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TO:	CHAIR AND MEMBERS COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING ON AUGUST 21, 2012
FROM:	WILLIAM C. COXHEAD MANAGING DIRECTOR OF PARKS & RECREATION
SUBJECT:	Future Spray Pads Site Selection

RECOMMENDATION

That, on the recommendation of the Managing Director of Parks and Recreation, the following report **BE ENDORSED**

- a) The following site selection criteria and rating scale **BE ENDORSED** when planning future spray pads in the City of London.
- b) Based on the recommended site selection criteria and park ratings, the following spray pads identified as priority projects in the ten year capital for spray pad construction:
 - 2014 Meadowgate Park
 - 2017 Constitution Park
 - 2019 Fox Field

PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER
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Parks & Recreation Master Plan – Recommendations 92 and 93.

BACKGROUND

SPRAY PADS

Description

Spray pads are interactive water play areas and/or outdoor cooling off centres that are available in an endless variety of shapes and sizes. A full scale spray pad may include a variety of water play features such as rainbow arches, ground sprays, overhead water sprays, walls of water and dumping buckets to provide water play to a wide range of users. The features can be set to operate within set hours and are only operational when activated by a user.

Spray pads are the number one requested item in a park redevelopment. The spray pads are a valuable resource in communities and provide a no cost means of family recreation participation. In 2011 the spray pads across London were activated over 247,000 times.

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Current Number & Placement

The first spray pad was built in 1999 when Rowntree Park wading pool was converted to a spray pad. Since that time 12 spray pads, with a variety of features in various parks, have been built throughout the city. There is currently area-existing deficit in the North area of the City, and South West of the City. Other areas of the City have some or plentiful service from existing spray pads and wading pools.

Spray Pad User/Operator Benefits

The spray pads have a number of benefits. The timer systems allow them to be used for a wide range of hours, and the times can be easily adjusted. When not in use no water is being used ,as a lifeguard is not required because there is no standing water. They are used by users of all ages and are handicapped accessible. They use the city potable water source so chemicalization is not required.

FUTURE SPRAY PAD DEVELOPMENT

Planning future spray pads must take into consideration a number of existing strategic directions and plans and be cognizant of existing park amenities and neighbourhood priorities.

Strengthening Neighbourhoods Strategy

Spray pads will improve the health, safety & wellbeing of individuals & families while promoting liveable & inclusive neighbourhoods. It will encourage the number of Londoners involved in lifelong recreation and leisure activities by offering opportunities that are affordable, accessible, inclusive, safe and fun. It improves the quality of life, health and well-being of all Londoners in all neighbourhoods

Parks and Recreation Master Plan

The 2009 Parks and Recreation master plan recommends four to five more spray pads to be built by 2025 with an emphasis on underserved areas. including NE and NW planning areas. Since that time two spray pads have been built in Ed Blake and Medway parks. Evaluations of proposed locations take that into consideration and look to undeserved aquatic areas.

Parks and Amenities

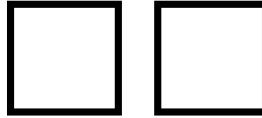
Within the parks system there is a hierarchy of park classifications. Appendix A indicates the type of park where spray pads are currently located. A **district park** has multiple features and serves an area of approximately 2km or 10,000 -20,000 people whereas a **neighbourhood park** serves fewer than 5,000 people and .8km in area and is not large enough for a spray pad. It is recommended that future spray pads continue to be located in district parks or neighbourhood parks for the following reasons:

- a) Neighbours to these parks are generally more receptive to new amenities such as spray pads because they are in keeping with the nature of existing active park use.
- b) The nature of a district park having a number of amenities encourages use, and provides parking for these drive to destinations.

Site Selection Criteria

Discussions were held with Parks Planning and Design regarding selection criteria for determining priority sites for future spray pads. Appendix B provides rating results of district parks based on the following criteria:

- **Underserved area** of the City based on distance and types of amenities in the area.



- **Demographics supporting use** is an important component of determining the value to the community, with the trend towards families with young children.
- **Proximity to other pools**, we have found that proximity to existing pools has a negative affect on the use of the pool, and therefore participation and revenue streams. In an effort to balance free participation with paid, and budget targets we need to be cognoscente of locations.
- **Washrooms** are a key requirement for the spray pad and should be nearby. Not all may but with small children and changing needs they are strongly recommended. They should be barrier free.
- **Parking** is important in that spray pads are generally considered to be drive to destinations. They draw from a larger area than a neighbourhood park. Parking should be a reasonable distance from the spray pad but also not be too close for safety reasons.
- **Servicing** of the site is important. Potable water, storm sewers, sanitary lines and electrical power service will reduce the initial outlay required when installing the spray pad.
- **High Visibility** is key. They should be visible from busy areas that allow for natural surveillance. This helps to deter vandalism and reduce criminal activities. It also encourages legitimate use especially with small children being key users.
- **Accessibility.** Feedback on existing spray pads is that they are wonderful for all users including those with special needs. A hard surface pathway is proposed to link features. The slope should not exceed 4%. This will increase accessibility and ease of use for children and parents with strollers.
- **Proximity to Other Amenities** in the park like trails, sports fields, playgrounds, and parking are appropriate as well. These give the Community a sense of activity and safety. Shade, benches and picnic tables are suggested features in close proximity to spray pads.
- **Existing Trees/Vegetation** Preservation of existing trees and vegetation is recommended. On a case by case basis vegetation should be replaced if removed.

CONCLUSION

At this time, based on the site selection criteria and rating results, the following are being recommended as priority sites for future spray pad development.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Park</u>
2014	Meadowgate Park
2017	Constitution Park
2019	Fox Field

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The capital budget has earmarked \$400,000 for spray pads in each of the years 2014, 2017, and 2019. Depending on locations the spray pads may be available for development charges funding.

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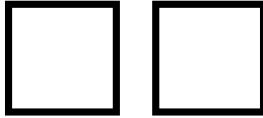
Cost to operate the spray pads is estimated to be \$30,000 a year, and will have to be included in Environmental Services budget they years of construction and in subsequent years.

Acknowledgments

Andrew Macpherson, Parks Planning
Dianna Clarke, Parks Operation
Scott Bowron, Aquatic Services

SUBMITTED BY:	RECOMMENDED BY:
LYNN LOUBERT DIVISION MANAGER – AQUATICS, ARENAS AND ATTRACTIONS	WILLIAM C. COXHEAD DIRECTOR, PARKS & RECREATION

- c Andrew Macpherson, Parks Planning
Dianna Clarke, Parks Operations
Scott Bowron, Aquatic Services



APPENDIX A

Existing Spray Pads in London

Pad Name	Location	Opened in
Rowntree Park	Whetter Avenue	1999
Kiwanis Park	off Hale St	2000
Forks of the Thames	Riverside behind the old Court House Between King and Riverside	2000
West Lions Park	Granville Ave beside Kinsmen Arena	2001
Lambeth Centennial Park	Beattie St beside Lambeth Arena	2001
Jesse Davidson Park	Monte Vista or Ensign Crescent	2004
Bonaventure Meadows	At the school at 141 Bonaventure Drive	2004
Gibbons Park	Saturn playground, end of Grovenor	2007
S.E Optimist Park	Deveron Cres	2008
Oakridge	Oakridge arena/pool Valetta St	2010
Ed Blake Park	Near Huron and Barker St behind Monsignor Bruyer H.S.	2011
Medway park	Beside Ray Lancton arena	2011



APPENDIX B

Ranking of Parks for suitability

Points awarded as follows:

Point Value	Rationale
20	Underserved area
10	Field house on site or identified in park plan
10	Sufficient space
10	Playgrounds and features
10	Sport fields
15	Demographic / Built area
15	Sufficient Parking
10	Community interest/Support
100	Total Points

Park	Location	Amenities	Community	Points
Meadowgate	SE	-district park land acquired -area highly populated -2 soccer pitches and playground -sufficient space -number of amenities -field house planned -Parking on site limited but plenty on street	-community meets demographics -high level of interest	95
Fox Field	NW	-10 to 12 acres of land -Field house planned -soccer pitches, tennis court and sports pad -parking for 80 cars -underserved area	-will be excellent site as area builds -planned for 2019 based on further development of area	90
Constitution	N	-good size for features -7 acres of land -plenty of parking 36 spots - on site soccer pitch -playground	-meets demographics -community input and financial support in park 75K by Optimist	80
S.W. Optimist	SW	-Field house -sufficient space -access and parking -sport fields	-lack of community support	50
Jack Chambers	NE	-school property -no field house -parking for school -lots of land	-meets demographics	45
Plane Tree	NW	-some amenities in park -no field house	-limited community support	40
Basil Grover	SW	-field house -park has a number of amenities -lack of parking -high level of vandalism	--not in a key population area	30
White Oaks	S	-park in state of redevelopment -amenities present -future project work tbd	-close proximity to SLCP -some spray features may be part of park-et	TBD