained on how to run Camps on TRACKS. Fanshawe College is partnering with the City and TVCC to evaluate this program through the summer of 2011.</i></p>



The City continues to implement new Facility Accessibility Design Standards (FADS) in all upgrades and new development projects at facilities. For example, entry ramps installed in outdoor pool upgrades, updates to change and shower facilities as buildings upgraded, spray pads include pathways for ease of access and fully accessible features.

Social Marketing and Promotion

The Master Plan places high priority on promoting healthy and active lifestyles and communicating the full breadth of parks and recreation opportunities available to residents to engage in active lifestyles.

Highlights

*Middlesex-London **in motion**[®] is a community-based initiative to promote healthy and active living through communications/social marketing (www.healthylivinginfo.ca), targeted community strategies, building community partnerships and measurement through research and evaluation. The City of London is a key partner in this initiative along with 52 other community organizations. A media campaign in 2010 was launched to promote healthy and active living.*

Interpretive signage was installed in Victoria Park to celebrate the long history of the park, from the British Garrison to the first school for children of the underground railway to the Victorian-era development of the park.

Partnerships

The Master Plan reaffirms the City's holistic approach to service delivery that relies on the abilities and resources of countless community partners and volunteers. The Plan recommends the city continue to encourage partnerships in the future delivery of municipal parks and recreation facilities and services.

Highlights

In 2010, 76 parks projects were successfully completed due to outstanding community support. The total value of cash donations, in-kind donations and volunteer time was over \$700,000 with a city investment of only \$219,000. A few examples include:

- The Ed Blake Park community raised \$38,500 for construction of multi-purpose sports pad as part of Ed Blake Park redevelopment.*
- The Kiwanis Club of Forest City-London contributed \$92,000 to the Kiwanis Skate Park as well as \$33,000 to add additional features to the Medway District Park skateboard park.*

Stoney Creek Community City, YMCA and Library is a very successful partnership project that provides an indoor pool, gymnasium, fitness centre, community centre and library.

The City continues to partner with sport organizations to deliver quality venues and services for programming provided by others.

Environmental Stewardship

The City is committed to taking a leadership role in addressing the environmental impact of its operations. Green technologies and design principles should be considered in all projects.

Highlights

Stoney Creek Community Centre, YMCA and Library was designed to achieve a LEED Gold certified green building standard.

Significant energy and water savings are being realized as new construction and lifecycle renewal projects include many "green" technologies – green roof technologies, arena LED lighting replacements, spray pads with water conserving features, self cleaning pool filters in outdoor pools, energy efficient refrigeration and heating systems in arenas, pools and community centres etc.



SERVICE LEVEL RECOMMENDATIONS

Community Investment and Planning

Through investment and community development, the City provides opportunities to build social infrastructure and strengthen London’s neighbourhoods. The city believes strongly in liveable and inclusive communities and recommendations that improve quality of life and strengthen London’s neighbourhoods are found throughout the Master Plan. Continued investment in community development that encourages resident participation and builds strong community leaders and supports families is recommended.

Highlights

The Kipps Lane Strengthening Neighbourhood Strategy is an asset based community development approach undertaken to empower the community to enhance their neighbourhood’s capacity and vibrancy. By giving residents the tools and resources they need by focussing on community development, improved recreation programming and youth mentorship, a strong and focused resident-led group is now undertaking action to improve the Kipps Lane and community area. In Kipps Lane residents are the heart of change.

The Community Services Department and the Child and Youth Network (140 community agencies), have adopted the Active Creative Engaged (ACE) Community Development Toolkit to guide the way we work in the community. This toolkit is a practical guide to community development that recognizes the strength and ability of the community (residents and stakeholders) to create and implement effective, relevant and meaningful initiatives. Training modules have been developed and community partners and City staff from a many departments have participated.

In 2010 the City of London was recognized as an Age Friendly City by the World Health Organization. Further work will continue on this initiative in 2011.

Community Programs / Spectrum

Community programs provide individuals, neighbourhoods and the broader community with the opportunity to benefit from recreation participation through delivery of accessible, diverse and affordable physical, arts/culture and special interest recreation and leisure programming. Continual review of interest in programs and new trends is recommended.

Highlights

New recreation and leisure programs were developed for target groups identified in the Master Plan – children, teens, older adults, new immigrants as well as new introductory programs. In 2009 and 2010 new programs included:

- Grey matters memory program for older adults;*
- Exercise program for older adults developed in partnership with Canadian Centre for Activity and Aging at UWO;*
- Summer Community Connections program begin in 2010 and provides youth (12-15) opportunities to volunteer at community agencies and programs (Food Bank, London Public Library, City of London summer programs) we well as participate in typical camp activities;*
- Summer Surprise, in partnership with Lifeskills Centre Inc. provides a day camp for individuals with varying disabilities; and,*
- Stride and Glide ice skate program in partnership with LIHC for newcomers.*

The City continues to provide over 2,600 registered Spectrum recreation and leisure programs each year at 90 locations, including schools, community centres and through business partnerships. In 2010 registered program and drop-in visits increased. There were a total of 365,000 registered program visits and 481,000 drop-in visits.

Targeted Leader- in-Training (LIT) programs were offered in 10 neighbourhoods typically not represented at teen camps. In 2010, 393 youth participated in LIT programs. Typically 50 to 75% of these youth go on to employment with the City of London.



Community Facilities and Gathering Places (Indoor)

The Master Plan directs the City to continue to build and maintain a clean, safe, usable system of parks and recreation facilities that supports healthy and socially active lifestyles and that contribute to neighbourhoods that are strong, liveable and inclusive. Many facilities projects are identified for construction and/or redevelopment in the Master Plan and as a results of the Infrastructure Stimulus funds 20 parks and recreation projects were able to be advanced.

Highlights

The Stoney Creek Community Centre, YMCA and Public Library opened in the Fall of 2010. A successful partnership project between the City of London, YMCA of Western Ontario and London Public Library provides an indoor pool, gymnasium, fitness centre, community centre and library. Use of the centre has exceeded expectations and the centre is truly functioning as a neighbourhood gathering place.

In June 2009 the Government of Canada, Province of Ontario and City of London announced an economic stimulus fund for infrastructure projects in London. This cost sharing Infrastructure Stimulus Fund (ISF) and Recreational Infrastructure Canada (RInC) Fund allowed several community and recreation facility projects to be advanced in 2009 and 2010:

- o Redevelopment of an existing structure into the new Springbank Gardens Community Centre which opened in 2010.*
- o Redevelopment of the Byron Optimist Community Centre, Medway Community Centre and Boyle Memorial Community Centre*
- o Supported the London Optimist in the new BMO Centre for indoor soccer/sports complex converting a former Brownfield site to a vital recreational use in the heart of the city.*

Aquatics

Aquatic services provide London families and individuals of all ages with opportunities to participate in unstructured activities and structured swimming programs at indoor and outdoor pools, wading pools and spray pads. The Master Plan recommends the continued provision of these services and further construction of 2 more indoor pools and 5 new spray pads. As well, the Plan recommends investment in educational outreach programs for drowning prevention and water safety.

Highlights

A customer service satisfaction survey was completed and indicated that 97% of users were satisfied with the programs and service. Programs were updated to reflect comments.

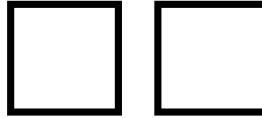
Thames Pool redevelopment was completed in 2010. The renovated pool includes a 50 meter pool plus a beach entry area, with a number of water play features and 5 meter waterslide. Feed back from users has been incredible and use has been high.

Three new spray pads were constructed in Medway District Park, Ed Blake Park and Oakridge Park as part of larger park redevelopment projects.

Drowning prevention and water safety continue to be a program priority in aquatics. Over 2,200 Grade 3 students participated in Swim to Survive in 2010. This initiative teaches basic swimming skills. A grant was acquired from Canadian Tire Jump Start program to teach newcomers to London how to swim. Water Smart campaign continues to educate Londoners in and around water through a wide range of programs and school visits.

Parks Planning and Design

The parks and natural areas planning and design service area is part of the City's Planning and Development Division. Recommendations include policy direction for the Official Plan and for council with respect to the provision of parkland and land acquisition priorities. Many lifecycle renewal and growth capital projects and initiatives are recommended in the Plan relating to the Thames Valley Parkway, Open Space Development, District Parks, Neighbourhood parks, Sports parks and specialty parks. Several design related recommendations are also contained in this Master Plan, including the need to incorporate amenities that increase the usability of parks. The majority of the projects are captured in the Community Facilities section below.



Community Facilities (Outdoor)

The Master Plan identifies facility and amenity provision targets for parks and outdoor amenities. In striving to maintain or improve the provision of these amenities a number of projects are recommended. In June 2009, the Government of Canada, Province of Ontario and City of London announced an economic stimulus fund for infrastructure projects in London. The cost sharing Infrastructure Stimulus Fund (ISF) and Recreational Infrastructure Canada (RInC) fund allowed 11 parks and recreation projects to be advanced.

Highlights

Infrastructure Stimulus Funding contributed to 11 parks projects in 2009/2010 including:

- *City-wide Sport Complex – 2 artificial soccer/football fields including landscaping, planting, fencing etc.*
- *Meredith Park – multi-usage sports pad, pathways, trees, tennis court rehabilitation*
- *Basil Grover Park fieldhouse*
- *Ed Blake Park – spraypad, soccer field, playground, fieldhouse,*
- *Kiwanis Skateboard Plaza and fieldhouse*
- *McMahon Park – baseball diamond, field house, pathways, significant enhancement to Wolseley skate park Middlesex)*
- *Medway District Park– new skateboard park, spray pad, playground equipment*
- *Oakridge Optimist Park – conversion of wading pool to spraypad*
- *Piccadilly Park play structure was replaced and urban plaza constructed*
- *Thames Valley Parkway projects on the Main and North branches*
- *Veterans Memorial Parkway enhancement project - 8 new commemorative features and substantial landscape planting have been completed*

Thames Valley Parkway system improvements:

- *Two major links were completed in the Thames Valley Parkway Trail system in 2009 in the new Uplands Community and along the Pincomb Drain.*
- *In 2010, 12,000 meters of new multiuse pathway was constructed (+3 new pedestrian bridges over Pottersburg Creek) and 1,200 meters of existing TVP was rebuilt.*

Special Events

The Master Plan recommends continued support of special events which create opportunities for residents and visitors to participate in a variety of cultural, sporting and community events.

Highlights

136 special events were held in 2009 and 149 in 2010 with a total participation of over a million individuals. Of special significance was:

- *The Olympic Torch Relay Celebration on December 24, 2009 at Victoria Park;*
- *Inspiring a Dream, a Celebration of London’s Olympic and Paralympic Athletes on June 21, 2010 at the John Labatt Centre; and,*
- *The Special Olympics competition in July 2010 where more than 1,400 athletes and 1,000 volunteers participated.*

A number of large events in city-wide parks and smaller neighbourhood celebrations continue to be supported by City of London.

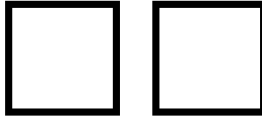
Golf

The Master Plan recognizes the provision of 60 years of providing high quality, accessible, affordable golf experiences for Londoners.

Highlights

The City continues to enhance the experience of players and encourages the year-round use of clubhouse and/or course facilities.

The golf business was the subject of a new business plan which focussed on improving the customer experience, increasing participation, revenue generation and marketing.



Storybook Gardens

The Master Plan recognizes Storybook Garden’s vital role in enhancing opportunities for children and families to learn through play and programming.

Highlights

Five new amusement rides were added in 2010, bringing the total to seven. Approximately 150,000 riders used the rides in 2010.

Storybook Gardens published its own storybook in 2009, entitled “A Home for Magic”. The storybook serves to anchor Storybook Gardens’ commitment to providing an environment that is supportive of emergent and family literacy. New book-based outdoor education programs were also launched in 2009. Developed by Ontario board-certified teachers, the programs tie together storybooks read aloud in the classroom with multiple intelligence activities delivered at the park.

The City will continue to implement the 2007-2010 business plan.

LOOKING FORWARD

The Parks and Recreation Strategic Master Plan continues to guide decision making and remains relevant to the ongoing operation and capital planning of the Parks and Recreation and Neighbourhood and Children’s Services Divisions as well as Parks Planning and Design. Upcoming projects and initiatives that will advance recommendations of the plan and include:

- The development of an Age Friendly London Plan will inform usability of parks and facilities as London’s population ages.
- The Spectrum Program Guide Review which is considering efficiencies in use of technology in the registration process, communications/marketing in the community and integration with the Play Your Way marketing and branding.
- Completion of infrastructure projects and grand openings of many projects listed above.
- The East-Southeast Recreation Facility siting project to be completed using a deliberative community engagement approach in soliciting input from residents.
- Continued linkages to other initiatives including: the London Strengthening Neighbourhoods, Strategy, Child and Youth Agenda and Community Engagement policy development.
- Continued development of business plans in specific areas including golf and Storybook Gardens.

CONCLUSION

The Master Plan, endorsed by Council, recognizes that recreation and parks are essential to the quality of life of our community and are committed to the Vision of the Charter for Recreation and Parks in Ontario. Guided by this Plan, the City will continue to provide opportunities for Londoners to not only lead healthy, socially active lives, but to have *Amazing Experiences* in our safe, high quality, programs, facilities, parks and trails.

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SUBMITTED BY:	RECOMMENDED BY:
Donna Baxter Manager, Policy & Research Neighbourhood & Children's Services	William Coxhead, Director Parks and Recreation
RECOMMENDED BY:	RECOMMENDED BY:
Lynne Livingstone Director Neighbourhood & Children's Services	Andrew Macpherson Manager Parks Planning & Design
	CONCURRED BY:
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- C.** Lynn Loubert, Division Manager, Aquatics, Arenas & Attractions
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 Paul D'Hollander, Manager, East Area Recreation
 Tony Kyle, Manager, West Area Recreation
 Andrew Macpherson, Manager, Parks Planning & Design

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Parks and Recreation Strategic Master Plan – Key Accomplishments 2009 and 2010
 (*Infrastructure Stimulus Fund (ISF) and Recreational Infrastructure Canada (RInC) Funded Projects)

SYSTEM RECOMMENDATIONS	
Service Excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted a program operations and business process review of community centers and seniors centers. • Improvements to registration processes: Memberships (Golf, Storybook, Community and Senior’s Centres) can now be renewed online, modified the Spectrum registration process to spread first day registrations across 2 days • Implementation of Pricing Framework for Facility Rentals (Jan. 2009) • Policy Regarding Alcoholic Beverages at Private Rentals of Recreation and Community Centres (May 2009) • Initial investigations to develop a City Sport Strategy • Continue to participate in Ontario Municipal Benchmarking Initiative and Municipal Performance Management Program
Communications / Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of the Minimum Public Notification Requirements and Public Participation Framework for recreation facilities and parks projects, initiatives and developments (Jan. 2009). • Parks and Recreation Website updates 2010 and continuing in 2011. • New Neighbourhoods web site
Access and Equity (Services for All)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • London was recognized as an Age Friendly City by the World Health Organization in 2010. • Seniors Neighbourhood Advisory Committees established in Glen Cairn, Argyle and Central London. • Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities (AODA) policies were developed to comply with Provincial regulations. All have been provided training in practices. • The City continues to implement new Facility Accessibility Design Standards (FADS) in all upgrades and new development projects at its facilities • To improve accessibility to recreation and leisure opportunities the City provided financial support for almost 8,900 programs and memberships per year. • Advances in inclusion of persons with disabilities by offering such programs as Camps on TRACK and further training for summer camp staff on inclusion. • Developed a recreation module for the Healthy Homes program in partnership with Salvation Army, Fanshawe College, London Housing and others. • The City dedicates a percentage of time at community centres for low fee/no fee programs or drop-ins and for community use. • The City of London continues to increase availability of free programming with community partners in targeted neighbourhood community centres, parks etc • Starting in 2011 the City of London will build into its budget dedicated time at community centres where the community can access space free of charge

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Almost 400 youth participated in the Leader in Training courses in 2010. Targeted LIT programs were introduced in 9 neighbourhoods in 2010. • Tennis and Skatepark monitoring took place in the summer of 2009 to inform usage of sites and priorities for upgrades. • City Council endorsed a Free Access to Space Policy in 2010 that waives rental fees in community centres for eligible community groups. • The City of London has undertaken a review of the steps that can be taken to have a community centres act as neighbourhood gathering places. • The City of London has a number of free access to space agreements for affiliate groups at several city facilities. • Policy for Waiving Fees for Use of City-Owned Recreation and Community Centres (Sept 2009)
<p>Social Marketing & Promotion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Middlesex-London in motion[®] is a community-based initiative to promote healthy and active living through communications/social marketing (www.healthylivinginfo.ca), targeted community strategies, building community partnerships and measurement through research and evaluation. The City of London is a key partner in this initiative along with 52 other community organizations. A media campaign in 2010 was launched to promote healthy and active living. • First Spectrum Open House held in 2010. • The City of London has developed a successful Skateboard Facebook page to promote local neighbourhood skate parks • Recreation services successfully improve promotion of summer, Christmas and March break camps through the use of sign boards in strategic locations around the city. • A review of the Spectrum program guide in 2011. Review will include consultation with customers, stakeholders and advertisers as well as a review of the distribution. • Interpretive signage was installed in Victoria Park to celebrate the long history of the park, from the British Garrison to the first school for children of the underground railway to the Victorian-era development of the park.
<p>Partnerships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City of London currently maintains Purchase of Service Agreements with community partners that deliver programs and services. • The City of London, Recreation Services has a joint use agreement with the 2 local school boards in an effort for the community to access space at local schools for community programming • Through the Child and Youth Network, City staff and community partners are working with local school boards to improve access to school spaces and ensure schools are open to the public. • The Stony Creek Community Centre, YMCA and Public Library opened in the Fall of 2010. A successful partnership project between the City of London, YMCA of Western Ontario and London Public Library provides an indoor pool, gymnasium, fitness centre, community centre and library. • In 2009 community projects included: Piccadilly Park addition of play equipment and benches, the Bereaved Families of Ontario “secret garden” in Springbank Park and improvements in Carriage Hill Park. In total \$759,411 in donations were made under this program. • In 2009, community planting projects were continued with Scout Trees and the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority community planting program, Friends of Stoney Creek and ReForest London. Close to 8,000 volunteers across the city came out to make a difference, planting a total of 10,507 native trees and shrubs.

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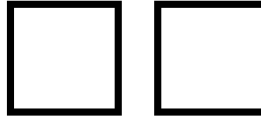
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2010, 76 parks projects were successfully completed due to outstanding community support. The total value of cash donations, in-kind donations and volunteer time was over \$700,000 with a city investment of only \$219,000 representing at least a 3:1 return on capital investment.
<p>Environmental Stewardship</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lifecycle renewal projects for city facilities include many “green” technologies – arena lighting replacements, spray pad water conservation systems, energy efficient refrigeration and heating systems in arenas, pools and community centres • Stoney Creek Community Centre, YMCA and Library was designed to achieve a LEED Gold certified green building • Promoted the use of tap water via “The Clear Choice - London's Tap Water” promotion and installed water bottle refill stations at many facilities (arenas, community centres) and at Victoria Park • Piloting the use of sustainable technologies and programs in City facilities, such as LED lighting and ground-sourced heat pumps for heating & air conditioning • Green Roof technology was installed at the new Ed Blake Park fieldhouse and Stoney Creek Community Centre, YMCA and Library. • Two new self cleaning pool filters were installed at Northeast and Gibbons pools – a significant water savings will be realized • Ed Blake Park spraypad was designed with water conserving features - run times were shorted on all spray pads to reduce water use • The City Parks Planning reported on Trail Planning for ESAs to Council in 2010, this report will be finalized in 2011 • Parks Planning recommended to Council in 2010 that ESAs be removed from the Parks category in the Official Plan and be located under Natural Heritage. An Official Plan Amendment will be brought forward in 2011. • Results from the Urban Forest Model project were made available in 2009/2010 and is expanding awareness of the environmental benefits of forested areas and tree cover. • The city purchased the East Cove Woods property (14 Ha) in the Coves ESA/subwatershed in response to community concern over lack of access to the ESA and historic interest and use. • Environmental Programs staff are working with Friends of the Coves to promote the Coves ESA, its environment and community values and the wise stewardship options available to residents. This is a model that could be followed for other parks and ESAs. • Coves sub-watershed pilot project promotes the Coves ESA through a variety of educational and awareness programs sponsored by the City. • An updated trail Master Plan was initiated for Medway Valley ESA North
<p>SERVICE LEVEL RECOMMENDATIONS</p>	
<p>Community Investment & Planning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of the London Strengthening Neighbourhoods Strategy. A dedicated group of residents continue to implement the plan. Many projects overlap with recommendations in the Master Plan. • The Child and Youth Network continues to implement its 3 year plan with concentration in the areas of Ending Poverty, Improving Literacy and Healthy Eating/Healthy Physical Activity. London System Reengineering began to examine how to improve services for children, youth and families at the neighbourhood level.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Community Services Department and the Child and Youth Network (140 community agencies), have adopted the Active Creative Engaged (ACE) Community Development Toolkit to guide the way we work in the community. This toolkit is a practical guide to community development that recognizes the strength and ability of the community (residents and stakeholders) to create and implement effective, relevant and meaningful initiatives. Training modules have been developed and community partners and City staff from a many departments have participated. • Community Gardens Review in Spring 2010 contains recommendations related to management of the gardens. • The Kipps Lane Strengthening Neighbourhood Strategy is an asset based community development approach undertaken to empower the community to enhance their neighbourhood's capacity and vibrancy. By giving residents the tools and resources they need by focussing on community development, improved recreation programming and youth mentorship, a strong and focused resident-led group is now undertaking action to improve the Kipps Lane and community area. In Kipps Lane residents are the heart of change. • In 2010 the City of London was recognized as an Age Friendly City by the World Health Organization. Further work will continue on this initiative in 2011.
<p style="text-align: center;">Community Programs / Spectrum</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide over 2,600 registered Spectrum recreation and leisure programs each year at 90 locations, including schools, community centres and through business partnerships. • In 2010 registered program and drop-in visits increased. There were a total of 365,000 registered program visits and 481,000 drop-in visits. • Overall Spectrum program customer satisfaction increased in 2010 to 97% from 87% in 2009 • New recreation programs were developed for target groups identified in the Master Plan - children, teens, older adults, new immigrants as well as new introductory programs. Program examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Grey matters memory program; ○ Exercise for older adults; ○ Summer Community Connections program for youth; ○ Skating program for newcomers; and, ○ Introductory program focus in yoga and martial arts ○ Stride and Glide ice skate program in partnership with London Intercommunity Health Centre for newcomers
<p style="text-align: center;">Community Facilities & Gathering Places (Indoor)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Stoney Creek Community Centre, YMCA and Public Library opened in the Fall of 2010. A successful partnership project between the City of London, YMCA of Western Ontario and London Public Library provides an indoor pool, gymnasium, fitness centre, community centre and library. • *Redevelopment of an existing structure into the new Springbank Gardens Community Centre which opened in 2010. Provided much needed community space in an underserved area of the city. • *Redevelopment of the Byron Optimist Community Centre, Medway Community Centre and Boyle Memorial Community Centre vastly improved community space in all three neighbourhoods.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • *Supported the London Optimist in the new BMO Centre for indoor soccer/sports complex converting a former Brownfield site to a vital recreational use in the heart of the city. It is estimated that the new facility will be used by over 500 teams, playing in kids, men's, women's and mixed soccer leagues, with more than 600,000 people passing through its doors each year. An elevated walking track will broaden the usage of the facility giving parents and seniors a year round venue for activity.
Aquatics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thames Pool redevelopment was completed in 2010. The renovated pool includes a 50 meter pool plus a beach entry area, with a number of water play features and a 17' waterslide. Feed back from users has been incredible and use has been high. • Gibbons (reopened in 2010), Northeast (reopening in 2011) and Southcrest outdoor pool lifecycle renewal projects. • In keeping with the Master Plan recommendation that wading pools be eliminated in favour of other park amenities the wading pools at Doidge Park and Kiwanis park were removed. Oakridge Optimist Park wading pool was replaced with a spray pad. • The recommendation to build at least 5 more spray pads in underserved parts of the community allowed 3-new spray pads to be constructed in Medway District Park, Ed Blake Park and Oakridge Park. • A customer service satisfaction survey was completed and indicated 97% of users were satisfied. Programs were updated to reflect comments where possible. • Over 2,200 Grade 3 students participated in Swim to Survive in 2010. This initiative teaches basic swimming skills. • A grant was acquired from Canadian Tire Jump Start program to teach newcomers to London how to swim. • Water Smart campaign continues to educate Londoners in and around water through a wide range of programs and school visits.
SUMMARY Parks PI & Design	
Parks Planning & Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A total of 52 hectares of new parkland was assumed in 2010 and includes Paul Haggis and Beaverbrook Neighbourhood Parks and Riverbend District Park • 10 new Woodlots/Open Spaces were assumed (6 < 39 acres and 4 > 40 acres) • The City of London assessed the concept that more popular trails have separate pedestrian and cycling trails (as long as the Environmentally Significant Areas are not jeopardized) and implement in high volume areas where there is room to allow for 2 trails • The City parks planning design standards are being reviewed to permit smaller urban parks; several are being planned in new subdivisions (Talbot Village, Richmond North). • Two new urban plazas were constructed at Doidge Park and Piccadilly Park • The City of London maintains an inventories of available park space (available on CityMap) and identifies gaps based on 3 hectares/1,000 people • New parkland dedication policies were developed that ensure adequate amounts of parkland are set aside in all new subdivisions • The Thames Valley Corridor Plan is soon to be finalized and there are many recommendations related to signage, connectivity, development standards, development of a River Stewardship program etc.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City has launched an updated Commemorative Program in 2010 to encourage donations towards naturalization projects, trees, benches or large-scale park features. Donors to the Graham Arboretum are recognized on the memory wall located in Springbank Park
<p>Community Facilities (Outdoor)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • *City-wide Sport Complex – 2 artificial soccer/football fields including landscaping, planting, fencing etc. • *Meredith Park – multi-usage sports pad, pathways, trees, tennis court rehabilitation • *Basil Grover - fieldhouse • *Ed Blake Park – spraypad, soccer field, playground and fieldhouse. The Ed Blake Park community raised \$38,500 for construction of multi-purpose sports pad as part of Ed Blake Park redevelopment. • *Kiwanis Skateboard Plaza and fieldhouse. • *McMahon Park – baseball diamond, field house, pathways, significant enhancement to Wolseley skate park (received funding from Kiwanis Club of London and Middlesex) • *Medway District Park– new skateboard park, spray pad, playground equipment. The Kiwanis Club of Forest City-London contributed \$33,000 to add additional features to the skateboard park • *Oakridge Optimist Park – conversion of wading pool to spraypad • *Piccadilly Park play structure was replaced and urban plaza constructed • *Thames Valley Parkway projects on the Main and North branches • *Veterans Memorial Parkway enhancement project - 8 new commemorative features and substantial landscape planting have been completed • New playgrounds were built in 14 parks in the past 2 years • Two new neighbourhood parks were built in 2009: Capulet Park with a playground, basketball court, adult exercise stations and a loop pathway around the park Stephens Farm Park has a playground, mini-soccer pitches and pathway. • Six new field houses constructed. • New sports fields built in 5-parks. • Redevelopment of Doidge Park and construction of urban plaza. • St. Julien Park skate park was constructed improving the current supply to 10 skate parks • In 2009 Springbank Park saw numerous improvements including a new all-season washroom replacing two smaller out-dated facilities. Internal roadways and pathways were realigned to eliminate cars from the Thames Valley Parkway along the river near the dam. The construction of the Memory Wall in the Graham Arboretum was completed. • In Victoria Park a new stone gateway was installed through partnership with the London Home Builders Association and upgrades to the skate plaza and bandshell were completed • The grand opening of the Walter Blackburn Memorial Fountain at the Forks of the Thames occurred in May 2009. • In 2009 there were 5 new Community Gardens developed in City parks.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two major links were completed in the Thames Valley Parkway Trail system in 2009 in the new Uplands Community and along the Pincomb Drain. • In 2010, 12,000 meters of new multiuse pathway was constructed (+3 new pedestrian bridges over Pottersburg Creek) and 1,200 meters of existing TVP was rebuilt.
Sports Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender Analysis of Parks and Recreation Facility Allocation and Program Participation (July 2010). • *Supported the London Optimist in the new BMO Centre for indoor soccer/sports complex converting a former Brownfield site to a vital recreational use in the heart of the city. • Online arena availability can now be done online. • Baseball and football communities were brought together to discuss field needs in 2010. • Several upgrades were made to Labatt Park including an upgraded infield and scoreboard.
Special Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 136 special events were held in 2009 and 149 in 2010 with a total participation of over a million individuals. Of special significance was: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Olympic Torch Relay Celebration on December 24, 2009 at Victoria Park; ○ Inspiring a Dream, a Celebration of London's Olympic and Paralympic Athletes on June 21, 2010 at the John Labatt Centre; and, ○ The Special Olympics competition in July 2010 where more than 1,400 athletes and 1,000 volunteers participated. • A number of large events in city-wide parks and smaller neighbourhood celebrations continue to be supported by City of London.
Golf	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City continues to enhance the experience of players and encourages the year-round use of clubhouse and/or course facilities. • The golf business was the subject of a new business plan which focussed on improving the customer experience, increasing participation, revenue generation and marketing. • To encourage the year round use of the clubhouse, virtual golf was installed in the Thames Clubhouse in 2009.
Storybook Gardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In accordance with the Storybook Gardens business plan task force recommendations, twenty-six wildlife and large domestic animals have been transferred to other facilities, reducing the size of the Storybook Gardens zoo to a total of 18 animals representing 9 wildlife species. • Five new amusement rides were added in 2010, bringing the total to seven. Approximately 150,000 riders used the rides in 2010. • Storybook Gardens published its own storybook in 2009, entitled "A Home for Magic". The storybook serves to anchor Storybook Gardens' commitment to providing an environment that is supportive of emergent and family literacy. • New book-based outdoor education programs were launched in 2009. Developed by Ontario board-certified teachers, the programs tie together storybooks read aloud in the classroom with multiple intelligence activities delivered at the park. • Professional storytellers are booked for storytelling presentations on a weekly basis throughout the summer season to support the growth of literacy through oral storytelling for the entire family. • New raised bed teaching gardens were planted in 2010 to provide children with hands-on learning opportunities to connect with locally grown food and to learn the story of where food comes from, in support of the CYA Healthy Eating and Healthy Physical Activity Initiative.