

City of London Draft Parks and Recreation Master Plan Phase 3: Public Engagement on Draft Recommendations

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Sent to S. Stafford and D. Baxter April 23, 2019 as per their request at EEPAC's April 11, 2019 meeting

Where park is used in the Plan, it refers to a definition that contains the word Park

Definitions (from Development Charges study definitions provided by staff on October 11, 2018 to the Development Charges Stakeholder Group)

Neighbourhood Parks are intended to serve as a focal point of a neighbourhood and are designed to serve the needs of the local neighbourhood by supporting both unorganized and organized activities and programs.

District Parks are intended to serve groups of neighbourhoods and are designed with an emphasis on facilities for organized sports and unorganized activities.

Open Space generally buffers and protects natural features and is often linear in nature following tributaries of the Thames River, upland corridors or utility easements.

Woodland Parks have typically been established and protected for their environmental significance and may have been identified by the City through a previous study or have a development-related Environmental Impact Study (EIS) with recommendations for their protection, management and enhancement.

Environmentally Significant Areas (ESAs) are identified as components of the Natural Heritage System and include lands that are to be maintained in their natural state through appropriate management for the purposes for which they have been recognized.

Sports Parks are designed to accommodate multiple high-end sport fields and service larger areas in the City.

Thames Valley Parkway (TVP) is the City's multi-use pathway system which generally follows the Thames River. Future extensions of the TVP will occur as lands along the branches of the Thames River come under urban development.

Urban Parks are relatively small spaces that provide a higher level of design quality and are intended to be focal points within neighbourhoods.

Civic Spaces are small parcels of municipally owned land in the Downtown core and along older main street areas that are designed to a high standard.

In this document, a pathway has a surface that is hardened with asphalt or other similar base. A trail does not.

In this document, passive recreation refers to recreational activities that do not require prepared facilities like sports fields or pavilions. Passive recreational activities place minimal stress on a site's resources; as a result, they can provide ecosystem service benefits and are highly compatible with natural resource protection. (US EPA)

The Natural Heritage System refers to Policy 1298 of the London Plan and is shown on Map 5 of the London Plan.

ACTIVE LIVING

Goal: We will support and promote opportunities for active living. This will be achieved through unstructured and structured experiences that encourage regular physical activity and healthy aging.

Strategic Directions:

- a) Foster active living through structured and **unstructured activities** that improve physical, mental, and social wellbeing.
- b) Make parks and facilities walkable and accessible by residents through **active transportation** and connections to public transit.
- c) Support programming that encourages introductory skill development, interaction, and community building.

Physical Activity, Active Living, and Active Aging

- A. Programs provided by the City of London will continue to emphasize physical activity and physical literacy for residents of all ages and abilities through registered and drop-in opportunities.
- B. Expand the variety, frequency, location, and promotion of **drop-in programs** through the use of community centres, neighbourhood locations, parks, and **non-traditional sites**. Develop a strategy to identify, administer, and evaluate drop-in programming that responds to changing demographics and diversity.
- C. Offer more **family recreation opportunities** to meet the needs of newcomers and minority groups (including more intergenerational opportunities and options for children ages 0-2 years) and to help foster lifelong participation.
- D. Work with Child and Youth Network priority area leads to explore options for integrating **physical literacy and new physical activity elements** into our built environment, such as incorporating literacy decals, murals, etc. into community centres.
- E. Explore how to best meet the increasing demands and unique needs of **older adults**. Meet with partners such as the Huff N' Puff Seniors Fitness Association to explore needs/plans moving forward, including the exploration of a **therapeutic line of programming** with community partners.
- F. Continue to review **program participation data** to make informed decisions about program development by age group and location through the establishment of participation targets.
- G. **Work together with other service providers and stakeholders** to understand and address overall participation rates and gaps in parks, recreation, and sport pursuits in London.

Is there anything missing from the recommendations above that you want considered within the Master Plan? **A definition of passive and active recreation with examples.**

Please provide any additional comments that you may have **"non-traditional sites" is completely open ended. Examples would be helpful. Do unstructured activities fall under active recreation which would include a game of pick up soccer or ultimate Frisbee? Does active transportation include bikes including electric bikes? None of these activities should not be permitted in ESAs or Woodland Parks.**

INCLUSION & ACCESS

Goal: We will remove barriers to participation by adopting a model of “access for all”. This will be achieved by welcoming and including all residents.

Strategic Directions:

- a) Work collaboratively with populations that face constraints to participation – such as (but not limited to) Indigenous peoples, newcomers to Canada, residents with low income backgrounds, LGBT+ community, women and girls, and persons with disabilities – to reduce and remove barriers.
- b) Support diversity and inclusion by evaluating proposals, policies, and actions through an equity and gender identity lens.
- c) Provide, promote, and enhance subsidy programs that improve affordability for all.
- d) Increase the range of low- and no-cost programs within the city.
- e) Promote the use of parks and public spaces.
- f) Promote the use of trails and pathways in a way that protects unique species and habitats.
- g) Implement age-friendly design standards and planning strategies that improve accessibility for all.

Inclusion and Access

- A. As the City grows, continue to expand **low- and no-cost program initiatives** that advance the City’s service mandate. Continued research and engagement at the neighbourhood-level is necessary to identify areas that will benefit the most from these initiatives.
- B. Reach out to **Indigenous people and organizations** to:
 - i. Undertake regular and meaningful engagement on matters of importance related to parks, recreation programs, sport services and facilities;
 - ii. Explore new partnerships for including Indigenous programming in the Recreation Guide;
 - iii. Explore how to best ensure Indigenous peoples feel welcomed in programs and community centres;
 - iv. Target casual staff recruitment efforts through Indigenous organizations to increase the diversity in London’s leadership staff; and,
 - v. Identify how parks, recreation, and sport can support the recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.
- C. Work with **under-represented populations** to: identify participation rates in parks, recreation, and sport; remove barriers to participation; and, establish appropriate participation targets.
- D. Expand our reach to **newcomer populations** by:
 - i. Focusing on staff recruitment efforts and leadership development to increase the diversity of the staff team;
 - ii. Increasing the variety of recreational opportunities that are appropriate for various ethnocultural groups; and
 - iii. Translating promotional materials into predominant languages.
- E. Expand programs and services for the **special needs population**, with a focus on increasing physical activity options for school-aged children with special needs.
- F. Expand **staff training** around accessibility, including sensitivity training in staff meetings or training sessions.
- G. Expand **gender diversity/LGBT+ inclusion** by utilizing consistent signage at all centres and using the Ontario Human Rights Code and experts in the region to inform the staff training programs.
- H. Evaluate the balance of **female participation** by age cohort in all direct, casual, community, and stakeholder-driven sport opportunities in London.

Is there anything missing from the recommendations above that you want considered within the Master Plan?

We split trails and pathways from E and added a new F in the Strategic Directions section.

Please provide any additional comments that you may have

CONNECTING PEOPLE & NATURE

Goal: We will strengthen residents' connections with their neighbourhoods and nature. This will be achieved through public awareness, neighbourhood-driven activities and decision-making, and opportunities to animate and enjoy London's **outdoor spaces parks and places civic spaces**.

Strategic Directions:

- a) Enhance awareness of community initiatives and promote the personal and community benefits of parks, recreation, and sport.
- b) Support volunteerism and community engagement in the planning and delivery of services.
- c) Continue to emphasize initiatives focused on strengthening neighbourhoods, animation of public spaces, and unstructured activities.
- d) Collaborate with providers to exchange information and promote services and programs.
- e) Use recreation to help people connect with nature and be stewards of the natural environment.
- f) Apply effective designs and management strategies such as natural landscapes, native plants, and natural heritage education opportunities that support healthy and sustainable environments, **and sustain ecological features and functions**.
- g) Support efforts to expand active transportation networks, including trails and pathways within and connecting to parks and **open civic spaces**.

Connecting People and Neighbourhoods

- A. Continue to **support community development and local decision-making initiatives**, the Strengthening Neighbourhoods Strategy, Child and Youth Network, partnerships, and other means of achieving equity in park, facility, and service delivery.
- B. Continue to embed **public engagement as a required element** when making key decisions relating to parks, recreation, and sport services. Consider a variety of tactics (including community-led and community-designed engagement opportunities) that make it easy for people to participate, such as non-traditional locations and times.
- C. Continue to support **Neighbourhood Hubs** (Indoor and outdoor) by:
 - i. Ensuring our community centres and parks are safe places where people can gather and connect and promote this fact;
 - ii. Providing welcoming and inviting spaces (e.g., consistent wayfinding);
 - iii. Using our community centres and parks as access points for information about other City of London services; and,
 - iv. Using our community centres as warming/cooling centres during extreme weather.
- D. Continue to maximize **program delivery in existing places and spaces** by:
 - i. Identifying location gaps for different program areas and develop strategies to fill these gaps; and,
 - ii. Sourcing out new program locations through formalizing usage of school facilities (all Boards), coordinating with Family Centres, planning ahead such as for when new school space becomes available, and identifying under-utilized public library spaces.
- E. As part of a broader community engagement strategy, investigate the feasibility of developing an **online community portal and application** centred on parks, recreation, and sport in London.
- F. Increase **resident awareness and marketing** of parks, recreation, and sport opportunities and information through:
 - i. Leveraging new and emerging technologies that enhance the customer service experience (e.g., program registration and rentals);

- ii. Including more information about features available at each location, including those accessible to persons with disabilities;
 - iii. Educating the public about service level standards, such as parks maintenance and naturalization initiatives;
 - iv. Establishing strategies for communicating with specific audiences, including under-represented groups;
 - v. Expanding current initiatives such as the Play Your Way newsletter, Neighbourhood Decision-Making program, surveys, information centres, etc.;
 - vi. Developing generic neighbourhood-based information by working with Family Centres, libraries, and schools; and,
 - vii. Increasing cross-promotion on social media, utilizing relationships with neighbourhood groups, etc.
- G. Continue to explore opportunities to publish key promotional material and provide language supports for meeting participants in **multiple and predominant languages** with the goal of expanding the City's reach and increasing participation amongst newcomer groups.

Is there anything missing from the recommendations above that you want considered within the Master Plan?

Please provide any additional comments that you may have. If the Goal and Strategic Direction G are changed from open spaces to civic spaces as shown above, it is therefore made clear that Environmentally Significant Areas and buffers to environmental features are excluded.

Connecting People with Nature / Thames River

- A. Place a greater emphasis on helping people **connect with nature through recreation** by:
 - i. Incorporating appreciation and exposure to nature through new program design;
 - ii. Improving the connection between community and seniors' centres and their outdoor spaces; and,
 - iii. Enhancing shoreline access and gathering spaces by providing more amenities for trails/pathways and water-based recreational pursuits (e.g., fishing, paddling, etc.) adjacent to the Thames River, in keeping with best environmental practices.
- B. To support education and nature appreciation, provide **interpretive signage** that highlights the significance of London's **natural areas** Natural Heritage System.

Is there anything missing from the recommendations above that you want considered within the Master Plan?

Please provide any additional comments that you may have. It is unclear if this section does or does not include Environmentally Significant Areas. EEPAC has been told that the Plan does not include ESAs. If so, what is the meaning of "natural area" in B? We recommend using the term Natural Heritage System in B as this would include Woodland Parks, River and Stream Corridors and Environmentally Significant Areas.

Recreational Trails and Pathways **outside of Environmentally Significant Areas**

- A. Continue to provide Londoners with **trails** that provide opportunities to be immersed in, experience, respect, and value nature.
- B. Where ecologically appropriate, ensure that new trails are **AODA compliant**, so that all Londoners can experience nature.
- C. Continue efforts to address **gaps in the recreational trail and pathway networks** and extending the system into new growth areas. All trail and pathway development projects require site-specific analysis, including application of applicable policies and guidelines.
- D. Identify and consider opportunities to enhance the **safety and convenience** of the recreational pathway system through urban design, active transportation, and park renewal initiatives. Examples include (but are not limited to) connections where intensification and redevelopment occurs, installation of bike racks and amenities, signage clearly demarcating access points, community education, and awareness, separation of users in high traffic areas, and a **winter maintenance program** in select locations **where ecological features and functions are not put at risk**.
- E. Work with applicable approval agencies to develop a coordinated policy approach for **recreational trail and pathway development within natural areas** **Woodland Parks** and floodplains. **What is a natural area ?**
- F. **Before trails and pathways are created in Significant Woodlands shown on Map 5 of the London Plan, they must follow a woodland management plan based on an Environmental Impact Study.**
- G. Align implementation of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan with the City's **Cycling Master Plan** and promote and link with **Provincial Cycling Routes** (CycleON). Update technical standards to reflect provincial planning guidelines, as revised from time to time.

Is there anything missing from the recommendations above that you want considered within the Master Plan? **We have recommended a new F**

Please provide any additional comments that you may have **Trails and pathways must not be in ecological buffers as per the City's Environmental Management Guidelines.**

Environmental Health and Stewardship

- A. Identify resources to support the enhanced **management of municipal woodlands** **Woodland Parks** and work collaboratively with internal and external stakeholders to achieve the desired service level standards. **Not sure what enhanced management means. Invasive species? Dogs off leash control? Or does it mean naturalization? Clarity would be helpful.**
- B. Encourage **stakeholder and resident roles** in providing **stewardship** of parks, gardens, and other community resources. This may include encouraging the establishment of park foundations, conservancies, and other stewardship partnerships that enhance park sustainability.
- C. Seek opportunities to improve **awareness and understanding** about the importance of the City's Natural Heritage System and urban forest and their broader role within **Carolinian Canada**. Additional research should be conducted into best practices that build upon existing community partnerships and community education opportunities (e.g., programming and events, social media, educational signs, etc.).
- D. Continue to promote **naturalization of appropriate municipal lands and beautification and greening efforts** led or sponsored by the City (e.g., planting programs, "adopt-a" initiatives, community events, public art, and more) to meet multiple goals for habitats, pollinators, and tree coverage.

E. Continue to seek and implement strategies for the effective management of **urban wildlife** and **invasive species**.

Is there anything missing from the recommendations above that you want considered within the Master Plan?

Please provide any additional comments that you may have C. includes the City's ESAs as they are part of the Natural Heritage System. Not sure what this looks like in action and in outcomes. Why not simply say, "signage will be installed in locations where use of the city's natural heritage system and urban forest are greatest to help raise awareness and understanding"

Outdoor Play

- A. Develop an **Outdoor Activity Strategy** to encourage residents of all ages to stay outdoors longer, enjoy outdoor settings and enhance connections with nature.
- B. Investigate new **challenging play opportunities** to keep children and families outdoors and active for longer periods of time, such as natural play areas and adventure play features.

Is there anything missing from the recommendations above that you want considered within the Master Plan?

Please provide any additional comments that you may have

SECTION 7: SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENTS

Goal: We will invest strategically in parks, recreation, and sport infrastructure to support the Master Plan goals. This will be achieved by responding to demonstrated community needs through the thoughtful design, provision, and management of parks, facilities, and spaces.

Strategic Directions:

- a) Ensure that public **Parks and Civic Places** are safe, welcoming, accessible, and maintained in a state of good repair through the implementation of contemporary design standards, AODA requirements, and effective asset management practices.
- b) Renew, expand, and develop ~~spaces~~, facilities, and amenities in appropriate locations to address existing gaps. **Spaces is undefined – places may be better if you are referring to buildings.**
- c) Strive to develop spaces, facilities, and amenities that are flexible, serve multiple users, function as neighbourhood hubs, and can be linked to broader strategies and initiatives.
- d) Respond to changing participation patterns, demographics, and emerging activities by adapting public spaces and programs to fit evolving needs and expectations.
- e) Employ effective and progressive maintenance and asset management practices.
- f) Support inward and upward growth through proactive planning and innovative models that support future growth and an increasingly urbanized city.
- g) Recognize the importance of placemaking through the provision of exceptional civic spaces and robust infrastructure.

- h) Utilize a variety of acquisition and non-acquisition-based options to enhance the supply of parks and **city owned parts of the Natural Heritage System.** ~~open spaces.~~

Planning for a Mature City

- A. Consider **new service and facility provision models** that reflect the realities of higher-density residential communities, while ensuring convenient public access to needed spaces (e.g., public recreation amenities in condominium podiums).
- B. In neighbourhoods planned for **residential intensification**, design new parks and evaluate existing parks, green spaces, and other municipal properties for their potential to accommodate urban park features, multi-functional spaces, and expanded social and recreational opportunities to serve diverse populations.
- C. Evaluate **surplus school and other acquisition opportunities** based on the principles and targets advanced in this Master Plan, with a focus on geographic gap areas.

Is there anything missing from the recommendations above that you want considered within the Master Plan?

Please provide any additional comments that you may have **Waiting until lands that are environmentally significant such as ESAs and Woodlands are taken thru the subdivision process means the city is taking on management well after people have created their own trails and access points to features. This risks the ecological feature and reduces the chance to make people aware at the beginning of the importance of the feature. Waiting to get land for free late in the land use planning process is not good ecological planning. In the next section, C raised the possibility of acquiring land in advance of development. Geez Louise, why not for Woodland Parks and other parts of the Natural Heritage System (ex. Lower Dingman)**

Guidelines for Planning and Priority-Setting

- A. Facilitate a **balanced distribution and network** of parks, recreation programs, sport services, and facilities recognizing that different locations may serve different needs. This includes planning for **new program locations** (municipal and partnered) in gap and growth areas.
- B. Utilize the planning and priority-setting guidelines identified in this Master Plan (Section 7.1) for evaluating requests and opportunities to provide **new or enhanced infrastructure** and when planning and designing infrastructure.
- C. Where possible, **acquire land well in advance** of development for higher order projects such as planned community centres. Consider options for co-locating community centres with District Park-level sports fields and amenities.
- D. Continue to make facilities and parks more accessible for persons with disabilities, in keeping with **AODA requirements**. Review the City's **accessibility design standards** to ensure that all relevant parks, recreation and sport facilities are included.
- E. Conduct **accessibility audits** on a regular basis to ensure that the City's accessibility standards are being met at all parks, recreation and sport facilities. Give consideration to assistive technologies and adaptive equipment that facilitate access for persons with physical or mental disabilities.
- F. Develop a **standardized framework to evaluate requests** for facilities presently not part of the City's core parks, recreation, and sport service mandate. At a minimum, the framework should consider the City's role (or lack thereof) in providing the service in relation to demonstrated demand, alternate providers, cost factors, and economic sustainability.
- G. Ensure that major retrofits and new construction projects adequately consider opportunities to address **climate change, environmental sustainability, and energy conservation**. At minimum, this should include

consideration of green technologies (e.g., green roofs, **EV charging stations**, battery-powered maintenance tools, refrigeration plants, etc.) and low-impact development practices (e.g., stormwater management, permeable surfaces, etc.) by building these items into City budgets.

Is there anything missing from the recommendations above that you want considered within the Master Plan?

Please provide any additional comments that you may have

Community Centres

- A. Develop a mid-size multi-use community centre in **Southeast London**, with an emphasis on securing an alternate site (considering the site selection criteria developed in 2010) in the short-term. Proposed components (to be confirmed through community and partner consultation) include twin ice pads (as a replacement for Farquharson Arena), large gymnasium, activity rooms, and multi-use space. Potential partnerships will be considered.
- B. Develop a mid-size multi-use community centre in **Northwest London** (following the Southeast London project). Proposed components (to be confirmed through community and potential partner consultation) include an indoor pool, large gymnasium, activity rooms, and multi-use space. Potential partnerships will be considered. Additional study is required to determine the preferred approach, which could influence location(s), timing, and/or potential partners.
- C. Expand the network of **neighbourhood community centres** by establishing a facility in North London and another in Central London between 2024 and 2029. Neighbourhood centres would generally include large gymnasiums, community kitchens, multi-purpose spaces, and/or specialty/partnered spaces based on demonstrated needs. In the longer-term, one to two additional neighbourhood centres should be considered to address gap areas in South London. Traditional models of providing community centres may evolve as the city intensifies within the Primary Transit Area.
- D. Build **gymnasiums and multi-use activity space** as part of each proposed multi-use and neighbourhood centre, for a total of six new gymnasiums by 2039. Consider opportunities to add gymnasiums to existing centres or repurposed facilities to assist in meeting this goal.
- E. Prepare a **Gymnasium Strategy** to review current access policies, other providers, needs, and provision strategies, with a goal of enhancing access to large gymnasiums for programs, events, and rentals.
- F. Establish a strategy to **expand the senior satellite model** in consultation with stakeholders, with a view toward coordinated service delivery at the neighbourhood-level. Considerations include:
 - i. Adding a new satellite site in the short-term;
 - ii. Program expansion, low-cost and/or unstructured options, sustainable multi-site membership model, and expanded hours at locations that are experiencing high attendance and unmet demand; and,
 - iii. Working with Parks Planning to identify outdoor spaces that can be used to complement programming at seniors centres and satellites.

Is there anything missing from the recommendations above that you want considered within the Master Plan?

Please provide any additional comments that you may have

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Aquatics (Indoor & Outdoor)

- A. Work with local users to ensure that the **Canada Games Aquatic Centre** remains able to host competitions and meets, with consideration being given to pool depth, technical requirements, and support spaces.
- B. Develop a new indoor 25-metre 6-lane pool for community use in **Northwest London** in the short-term. Further study is required to determine if the pool is best provided as part of the proposed large multi-use community centre or through an expansion to the Canadian Games Aquatic Centre.
- C. Reassess longer-term demand for an **eighth municipal indoor pool location** through the next Master Plan update, possibly in partnership with an alternate provider in Central London.
- D. Develop five additional **spray pads** (for a total of 21) by 2039, with a focus on identified gap areas (Foxfield Park, Riverbend Park, one in North London, and two in Southwest London). New spray pads should be provided through park development projects or wading pool conversions, with an emphasis on district-level sites with existing washrooms, parking, and shade. Consideration may be given to different levels of spray pads provided (e.g., basic and enhanced), as well as options for recirculated/treated water systems.
- E. Assess usage trends at **outdoor swimming pools** and develop a strategy to guide future programming and reinvestment priorities, including consideration of the City's role in ensuring community access to non-profit community pools. No additional outdoor swimming pools are recommended.
- F. Continue to reduce the number of **wading pools** within City parks and develop criteria for wading pool decommissioning. Wading pools that are under-utilized, in poor condition, serving aging communities, in close proximity to alternative aquatic services and/or are not associated with outdoor pools are likely candidates for removal. They may be replaced with spray pads or other in-demand park amenities identified through community consultation.

Is there anything missing from the recommendations above that you want considered within the Master Plan?

Please provide any additional comments that you may have

Arenas

- A. Maintain public access to 22 indoor ice pads until 2031, at which point planning may begin for **one additional ice pad** (as a multi-pad replacement and/or partnered project). Long-term consideration may be given to **phasing out single pad arenas** in favour of multi-pad facilities with community space. To confirm these directions, facility usage and registration trends should be monitored, as should capacities and capital plans in adjacent municipalities.
- B. Continue to examine and assess the need for **dry pads for floor sports** and community activities. Where supported by demonstrated demand, consider opportunities to repurpose under-utilized spaces.
- C. Repurpose **Silverwood Arena** to alternate community uses. Initiate a Request for Proposal process (with identified objectives and outcomes) and feasibility study (with community input) to guide the project.
- D. Remove **Glen Cairn Arena** as a municipal capital asset as it is surplus to community needs.
- E. Include two ice pads as part of the proposed multi-use community centre in **Southeast London**. Upon opening, remove the ice pads at **Farquharson Arena** from the inventory. Continue discussions with the landowner (Thames Valley District School Board) regarding the future of this facility.

Is there anything missing from the recommendations above that you want considered within the Master Plan?

Please provide any additional comments that you may have

Sports Fields

- A. Develop up to 28 additional **rectangular sports fields** (unlit equivalents) over the next 20 years through new park development, improvements that create capacity (e.g., upgrades such as adding lights, expanding fields, etc.), and enhancing access to non-municipal fields. Where possible, priority should be placed on multi-field complexes with full-size, lit and irrigated fields (including artificial turf fields that extend the season and accommodate multiple sports).
- B. Develop up to 12.5 additional **ball diamonds** (unlit equivalents) over the next 20 years through new park development, improvements that create capacity (e.g., adding lights), and enhancing access to non-municipal diamonds. Most of these diamonds are required in the short-term to accommodate the recent increase in youth participation and loss of fields at the Southwest London Baseball Complex). Where possible, priority should be placed on multi-field complexes with full-size, lit diamonds.
- C. Develop a second full-size **cricket pitch** (potentially spanning two rectangular sports fields). Longer-term needs should be examined once the second pitch is fully operational and usage patterns can be assessed.
- D. Continue to undertake **upgrades and improvements** to existing sports fields, supported by demonstrated demand and in cooperation with sports organizations. Examples include field dimensions, lighting, grading, irrigation, drainage, turf, and infield improvements, fencing, benches, shelters, etc. Efforts should be made to add lights to fields prior to nearby residential construction taking place.
- E. Continue to work with local **school boards** to improve the quality of school fields as demand grows. By enhancing public access to quality non-municipal fields, the City will be able to add capacity and reduce development costs. Options for improving the quality and maintenance of school fields should also be explored.
- F. Update the **fieldhouse strategy** to confirm the preferred level of service and development and renewal needs.
- G. Develop a **sports field allocation policy** and integrate emerging sports into existing allocation policies.

Is there anything missing from the recommendations above that you want considered within the Master Plan?

Please provide any additional comments that you may have

Playgrounds

- A. Seek a balanced **distribution of playgrounds** by providing one play structure generally within an 800-metre radius of every residential area (without crossing a major arterial road or physical barrier).
- B. Design new and redeveloped playgrounds with **accessibility** in mind (including surfacing and components), as well as consideration of challenging/adventure and natural play areas. The standard for City-Wide and District Parks should be fully accessible playgrounds with rubber surfacing. Playgrounds in Neighbourhood Parks should generally have engineered woodchip surfacing with consideration to partially-accessible playground structures.
- C. Develop a process and criteria to prioritize **playground replacement, relocation, and/or removal** to deal with the gap in replacement funding.
- D. Consider adding **adult fitness equipment** to selected parks or trails on a case-by-case basis. These opportunities should be supported by the local community and be in proximity to indoor spaces with access to washrooms, as well as older adult and multi-cultural populations that have an interest in outdoor recreation.

Outdoor Courts

- A. Prepare a **Tennis / Multi-use Court Strategy** to: validate future needs (up to eleven additional courts in next 20 years); identify gaps and potential locations; establish priorities for upgrade, replacement, removal, or repurposing; and, identify a business case and funding strategy to support court construction and renewal.
- B. Evaluate **outdoor pickleball court** needs on a case-by-case basis, with a preference for locating them in areas with demonstrated demand. Opportunities to accommodate a pickleball complex of four or more courts (supported with amenities such as shade, washrooms, and nearby parking) should be explored further.
- C. Resolve gaps in **outdoor basketball court** provision (Central London, Oakridge, Medway, Westmount/Highland, and Byron) and consider basketball courts in parks within growing areas (a minimum of nine additional hoops will be required by 2039 to serve growth). Where appropriate, consideration should be given to multi-use court designs that can accommodate multiple sports and activities, such as basketball, ball hockey, ice skating, etc.
- D. Where feasible, continue to encourage the development and operation of **neighbourhood outdoor ice rinks** (natural ice) where supported by community requests and volunteer efforts. Consider opportunities on a case-by-case basis to develop **boarded multi-use pads** that can be used for ball hockey and other activities in the summer and natural ice skating in the winter.

Is there anything missing from the recommendations above that you want considered within the Master Plan?

Please provide any additional comments that you may have

Skate and Bike Parks

- A. Update the **Outdoor Skateboard Park Implementation Strategy** to reflect preferred skate park types, needs, design standards (including lighting of City-wide skate parks), site selection criteria, and potential locations.
- B. Identify suitable sites for the development of **two district-level skate parks** (Southwest London, Southeast London). Additional **neighbourhood-level skate parks** may be considered where there is demonstrated demand, a gap in service, and a suitable location that is locally supported. Locations and designs should be confirmed through consultation with youth, the skateboarding community, and local neighbourhoods.
- C. Initiate a feasibility study involving community engagement, site selection, and design processes to confirm the need expressed for a dedicated **BMX and/or mountain bike park** **outside the Natural Heritage System.**

Is there anything missing from the recommendations above that you want considered within the Master Plan?

Please provide any additional comments that you may have **No mountain bike parks should be anywhere near significant ecological features**

Other Outdoor Sites and Amenities

- A. Provide a balanced distribution of **off-leash dog parks**, including consideration of new parks in Northwest and Southwest London over the longer-term. Site-specific analysis, community consultation, and partnerships are required as securing suitable locations can be a challenge.
- B. Develop a **tiered model of dog park designs** to enable provision at the neighbourhood-level, particularly in areas of residential intensification. Opportunities to work with developers to provide amenity space for dog owners may also be considered.
- C. Continue to support the **community garden program** and related initiatives (e.g., pollinator habitat, community kitchens, etc.) through strategies that encourage broad participation, as identified in the City's Urban Agriculture Strategy and Community Gardens Strategic Plan, an emphasis should be placed on community garden development in neighbourhoods.
- D. Undertake a review of our **golf service delivery model and standards**, with a focus on the continued provision of affordable and inclusive golf opportunities. The review should consider the potential expansion of services that would encourage year-round use of clubhouse and/or courses.
- E. Continue to update and implement the **Storybook Gardens Business Plan** to meet the changing needs and expectations of visitors, with the goal of supporting a unique programming environment that provides opportunities for children to build developmental assets and for families to foster connections.
- F. Continue to refine practices and procedures that support the animation of parks and civic spaces through **special events.**
- G. Develop a service standard for the provision of **seating areas** to support the City's efforts related to park and civic space design, active transportation, and complete streets.

Is there anything missing from the recommendations above that you want considered within the Master Plan?

Please provide any additional comments that you may have

Parkland Acquisition

- A. When planning for new parks and **public Civic Spaces**, have regard to the policies for parkland classification, suitability, dedication, acquisition, and design contained in **the London Plan and Parkland Conveyance & Levy By-law**. Procedures and fee schedules should be reviewed on a regular basis.
- B. Continue to acquire **active parkland** at the maximum applicable rate as permitted by the Planning Act, via the City's implementing policy documents. Seek to maintain the current city-wide provision level of **2.2 hectares of municipal parkland per 1,000** residents. Provision levels will vary across the city; however, efforts should be made to balance the distribution of neighbourhood-level park types across all communities.
- C. Continue to evaluate the acquisition of **open space lands (e.g., woodlands, natural areas, etc.) Woodland Parks, Open Space and Environmentally Significant Areas** on a case-by-case basis using criteria in the City's guiding documents. Hazard, **Woodland Parks or Open Space** ~~open space~~ lands will only be accepted as part of parkland dedication requirements at the City's discretion (at a substantially reduced rate in keeping with the Parkland Conveyance & Levy By-law), with the goal of supporting their long-term protection and management.
- D. Employ a variety of **acquisition and non-acquisition-based strategies** to achieve the ~~parkland and open space~~ **objectives of this Plan** with a focus on growth areas and other areas of need.
- E. **Lands that are part of Environmentally Significant Areas currently in private hands should be considered for early acquisition and management by the City.**

Is there anything missing from the recommendations above that you want considered within the Master Plan? **You have open space lands (e.g. woodlands, natural areas, etc.) without any clear definition or distinctions. Suggest that when you mean woodlands, say woodlands, when you mean park, say park, when you mean ESA say ESA. Drop the use of natural area as it has no definition in policy. See our suggested definitions at the beginning of this document.**

Please provide any additional comments that you may have **EEPAC is not aware of any case by case evaluation (C. above) of acquiring natural heritage lands at any other point than late in the subdivision development process.**

Park and **Public Civic Space Design (this section excludes Woodland Parks)**

- A. Review and revise the City's **park design guidelines**, having regard to the design considerations identified in the Master Plan such as age-friendly applications. Update standards relating (but not limited) to on and off-street parking, general park lighting, washrooms, and gateway features provided by developers. Not all amenities will be appropriate for all park types.
- B. Allocate a portion of space in **appropriate** park types for **passive recreation** to encourage park use by residents of all ages. Design and manage the interface between **active and passive park areas** to allow for sufficient separation.

- C. Develop a strategy for the **renewal of Neighbourhood Parks** across the city, including funding amounts and sources. Emphasize projects that promote usage by people of all ages, such as the introduction of shade, seating, pathways, unprogrammed space, etc. (note: washrooms are not a viable service level in most Neighbourhood Parks).
- D. Recognize the space surrounding **stormwater management (SWM) ponds** as community assets, where appropriate. In areas with parkland deficiencies, design and maintain the areas surrounding SWM ponds to allow for greater community use.
- E. Continue to seek opportunities through the subdivision approval process to **accelerate park development**, including the use of developer-built parks (under the direction and to the satisfaction of the City).
- F. Continue to encourage community stakeholders and partners to invest in **“value-added” improvements** within the parks system. Projects must address neighbourhood and/or city-wide priorities and must conform to City standards.
- G. Create **well-designed parks and public Civic spaces** that are age-friendly and embed opportunities for residents and visitors to play, learn, and connect. **This includes (but is not limited to) the projects proposed by the One River Master Plan at the Forks of the Thames.**
- H. Develop an implementation strategy for the establishment and management of **private-owned publicly accessible spaces (POPS)**. Created by the development industry within higher density urban areas, POPS offer an opportunity to enhance the public realm through effective design and programming. They are not considered a replacement for municipal parkland or dedication requirements.
- I. Engage in the **coordinated informed response** and other integrated responses and strategies aimed at improving the use, public safety, activities, and access of parks.

Is there anything missing from the recommendations above that you want considered within the Master Plan?

Please provide any additional comments that you may have **Not sure why One River is included here when the EA has not been completed. It is not clear what is considered an appropriate park type in B for passive recreation when passive recreation is not defined in this document. We recommend that this section clearly exclude Woodland Parks.**

RECREATION CAPACITY

Goal: We will deliver exceptional parks, recreation, and sport services. This will be achieved through the use of effective and responsive practices, partnerships, innovation, leadership, and accountability at all levels.

Strategic Directions:

- a) Demonstrate leadership and service excellence in the management and provision of quality parks, **built** facilities, programs, and services.
- b) Adopt evidenced-based continuous improvement models in the delivery of service.
- c) Respond to a changing community through continued professional development and training.
- d) Seek out partnership and community relationship opportunities that maximize benefits to Londoners.
- e) Work with community partners to create a sustainable sport development model.
- f) Promote alignment between the Master Plan and other community strategies and initiatives.

Leading in Public Service

- A. To inform program and service provision, increase **collaborative efforts** with community groups and volunteers by:

- i. Continuing to collect feedback from neighbourhood groups about programs and services they want to see and use this feedback to inform program decisions;
 - ii. Working with new and partner organizations to fill gaps using a strength-based delivery approach (organizations that focus on different abilities, markets, etc.);
 - iii. Identifying populations and neighbourhoods not currently accessing services and forming new program delivery relationships to jointly address those needs (e.g., targeted Leader in Training options, Indigenous program opportunities, etc.);
 - iv. Building leadership capacity within the community to support local initiatives and create strong neighbourhoods;
 - v. Hosting regular forums with service providers and funders to identify and address potential improvements to customer service practices, the built environment, etc.; and,
 - vi. Regularly communicating the Master Plan priorities to internal and external partners to improve coordination, alignment, and implementation.
- B. Undertake a review of the effectiveness of the **Play Your Way financial assistance program** and **“Policy for waiving or reducing fees for use of city owned community centres and recreation facilities”**, including opportunities to simplify the process to register for programs and apply for subsidy.

Sport Services

- C. Host a forum with all sport providers and stakeholder groups to discuss the merits of developing a London Sport Agreement as a commitment to engage collectively to develop a **Sport Policy and Sport Plan** for the City of London.

Partnerships

- D. Expand and/or realign **strategic partnership opportunities** to further the directions of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan including (but not limited to) increasing physical activity, enhancing access for under-represented and diverse populations, increasing outdoor play duration, strengthening diversity and inclusion, and increasing capacity for older adults and youth. Be proactive in partnership development through regular communication and establishment of a **standard framework and criteria** to simplify partnership outcomes.
- E. Utilize the **sponsorship, advertising and naming rights programs** to capture an increased level of alternate funding to enhance parks, recreation, and sport facilities, programs, and services.
- F. Collaborate with **school boards** to identify opportunities to maximize community access to existing sites and future park/school campuses.
- G. Collaborate with **post-secondary institutions** to identify opportunities to maximize community access to existing and future sport facilities. Encourage opportunities to work together on the research and evaluation of community-based approaches to prevailing issues in service delivery.
- H. Support **regional, provincial, and national initiatives** that increase support for information sharing, research, and data collection.

Is there anything missing from the recommendations above that you want considered within the Master Plan?

Please provide any additional comments that you may have