

MUNICIPALITY OF SOUTH DUNDAS
Parks & Recreation Master Plan
September 2022

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Municipality of South Dundas

Parks & Recreation Master Plan

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Executive Summary

E.1 The Importance of Parks & Recreation to the People of South Dundas

Parks and recreation services are important to the quality of life in South Dundas. Some of the benefits provided through these services include:

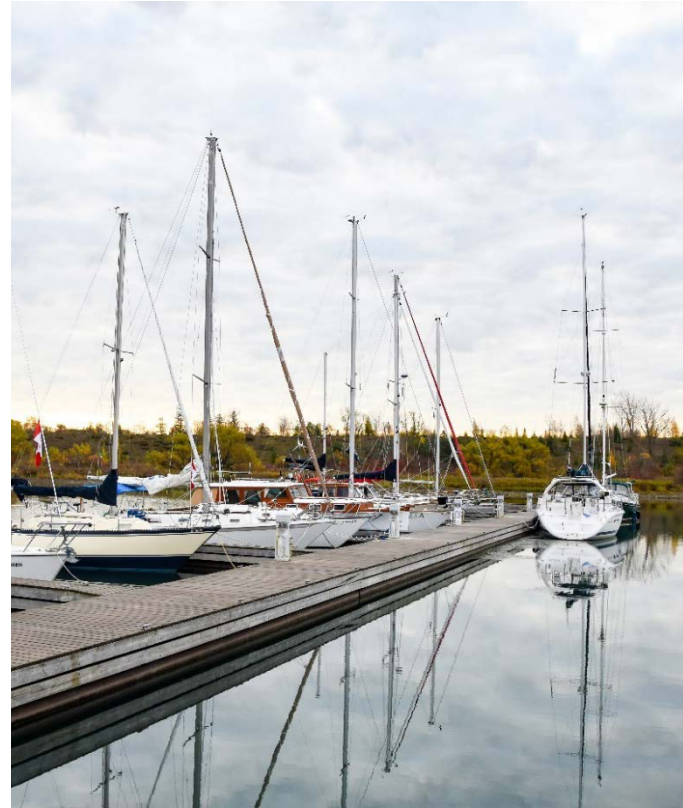
- improved mental and physical wellbeing of residents;
- enhanced social connections within our communities and strengthened family ties;
- creating welcoming places that promote inclusion;
- an ability to attract new residents and businesses to South Dundas while encouraging tourism; and
- connecting people to nature and the outdoors.

The Parks & Recreation Master Plan guides how the Municipality of South Dundas invests in these services over the next 10 years so that residents, communities and businesses continue to benefit from access to parks and recreation. The Master Plan explores:

- Indoor and outdoor recreation facilities;
- Parks, open spaces, waterfront and trails;
- Programs, activities and events; and
- Service delivery policies and practices.

The importance of this Master Plan cannot be understated. It is a roadmap that provides Municipal Council, staff, community stakeholders and the general public with an understanding of parks and recreation needs. The Master Plan's recommendations are based on community input, projected population growth, trends and best practices in the parks and recreation sector, alignment with the Municipality's current and past initiatives, facility usage profiles, and many more. Its recommendations are prioritized based on short, medium and long-term timeframes to allow for ease of implementation but also adjustment based on future grant funding opportunities or changing community characteristics.

Providing parks and recreation services across South Dundas is a collective effort between the Municipality, community organizations, local agencies and other organizations. By working together, the Master Plan's recommendations and the actions of others will help ensure that a wide and inclusive range parks and recreation experiences can exist to enjoy for the years to come.



E.2 Fitting in with the Municipality's Priorities

The Municipality of South Dundas Strategic Plan identifies priorities aimed at enhancing community and encouraging residents to live, work and play locally. Corporate priorities include:

- Strategic asset management;
- Maintain, enhance and strengthen community assets such as schools and the waterfront;
- Retaining youth and families in South Dundas;
- Attracting young families, working professionals (e.g., medical practitioners) and tourists; and
- Facilitate economic development to attract and expand businesses.

Parks and recreation services plays a key role in achieving each of these priorities based on the aforementioned benefits they offer. Residents and employers factor whether high-quality parks and recreation services are available when choosing where they want to locate. As a result, investing in local parks and recreation system is important to retain our existing residents and businesses while attracting new families, professionals, businesses and tourists to South Dundas.

E.3 Strategic Vision Statement

A Vision tells a story of the future. Through the extensive feedback provided throughout the Master Plan's formative stages, the following vision was specifically developed to guide how the Municipality of South Dundas views parks and recreation to the year 2031.

We strive to improve our quality of life in South Dundas through active and healthy opportunities for all.

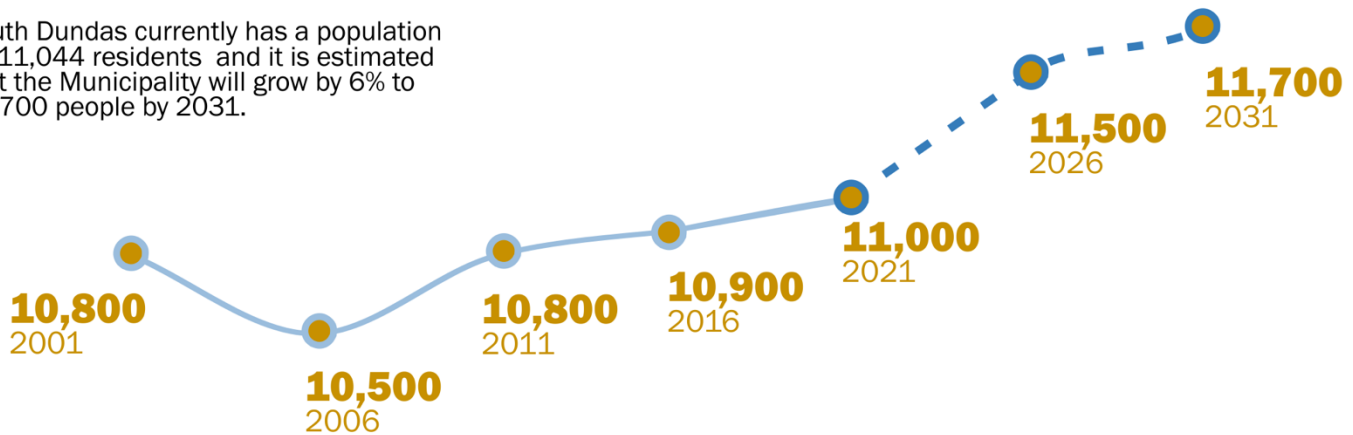
Our Vision for Parks & Recreation in South Dundas



E.4 South Dundas Community Profile

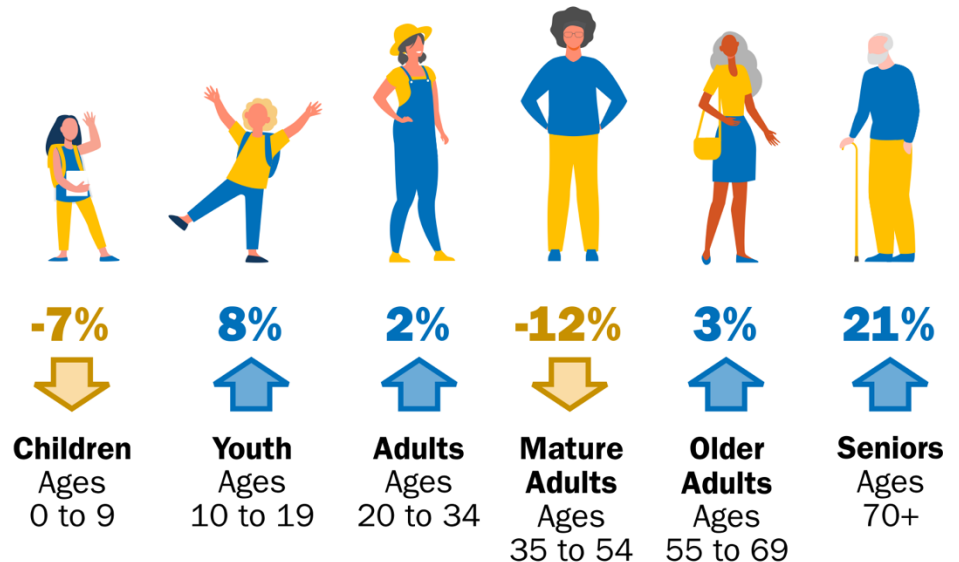
Population Growth

South Dundas currently has a population of 11,044 residents and it is estimated that the Municipality will grow by 6% to 11,700 people by 2031.



Population Growth by Age Group, 2016 to 2021

Between the 2016 and 2021 Census, the population seniors in South Dundas grew the most. The number of youth, adults and older adults also grew, while children and mature adults declined. This indicates that the community is aging, which is a trend being experienced across Ontario.



What does this mean?

Future residential growth is expected to draw families with children and youth. New residents are also expected to be more culturally diverse, which is consistent with trends seen in other small communities across Ontario.

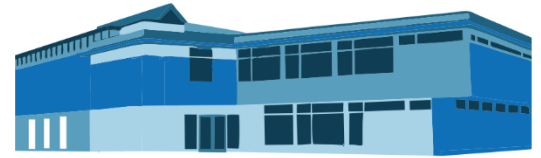
To attract new families with children and to continue to meet the needs of current residents in South Dundas. The Municipality will need to work with its community partners and volunteers to ensure that there is a balanced range of parks and recreation facilities, programs and services for all ages, interests and abilities.



Population sources: Statistics Canada 2001 to 2021 Census. United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Official Plan

E.5 Key Trends in Parks & Recreation

There are key trends influencing how municipalities – including South Dundas – provide parks and recreation services, as well as how people participate in activities. Some of these trends are summarized in this graphic. Additional details about these trends can be found in the Master Plan.



Shift towards **multi-use** facilities and parks that function as **community hubs**



Popularity of **active transportation opportunities** for recreation such as walking and cycling



Parks, open spaces and trails support municipalities in reducing its **environmental impact**

Partnerships and volunteers are important in delivering parks and recreation services



Inclusion and accessibility



High levels of **physical inactivity**



Growing **income disparity**



Demand for **unstructured activities**

Aging or underutilized infrastructure requires **re-investment, renewal or re-purposing**



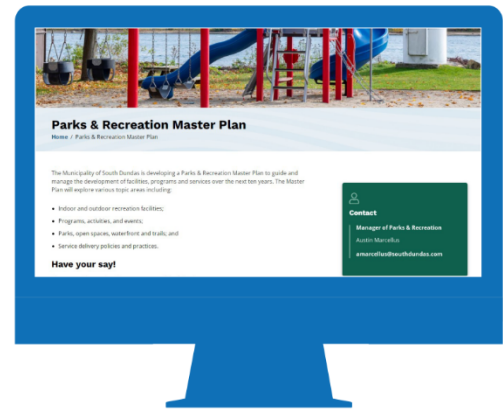
COVID-19 pandemic impacts

E.6 Public Consultation

Public consultation was critical in creating a “Made for South Dundas” Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The perspectives of residents, students, stakeholders, Council and Municipal staff are important elements to developing strategies that address community needs.

There were many opportunities to collect public input and feedback throughout the process using online, print, and in-person activities.

The Master Plan engaged nearly 650 households that represented over 1,600 people of all ages, as well as 27 community stakeholders, Municipal staff and Council.



Public Awareness and Promotion



Virtual Public Information Session



Community Survey and Questionnaire



Stakeholder Focus Groups and Questionnaire



Staff and Council Input Sessions



Project Team Meetings



Draft Master Plan Open House



Written Input

E.7 Top Themes from the Master Plan

Based on research and consultations, notable themes are identified along with the recommendations to address them over the 10-year planning period (identified in no particular order) with supporting rationale found throughout the Master Plan.

E.7.1 Growing South Dundas

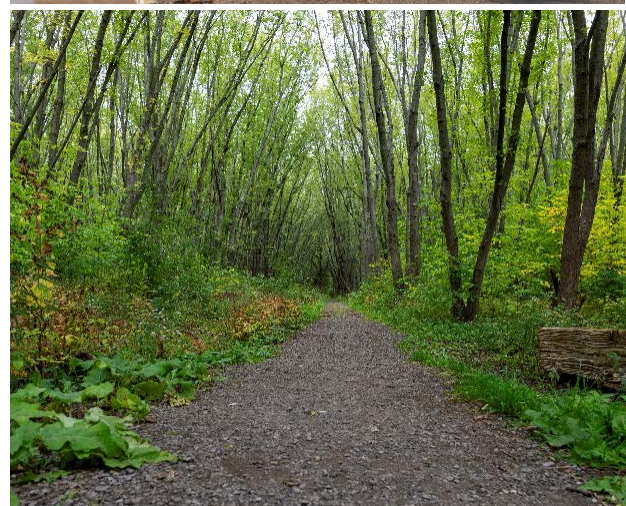
South Dundas is projected to grow by 6% to reach 11,700 residents by 2031, with the majority of population growth expected within established urban settlement areas of Morrisburg and Iroquois. Like many other small or rural municipalities, South Dundas is focused on finding ways to encourage residents to remain in the community as well as compete for new residents, workers and investment. Enhancing local parks and recreation infrastructure is one of the strategies being pursued to achieve these objectives in addition to other priorities such as encouraging healthy lives.

The Master Plan's actions are aimed at strengthening existing parks and recreation services, addressing gaps, and responding to future needs. Recommendations cover a range of topics such as:

- positioning waterfront areas to support parks and recreation, as well as recreational tourism;
- making cost-effective use of existing facilities;
- enabling recreation programs for all age groups, spanning infants to the elderly;
- ensuring appropriate spaces and services in rural areas to promote health and minimize social isolation in remote settlements; and
- developing of community hubs and multi-use spaces that support gathering opportunities and are efficient for the Municipality to operate.

Recommendations to address growth in our communities include:

- **Create an Active Transportation Strategy** to establish a vision for walking, cycling and other human-powered forms of travel in South Dundas. This Strategy would further develop the trail initiatives recommended in the Parks & Recreation Master Plan, including detailed routing of the conceptual network, partnership opportunities (e.g., United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry, conservation authority, agencies, landowners, etc.), design guidelines, policy development, costs, and other details. The Strategy should focus on strengthening linkages in the Municipality to draw residents to the waterfront, establish designated pathways within existing parks, identify circulation areas within future residential areas, enhance connections to the rural area over the long-term, and promote and encourage active transportation in South Dundas.



- **Update the Morrisburg Waterfront Plan and Iroquois Commons Waterfront Plan** with the assistance of the Municipality's waterfront committees and the public to renew the vision for the waterfront areas based on new community priorities. This process should consider and incorporate the recommendations contained in the Parks & Recreation Master Plan, as well as other enhancements to be determined through a public consultation process. Emphasis should be placed on creating new and exciting ideas, including strategies to create multi-use opportunities to maximize use along the waterfront.

Key recommendations for updating the Morrisburg Waterfront Plan include:

- Evaluating opportunities to incorporate multi-use community space at a potential indoor facility, which may also support tourism and vendor activities (e.g., restaurant/patio, etc.). This facility should include space to relocate the Lending Library from Morrisburg Arena and storage space to support community programming. Should this be achieved, repurpose the existing Lending Library at the Morrisburg Arena to multi-purpose space for dryland training and other community use.
- Reintroducing the sand volleyball court and add a second court.
- Identifying locations for outdoor fitness equipment, potential locations for water activities such as scuba diving, signage, trails, comfort features and other supporting amenities.
- Strengthening opportunities for cultural activities and special events that support tourism, including enhancing the use of the amphitheatre.

Key recommendations for updating the Iroquois Commons Waterfront Park Plan include:

- Evaluate the feasibility and public support for a splash pad and off-leash dog park at Iroquois Commons Waterfront Park, or if alternative locations in Iroquois should be considered. These projects should be community-led projects, similar to what was done in Morrisburg.
- Evaluating the feasibility of developing a natural/adventure style playground that features the use of wood, stones, boulders, and landscaping, as well as a beach theme.
- Continue to support the Iroquois Waterfront Committee to potentially establish a disc golf course.



- Relocate and expand the sand volleyball court to add a second court.
 - Identify locations for outdoor fitness equipment, potential locations for water activities such as scuba diving, signage, trails, comfort features and other supporting amenities.
 - Strengthen opportunities for cultural activities and special events that supports tourism.
- **Modernize Iroquois Civic Centre** after conducting an architectural study that explores its ability to be reconfigured to include a gymnasium (or similar space), multi-purpose space, library branch, and fire hall. Consideration should be given to flexible design and include a community kitchen that can support programming, hardwood floors, partition walls, counter space, sinks, wireless internet, audio and visual equipment, storage and providing sufficient parking. The fire hall and library should be engaged as part of this process to ensure that their space needs continue to be met.
 - **Seek ways to increase public access to non-municipal multi-use community spaces** (e.g., schools, places of worship, etc.) for community events, programs and rentals.
 - **The South Dundas Municipal Centre's program room** should be evaluated to determine if a dividing wall can be installed to deliver multiple programs at the same time.
 - Undertake enhancements to **Matilda Memorial Park** including constructing a spray feature, small-scale skate zone, outdoor fitness equipment, and monitoring demand to add a second sand volleyball court.
 - Recommendations for **Earl Baker Park** include constructing a multi-use court for basketball, ball hockey, tennis, pickleball and outdoor skating. Construct a skate park for skateboarding, scootering, in-line skating, BMX biking, and other wheels sports.
 - Enhancements to **J.C. Whitteker Park** include resurfacing the multi-use court and replacing the basketball hoops, and relocating and updating the playground.
 - At **Riverside Heights Park**, replace the basketball hoop with a full multi-use court for basketball and ball hockey and construct a small-scale skate zone.
 - Investigate the potential to establish a skate park at **Haldane Park** and add basketball and ball hockey opportunities to the existing asphalt pad.



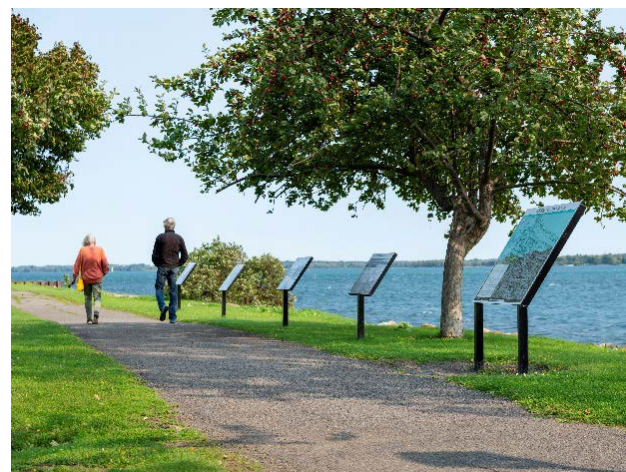
- Reposition the existing basketball court at **Winchester Springs Park** away from the existing tree line.
- **Target playground replacements** after a lifecycle of 15 years, subject to regular inspections. New playgrounds should be designed with accessible components.
- **Continue to enhance community halls and multi-use spaces** to address items identified in the Municipality's facility condition reports to update and repair aging building components, including accessibility retrofits. Consideration should also be given to the provision of modern amenities including, but not limited to, reliable wireless internet and audio and visual equipment. Consultation with user groups and others is encouraged to identify and prioritize facility improvements. The development of new or redevelopment of standalone community halls and multi-purpose spaces is discouraged if there is an existing public space available within a reasonable driving distance.
- **Make the Recreation Coordinator a full-time position** to implement the Municipality's Recreational Programming Plan to address to community requests for more program opportunities for all age groups. Organized programs should be complemented by drop-in opportunities to respond to the desire for unstructured activities and to maximize the use of the Municipality's facilities. The Recreation Coordinator should also lead or support community group engagement, volunteer recruitment, policy development, performance measurement, etc.



E.7.2 Keeping our 55+ Population Active, Engaged & Connected

Between 2016 and 2021, the number of seniors (ages 70+) living in South Dundas grew by 21% and the median age increased to 51 years. Like many urban and rural communities across Ontario, South Dundas is an aging community and this trend is likely to continue over the next 10 years. With local older adults and seniors making up 45% of all South Dundas residents, these populations should be a priority for the Municipality to serve through parks and recreation, balanced with its efforts aimed at retaining young people in the community and attracting younger households.

The Municipality has responded to the growing parks and recreation needs of South Dundas 55+ population so that they may lead active and healthy lifestyles as they “age in place.” Recent initiatives include adding pickleball court lines to the at Elizabeth Drive Park tennis courts along with paving recreational trails along the Iroquois and Morrisburg waterfronts. The Master Plan identifies the following recommendations that support and encourage the use of parks and recreation services among the older adult and senior population:



- **Establish pedestrian circulation areas within existing parks** (specific locations to be refined through an Active Transportation Strategy) to provide firm and stable walking surfaces and identify active transportation routes within future residential areas to provide safe linkages within the community.
- **Incorporate comfort features within South Dundas' parks and trail system** including, but not limited to, seating, shade, lighting, pathways, picnic tables, washrooms, lighting, and other amenities that attract people and encourage use.
- **Establish casual, drop-in times for older adults and seniors** within existing multi-use space and to complement the Municipality's efforts to expand organized program opportunities.
- **Build a multi-use tennis/pickleball court** at Earl Baker Park.
- **Continue to work with organizations that serve the 55+ population** (e.g., Iroquois Lawn Bowling Club, etc.) to promote a wide range of activities to ensure long-term success of existing and future programs available to this age group.
- **Implement the HIGH FIVE Principles of Healthy Aging** with community partners so that programs for older adults and seniors offer positive experiences and enhance physical and mental health.
- **Implement the Recreational Programming Plan** with the help of community providers, volunteers and others in order to maximize participation among the 55+ population at municipal facilities.
- **Promote all municipal and community-provided parks and recreation opportunities** in South Dundas, as well as in adjacent municipalities to ensure that older adults and seniors are aware of what is available.
- **Expand arts and cultural activities** within public spaces such as along the waterfront (e.g., amphitheatre), programming, and promoting existing service providers including the Upper Canada Playhouse and others.

E.7.3 A Responsible Approach with Aspirations for the Future

The Master Plan is a helpful tool that supports the Municipality's long-range capital planning. To achieve its vision for high quality parks and recreation services in line with economic development and tourism goals, it is important to balance the Municipality's goals of growing South Dundas with its financial realities due to limited resources and competing public priorities.

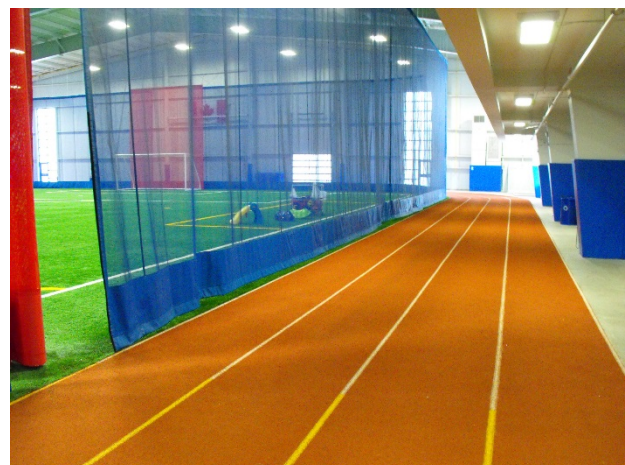
South Dundas has a small population base that is highly dispersed over a very large geographic area. For this reason, the Master Plan has had to strike a careful balance between investments needed to encourage additional growth and having a sustainable financial position in place so that parks and recreation services can be maintained at the quality people expect for the generations to come. The Municipal parks and recreation system is a multi-million dollar portfolio and new parks and recreation endeavours can have significant financial impacts ranging from a few thousand dollars for programs in existing facilities to tens of millions of dollars if building new community dollars; annual operating costs must also be factored with the Parks & Recreation Department's annual operating budget presently standing at \$1,956,360 for 2022. Revenue generated by the Department is projected to be \$728,575 for 2022, resulting in an operating deficit of \$1,227,785.



Public parks and recreation services are not intended to generate income and many municipalities including South Dundas view their investments in parks and recreation as being well worth it when considering the wide-ranging benefits that these community services bring. Although the Master Plan has not found it feasible within its 10-year planning period to recommend a new recreation centre due to the limited market potential and challenging fiscal case associated with the small population base, this is not to say that a new recreation centre is not something to aspire to in the future particularly if capital and operating funding burden placed on local ratepayers can be eased. For example, the Municipality may be the beneficiary of external grants or infrastructure stimulus programs, or there may be an ability to partner with other agencies operating in South Dundas to build and operate a community centre together.

For this reason, the Master Plan provides direction on the future planning a new indoor multi-use facility to support a range of sports and recreation activities. It builds upon the Municipality's past proposal for an indoor multi-use sports facility that includes an artificial turf field, walking track and other spaces, and recognizes that there are other potential recreation space needs that could be addressed through a phased facility development approach, including an eventual replacement of the Morrisburg Arena, and multi-purpose program space, as well as an outdoor pool and other outdoor recreation amenities. While this facility is not recommended in the immediate term, there is strong merit in initiating long-term capital planning given the Municipality's Strategic Plan priorities and reinforced through Council engagement in the Master Plan's development of retaining youth and families in South Dundas, attracting young families, working professionals (e.g., medical practitioners) and tourists. Ultimately, Council will need to weigh the costs and benefits of long-term facility planning and provision with demonstrated community needs and fiscal realities.

As a point of departure, it is recommended that at the five-year review of this Master Plan, the Municipality initiate a site selection and acquisition process to identify a parcel of land suitable to accommodate a phased-in multi-purpose recreation centre that would include an indoor artificial turf field, indoor walking track, program rooms, and an outdoor pool (designed to potentially be enclosed). This site should also be capable of accommodating the longer-term replacement of the Morrisburg Arena; subject to regular building condition assessments, a replacement arena could potentially be required in the next 15+ years. Additionally, any such site should provide ample room for parking, outdoor play area, and support amenities (e.g., benches, walking path, etc.). As part of this longer-term future recreation facility planning, there will be need to establish a capital reserve fund, applying for grant funding to undertake a detailed feasibility study and, if rationalized, seeking grant capital funding sources to assist in off-setting municipal contributions, as well as updating its business plan (operating cost estimates, revenue generation opportunities, partnerships/alternative delivery models, etc.) and more.



While not identified in this Master Plan as a current or projected community-based need, recognition of the Municipality's Strategic Plan priorities and Council input into this Master Plan's preparation suggests a strong desire to pursue a community hub with a multi-purpose community centre as a central focal point to maintain and grow the population of the South Dundas with a particular focus on attracting young families, professionals, economic growth, tourism, etc. Recognizing that constructing a new indoor multi-use facility is a major investment for South Dundas, undertaking this long-term initiative should be pursued with community partners and with the support of external funding opportunities, and other strategies to reduce the Municipality's capital requirements. Key recommendations regarding the indoor multi-use sports and recreation facility are highlighted below:

- During a five-year update to the Master Plan, revisit the need for an indoor multi-use sports facility that may include an **artificial turf field, walking track and other active facilities** and support spaces.
- Revise the Municipality's **existing business plan** for the indoor multi-use sports facility to update capital and operating budgets, re-engage community organizations to determine the support for the facility from a usage perspective, including program opportunities and potential partnerships, and other space needs.
- Evaluate the life expectancy of the **Morrisburg Arena** to plan for its eventual replacement (e.g., 15+ years), as well as the feasibility of an **outdoor pool** (with the potential to be enclosed), which ideally would be located on the same site as a future indoor multi-use sports facility.
- **Evaluate potential site opportunities** for a future indoor multi-use sports and recreation facility to accommodate an indoor artificial turf field, indoor walking track, arena, other active facilities and support spaces, as well as an outdoor pool and other outdoor recreation amenities.
- Establish a **capital reserve** to improve existing or construct new indoor recreation facilities.

E.8 Implementing the Master Plan

An implementation strategy provided in Section 9.0 of the Master Plan provides the Municipality with a guide to manage how resources are used by prioritizing community needs, particularly within the short-term to address immediate gaps or deficiencies. Capital costs to implement recommendations contained in the Master Plan are contained Section 9.2. While the Municipality can use these high-level cost estimates for capital budget planning, detailed costs should be obtained prior construction.

Full implementation of the Master Plan's recommendations will require the Municipality to explore a combination of funding sources including, but not limited to, taxation, user fees and surcharges, donations and sponsorships, capital reserve funds, and other options. Where opportunities exist, the Municipality is encouraged to work with community partners to share roles and responsibilities, particularly if organizations have expertise and knowledge in delivering certain services. The Municipality should also stay up to date on grant funding opportunities as they become available. By having this Master Plan, the Municipality can demonstrate that there is sufficient community demand for new or enhanced parks and recreation services.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 A Vision for Parks & Recreation in South Dundas

The Municipality of South Dundas' Parks & Recreation Master Plan (the "Master Plan") guides decision-making that responds to community needs and priorities towards 2031. With a growing emphasis on personal health and wellbeing, environmental and economic stability, and community vibrancy, access to high quality parks and recreation opportunities have never been more important. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted how important parks and recreation services are to mental and physical health, a sense of place and social cohesion. While the pandemic has changed the way Canadians participate in their leisure time, the full extent of its impacts continue to be studied.

Working with dedicated community organizations and volunteers, the Municipality of South Dundas proudly offers parks and recreation programs, facilities, and services to enrich the lives of residents and visitors. The Municipality demonstrates its continued commitment to providing high quality parks and recreation experiences with notable examples, including reinvestment in existing assets like the Morrisburg Arena and the waterfronts, as well as municipally-led activities through the Recreation Program Coordinator. This Master Plan builds upon these and other initiatives by establishing strategies to address the parks and recreation needs of current and future residents based on community demographics, trends, utilization data, and community input. The scope of the Master Plan includes:

- Indoor and outdoor recreation facilities;
- Programs, activities and events;
- Parks, open spaces, waterfront and trails; and
- Service delivery policies and practices.

To ensure that the Master Plan responds to new opportunities and evolving community needs, periodically reviewing and updating recommendations will be required. The Master Plan aligns with community priorities and should be implemented in conjunction with the Municipality's Official Plan and other related studies. Full implementation of the Master Plan will require the Municipality to work with community stakeholders and secure external funding.

A vision statement was developed to guide the delivery of parks and recreation services in South Dundas, which tells a story of how parks and recreation in the Municipality will be viewed in the future. The vision was developed from the common themes expressed through the public consultation for this Master Plan.

We strive to improve our quality of life in South Dundas through active and healthy opportunities for all.

Vision for Parks & Recreation in South Dundas

1.2 Benefits of Parks & Recreation

Access to parks and recreation are integral to the community's success, health and wellbeing. They contribute in a significant way to our social, economic and environmental priorities by providing public spaces for services and programs that benefit residents and support community-building. Access to inclusive parks and recreation opportunities that respond to diverse needs and high-quality experiences is vital to individual and community health and prosperity. South Dundas recognizes these benefits and continues to advance them through investment in this Master Plan and through implementation of its recommendations.

South Dundas' parks and recreation services have the opportunity to enhance the lives of residents through the following ways:

- Enhance mental and physical wellbeing;
- Enhance social wellbeing and promote engagement and inclusion;
- Help build strong families and communities;
- Help people connect with nature;
- Help people develop critical and creative thinking skills; and
- Provide wide-ranging economic benefits.

1.3 Planning Approach

Key inputs were considered in the development of the Master Plan and its recommendations, including a review of South Dundas' community profile, trends, inventory, usage and participation data, consultation and more. The Master Plan process consists of three phases, which are highlighted below.

Phase One Research & Consultation	1. Background Review
	2. Community Profile, Trends and Inventory Review
	3. Public Consultation
Phase Two Draft Parks & Recreation Master Plan	4. Parks and Facility Assessment
	5. Service Delivery Assessment
	6. Organizational and Staffing Review
Phase Three Final Parks & Recreation Master Plan	7. Draft Parks & Recreation Master Plan
	8. Final Public Consultation
	9. Final Parks & Recreation Master Plan
	10. Council Presentation

2.0 Alignment with Strategic Documents

National and municipal strategic documents have been reviewed and considered to ensure that the Master Plan aligns with key findings and directions from these important documents – as they relate to parks and recreation. Key strategic documents are summarized in this section.

2.1 National Strategic Documents

2.1.1 Framework for Recreation in Canada

Guided by significant public consultation, the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association – in collaboration with the senior levels of government and the Provincial Recreation and Parks Associations – developed a Framework for Recreation in Canada (FRC). The FRC provides a renewed definition for recreation, highlights the benefits of recreation and parks (including the economic impacts) and identifies five evidence-based goals for communities to strive towards, including:

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

Renewed Definition of Recreation. Framework for Recreation in Canada.

Goal #1: Active Living

Goal #2: Inclusion & Access

Goal #3: Connecting People & Nature

Goal #4: Supportive Environments

Goal #5: Recreation Capacity

South Dundas' Master Plan has been prepared to address each of the five goals.

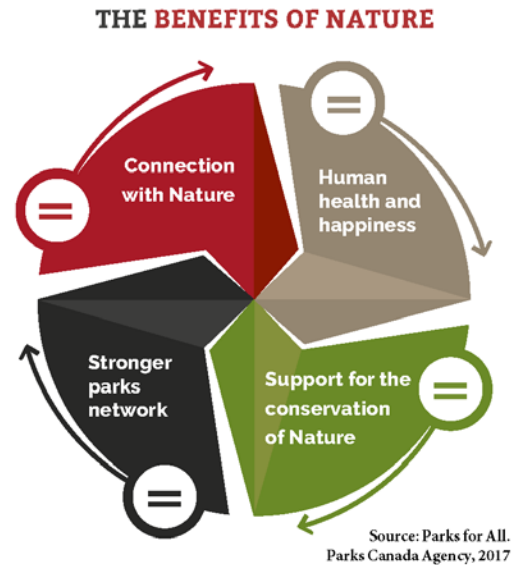
Figure 1: Five Goals of the Framework for Recreation in Canada



2.1.2 Parks for All

Parks for All is **An Action Plan for Canada's Parks Community**, published in 2017 through a collaboration between the Canadian Parks Council and the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association. It aligns with and supports the Framework for Recreation in Canada, particularly the FRC's third goal of "Connecting People and Nature".

This guiding document defines parks as "any land and water that exists on the parks continuum, which could be located on public or privately held lands. As outdoor spaces, parks provide an important connection to nature, which is required for our survival as well as personal, community and social enrichment." The vision for Canada's parks is described as *"Connected Canadian park lands and water that support healthy nature and healthy people in harmony for generations to come, backed by an active, diverse parks community that cultivates shared goals, mutual respect, and collective action."*¹ The plan is guided by four strategic directions: **Collaborate, Connect, Conserve, and Lead**. Each goal contains specific actions that have been considered in the development of this Master Plan.



2.2 Municipal Strategic Documents

2.2.1 Corporate Strategic Plan (2019 – 2022)

The Municipality is guided by a Corporate Strategic Plan that identifies key initiatives to be completed by the current term of Council. The Strategic Plan is guided by a vision statement that describes the desired future state of South Dundas, which will be achieved through addressing five priority areas.

Vision

Our Municipality is recognized as a welcoming and healthy community with a strong municipal government providing cost effective services and infrastructure. We will earn this reputation by:

- Being in a better financial state with reserves;
- Integrating an AMP with improved infrastructure that includes one landfill, a new water tower, better roads and sidewalks;
- Providing strong community and economic development with a clear identity and case to attract and retain people and businesses;
- Providing excellent customer service to our residents and visitors;
- Revitalizing our waterfronts, main streets, and villages.

¹ Parks Canada Agency. 2017. Parks for All: An action plan for Canada's parks community.

Five Priorities

1. Asset Management Planning
2. Economic Growth
3. Schools & Medical Clinic
4. Community Engagement & Consultations
5. Governance & Staff-Council Relations

2.2.2 Charter for Active Living

South Dundas' Charter for Active Living recognizes that a strong parks and recreation system contributes to the betterment of the community and its residents by encouraging active living and physical activity opportunities, as well as ensuring that the community is aware of the programs and services that are available. The Charter for Active Living also recognizes that parks and recreation services contribute positively to local economic development and fosters a higher quality of life among residents. The Charter for Active Living identifies that all residents have a right to:

- Participate in safe, accessible and affordable quality recreation programs.
- Be physically active through participation in both organized and informal sport, recreation and physical activities.
- Be included in activities that build a strong community, engaged residents and a healthy family life.
- Be engaged in the planning of recreation and urban planning in their community and participate in volunteer services.

The Master Plan has been developed with these rights in mind to advance the Charter for Active Living in South Dundas, including the Charter's vision and goal, as follows:



Vision

The Municipality of South Dundas is an active and healthy community, where families and individuals integrate active living in their everyday lives as they learn, work and play.

Goal

The Municipality of South Dundas will improve the physical and mental well-being of its residents by encouraging families and individuals to integrate active living in their everyday life as they learn, work and play through continued education, promotion of healthy living and accessible programming.

2.2.3 South Dundas Community Strategic Plan (2012 – 2022)

The South Dundas Community Strategic Plan is a blueprint for the Municipality that encompasses strategic initiatives based on input from the community, stakeholders, staff and Council.

Vision

South Dundas is a safe, inclusive community that maintains vibrancy by enhancing its natural, cultural and historical assets. Here, our small-town lifestyle is enriched by a range of services and amenities with community partners working together to foster future opportunities!

The Plan identifies nine core values that guide decision-making and establish a clear outline of expectations (Table 1).

Table 1: South Dundas Community Strategic Plan Core Values

Core Value	Expectations
1. Caring and welcoming community	We are a community made up of good, friendly neighbours who come from diverse backgrounds and have various talents. We provide a welcoming environment for long-time residents and newcomers.
2. Community values	We value the local sense of community and are loyal to our community, our families and to one another.
3. Collaboration and partnership	Our community leaders and residents work together for long-term continuous improvement within our community.
4. Appreciation for a small-town lifestyle	We appreciate living in a small Municipality and will provide an environment that will attract small and medium-size businesses, young families to raise children and the aging population to retire.
5. Value our natural environment	We value our rich natural heritage features, including the waterfront, green space, locks and the landscapes that are unique to South Dundas to support wellness and physical activity.
6. Safe and secure environment	We are a safe community and provide a safe place to live, work and play.
7. Celebrate our historical roots and traditions	We are proud of and celebrate the Municipality's rich history and culture, including our waterfronts, historical architecture, the McIntosh Apple, local farmers and artists. We will use our historical roots as a means of building and guiding our future.
8. Strong volunteer spirit	We care for the most vulnerable populations and have a strong volunteer spirit.
9. Mutual respect and trust	We have mutual respect and trust among one another and work together to develop a common understanding between farmers and non-farmers, residents and commuters, and between generations.

The Community Strategic Plan identifies seven community directions with associated actions to be implemented between 2012 and 2022. Actions related to parks and recreation are include:

1. Encourage and facilitate waterfront development;
2. Develop our municipal identity to celebrate South Dundas' rich history and culture;
3. Create recreational programs, opportunities and facilities that will attract and retain families, children and youth;
4. Strengthen resident and visitor's connection to South Dundas' agricultural sector through awareness building and increased availability of products/produce;
5. Sustain South Dundas' small-town lifestyle through appropriate development;
6. Implement beautification projects to strengthen our sense of pride and community; and
7. Support business expansion and job creation

2.2.4 United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Official Plan

Land use planning in South Dundas is guided by the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Official Plan. Among many land development matters, the Official Plan directs where new residential development should be located, as well as the planning of parks and recreation spaces. Approved in 2018, several new legislative requirements, policy frameworks, and initiatives have come into effect such as changes to the Planning Act, 2020 Provincial Policy Statement, and Bill 197 (COVID-19 Economic Recovery Act), which may result in future amendments to the Official Plan.

With respect to the Master Plan, section 3.5.2.1 of the Official Plan recognizes that parks, open spaces or green areas should be planned to meet a variety of leisure and recreation needs and should be readily accessible to users. Green areas should also be linked or integrated with natural heritage features and areas.

Section 4.3.2.2 of the Official Plan supports the provision of virtual or physical community hubs where residents can access services and resources. The Official Plan identifies that the community hub can be a school, neighbourhood centre, County library, or other public space that offers coordinated services such as education, health care, social services and parks.

Section 4.3.2.5 and 8.12.11 permits local municipalities, such as South Dundas, to provide parks and open space facilities for recreation in accordance with the parkland dedication provisions of the Planning Act. Accepting land for park purposes should have consideration for criteria such as the existing distribution, accessibility, visibility and suitability. New parks should also be located near or adjacent to other public facilities such as schools and community centres. Where it may not be feasible to do so, the Official Plan permits local municipalities to accept cash-in-lieu of parkland to acquire land or develop parks or public recreation uses. The provision of trails is also supported, with an emphasis on establishing a continuous linkage system to parks and community services.

In addition to these policies, the Official Plan contains policies regarding the protection, preservation and enhancement of natural heritage features.

2.2.5 Municipality of South Dundas Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2020 - 2025

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, (AODA) was passed with a goal to make Ontario accessible for persons with disabilities by 2025. In adherence to the AODA, the Municipality's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan was developed to prevent and remove barriers in South Dundas. Specifically pertaining to the Master Plan, the Accessibility Plan contains strategies to ensure that the design of public spaces minimize barriers. Notable achievements completed to date include (but are not limited to):

- Installation of new street and pathway lighting along Cruickshank Way in Morrisburg and walking pathways along the Morrisburg Waterfront.
- Installation of a new 1.5 metre wide asphalt pathway along the Iroquois Waterfront.
- Construction of a new Campground administration and Recreation Facility with accessible washrooms and showers.
- Construction of a new outdoor rink with two AODA compliant washrooms.

Key capital projects that are planned to occur between 2020 and 2025 to remove barriers and ensure that residents can participate in parks and recreation activities include, but are not limited to, the following (some may already be completed or underway):

- Installation of additional lighting along the Morrisburg Waterfront.
- Install AODA compliant picnic tables for high traffic areas along the Iroquois and Morrisburg Waterfronts.
- Re-design of the Morrisburg Arena to improve accessibility to the ice surface and associated areas of the Arena.

2.2.6 Economic Development Strategic Plan Update (2017)

The Municipality updated the Economic Development Strategic Plan in 2017. The purpose of this update was to review the key priorities contained in the Strategic Plan to ensure that they continue to be relevant, charter a pathway forward and continue to stimulate economic development activity in South Dundas. Relevant recommendations identified in the Strategic Plan include the following (some of these initiatives may already be underway or completed):

- As an initial step in the Tourism Strategy process, create an asset inventory of tourism assets including points of historical and cultural interest, recreational assets and retail/accommodation businesses.
- Engage youth leaders in the community to develop a youth retention and attraction strategy.
- Create and implement a Waterfront Master Plan for both Iroquois and Morrisburg.



2.2.7 South Dundas Report on Youth (2019)

The Municipality prepared a Youth Study in 2019 to gain a better understanding in how to engage this segment of the community, including their perspectives in how South Dundas can be improved and what their interests were. The study engaged 109 youth residents and explored a variety of topics that impacted this age group. Key findings related to parks and recreation opportunities are highlighted below.

Table 2: South Dundas Report on Youth Key Findings

What do youth like?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waterfront • Municipal facilities, parks, trails • Greenspaces and nature • Dog park • Arena
What do youth want to see improved?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertising so that it is easier to find information • For their ideas to be considered • More recreational sports leagues • Walking paths through parks
What entertainment would youth like to see?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-use recreation centre • More restaurants and bars • More shopping options • More community events • Live music • Movie theatre • Skateboard park
What are opportunities for youth?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment • Waterfront • Education • Recreation
How do youth want to be engaged?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More events geared towards youth • Incentives to participate (e.g., rewards) • Sessions to provide overviews of what is happening within the Municipality • Volunteer opportunities

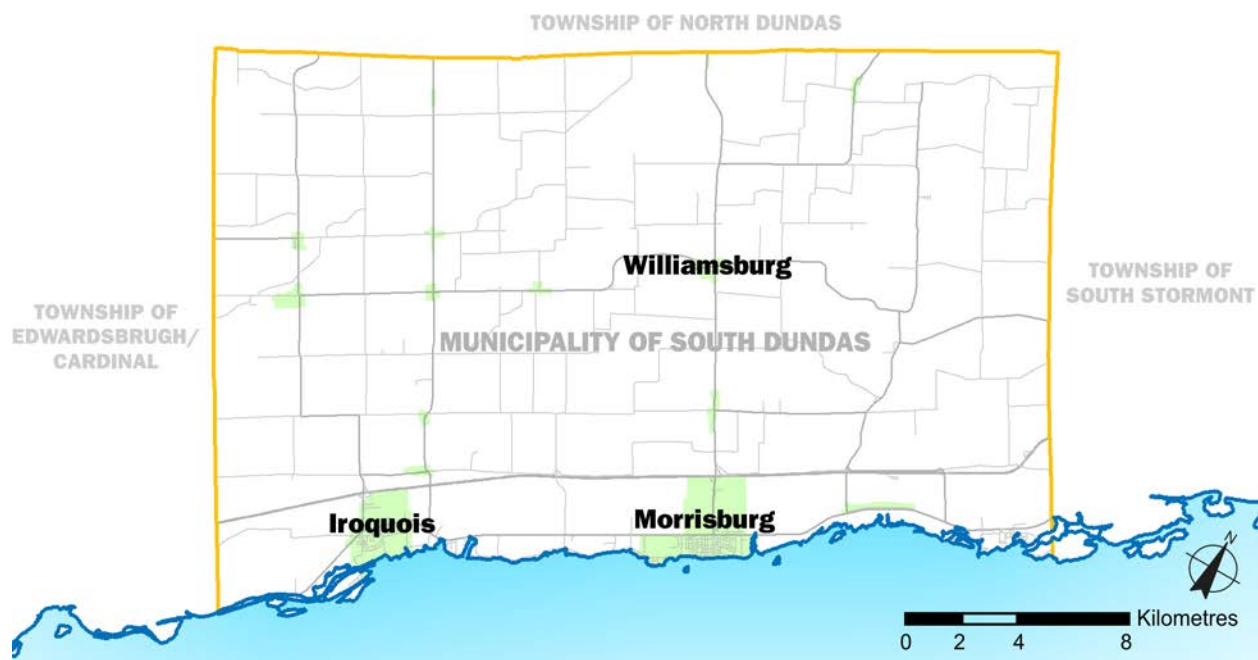
3.0 Community Profile

3.1 Local Context

The Municipality of South Dundas borders North Dundas to the north, South Stormont to the east, St Lawrence River to the south and Edwardsburgh/Cardinal to the west. South Dundas has strong agricultural roots with the majority of land continuing to be used for farming. South Dundas's rural landscape is complemented by three urban settlement areas, including Iroquois, Morrisburg and Williamsburg, as well as twelve rural settlement areas across the Municipality.

As an urban and rural municipality, South Dundas offers small-town charm with modern amenities, including a variety of parks and recreation opportunities including facilities, parks, trails, the St Lawrence River, and more.

Figure 2: Municipality of South Dundas Context Map



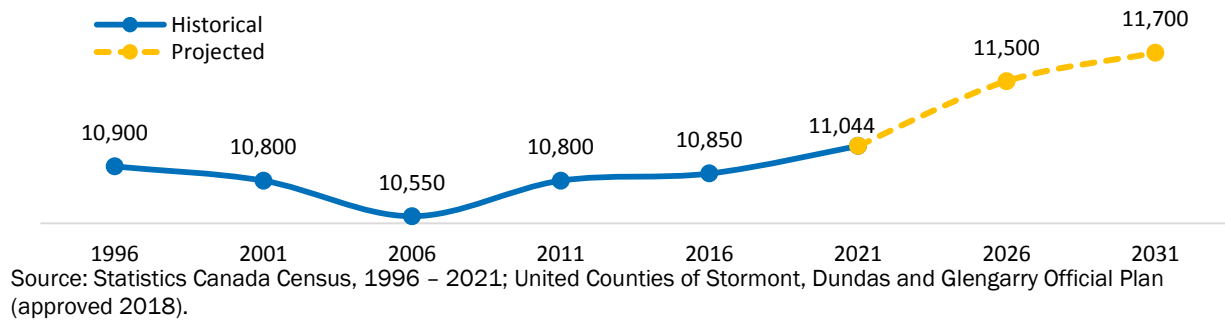
3.2 Historical & Projected Population

Statistics Canada reported that South Dundas' population generally remained unchanged over the past 25 years. The recently released 2021 Census reported that South Dundas currently has a population of 11,044 residents, which is a 1.8% increase from 2016. The Municipality's current population is slightly less than the 2021 population identified in the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Official Plan, suggesting that population growth has been slower than anticipated.

Similar to other small municipalities, South Dundas is expected to undergo population growth as people from larger urban centres such as Ottawa and Montreal seek alternative lifestyles that are slower paced or are more affordable for raising a family or retiring. The COVID-19 pandemic has also allowed people to work remotely and thus, South Dundas may welcome home residents who had once left for other communities. Population projections contained in the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry

Official Plan estimates that South Dundas will grow by nearly 700 residents (+6%), reaching a population of 11,700 by 2031 (Figure 3). The majority of future population growth is anticipated to be accommodated within Morrisburg. While the level of projected growth is not likely to generate significant added pressure on the Municipality's parks and recreation facilities, ensuring that the right mix and distribution of opportunities is available will be necessary to ensure that current and future residents are engaged in active and healthy lifestyles.

Figure 3: Municipality of South Dundas Historical and Future Population Growth, 1996 to 2031

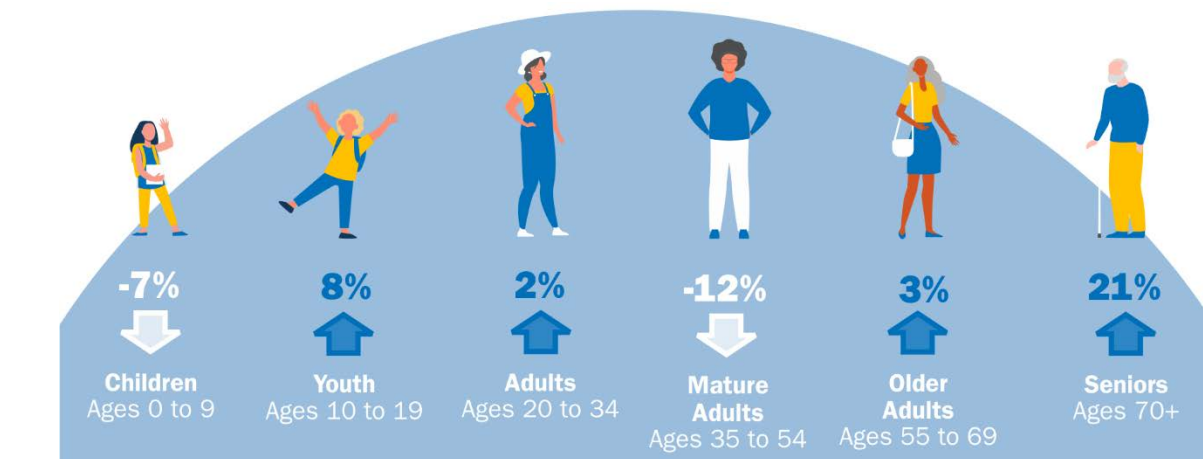


3.3 Population by Age Group

South Dundas is an aging community, which is a trend that is consistent with other municipalities in Ontario. Between the 2016 and 2021 Census, South Dundas's median age increased from 50.0 years to 50.8 years, which is significantly higher than the Province (41.6 years).

Additional evidence of an aging community is revealed by looking at population growth by age group. Between the two Census periods (2016 and 2021), the number of older adults (ages 55 to 69) and seniors (age 70+) increased by 3% and 21%, respectively (Figure 4). The population of youth (ages 10 to 19) and young adults (ages 20 to 34) also increased modestly by 8% and 2%, respectively. By contrast, the population of children (ages 0 to 9) and mature adults (ages 35 to 54) each declined by 7% and 12%, respectively. These findings suggest that while the Municipality can be expected to experience an increased demand for older adult and senior services, there will be a continued need to ensure that a balanced spectrum of parks and recreation facilities, programs and services are provided for all age groups.

Figure 4: Population Growth by Age Group, 2016 to 2021



Source: 2016 – 2021 Census

3.4 Income & Education

Costs associated with transportation, user fees and equipment tend to be common barriers to participating in recreation opportunities, particularly for households experiencing financial barriers. Research suggests that income levels have been found to influence (or at least be an indicator of) participation in recreation; higher income levels tend to correlate to higher levels of participation.

The 2021 Census reported that the median household income of South Dundas in 2020 was \$78,000, which was lower compared to the Province (\$91,000). Statistics Canada also reported that 11.1% of residents are experiencing financial barriers, which is marginally higher compared to Ontario (10.1%). Based on income alone, this suggests that South Dundas residents may be more likely to face financial barriers when it comes to participating in recreation activities compared to their Provincial counterparts. This highlights the importance of ensuring that low-cost and free parks and recreation activities are available, and that financial barriers are minimized, to ensure that all residents have an opportunity to participate, regardless of income level.

Similar to income, education levels can be an indicator of recreation participation. The 2016 Census reported that 45% of residents in South Dundas have completed a post-secondary certificate, diploma, or degree which is lower than the Province (55%). Since 2006, the number of residents attaining a post-secondary certificate, diploma, or degree has risen by 23% and residents receiving no certificate, diploma, or degree has fallen by 18%, a trend that is consistent with the Province.

3.5 Immigration & Cultural Diversity

Immigration levels can also be an influencing factor in parks and recreation interests and participation. While municipalities across Ontario have experienced a diversification of residents as a result of immigration this is not the case for South Dundas. The 2016 Census reported that approximately 8% of residents in South Dundas are immigrants, the majority of whom migrated decades ago from European countries such as the Netherlands and United Kingdom.

Over the planning period, South Dundas may experience some level of growth from new residents with diverse cultural backgrounds. This is a trend being experienced in many small communities being driven by an out-migration of residents from larger urban centres seeking affordable lifestyles, as well as in response to COVID-19 pandemic and the shift to working remotely. The Municipality will need to monitor the 2021 Census data as it is released to ensure that any more recent population diversification trends are known, and recreation needs assessed.

4.0 Trends in Parks & Recreation

4.1 General Participation Trends

4.1.1 Popularity of Unstructured Activities

The lack of free time is commonly identified as a barrier to participation. Activities such as organized sports, particularly at competitive levels, often require considerable time commitment for training, practices, travel and other league activities. With increasingly busy lifestyles, competing interests, and inability for people to commit to structured activities, there is a growing interest for casual drop-in and unstructured activities that do not require advanced registration and can be self-scheduled. Municipalities are evolving their service delivery models to respond to this trend by extending operating hours and expanding the range and frequency of drop-in programs.

South Dundas is one of the many municipalities experiencing a growth in demand for unstructured activities and in response, the Municipality provides flexible opportunities to engage in casual leisure activities, largely through public skating and outdoor swimming, as well as general interest programs, parks, trails, beaches and outdoor spaces.

4.1.2 Growing Income Disparity

Affordability is a key concern for many households as participation in parks and recreation activities is one of several spending choices for discretionary income. As previously noted, the median household income in South Dundas is lower compared to Ontario and the proportion of households experiencing financial barriers is marginally higher than the Province. Access to low-to-no-cost programming options, together with subsidy programs, can help alleviate the financial burden of participation.

While the Municipality does not offer a financial subsidy program, it remains committed to minimizing financial barriers for recreation as many youth opportunities are free including public skating, drop-in sports, Beach Days, and discounted pricing for rentals (e.g., ice). Third party subsidy programs are also available such as Canadian Tire Jumpstart. The Municipality also provides a Municipal Grant, as well as “Dollar for Dollar” Capital Funding Program to provide financial support to organizations and volunteers.

4.1.3 Active Transportation

Active transportation is becoming a core element of complete communities. During the COVID-19 pandemic, many municipalities observed an increase in walking and cycling for leisure as residents participated close to home and connected with nature through trails and pathways. Active transportation also has an environmental benefit to road uses because it reduces road congestion in urban areas and minimizes greenhouse gas emissions, land consumption, and the costs for road maintenance.

Active transportation refers to non-motorized movement through cycling, walking, hiking and other human-powered modes. Active transportation in South Dundas is primarily for recreation given that the majority of residents drive to work. The Municipality proudly offers a section of the Great Lakes Waterfront Trail that follows the road network along the Municipality’s southern border along the St. Lawrence River. The Municipality also maintains a separate pathway system along the Iroquois and Morrisburg waterfronts that are used by residents and visitors. Other non-municipal trail systems are also found in South Dundas, including the Two Creeks Conservation Area and Robert Graham Conservation Area.

4.1.4 High Levels of Physical Inactivity

The 2019 and 2020 ParticipACTION report cards on physical activity graded overall physical activity levels a “D+”² for Canadian children and youth and “D” for adults, which is a marginal improvement over previous years. Physical inactivity has been found to be a contributor to Canada’s growing obesity problem. In 2017, a study by Statistics Canada found that nearly one-third of Canadian children and youth (age 5-17) are obese or overweight, which was an increase from 23% reported in 1979.³ During the same period, almost two-thirds (64%) of adults over the age of 18 are obese or overweight, which was an increase from 49% in 1979.⁴

Locally, while an older document, a 2013 health profile prepared by Statistics Canada for the Eastern Ontario Health Unit determined that 61% of the population within the catchment area was obese or overweight, higher than the Province (52.6%). 54.9% of the population was also found to be ‘active’ or ‘moderately active’ during leisure time physical activity, which was also higher than the Province (53.8%).⁵ Generally speaking, the reliance on automobiles has contributed to a culture of physical inactivity, while sedentary activities such as watching television, playing video games, or using a computer further increase sedentary behaviours. It is recognized that this may vary in each community such as large, rural municipalities such as South Dundas where the automobile is the only reasonable means of travel. Preparing this Master Plan is one strategy to increase physical activity and provide ways to broaden the range of opportunities to get active.

4.2 Facility Trends

4.2.1 Aging Infrastructure

The 2019 Canadian Infrastructure Report Card reported that 32% of Canada’s municipal arenas and pools are in fair to very poor condition.⁶ Many of these facilities were built between 1956 and 1980 whose age and/or deferred infrastructure renewal/maintenance activities have accelerated the number of facilities in need of replacement.

Constructed in 1962, the Morrisburg Arena underwent an extensive renovation in 2017 to replace the arena floor slab, cooling system, arena boards, players seating, glass and flooring. A portion of the renovation cost was covered through the Ontario 150 Community Capital Program under the Ontario Trillium Foundation. While these programs have gone a long way toward reducing the infrastructure deficit, significant shortfalls remain in municipalities across the country. Building upon the Municipality’s efforts, plans are also in place to undertake accessibility improvements to the Morrisburg Arena entrance.

² The ParticipACTION Report Card on Physical Activity for Adults (2019) and Children and Youth (2020). Retrieved from <https://www.participation.com>

³ Public Health Agency of Canada. Tackling obesity in Canada: Childhood obesity and excess weight rates in Canada. 2017. Retrieved from <https://www.canada.ca>

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Statistics Canada. 2013. Health Profile, Eastern Ontario Health Unit. Retrieved from <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca>

⁶ The 2019 Canadian Infrastructure Report Card measured the condition of municipal arenas and pools together.

4.2.2 Multi-use Recreation Facilities & Community Hubs

In this era of user convenience and cost recovery, many municipalities are centralizing various civic services including parks and recreation activities. Multi-use facilities can provide a great number of benefits. While the specific nature and degree of these benefits will depend on local circumstances, facility design and operation, and other factors, there is no denying that multi-use parks/facilities have the potential to generate substantial economic, social, and environmental gains for local municipalities.

The majority of recent recreation facility construction across Ontario has been in the form of multi-use venues. There are a range of benefits of multi-use facilities including the creation of a destination where all household members can gather and engage in recreation activities, thereby contributing to sport development, tourism, and operational efficiency. The creation of multi-use facilities is particularly important in small municipalities such as South Dundas to optimize the use of available amenities, which will be a particular point of emphasis for this Master Plan.

The creation of “community hubs” has also been a recent focus in many communities as they offer tremendous social benefits, strengthen community cohesion, and improved quality of life by providing a central location to deliver a range of services. A community hub is a central access point for vital health and social services, along with cultural, recreational, and green spaces to nourish community life.

The Municipality’s Municipal Centre functions as a community hub where residents can access civic services, the Morrisburg Library, and recreation programs. The Iroquois Campground Building also serves as a community hub as it offers flexible space for the Iroquois Campground and other users.



4.2.3 Environmental Sustainability

There is an increasing desire to reduce community impact on the environment to be more sustainable. To support this direction, an emphasis is being placed on leaving open spaces in a natural state, which is also beneficial to support and preserve important ecological functions and habitats. Many municipalities have made efforts to design facilities that utilize state-of-the-art technologies to enhance energy efficiency and achieve environmental objectives such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

From an outdoor perspective, parks are being designed and maintained to be more environmentally sustainable through reducing grass cutting in strategic locations, planting native species, establishing tree canopy targets, creating pollinator gardens, and offering programs aimed at creating awareness and educating the public about local natural heritage features (e.g., outdoor classrooms or interpretive signage), and strategies to be more resilient to climate change.

Locally, the Municipality's Iroquois Waterfront Park concept identifies locations for protecting and enhancing biodiversity and sustainability through native plantings that support habitats. Riparian plantings were also proposed to filter runoff and sediment, reduce bacteria contamination, and moderate the presence of geese.

The Municipality also developed an Energy Conservation and Demand Management Plan in accordance with the Green Energy Act. The Municipality is proud to have completed many projects aimed at minimizing its impact on the environment, including retrofitting buildings with LED lighting and updating and replacing mechanical equipment at Morrisburg Arena. The Municipality continues to strive towards reducing energy consumption through the development of new and redeveloped facilities which are encouraged to incorporate LED lighting, energy efficient equipment, and achieve Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards.

South Dundas also has an Emerald Ash Borer Management Plan. The Management Plan estimates that approximately 30% of its tree canopy consists of ash trees and as a result, the plan establishes control measures and replanting efforts to respond to invasive species.

4.3 Service Delivery Trends

4.3.1 Partnerships

Municipal parks and recreation departments throughout Ontario are increasingly challenged to provide and maintain top quality facilities, services and programs within defined budget envelopes. As financial pressures mount and the need for cost containment rises, communities are examining new and creative service delivery models, including developing relationships with third-party entities.

There are many potential advantages of a collaborative service delivery approach, including the sharing of risk, possible cost or service efficiencies, gaining a competitive advantage in having programs and services delivered by specialized community groups, the sharing of vital data to identify emerging trends and opportunities, and minimizing service duplication. South Dundas collaborates with many partners such as service clubs and community service providers (e.g., EarlyON Child and Family Centres). Partnerships with local organizations has played a key role in provide community services in South Dundas. Continuing to grow these partnerships and establishing new relationships will be an important consideration to address community needs and to implement recommendations contained in this Master Plan.

4.3.2 Volunteerism

Volunteers are critical to the parks and recreation services system, especially in municipalities such as South Dundas that rely on community volunteers to deliver programs, events and services. In January 2015, Statistics Canada published a Spotlight on Canadians: Results from the General Social Survey whose section focused on volunteering and charitable giving found that 12.7 million people in Canada volunteered nearly two billion hours in 2013. However, the research found that volunteers are aging and despite high reports of hours volunteered, the general volunteer rate was lower than recorded in previous surveys. Municipalities recognize the importance of maintaining a strong group of local volunteers and actively recruits volunteers to assist with delivering important community services. This will continue to be important during the Master Plan period.

4.3.3 Technology

Technological advances have enabled both service providers and users to be more aware of the parks and recreation opportunities in their communities. This includes websites that summarize facilities, services and program offerings; online portals for program registration and facility bookings; synchronization with smartphone applications; virtual programming; video-conference meetings; streaming Council meetings; and more. The Municipality has embraced the use of technology using some of these services to engage the public including its social media presence that boasts over 5,400 followers. The Municipality is also working towards establishing an online booking portal to better serve its residents.

4.3.4 Inclusion & Accessibility

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, (AODA) directs municipalities to consider the needs of persons with disabilities through facility design and service delivery. By 2025, municipalities are required to remove all barriers within new and redeveloped municipal facilities, including those related to physical space as well as customer service through training.

The South Dundas 2020 – 2025 Accessibility Plan was developed in response to the AODA and demonstrates the Municipality's commitment to making the community more accessible and inclusive for persons with disabilities. The Accessibility Plan identifies actions including, but not limited to, providing accessible customer service training, ensuring that all new or redeveloped public spaces are barrier free (e.g., playgrounds, walking paths, facilities, etc.). The Municipality's Charter for Active Living also recognizes the importance of providing inclusive opportunities for residents to lead active and healthy lifestyles.

There are other segments of the population that are common users of parks and recreation programs, services and facilities such as youth and seniors, persons experiencing low income, people with diverse cultural backgrounds, and the LGBTQ2S+ community. The Federal Government has declared the goal of gender equity in sport and recreation by the year 2035. This is particularly timely given that women drop out of sport and recreation at pre-adolescence and fewer women are committed to sport participation post-COVID. National best practices and awareness of local support groups and services need to be considered to ensure that parks and recreation services in South Dundas are welcoming of all residents, regardless of gender, ability, age, income, background and orientation.

4.3.5 COVID-19 Pandemic Trends

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the demand for, and delivery of, parks and recreation services and that change may be lasting; however, the ultimate scope and scale of changes are unknown. Long-term planning and strategic investment are vital to support the significant role that the parks and recreation sector plays in personal, social, and economic recovery and revitalization.

Recognizing that the situation is evolving and new information and guidance is emerging on a regular basis, South Dundas must prepare for a wide range of scenarios. During the planning period, the Municipality will need to closely monitor demand, participation and usage levels of its facilities, programs and services and adjust resource allocation, as necessary. Working with local community organizations as the Municipality emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic will also be critical to ensure that these important groups continue to be successful over the long-term. The following are some potential impacts the pandemic may have on the sector in the short- to longer-term.

- Continued population growth in less urbanized areas such as South Dundas;
- Emphasis on health equity and access to parks and trails;
- Growing interest in unstructured, individual, and small group activities;
- Desire for outdoor recreation (including four seasons use), placing pressure on trails, parks, waterfront, washrooms, etc.;
- A possible shift in prime-time demand as people work more flexible hours;
- Volatility in volunteers and events;
- Substantial changes to operations (e.g., demand for touchless services, cleaning, visitor management, staff training, etc.), possibly requiring higher levels of subsidy;
- Impacts on building design (ventilation, spacing, access/egress, mid-door spaces, etc.);
- Constant engagement and communication –need accurate and real-time information;
- Rethinking of some third-party partnerships (schools, etc.); and
- Greater use of technology to help support changes (virtual programming, etc.).

5.0 Public Consultation

Public consultation is critical in creating a “Made for South Dundas” Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The perspectives of residents, stakeholders, Council and Municipal staff are important elements to developing strategies that address current and future needs. This section summarizes the findings from each consultation activity undertaken for the Master Plan. **The findings contained in this section should not be interpreted as recommendations. The input received informed the needs assessments and recommendations, which can be found in Sections 6 to 8 of the Master Plan.**

5.1 Consultation Approach & Public Awareness

A Consultation Strategy was prepared to identify and guide the engagement tactics used during the Master Plan. The Strategy identified initiatives to raise awareness for the project, including the creation of a project webpage on the Municipality’s website, social media, word of mouth, posters, news articles and advertisements, mail postcards, and a project e-mail address. Consultation activities included:

- Initial Virtual Public Information Boards
- Community Survey and Questionnaire
- Stakeholder Focus Groups and Survey
- Staff Workshops;
- Final Public Open House
- Committee of the Whole Presentation;
- Written Input; and
- Regular meetings with the Steering Committee.

5.2 Summary of Key Themes from Consultation

To date, 647 households (representing over 1,600 people of all ages) have been engaged, in addition to 36 individuals that represented 27 community organizations. The consultation process also received input from 19 municipal staff at all levels and departments, as well as members of Council. Common themes heard through the consultation activities included the following (in no particular order):

- The COVID-19 pandemic has influenced how people participate in parks and recreation activities; however, residents are adapting and seeking new ways to engage in physical activity and to connect with others.
- There is a demand for casual, unstructured activities for residents of all ages.
- There is strong community pride in the parks and recreation activities that are available, particularly with respect to the Iroquois and Morrisburg Waterfronts.
- Emphasis should be placed on improving the use of existing facilities; to support this, suggestions were made to modernize spaces (e.g., accessibility, technology, etc.).
- There is a desire for a new multi-use recreation facility to function as a community hub and civic gathering space. Suggested amenities include an indoor pool, gymnasium, multi-purpose space, indoor artificial turf field and more.
- Community groups are a strength in South Dundas but concerns were raised about the ability to retain and attract new volunteers, particularly among the younger demographic. Continuing to support establish organizations was suggested to ensure that they are successful.
- Improve awareness and participation through communication and marketing.

5.3 Initial Virtual Public Information Boards

Virtual public information boards were prepared and displayed on the project webpage at the beginning of the planning process to raise awareness about the Master Plan. The information panels highlighted the purpose of the Master Plan, summarized the Municipality's community profile, as well as relevant trends impacting the parks and recreation sector. Opportunities for the public to get involved were also promoted, including completing the community survey.

5.4 Community Survey

A community survey was conducted to collect input about parks and recreation needs and priorities in South Dundas. The survey gathered information regarding participation and barriers, facility usage, suggested improvements, priorities for investment, and opinion on various statements.

The community survey was available online and by hardcopy from January 11th to February 11th, 2022 for respondents to complete. A total of 647 responses were received, representing over 1,600 people of all ages; less than 2% were non-residents, which did not significantly impact the results. As a voluntary, self-directed survey, respondents were not required to answer every question. The survey was promoted through the Municipal website, social media, word-of-mouth, and more.

As the COVID-19 pandemic has influenced the way in which people participate in parks and recreation, survey respondents were asked to report their participation levels from 2019 (pre-COVID) to provide an accurate picture of what activities residents typically engage in. How the COVID-19 pandemic impacted respondents' participation in parks and recreation opportunities was also explored through this survey. The following is a high-level summary of key findings. Survey response data can be found in Appendix A.

5.4.1 Summary of Respondents

The following is a high-level summary of the demographic profile of responding households:

- The average age of respondents was 57 years, which is higher compared to the 2016 Census (45.7 years).
- Households with children and youth were more likely to complete the survey. When compared to the 2016 Census, responding households were over-represented in children and youth (ages 0-19), while being underrepresented in adults, older adults and seniors (ages 35 to 70+).
- 64% of responding households lived in Morrisburg and Iroquois.

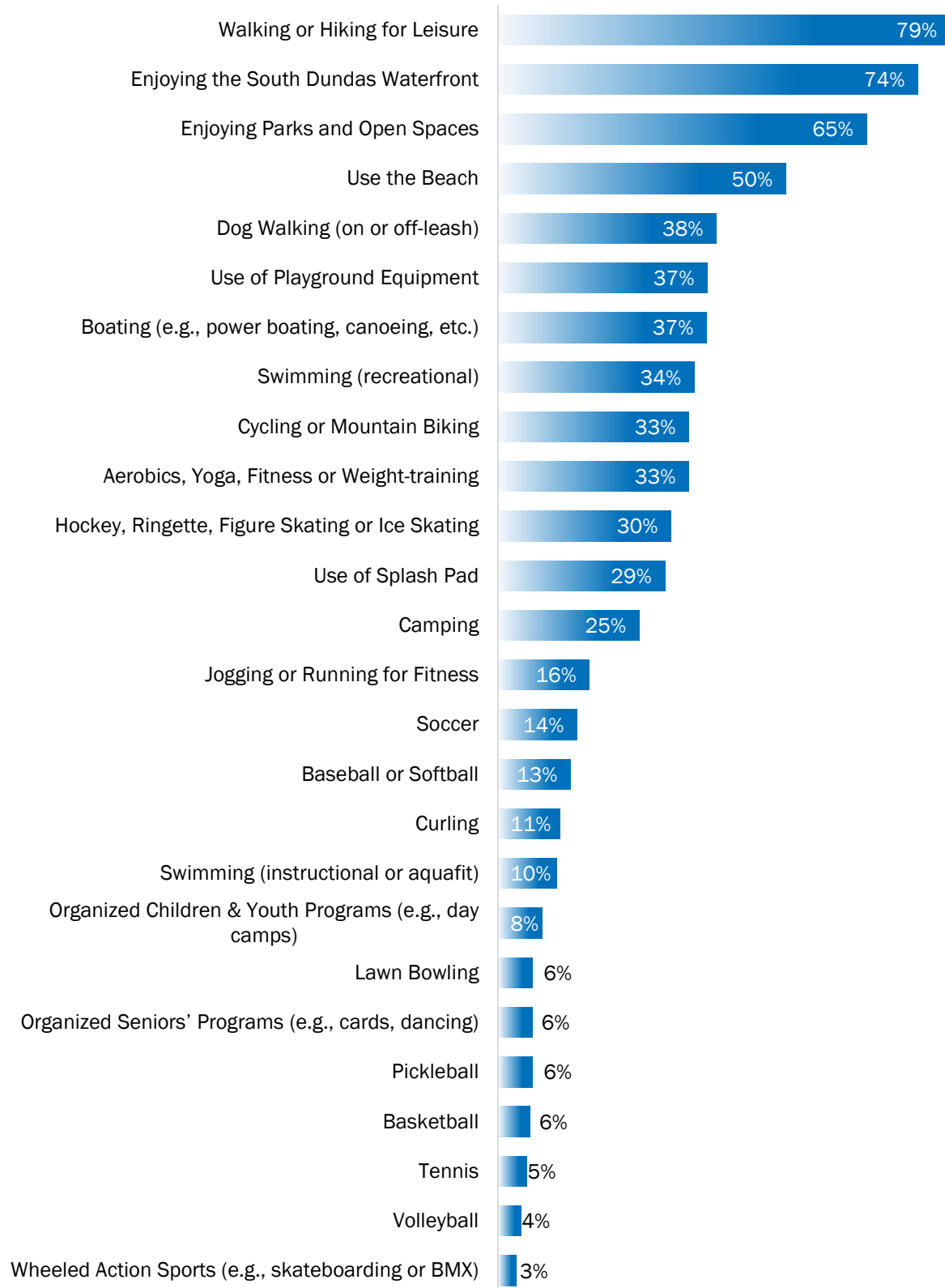
5.4.2 Participation in Parks and Recreation Activities

Walking or hiking for leisure (79%) was identified as the most popular activity that respondents and/or their households actively participate in prior to the pandemic. Other top parks and recreation activities included enjoying the South Dundas waterfront (74%), enjoying parks and open spaces (65%), using the beach (50%), and dog walking on or off leash (38%). Figure 5 summarizes participation in parks and recreation activities.

A commonality among the top five activities is that they are all unstructured and self-scheduled activities, which is consistent with broad participation trends. These types of activities tend to rank high as they can be undertaken through all ages and stages of life. Organized sports such as hockey, soccer and baseball

ranked lower and tend to be played by a subset of the community. Lower ranked activities tended to be more specialized or age-specific in nature (e.g., skateboarding, Pickleball).

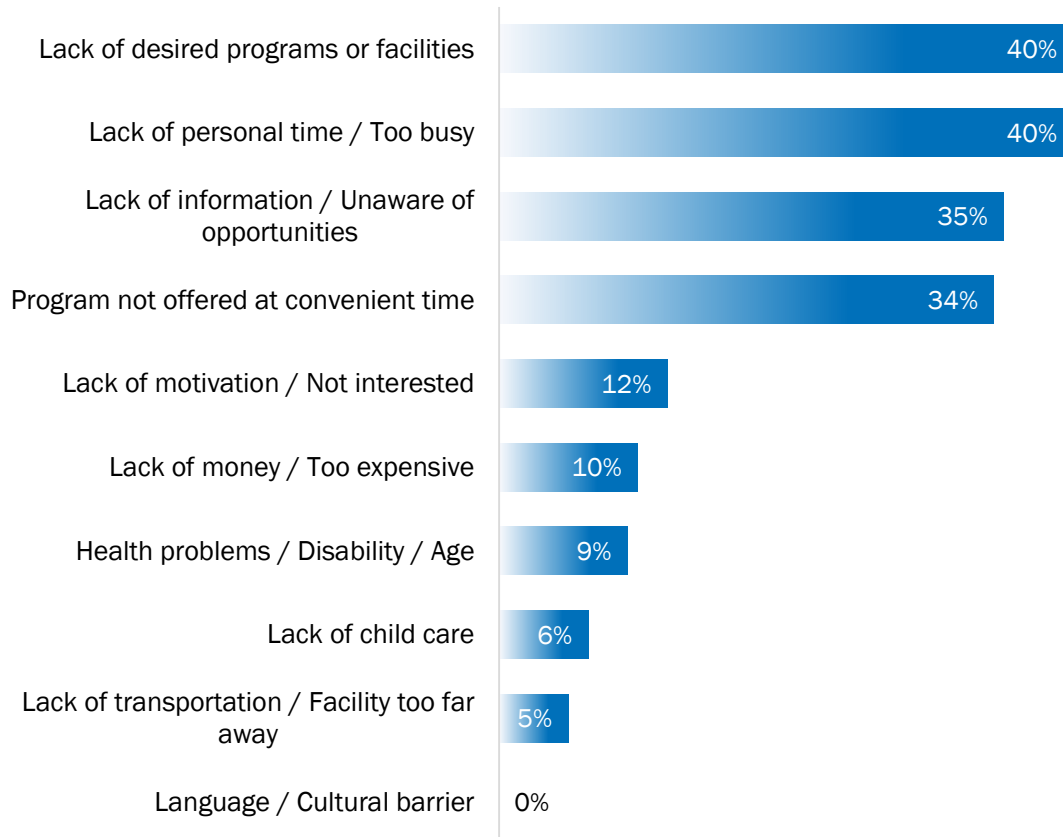
Figure 5: Participation in Parks and Recreation Activities in 2019 (n=642)



5.4.3 Barriers to Participation in Parks and Recreation Activities

Respondents identified that a lack of desired programs or facilities (40%) and a lack of personal time/too busy (40%) were equally the most common participation barrier prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Other common barriers included a lack of information/unaware of opportunities (35%) and programs not offered at convenient time (34%). A summary of participation barriers identified by respondents is contained in Figure 6. 70% of respondents reported that they did not face any barriers and were able to participate in parks and recreation activities as often as they would like prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 6: Participation Barriers to Recreation and Park Activities in 2019 (n=145)



5.4.4 Requests for Parks and Recreation Activities

Table 3 highlights the top ten parks and recreation opportunities that respondents would like to see offered in South Dundas that are not currently available. A broad range of suggestions were received, including pools and swimming opportunities (e.g., lane swim, lessons, aquafit), fitness opportunities, trails and indoor walking opportunities, and outdoor pickleball courts.

Table 3: Top 10 Requested Parks and Recreation Opportunities (n=322)

Top 10 Requested Parks and Recreation Opportunities	
1. Fitness opportunities (e.g., yoga, pilates, tai chi, etc.)	6. Skateboard park / BMX park
2. Indoor swimming and programs (e.g., lane swim, lessons, aquafit)	7. Tennis courts
3. Outdoor pickleball courts	8. Cycling trails
4. Walking pathways	9. Indoor walking track
5. Outdoor swimming pool	10. Cross-country skiing

5.4.5 Importance and Satisfaction Levels

Respondents were asked to rate their level of importance and satisfaction with respect to parks and recreation facilities (Figure 7), including indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, parks and trails. Generally speaking, high levels of importance paired with high levels of satisfaction indicates that expectations are being met. With this in mind, expectations are not being met in all areas, with the largest discrepancy in indoor recreation facilities. These findings suggest that there is room for improvement in all areas.

Figure 7: Importance and Satisfaction Levels with Parks and Recreation Facilities

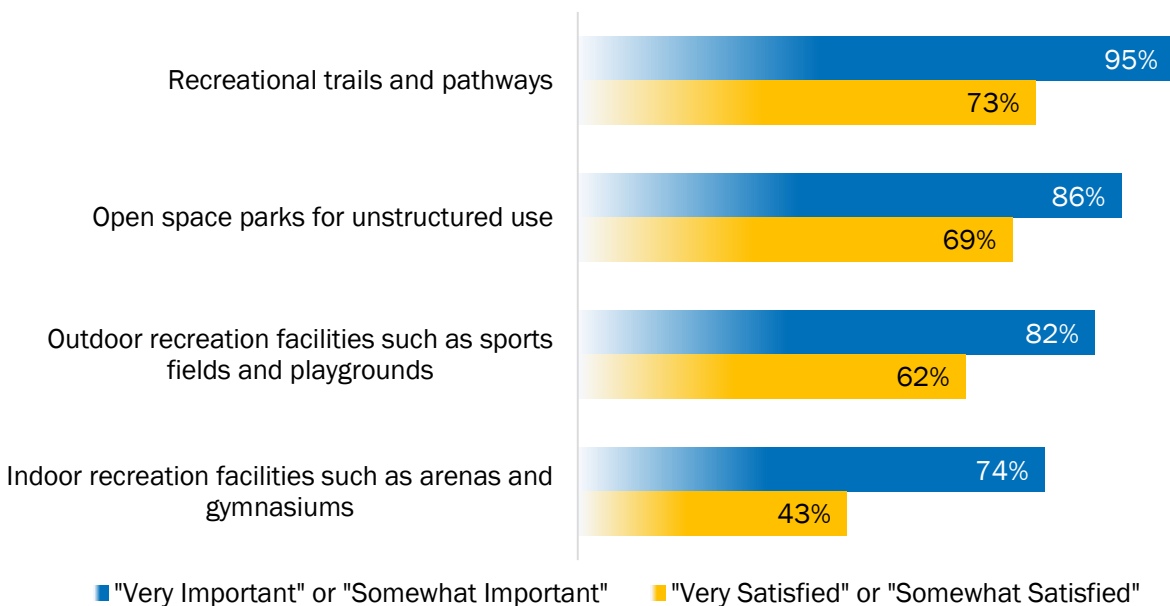
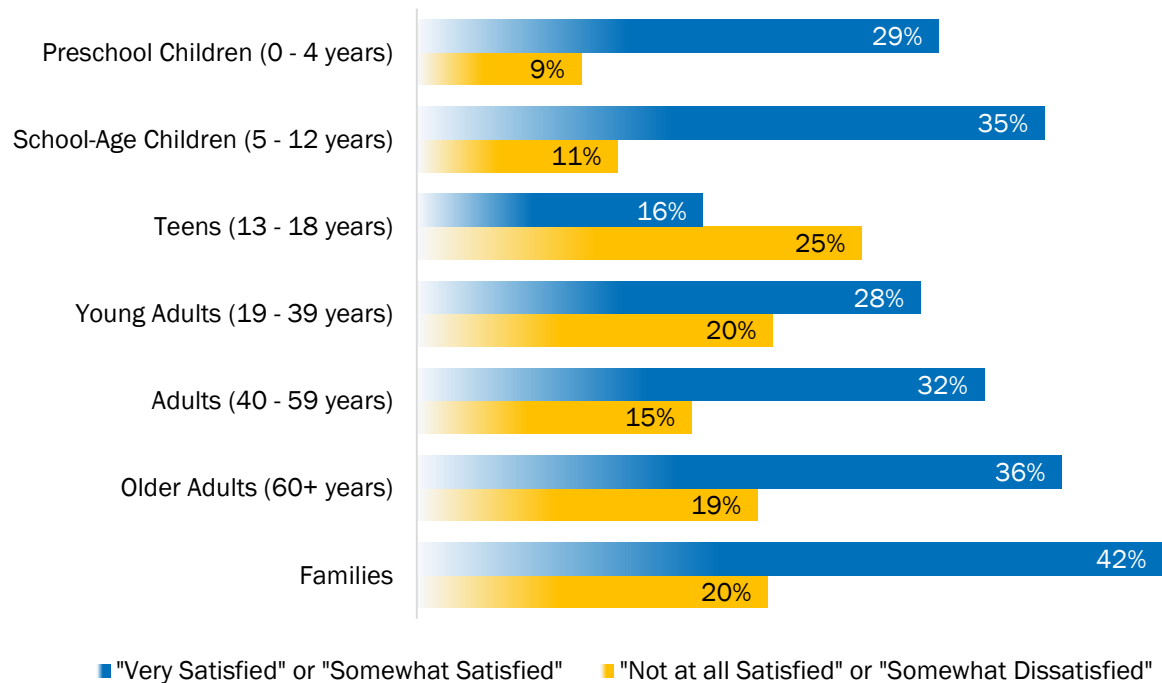


Figure 8 illustrates respondents' satisfaction levels related to parks and recreation opportunities by age group. Respondents were most satisfied with parks and recreation opportunities for families (42%), followed by older adults (36%) and school-aged children (35%). The lowest satisfaction levels recorded were for teens (16%). This is a common finding in many communities as there can be a perception that there are not enough opportunities for this age cohort. These findings suggest that there are opportunities to improve satisfaction levels among all age groups.

Figure 8: Satisfaction with Parks and Recreation Opportunities by Age Group



5.4.6 Priorities for Investment

Figure 9 illustrates respondents' level of support for spending additional public funds on improving existing or developing new parks and recreation facilities. Consistent with trends in the sector, facilities that support unstructured and self-scheduled activities were most commonly supported for additional spending. The top supported facilities were nature trails (92%), South Dundas Waterfront (90%), Beach (88%), paved multi-use trails (83%), and indoor swimming pools (79%).

In order to fund investment in improving or building new parks and recreation facilities, respondents were most willing to pay an increased fee for activities and sport registration (65%); there was also support for donating to a capital fundraising campaign (60%) (Figure 10).

Figure 9: Support for Public Spending on New and Improved Parks and Recreation Facilities

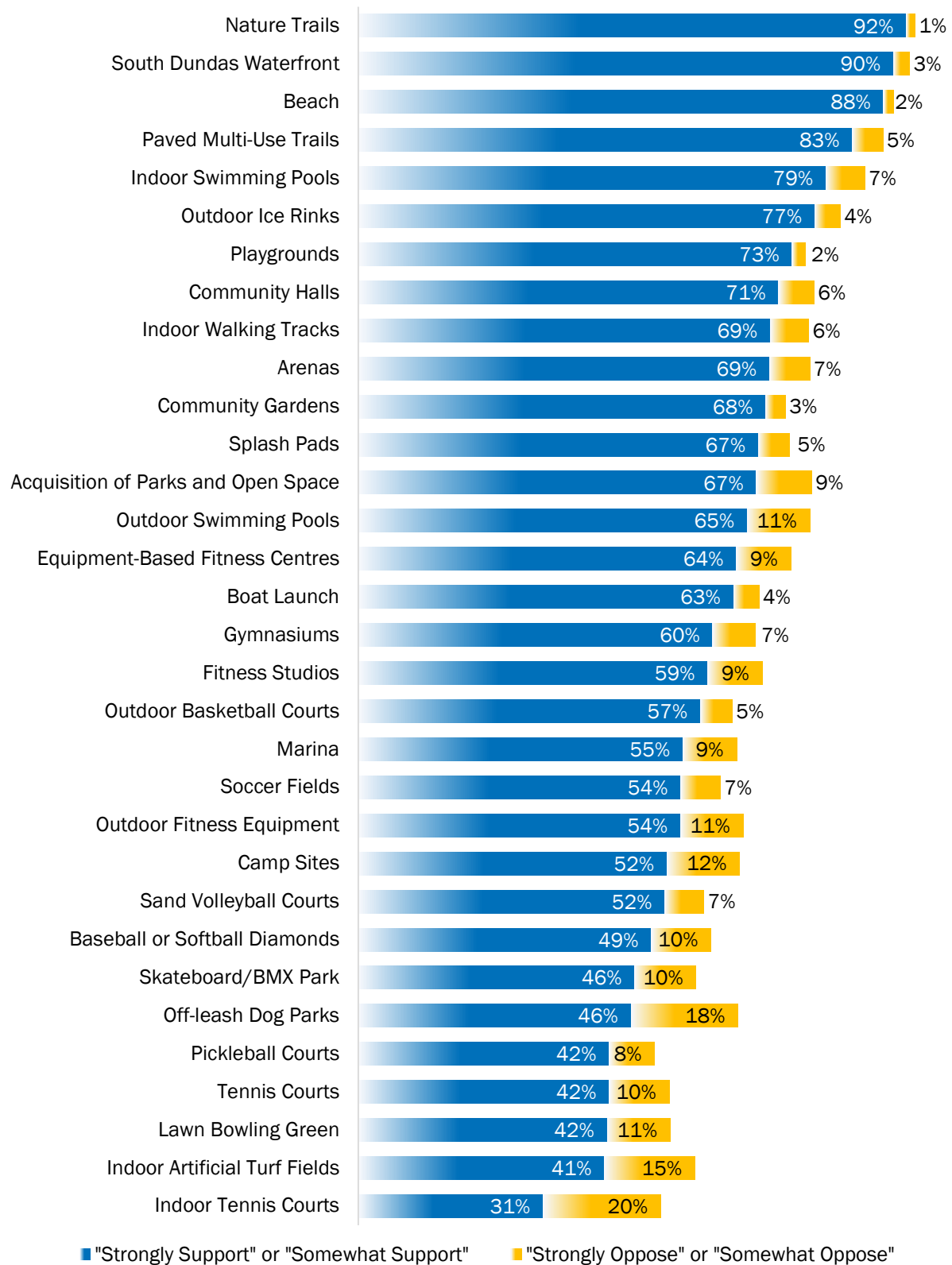
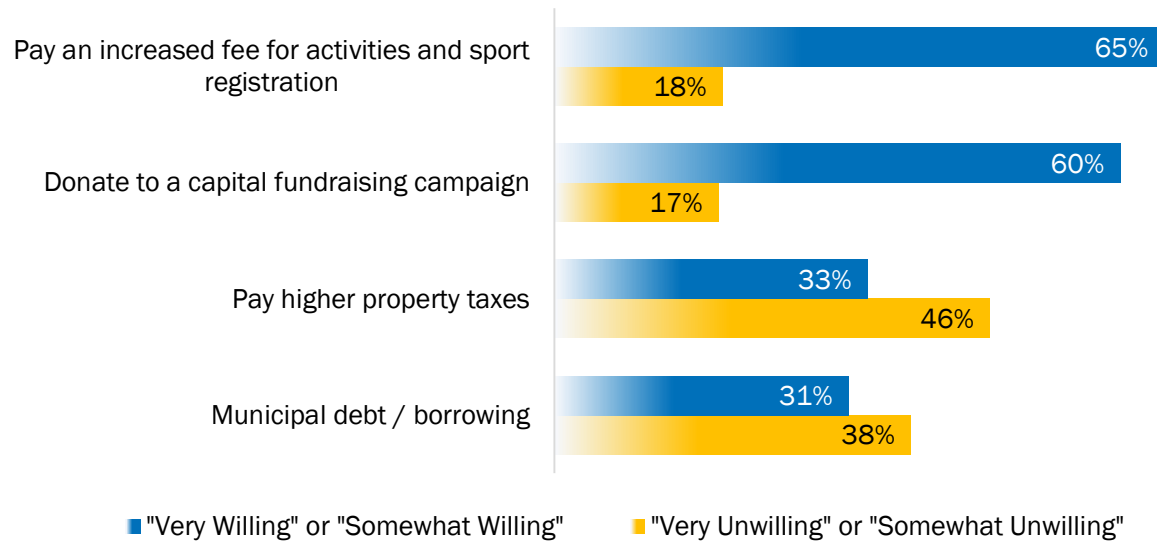


Figure 10: Willingness to Provide Financial Support for New or Improved Parks and Recreation Facilities

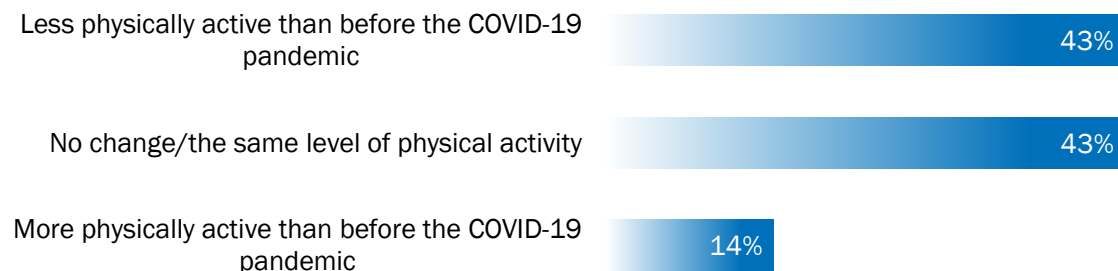


5.4.7 Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Parks and Recreation Activities

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the way that residents participate in parks and recreation. 43% of respondents identified that during the pandemic they were less physically active than before. The same proportion of respondents reported that there was no change to their level of physical activity, while 14% indicated they were more physically active (Figure 11).

Looking ahead, many respondents believed there would be little to no lasting impact that the pandemic would have on their participation in parks and recreation activities. Some respondents expressed that they would be more hesitant to participate in indoor recreation activities and would feel more comfortable in larger spaces/facilities to ensure physical distancing. This also may result in an increase in outdoor participation and a higher demand for outdoor facilities and amenities.

Figure 11: Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Participation in Parks and Recreation Opportunities (n=641)



5.4.8 Additional Survey Responses

Respondents were provided with an opportunity to provide additional input to be considered in the development of the Master Plan. Key themes from the input received identified that there is a desire for additional indoor facilities, as well as revitalization of existing outdoor facilities. Residents expressed their preference for a centralized multi-use facility that included amenities like an indoor pool, walking track, gymnasium and fitness equipment.

Residents also expressed the desire for more programs for teens and adults, preferably unstructured, drop-in classes and sports that were available during the evenings.

The waterfront was identified as an asset and attraction for South Dundas that should continually be improved and invested in.

Requests were made for improving the boat ramps and water access, regular cleaning of the bathrooms and garbage, and adding more opportunities at the waterfront such as shops and restaurants. Lastly, residents would like to see more focus on facilities outside of Morrisburg and Iroquois. In these more rural areas, requests were received for additional outdoor amenities such as playgrounds, outdoor rinks and maintenance to existing parks and playground structures.



5.5 Stakeholder Focus Groups

Four focus groups were held on January 26 and 27, 2022 with community stakeholders to participate in discussions on a range of topics related to improving parks and recreation opportunities in South Dundas. 50 stakeholders including indoor and outdoor sports organizations, service clubs and committee groups, were invited to participate in the focus groups. The sessions were attended by 36 individuals representing 27 groups. As part of the engagement process, a Stakeholder Survey was also made available for all groups to submit input, which have also been summarized in this section. The following is a summary of key themes from the input that was received.

5.5.1 Indoor Recreation Stakeholder Focus Group

The Indoor Recreation Stakeholder Focus Group was attended by 10 individuals representing the following groups:

1. Boot Camp
2. H.I.I.T.
3. Hatha Yoga
4. Kickboxing
5. Morrisburg & District Skating Club
6. Morrisburg Lions Junior Hockey
7. Parkinson's Exercise Class
8. Senior Men's Hockey
9. South Dundas Minor Hockey Association
10. Taekwondo

An overview of the discussion is summarised below.

Affordability	Affordability was mentioned as one of the key strengths and focuses for indoor recreation groups. When compared to other organizations around South Dundas, organizations believe that they offer some of the most affordable programs. It is believed that this is partly due to the Municipality offering affordable rental rates. Groups recognize that financial support programs are available (e.g., Canadian Tire Jumpstart) and an appreciation for the Lending Library was expressed, which provides free sports and recreation equipment to residents.
Addressing Youth Needs	It was expressed that youth opportunities in South Dundas are limited. Suggestions were made for dedicated youth space to establish a gathering place for this segment of the community, as well as to ensure that a diverse range of programs are available and appeal to youth, beyond sports, such as music, arts and cultural activities, youth fitness, game nights, etc.
Communication and Awareness	Groups expressed that a greater emphasis should be placed on raising awareness about the parks and recreation opportunities that are available to ensure that programs and services are successful. The importance of promoting opportunities through a variety of digital and print sources was expressed. Getting people involved through volunteerism also plays an important role in delivering programs and services.

Modernize Facilities and Services	<p>Organizations expressed the desire to modernize the way groups and residents access services particularly with respect to the process for registering and paying for programs. There was a strong desire for an online platform to address this need, which would streamline services and minimize the need to visit public facilities in-person.</p> <p>Groups expressed the need to modernize the Municipality's facilities. Suggestions were made for technology to support activities, particularly for groups that offer virtual programming, such as audio and visual equipment (e.g., microphones, televisions, etc.) and wireless internet.</p> <p>Undertaking updates to the arena was also suggested. Examples included accessibility enhancements, including entrance renewal, and providing live streaming and dry-land training opportunities.</p>
Outdoor Recreation	<p>Organizations recognize that during the pandemic, there has been a greater demand for outdoor recreation opportunities. Some groups have offered programs using outdoor space but noted there are challenges with equipment logistics, as programmers would be required to transport their own equipment, and storage. Outdoor programs are also weather dependent. Suggestions were made for an outdoor pavilion with adequate storage space, potentially along the Morrisburg waterfront, which could be used for outdoor programs. Establishing a Lending Library location near the waterfront was also suggested.</p> <p>Other suggestions for outdoor recreation amenities included enhancing trail connections and courts for tennis, pickleball and basketball.</p>

5.5.2 Parks and Outdoor Recreation Stakeholder Focus Group

The Parks and Outdoor Recreation Stakeholder Focus Group was attended by seven individuals representing the following groups:

1. Iroquois Lawn Bowling Club
2. Morrisburg Curling Club
3. Seaway Kickers
4. Seaway Surge Baseball Club
5. South Dundas Soccer Association
6. St. Lawrence Rowing Club
7. Upper Canada Trails Association
8. Williamsburg Recreation Committee

The following is a high-level summary of the discussions formed from this focus group.

Strong Community Ties	<p>Strong community ties were identified as a core strength among the organizations. Organizations emphasized that their groups rely heavily on volunteers to offer their services, including many high school students. It is believed that the volunteers are what makes community services successful in the Municipality and it has worked well as they have been supported by the Municipality.</p>
Unstructured Recreation Opportunities	<p>The pandemic has heightened interest in unstructured outdoor activities and it is expected that this will continue. Suggestions were made for more trail opportunities for hiking, cross country skiing, cycling, and water-based activities.</p>

Municipal Support	While organizations expressed that community groups and volunteers play a large role in providing parks and recreation services in South Dundas, greater municipal support was requested to provide public space that is functional and high quality through regular infrastructure renewal and asset management. Greater support in promoting programs, services and special events held by organizations would also be beneficial to boost community interest, support and participation. Ensuring that this information, including where Municipal parks and facilities are located, is publicly available was also identified.
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5.5.3 Community Stakeholder Focus Group

The Community Stakeholder Focus Group was attended by seven individuals representing the following groups:

1. Morrisburg Golf Club
2. Harvest Fest Committee
3. South Nation Conservation Authority
4. EarlyON Child and Family Centre

Notable and common themes from the focus group have been consolidated below.

Waterfront Potential	The waterfront was identified as an underused resource and perhaps the largest potential growth area. Although the Municipality offers a free personal watercrafts and equipment through the Lending Library, they are stored at the Morrisburg Arena, which is not convenient for many people, particularly if the arena is not open. Winter access to the waterfront also needs to be improved as it is not maintained during the winter. It was mentioned that greater investment in waterfront facilities, amenities and programs could transform the area into a tourist attraction.
Coordination and Guidance	Groups identified that there are many people willing to volunteer but Municipal support is needed to provide guidance and coordination. They expressed that it would be helpful if a resource was created to help organize volunteer groups and make it easier for them to present ideas and get them started. Currently, it can be difficult for them to find who they need to talk to and steps to move their ideas forward. There are many people willing to help make events happen they just need some coordination and information to organize the groups.

5.5.4 Committees Stakeholder Focus Group

The Committees Stakeholder Focus Group was attended by 12 individuals including:

- 1. Youth Advisory Committee
- 2. Iroquois Waterfront Committee
- 3. Morrisburg Waterfront Committee
- 4. Matilda Memorial Recreation Committee
- 5. Historical Society of South Dundas Committee
- 6. Carman House Museum

A summary of themes from the focus group is consolidated below.

Regulations and Bylaws	Some committees expressed a desire for updated Municipal by-laws and regulations to better reflect the community they are serving and to create consistency through processes.
Additional Recreation Facilities	<p>Access to outdoor parks and recreation opportunities, including the waterfront, was viewed as a strength in the community. Throughout the discussion many different recreation facilities were identified as areas of improvement to better service all age groups. Disc golf was identified as an emerging sport that is very inclusive as there is minimal investment required to play and is suitable for all ages. Disc golf courses can also be incorporated in any large open space area. Youth expressed an interest in additional volleyball and basketball courts as most of these facilities are located at schools. In addition, youth would be interested in the addition of a skate action park for rollerblading, BMX, skateboarding, etc. Another gap identified was programs or events that the whole family can enjoy together.</p> <p>Complementing outdoor parks and recreation opportunities, the desire for an indoor community hub along the Morrisburg Waterfront was suggested, which could include a restaurant, library and community meeting space.</p> <p>Besides recreation opportunities, there was an interest in offering more social activities and events such as “reach for the top” or trivia nights. More arts and cultural opportunities was also suggested such as a community art wall where residents can come together to express their artistic and creative abilities.</p>

5.6 Staff Workshops

Two workshops were held on January 26, 2022, with Municipal staff to capture their valuable knowledge, insights and experiences to be considered as a part of the Master Plan. The workshops were attended by 19 Municipal staff representing various positions from senior management to customer facing staff. Through the workshop sessions, staff participants expressed their desired vision for the future of Parks & Recreation Department included:

- Working closely with community partners to provide and enable a wide range of recreation and parks choices for all age groups;
- Ensuring that all programs, parks and facilities are well maintained and utilized;
- Understanding the connection to community wellbeing and quality of life through participation in parks and recreation experiences; and
- Bringing the community together during special events garners pride and cohesion.

Key priorities that staff expressed should be considered as a part of future parks and recreation service delivery include:

- Capturing what the community indicates are the gaps and determine how the **program, facility, events, and service gaps could be addressed** with recommendations as to how to provide a variety of choices for all residents.
- An indication of the **Asset Management funding sources** once the Asset Management Plan is completed.
- A Plan to address **park locations, amenities and parks sizes**.
- Strengthening **Communications and Community Engagement** approaches to ensure that the Department continues to meet residents needs.
- Guidance on forming more **partnerships** to address gaps and when they are appropriate.
- Recommendations on **waterfront** amenities, parking, etc.
- An indication of the needed **policies, procedures, and quality assurance** mechanisms.
- Considering the advantages of a volunteer **Recreation Advisory Committee**.
- An **implementation plan** that considers the staffing levels, time and what initiatives should be prioritized.

The following is a high-level summary of how staff view the current state of various areas of the parks and recreation system, including opportunities for improvements.

Programs and Events

Strengths

- Most programs and opportunities are provided for and by older adults.
- Technology was utilized to engage residents and keep them active during the pandemic.
- Community groups have been vital in providing events such as Tubie Fest, Harvest Fest, etc. the Municipality provides a supporting role in setup and providing space (approximately eight events a year).
- There are some small events that the tourism committee is preparing for – Indigenous event, a tugboat event, etc.

Challenges

- People coming from other communities expect recreation and parks opportunities for all ages. Current gaps for children, youth and younger adults.
- Program staff is part-time and therefore meeting the needs of all ages is a challenge.
- Improvements could be made to be more inclusive, particularly for persons with disabilities and those experiencing low income.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged staff to provide a continued level of service.
- There is no reciprocal agreement with the Board of Education that would allow access to schools for recreation and sport programming.

Recreation Facilities

Strengths

- There are a variety of facilities throughout the Municipality.
- An Asset Management Plan for all facilities is under development – this will identify reasonable repair and replacement timeframes and building funding mechanisms.
- There is 50/50 dollar for dollar program whereby Council will match funds for community-led capital projects.

Challenges

- The Municipality's infrastructure is aging – the Asset Management Plan will prioritize repairs and determine funding requirements.
- The Municipality has a lot of facilities; they are all the same and not enough variety.

Parks, Trails and Waterfront

Strengths

- Beautiful waterfront along the St. Lawrence River that draws residents and tourists.
- The Municipality's Lending Library was well utilized pre-pandemic and plans are in place to expand lending locations to broaden its public access.
- The Municipality has been revitalizing walking pathways along the waterfront and they are maintained year-round.
- A Tourism App was created to highlight all local locations of significance to promote destinations in South Dundas.
- There is a good proximity to conservation areas and Provincial parks adding to the parks network.

Challenges

- There is a challenge with beach and parking overcrowding on the weekends during the summer months.
- The Municipality has several park locations, which can be operationally challenging to maintain on a regular basis.

Policies and Procedures

Strengths

- The Municipality is embracing technology to streamline customer service processes to allow the public to register for programs and other services.

Challenges

- There is a need for policies in special events, partnerships, costing and pricing services, access for persons with disabilities, access for persons experiencing low income, etc.

Community

Strengths

- Community partnerships provide a range of services.

Challenges

- Attracting an adequate number of volunteers to assist with opportunities is a difficult endeavour.
- Population growth during the planning period is expected in Morrisburg and Iroquois, which will drive parks and recreation opportunities; however, emphasis should be given to providing balanced opportunities across the Municipality.

Staffing and Resources

Strengths

- Staff are commended for the programs and services that are provided.
- Complaints management software is utilized to track complaints.

Challenges

- There is a difficulty in finding adequate time to provide a range of opportunities for all age groups with one part-time Programmer.
- Operations staff move outside in the summer and inside in the winter. Fall clean-up is left to the Spring when a good number of complaints are heard as staff cannot get ahead of the operational requirements.
- Regular investments in parks and recreation facilities for improvements would keep facilities upgraded.

5.7 Committee of the Whole Meeting

Council members were engaged at a Committee of the Whole meeting on February 2nd, 2022. A presentation was given to introduce the Consulting Team and the Master Plan project to Council and receive their input. If requested, follow-up discussions with individual Councillors were held. Council members described their excitement for the Master Plan and highlighted priorities that should be considered such as the waterfront, opportunities for youth and older adults, trails, community hubs, and the need to consider the parks and recreational needs of residents across the entire Municipality, including those living in the rural areas and hamlets. The need to communicate parks and recreation opportunities with the public was also emphasized to ensure that they are engaged, as well as working together with stakeholders to provide successful and sustainable programs.

5.8 Community Questionnaire

A community questionnaire was developed to solicit input from attendees at the Spring Home & Trade Show on April 30, 2022, which is an annual event held by the South Dundas Chamber of Commerce. The questionnaire was undertaken within schools between May 9 and 13, 2022 to collect input from students in the Municipality. The questionnaire collected open-ended input on how the Municipality can enhance indoor and outdoor parks and recreation facilities, programs and services to be considered as the Master Plan was developed. This section highlights key themes from the input that was collected.

Generally speaking, respondents had an appreciation for the Municipality's parks, facilities and waterfront area. Requests were made for an indoor walking track, a second arena and a pool. Opportunities to enhance programs included more activities that appeal to youth and young adults such as roller skating, water-based activities (e.g., kayaking lessons and swimming), art classes, book club, and drop-in sports such as basketball, hockey, volleyball and ball hockey.

With respect to outdoor spaces and the waterfront, requests were made for more interpretive signage, shade (such as at the amphitheatre) and seating, trails, lighting, paved parking at the waterfront, water bottle filling station, and ensuring that the riparian edge is maintained to protect the biodiversity of the area. Suggestions to assist with funding future parks and recreation enhancements included taxation, user fees, fundraising and grants.

5.9 Written Input

The Master Plan welcomed residents to submit written input to be considered in the development of the Master Plan. Two submissions were received, which included comments relating to the desire for an indoor multi-use facility, more recreation activities, promotional strategies, and suggestions to minimize the Municipality's environmental impact.

5.10 Final Public Open House

A Public Open House was held on July 20, 2022 at the Morrisburg Arena to collect public feedback on the draft Master Plan. The purpose of this session was to provide an opportunity for the public to review the draft master plan and provide feedback on the preliminary recommendations in addressing community needs and to identify potential revisions to the draft Master Plan. Information panels were presented at the drop-in session that highlighted the Master Plan process, key themes from the consultation activities undertaken to date, and preliminary recommendations. Attendees were requested to review the information and provide their feedback on what they liked most about the draft Master Plan, what they thought was missing, and any additional input. Approximately 60 attendees visited the Public Open House, in addition to Municipal staff, Council and stakeholder representatives. Following the Public Open House, the draft Master Plan was made available on the Municipality's website for public viewing and feedback was received until August 3, 2022.

There was positive support for the draft Master Plan as the public felt that investment in parks and recreation services is important to enhance the quality of life in South Dundas to retain residents and encourage growth. There was support for many recommendations, including updating the Municipality's waterfront plans and investments in trails, splash pad and spray features, off-leash dog park, multi-use courts and more; the rationale for these and other recommendations are found in the appropriate sections of the Master Plan. Feedback from the public was also considered, which resulted in revisions prior to finalizing the Master Plan including (but not limited to) the following:

- Provide clarity on what is a natural/adventure playground.
- Emphasize the importance of the waterfront need to preserve and enhance what works well, safety and rental opportunities (e.g., Lending Library)
- Requests for an indoor recreation facility for year-round sports and other activities such as walking, as well as an outdoor pool.
- Consider opportunities to enhance J.C. Whitteker Park in Williamsburg.
- Identify inclusive program opportunities for youth, children, older adults, and seniors, including in the rural area.
- Regular engagement with community stakeholders and adjacent municipalities to promote parks and recreation programs and events, as well as arts and cultural opportunities.

5.11 Council Presentation

A presentation was made to Committee of the Whole on August 10, 2022 to provide a status update to Council, highlight key recommendations contained in the draft Master Plan, summarize the public feedback that has been received and review proposed changes to respond to what was heard. The presentation also provided an opportunity for Council to provide any additional feedback. Key themes from Council feedback are highlighted below, which resulted in revisions as part of finalizing the Master Plan:

- Highlight the Municipality's corporate priorities, including asset management; retaining residents; attracting new residents including working professionals and tourism; and economic growth.
- Consider major investments in parks and recreation services to align with the Municipality's corporate priorities, including developing an indoor sports facility with an indoor artificial turf field, indoor walking track and other amenities. An outdoor pool should also be considered. High-level costs reflective of surrounding municipalities should be identified to support future decision making.
- The long-term replacement of the Morrisburg Arena should be considered.
- The Municipality should evaluate the feasibility and public support for a splash pad and off-leash dog park at Iroquois, beyond the Iroquois Commons Waterfront Park or at alternative locations in Iroquois. These initiatives should be community-lead projects, similar to what was done in Morrisburg.
- The Municipality should work with all community groups to ensure that they are successful over the long-term.

A final Council presentation was held in early Fall 2022 to seek approval of the Master Plan as a guiding document.

6.0 Parkland Overview

6.1 Parkland Classification

A parkland classification system defines the function, permitted uses, catchment area and size of each type of park. While the Municipality does not currently have a parkland classification system, it is viewed as highly beneficial in guiding the planning and development of current and future parks to ensure that they function appropriately, respond to the needs of the community and are compatible with adjacent land uses. Formalizing a parkland classification system also allows the public to understand what they may expect to see at different types of parks. It is recommended that South Dundas adopt a three parkland types – Community Parks, Neighbourhood Parks and Local Parks. The following is a summary of each of these park types based on general best practices and research in other municipalities, as well as the parks that currently exist in South Dundas.

Community Parks serve the widest number of residents as well as regional visitors and as a result, a broad range of recreation facilities are found at these locations. Active recreation facilities found within Community Parks include (but are not limited to) lit and unlit sports fields, splash pads, playgrounds, hard surface courts, and other specialized facilities. Supporting park features include on-site parking, trails, washrooms, covered shelters and more. As Community Parks serve a wide range of users, they are commonly used for outdoor special events and festivals, and may feature arts and cultural installations or monuments. Naturalized open space and woodlots may also be found at Community Parks. Additionally, Community Parks may be located with indoor public facilities or schools and they tend to be “drive to” parks, although they may feature major trail connections.

South Dundas has a number of Community Parks such as Earl Baker Park, Haldane Park, Iroquois Beach, Matilda Memorial Park, and Morrisburg Waterfront Park. These parks feature many of the characteristics that are reflective of Community Parks. The Master Plan recommends enhancements to the Municipality’s Community Parks with new facilities including, but not limited to, splash pads, skate parks, sand volleyball courts, playgrounds, trail development and more.

Neighbourhood Parks serve residents within walking distance of a neighbourhood. Generally speaking, Neighbourhood Parks may have unlit sports fields, playgrounds and hard surface courts and amenities such as pathways, covered shelters, seating and open space. Neighbourhood Parks are important public meeting spaces and thus they should be located in visible areas and connected with broader trail and sidewalk systems. As a general best practice, Neighbourhood Parks should be a minimum of 0.8 hectares to support the suggested facilities and amenities that are typically found within these parks.

Examples of Neighbourhood Parks in South Dundas include Render Park and Winchester Springs Park. The Master Plan identifies recommendations to enhance the Municipality’s Neighbourhood Parks to align with what is typically found at these locations and to respond to community needs including, but not limited to, playground renewal (including incorporating accessibility features), outdoor fitness equipment, multi-use courts for basketball and ball hockey, trails, comfort features, signage and more.



Local Parks support a limited range of features such as playgrounds, trails, arts and cultural installations, and comfort amenities including seating, landscaping, and other features that support spontaneous gatherings and rest areas. These small parks are generally not less than 0.5 hectares and should be visibly located in neighbourhoods where residents can access them by walking along trails and sidewalks.

Bayview Park, Bridlewood Park, Meadowbrook Park, and Steward Drive Park are examples of Local Parks in South Dundas. A playground with supporting seating is generally the only feature found in the Municipality's Local Parks, although this is common given that these parks are not designed to support intensive use. The Master Plan recommends enhancements to these locations to encourage more frequent and casual use such as playground renewal, pathway development, comfort features (e.g., seating), incorporating environmental sustainability features such as creating pollinator gardens and native species plantings, and more.

A summary of the recommend parkland classification system for South Dundas is contained in Table 4. The Municipality should refer to this table to guide the planning of new, and redevelopment of existing, parks during the planning period.

Recommendations – Parkland Classification

1. The **parkland classification** system to include Community Parks, Neighbourhood Parks and Local Parks, as contained in the Parks & Recreation Master Plan, should be used to guide the development and redevelopment of active parkland according to park type, form, function, size, and the features and amenities that they provide.



Table 4: Recommended Parkland Classification System

Park Classification	Description
Community Parks Examples: Earl Baker Park, Haldane Park, Iroquois Beach, Matilda Memorial Park, Morrisburg Waterfront Park	Community parks serve residents and the broader regional population. Community Parks are designed for a broad range of recreation activities and may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active recreation facilities such as lit and unlit sports fields, splash pads, playgrounds, hard surface courts, outdoor skating rinks, and other specialized facilities. • Offer supporting amenities to meet community needs such as on-site parking, trails, washrooms and change rooms, covered shelters, utilities and other comfort features. • Arts and cultural features, including open space for special events and festivals. • May contain naturalized areas and woodlots. • Vary in size depending on the nature and extent of the facilities being provided and the purpose of the park. • Be ideally located with an indoor community facility, along a major road and accessible by active transportation.
Neighbourhood Parks Examples: Render Park, Winchester Springs Park	Neighbourhood Parks serve residents within walking distance of a neighbourhood. Neighbourhood Parks are designed with the following in mind: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active recreation facilities such as an unlit sports field, playgrounds and hard surface courts. • Features supporting amenities to meet neighbourhood needs such as trails, covered shelter and seating. • May contain naturalized areas and open space. • Should not be less than 0.8 hectares. • Located in a visible area of the neighbourhood and accessible by active transportation.
Local Parks Examples: Bayview Park, Bridlewood Park, Meadowbrook Park, Steward Drive Park	Local Parks support spontaneous gatherings and rest areas. Local Parks are designed to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A limited range of features, including a playground, trails, and arts and cultural features, seating, covered shelter, landscaping, and other features that support informal public gatherings. • Should generally not be less than 0.5 hectares.

6.2 South Dundas Parkland

South Dundas offers a range of parks that showcases the Municipality's natural beauty and plays a key role in supporting physical activity, outdoor enjoyment and connecting with nature.

Parkland is commonly identified as one of the most valued aspects of a community and studies have shown that access to a well-designed park system provides a wealth of social, environmental, health, and economic benefits, and has the potential to bring people together.

South Dundas owns approximately 78.6 hectares of parkland across the Municipality. This includes lands suitable for active outdoor recreation pursuits such as sports fields and playgrounds, as well as passive open spaces for unstructured activities and social gatherings. The Municipality's parks system also serves important cultural purposes as some are used as outdoor venues for special events.

Based on a current population estimate (11,044 residents), the Municipality is achieving a strong parkland service level, amounting 7.1 hectares per 1,000 residents. A summary of parkland is contained in Table 5 and the geographic distribution is illustrated in Figure 12.

The Municipality's parks system is complemented by natural heritage features that are owned by other agencies. Key non-municipal parks in South Dundas include the following:

The **Two Creeks Forest Conservation Area** offers nine types of ecosystems within the 185 hectare property. Each ecosystem is identified through interpretive signage along a 3.9 kilometre trail for hiking, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing and dog walking. Other common activities permitted include geocaching and picnicking.

Robert Graham Trail Conservation Area is 16 kilometres north of Iroquois. Located along the western boundary of South Dundas, Robert Graham Trail Conservation Area has approximately 57 hectares of outdoor space for people to connect with nature and enjoy native plants and animals. In addition to a 4.2 kilometre trail for hiking, dog walking and winter activities (e.g., snowshoeing and cross-country skiing), this location is used for birdwatching, photography, picnicking and other similar uses.

Located approximately five kilometres east of Morrisburg, **Dupont Provincial Park** is a nature reserve with over 600 hectares of natural heritage features, including habitats and diverse species. According to the 2009 Park Management Plan, Dupont Provincial Park protects and preserves the natural and cultural heritage. Dupont Provincial Park is a non-operating park that is not staffed or maintained. Recreational opportunities are limited to pedestrian trail use. During the winter season, trails are known to be used for snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, and snowmobiling.

Active Parkland and Natural Areas

Active parkland refers to Municipally-owned lands that are suitable for the development or installation of built recreational amenities (such as sports fields, playgrounds, courts, etc.) and may be used for both organized and unorganized activities, although these parks may also incorporate open space and natural features. Active parkland is the focus of parkland dedication under the Planning Act.

Natural areas and **open spaces** refer to sites with no to low development potential and are primarily designated for purposes such as provincially significant wetlands, environmentally significant and sensitive natural areas, watercourses and floodplains. Due to their important ecological functions and the lack of development potential of these lands, they primarily facilitate passive recreation activities only.

Table 5: Summary of Parkland Supply

Park Name	Area (ha)
Morrisburg	
Coyle Drive Park	0.1
Duncan Park	0.7
Earl Baker Park	7.1
Locke Park	0.3
Morrisburg Dog Park	0.4
Morrisburg Waterfront Park	10.4
Orchard Park	0.5
Steward Drive Park	0.2
Iroquois	
Bridlewood Park	0.1
Carman-Galop Park	0.04
Elizabeth Drive Park	1.6
Galop Canal Marina	1.0
Haldane Park	5.4
Iroquois Beach	1.8
Iroquois Greenbelt/Waterfront	28.1
Iroquois Campground	1.0
Meadowbrook Park	0.1
Render Park	0.7
South Dundas Soccer Fields	2.6
West End Terrace Park	0.06
Rural Settlement Areas	
Bayview Park	0.3
Dunbar Park	0.4
Glen Stewart Park	0.2
J.C. Whitteker Park	9.2
Loyalist Park	0.5
Matilda Memorial Park	2.8
McIntosh Park	0.7
Riverside Heights Park	1.6
Winchester Springs Park	0.8
Total	78.6



6.3 Parkland Needs

Municipalities often provide active parkland based on historical provision and acquisitions. In general, typical parkland provision targets a range between 2.0 and 3.0 hectares per 1,000 residents. This consists of land suitable for the development of recreation amenities such as sports fields, playgrounds, courts, and other features that can be used for organized or unorganized activities. It was previously noted that the Municipality is providing a strong parkland service level at 7.1 hectares per 1,000 residents, although this includes large swaths of open space area including the Iroquois Greenbelt and specialized facilities including the Iroquois Campground and Galop Canal Marina. Removing these outdoor spaces from the Municipality's supply to focus on active parkland results in an adjusted service level of 4.4 hectares per 1,000 residents, which should be maintained over the planning period. While it is recognized that it is on the higher end of the service level spectrum, it ensures that the Municipality is able to meet the parkland needs for future residents.

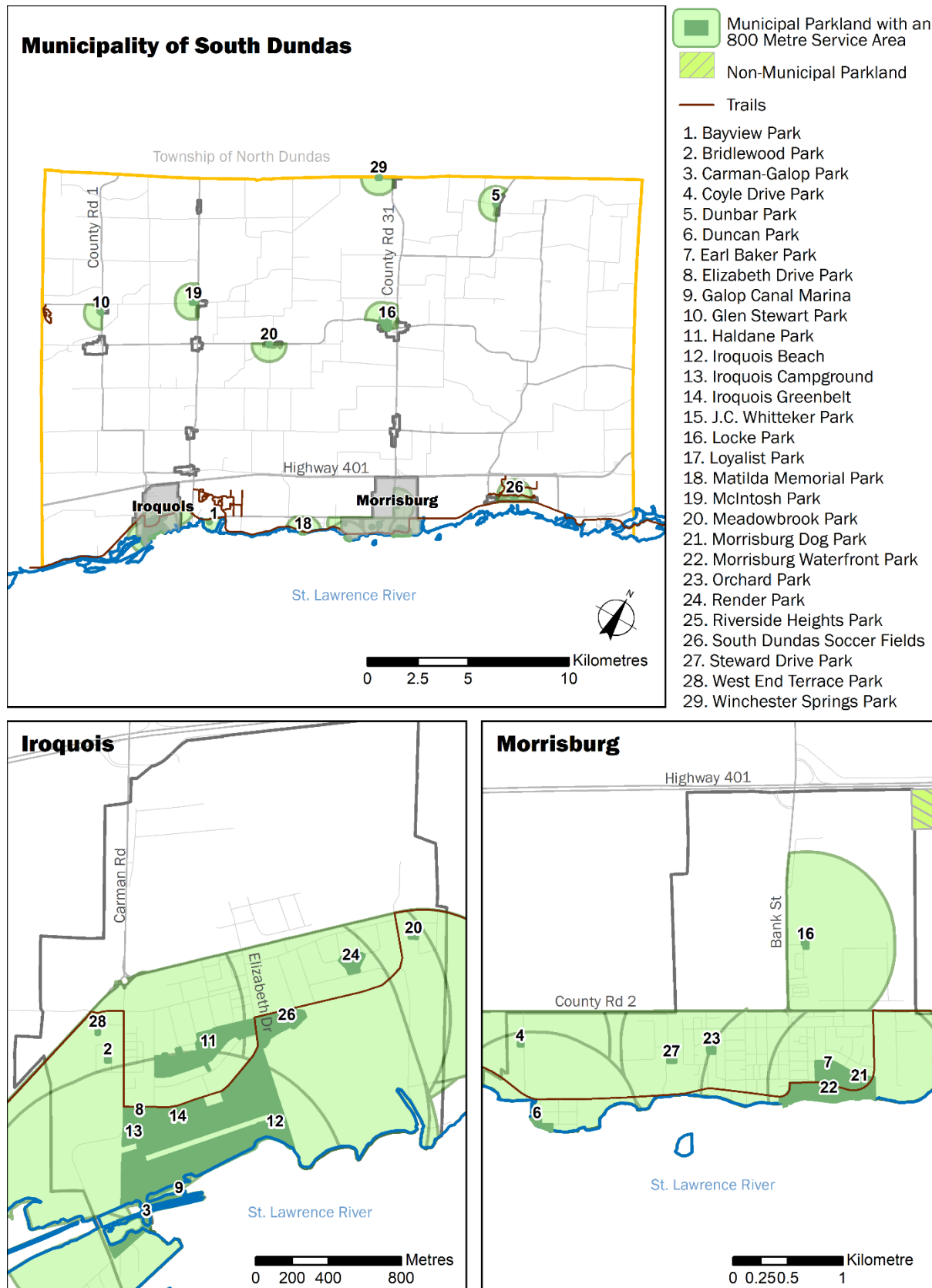
Applying the current parkland service level to the Municipality's projected population (11,700 residents) suggests that South Dundas would require approximately 3.1 hectares to satisfy needs. While there is a residential development under construction on the west side of Morrisburg, parkland dedication was not a part of this approval process. There are no other known land development projects at this time where the Municipality would be receiving land for park purposes. The Municipality would be required to achieve the required amount of new parkland through future parkland dedication processes or by other land acquisition strategies (see Section 6.4) as a long-term goal.

To understand where new active parks should be provided, a distributional analysis was undertaken by applying an 800-metre service area to each park, which equates to a five to 10 minute walk within urban settlement areas, unobstructed by physical barriers such as major roads and waterbodies. This analysis revealed that there is a strong distribution of parkland in Morrisburg and Iroquois. However, it is known that many of the Municipality's parks are small, which may not meet all the needs of residents in emerging areas, particularly on the west side of Morrisburg where the residential development is currently under construction. Recognizing that the Municipality is expected to attract new residents from more urban municipalities, it can be expected that they will have high expectations for quality parks and may have a variety of needs that may not be accommodated within the existing park supply. Another gap is located on the north side of County Road 2 in Iroquois which is currently undeveloped but designated as residential lands. Future parks should be directed to the Municipality's growing residential areas.

Recommendations – Parkland Needs

2. Acquire 3.1 hectares of active parkland to maintain the current service level of **4.4 hectares per 1,000 residents**. Although this is a high level of service, it acknowledges that additional parkland will be required to address needs for future residential areas that are not in proximity to parkland that supports meaningful experiences.

Figure 12: Distribution of Parkland



6.4 Park Policy & Acquisition

There are a number of key provincial regulations, policies and guidelines governing the acquisition and development of parkland. The Planning Act establishes a framework for the dedication of parkland and potential alternatives. Section 42 of the Planning Act allows approval authorities to require up to 2% of commercial or industrial land, or 5% of residential land or 1 hectare per 300 units, may be conveyed to the Municipality for parkland or other public recreational purposes. Where parkland already exists, or where it is not feasible to receive parkland as a part of development, cash-in-lieu of parkland is permitted. Funds should be used towards the acquisition or development of parks or public recreation.

In 2020, the Province passed Bill 197 (More Homes, More Choices Act) that included provisions relating to a Community Benefits Charge for medium to high density development. An alternative cash-in-lieu rate of one hectare per 500 dwelling units was also introduced, with this Master Plan serving as the parks plan requirement under the Planning Act. In 2022, Bill 109 (More Homes For Everyone Act) received Royal Assent that identified further changes to the Planning Act regarding parkland dedication, although these changes primarily impact parkland dedication within transit-oriented communities to provide a greater level of certainty for parkland requirements. These recent changes to the Planning Act are unlikely to apply to the South Dundas context.

While these recent changes to the Planning Act are unlikely to apply to South Dundas' context, maximizing parkland dedication is encouraged, particularly to address park needs in new residential areas. Through this process, consideration should be given to the parkland classification system recommended in this Master Plan (see Table 4).

The Municipality should also establish site criteria to ensure that parks are located in appropriate areas, and are sized appropriately for development. For example, the Municipality currently has Local Parks that are generally undersized to support meaningful park experiences. As a best practice, the Municipality should avoid developing park parcels smaller than 0.5 hectares, unless there is a need to reconcile a gap area or if it is being used to expand an adjacent park. Other site requirements that should be considered include street frontage, proximity to existing parks and recreation facilities, potential locations with opportunities for expansion, and other criteria to be determined by the Municipality to maximize visibility within the community.

Recognizing that the development process may not provide sufficient active parkland to meet its long-term requirements, a full range of methods for acquiring land for active park purposes will need to be used. In addition to the parkland conveyance and cash-in-lieu tools permitted by the Planning Act, other methods for securing parkland include:

- Land purchase;
- Donation or bequest;
- Expropriation;
- Land lease or public access agreements;
- Land exchanges or swaps, as well as off-site conveyance of parkland;
- Reallocating surplus municipal lands for park use; and/or
- Partnerships with local partners to provide parkland.

Recommendations – Parkland Policy & Acquisition

3. Establish **criteria for accepting suitable land for developing active parkland** including street frontage, proximity to existing parks and recreation facilities, opportunities for future expansion, grading, drainage, and other site conditions.
4. Parkland **conveyance tools** contained in the Planning Act should be complemented by a range of land acquisition tools to maximize public access to parkland and natural areas (e.g., land purchase/lease, land exchanges, partnerships, donations, etc.).
5. The dedication or acquisition of land for park purposes **less than 0.5 hectares** should be discouraged, unless it is necessary to reconcile gap areas or to expand an existing park.

6.5 South Dundas Waterfront & Beaches

The South Dundas waterfront is one of the Municipality's most treasured assets and is an important part of the parks system and stimulator of economic activity. The Municipality maintains two waterfront properties, which are known as the Iroquois Waterfront and the Morrisburg Waterfront. Both locations offer a beach, boat launches, vast greenspaces, outdoor recreation amenities, trails, and more. The Iroquois Waterfront also offers camping and a marina. Additionally, the Municipality offers its outdoor swimming programs along the waterfront in designated locations at the beach. Aquatic groups also use the St. Lawrence River, including the St. Lawrence Rowing Club and the Abucs Scuba Diving Centre. The Municipality's two waterfronts are popular warm weather destinations for residents and tourists who participate in these active and passive recreation pursuits, as well as enjoy the waterfront and watch ships pass through the Iroquois Locks along the St. Lawrence River.

The Municipality recognizes the importance of its waterfront properties and has taken steps to invest in these key assets to create high quality experiences. The development of these locations is guided by the Morrisburg Waterfront Plan (2013) and the Iroquois Commons Waterfront Plan (2015), both of which are spearheaded by separate Committees of Council. These plans establish a long-term vision for each waterfront and create unique public spaces that also recognize the natural and cultural heritage of Morrisburg and Iroquois.

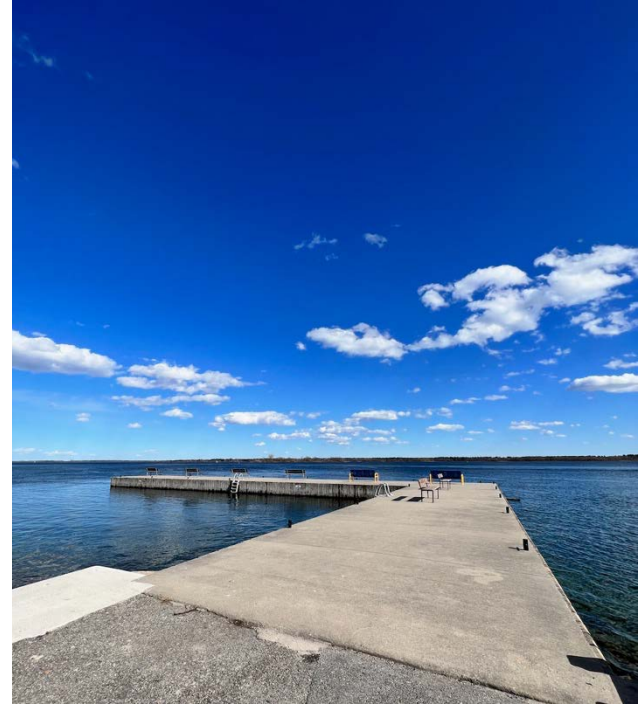


6.5.1 Morrisburg Waterfront

The Morrisburg Waterfront Plan was designed to create a destination for active recreation together with passive open space for outdoor and waterfront enjoyment (Figure 13). Notable components of the Morrisburg Waterfront Plan include:

- Waterfront Promenade spanning the length of the waterfront;
- Multi-use building;
- Enhanced boat launch with parking;
- Consolidation of sports fields to one ball diamond and one soccer field;
- Connected pedestrian pathway throughout the park; and
- Open greenspaces and event activity areas.

Construction is underway to install pathway lighting between the beach to the ball diamonds.



6.5.2 Iroquois Waterfront

Described as Iroquois Commons Waterfront Park, the design concept sought to marry the community's connection to the past as a village shipping port along St. Lawrence River with modern parks and recreation needs that residents and visitors desire (Figure 14). Key design features proposed in the concept plan include:

- Expansion to Iroquois Beach to accommodate additional users and supporting amenities;
- Update the existing concrete structure to create a beach pavilion for concessions and washrooms;
- Construction of a Waterfront Promenade consisting of multi-use pathways connecting the marina and the beach;
- Development of the Commemorative Meadows to recognize the village's historical roots through native plantings and interpretive signage;
- Establishment of a Heritage Centre, including a new Visitor Arrival and Interpretive Centre and improvements to the Carman House Museum;
- Enhancements to the Iroquois Campground (including reconfiguration) improved facilities for the Carman House Museum, campground, Lawn Bowling Club and tennis courts; and
- Improvements to the Galop Canal Marina.

The Iroquois Waterfront Advisory Committee has made a number of budget requests to Council for a number of improvements to take place in the short-term. Such projects include amenities (e.g., seating and signage), beautification projects and a study to evaluate the feasibility of a disc golf course.



The Morrisburg Waterfront Plan and the Iroquois Commons Waterfront Park Plan provide the Municipality with a long-term vision for these two areas, which function as vital community assets for gatherings among residents and visitors. By the end of the planning period, these waterfront plans will be more than 15 years old and by this time the Municipality will have experienced several changes in population and preferences and priorities for parks and recreation opportunities.

Input received through the consultation process reinforced the importance of the Municipality's waterfront areas. These areas were commonly identified as one of the Municipality's greatest natural assets that are enjoyed by residents and regional visitors. There is continued support for investment along the waterfront as the community survey found that 90% of respondents were in favour of additional support for waterfront improvements. Public input emphasized the need to preserve the strengths of the waterfront such as the open space for special events and the Iroquois Airport. Suggested improvements expressed by the community included developing a multi-use building, covered pavilion, storage space for user groups or the Lending Library, new recreation amenities (e.g., tennis courts, basketball courts, etc.), enhancements to pedestrian safety (particularly during the evenings), and more. A greater commercial presence was also suggested such as restaurants. Concerns were also raised regarding overcrowding of the waterfront and beach areas during the peak season, as well as parking, litter and need for greater by-law enforcement.

Many of the comments put forward through the consultation process have been addressed throughout the appropriate sections of the Master Plan. Recognizing the importance of the South Dundas waterfront areas, the Municipality should undertake an update to the two waterfront plans to establish a renewed vision. Emphasis should be placed on enhancing what currently works well along the waterfront and addressing emerging parks and recreation needs of the public. This process should consider and incorporate the recommendations contained in the Parks & Recreation Master Plan (identified below), as well as other enhancements to be determined through consultation with the Municipality's waterfront committees, community groups and service clubs, the public, and others. Emphasis should be placed on creating new and exciting ideas, including strategies to create multi-use opportunities to maximize use along the waterfront. The waterfront should also be a place for all ages of the community and thus it is important that members of the waterfront committees are reflective of this, particularly the youth community to ensure that their voices are also heard.

Key recommendations for updating the Morrisburg Waterfront Plan:

- Evaluate the feasibility of establishing indoor space for community programs and gatherings, as well as tourism activities (e.g., vendor space for a restaurant/patio). The indoor facility should also consider storage space to support outdoor programming and opportunities to relocate the Lending Library from the Morrisburg Arena.
- A full-size soccer field is not required to meet needs while a minimum of two ball diamonds should be provided, although the Municipality should monitor soccer field use by tracking participation data and usage schedules.
- Establish a multi-use pad at Earl Baker Park for basketball, ball hockey, tennis, pickleball and outdoor skating. Once this has been established, remove the basketball posts in the parking lot at the Morrisburg Waterfront.
- Reintroduce sand volleyball courts and adding a second sand volleyball court.
- Identify strategic locations for outdoor fitness equipment, potential locations for water activities such as scuba diving, signage, trails, comfort features and other supporting amenities.
- Strengthen opportunities for cultural activities and special events that supports tourism, including enhancing the use of the amphitheatre.

Key recommendations for updating the Iroquois Commons Waterfront Park:

- Continue with the Galop Canal Marina and Iroquois Campground Operations Plan including noted enhancements on the basis of maintaining a break-even operating model.
- Evaluate the feasibility and public support for a splash pad and off-leash dog park at Iroquois Commons Waterfront Park or if alternative locations in Iroquois should be considered. These projects should be community-led projects similar to what was done in Morrisburg.
- Evaluate the feasibility of establishing a natural/adventure playground that incorporates the use of wood, stones, boulders, ropes and landscaping, as well as a potential beach theme.
- Continue to support the Iroquois Waterfront Committee to potentially establish a disc golf course.
- Identify strategic locations for outdoor fitness equipment, potential locations for water activities such as scuba diving, signage, trails, comfort features and other supporting amenities.

Recommendations – South Dundas Waterfront & Beaches

6. Undertake **updates to the Morrisburg Waterfront Plan and the Iroquois Commons Waterfront Park Plan** to establish a renewed waterfront vision for South Dundas. Consideration should be given to preserving and enhancing what currently works well and addressing the relevant recommendations identified in the Parks & Recreation Master Plan. Emphasis should be placed on creating new and exciting ideas and strategies to become more multi-use. Additional consultation with the Municipality's waterfront committees, community groups and service clubs, the public and others is recommended to inform this process.
7. Review Morrisburg Waterfront and Iroquois Waterfront Committees to ensure that members are representative of key segments of the community, particularly for **youth to ensure that their voices are heard** in the decision-making process.



Figure 13: Morrisburg Waterfront Plan



Figure 14: Iroquois Commons Waterfront Plan



6.6 South Dundas Galop Canal Marina

The Galop Canal Marina is an important historical feature in Iroquois, which has provided watercraft services since 1844. Operated by the Municipality, the marina offers seasonal, transient, monthly and daily slips for up to 50 boats (depending upon the size). Services available at the marina include gas, pump outs, water, electricity, washrooms, bait and tackle, ice, picnic areas, and a covered pavilion.

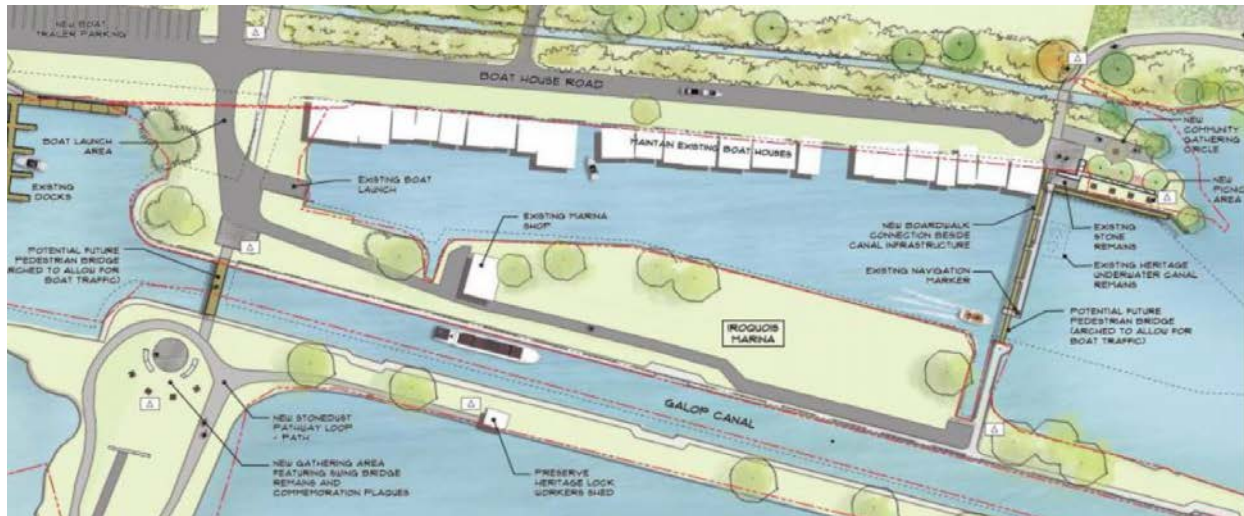
The marina is recognized in the Iroquois Commons Waterfront Plan as a key feature along the St. Lawrence River and identifies various improvements to increase boating, fishing, picnicking and related activities, which are highlighted in the Municipality's Operating Plan. Short-term improvements identified in the Municipality's Operating Plan include repairing/replacing the boat ramp (completed), guard rail replacement, electrical upgrades, improved amenities (e.g., picnic tables), and bathroom and office renovations. Future improvements include:

- Establishing trail to connect existing heritage and recreational elements to improve connectivity within the area.
- Install interpretive and wayfinding signage to promote education about the historical significance of the local village.
- Promoting the marina as a location for boating, fishing, and picnicking activities to increase community interaction with the waterfront, including through online mediums and tourism outlets.
- Parking and servicing enhancements.

The Galop Canal Marina is a unique amenity in South Dundas that offers local residents with boating activities and draws visitors and tourists to the Municipality. According to the Galop Canal Marina Operations Plan, the marina is projected to generate between \$81,000 and \$84,000 in total revenue per year between 2021 and 2026. Operating costs are estimated to be between \$82,000 and \$84,000 per year. As a result, the marina is anticipated to be a net neutral service provided by the Municipality. Recognizing that the Operations Plan was recently completed by the Municipality, no new recommendations have been identified, particularly given that identified marina improvements are consistent with broader directions contained in this Master Plan such as strengthening trail connections and erecting signage. An emphasis should be placed on continuing to maintain the marina on a break-even operating model over the long-term.



Figure 15: Excerpt of Galop Canal Marina Operations Plan



Recommendations – South Dundas Galop Canal Marina

8. Continue to **implement the Galop Canal Marina Operations Plan** on the basis of maintaining a break-even operating model.

6.7 Recreational Trails

The majority of residents drive to work and so South Dundas' trails are primarily used for recreational purposes. The Municipality provides approximately 3.4 kilometres of trails in South Dundas that supports active movement such as walking and cycling. The trail system includes 1.1 kilometres along the Morrisburg Waterfront and 2.3 kilometres along the Iroquois Waterfront. The Municipality resurfaced the Iroquois waterfront pathway in 2019 (funded in part by a grant through the Ontario Trillium Foundation) and the Morrisburg Waterfront pathway in 2021, which included surface widening completed with funding received through the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program. The Municipality's trail system is also complemented by a comprehensive sidewalk system and pedestrian linkages within South Dundas' urban areas.

South Dundas is also home to a segment of the Great Lakes Waterfront Trail that extends over 3,600 kilometres and 155 communities and First Nations along the Canadian Great Lakes. The South Dundas portion consists of a 30 kilometre on-road cycling route along the St. Lawrence River.



Other trail systems are also located in South Dundas, which are owned and maintained by other agencies, including:

- Dupont Provincial Park (distance unknown)
- Two Creeks Forest Conservation Area (3.9 kilometres)
- Robert Graham Trail Conservation Area (4.2 kilometres)
- St. Lawrence Parks Sugar Bush (2.9 kilometres)

Trail development is supported at the County level. The United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Official Plan, which addresses matters related to land use planning in South Dundas, emphasizes the development of a connected trails system that connects parks, facilities and community services (Section 4.3.2.5). Section 4.3.6.9 of the Official Plan also recognizes that active transportation opportunities offer environmental, social, health and economic benefits and should be encouraged through working together with local municipalities, as well as other landowners and agencies. The County encourages local municipalities to prepare a Trails Master Plan and support the development of sidewalks and walkways within residential neighbourhoods, as well as to strengthen linkages to parks, open spaces, commercial areas, and public facilities. The County also supports the development of recreational trails within County forests.



The Parks & Recreation Master Plan consultation process revealed that trails are highly valued in South Dundas. The community survey found that walking and hiking was the most popular activity among respondents and 92% of respondents support additional funding for trail improvements or development, which was also identified as the highest priority among all other parks and recreation facilities. Public input that was received also expressed the desire to strengthen linkages throughout the Municipality, noting that there are existing trails located in the rural area. Opportunities to work with others to develop new trails was also suggested, such as within Dupont Provincial Park. A public suggestion was also put forward for trails that support all terrain vehicles; however, as a best practice, municipalities such as South Dundas provide recreational trails for active transportation (e.g., walking and cycling).

Walking and cycling trails are commonly identified as one of the most desirable features in a community, lending support for the Municipality's past and planned investments in the trails network. A strong trails system provides countless environmental benefits, promotes physical activity, connects people to nature, enables unstructured and affordable recreation opportunities, and contributes to the development of a sustainable transportation system. Research has also found that trails heighten community vibrancy by encouraging the development of walkable neighbourhoods where people are more likely to socialize and interact with each other. Through these benefits, South Dundas' trails contribute to an improved quality of life for its residents.

Continuing to improve active transportation infrastructure has been an important initiative for the Municipality, which is demonstrated through recent trail improvements along the waterfront; additional trail development and lighting projects are planned to take place during the short-term.

At a conceptual level, the Master Plan investigated potential trail routes and linkages to support the existing network, particularly within Morrisburg and Iroquois. Consideration was given to underutilized open spaces, connecting users with key destinations (e.g., waterfront, community facilities, parks, main streets, etc.), and developing linkages through future residential areas. A conceptual trail network developed for this Master Plan is intended to be used as a starting point to identify new trail opportunities that should be explored as opportunities become available over the planning period and beyond (Figure 16).

The key to the continued development of an effective and robust trail network will be to ensure that safe, accessible and convenient linkages exist between users and key destinations. The Municipality provides strong linkages along its waterfront and to the Great Lakes Waterfront Trail. Additional trail development is also identified through the Iroquois and Morrisburg waterfront plans. Emphasis should be placed on strengthening linkages within Iroquois and Morrisburg, particularly to connect residents to the waterfront.

As future residential development occurs in Morrisburg and Iroquois, the Municipality should investigate recreational trail development, sidewalks and pedestrian linkages to support active transportation modes, which is consistent with County Official Plan policies. While trail development in established urban areas is often a challenge, emphasis should be placed on ensuring that there are walking pathways within parks to provide accessible circulation areas and linkages to internal amenities (e.g., playgrounds, multi-use sports pads, etc.). Other trail design features and comfort amenities should also be considered in appropriate areas including (but not limited to) wayfinding signage, seating and shaded areas.

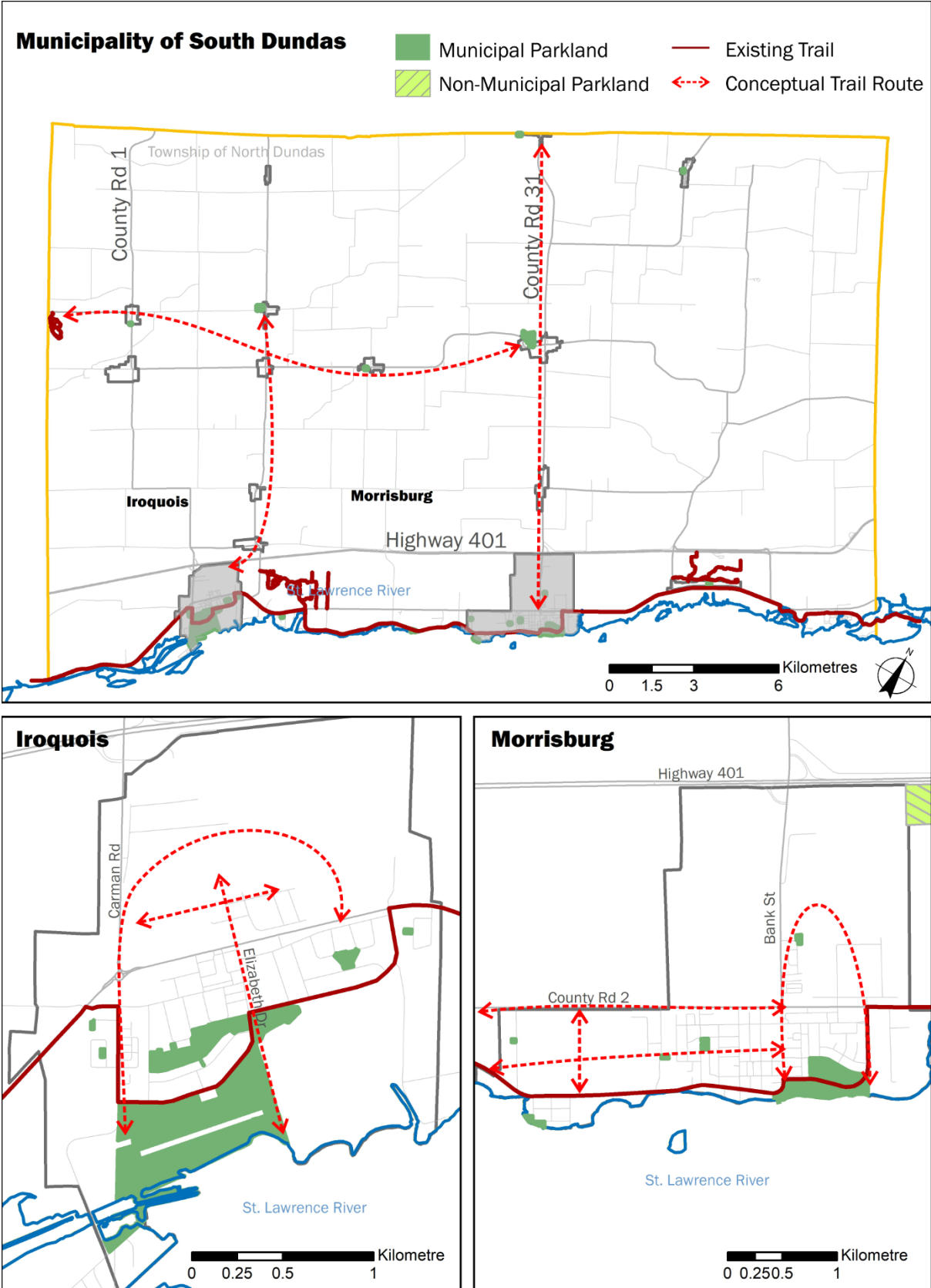


Long-term strategies to establish safe connections to the rural areas and settlement areas should also be explored. This will involve coordination with the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry to establish safe routes along County roads. Additionally, working with others to maintain public access to non-municipal trails is encouraged.

Promoting the use of trails in South Dundas is strongly supported by the Master Plan to encourage outdoor physical activities and attract families, which is consistent with the Municipality's Charter for Active Living and Community Strategic Plan. Promotional initiatives that should be considered include publishing an online map of trails in the Municipality, as well as through a mobile application. Other potential opportunities include erecting wayfinding signage within the community such as at key trailheads and along the waterfront, and more.

The Municipality would benefit from the creation of an Active Transportation Strategy to create a vision for active transportation in South Dundas. This strategy would further develop the trail initiatives recommended in the Parks & Recreation Master Plan, including detailed routing of the conceptual network, partnership opportunities, design guidelines, policy development, costs, and other details.

Figure 16: Conceptual Recreational Trail Network



Recommendations – Recreational Trails

9. Develop an **Active Transportation Strategy** to establish a long-term vision (2031+) for trail development to support non-motorized movement in South Dundas. This strategy should have regard for planned trail development initiatives and the conceptual trail network contained in this Master Plan with consideration given to the following:
 - a) Strengthen linkages in the Municipality to draw residents to the waterfront, especially in Morrisburg and Iroquois;
 - b) Establish pedestrian circulation areas within existing parks (e.g., pathways to outdoor recreation amenities, pavilions, etc.);
 - c) Identify active transportation routes within future residential areas as permitted by the Official Plan;
 - d) As a long-term strategy (e.g., 2031+), enhance connections to the rural area, non-Municipal trail systems in South Dundas and adjacent municipalities, including working with landowners to maintain or establish public access; and
 - e) Either alone or in partnership with others (e.g., United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry, South Nation Conservation Authority, etc.), establish new trail connections, promote active transportation opportunities including publishing trail routes (e.g., online or print map, mobile application), erect wayfinding signage, and other strategies to encourage active transportation in South Dundas.



6.8 Parks and Trails Design Guidelines

South Dundas' outdoor system must continually evolve to respond to changing community interests, participation preferences and priorities. Outdoor public spaces that support organized and unstructured uses need to evoke thoughtful design to encourage and maximize use from sports, using the beach and attending community events to simply meeting with friends and family. Well-designed parks and trails that are accessible and offer supporting amenities can also heighten physical activity levels and active transportation traffic, while reducing vehicular movement and parking pressures in high traffic areas, such as along the Municipality's waterfront areas. The Municipality should consider the following industry best practices in designing future parks, open spaces, trails and waterfronts to create more inviting outdoor public spaces.

6.8.1 Accessible Outdoor Spaces

Designing outdoor public spaces such as parks, trails and the waterfront to be accessible is an importance objective to fully realize their potential and encourage use. These areas are considered to be a place for all residents and visitors, emphasizing the need to provide access for persons of all ages, abilities, orientation and background. It is recognized that not all outdoor public spaces are appropriate for universally accessible infrastructure such as ecologically sensitive or naturalized areas, or locations with challenging terrain; however, every effort must be taken by the Municipality to ensure that community focused spaces are accessible to all, in keeping with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

The Municipality has been proactive in undertaking various accessibility improvements to both indoor and outdoor public spaces to remove physical barriers. Some of these projects are identified in the Municipality's 2020 – 2025 Accessibility Plan, including the development and refurbishment of sidewalks and pedestrian crossovers, paving key trail routes such as along the waterfront, updating park washroom buildings, and enhancing playgrounds with an entry ramp and replacing the sand base with engineered wood fibre mulch to accommodate persons with disabilities. The Municipality is currently in the planning stages of undertaking a facelift to the Morrisburg Arena, which will included making the building more accessible for persons with disabilities.

While future projects are also planned to pave additional trail sections and add pathway lighting along the waterfront, the Municipality should evaluate opportunities to ensure that its parks are accessible to users, such as establishing walkways connecting to outdoor amenities, such as playgrounds, multi-use sports pads, pavilions, and other outdoor features.

Recommendations – Accessible Outdoor Spaces

10. Parks, open spaces, trails and waterfront areas should be designed in a manner that **considers universal accessibility** to minimize physical barriers for persons with disabilities, with consideration given to establishing designated pathways within parks that connect users to circulation areas and pathways. Consultation with the Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Accessibility Advisory Committee, persons with disabilities, and others should form part of the design of outdoor public spaces.

6.8.2 Environmental Sustainability

The protection and preservation of the environment is a key issue for many Ontarians. Locally, the Municipality recognizes the importance of this fact as the preservation of the natural environment is identified as a core value in the South Dundas Community Strategic Plan. The Municipality's commitment to reducing its environmental impact is highlighted through its Energy Conservation and Demand Management Plan, which seeks to reduce municipal energy consumption from facilities and streetlights by 5% between 2019 and 2024. The Plan identifies a number of initiatives to achieve this goal such as LED lighting retrofits, the use of energy efficient equipment and more.

As a best practice, municipalities have made efforts to design outdoor public space to be more environmentally-friendly and sustainable by reducing grass cutting in strategic locations, planting native species, establishing tree canopy targets, creating pollinator and community gardens, establishing programs to raise awareness and educate the public about local natural heritage features (e.g., outdoor classrooms, stewardship, interpretive signage, etc.) and strategies to be more resilient to climate change.

Opportunities to promote environmental sustainability within the Municipality should be explored in strategic locations. For example, reducing the level of maintenance in certain portions of the Municipality's parks should be considered in areas that are not used to support outdoor activities. This approach allows sections of parks to return to a naturalized state, while providing the Municipality with the ability to conserve vital resources that can be directed to other priority areas. For example, Coyle Drive Park, Glen Stewart Park, McIntosh Park, and Meadowbrook Park may be suitable candidates for naturalization due to various factors such as the fact that they exhibit a degree of underutilization, they are small in size, they are known locations for flooding that renders the parks or amenities unusable during certain periods, or there are other parks serving the same neighbourhood.

Recommendations – Environmental Sustainability

11. Alone or in partnership with other organizations and agencies, explore initiatives to be more **resilient to climate change and protect and enhance the natural environment**. Initiatives include establishing pollinator gardens, planting native species, setting tree canopy targets, establishing outdoor educational programs, strategically naturalizing parks and open space, and other strategies determined by the Municipality. Opportunities to implement these and other related initiatives include Coyle Drive Park, Glen Stewart Park, McIntosh Park, Steward Drive Park and Meadowbrook Park, although other locations may be identified and considered.

6.8.3 Designing for Comfort

Comfort amenities within the Municipality's outdoor public spaces can create more inviting areas for everyday users. As a best practice, well-designed parks that evoke a feeling of comfort tend to be used frequently. Comfort amenities that are typically desired by users include shade, lighting, pathways, picnic tables, seating, washrooms, and other features that attract people and encourage use. Comfort amenities are beneficial in all park types as well as in strategic locations such as along major trail routes and at trail heads. They are highly desired by all ages, but particularly families, older adults and seniors.

The Municipality has been incorporating comfort amenities within its outdoor public spaces to encourage greater use. Many of the parks in South Dundas feature shade, seating and lighting elements to create an inviting atmosphere to draw in users and encourage use, while washroom buildings are provided in strategic locations such as at community-level parks to support more intensive uses. The placement of additional park amenities should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis as consideration needs to be given to location, safety, partnerships, fundraising, and costs associated with construction, maintenance and replacement, among other factors.

Recommendations – Designing for Comfort

12. On a case-by-case basis, evaluate opportunities to **incorporate comfort features** within South Dundas' parks and trail system including, but not limited to, seating, shade, lighting, pathways, picnic tables, washrooms, lighting, and other amenities that attract people and encourage use.



6.8.4 Signage & Wayfinding

Signage is an essential public amenity that plays a vital role in communicating information such as the name of the public space, address, hours of operation, contact information and other key details. In South Dundas, a standard signage template is prominently displayed at some parks with this information, although it does not exist at all locations. Different signs also exist at some parks such as regulatory signs and memorial plaques. An inventory and review of park signage should be undertaken to ensure that the Municipality's corporate branding is applied consistently across all parks, as well as facilities.

As the Municipality continues to develop its recreational trail system, it will be important to establish wayfinding signage to assist trail users with movement throughout South Dundas, particularly as the Municipality tends to draw a large number of non-resident visitors to its waterfront area. Wayfinding information should include a map of municipal and non-municipal trails in South Dundas, trail names, distance, difficulty, location of key amenities and destinations, and other essential information. Ensuring that the Municipality's parks and trail sign designs and the information being conveyed is clear, concise, and consistent is important to promote awareness and create civic pride, while avoiding confusion.

Recommendations – Signage & Wayfinding

13. Undertake a **review of all Municipal park signage** to ensure that the corporate brand and the information being conveyed is clear, concise and consistently applied across South Dundas.
14. As the Municipality continues to develop its recreational trail system, **establish wayfinding signage** to raise awareness about trails and to encourage their use. Wayfinding information should include the trail route, distance, difficulty, location of amenities and key destinations in the community, and other important information. Wayfinding signage should be erected in prominent locations in South Dundas and published on the Municipality's website. Coordination with other Municipal sectors is encourage including Business & Development and Tourism.



6.8.5 Public Art & Heritage Features

Incorporating public art and heritage features in parks (and facilities) is a growing trend to recognize local heritage and artisans, as well as the organizations that are dedicated to promoting and preserving arts and culture. This includes selecting prominent or meaningful locations for public art installations, signage recognizing cultural heritage features, and the provision of permanent or temporary infrastructure to support special events, festivals and farmers' markets, including, but not limited to, stages, servicing (electricity, water, etc.), fencing, and more.

Examples of arts and heritage features are found in South Dundas, including historical signage along the Morrisburg and Iroquois Waterfronts. Large murals have also been erected across the South Dundas to highlight significant periods from the Municipality's past. New opportunities to incorporate public art and heritage features within the Municipality's spaces should be explored. Opportunities to collaborate with community organizations and the arts and cultural community on this initiative is encouraged.



Recommendations – Public Art & Heritage Features

15. Work with community organizations and the arts and culture community to identify opportunities to **incorporate public art and heritage features** in strategic locations within the Municipality's parks, trails (where applicable) and facilities such as cultural heritage signage, art installations and supporting infrastructure to support special events and festivals (e.g., electricity, water, etc.).



7.0 Recreation Facility Overview

7.1 Summary of Indoor & Outdoor Recreation Facilities

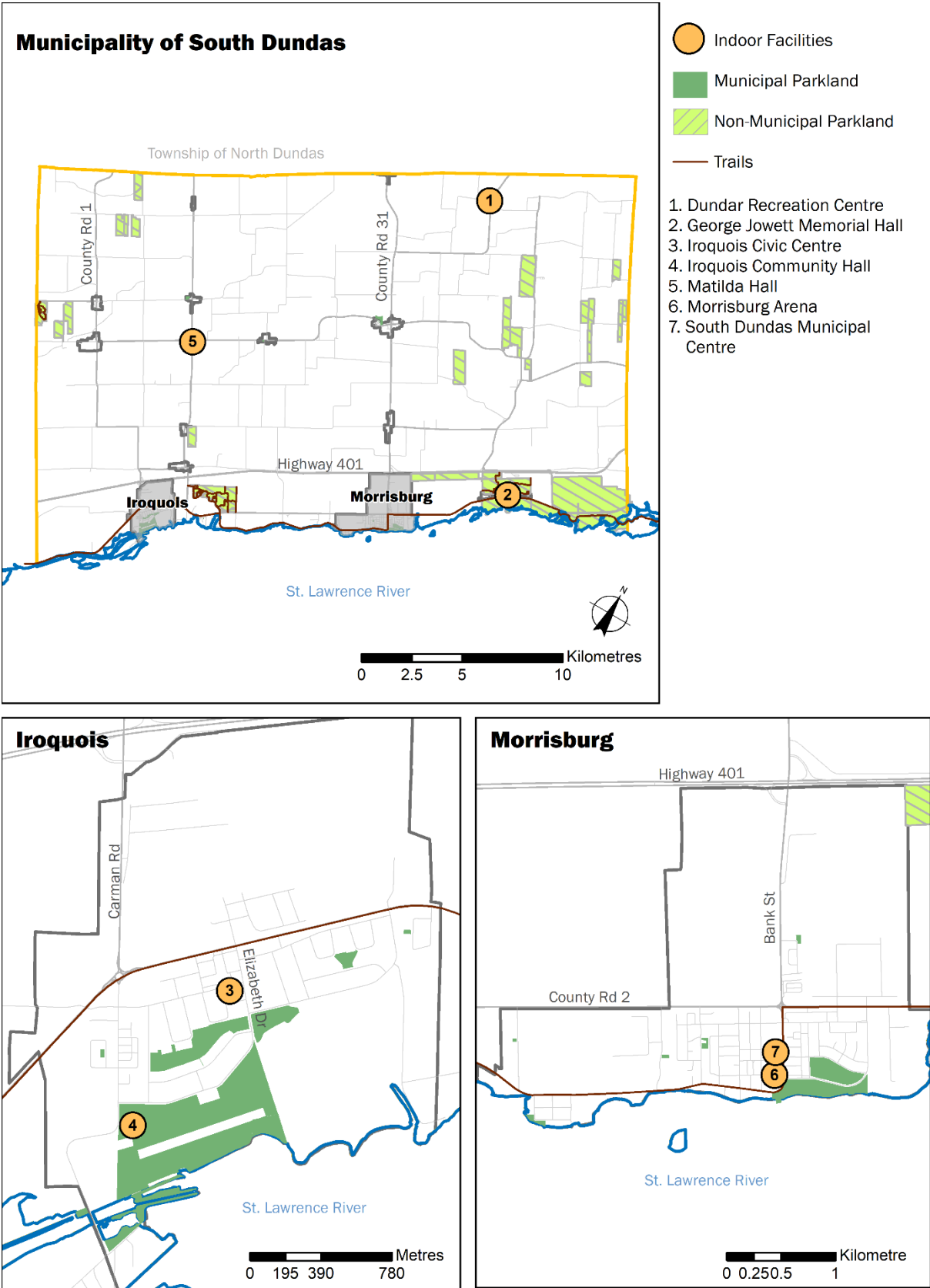
Table 6: Summary of Indoor & Outdoor Recreation Facilities

Facility Type	Supply	Locations
Arenas	1	Morrisburg Arena
Community Halls and Multi-Purpose Space	8	Dunbar Recreation Centre*, George Jowett Memorial Hall*, Iroquois Civic Centre (2), Iroquois Campground Building, Matilda Hall, South Dundas Municipal Centre
Soccer Fields	3	South Dundas Soccer Fields (1 full, 2 intermediate)
Ball Diamonds	9	Haldane Park (lit), J.C. Whitteker (1 lit, 2 unlit), Matilda Memorial Park (lit), Riverside Heights Park (lit), Morrisburg Waterfront Park (1 lit, 2 unlit)
Outdoor Aquatics	3	<u>Outdoor Swimming</u> : Iroquois Beach, Morrisburg Beach <u>Splash Pad</u> : Earl Baker Park
Outdoor Tennis & Pickleball Courts	8 locations	<u>Tennis Courts</u> : Elizabeth Drive Park (2 courts, also lined for 4 pickleball courts), J.C. Whitteker Park <u>Pickleball Courts</u> : J.C. Whitteker Park (2), Matilda Memorial Park (3)
Outdoor Basketball Courts	4	J.C. Whitteker Park, Morrisburg Waterfront Park, Matilda Memorial Park, Riverside Heights Park
Playgrounds	19 locations	See Figure 17
Off-Leash Dog Parks	1	Morrisburg Dog Park
Outdoor Skating Rinks	5	Earl Baker Park, Haldane Park, J.C. Whitteker Park, Matilda Memorial Park, Riverside Heights Park
Sand Volleyball Courts	5	Haldane Park (3), Iroquois Beach, Matilda Memorial Park
Camping	1	Iroquois Campground

*Dunbar Recreation Centre and George Jowett Memorial Hall are owned by the Municipality of South Dundas and are operated by independent recreation committees.

Note: Supply excludes facilities not owned by the Municipality of South Dundas.

Table 7: Summary of Indoor Recreation Facilities



7.2 Arenas

South Dundas operates one ice pad at the Morrisburg Arena, which is supported by six dressing rooms, seating for 600 spectators, concession, lobby and viewing area. The arena also includes two small meeting spaces that are used by community groups, and former pro shop that is currently being used for storage, and space leased to the Community Food Share. According to a 2016 building condition assessment, the arena was originally constructed in 1957 and an addition was made in the 1970s, which consisted of the lobby and viewing area. Since this period, the Morrisburg Arena has undergone renovations and upgrades including in 2000 to replace aging infrastructure and equipment and in 2017 to replace the concrete arena pad (funded in part by the Ontario Trillium Foundation).



Ice sports such as hockey and figure skating have long been considered a cornerstone of Canadian pastime activities. Recent data from Hockey Canada, however, indicates that participation in minor hockey is steadily declining. Hockey Canada reported that there were nearly 210,000 affiliated minor players in Ontario for the 2019/20 season, which was a 16% decline from the peak during the 2008/09 season.⁷ This can be linked to several factors such as the high cost of participation, safety concerns, competing interests, aging populations, and competition from leagues/organizations that are not sanctioned by Hockey Canada. Skate Canada reports that participation rates increased marginally by 2% between 2014 and 2020.⁸ During the 2020/2021 ice season, many organizations were negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and in some cases, were not able to offer regular programming. As a result, participation levels are generally lower compared to historical trends, which is expected to continue over the short-term. There is also a concern that some participants will not continue when regular league play resumes.

Overall declining participation levels across the Province has resulted in surplus arena capacity in many communities, particularly during weekends and shoulder hours that fall just outside of prime time hours. As a result, municipalities have implemented strategies to cope with these trends such as amending ice allocation policies, offering new programs and sport subsidies, or closing arenas at certain times of the day to reduce operating costs.

The primary users of the Morrisburg Arena are the South Dundas Minor Hockey Association and the Morrisburg & District Skating Club. Other arena users include the Morrisburg Lions Junior C hockey team and other adult renters. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the two minor groups had a combined membership of 358 participants in 2019, which is an increase from 307 participants three years prior.

The consultation process found that there is a desire to update the aging Morrisburg Arena. More than two-thirds (69%) of community survey respondents supported investment in this facility. Community stakeholders suggested various improvements, including general accessibility enhancements, lobby and entrance renewal, and technology upgrades such as installing webcams to livestream events. The desire for dryland training space was also suggested.

⁷ Hockey Canada Annual General Meeting Reports.

⁸ Skate Canada Annual General Meeting Reports.

The Master Plan reviewed usage during the core prime time period at the Morrisburg Arena to understand utilization during the peak period of the week. For the purposes of the Master Plan, this is considered to be 4:00 pm to 9:00 pm during the week and 7:00 am to 9:00 pm during the weekend, which generally aligns with the time period that is most likely to be used by minor groups. Based on these parameters, the Morrisburg Arena is well used with a weekly utilization rate of 96% during the 2018/2019 season, which was consistent with the previous ice season. This level of usage is indicative of an arena that is operating at or near full capacity.

The Municipality is projected to continue aging, which is not expected to generate a substantial demand for additional ice time. Population growth is also anticipated to occur in South Dundas, which is anticipated to be partly driven by young families with children and youth; however, trends suggest that this segment of the population desires a broad range of recreation activities that is less focused on ice sports. These considerations suggest that an additional ice pad is not warranted at this time.

Moving forward, the Municipality will need to ensure that the Morrisburg Arena is maintained in a state of good repair to serve the community. Recent improvements to the ice pad and replacement of aging equipment in 2017 positions the arena well in this regard. The Municipality is also in the planning stages of undertaking arena enhancement to improve accessibility and other support spaces to update these areas and to meet accessibility requirements.

Strategies to improve the arena user experience should be evaluated over the planning period. Stakeholders engaged in the Master Plan consultation process suggested live streaming games and events, which is a new trend in progressive communities to virtually engage spectators who are unable to attend in-person. The Municipality should also investigate the feasibility of creating multi-purpose space for dryland training and other activities such as community programming and rentals, which is further discussed in the next section.

With no new ice pads required during the planning period, the Municipality must also be proactive in optimizing the use of the arena during prime and non-prime hours. One strategy to consider is to encourage the use of early morning weekday ice, as well as using available ice time during the weekends. Establishing an online system to sell last minute bookings is another strategy that should be explored. This could potentially be achieved through the new online booking system that the Municipality is developing.

While the Municipality continues to reinvest in the Morrisburg Arena, there is merit to begin long-term planning for its replacement as the arena will be more than 70 years old by 2031. As there are potentially other indoor recreation and community space needs identified in this Master Plan, opportunities may exist to establish a new arena to replace the Morrisburg Arena with modern amenities that are desired by arena users and spectators. Co-locating a new arena as a part of an indoor multi-use recreation facility achieves efficiencies and benefits in construction, operation and programming, and would strengthen the facility as a community hub for residents and visitors. This initiative aligns with the Municipality's corporate vision and priorities to manage public assets, attract and retain residents, as well as support economic growth. Regular building condition assessments should guide the eventual replacement of the Morrisburg Arena (e.g., 15+ years). Recognizing that the Municipality's recent reinvestment into the existing arena, constructing the replacement arena at a new indoor multi-use recreation facility could be undertaken through a phased-development approach.

Recommendations – Arenas

16. Proceed with undertaking **enhancements** to the front entrance and other areas at the Morrisburg Arena to refresh support spaces and improve accessibility.
17. Explore strategies to **optimize the use of the Morrisburg Arena** such as promoting the use of available ice time, such as during the early morning hours and during the weekends and establishing an online system to allow users and/or the public to book last minute ice rentals.
18. Investigate the feasibility of **livestreaming games and events** to virtually engage spectators who are unable to attend in-person.
19. Guided by regular building condition assessments, begin long-term planning for the **replacement** of the Morrisburg Arena (e.g., 15+ years), which may potentially be co-located at a future indoor multi-use recreation facility through a phased development approach. During the medium term, the Municipality should explore potential site opportunities, a capital reserve and external funding sources, and appropriate business planning.

7.3 Community Halls, Multi-purpose Spaces & Gymnasiums

The Municipality offers eight community halls and multi-purpose spaces available for rent across South Dundas, including the Iroquois Civic Centre (2), Matilda Hall, South Dundas Municipal Centre and Iroquois Campground Building (seasonal building). The supply also includes the Dunbar Recreation Centre and two spaces at the George Jowett Memorial Hall, which are owned by the Municipality and operated by independent community groups who are responsible for rentals.

In addition, the Forward House in Iroquois is a municipal space that is operated by the Historical Society of South Dundas. The Municipality's Carmen House Museum in Iroquois is also an important public space as it is recognized as one of the remaining original buildings from Iroquois Village and the Iroquois Commons Waterfront Plan identifies plans to enhance the building to create a "heritage zone" to strengthen the waterfront as a tourist hub.



The Municipality's community meeting spaces are complemented by other community service providers and institutions including the Seaway District High School, Iroquois Public School, Morrisburg Public School, St. Mary-St. Cecilia Catholic School, Morrisburg and Iroquois Legion, library branches and churches.

Community halls and multi-purpose spaces provide flexible gathering spaces that accommodate a variety of uses including meetings, birthdays, social gatherings, community programs, and other events (Table 8). Amenities available at the Municipality's community spaces vary by location and may include kitchens, seating, tables, storage and more. The Municipality's spaces generally have low to moderate levels of usage, although this is typical for this facility type as they are predominantly provided to ensure that residents have publicly accessible and affordable indoor space for a variety of community activities and gatherings.

Table 8: Primary Uses of South Dundas Community Halls and Multi-Purpose Spaces

Community Facility	Primary Uses/Users
Dunbar Recreation Centre (third-party operated)	Dance, Women's Institute meetings, special events (e.g., bridal showers, weddings, etc.), etc.
George Jowett Memorial Hall (third-party operated)	Bingo, euchre, Lions Club meetings, Elections Ontario, special events (e.g., birthday parties, family reunions, etc.), scouts, etc.
Iroquois Civic Centre	Municipal recreation activities (e.g., HIIT, taekwondo, senior fitness, guitar lessons, etc.), economic development and committee meetings, historical and Parkinson's Group meetings, etc.
Iroquois Community Hall	Non-programmed meeting space shared with the Iroquois Campground, Iroquois Lawn Bowling Club, airport users and others.
Matilda Hall	Municipal recreation activities (e.g., shuffleboard, HIIT, walking club, etc.), recreation meetings, Elections Canada, etc.
South Dundas Municipal Centre	Municipal recreation activities (e.g., HIIT, kickboxing, bootcamp, Early On, art and games, etc.), Council and committee meetings, etc.

As a best practice, community halls and multi-purpose spaces are encouraged to be incorporated into multi-use facilities to complement other facility components to achieve cross-programming opportunities and efficiencies in construction, maintenance and management. Providing these types of spaces within larger public facilities also positions communities to establish community hubs, which is a growing trend in many municipalities to create destinations where residents can gather and access civic services. For these reasons, constructing new standalone community spaces is discouraged, particularly if there is an existing public space available within a reasonable driving distance.

The South Dundas Municipal Centre functions as a community hub in Morrisburg as it combines several civic amenities at a single location, including recreation programs, library, health resources, and other municipal services. From a recreation perspective, the municipal program room serves the community well; however, there are program limitations given that only one space is available. Erecting a dividing wall would allow the Municipality to offer concurrent programs that are compatible with each other as some activities could be delivered using a smaller space such as music lessons. Increasing the number of activity spaces at the South Dundas Municipal Centre will position the Municipality well with serving Morrisburg, particularly given its proximity to schools, retirement residences and residents in the broader community.

It is noted that user groups expressed the desire for indoor meeting space near the waterfront that is suitable for community programming and rentals. This space could also be used to support the Municipality's tourism activities such as a restaurant or patio space. A new indoor building is identified in the Morrisburg Waterfront Plan. Should this facility continue to be desired, which should be evaluated further through the Morrisburg Waterfront Plan update, as identified in Section 6.5, incorporating multi-use community space into this design is recommended. At a minimum, this facility should include storage space to support potential outdoor program opportunities and consider relocating the Morrisburg Lending Library. It is noted that relocating the Lending Library, which is currently located at the Morrisburg Arena, could create an opportunity to re-purpose the Lending Library space to a multi-purpose space, which does not currently exist at this location which would respond to community requests for dryland training space associated with arena activities. Multi-purpose program space should also be considered should the Municipality move forward with developing a new indoor multi-use sports facility.

Opportunities also exist to reconfigure the Iroquois Civic Centre to position this facility as a community hub. This is a vital facility for Iroquois given that the fire hall and library also exist at this location, although

it has untapped potential in its current form due to undersized meeting space and community hall, as well as aging amenities such as the dated kitchen; the stage in the community hall is not utilized.

The consultation process revealed that there is a desire for enhanced indoor space such as a gymnasium, which could be accommodated at the Iroquois Civic Centre by repurposing the community hall. The Municipality does not currently provide a gymnasium, nor do they have an agreement to access school gymnasiums. While community organizations can book school gymnasiums, it can be unaffordable and regular access is not guaranteed. A cursory review of online booking schedules for schools in Iroquois and Morrisburg suggests that school gymnasiums are well used. The gymnasium at the Seaway District High School is in high demand and while there is some time available at public schools, they tend to be less desirable for community uses due to their small size. Nevertheless, the Municipality is encouraged to work with schools to explore opportunities to use to gymnasiums, as well as other school space, to access public community spaces (as recommended in 8.3.8). Increasing public access to other non-municipal public spaces should also be considered, such as the Morrisburg and Iroquois Legion and other community service providers.

An architectural study should be prepared to assess the feasibility of repurposing the Iroquois Civic Centre community hall to a gymnasium to accommodate a broader range of uses. Opportunities to enlarge and optimize existing meeting spaces should form part of this exercise. Reconfigured space should also be designed with flexibility in mind and consider a community kitchen to support programming, hardwood floors, partition walls, counter space, sinks, wireless internet, audio and visual needs, and storage. Strategies to provide sufficient parking should also be addressed as this is currently a constraint in its current configuration. Engaging the fire hall and library as part of this process will ensure that their needs continue to be met. Enhancements to the Iroquois Civic Centre can help facility efforts to optimize facility use and provide recreation programs that support the Municipality's goal of retaining and attracting youth, young families and seniors. Opportunities may also exist to collaborate with community partners to program this space, such as establishing a third-party operated youth centre (e.g., Fusion Youth Centre), should the appropriate partner come forward.

During the planning period, the Municipality should ensure that its community halls and meeting spaces remain in a state of good repair to serve the community. A high-level review of building condition reports identified that the Municipality's facilities are generally in good condition, although various updates and repairs have been identified and should be addressed accordingly over the planning period. Strategies to promote the use of existing spaces and bolster utilization are also recommended such as working with user groups to encourage the use of space and exploring new program opportunities. Through the consultation process, suggestions were made to modernize the Municipality's community spaces, such as adding wireless internet to support the delivery of virtual programming, as well as audio and visual equipment such as web cameras and microphones. It will also be important for the Municipality to be mindful of activities that take place at public facilities to ensure that they are compatible with the surrounding area and existing features. For example, Municipal facilities may have design constraints or there may be historically significant features on site such as a cenotaph that must be respected.

Recommendations – Community Halls, Multi-Purpose Spaces & Gymnasiums

20. The development of new or redevelopment of standalone community halls and multi-purpose spaces is **discouraged** if there is an existing public space available within a reasonable driving distance.
21. Undertake an **architectural study of the Iroquois Civic Centre** to reconfigure and modernize existing spaces, which should include a gymnasium-type space, multi-purpose space(s), library branch, and fire hall. Reconfiguration of space should consider flexibility in design and include a community kitchen that can support programming, hardwood floors, partition walls, counter space, sinks, wireless internet, audio and visual equipment, storage and providing sufficient parking. The fire hall and library should be engaged as part of this process to ensure that their space needs continue to be met.
22. Through an update to the Morrisburg Waterfront Plan, evaluate opportunities **to incorporate multi-use community space at potential indoor facility**, which could also be used to support tourism activities (e.g., vendor for a restaurant or patio). At a minimum, this facility should include storage space to support outdoor program opportunities and potentially relocate the Morrisburg Lending Library. Should this be achieved, repurpose the existing Lending Library at the Morrisburg Arena to multi-purpose space for dryland training and other community uses.
23. Incorporate **multi-purpose program spaces** as part of a future indoor multi-use recreation facility to support community programs, rentals and gatherings.
24. Investigate opportunities to **install a dividing wall in the program room at the South Dundas Municipal Centre** to increase the number of activity spaces and to offer concurrent programs that are compatible with each other.
25. Engage third-party organizations to establish or increase **public access to non-municipal community spaces for community events, programs and rentals**.
26. Continue to **enhance community halls and multi-use spaces** to address items identified in the Municipality's facility condition reports to update and repair aging building components, including accessibility retrofits. Consideration should also be given to the provision of modern amenities including, but not limited to, reliable wireless internet and audio and visual equipment. Consultation with user groups and others is encouraged to identify and prioritize facility improvements.

7.4 Dedicated Age Spaces

The Municipality does not currently have any dedicated space for youth or older adults and seniors. Dedicated space for these age groups provides locations that create a sense of belonging where individuals can gather, participate in activities, share interests and socialize. Research has shown that spaces for these age groups function as safe places that offer positive support and reinforcement, while combating concerns surrounding mental and physical health, as well as social isolation.

Throughout the consultation process for the Master Plan, there was a desire for more youth opportunities as concerns were expressed regarding the ability to attract and retain youth and young families in the community. Suggestions were made for a youth space or more activities that appeal to this demographic. A Report on Youth (2019) prepared by the Municipality found that there were requests a multi-use recreation centre, as well as other recreation amenities including a skateboard park, community events, live music, trails, and recreational sports leagues. Through separate municipal process, suggestions were also made to work with community partners to provide programs within the Municipalities facilities (e.g., Fusion Youth Centre).

There are currently limited opportunities to establish dedicated youth space and recognizing the Municipality's large geography, it would be a challenge to identify a suitable location that would be equitable for this segment of the community as youth are limited in their travel patterns. As a result, an emphasis should be placed on accommodating youth through existing community spaces during key periods such as having designated drop-in times for youth to use multi-use spaces after school. The Municipality's efforts to strengthen program opportunities for youth, together with the provision of new outdoor recreation opportunities geared towards youth that are identified in this Master Plan (e.g., basketball courts, skate parks, etc.) will address needs for this key age group during the planning period.

Similarly, requests were made for older adult and senior space. As the Municipality's population continues to age, the demand for space that responds to this segment of the community will increase. It is noted that there are older adult and seniors groups that meet at facilities including the George Jowett Memorial Hall (municipally-owned) in Riverside Heights and The Royal Canadian Legion (non-municipally-owned) in Iroquois. Moving forward, the Municipality should endeavour to continue to accommodate older adult and senior needs within existing spaces through programming and services that are geared towards this age group. Opportunities to establish dedicated drop-in times for older adults and seniors within multi-use spaces is also encouraged. This strategy is complementary to recommendations contained in this Master Plan that appeal to this segment of the community such as the provision of new pickleball courts.

Recommendations have also been made throughout this Master Plan that bolster parks and recreation opportunities for youth, older adults and seniors. Such recommendations include modernizing the Iroquois Civic Centre, evaluating the feasibility of an indoor multi-use recreation facility, trails, multi-use courts for tennis, pickleball, basketball and ball hockey, waterfront improvements, expanding recreational programming, and more. These recommendations support the Municipality's efforts to retain and attract youth and young families, as well as allow residents ages 55+ to age in place, while remaining physically active in the community.

Recommendations – Dedicated Age Spaces

27. Explore opportunities to establish **drop-in times for youth and older adults and seniors** within existing multi-use space and to complement the Municipality's efforts to expand program opportunities and other facility recommendations geared towards these age groups.

7.5 Indoor Sports Facilities

The Municipality had previously submitted a grant application to the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program for an indoor sports facility. The facility was proposed to be located at Haldane Park in Iroquois and included a near full-size artificial turf soccer field (divisible by three), tennis court, sports pad, and walking track, as well as ancillary space for washrooms and change rooms, meeting room, office space and more. While the Municipality was not successful in the grant application, the merits of the proposed facility have been considered in this Master Plan.

Indoor sports facilities are niche amenities that provide enhanced recreation opportunities that complement outdoor activities and respond to demands for year-round play. Indoor sports facilities can be designed to respond to a variety of indoor space needs including, but not limited to, indoor sports, team training and conditioning and fitness activities.

The Master Plan community survey found that 41% and 31% of respondents supported investment in indoor soccer and indoor tennis, respectively, which ranked lowest among facility priorities, although this tends to be the case for niche amenities. The desire for a greater range of year-round recreation activities was heard through the Master Plan's consultation process to support physical activity opportunities across key age groups. It was felt that an indoor sports facility in South Dundas could address these requests. Requests for a multi-use recreation centre was also expressed from youth as part of the Municipality's Report on Youth prepared in 2019.

As a part of the Municipality's grant submission process, a business case was developed that indicated that the indoor soccer field was the primary drive for this facility. As a general rule, indoor artificial turf fields are typically provided based on a service level of one per 100,000 residents. These specialized facilities do exist in small to medium-sized communities but they have a wide catchment area and draw heavily from a regional user-base, or they were constructed to meet a community need or to support economic development opportunities. The Municipality's business case identified that the catchment areas of this facility had an approximate population of 72,000 residents.⁹ While it is recognized that the population in surrounding municipalities are older and are generally not indoor sports facility users, there is evidence that suggests that young families are gravitating towards smaller municipalities such as South Dundas and surrounding communities for more affordable lifestyles.

The ability to retain and attract new residents, as well as foster economic growth has been a corporate priority for the Municipality and the development of an indoor multi-use facility is a key opportunity to support these goals. The development of a facility of this magnitude would need to be approached cautiously for a small municipal such as South Dundas given the capital and operating investment required to support such a facility. The business plan developed for the grant submission estimated construction costs at approximately \$4.3M; however, costs have increased significantly in recent years due to shortages in labour and materials and as a result, actual costs may be higher.

From an operational perspective, the Municipality's business plan estimated a net operating subsidy of \$63,000. A scan of existing indoor artificial turf fields in the region also found that there are three publicly-operated indoor sports fields within a one hour drive of South Dundas in North Glengarry, Russell and Cornwall. The indoor sports fields at these locations are co-located with other major facility components such as indoor walking tracks, sport courts, arenas, fitness centre and other amenities, which vary at each location. As a result, annual operating costs can be as high as \$160,000 or more. Some indoor sports facilities may have an operating surplus or break even, although this can vary annually due to a range of factors such as sponsorship and advertising revenues, corporate donations, monies allocated towards capital reserves and debenture payments, and more.

⁹ Doyletch Corporation. Multi-use Indoor Sports Facility Business Case

Updating the Municipality's business plan to reflect the evolving market conditions and costs associated with constructing and operating an indoor multi-use sports facility is recommended. This will better position staff and Council to make informed decisions on moving forward with this type of facility, which should be revisited through a mid-term update to this Master Plan. At the time when the Municipality's grant application was submitted, a number of stakeholders expressed support for the indoor sports facility, noting their interest in using this space to deliver programs. The Municipality should re-engage community organizations to re-confirm their support for this type of facility from a usage perspective, including program opportunities and potential partnerships, as well as to identify space needs.

It is noted that the Master Plan identified other potential indoor facility needs that the Municipality may wish to consider to incorporate as a part of the indoor multi-use sports facility, particularly the long-term replacement for the Morrisburg Arena (2031+), which may be accommodated through a phased expansion, as well as an outdoor pool that is designed with the potential to be enclosed and multi-purpose program spaces (see Recommendation #19 and #32). Co-locating these components at a single site can create a central community hub and focal point in South Dundas and supports the Municipality's corporate priorities. Should this be considered, the Municipality will be required to evaluate potential site opportunities large enough to accommodate these facility components as well as ancillary spaces such as parking. Land acquisition may be required if there are no suitable candidate sites in the Municipality's land inventory which would benefit from a facility and site concept plan to determine site size and shape considerations).

Recommendations – Indoor Sports Facilities

28. Through a five-year update to the Master Plan, revisit the need for an **indoor multi-use recreation facility** that may include an indoor artificial turf field, indoor walking track, multi-use program space and other active facilities and support spaces, including an outdoor pool and other outdoor recreation amenities. This facility may also serve as a potential location for the long-term replacement of the Morrisburg Arena (2031+). As a part of this strategy the Municipality should evaluate potential site opportunities large enough to accommodate the new facility (including parking requirements which would benefit from a facility and site concept plan to determine site size and shape considerations).
29. Revise the Municipality's **business plan** for the indoor multi-use recreation facility to update capital and operating budgets, re-engage community organizations to determine the support for the facility from a usage perspective, including program opportunities and potential partnerships, and other space needs.

7.6 Sports Fields

7.6.1 Soccer Fields

The South Dundas Soccer Fields are located in Iroquois on the southeast corner of Elizabeth Drive South and Lakeview Street adjacent to the Iroquois Public School and the Iroquois Golf Club. The South Dundas Soccer Fields are the Municipality's only sports field location, which consists of three soccer fields, including one full size and two intermediate fields. Excluded from this inventory are school-owned soccer fields.

Registration in organizations affiliated with Ontario Soccer have been gradually declining for over a decade. In 2019, Ontario Soccer reported approximately 273,000 players, which was 29% below its peak in 2007.¹⁰ Declining registrations across the Province are driven by factors such as aging demographic trends, growing competition from other sports and activities, and the emergence of elite soccer clubs and academies that are not affiliated with provincial governing body. Despite declining participation trends, soccer continues to be a popular sport due to its worldwide appeal, high fitness quotient and relatively low cost to participate.



The Municipality's soccer fields are used by the South Dundas Soccer Association, which provides soccer programming for local children and youth. The Municipality has historically provided the soccer fields at no cost to the organization, although the group is responsible for field maintenance. For 2022, the organization reported 427 participants for the summer season, in addition to 175 players for the fall season and 61 players in the competitive program. In addition to the Municipality's three soccer fields, the group also uses the field at the Seaway District High School and Iroquois Public School. The five soccer fields translate into a service level of one field per 85 participants during the summer season, which is within range of generally accepted playing standards (one field per 80 to 90 participants). It is recognized, however, that due to Long-Term Player Development field requirements, the South Dundas Soccer Association is able to offer simultaneous programs on single fields, particularly for younger divisions and thus, the organization is able to make efficient use of existing fields.

The group's efficient use of fields suggests that there is excess capacity within the existing field supply. This is confirmed through a review of the group's online field usage schedules. During a 10-week summer season, the group uses the fields for five hours on Saturdays for games. Practices are also held two hours a day on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday for eight weeks. Fall season soccer is three hours per week for seven weeks. Current usage levels suggest that the supply is adequate to accommodate increased participation which is expected to occur to a certain degree over the next 10 years given that future population growth is anticipated to draw young families and children and youth.

It is noted that a full-size soccer field has been proposed as part of the Morrisburg Waterfront Plan, although it does not appear to be warranted at this time based on current usage levels. The Municipality should monitor the use of soccer fields in South Dundas (including school fields) to inform future demand, which should include collecting and tracking participation data and scheduling.

¹⁰ Ontario Soccer Association Annual General Meeting Reports.

7.6.2 Ball Diamonds

There are nine ball diamonds at five parks in South Dundas at Haldane Park (1 lit), J.C. Whitteker Park (1 unlit, 2 unlit), Matilda Memorial Park (1 lit), Riverside Heights Park (1 lit), Morrisburg Waterfront Park (1 lit, 2 unlit). An equivalency factor of 1.5 unlit diamonds is applied to lit diamonds to recognize the fact that they provide extended periods of play during the evenings. With five lit and four unlit ball diamonds, the Municipality provides an adjusted supply of 11.5 unlit equivalent ball diamonds. Excluded from this inventory are school-owned ball diamonds.

After being considered a sport in decline for the better part of the past two decades, baseball and its variations (including softball, fastball, etc.) have experienced a resurgence in communities across Ontario. Baseball Ontario reported nearly 16,000 competitive participants in 2019, which was a growth of 39% compared to 2007, though that figure excludes recreational/house leagues and non-affiliated ball groups (thus actual participation figures are greater).¹¹ The renewed interest in ball diamond sports is driven by factors such as a greater focus on skill development, and grassroots programs to engage children and youth at a young age to participate in the sport. The popularity of the Toronto Blue Jays is also a contributing factor.

Minor level baseball opportunities are provided by the Seaway Surge Baseball Club and the Williamsburg Pioneers. The Seaway Surge primarily provides competitive-level baseball for youth and young adults in the region, although the group has also begun providing recreational league play for children and youth in South Dundas and plays at the Morrisburg Waterfront Park. The Williamsburg Pioneers provides programming to youth at J.C. Whitteker Park. In addition to these minor groups, recreational adult ball groups use the ball diamonds at Matilda Memorial Park and Riverside Heights Park.

Similar to soccer fields, the Municipality has historically not charged fees for the use of the ball diamonds. The Municipality began implementing adult ball diamond fees in 2021 but given the recent change, ball diamond booking data is not available, although the Municipality has started to track adult usage in 2022. Anecdotal discussions with ball organizations and Municipality staff suggests the ball diamonds are generally used well by organizations, although there is capacity within the existing supply to accommodate additional usage.

Evidence of excess capacity in the supply of confirmed through the fact that the ball diamond at Haldane Park is not being utilized. This suggests that there is a surplus of ball diamonds in South Dundas. The Master Plan did not identify any recreational needs that would be suitable to warrant repurposing this ball diamond. While it is recognized that the Municipality identified a potential indoor sports dome at this site, the Master Plan does not recommend pursuing this facility within the next ten years. Instead, the Municipality should reduce the maintenance (e.g., grass cutting) of the Haldane Park ball diamond as it is not used for programmed sports activities to direct operational resources to other areas. Reducing grass cutting also has environmental benefits such as improved biodiversity. This area should be maintained at



¹¹ Baseball Ontario. Annual General Meeting Reports.

a level that is appropriate to support informal games and other open space activities such as picnicking, casual activities (e.g., ball throwing), and gatherings.

The Morrisburg Waterfront Plan identifies a future that includes one ball diamond and two existing diamonds would be repurposed to accommodate other park uses. There is merit in revisiting the number of ball diamonds required at this location given that this is the primary location for the Seaway Surge. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the organization had 90 youth participants, which suggests that the group only requires the use of one ball diamond based on accepted standards of play (one ball diamond per 100 participants). However, removing two of the three ball diamonds at the Morrisburg Waterfront Park is not recommended as this would not leave room for the Seaway Surge to grow their programming, particularly as the group recently introduced house league play and the fact that future population growth in Morrisburg is expected during the planning period, which will draw more families to the area, some of whom may be seeking opportunities to play baseball. Multi-diamond sites are also desirable to support tournament play. Based on these factors, two ball diamonds should be maintained at this location; regularly collecting registration data and schedules from ball organizations will assist with informing long-term ball diamond needs. As part of this process, groups should be engaged to identify and prioritize improvements to continue providing high quality user experiences.

Recommendations – Sports Fields

30. Based on available information, **no new soccer fields** are required while two ball diamonds should be maintained at the Morrisburg Waterfront Park. The Municipality should collect annual registration and schedules to inform future sports field needs and engage users on a regular basis to identify and prioritize improvements.
31. Strategically **reduce the level of maintenance** of non-programmed sports fields (e.g., Haldane Park ball diamond) to direct operational resources to other priority areas and achieve environmental benefits. This area should be maintained in a manner that supports informal sports (such as ball throwing, Frisbee, etc.), picnicking, outdoor programming and other related activities.



7.7 Aquatics

7.7.1 Indoor and Outdoor Swimming Pools

The Municipality does not provide an indoor or outdoor swimming pool and, instead relies on the South Dundas waterfront for aquatic opportunities including swimming programs at Morrisburg and Iroquois Beach during the summer months. Access to swimming pools are also important amenities to have in waterfront communities such as South Dundas given its proximity to a large body of water and the lifelong benefits associated with learning to swim. The benefits of swimming appeal to people of all ages and as a result, they tend to be highly sought-after public facilities.

The Master Plan consultation process yielded strong support for a swimming pool in South Dundas. Four-out-of-five (79%) of respondents to the community survey supported investment in an indoor swimming pool, which was the fifth highest priority. Two-thirds (65%) of the respondents also supported investment in outdoor pools, which was the 14th highest priority. Several requests were also made for an indoor and outdoor swimming pool.

Provincially, indoor pools are generally provided at a rate of anywhere between one for every 30,000 and 50,000 residents. Smaller municipalities may provide indoor swimming pools, but they must rely on both primary (residents) and secondary (non-residents) markets. Best practices in the recreation sector indicate that pool users are most willing to drive up to 40 kilometres (or 30 minutes) to access an indoor pool. This would suggest that the Municipality's secondary market generally consist of residents in Precott, Edwardsburgh/Cardinal, North Dundas, and portions of North Stormont and South Stormont who may potentially use a pool in South Dundas. Inclusion of the primary and secondary market could bring the service population closer to the minimum population required to support an indoor pool; however, it is recognized that the regional population is also served by existing public and privately-operated pools. For example, the Cornwall Aquatic Centre is located 43 kilometres (or a 35-minute drive) from Morrisburg.

Municipalities that provide indoor pools recognize that they are capital intensive projects and costs can vary considerably depending upon the design, materials, number of facility components and the range of amenities. Construction costs have also increased significantly in recent years due to labour and material shortages. Regionally, the Township of Russell is in the process of constructing a new multi-use recreation complex – expected to open in 2025 – which is estimated to cost approximately \$100M to construct (excluding land costs). This facility includes a range of indoor and outdoor recreation facility components including an indoor aquatic centre with an eight lane, 25-metre tank and supporting components such as a sauna, leisure tank, change rooms and support spaces. Construction of the indoor aquatic centre portion is estimated to be approximately \$8.1M. Financing of this project is being managed through funds collected from a capital reserve, arena surcharge fees, development charges, fundraising, annual increases to the municipal tax rate, and grant funding from senior level government.

Indoor pools are provided as a community service and are operated at a significant deficit. Operating costs can also vary considerably. Most municipal indoor pools carry annual operating deficits in the range of \$200,000 to \$500,000 or more, depending upon factors such as program participation (which tends to be the primary revenue generator), pool design, staffing, and other factors. The Cornwall Aquatic Centre generally carries an annual operating deficit of \$300,000 to \$400,000. There are strategies to minimize the municipal cost of operating an indoor pool such establishing partnership agreements with others such as the YMCA and adjacent municipalities.

The construction and operation of an indoor pool is a major capital initiative and is a decision that is made from the perspective of intrinsic value (e.g., the community benefit that everyone should have an opportunity to learn to swim), as well as to achieve other corporate priorities such as attracting and retaining residents and supporting economic growth. This decision is made with the expectation that

these benefits will outweigh the financial burden of operating an indoor pool. Table 9 summarizes key considerations that the Municipality would need to evaluate to address indoor pool needs to serve South Dundas.

Table 9: Key Considerations in Evaluating the Need for an Indoor Pool in South Dundas

Benefits	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote year-round physical activity among many age, ability, and income groups depending upon the design and programming of the indoor pool. - Potential to attract and retain residents, as well as support economic growth including new business and non-resident spending. - Potential to draw some usage from regional markets. - Potential to partner in the construction and/or operation of an indoor pool. - Ability to complement other recreational and civic amenities if co-located as part of a multi-use community hub. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Construction costs have increased significantly in recent years due to labour and material shortages. Recent indoor pool construction costs in the region are approximately \$8.1M. - Most municipal indoor pools carry annual operating deficits in the range of \$200,000 to \$500,000 or more. - Competition for regional market users from existing public and privately-operated indoor pools. - Primary source of revenue from indoor pool use come from swimming lessons. The local and regional market of children and youth between the ages of 0 to 19 is limited, although this may change in the future as new residents are drawn to smaller municipalities. - It may be a challenge for the Municipality to construct and operate an indoor pool without external funding support from grant programs or partners.

There may be merit in considering the development of an outdoor pool in South Dundas, which is a more affordable approach to addressing community requests for swimming opportunities, particularly in smaller municipalities. Public outdoor pools were primarily constructed between the 1950s and 1980s, many of which were constructed to celebrate Canada's Centennial in 1967. As many of these public outdoor pools have reached the end of their lifecycle, some municipalities have reinvested in these aging assets to continue providing the community service. Other municipalities have decommissioned their outdoor pools in favour of constructing splash pads, which are more cost effective and operationally efficient to provide, although they do not provide the same experience as an outdoor pool (e.g., programming). There are some municipalities in Ontario that have built or are planning to construct a new outdoor pool. For example, there is currently a rural Township in Wellington County that is currently exploring the development of a new outdoor pool to replace an aging pool, with preliminary costs estimated to be approximately \$5.5M for a basic L-shaped pool design with two-lanes, leisure area, beach entry and washrooms and other support spaces.

A regional scan revealed that there are several public outdoor pools that are within a 40-minute drive of South Dundas in North Dundas, North Stormont, South Stormont, Edwardsburgh/Cardinal, Prescott and Cornwall. The outdoor pools provided in rural communities generally share the same basic layout including a rectangular, 20- to 25-metre (or smaller) swim tank with three to four lanes, and washrooms. Cornwall provides a slightly enhanced level of service as their five outdoor pools serve a larger, urban population, as each location offers a five-lane, 25-metre tank with a separate leisure tank and washrooms. Annual operating costs for these regional outdoor pools vary due to a range of factors such

as participation levels and range between \$33,000 and \$80,000, which is more manageable compared to operating an indoor pool.

Similar to indoor pools, the decision to construct an outdoor pool is based upon the desire to provide South Dundas with a community benefit to enhance the quality of life, attract and retain residents and support economic growth. This decision is made based on the fact that these benefits outweigh the initial capital cost and annual financial investment, although this must be approached with caution to recognize that there are also other parks and recreation needs in the community, as identified in this Master Plan. These costs may be offset by grants, donations and other external sources, although they are not guaranteed funding streams.

The Master Plan recommends that the Municipality revisit the need to construct an indoor multi-use sports facility within the medium-term (see Recommendation #28). The Municipality should consider the development of an outdoor pool at this time given that there are benefits associated with co-locating civic and recreation amenities in a single location to create a multi-use community hub. Should the Municipality move forward with developing an outdoor pool, a basic pool design similar to what is offered in adjacent communities is recommended recognizing that the inclusion of enhanced amenities (e.g., spray features, separate leisure tank, etc.) would have capital implications; the final design should be confirmed in consultation with the public. Efforts will be required to maximize pool participation to minimize operational costs. The outdoor pool should be designed with the option to be enclosed, should the Municipality consider providing this service in the future. It is noted that the Township of North Dundas made investments to the Winchester Centennial Outdoor Pool to allow the space to be enclosed.

Establishing a strong staffing complement will also be required as many communities are challenged with finding and retaining certified aquatic staff, which may involve providing municipal support for training. During the interim, the Municipality should evaluate the cost-benefit of providing an outdoor pool in the community including appropriate business planning to understand capital and operating costs and other details to inform future decision making.

7.7.2 Splash Pads

The Municipality also offers a splash pad at Earl Baker Park in Morrisburg. Installed in 2015, the splash pad features an assortment of interactive spray features. Splash pads in particular are in high demand for families with young children. From an operational perspective, splash pads are also more cost effective to provide as they require less maintenance and staffing compared to other aquatic facilities such as outdoor pools and wading pools. Splash pads also use less water and offer flexibility in design as they can be integrated into most parks and can be developed in a wide variety of stimulating designs with apparatuses that provide an enhanced aquatic experience for residents and visitors.



The popularity of splash pads is felt locally in South Dundas as the location at Earl Baker Park is well used during the warmer season. Two-thirds (67%) of respondents to the Master Plan community survey supported investment in splash pads. Requests were also made for a splash pad in Iroquois.

It is noted that a proposed splash pad is identified in the Iroquois Commons Waterfront Park Plan, which would be located near the Iroquois Beach. Locating a splash pad near the beach is a common approach in many waterfront communities as some people may not be comfortable with swimming in large bodies of water, particularly children and youth. For example, Cornwall and Prescott both offer splash pads at their public waterfronts. This approach also provides benefits in sharing infrastructure such as parking

and washrooms. The Master Plan supports the development of a splash pad in Iroquois to complement the existing location in Morrisburg. The Municipality should engage the public to evaluate support for a splash pad at Iroquois Beach as a part of the update to the Iroquois Commons Waterfront Park Plan. Noting public concerns regarding traffic and parking constraints along the waterfront, alternative locations in Iroquois should also be considered such as at Haldane Park.

To further enhance the supply of outdoor water features, opportunities for small scale spray features may also be considered in other areas of South Dundas such as at Matilda Memorial Park. As a community park, this location is one of the primary outdoor gathering spaces in the rural area. Based on high level site observations, there is space at this park to accommodate a spray pad; the park also features on-site washrooms, access to water and parking, which are key amenities to consider when developing spray features. A spray feature at Matilda Memorial Park would also complement other park amenities at this location such as the playground, and bolster the Municipality's summer programming, which is offered at this park. A design of the spray features should be determined through a separate process but it should be smaller in size and scale compared to the Earl Baker Park location. Community-driven fundraising and partnerships to develop new splash pads is encouraged, which is consistent with the Municipality's approach to constructing the Earl Baker Park splash pad.

Recommendations – Aquatics

32. As a part of revisiting the merits of an indoor multi-use sports facility during the medium term, explore the feasibility of **constructing an outdoor pool** similar in design to others provided in adjacent municipalities (with the potential to be enclosed) at the same site to strengthen the facility as a community hub for the Municipality. During the short-term, the Municipality should undertake a cost-benefit analysis of providing an outdoor pool in the community including appropriate business planning to understand capital and operating costs and other details to inform future decision making.
33. Evaluate public support for a splash pad at **Iroquois Beach** through an update to the Iroquois Commons Waterfront Park Plan. Alternative locations in Iroquois may also be considered. Consistent with the Municipality's previous splash pad development, community-driven fundraising and partnerships are recommended.
34. Supported by community-driven fundraising and partnerships, construct a basic spray feature adjacent to the playground at **Matilda Memorial Park**. The design of the spray feature should be smaller in size and scale compared to the existing location at Earl Baker Park.

7.8 Outdoor Tennis & Pickleball Courts

The Municipality offers eight locations for tennis and pickleball activities. Two tennis courts are located at Elizabeth Drive Park in Iroquois, which are also lined with four pickleball courts. J.C. Whitteker Park also has one dedicated tennis court and two dedicated pickleball courts, and three dedicated pickleball courts are located at Matilda Memorial Park.

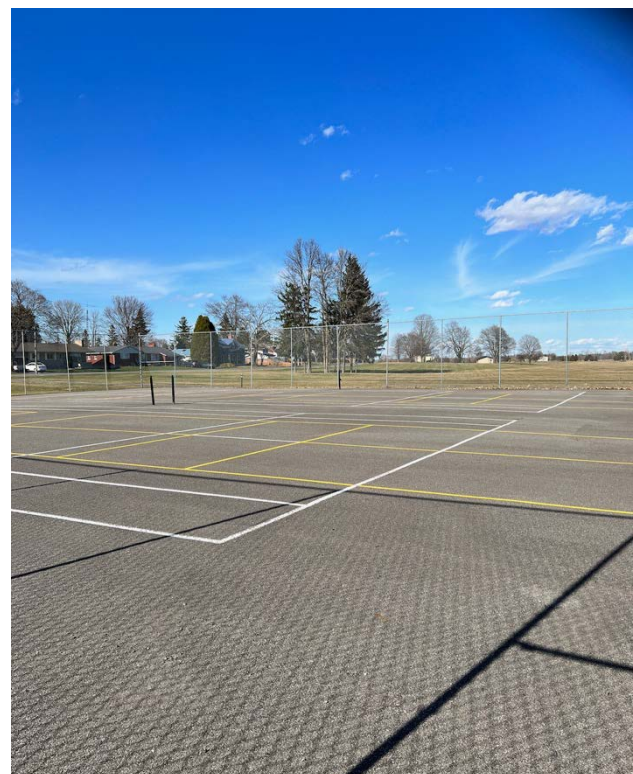
Across the Province, tennis has been experiencing a resurgence over the past several years due to factors including the success of Canadian professionals, a greater emphasis on grassroots programs to attract younger players, and a growing segment of baby boomers that are returning to the sport.

Older adults are also generating interest in pickleball, which is recognized as one of the fastest growing sports in Canada. Pickleball is a low-intensity sport that can be played on a modified tennis court (pickleball courts are smaller in size with a lower net height). The popularity of pickleball continues to spread across Ontario and its prominence is further bolstered by being played at the Ontario Senior Games. The consultation process revealed that there is a desire for more outdoor opportunities to play tennis and pickleball.

The Municipality's three tennis courts achieve a current service level of one per 3,700 residents, which is consistent with industry standards that range from one court per 4,000 to 5,000 residents. However, South Dundas' large geography must also be considered. It is noted that a service gap currently exists in Morrisburg where there are no tennis courts currently. Establishing two courts at Earl Baker Park is recommended, preferably with the proposed basketball court identified in Section 7.9 to create one large multi-use sports pad (see Recommendation #33).

Ensuring that existing tennis and pickleball courts are suitable to meet the needs of residents is also encouraged. Site visits suggested that the asphalt pad at J.C. Whitteker Park is aging and in need of replacement. Renewing this amenity is recommended to continue to provide tennis and pickleball activities in Williamsburg, as well as other activities such as basketball, ball hockey and outdoor skating.

As a best practice, it is recommended that pickleball lines are added to the proposed tennis courts, which is an efficient and effective strategy to accommodate the needs of both court users and to respond to a growing demand for pickleball in the Municipality. This approach is consistent with the recent addition of pickleball lines to the tennis courts at Elizabeth Drive Park.



Recommendations – Outdoor Tennis & Pickleball Courts

35. Construct **two tennis courts** at Earl Baker Park in Morrisburg and add playing lines for two to four pickleball courts. Consideration should be given to locating these courts on as asphalt pad with the proposed basketball court at this location to create one large multi-use sports pad.
36. **Resurface** the large multi-use pad at J.C. Whitteker Park to continue to support tennis and pickleball activities, as well as other activities such as basketball, ball hockey and outdoor skating.

7.9 Outdoor Basketball Courts

South Dundas provides four basketball locations, including three full courts at J.C. Whitteker Park, Matilda Memorial Park, and Morrisburg Waterfront Park. One basketball hoop is located at Riverside Heights Park. In addition to this location, basketball courts are also found at schools.

While outdoor hard surface pads are primarily used for basketball, some can be utilized as multi-purpose courts that accommodate a variety of informal and unstructured activities such as ball hockey, outdoor skating, and programs (e.g., summer camps). Basketball continues to be a popular pastime activity for youth and young adults in many communities due to its national appeal and the popularity of the Toronto Raptors. Basketball is relatively affordable compared to other sports, easy to learn, and can be played individually or in small groups.



Municipalities generally target a service level of one basketball court per 800 youth between the ages of 10 and 19. However, a higher level of service is often preferred in urban and rural municipalities such as South Dundas on the basis of achieving a strong geographic distribution of courts, particularly given that basketball courts are neighbourhood-level amenities and its primary user base is limited in the distance that they can travel. The Master Plan consultation process also found that there is a strong desire for more outdoor activities for youth, particularly given that satisfaction levels for this age group was low.

To achieve public access and the geographic distribution of basketball courts in South Dundas, candidate sites for a basketball court include Haldane Park (where there is currently an asphalt pad), Render Park and Orchard Park. Re-locating the basketball court at the Morrisburg Waterfront Park to Earl Baker Park is also recommended given that it is currently located in a parking lot. Additionally, enhancements to existing basketball court locations should be considered, including re-positioning the basketball court at Winchester Springs Park within the site so that the adjacent trees do not interfere with the activity. Replacing the basketball hoop at Riverside Heights Park with a full court should also be explored. As the Master Plan recommends resurfacing the asphalt pad at J.C. Whitteker Park (see Recommendation #32), the Municipality should also replace the aging basketball hoops to provide an enhanced playing experience.

New and redeveloped courts should be designed as full-size, multi-use sites to support a range of court activities (e.g., basketball, ball hockey, etc.). Strategic opportunities should also consider covered structures over courts to provide shade and support activities on a year-round basis such as outdoor skating and summer programs. Where feasible, consideration should also be given to locating these courts next to tennis and pickleball courts to create larger multi-use sports pads, which currently exists at some South Dundas parks such as at J.C. Whitteker Park.

Recommendations – Outdoor Basketball Courts

37. Establish new outdoor basketball courts at **Haldane Park** (where there is currently an asphalt pad), **Render Park** and **Orchard Park**.
38. Re-locate the outdoor basketball court from the Morrisburg Waterfront Park to **Earl Baker Park**. The court should be provided on an asphalt pad with the proposed tennis and pickleball courts to create one large **multi-use sports pad**.
39. Re-position the basketball court at **Winchester Springs Park** within the site so that the adjacent trees do not interfere with the activity.
40. Replace the basketball hoop at **Riverside Heights Park** with a full-size court.
41. Replace the basketball hoops at **J.C. Whitteker Park**.
42. New and redeveloped basketball courts should be designed to be full-size with paint markings to **function as multi-use sports pads to support a range of activities** (e.g., basketball, ball hockey, etc.). Strategic opportunities should be given to covered structures to provide shade and support year-round activities such as outdoor skating and summer programs.

7.10 Skate Parks

Skate parks have become a core level of service for many municipalities. These amenities are multi-use spaces for skateboarding, BMX biking, roller blading, scootering and other wheeled activities. While once considered a fad, these activities have demonstrated sustained longevity and it has been embraced as a mainstream activity given its benefits in supporting the healthy development of youth and young adults. Skate activities are also popular among this target demographic given that not all youth play organized sports. Skate parks provide a safe space for users to gather and socialized with others who share common interests. The prominence of skateboarding in particular is further bolstered on an international level following its introduction in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

South Dundas does not currently have a skate park, although a skate ramp is located in the parking lot at Riverside Heights Park. Requests for skate parks were made through the consultation process. Nearly half (46%) of respondents supported investment in this type of facility.

In communities that are similar in size to South Dundas, one community-level skate park located in a prominent area is a common approach to meeting the needs of local youth. A community-based skate park typically features a large concrete area with elevation changes, bowls, jumps, railings and more. A community-based skate park in South Dundas is recommended given that one does not currently exist. Introducing this amenity to South Dundas responds to community requests made through the Master Plan consultation process and will strengthen the Municipality's ability to attract and retain youth, which has been a growing concern in the community. Preliminary observations suggests that Earl Baker Park in Morrisburg is a suitable site for a skate park given its visibility in the community, ample park space and proximity to schools and other public spaces. Additional consultation should be undertaken with youth and the broader community to confirm the suggested location or consider other site opportunities and inform the design process.

It is important to recognize the Municipality's spatial geography and the fact that the recommended skate park may not be accessible for all youth. Once the skate park is completed, the Municipality should

monitor its use and demand to consider opportunities to construct a second skate park to serve youth in Iroquois, such as at Haldane Park given its close proximity to the Iroquois Civic Centre and schools.

Monitoring the use and demand for skate parks can also inform decisions on the creation of basic skate “zones” that can be integrated within parks in other areas of South Dundas. A skate zone may take the shape of a paved designated skate area with a few basic components (e.g., ramp, curb and/or rail) to serve local youth in an introductory manner. Providing introductory-level skate zones appeal to younger children and novice-level skaters to practice certain fundamental skills prior to transitioning to the larger location.

Opportunities for skate zones should be contemplated in the rural area. Site visits suggests that the skate ramp at the Riverside Heights Park is in need of renewal. Consideration should be given to establishing a designated skate zone area in the park given that it is currently located in the parking lot. Other rural parks should also be considered including Matilda Memorial Park and other locations determined by staff.

Recommendations – Skate Parks

43. Evaluate opportunities to construct a community-level skate park at **Earl Baker Park**. Consultation with youth and the general public should be undertaken to confirm the suggested location or to consider other location options, as well as to inform the design process.
44. Subject to monitoring skate park use and demand, engage the community to investigate the potential to establish a second skate park at **Haldane Park** in Iroquois. Skate zones should also be contemplated at rural parks including **Riverside Heights Park** (replacing the existing skate ramp), **Matilda Memorial Park**, and other locations to be determined by staff.

7.11 Playgrounds

South Dundas provides 19 playgrounds in parks across the Municipality. The location of the Municipality's playgrounds is illustrated in Figure 17.

Site visits indicated that the Municipality's playgrounds are similar in design, style and colours. They are generally fairly simple traditional play components with climbing components, slides, stairs and ladders, and some locations offer swing sets. Although the Municipality has begun replacing play structures with designs that offer more creative and unique play experiences such as at Earl Baker Park and Matilda Memorial Park, the latter location also features accessible features that are inclusive of all users such as a ramp and lowered play components.

As neighbourhood-level amenities, playgrounds support early childhood development, foster cognitive development and social skills, and encourage physical activity. Playgrounds evoke a welcoming and friendly sentiment that draw users to parks and families to neighbourhoods and as a result, they are always in demand. The consultation process revealed that there is a demand for larger and more unique play structures. Creating a destination-style playground at Iroquois Beach was also suggested. The Master Plan community survey found that 73% of respondents supported investment in playgrounds.

Best practices suggest that within urban areas, playgrounds should be located within 800 metres of residential areas. Applying this service area to the Municipality's playgrounds revealed that the majority of residential neighbourhoods in South Dundas' urban areas are well served with some form of playground. The most notable gap exists along the north side of County Road 2 in Iroquois. While a large portion of this area is undeveloped, portions of land are identified on Schedule A2b in the County's Official Plan as residential. The Municipality should endeavor to establish a playground at a future park to serve residents in this area. A service gap also exists in the northwest corner of County Road 2 and County Road 31 in Morrisburg, however, this area is designated as an Employment District where there are no residents.

Looking ahead, a play structure has been identified in the Iroquois Commons Waterfront Park Plan. Establishing a playground along the waterfront is a best practice in many communities as it strengthens public beaches and family-friendly destinations. As part of updating the Iroquois Commons Waterfront Park Plan, the Municipality should evaluate the feasibility and public support for a playground at this location. Should there continue to be public support for this amenity, a natural/adventure style playground is recommended for this location, which is a new trend that is gaining traction in many municipalities. These new styles of playgrounds are being developed in prominent public spaces to showcase unique recreation experiences that attract local residents and visitors. Natural/adventure playgrounds offer multi-sensory experiences that encourages risky play and interaction with landscape and natural materials such as wood, logs, ropes, stones, and boulders to allow users to create more daring opportunities.



It will be important for the Municipality to renew aging playgrounds to encourage use and promote safety. Many of the Municipality's playgrounds were constructed in the early 2000s, meaning that they are now approximately 20 years old. The Municipality's asset management plan for recreation facilities identifies that playgrounds should be replaced every 15 years, which is generally consistent with municipal best practices. A greater variety of playground styles, colours and components should also be explored as site visits to the Municipality's parks revealed that the same play structure template (or a variation of one structure) was used at a number of parks. Constructing more unique playgrounds has been found to create more engaging play experiences and encourages more frequent use.

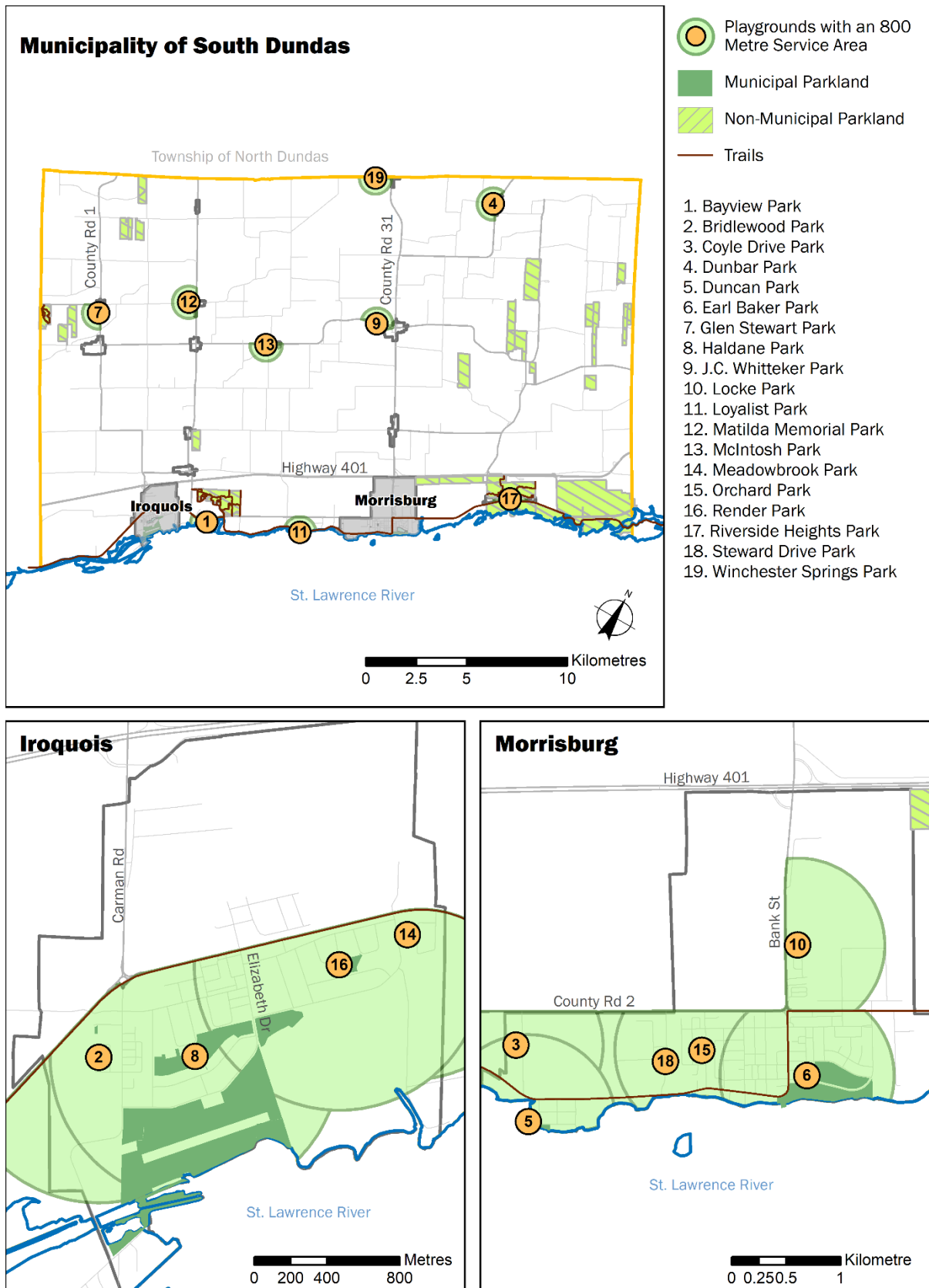
In particular, the playground at J.C. Whitteker Park is an older, basic structure with a sand base that is hidden from view. Replacing this structure with a larger, community-level playground that is more in keeping with the park type is recommended to ensure that it meets the needs of residents in Williamsburg, particularly given that it is the only playground in the settlement area. The existing playground abuts the property boundary and the North Williamsburg Recreation Centre and thus, the new playground should be constructed in a visible location within the park that does not interfere with other existing uses (e.g., ball diamonds).

Consistent with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, all new and redeveloped play structures should be inclusive of all users, regardless of ability. This requires that playgrounds incorporate components such as accessible play features, ramps, accessible swing seat, and a firm and stable surface. During site visits to the Municipality's parks, many playgrounds had a sand base, which should be replaced with engineered woodchip fibre or another appropriate material to ensure that the surface is accessible for persons with disabilities. Playground replacement should also have regard for the parkland classification system in Section 6.1 of this Master Plan. Recognizing that higher-order parks serve a broader service area and attract more users, larger play structures with enhanced accessibility features should be considered at Community Park sites.

Recommendations – Playgrounds

45. Ensure that all residential neighbourhoods within urban areas are located within **800-metres** of a playground, unobstructed by major roads, at grade railways, and other barriers. On this basis, address playground gaps on the north side of Iroquois at a future park in this area.
46. Subject to regular safety inspections, **target playground replacement after a lifecycle period of 15 years**. The development or redevelopment of playgrounds should incorporate creative playground designs and inclusive features such as barrier-free play components, ramps, accessible swing seats, and firm and stable surfaces.
47. As part of updating the Iroquois Commons Waterfront Park Plan, evaluate the feasibility and public support for a natural/adventure playground that features wood, logs, stones, boulders, ropes and landscaping, as well as incorporate a beach theme to create a unique destination for users.
48. At the time of playground replacement, evaluate opportunities to relocate the play structure at **J.C. Whitteker Park** to a more prominent location within the site to ensure that a community-level playground is provided to serve the Williamsburg Community.

Figure 17: Distribution of Playgrounds



7.12 Off-Leash Dog Parks

The Morrisburg Dog Park is South Dundas' sole off-leash area, which opened in 2011 and was made possible through a partnership between the Municipality, Park Pals Committee (no longer active), and sponsors, including Canadian Tire, Scotiabank and Valu-mart. Located within Earl Baker Park and adjacent to Morrisburg Beach, the dog park offers two fenced areas for large and small dogs with supporting amenities and features, including parking, seating, shade, waste receptacles, walking pathway, landscaping, signage, and drinking fountains for pets.

With municipal by-laws regulating the use of leashes, off-leash dog parks provide pet owners with the opportunity to exercise and socialize their dogs in a controlled area. Dog parks should not be viewed strictly for pets as observations at established dog parks suggest that they are also beneficial for residents and community interaction, particularly for residents living in isolation.

The Master Plan consultation process found that dog walking (on or off-leash) is a popular activity in South Dundas. 38% of community survey respondents reported to have gone dog walking in 2019, which was the fifth most popular recreational activity. Positive comments about the Morrisburg Dog Park were also expressed and requests were for a similar opportunity in Iroquois. Nearly half (46%) of respondents supported additional investment in off-leash dog parks.

While there is no generally-accepted standard for off-leash dog parks, it is common for small municipalities to provide one off-leash dog park. Additional locations may be considered on a case-by-case basis, subject to demand. With public requests received for an off-leash dog park in Iroquois, the Municipality should evaluate opportunities to establish a second location to serve residents in this area. Consistent with the approach used to establish the Morrisburg Dog Park, community-driven fundraising and partnerships to establish a new off-leash dog park is recommended. Potential locations may include Elizabeth Drive Park, Haldane Park, Iroquois Commons Waterfront Park or another location. A dog park in Iroquois also supports economic development and tourism opportunities in the area as it would broaden the variety of recreation activities available for visitors with dogs to stop, take a break, and enjoy the Municipality's outdoor amenities.



Recommendations – Off-Leash Dog Parks

49. Supported by community fundraising and partnerships, provide an **off-leash dog park in Iroquois**, potentially at the Iroquois Commons Waterfront Park or an alternative location.

7.13 Outdoor Skating

There are five natural outdoor skating rinks in South Dundas located at Riverside Heights Park, Matilda Memorial Park, Haldane Park, J.C. Whitteker Park and Earl Baker Park. Earl Baker Park is the Municipality's newest outdoor skating rink, which was installed in 2020 and reallocated the rink that was previously located at McIntosh Park in Dundela.

Recreational outdoor skating has been a Canadian tradition for many generations and it is a staple in winter activities. The popularity of outdoor skating was heard in the Master Plan community survey as 77% of respondents supported investment in outdoor skating opportunities, which was the sixth most popular facility type. However, the ability to maintain outdoor rinks has become increasingly difficult due to climate change. Natural ice rinks are the most affordable method to build and maintain given that expenses are largely relegated to water and operational time. Maintenance, however, can be cumbersome when temperatures are near or above the freezing mark during warmer days or weeks.

As a best practice, outdoor skating rinks are best provided through a community development approach where municipalities provide initial set-up and ice flooding and volunteers assist with maintenance and operations. Outdoor skating rinks tend to be operationally intensive as daily upkeep is required to maintain adequate ice quality and thus, harnessing the assistance of volunteers allows municipalities to direct human resources to other areas in the community.

The Municipality works in coordination with local volunteers to provide a good distribution of outdoor skating rinks in the urban and rural areas. As the Master Plan recommends a multi-use pad at Earl Baker Park (for basketball, ball hockey, tennis and pickleball), the Municipality and its volunteers will be able to continue providing an outdoor skating rink at this location. Additional outdoor skating rinks should only be provided if there is a willing group of volunteers coming forward to provide daily maintenance and upkeep. The Municipality should continue to play a supporting role by providing materials, set-up or removal.

Recommendations – Outdoor Skating Rinks

50. Additional outdoor skating rinks **should only be provided if there is a willing group of volunteers coming forward to provide daily maintenance and upkeep.** The Municipality should only be responsible for providing support including materials and initial set-up or removal.

7.14 Camping

South Dundas operates the Iroquois Campground, which is located along the waterfront of the St. Lawrence River. The campground consists of 69 sites for seasonal, transient, monthly and daily users with a variety of amenities, including electricity, water, septic dumping, washrooms, laundry, picnic area and a Campground Building. Similar to the Galop Canal Marina, the Iroquois Campground is a key component of the Iroquois Commons Waterfront Plan given that it draws a considerable portion of users to the waterfront area for outdoor recreation enjoyment.

Suggestions received from the public included enlarging the campsite to accommodate more users, tree plantings and general infrastructure updates. A greater level of supervision was also suggested to ensure that users enjoy a high-quality experience. Approximately half (52%) of respondents supported additional investment in improving the Iroquois Campground.

The Iroquois Campground Operations Plan identifies short- and medium-term improvements, including constructing a new storage building to replace the existing shed, adding three to five premium sites, extending sewer service, and updating utilities at older camp sites. Other plans that were identified included:

- Relocating campground sites along Carman Road's "scenic parkway";
- Expanding the campground, including the 35 relocated spaces from Carman Road with water, hydro, and sewer connections;
- Implementing a new campground layout to organize site use and better define the camping area, while screening views from outside with new plantings;
- Improve and enhance existing site servicing; and
- Increase promotion of the campground to increase usage through online advertising and tourism media.



Figure 18: Excerpt of the Iroquois Campground Operations Plan



Kampgrounds of America's (KOA) 2021 North American Campground Report identifies that between 2020 and 2021, the number of camping households grew by 3.9 million to reach 94.5 million households.¹² While it does not specify the number of Canadian camper households, subtracting 86.1 million camping US households would leave approximately 9 million camper households in Canada.

¹² Kampgrounds of America (KOA). 2020. The 2021 North American Camping Report.

By comparison, a 2015 industry report by the Canadian Camping & RV Council (CCRVC) estimated that there were approximately 5.8 million camping households in Canada, of which 1.8 million reside in Ontario.¹³ These statistics are not directly comparable, but it may infer that there is a growing interest in camping.

Campgrounds have an economic impact on communities as visiting campers seek local experiences such as shopping, dining and entertainment. The CCRVC reports that the camping industry generates approximately \$4.7 billion in economic impact in Canada, along with 66,000 jobs and \$1 billion in tax revenue.¹⁴ While the economic impact from the Iroquois Campground has not been quantified, it is recognized that there is some level of benefit given the close proximity of the downtown area. There may be potential synergies to create tourism packages for camping, trails, performing arts, etc., although the market of campers who may be interested in the arts is not known.

Recent statements from Ontario Parks officials indicate that there is an almost 100% increase in reservations, with bookings jumping from approximately 30,000 at the beginning of 2020 to over 58,000 for the same period in 2021. Ontario Parks attributes this to the COVID-19 pandemic and provincial stay-at-home orders and lockdown control measures.¹⁵

There is no provision target for providing campgrounds as municipalities that provide these amenities do so based on a historical level of service. The CCRVC estimated that in 2014, there were 4,200 campgrounds in Canada, of which 505 sites (12%) were municipally-operated and 51 of these were located in Ontario.¹⁶ Campgrounds are not typically a level of service for municipalities (and it is known that some locations have been decommissioned). As such, the actual number of public campgrounds that are operating today is likely lower. It is noted that there are a number of competing campgrounds in the Municipality including the Whispering Winds RV Park, Arlor Haven Campground and Riverside-Cedar Campground (The St. Lawrence Parks Commission). There are also a number of campgrounds available in adjacent municipalities.

Given the uniqueness of public campgrounds and the resources required to provide this service (e.g., dedicated land and seasonal staffing, infrastructure, etc.), research suggests that public campgrounds tend to break even or generate a profit in order to justify providing it as a service. The South Dundas Iroquois Campground operates on a break-even model as identified in the operations plan. The Municipality projects that between 2021 and 2026, the Iroquois Campground will generate between \$82,000 and \$95,643 per year in revenue, which matches the estimated operating costs.

The Municipality should continue with moving forward with campground enhancements given that a plan has been established, with investments already made, which includes a projected financial model. It will be important for the Municipality to monitor the financial performance of the campground to ensure that it continues to be operated at break even or generate a profit, at a minimum.

Recommendations – Camping

51. Continue to implement the **Iroquois Campground Operations Plan**, which includes providing an enhanced camping experience and heightened promotion and advertising to increase use, on the basis of maintaining a break-even or profit generating operating model.

¹³ Canadian Camping & RV Council. 2015. Camping Industry Portrait in Canada and Ontario.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Butler, C. February 25, 2021. CBC News. Sick of pandemic, lockdowns, eager campers flood Ontario park-reservation sites. Retrieved from <https://www.cbc.ca>

¹⁶ Canadian Camping & RV Council. 2015. Camping Industry Portrait in Canada and Ontario.

7.15 Sand Volleyball Courts

The Municipality provides five sand volleyball courts – three are located at Haldane Park, and single courts are located at Iroquois Beach and Matilda Memorial Park.

Sand volleyball courts are popular in waterfront communities such as South Dundas as they are low-cost activities that offer high energy physical activity as well as social opportunities, particularly among youth and young adults. Sand volleyball courts can also be used for other activities such as badminton or casual sand play. Requests were made for more sand volleyball courts in South Dundas. The community survey found that approximately half (52%) of respondents supported investment in these amenities. Requests for outdoor volleyball opportunities were also made through the consultation process.

There is no industry standard guiding the development of sand volleyball courts as they are typically provided to respond to local needs. As there are no organized sand volleyball users in the Municipality, they primarily facilitate unstructured activities. Sand volleyball is a synonymous beach activity when it comes to waterfront communities such as South Dundas as it provides a casual group activity for residents and beachgoers. As volleyball is a social activity, courts are best provided in groups of two at a minimum. The Iroquois Commons Waterfront Park has proposed that the existing sand volleyball court should be relocated and a second court be added. A sand volleyball court was historically located at the Morrisburg Waterfront Park and there is merit in reintroducing two courts at this location to provide this unstructured, outdoor amenity in the community, as well as support the delivery of recreation programs.

While it is recognized that only one sand volleyball court is located at Matilda Memorial Park, adding a second court is not recommended at time as it is located in a rural area that exhibits a lower level of use compared to the Municipality's waterfront locations. It is recognized, however, that the volleyball court at Matilda Memorial Park can support the Municipality's summer programming that occurs at this site. The Municipality should monitor the use of the sand volleyball court to evaluate the need for a second court at this location.

Recommendations – Sand Volleyball Courts

52. Continue with relocating the sand volleyball court at the **Iroquois Beach** within the site and add a second court.
53. Reintroduce the sand volleyball court at **Morrisburg Beach** and add a second court.
54. Monitor the use of the sand volleyball court at **Matilda Memorial Park** to evaluate the need for a second court at this location.

7.16 Outdoor Fitness Equipment

The Municipality does not currently provide any outdoor fitness equipment. The provision of these amenities is a growing trend being experienced in municipalities across Ontario to encourage no-cost physical outdoor activity. The desire for low-impact fitness activities has been further heightened during the COVID-19 pandemic when indoor fitness services had been temporarily closed.

Outdoor fitness opportunities vary by community. Outdoor fitness equipment can be consolidated at high traffic parks. Equipment can be consolidated at a single location in the park, which allows for potential program opportunities and the ability to offer other amenities such as WIFI for users to download or view online instructional fitness exercises. Outdoor fitness equipment provided along a trail is another common approach to allow for interval training and a mix of cardio and strength training. Other approaches involve the use of existing terrain (e.g., berm or hill) to run on or landscaped open space to participate in outdoor fitness programs.

There are a number of opportunities within South Dundas to introduce outdoor fitness equipment. Emphasis should be given to a limited number of high traffic locations to assess demand within parks and along trail routes such as along the waterfront including at Morrisburg and Iroquois Waterfront, and Duncan Park. Matilda Memorial Park may also be a suitable location to complement other recreation amenities at this site.

At the discretion of staff, other locations for outdoor fitness equipment should be considered, particularly in Neighbourhood or Local Parks to encourage physical activity. For example, there may be opportunities to incorporate outdoor fitness equipment at these smaller parks at a time when other capital projects are being undertaken, such as during playground replacement or pathway development.

Recommendations – Outdoor Fitness Equipment

55. Investigate strategic locations for outdoor fitness equipment, potentially at the **Morrisburg and Iroquois Waterfront, Duncan Park and Matilda Memorial Park**. Opportunities to incorporate outdoor fitness equipment at Neighbourhood or Local Parks should be considered at staff's discretion, potentially at a time when other capital projects are being undertaken such as during playground replacement or pathway development.

7.17 Lawn Bowling Greens

A lawn bowling green is located at Elizabeth Drive Park and is used by the Iroquois Lawn Bowling Club. The organization plays three times a week between May and September. The group has generally maintained approximately 26 members, although drop-in players are also welcomed. The group uses the Iroquois Campground Building as meeting space.

Lawn bowling is a popular activity among older adults and seniors; however, some organizations have had success in introducing the sport to younger generations. This is partly due to its social nature and the Ontario Lawn Bowling Association's buddy program that partners entry-level players with experienced members to enable skill development and overall understanding of the game. Each year, the



Iroquois Lawn Bowling Club hosts an open house to invite members of the public to try the game. Visitors are also welcomed to try the sport for free throughout the year.

Based on current membership levels, additional lawn bowling greens are not required during the planning period. Continuing to generate interest from youth and non-members through promotion of the activity will be essential to the success of the Iroquois Lawn Bowling Club. The new Iroquois Community Hall and planned improvements to the Iroquois Campground will also benefit the organization during the summer months. Continuing to work with the Iroquois Lawn Bowling Club to promote the activity is encouraged to ensure long-term success.

Recommendations – Lawn Bowling Greens

56. Continue to work with the **Iroquois Lawn Bowling Club** to promote the sport to ensure long-term success.

7.18 Disc Golf Courses

Disc golf is a sport in which players throw a flying disc on a course consisting of between 9 and 18 targets (or baskets). Disc golf is a century old game that originated in Canada in the early 1900s and it is now played recreationally and competitively across the world. It has been gaining in popularity in recent times as an increasing number of young adults have been taking up the sport.

The Professional Disc Golf Association is the governing body for the sport, which reported a total of 150,000 professional and amateur members in 2021. Interest in the sport continues to grow as people continue to seek casual and active outdoor physical activities, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. While South Dundas does not have a disc golf course, it was an activity requested through the consultation process and responds to a growing demand for outdoor recreation activities for youth and young adults. It is recognized that the Iroquois Waterfront Committee is evaluating the feasibility of establish a disc golf course near the waterfront, which should continue to be supported to respond to community requests for this amenity.



Recommendations – Disc Golf Courses

57. Continue to support the Iroquois Waterfront Committee in their efforts to study the feasibility of establishing a **disc golf course near the waterfront**.

7.19 Other Recreation Facilities

South Dundas may receive requests for recreational facilities that are not currently provided through its core service mandate. However, there is presently insufficient demand to warrant a specific recommendation in the Master Plan. Regardless, the Municipality must be prepared to respond appropriately to requests pending future market characteristics related to population growth, emerging sports and activities, future recreational trends and preferences, and other demands that may arise for existing activities and facilities.

When public requests are brought forward for investment in new, non-traditional, emerging and non-core municipal facilities, the Municipality should evaluate these recreational needs on a case-by-case basis. This should involve an examination into (but not limited to):

- Local, regional and provincial trends pertaining to usage and popularity of the activity and/or facility;
- Examples of delivery models in other municipalities;
- Local demand for the activity and/or facility;
- The ability of existing municipal facilities to accommodate the new level of service;
- The feasibility for the Municipality to provide the service and/or facility as a core service with consideration given to resources (e.g., staffing), and be able to do so in a cost-effective manner; and
- The willingness and ability of the requesting organization to provide the service and/or facility if provided with appropriate municipal supports.

Recommendations – Other Recreation Facilities

58. Requests for new indoor and outdoor recreation facilities should be **evaluated on a case-by-case basis** with consideration given to trends, examples in other municipalities, local demand, the feasibility of utilizing existing public space, the willingness of an organization to partner in providing the facility or space, and other factors.

8.0 Service Delivery Overview

8.1 South Dundas' Role in Recreation Services

The role of a municipality in delivering and enabling recreation services centres on proactive planning and efficient execution - always in concert with community and stakeholders/partners. In South Dundas, recreation and sports are delivered primarily through community groups. The Department has provided spaces and other supports as groups form and deliver leisure opportunities. Still, much is required to ensure that there is a choice of services available for age groups. There is a continued focus required as trends, conditions and interests change. Specific issues must be addressed such as inactivity levels, engaging persons with disabilities and ensuring that persons experiencing low income can access opportunities. Programs and services are enabled/provided with an aim of being cost efficient, providing quality opportunities and in safe environments.

Both the community partners and South Dundas need to be cognisant of national trends, industry priorities and local service expectations to be informed of the recreational needs within the community.

It is important to articulate the role of Municipality whether it is providing services directly or through a community partner. These following tactics typically result in high levels of public/user satisfaction levels and healthy community outcomes.

- **Understand the growth of the Municipality** and plan for any increase/decrease in service provision based on changes to demographics, income levels, social issues, including persons experiencing low income, persons with disabilities, and other marginalized peoples.
- **Promote the importance** of being engaged in active lifestyles as a lifelong pursuit;
- Incorporate program/service/community-driven approaches that **address social issues** within the community such as youth engagement, isolation among older adults, improving physical activity levels, in the delivery of service etc.;
- **Ensure that infrastructure and amenities** are highly utilized, meet a community need, are in a state of good repair, and are multi-purpose in terms of their use;
- **Provide/enable a full range of recreation and sport activities** based on the needs of the general population, families and within specific age groups;
- **Support partners and other providers** to excel and play their part in providing a full range of services, including joint planning, assistance with training and governance supports, development of common policies and practises etc.;
- **Promote and communicate** all the available opportunities and the benefits of participating in recreation and culture;
- **Work collectively to understand participation rates** by age group and set targets to increase participation;
- **Comply with legislative requirements and incorporate quality assurance measures** while adhering to industry standards and assist community providers in meeting these requirements.
- **Support and recognize the importance of volunteerism** in providing recreation opportunities;

- **Work collectively** with community partners and stakeholders, share knowledge, and new developments in addressing needed improvements such as inclusion and accessibility policies and approaches;
- **Ensure that the financial implications** of having joint responsibility for recreation services is fair-minded and provides a sustainable and proactive recreation system such as facility and sport field fees for volunteer groups supporting children and youth; and
- **Measure the satisfaction levels**, efficiencies and effectiveness of the service delivery system and address needed improvements.

8.2 Recreation Service Delivery Model

The Service Delivery Model in South Dundas is primarily a Community Development Model – this model relies on the community and businesses to provide opportunities, leagues, events, and camps as a first line of response. The primary role of the Municipality is to provide supports to these community organizations through central promotions and communications, municipal grants to promote certain priorities, the fair-minded allocation of public spaces, assistance with volunteer recruitment, training opportunities, grant submission opportunities from other funders and levels of government and assistance with governance.

Further, the role of the Municipality is to ensure that each age cohort has equitable access to a range of programs and services in categories (areas) like active lifestyles, sport, arts and culture, general interest, STEM (Science, Technology, Environmental and Math). The Municipality typically develops an inventory of available opportunities for each age group and assesses participation in each of the program categories listed above. The question should be posed – is there capacity within the system to provide enough and varied opportunities for each age group? The Municipality provides programs and services directly if there are gaps and no group or organization to deliver. This blended methodology provides a well-rounded and balanced approach to service delivery. It is inherent that all the community partners work together to provide a seamless service delivery to the public. The Municipality typically takes a leadership role in assessing opportunities and working as a collective with community partners.

The Parks & Recreation Department assists with special events or leads Council approved special events that prompt residents and visitors to gather and celebrate annual milestones and days of significance. Special Events benefit the community in terms of strengthening community pride and cohesion. Often enough there is an economic spin off within the community in terms of local spending.

The following steps demonstrate how the Parks & Recreation Department provides and enables a meaningful variety of programs and services in South Dundas. The success of this service delivery model depends on the strength and commitment of the parties to serve residents as a collective.

Step One: The Municipality identifies the range of recreation and parks service providers and opportunities – understanding the current suppliers of recreation and parks opportunities whether they are not-for-profit or private providers and their range of services will assist the Municipality in understanding what is available for each age group. A range of choices is paramount to meet varying needs and would include creative, active, sport, outdoor, general interest, and STEM related opportunities.

Step Two: The Municipality and other providers work together to assess community needs – Ideally, the Municipality would facilitate discussions with all service providers to understand their services, who they serve and summarize annual participation numbers by age group.

Step Three: The Municipality provides space, assists with communications/promotions and other supports (space allocation, grants, volunteer recruitment etc.). The work to summarize all opportunities by age group would fall under the responsibility of the Municipality. The Municipality would also promote all opportunities by age group both online and through a community parks and recreation guide.

Step Four: The Municipality provides programs and services directly where there are gaps for certain age groups and partners could not be found – Where there are critical gaps and no organization to provide these services, the Municipality would develop and oversee these programs and services directly until a likely community partner is prepared to do so. The Municipality should also anticipate the resources needed to respond to community-wide social issues such as access and inclusion, inactivity, women in sport, etc., and facilitating community plans and discussions around these issues and endeavours.

Step Five: The Municipality and other service providers monitor participation and satisfaction levels – To continually increase participation and service levels, the Municipality would work with community partners and participants to better understand how to improve service provision and undertake improvements, as necessary.



8.2.1 Opportunities to Strengthen the Community Development Model

The Municipality of South Dundas has a very definitive and proactive role to play in adopting a community development model in enabling/providing leisure opportunities. The specific supports that the Municipality provides in enabling quality and safe programs to the community is a significant undertaking. Best practises include the provision of a blend of supports each to meet the needs of the community not-for-profit providers and includes:

- a) **Understanding Community Needs by Working Together with Groups** – The Municipality must be vigilant in understanding the current menu of services, trends, addressing the needs of each age group through partnerships and providing services directly where there are evident gaps or the inability of groups and organizations to provide the programs/service.
- b) **Promotions and Communications** – A summary of all recreation and parks opportunities both provided by the Municipality and other providers, as well as opportunities in adjacent municipalities, is a public service. The promotion of all opportunities will enable ease of access, lists all programs and services and contacts in one central access point and promotes the range of opportunities available within the community. This is to promote a seamless delivery system and provide full access to residents. Providing these opportunities by age group also increases ease of access.
- c) **Allocation of Space** – The Municipality typically offers the equitable allocation of spaces based on a fair-minded allocation formula and serves affiliated community groups on a priority basis. Current Affiliation and Allocation Policies are required and should be developed and reviewed with community input. Affiliation Policies determine what groups should hold priority in terms of promoting their opportunities, gaining access to publicly funded spaces and in some cases providing insurance through the Municipality. Priority is typically given to children and youth and not-for-profit providers. Allocation policies depict what spaces are available and how they will be allocated and some indicate a pricing structure for publicly funded spaces. These policies must be developed in concert with user groups to ensure that the vision and guiding principles are equitable and fair-minded.
- d) **Ongoing Engagement** – The Municipality should be offering ongoing engagement opportunities to all community service providers on an annual basis to ensure that all representatives have a voice in promoting and raising awareness about the parks and recreation services that they provide. Discussions will include annual and seasonal utilization/participation, improvements to service suggestions, policy development/review inputs, Provincial legislation and Industry Standard requirements, quality assurance models, training opportunities, volunteer recruitment, succession and recognition, new trends, coordinate activities and services, including underrepresented populations, explore opportunities to network and collaborate, and future plans at a minimum.
- e) **Communications Regarding Grant Opportunities** – Many government, sport and support organization grants become available from time to time and may address specific issues (women in sport for example). The Municipality and service providers should share these opportunities to ensure that alternate funding is maximized by the community.
- f) **Municipal Grants** – Structured Community Grants are often offered to not-for-profit groups to assist groups in initiating programs that align with community priorities and current gaps. Often grants are offered as initial start-up funds and some granting policy offer grants for three years to allow the programs to flourish. Often, grant amounts are reduced over a three year period to allow the groups to capture adequate revenues to sustain the program. Start-up funds or funds to assist with training, special events, or address gaps such as including persons with disabilities. While the grants are in place, a further enhancement would be to determine the program gaps

and fund these priorities to encourage groups to form or expand, strengthen their capacity and/or respond to ongoing program and service needs.

- g) **Alignment with Legislated Requirements, Provincial Organizations and Quality Assurance Models** – The Municipality receives through national and provincial organizations ongoing training and professional development opportunities to keep up with issues within the field, and learning about trends in participation, etc. In a Community Development service delivery model, this information must be shared to ensure that other service providers are offering quality and safe experiences within the community.
- h) **Governance Assistance Where Needed** – Many community stakeholder groups may need assistance as they form to align themselves with provincial and national organizations, apply for non-profit group or charitable status, develop a constitution, and oversee their operations in accordance with provincial requirements. Municipal staff will keep abreast of these requirements and assist groups as required. Many training opportunities exist, and central resources are provided by Volunteer Canada. A shared file of these resources could readily support community groups.
- i) **Assistance with Volunteer Recruitment** – the ability to recruit, train, supervise, retain, and recognize volunteers is an ongoing requirement to the success of most community stakeholder groups. Operations depend to a great extent on having a volunteer corps and community groups indicated that they are currently having difficulty attracting and retaining volunteers. South Dundas in its role to assist community groups in the delivery of their recreation, parks and sport services could play a central role in promoting all volunteer postings. There are online applications that match applicants with the skill sets needed and forward potential volunteer applicants to the respective community group for their review. Basic online training can be provided on health and safety, and guidance on facility regulations etc. The programs can also track hours for recognition purposes.
- j) **Access & Inclusion** – The Canadian Human Rights Code dictates that all residents have equal access to services. This legislation requires providers to understand who is underrepresented and to take intentional steps to reduce barriers to better include them. The municipality would assist groups in addressing the diversity in the community and ways of being more inclusive.

8.2.2 Key Observations of the Current Delivery Model

Affiliation and Allocation – The Municipality does well to understand needs and to allocate facility and outdoor spaces fairly to all ages and genders. Ongoing efforts are made to consult the community on the development of policies and procedural developments and changes to reflect community concerns and preferences. Fair minded affiliation and allocation policies will identify what groups have priority (typically children and youth) and how spaces are allocated. This is especially important as new groups form and require access to public spaces.

Communications and Promotions – South Dundas does provide a listing by age group of the opportunities that are directly offered by the Municipality and lists the community groups and their activities. It is beneficial to have a central listing and a guide that lists opportunities for each age group by activity type - physical activity/fitness, STEM, creative, general interest, and sport. Blending the community group activities per age group will allow residents to see what is available for their age cohort in one listing.

Volunteer Recruitment – Many of the community groups indicated that it is increasingly difficult to recruit and retain volunteers. Municipalities in Ontario are acquiring software applications that assist in the recruitment by listing volunteer opportunities, matching skills and competencies, some training, and

tracking of volunteer hours. This central resource augments groups abilities to reach out and recruit volunteers within their own organizations.

Recommendations – Recreation Service Delivery Model

59. Develop a **Promotional Plan** to list and advertise all recreation and parks programs and services that are offered within South Dundas and adjacent municipalities as they are about to begin the registration process including but not limited to print (e.g., newspaper) and social media avenues. Further, augment the online listing of opportunities per age group by including the community group activities for one complete listing by age group and track communication preferences by age group.
60. Engage community organizations on a regular basis to ensure that all representatives have a voice in **promoting and raising awareness** about the parks and recreation services that they provide. Discussion points may include participation data, improvements to service suggestions, policy development/review inputs, legislative and industry standard requirements, quality assurance models, training and volunteer recruitment, succession and recognition, new trends, coordinate activities and services, including underrepresented populations, explore opportunities to network and collaborate, and future plans at a minimum.
61. Refine the **Municipal Grants** program to provide start up and special event funding to encourage community groups to assist in the provision of a robust spectrum of services. Grants could be offered where there are identified gaps and could also be offered over 3 years on a declining basis to assist with sustainability.
62. Develop **Shared Files** for all groups to access and share information on funding/grant opportunities from other levels of government and philanthropic organizations to promote recreation and active living opportunities in South Dundas. Any additional information to groups on trends in recreation and culture, initiatives and plans by other levels of government and key agencies and links to key studies and best practises that could assist groups in the delivery of services should be included.
63. Provide central resources on **Governance** and the formation and ongoing requirements of not-for-profit groups in the delivery of recreation and sport opportunities to keep community groups and agencies abreast of any changes and best practises.
64. Strengthen the ability to **recruit volunteers** to include the use of technology to match volunteer skills with opportunities, provide basic training on policies and track volunteer hours. Work with community groups to understand their difficulties in obtaining and retaining volunteers. Utilize the resources and standards as provided by **Volunteer Canada**.

8.3 Active Living

It is well recognized that community partners deliver recreation and sport in South Dundas. The overall role of the Municipality is strengthened by having an exceptional knowledge of trends, local needs, and the ability to work with partners to deliver a well-rounded menu of opportunities. There is a significant support role in ensuring that there is a range of choices for each age cohort and that all residents can be heard and engaged. Staff must be poised to respond to gaps in provision of service and to address key social issues such as inactivity and a lack of women in sport and recreation. The following objectives will outline the range of work required to contribute to the sustainability of a healthy and cohesive community.

8.3.1 Increasing Physical Activity Levels in South Dundas

Canada continues to focus on ways to increase physical activity levels to reduce chronic health issues. Canada has made very little progress over the last few decades – the Physical Activity Report Card for 2021 gave adults varying grades for types of activity and sedentary time from C to F and children a D+ for overall physical activity. Recreation staff will need to connect with Health Promoters, Education, and other partners to address this critical health issue. With limited staff resources in South Dundas, using the tools described in this section to assist with physical activity will be the best use of staff time.

8.3.1.1 Canada's 24-Hour Movement Guidelines

Canada's 24-Hour Movement Guidelines have replaced Canada's Physical Activity Guidelines. The new guidelines were introduced in 2020 and depict the amount of time various age groups should "Sweat, Step, Sleep and Sit" in a 24-hour timeframe. This is viewed as a more helpful tool for Canadians as the new guidelines speak to the amount of daily recreational screen time that is appropriate from a health perspective. For example, the recommended movement guidelines for children and youth between the ages of seven and 17 are summarized in Table 10. These new guidelines have been developed for all age cohorts and should be communicated and promoted to the public within facilities and online. Discussions with community partners to introduce Physical Literacy, is a good starting point in increasing the frequency, duration, and intensity of physical activity.

Table 10: Canada's 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for Children and Youth Ages 7 to 17.

Activity	Time / Day
Sweat	60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity
Step	Several hours of moderate physical activity
Sleep	Nine to 11 hours for children and youth aged five to 13 years old and Eight to 10 hours for youth aged 14 to 17 years old
Sit	Limit sitting for extended periods No more than two hours of recreational screen time per day

8.3.1.2 Physical Literacy

One approach to increasing physical activity is to ensure that community members have the basic physical skills to participate in active opportunities. The Canadian Sport for Life Movement has developed a Physical Literacy program for all age groups to ensure that they can run, throw, catch, etc. Physical literacy can be taught in existing programs and environments such as in early learning centres, seniors centres, schools, sport clubs etc. Once people are comfortable with the skills to be more active, it is hoped that some barriers to participation in physical activities will be alleviated.

8.3.1.3 ParticipACTION Active APP

ParticipACTION has developed and released a free App that serves to motivate and incentivize Canadians to be more active. The Parks and Recreation Department as an initial approach could promote its use. The App includes daily quick tips, articles, and videos, can connect to tracking devices and provides weekly, monthly, and yearly rewards. The App will also remind you to be active at pre-set times and continues to include upgrades. This is another opportunity for South Dundas to promote physical activity without utilizing significant staff and other resources.

8.3.1.4 The ParticipACTION Community Better Challenge – Top Prize \$100,000

In June of every year ParticipACTION hosts a Community Better Challenge to encourage Canadian communities to get more active. It is open to all communities and residents are encouraged to track minutes of activity on the ParticipACTION App or website from June 1st to the 30th. Total minutes achieved per capita count toward the national winner and a top active community is identified within each province and territory. The fifty finalist communities are asked to apply, explaining why they deserve to be known as Canada's Most Active Community. This initiative has helped community groups and organizations join in and improve activity levels. The prize of \$100,000 often helps to improve infrastructure, program, and equipment levels. North Grenville in Eastern Ontario with a population of 16,000 won the top prize in 2021 as Canada's Most Active Community. The community achieved over nine million physical activity minutes. Some events included a 12-hour tennis marathon and a cartwheel contest lead by the mayor.

Communities and organizations can apply for grants and event tool kits in January/February each year to assist with events and challenges. This could be a way to galvanize community groups and organizations in South Dundas to improve physical activity levels for all age groups and abilities. This could become an annual event.

Recommendations – Increasing Physical Activity Levels in South Dundas

65. Work to **increase the physical activity levels** in South Dundas by:

- a) Communicating the physical activity issue and what community groups and the Municipality can do to address this collectively;
- b) Promoting ParticipACTION's Active App;
- c) Introducing Physical Literacy to all age groups to better enable participation in active pursuits;
- d) Promoting the 24-Hour Movement Guidelines to all South Dundas residents; and
- e) Considering departmental and community capacity to enter the Community Better Challenge through ParticipACTION in 2024 to become Canada's Most Active Community.

8.3.2 Programs & Activities for All Age Groups

The Municipality works to ensure that there is a blend of quality and safe recreation experiences available to all citizens. Staff provide some opportunities directly and enables programs, events, and drop-in opportunities through community groups. The South Dundas' commitment to expanding recreation programs is demonstrated through the Municipality's Recreation Programming Plan to guide the development of activities for all age groups.

A review of the Recreation Programming Plan identified some gaps that must be addressed to ensure that it is meaningful for all residents and the targets are achievable by staff. It is suggested that staff review the Recreational Programming Plan with the following comments in mind.



- The percentage of residents living at the Lower Income Cut-Off must be identified and quantified – currently there are 14% of residents living in households that are experiencing financial barriers. The development of an **Access Policy** must be a priority as well as providing free to low-cost programming. Evaluating participation of residents who gain access through the Access Policy must also be part of the evaluation metric. This should be complemented by subsidies provided by others such as Canadian Tire Jumpstart (see Recommendation #71).
- Persons with Disabilities is not included in the Recreation Programming Plan. It is estimated that 22% of the Canadian population is living with a disability¹⁷, which translates into approximately 2,400 residents in South Dundas. A policy for including persons with disabilities is a first step in understanding recreation program gaps. Working with groups that serve persons with disabilities to offer programs, or offering care givers free access to assist the participant are considerations along with equipment modifications. As the population ages, more residents will require assistance to access recreation and parks programs.
- Working with other underserved populations including but not limited to Indigenous Peoples, women, and the LGBTQ2SIA community will be key in reaching a broader market in South Dundas (see Recommendation #67).
- The program participation targets set by staff by age group seem ambitious as compared to participation rates in other similar sized municipalities. It is recommended that participation rates be determined in year one and that achievable targets be set based on the year one data.
- The Recreation Programming Plan is comprehensive and requires a staged implementation plan based on the staff and funding resources that are available.

A preliminary assessment of opportunities by age group is provided to identify strengths and gaps in recreational pursuits. Table 11 summarizes the opportunities from information that was available. This overall community-wide assessment should be completed on a bi-annual basis to ensure that there are no gaps within each age group.

¹⁷ Statistics Canada. 2017. A demographic, employment and income profile of Canadians with disabilities aged 15 years and over, 2017. Retrieved from <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca>

Table 11: Summary of Municipal Recreation Opportunities by Age Group

Age Group	STEM (Science, Technology, Environment, Mathematics)	Physical Activity	Arts	General Interest	Sport
Pre-School Ages 0 to 6		Drop in Sports Dance Hiking Public Skate Swimming (beach) Playgrounds	Circle Time – Singing (EarlyON)	Play & Story Time (EarlyON)	Soccer Dance
Children (Grades 1 to 5) Ages 7 to 12	Science Wonders	Drop in Sports Martial Arts Dance Public Skate Swimming (beach) Playgrounds	Acrylic Painting Guitar	Arts and Games Girl Guides	Tennis Baseball Hockey Skating Club Soccer
Youth (Grades 6 to 12) Ages 13 to 18		Drop in Sports Gaming (Library) Martial Arts Dance Public Skate Swimming (beach)	Acrylic Painting Guitar		Curling Baseball Hockey Skating Club Rowing Soccer
Adult Ages 19 to 54		Drop in Sports Public Skate Adult Ball Hockey Shinny Boot Camp Chair Yoga Hatha Yoga HIIT Kick Boxing Swimming (beach)	Art Classes	Pet First Aid	Hockey Baseball Curling Rowing Volleyball Pickleball Lawn bowling
Older Adults Ages 55+	Learning Technology	Drop in Sports Public Skate Adult Fitness Classes (as above) Swimming (beach)	Art Classes Beginner Ukulele	Take A Break Travel Club Games	Curling Lawn bowling Badminton Pickleball
Family		Open Gym Public Skate Walking Trails Swimming (beach)			Tennis

Based on the program summary presented on the previous page, the following program gaps are identified, which are activities that are typically provided in other communities to ensure that broad opportunities are available to respond to varied interests. The caution is that there has not been a “normal” year of programming in two years and participation rates will take time to get to the pre-pandemic levels. Apparent gaps (at the time of writing) are identified as including a lack of:

- STEM programs and opportunities for pre-school, youth, adults, and families;
- Creative (visual and performing arts) programming for families; and
- General interest programming for youth, and families.

The consultation process found that there is a desire for more recreation programs for all age groups, including in the rural area and during the evenings. The Master Plan community survey reported that between 16% and 42% of respondents were satisfied with the recreation activities in South Dundas, suggesting that this is an area for improvement (Table 12). Nearly two-thirds (63%) of respondents also indicated that they are willing to pay an increased fee for enhanced recreation programs.

Table 12: Satisfaction in Municipality of South Dundas Programs and Services by Age Group

Age Group	Very Satisfied or Somewhat Satisfied
Pre-School (Ages 1 to 5)	29%
School-Aged (Ages 6 to 12)	35%
Youth (Ages 13 to 19)	16%
Adults (Ages 20 to 54)	30%
Older Adults (Ages 60+)	36%
Families	42%
Average	31% overall

As a general guide, a target satisfaction rate of 80% is recommended, which aligns with industry best practices. Efforts to enhance program participation are ongoing as the Municipality implements its Recreational Programming Plan and is working on developing an online booking and registration system, which also aims to boost program participation in the rural area. The Master Plan also contains recommendations to support enhanced programming efforts such as expanding the Recreation Coordinator to a full-time position to play a larger role in facilitating program delivery, promotion and other responsibilities.

8.3.3 Children

Fulsome information is not available at this time with respect to the capacity (number of spaces available) of programs and camps and registration numbers given the program and camp cancellations over the last two years. This information is important for the Municipality to understand if the current system and if opportunities can accommodate the current number of children. This will also serve to identify any pent-up demands through waiting lists. This data will identify where additional courses could be offered and low registered programs decreased. There is a current lack of programs for children in STEM, cultural (visual and performing arts) and general interest opportunities.



It is recommended that Council approve the direction that staff provide needed programs and services directly if a community partner cannot be found. There is a strong indication that the community would like a broader range of programs and services.

It is inherent on the Municipality to ensure that any providers using municipal spaces to offer programs are compliant with quality assurance frameworks and legislated requirements such as Parks and Recreation Ontario **HIGH FIVE Principles of Healthy Child Development**. HIGH FIVE is a quality assurance standard in the provision of recreation programs and camps. HIGHFIVE also addresses physical literacy training to address strengthening a child's capacity to be physically active. The standards emphasize five principles that ensure that a quality and safe experience is enjoyed by all participants and includes:

- A caring leader;
- An opportunity to make friends;
- An opportunity to play;
- An opportunity to develop new skills; and
- An opportunity to participate.

Certification in HIGHFIVE involves training, assessing existing programs and addressing any identified gaps. Certification is an industry standard and should be achieved whether a program is offered by community partners or the Municipality directly – especially within municipally owned places and spaces.

8.3.4 Youth

The opportunities for youth in South Dundas provide a variety of choices between drop-in and formalized programs. The Youth Plan developed in 2019 identified three priorities for youth – enhance promotion of existing youth opportunities, increase the number of sport opportunities and ensure that their ideas are considered. Leadership opportunities should be offered to youth to enable them to be employment ready within the recreation and sport system. This is an opportunity for the South Dundas Youth Committee to discuss and help to implement.

Ontario's Playworks Partnership for Active and Engaged Youth is a group of youth serving organizations including Parks and Recreation Ontario, the Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada – Central Region, 4-H Ontario, Ontario Physical and Health Educators Association (OPHEA), Arts Network for Children and Youth, and the YMCA Ontario. This community of youth serving organizations has researched, defined, and promoted a well-recognized quality assurance framework. It articulates what must exist in a community to demonstrate support for youth. Youth Friendly Communities work to increase the commitment and interest in enabling recreation services for youth. Communities work with partners to address 10 criteria within the community to establish and validate a real commitment toward youth such as providing options for play, formally connecting with the community, evidence of supporting positive youth development, and more. Communities are awarded Youth Friendly status at varying levels by demonstrating their provision of services and youth engagement efforts. Using these criteria in South Dundas will ensure quality experiences for youth and promote its dedication to youth engagement and positive reinforcement.

Applying the Youth Friendly principles would engage all organizations that support youth development to identify gaps and strengthen South Dundas' commitment toward youth development. This is an industry standard within the recreation and municipal field and although the application is arduous – applying the principles is a logical first step given the capacity of the Department.



8.3.5 Adults

The community engagement sessions indicated that there is a lack of programs for adults – or not the range of choices expected. While adults typically self-organize and use municipal spaces, there may be a need to consult to a greater extent with this population to understand any pent-up interests and the opportunity to assist groups in developing and organizing more recreational opportunities.

8.3.6 Older Adults and Seniors

Older adults are well serviced in South Dundas from a recreation perspective. Many opportunities are self-organized by the older adult population. There may be a capacity issue as the older adult population ages and volunteerism decreases. There is a trend for older adults to join adult programs and services and for elders to self-organize their own social, creative, and physical activities. Ensuring that there are adequate opportunities for this growing population will require working in partnership with older adult serving organizations. Older adults do exemplary work to self-govern and the Municipality should only look to provide and enable programs and services where there are gaps, and the community is unable to respond through volunteerism.

Parks and Recreation Ontario has developed a quality assurance framework in the offering of recreation programs and services to older adults and seniors. The course and assessment tools offer staff and volunteers insight into the unique requirements of service delivery and engagement with the older population. It builds on the Principles of Healthy Child Development and strengthens an organization's ability to plan programs, respect what elders face with ageism, physical literacy, social connectedness, and overall enhancements to the quality of life for older adults. This is a suggested requirement for any organization or staff working with older adults and seniors.

8.3.7 Special Events & Celebrations in South Dundas

With the support of Council, the Municipality invests resources to support approximately eight special events throughout the year. Special events provide several benefits including building community cohesion and civic pride and in generating economic development opportunities for local business owners. South Dundas provides a schedule of special events that occur throughout the year and staff provide support in set-up/take-down, marketing and assisting community groups with organization. A sampling of annual events includes the Tubie Fest and the Harvest Festival.

The development of a Special Events Policy should outline the benefits to the community, the conditions under which the Municipality will lead Council approved events and conditions for community lead events. Further, the Policy should indicate the commitments of Council in terms of resources to assist community lead events and an evaluation metric of each event on an annual basis. Guidelines for safe fire pits for special events should also be investigated to respond to requests received through the consultation process.

To justify further resources that will be required as events expand and more requests are received, it will be important to ensure that the return on the investment (ROI) can justify additional events and resources. Measuring the ROI can be done from a financial perspective (e.g., total municipal costs divided by the number of attendees or total cost subtracted from funds raised as a percentage of total costs). Quantifying the success of an event would be completed by measuring annual attendance and satisfaction levels among attendees, monitoring social media activity, and sponsor recognition. Both qualitative and quantitative measures should be developed to ensure the best use of public funding.

8.3.8 Accessing Space in Schools

Reciprocal agreements with school boards identify conditions whereby both the Municipality and schools can permit spaces within each institution's purview. This approach maximizes the use of public spaces for each institution's purposes. These agreements serve as a framework to improve the relationship between schools and municipalities. South Dundas does not have an agreement in place currently with the Upper Canada District School Board or the Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario. It is recommended that these conversations commence to understand if there is a willingness for a reciprocal agreement.

Recommendations – Programs & Activities for All Age Groups

66. Update the Municipality's **Recreational Programming Plan** to recognize the need to be inclusive and welcoming of all residents, regardless of income, ability, background, orientation and gender, as well as to address activity gaps including STEM, creative programs, and general interest programs.
67. Aim to achieve a collective **satisfaction level of at least 80%** for recreation programs and services through annual adjustments to provision, based on community input.
68. Strive to engage **at least 25% of a given age cohort** in programs, services, and sports within South Dundas.
69. Work with community partners to **implement quality assurance frameworks** in the provision of service including HIGH FIVE – Principles of Healthy Childhood Development, Youth Friendly Community Criteria, and the Principles of Healthy Aging.
70. Develop a **Special Events and Festivals Policy** to outline Council's commitments, partnership conditions, resource allocations including an evaluation metric. Further, that requirements for safe fire pits in special events be investigated.
71. Commence discussions with the Upper Canada District School Board and the Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario to determine if there is a willingness to develop **reciprocal use agreements** with the Municipality of South Dundas.

8.4 Access & Inclusion

Municipalities in Ontario are increasing their efforts to include underrepresented residents in all activities. Intentional efforts to identify who might be marginalized and arranging open discussions about barriers and preferred activities are being undertaken. The development of a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion policy to identify underserved populations and what efforts the Municipality and partners will commit to is the first undertaking. Staff and volunteers must be trained to assist in creating welcoming environments and services. Ongoing discussions to work together to reflect the community within parks and recreation programs and services is a continued requirement.

The make-up of each municipality in Ontario is unique and different from each other, and the provision of services must respect and celebrate these differences. Recreation programs and services become more meaningful by knowing the make-up of the community and by engaging residents when determining their needs and addressing barriers. Governments and businesses have embraced diversity, equity, and inclusion to a greater extent to expand their reach and respect that everyone has a right to service provision. To be successful in engaging all residents, policies and actions to include underserved residents must be more intentional.

8.4.1 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Best Practices within Municipal Parks, Recreation and Culture Departments

Policy Development and Refinement – A Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy recognises that residents come from different backgrounds and may have differing needs. A policy will articulate this in its purpose and will indicate what the municipal staff and partners will do to be more inclusive individually and jointly. A review of all existing policies as to their language and intent will also apply an equity lens.

Observe the Use of Public Spaces – It is most important to the success of diversity, inclusion, and equity efforts to fully understand who is using public spaces, who feels safe, and what supports, and amenities are needed to enhance this use. It is more important to understand who is not utilizing public spaces in identifying and addressing barriers to participation.

An Equity Lens – As programs and services are developed/enabled and reviewed, it is important to ask three questions to address equity principles in a highly diverse community. These queries include:

- What underrepresented groups were consulted as the program/service/policy was under development or under review?
- What were the results of this engagement effort and how did it change the implementation and delivery?
- What underrepresented residents were attracted to the program and what did the evaluations indicate?

Respecting Intersectionality – Intersectionality speaks to the way that people identify which is often as many different identities. One person might identify as two-spirited, experiencing low income and Indigenous while another person might identify as a transgender person with a disability. Respecting the notion of intersectionality prompts staff to better understand language, terms, varying needs, that one size does not fit all and most importantly to create/enable welcoming and safe spaces and programs for all.

Committee, Staff and Volunteer Representation – Ensuring that committees represent the residents they serve lends to employing diverse and enriched opinions in decision making through staff, volunteers, and advisory committees. This should be a policy at the corporate level to blend with the skills and competencies needed to provide services and bring diverse opinions to the table.

Staff Development and Training – The effort to train and develop staff around the concepts of diversity, equity and inclusion will result in the skills and competencies needed to enable, refine, and create programs and services that serve a broader population.

Measure Success – A more in-depth understanding of South Dundas' baseline participation data and information will help to identify gaps and specific diversity, inclusion, and equity goals. Comparing the number of persons with disabilities to general recreation participation numbers will be telling as well as the number of persons experiencing low income in the Municipality as compared to the number of residents currently receiving subsidies. All efforts should be made to achieve similar participation percentages as the general population.

8.4.2 Women Participating in Sport and Recreation

Participation in sport and recreation by girls and women is on a downward trend in Canada. Canadian Women in Sport in concert with the Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities released a report in a national study entitled The Rally Report in June of 2020 regarding sport participation for girls aged six to 18. The findings noted that girl's participation in sport is much lower than boys the same age and further that girls experience a significant drop out rate by late adolescence. One in three girls leave sport as compared to one in 10 boys. Among the barriers cited, girls stated low levels of confidence, low body image, lack of skills and feeling unwelcomed in a sport environment. In 1992 over half of women over 15 participated in sport.



By 2019, 28% of women participate in sport while 62% do not. Current studies are demonstrating that one in four girls are not committed to returning to sport after the Pandemic. This declining participation rate is alarming, and the Federal government has declared that we will achieve gender equity in sport by 2035 in Canada. The Canadian Women and Sport (CWS) supports and enables girls, women and gender diverse people in pursuing sport and active lifestyles, and keeps women actively engaged in building community capacity. CWS priority and focus is to develop and support welcoming environments and sustainable models where women are trained to lead and promote active opportunities in concert with community partners such as municipalities, universities, and not-for-profit organizations. They have many resources that are readily available to audit policies and practices and help to build capacity within community organizations. Women participation in community-driven sport and recreation has not been identified as a priority in South Dundas at this time but warrants an assessment and follow up actions.

8.4.3 Persons Experiencing Low Income

South Dundas understands that 14% (approximately 1,540 residents) of its population experiences low income and face barriers to participation in recreation. The Municipality does not have a defined access policy for persons experiencing low income and it is recommended that a policy be developed complete with implementation and funding options. Leading edge work in this area measures participation rates and targets participation to be at the same rate as the general population. Further universally free or low-cost programming is offered to all residents to reduce any stigmas attached to participation.

Leading approaches in Ontario offer persons living at the Lower Income Measure (LIM) an annual allowance to seamlessly access programs and services. This allows freedom of choice and reduces barriers to requesting approval each time a participant experiencing low income wishes to participate.

8.4.4 Persons with Disabilities

South Dundas staff work with the United Counties of Stormont Dundas and Glengarry Accessibility Committee to ensure that physical access and customer service standards meet the legislative requirements of the Ontarians with a Disabilities Act (AODA). Caregivers are typically welcomed at no fee to assist participants in accessing programs and drop in opportunities. The national average of persons with disabilities is 20% and as applied to South Dundas – over 2,200 people over the age of 15 years could be experiencing barriers to participation due to a disability. Staff has indicated that there is no current policy or practises in place to support persons with disabilities in municipally provided services. More discussions amongst the recreation and sport providers are required to address potential supports for persons with disabilities to participate in programs and services.

8.4.5 Safe Spaces & Positive Spaces

The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, Questioning, Intersexed and Two-Spirited Plus (LGBTQI2S+) community often experience exclusionary behaviours. With the recognition that 13% of the Canadian population identifies as LGBTQI2S, more intentional efforts are needed to provide welcoming recreational and sport environments. The introduction of “Safe Spaces” is one way of welcoming this community to public places. Safe Spaces was developed by Safe Spaces Canada whereby signage on the entrance to community centres and public space indicates that staff have been trained in reducing homophobic and transphobic gestures and slurs and in creating welcoming environments.

Further discussions with this community and local support groups as well as training of staff and volunteers in public spaces is recommended and will serve to reduce barriers to participation.

8.4.6 Indigenous Peoples

All communities have a role to play in recognizing the land that Indigenous Peoples lived on before land settlements and in being inclusive of these peoples. South Dundas is located on the traditional territories of the Mohawk nation of Akwesasne Peoples. According to 2016 Statistics Canada Census data there are over 105 residents who identify as having North American Aboriginal origins and/or identify as Indigenous within South Dundas.

The Truth and Reconciliation Report (2015) and the Parks for All Report (2017) speak to the role that Canadians have in reconciling with Indigenous Peoples over history. The following excerpt from the Truth and Reconciliation Report articulates the call to action through sport.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Calls to Action (2015) – Sports and Reconciliation (all levels of government):

87. We call upon all levels of government, in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, sports halls of fame, and other relevant organizations, to provide public education that tells the national story of Aboriginal athletes in history.

88. We call upon all levels of government to take action to ensure long-term Aboriginal athlete development and growth, and continued support for the North American Indigenous Games, including funding to host the games and for provincial and territorial team preparation and travel.

Communities and especially recreation, parks, and culture organizations are emphasizing the role of Indigenous Peoples through education, arts, sports, parks amenities and interpretation. With greater awareness being raised regarding Indigenous Peoples and the Federal government's focus towards Truth and Reconciliation, municipalities are first and foremost listening to the needs of Indigenous Peoples locally. Some communities are teaching Indigenous sports, providing public spaces, showcasing Indigenous history through public art in community centres and parks along with exploring programs reflective of First Nations sports and culture.

Engaging and listening to diverse and underrepresented populations is the initial and most important step in understanding what exists and what can exist to increase representation and participation. Initial discussions centre on understanding leisure and sport program and service needs, how to improve access, and navigate municipal government. Working collectively with all related organization can serve to strengthen participation in leisure and sport activities in South Dundas.

Recommendations – Access & Inclusion

72. Develop an **Equity and Inclusion Policy** with community partners to identify what actions South Dundas and partners are committed to, including underrepresented residents within Parks and Recreation.
73. Provide and enable **training and professional development** opportunities for staff, partners, and volunteers with respect to equity and inclusion of all underrepresented populations in the delivery of services.
74. Organize and **meet with underrepresented residents and organizations** as well as leisure/sport service providers to determine what the Municipality is doing well and what could be done to be more intentionally inclusive of all residents facing barriers.
75. Complete an analysis of the **number of women** and those identifying as women participating in recreation, and sport, pursuits by age group in South Dundas. Address gaps through community discussions with women and those who identify as women to address barriers to participation and increase equity. Work with other organizations to **increase participation among women** in active and sport pursuits.
76. Summarize all funding sources that **subsidize persons experiencing low income** in South Dundas. Provide this information to Social Service personnel working with recipients of government funding and post this information on the website as a first step. Develop a **Standard Access Policy** for South Dundas residents experiencing low income to improve seamless access to programs, services, and sport.
77. Meet with groups representing **persons with disabilities** to develop programs and approaches to include more persons with disabilities into recreation programs.
78. Ensure that all public spaces and facilities are safe and welcoming spaces for the **LGBTQI2S community**. Provide staff, volunteers, and partner training to better welcome and include these residents.
79. Engage with the **Indigenous community** to listen and understand how they would like to be included to a greater extent and represented in parks, sport, and recreation within South Dundas.

8.5 Parks & Recreation Capacity

Building capacity in Parks and Recreation focusses on work that is completed internally for the most part, including policy development, training, volunteerism, strengthening partnerships and other initiatives to provide exemplary services to the public.

South Dundas has a Recreation Coordinator on a Part-time basis. The position is providing leadership in providing well rounded services, quality assurance and policy development. The internal capacity work is in progress, and it will take time to demonstrate that fulsome policies and high-performance measures are in place.

8.5.1 Legislative Compliance

Reviewing adherence to legislative and industry standards ensures that operations are compliant and embracing the highest operational standards. Municipalities test their compliance on an annual basis at a minimum and make operational changes as legislative requirements and industry standards change.

8.5.2 Aquatic Safety Management Program

The Lifesaving Society – Ontario Branch has developed an Aquatic Safety Management Program to ensure that aquatic service providers can comply with legislative requirements and industry standards. This is critical from a liability standpoint and to prevent the possibility of water incidents. The Society offers an audit service to review all aspects of safety in and around water at pools and waterfronts. An Aquatic Safety Accreditation Program shows recognition for compliance. The South Dundas waterfront is not accredited at this time.



8.5.3 Policies

The Department continues to develop new policies that are relevant to their current operations. A **Special Events and Festivals Policy**, **Affiliation and Allocation Policy** and an **Equity, and Inclusion Policy** (all discussed in previous sections) are recommended. This section recommends a **Partnership and Sponsorship Policy** to look at alternate revenue streams to fund recreation and cultural services. Each policy that is developed should engage the public and relevant stakeholders to understand their priorities and how certain policy statements may improve their ability to operate groups or access services. Staff should develop a system to automatically review existing and new policies on a consistent basis.

8.5.4 Volunteerism

During the community consultation to support the development of the plan many community stakeholder groups indicated that they were having issues with the recruitment and retention of volunteers. It would be prudent to meet with community groups to discuss volunteer promotion, a common and central location to list opportunities and a streamlined approach to matching volunteers with opportunities.

Current best practices in Volunteerism include online software to recruit, match skills and competencies, track hours and provide training modules. Many municipalities have implemented an online system to match volunteers with volunteer needs and the Department usually takes on the responsibility to list opportunities. It is important to investigate online Volunteer applications that serve to recruit and provide training modules in standard practices. This may save community organizations and staff many hours of repeated training time.

8.5.5 Costing of Services in Setting Fair Minded Fees

The Municipality's User Fees and Charges By-law is reviewed annually, and adjustments are made based on the fees that are set in adjacent municipalities. The costs to provide programs and services and determine an equitable cost recovery formula is not currently part of developing a fee schedule for parks and recreation services in South Dundas. Through the consultation process, community groups indicated that they would like to understand how fees are set and how much they are subsidized by the Municipality. Some felt that fees were too high, while almost 50% of respondents were willing to pay more for enhanced services.

South Dundas partially offsets the financial costs of providing parks and recreation services through several revenue streams, most notably user fees, entrance fees, taxation and, to a lesser extent, sponsorships/grants/partnerships. The Department also accepts that there are non-financial and intangible benefits that offset fiscal expenditures by way of increased physical and social health among residents, contributions to community vibrancy and cohesion etc. Therefore, the degree to which quantifiable costs are "recovered" is dictated by the Municipality's philosophy surrounding the "value" of the service that it provides to residents and the community. The first step in setting fair minded fees and cost recovery levels is understanding the cost to provide the service. This is a first step and an arduous task and will involve guidance and assistance from the Finance Department (to set corporate guidelines).

Once costs are known – to produce an hour of ice, for example – the current cost recovery levels can be ascertained by understanding the percentage of the costs that are recovered through the current fee structure. A comparison to the market rate is usually undertaken to determine if fees can be modified. Setting of fees can be developed by determining which age groups or types of programs should receive greater subsidies.

8.5.6 Community Partnerships and Sponsorships

The Parks & Recreation Department works with community partners to provide the highest level of service to the public while maximizing resources. The starting point for successful partnerships and sponsorships is to develop a policy that articulates the types of services that will seek both partners and sponsors and define a transparent method of procuring these relationships. The goal is to maximize the community's assets and increase services at a shared cost or effort. There is a clear commitment to working with community partners and there are numerous arrangements in place. Each existing partnership arrangement has been considered on its own merit.

8.5.7 Partnership Principles for Parks and Recreation

Each partnership must be considered with the following guiding principles in mind:

- The outcome of the partnership is aligned with municipal values, mandate, and priorities.
- There is an articulated need for the proposed program or service in the community.
- The financial and liability risks to the Municipality are shared or reduced.
- The partner is equipped and qualified to co-deliver the service through identified efficiencies, and the ability to reach an identified segment of the population.
- The quality of the program or service provided through the partnership meets municipal quality assurance and risk management requirements and complies with legislation.
- Unsolicited for-profit partnership proposals are dealt with transparently and through a competitive process as identified in a procurement process.
- Accountabilities and responsibilities can be clearly defined and complied with; and
- Annual reporting requirements capture participation numbers, expenditure reduction or revenue enhancement, and are clearly aligned with departmental objectives.

In all partnership arrangements, specifications and requirements must ensure that the partner respects and aligns with the Department's key goals and objectives. The value in seeking out and formalizing partnerships provides a net benefit to both organizations and reduce costs to the Municipality. Where possible, the Municipality is encouraged to work with community partners, as well as in coordination with other corporate departments (e.g., Business & Development, Tourism, etc.) to implement recommendations contained in this Master Plan to share roles, responsibilities, resources, and ensure consistency in approach. It is recommended that staff develop standardized agreements with community partners who may share public spaces or work collectively to offer programs and services.

8.5.8 Complaints Management

The Department employs a complaints management system to understand and address the complaint. For example, in the springtime, as grass is growing, staff cannot cut grass to an acceptable standard while cleaning up parks from the winter months. Complaints are received and staff address them as quickly as resources will allow. Staff know that this issue occurs year over year and added communications can inform the public of the issue and ask for their patience. This would create an understanding of the operational requirements and address public concerns. The complaints system is not used to this extent and taking a more planned and proactive approach would serve to better inform the public.

8.5.9 Measuring Performance Recreation Services Strengthens Accountability

Performance measures hold staff accountable for their work and provide valuable information in comparing performance against intended service targets year to year. This information provides baseline data on which to refine and set achievable targets. This approach to enhance service delivery provides a vehicle to analyze what is important and allows staff to change course if changes are warranted. The objective is to align measures with the goals and objectives of the corporation and Department. The key is to keep measures simple to tell the story of how the Department meets its mission. For example, if the goal of recreation is to increase participation and utilize facilities to their maximum capacity with high levels of satisfaction; then measures will centre around increasing participation from the previous year, communicating the capacity and utilization of public facilities, and testing public satisfaction levels. Measures need not be complex – they just need to tell a story and influence future actions.

A framework for measuring performance is suggested to be implemented in parks and recreation. Data is currently being collected and annual reporting is anticipated. The Recreation Programming Plan should also be a simple illustration that staff and the public can glean and determine if targets are being met or have been exceeded.

A typical performance measurement framework for the Parks & Recreation Department includes capturing the inputs (resources approved to deliver service), outputs (what was achieved within the approved resources, such as number of participants, square metres of facilities tended, etc.), efficiencies (the unit costs to deliver each service) and effectiveness (public and user satisfaction levels) (Table 13).



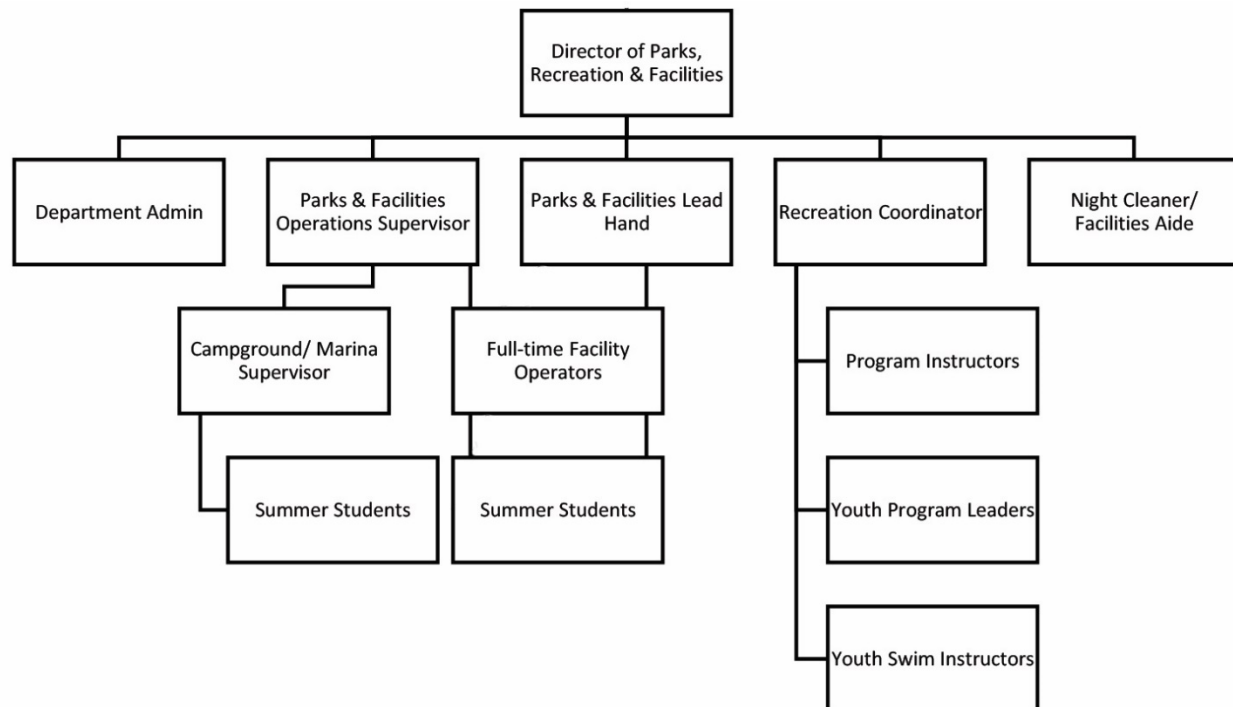
Table 13: Potential Performance Measurement Model

Performance Measure Type	Answers These Questions	Suggested Measures
Inputs	What resources are allotted to parks and recreation (staff, financial and physical spaces)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full time equivalents (FTEs) in staff • Budget for key service areas • Asset inventory • Number of Volunteers
Outputs	<p>What did the Department achieve with the resources provided?</p> <p>Were there increases/decreases in certain areas?</p> <p>How did these outputs compare to previous years and program related targets?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation per age group achieved • Participation in programs and drop-in opportunities. • Results compared to the previous year or the average of the previous three years • Any pent-up demands
Efficiencies	What are the high-level unit costs and have any been reduced by increased participation/productivity?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on unit costs (increased participation might result in a reduction of unit costs over all) • Efficiencies achieved through doing things differently • Cost savings realized through partnerships and grants or alternate revenue streams
Effectiveness	<p>How do users and public rate services?</p> <p>Have there been satisfaction level improvements in targeted areas?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall public and satisfaction levels • Number of complaints as compared to the previous year • Comparison to previous year ratings as compared to the average of the last three years

8.5.10 Staffing Capacity in an Active Community

The organizational structure in the Parks & Recreation Department is well designed in that it ensures that like functions are captured together to service like customers (Figure 19). Parks and arena staff serve 6 months in the arena and six months in the parks system for the most part. Recreation staff are utilized to work with groups, be a source of information and address developing services where there is a need. The system is effective and can be described as a lean operation. The recommendations in the Parks & Recreation Master Plan will impact the staff effort required to better service the residents of South Dundas.

Figure 19: Municipality of South Dundas Parks and Recreation Department Organizational Chart



The recreation needs are significant not only to respond to a changing community but to increase the current level of service as requested by the public. There are needs demonstrated to increase programming for age groups (including in the rural area), general promotion and awareness, regular communication with community groups, develop baseline policies, address equity/inclusion efforts, and increase volunteerism. To lead these initiatives, expanding the part-time Recreation Coordinator to a full-time position is recommended. During the mid-term update to the Master Plan, consideration should be given to the need for a Recreation Programmer role to provide additional human resources to support greater public expectations for programs, events, policies and other service delivery needs, which should be based on demonstrated demand.

A Recreation Coordinator would have responsibility for policy and procedure development, target setting/performance standards, data management, legislative and industry standard compliance, community development, preparing reports to Council and overall administration and operations of recreation services. A Recreation Programmer would have more operational responsibilities, including program development, working with community recreation and sport providers, supporting special events staff training, policy and procedural compliance – essentially the more operational requirements of recreation services.

8.5.11 Governance – A Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee

The implementation of the Parks & Recreation Master Plan will require ongoing community input to ensure that the public voice is heard and reflected in the delivery of service. The responsibility of the advisory committee would be to assist staff in implementing the recommendations housed in the Master Plan by providing guidance and advice. Representation of various age cohorts and skill backgrounds will be imperative to the success of its body of work. For example, marketing and communications is recommended in the plan and therefore a community member with this background can assist to a great extent. The committee would make recommendations to staff or Council pending the issue but would have no authority to approve budgets, hire staff or enter contracts.

Often a Council member sits on the advisory committee as an ex-officio member who can represent the advisory committee at Council. A senior staff member would report to the committee to share the implementation plan, provide draft policies and procedural documents for comment and bring new trends and research findings forward for consideration. A recruitment plan would involve providing a terms of reference and recruiting members based on their skills, experience and a combination of age cohort representation. A terms of reference with deliverables and a skill and competency based advisory committee will strengthen the parks and recreation service delivery in South Dundas.



Recommendations – Parks & Recreation Capacity

80. Demonstrate compliance with **legislative and industry standards** in the operations of the Parks & Recreation Department.
81. That the South Dundas Waterfront be audited for compliance with legislation and industry standards through the Lifesaving Society Ontario Branch **Water Safety Management Program** to ensure that operations meet high performance standards in preventing water incidents.
82. Develop a **Sponsorship Policy** to seek out alternate revenue sources to offset the cost to provide Parks and Recreation.
83. Develop a standardized **Partnership and/or Sponsorship Agreement or Memorandums of Understanding** to apply to various partnership types and to standardize municipal and partner expectations.
84. Apply a consistent formula to better **understand the costs** to provide the various parks and recreation services and determine current cost recovery levels. Develop a fair minded and transparent **Pricing Policy** to ensure that fees are equitable and respect the value that each service provides to the community.
85. Utilize the data from the **Complaints Management** system to align staff assignments and to communicate in advance of annual concerns (e.g., grass cutting levels in the spring of each year).
86. Develop a meaningful set of **Performance Measures** in Parks and Recreation that describe the inputs, outputs, efficiencies, and effectiveness measures employed in each discipline.
87. Seek Council approval to make the **Recreation Coordinator** a full-time position as an addition to the staff complement to address the recommended actions for expanding programs for all age groups, community group liaison, volunteer recruitment, policy development, performance measurement etc.
88. Assess the need for a **Recreation Programmer** position in 2025 to address the increased recreation needs of a changing population with greater expectations.
89. Investigate the merits of introducing a skills and competency-based **Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee** to assist in the implementation of the Parks & Recreation Master Plan.

9.0 Master Plan Implementation

9.1 Monitoring & Updating the Master Plan

The Municipality should regularly review and assess, and periodically revise the recommendations of the Master Plan to ensure that they remain reflective of local conditions and responsive to the changing needs of the community. This will require measuring the performance of various parks and recreation services including monitoring population growth and projections; tracking activity patterns, participation levels, facility utilization, and user satisfaction levels. Regular dialogue with community organizations during the planning period will be particularly important to maintain open lines of communication and to discuss a range of topics such as how groups are recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure long-term success and how the Municipality and organizations can work better together, including how this Master Plan can be fully implemented.

These metrics and the input received from community organizations will provide the Municipality with the information needed to undertake a mid-cycle Master Plan update by 2027 and a full update by 2031. Through these mechanisms, or as a result of other internal or external factors – adjustments of resource allocations and priorities identified in this Master Plan may be required.

To highlight achievements and statistics related to parks and recreation, as well as the implementation of the Master Plan, the Municipality should present regular (e.g., annual or bi-annual) status reports to Council. This report should also be extended to include objectives and recommendations that staff seek to achieve within the short-term. As a part of annual work plans, staff should outline financial requirements and other resources required to implement recommendations such as involvement with other Municipal departments and partners (e.g., community groups, committees, etc.).

Reviewing the Master Plan requires commitment from all staff involved in the planning, financing and delivery of parks and recreation services. The following steps may be used to conduct an annual review of the Master Plan.

- Review of the past year (recommendations implemented, capital projects undertaken, success/failure of new and existing initiatives, changes in participation levels, issues arising from the public and community groups, etc.);
- Identification of issues impacting the coming year (anticipated financial and operational constraints, emerging opportunities, updated population data and forecasts, etc.);
- Cursory review of the Plan for direction regarding its recommendations;
- Preparation of a staff report to indicate prioritization of short-term projects and determination of which projects should be implemented in the coming year based upon criteria established by staff (e.g., financial limitations, community input, partnership/funding potential, etc.);
- Communication to staff and Council regarding the status of projects, criteria used to prioritize projects and projects to be implemented in the coming year; and
- Budget requests/revisions as necessary.

Recommendations – Monitoring & Updating the Master Plan

90. Develop a system for **regular monitoring and reporting** for the Master Plan, which should include tracking activity patterns, facility usage, activity levels, trends and completed recommendations to provide status reports to Council.
91. Undertake regular **dialogue with community organizations** to understand how groups are recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure long-term success and how organizations and the Municipality can work together to fully implement the recommendations of the Master Plan.
92. Establish **annual work plans** that identifies Master Plan recommendations that staff seek to achieve within the short-term. Work plans should identify financial requirements and other resources required to implement recommendations such as involvement with other Municipal departments and partners (e.g., community groups, committees, etc.).
93. Undertake a **mid-cycle review** around 2027 and a **full review and update** of the Master Plan by 2031. Timing may be adjusted based on the pace of implementation and changes in population growth, trends and other internal and external factors.

9.2 Funding the Parks & Recreation Master Plan

The Municipality has limited resources and cannot afford to do everything that the community desires; this is one of the primary reasons for undertaking the Master Plan to establish priorities and ensure that resources are allocated responsibly. The Master Plan's recommendations recognize that the Municipality has been proactive in strategic asset management to plan for the renewal of existing infrastructure and this is encouraged to continue to address emerging community needs.

To provide the Municipality with a guide to inform its capital budget process, a high-level summary of cost estimates for key recommendations contained in this Master Plan is identified in Table 14. These estimates are based on best practices and should be interpreted with caution. It should be noted that cost estimates have not been identified for all capital projects in this Master Plan due to influencing factors such as size and scale of the project. Municipal staff will be required to confirm or refine all capital cost estimates at the time of implementation and on an on-going basis in the capital budget forecast. The rationale for these capital projects can be found in Section 7.0 of the Master Plan and additional implementation details are found in Section 9.3.

Table 14: Summary of Capital Cost Estimates

Timing			
Short-Term	2022 to 2024	2025 to 2027	2028 to 2031
Develop an Active Transportation Strategy	\$60,000		
Review Municipal Park Signage	\$75,000		
Establish Trail Wayfinding Signage	\$20,000		
Morrisburg Arena Renovation	\$900,000		
Architectural Study of the Iroquois Civic Centre (excludes construction cost - to be determined)	\$75,000		
Install Dividing Wall in the Program Room at the South Dundas Municipal Centre	Costs to be determined by staff		
Morrisburg Waterfront Plan and Iroquois Park Commons Waterfront Plan Updates	\$75,000		
Update Indoor Multi-Use Recreation Facility Business Case	\$30,000		
Earl Baker Park Multi-Use Sports Pad (Tennis, Pickleball, Basketball, Ball Hockey, Outdoor Skating)	\$150,000		
Haldane Park, Render Park and Orchard Park Multi-use Sports Pad for Basketball and Ball Hockey	\$120,000 (\$40,000 per location)		
General Playground Replacement	\$750,000 (assumes a replacement of two per year at \$125,000 per location)		
Medium-Term			
Indoor Multi-Use Recreation Facility Construction (excludes land acquisition)		Provision of this facility is subject to further review and assessment \$4,300,000+ (Municipality to update construction costs)	
Outdoor Pool		Provision of this facility is subject to further review and assessment \$6,000,000+	
Iroquois Splash Pad		\$500,000+	
Riverside Heights Park Multi-Use Sports Pad Enhancement		\$40,000	
J.C.Whittaker Park Multi-Use Sports Pad and Basketball Hoops Renewal		\$100,000	
Earl Baker Park Community Skate Park		\$450,000	
Iroquois Beach Playground		\$125,000	
Iroquois Beach Sand Volleyball Court		\$20,000	
Morrisburg Beach Sand Volleyball Court		\$20,000	
Morrisburg and Iroquois Waterfront, Duncan Park, Matilda Memorial Park Outdoor Fitness Equipment		\$160,000 (40,000 per location)	

Long-Term	Timing		
	2022 to 2024	2025 to 2027	2028 to 2031
Matilda Park Spray Feature			\$300,000+
Winchester Springs Park Multi-use Sports Pad Enhancement			\$40,000
Haldane Park Community Skate Park			\$450,000
Riverside Heights Park and Matilda Memorial Park Skate Zones			\$100,000+
Matilda Memorial Park Sand Volleyball Courts			\$15,000
Total	\$1,545,000	\$6,870,000	\$6,305,000

Note: Cost estimates should be interpreted with caution and only be used as a guide to inform the budget process. Not all capital costs are shown as estimates may vary depending on the size and scale of capital recommendations identified in this Master Plan. Municipal staff will be required to confirm or refine cost estimates at the time of implementation and on an on-going basis as part of the capital budget forecast. Capital costs may be offset by external funding opportunities such as grants and partnerships.

Funding the construction of these capital projects and others identified in the Master Plan will require the Municipality to explore a combination of sources including, but not limited to, direct taxation and subsequent increases to the municipal tax rate, parkland cash-in-lieu, donations, sponsorships and program or facility rental surcharges. It is also recommended that the Municipality establish a dedicated capital reserve to fund future indoor multi-use facility development projects. Long-term operations and maintenance are generally funded by the tax base and user fees.

Where opportunities exist, the Municipality should also seek funding from senior levels of government for major municipal capital projects. By having this Master Plan, the Municipality can demonstrate that it has rationalized the development of new capital projects to address the parks and recreation needs of current and future residents, that align with the Municipality's corporate priorities.

In 2017, the Federal government introduced the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP), which included a Community, Culture and Recreation Infrastructure funding stream, to invest in various projects over a 10-year period. A COVID-19 Resilience stream was also announced during the pandemic to assist municipalities with funding quick-start, short-term projects. There are various other grant programs available through the federal government or other organizations such as the Ontario Trillium Foundation, Canada Community-Building Fund (formerly known as the Federal Gas Tax Fund), Green and Inclusive Community Buildings Program, Park People Grants, Healthy Communities Initiative, Canadian Tire Jumpstart, and more.

Some of these programs are available to non-profit organizations and so the Municipality is encouraged to work with local groups to secure funding to implement recommendations identified in this Master Plan. These grant programs would complement South Dundas' Municipal Grants Program and Dollar for Dollar Capital Funding Program. Grant programs may be available on a reoccurring basis, while others provide one-time financial support. While there are currently no known grant programs available at the time of preparing this Master Plan, it will be crucial for the Municipality to regularly monitor and apply for grants as they become available. The presence of a Master Plan is often a requirement for securing grant funding and thus it will be a benefit to the Municipality.

At the time of implementation, recommendations that have a capital requirement should be brought forward through the budget process once the Municipality has the information it needs to develop costs (e.g., design characteristics, financial contributions from non-municipal sources, etc.). A number of service-delivery focused recommendations contained in the Master Plan centre upon community development and volunteer supports or can be worked into existing staff workloads.

Recommendations – Funding the Parks & Recreation Master Plan

94. Where appropriate, evaluate **alternative funding and cost-sharing approaches** including (but not limited to) grants, fundraising, sponsorships, partnerships, and other forms of community collaboration to provide the best value to residents.
95. Establish a **capital reserve** to fund future indoor multi-use facility development projects.

9.3 Action Plan Summary

Throughout the body of the Master Plan, recommendations have been identified at the end of each subsection or by topic area. By approving the Master Plan as a guiding document, the Municipality is not bound to implementing every recommendation or providing facilities, programs and services in the order, amount or manner indicated; rather this Master Plan provides guidance on community priorities and sets a general course for meeting the needs as they are presently defined.

Recommendations contained within the Master Plan are summarized on the following pages, together with potential resource implications including preliminary cost estimates for capital projects or staff time to implement actions. Estimates are based on past projects in comparable communities and should only be used as a guide for capital planning purposes. Actual costs will need to be determined by the Municipality at the time of implementation.

Determining priorities is a process that should be revisited regularly such as prior to the Municipality's budget development exercise. The Municipality is expected to make decisions on individual recommendations and projects annually through the budget process. In addition to funding availability, factors that may affect priorities may include:

- Capital lifecycle needs and safety considerations;
- Legislation and mandated requirements;
- Changes to service standards;
- Public input and community interests;
- Emerging trends and changes in participation rates;
- Availability of alternate providers;
- Socio-demographic changes and growth forecasts; and
- Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Priority is often, but not always aligned with timing – the higher the priority, the sooner the action should be implemented. Priority has been determined based on an assessment of need, as identified throughout the planning process with consideration given to public input, trends, demographics, capacity, demand, etc. South Dundas should make efficient use of resources through initiatives that have the broadest community benefit and serve the widest range of needs. The priority and timing of recommendations are organized into the following categories.

Priority

- High Priority:** Immediate attention is recommended during the proposed timeframe
- Medium Priority:** Attention is required when high priority recommendations have been initiated or completed, or when suitable partners have been identified for funding.
- Lower Priority:** Attention is required when high and medium priority recommendations have been initiated or completed.

Timing

- Short-Term 2022 to 2024
- Medium Term 2025 to 2027
- Long-Term 2028 to 2031



Recommendation	Priority	Suggested Timing			Resource Implication
		2022 to 2024	2025 to 2027	2028 to 2031	
Parkland Classification					
1. The parkland classification system to include Community Parks, Neighbourhood Parks and Local Parks, as contained in the Parks & Recreation Master Plan, should be used to guide the development and redevelopment of active parkland according to park type, form, function, size, and the features and amenities that they provide.	High	●	●	●	Staff time
Parkland Needs					
2. Acquire 3.1 hectares of active parkland to maintain the current service level of 4.4 hectares per 1,000 residents . Although this is a high level of service, it acknowledges that additional parkland will be required to address needs for future residential areas that are not in proximity to parkland that supports meaningful experiences.	High	●	●	●	Staff time
Parkland Policy & Acquisition					
3. Establish criteria for accepting suitable land for developing active parkland including street frontage, proximity to existing parks and recreation facilities, opportunities for future expansion, grading, drainage, and other site conditions.	High	●			Staff time
4. Parkland conveyance tools contained in the Planning Act should be complemented by a range of land acquisition tools to maximize public access to parkland and natural areas (e.g., land purchase/lease, land exchanges, partnerships, donations, etc.).	High	●	●	●	Staff time and costs for land acquisition
5. The dedication or acquisition of land for park purposes less than 0.5 hectares should be discouraged, unless it is necessary to reconcile gap areas or to expand an existing park.	High	●	●	●	Staff time

Recommendation	Priority	Suggested Timing			Resource Implication
		2022 to 2024	2025 to 2027	2028 to 2031	
South Dundas Waterfront & Beaches					
6. Undertake updates to the Morrisburg Waterfront Plan and the Iroquois Commons Waterfront Park Plan to establish a renewed waterfront vision for South Dundas. Consideration should be given to preserving and enhancing what currently works well and addressing the relevant recommendations identified in the Parks & Recreation Master Plan. Emphasis should be placed on creating new and exciting ideas and strategies to become more multi-use. Additional consultation with the Municipality’s waterfront committees, community groups and service clubs, the public and others is recommended to inform this process.	High	●			Consulting Fees (\$75,000) and staff time for project support
7. Review Morrisburg Waterfront and Iroquois Waterfront Committees to ensure that members are representative of key segments of the community, particularly for youth to ensure that their voices are heard in the decision-making process.	Medium	●			Staff time
South Dundas Galop Canal Marina					
8. Continue to implement the Galop Canal Marina Operations Plan on the basis of maintaining a break-even operating model.	Medium	●			Staff time and costs for implementation

Recommendation	Priority	Suggested Timing			Resource Implication
		2022 to 2024	2025 to 2027	2028 to 2031	
Recreational Trails					
9. Develop an Active Transportation Strategy to establish a long-term vision (2031+) for trail development to support non-motorized movement in South Dundas. This strategy should have regard for planned trail development initiatives and the conceptual trail network contained in this Master Plan with consideration given to the following:		●			Consulting Fees (\$60,000) and staff time for project support
a) Strengthen linkages in the Municipality to draw residents to the waterfront, especially in Morrisburg and Iroquois;	Medium	●			
b) Establish pedestrian circulation areas within existing parks (e.g., pathways to outdoor recreation amenities, pavilions, etc.);	High		●		
c) Identify active transportation routes within future residential areas as permitted by the Official Plan;	Medium	●	●	●	
d) As a long-term strategy (e.g., 2031+), enhance connections to the rural area, non-Municipal trail systems in South Dundas and adjacent municipalities, including working with landowners to maintain or establish public access; and	Lower			●	
e) Either alone or in partnership with others (e.g., United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry, South Nation Conservation Authority, etc.), establish new trail connections, promote active transportation opportunities including publishing trail routes (e.g., online or print map, mobile application), erect wayfinding signage, and other strategies to encourage active transportation in South Dundas.	High		●		

Recommendation	Priority	Suggested Timing			Resource Implication
		2022 to 2024	2025 to 2027	2028 to 2031	
Parks & Trails Design Guidelines					
10. Parks, open spaces, trails and waterfront areas should be designed in a manner that considers universal accessibility to minimize physical barriers for persons with disabilities, with consideration given to establishing designated pathways within parks that connect users to circulation areas and pathways. Consultation with the Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Accessibility Advisory Committee, persons with disabilities, and others should form part of the design of outdoor public spaces.	High	●	●	●	Costs to be determined on a case-by-case basis
11. Alone or in partnership with other organizations and agencies, explore initiatives to be more resilient to climate change and protect and enhance the natural environment . Initiatives include establishing pollinator gardens, planting native species, setting tree canopy targets, establishing outdoor educational programs, strategically naturalizing parks and open space, and other strategies determined by the Municipality. Opportunities to implement these and other related initiatives include Coyle Drive Park, Glen Stewart Park, McIntosh Park, Steward Drive Park and Meadowbrook Park, although other locations may be identified and considered.	Medium	●	●	●	Costs to be determined on a case-by-case basis
12. On a case-by-case basis, evaluate opportunities to incorporate comfort features within South Dundas’ parks and trail system including, but not limited to, seating, shade, lighting, pathways, picnic tables, washrooms, lighting, and other amenities that attract people and encourage use.	Medium	●	●	●	Costs to be determined on a case-by-case basis
13. Undertake a review of all Municipal park signage to ensure that the corporate brand and the information being conveyed is clear, concise and consistently applied across South Dundas.	Medium	●			\$75,000 (\$2,500 per sign)

Recommendations	Priority	Suggested Timing			Resource Implication
		2022 to 2024	2025 to 2027	2028 to 2031	
Parks & Trails Design Guidelines					
14. As the Municipality continues to develop its recreational trail system, establish wayfinding signage to raise awareness about trails and to encourage their use. Wayfinding information should include the trail route, distance, difficulty, location of amenities and key destinations in the community, and other important information. Wayfinding signage should be erected in prominent locations in South Dundas and published on the Municipality’s website. Coordination with other Municipal sectors is encourage including Business & Development and Tourism.	Medium	●			\$20,000 (\$5,000 per sign)
15. Work with community organizations and the arts and culture community to identify opportunities to incorporate public art and heritage features in strategic locations within the Municipality’s parks, trails (where applicable) and facilities such as cultural heritage signage, art installations and supporting infrastructure to support special events and festivals (e.g., electricity, water, etc.).	Lower		●		Costs to be determined on a case-by-case basis

Recommendation	Priority	Suggested Timing			Resource Implication
		2022 to 2024	2025 to 2027	2028 to 2031	
Arenas					
16. Proceed with undertaking enhancements to the front entrance and other areas at the Morrisburg Arena to refresh support spaces and improve accessibility.	High	●			\$900,000
17. Explore strategies to optimize the use of the Morrisburg Arena such as promoting the use of available ice time, such as during the early morning hours and during the weekends and establishing an online system to allow users and/or the public to book last minute ice rentals.	Medium	●			Staff time
18. Investigate the feasibility of livestreaming games and events to virtually engage spectators who are unable to attend in-person.	Lower	●			Costs for livestreaming equipment
19. Guided by regular building condition assessments , begin long-term planning for the replacement of the Morrisburg Arena (e.g., 15+ years), which may potentially be co-located at a future indoor multi-use recreation facility through a phased development approach. During the medium term, the Municipality should explore potential site opportunities, a capital reserve and external funding sources, and appropriate business planning.	Lower		●		Cost for land acquisition and arena design and construction
Community Halls, Multi-Purpose Spaces & Gymnasiums					
20. The development of new or redevelopment of standalone community halls and multi-purpose spaces is discouraged if there is an existing public space available within a reasonable driving distance.	High	●	●	●	Staff time

Recommendation	Priority	Suggested Timing			Resource Implication
		2022 to 2024	2025 to 2027	2028 to 2031	
21. Undertake an architectural study of the Iroquois Civic Centre to reconfigure and modernize existing spaces, which should include a gymnasium-type space, multi-purpose space(s), library branch, and fire hall. Reconfiguration of space should consider flexibility in design and include a community kitchen that can support programming, hardwood floors, partition walls, counter space, sinks, wireless internet, audio and visual equipment, storage and providing sufficient parking. The fire hall and library should be engaged as part of this process to ensure that their space needs continue to be met.	High	●			\$75,000
22. Through an update to the Morrisburg Waterfront Plan, evaluate opportunities to incorporate multi-use community space at potential indoor facility , which could also be used to support tourism activities (e.g., vendor for a restaurant or patio). At a minimum, this facility should include storage space to support outdoor program opportunities and potentially relocate the Morrisburg Lending Library. Should this be achieved, repurpose the existing Lending Library at the Morrisburg Arena to multi-purpose space for dryland training and other community uses.	Medium	●			\$250 - \$300 per sq. ft.
23. Incorporate multi-purpose program spaces as part of a future indoor multi-use recreation facility to support community programs, rentals and gatherings.	Medium		●		\$250 - \$300 per sq. ft.
24. Investigate opportunities to install a dividing wall in the program room at the South Dundas Municipal Centre to increase the number of activity spaces and to offer concurrent programs that are compatible with each other.	Medium		●		Costs to be determined on a case-by-case basis
25. Engage third-party organizations to establish or increase public access to non-municipal community spaces for community events, programs and rentals .	Medium	●			Staff time

Recommendation	Priority	Suggested Timing			Resource Implication
		2022 to 2024	2025 to 2027	2028 to 2031	
26. Continue to enhance community halls and multi-use spaces to address items identified in the Municipality's facility condition reports to update and repair aging building components, including accessibility retrofits. Consideration should also be given to the provision of modern amenities including, but not limited to, reliable wireless internet and audio and visual equipment. Consultation with user groups and others is encouraged to identify and prioritize facility improvements.	High	●	●		Costs to be determined on a case-by-case basis
Dedicated Ages Spaces					
27. Explore opportunities to establish drop-in times for youth and older adults and seniors within existing multi-use space and to complement the Municipality's efforts to expand program opportunities and other facility recommendations geared towards these age groups.	Medium	●			Staff time
Indoor Sports Facilities					
28. Through a five-year update to the Master Plan, revisit the need for an indoor multi-use recreation facility that may include an indoor artificial turf field, indoor walking track, multi-use program space and other active facilities and support spaces, including an outdoor pool and other outdoor recreation amenities. This facility may also serve as a potential location for the long-term replacement of the Morrisburg Arena (2031+). As a part of this strategy the Municipality should evaluate potential site opportunities large enough to accommodate the new facility (including parking requirements which would benefit from a facility and site concept plan to determine site size and shape considerations).	Lower		●		Staff time

Recommendation	Priority	Suggested Timing			Resource Implication
		2022 to 2024	2025 to 2027	2028 to 2031	
29. Revise the Municipality's business plan for the indoor multi-use recreation facility to update capital and operating budgets, re-engage community organizations to determine the support for the facility from a usage perspective, including program opportunities and potential partnerships, and other space needs.	High	●			\$30,000
Sports Fields					
30. Based on available information, no new soccer fields are required while two ball diamonds should be maintained at the Morrisburg Waterfront Park. The Municipality should collect annual registration and schedules to inform future sports field needs and engage users on a regular basis to identify and prioritize improvements.	Medium	●	●	●	Staff time
31. Strategically reduce the level of maintenance of non-programmed sports fields (e.g., Haldane Park ball diamond) to direct operational resources to other priority areas and achieve environmental benefits. This area should be maintained in a manner that supports informal sports (such as ball throwing, Frisbee, etc.), picnicking, outdoor programming and other related activities.	Lower	●			Staff time
Aquatics					
32. As a part of revisiting the merits of an indoor multi-use sports facility during the medium term, explore the feasibility of constructing an outdoor pool similar in design to others provided in adjacent municipalities (with the potential to be enclosed) at the same site to strengthen the facility as a community hub for the Municipality. During the short-term, the Municipality should undertake a cost-benefit analysis of providing an outdoor pool in the community including appropriate business planning to understand capital and operating costs and other details to inform future decision making.	Medium		●		Provision of this facility is subject to further review and assessment \$6,000,000+

Recommendation	Priority	Suggested Timing			Resource Implication
		2022 to 2024	2025 to 2027	2028 to 2031	
33. Evaluate public support for a splash pad at Iroquois Beach through an update to the Iroquois Commons Waterfront Park Plan. Alternative locations in Iroquois may also be considered. Consistent with the Municipality's previous splash pad development, community-driven fundraising and partnerships are recommended.	High		●		\$500,000+
34. Supported by community-driven fundraising and partnerships, construct a basic spray feature adjacent to the playground at Matilda Memorial Park. The design of the spray feature should be smaller in size and scale compared to the existing location at Earl Baker Park.	Medium			●	\$300,000+
Outdoor Tennis & Pickleball Courts					
35. Construct two tennis courts at Earl Baker Park in Morrisburg and add playing lines for two to four pickleball courts. Consideration should be given to locating these courts on as asphalt pad with the proposed basketball court at this location to create one large multi-use sports pad.	High		●		\$75,000
36. Resurface the large multi-use pad at J.C. Whitteker Park to continue to support tennis and pickleball activities, as well as other activities such as basketball, ball hockey and outdoor skating.	High		●		\$90,000
Outdoor Basketball Courts					
37. Establish new outdoor basketball courts at Haldane Park (where there is currently an asphalt pad), Render Park and Orchard Park .	Medium	●	●		\$40,000 per location
38. Re-locate the outdoor basketball court from the Morrisburg Waterfront Park to Earl Baker Park . The court should be provided on an asphalt pad with the proposed tennis and pickleball courts to create one large multi-use sports pad .	High		●		\$75,000

Recommendation	Priority	Suggested Timing			Resource Implication
		2022 to 2024	2025 to 2027	2028 to 2031	
39. Re-position the basketball court at Winchester Springs Park within the site so that the adjacent trees do not interfere with the activity.	Lower			●	\$40,000
40. Replace the basketball hoop at Riverside Heights Park with a full-size court.	Medium		●		\$40,000
41. Replace the basketball hoops at J.C. Whitteker Park .	Medium		●		\$10,000
42. New and redeveloped basketball courts should be designed to be full-size with paint markings to function as multi-use sports pads to support a range of activities (e.g., basketball, ball hockey, etc.).	High	●	●	●	Staff time
Skate Parks					
43. Evaluate opportunities to construct a community-level skate park at Earl Baker Park . Consultation with youth and the general public should be undertaken to confirm the suggested location or to consider other location options, as well as to inform the design process.	High		●		\$400,000
44. Subject to monitoring skate park use and demand, engage the community to investigate the potential to establish a second skate park at Haldane Park in Iroquois. Skate zones should also be contemplated at rural parks including Riverside Heights Park (replacing the existing skate ramp), Matilda Memorial Park , and other locations to be determined by staff.	Medium			●	\$100,000 - \$400,000 per location
Playgrounds					
45. Ensure that all residential neighbourhoods within urban areas are located within 800-metres of a playground, unobstructed by major roads, at grade railways, and other barriers. On this basis, address playground gaps on the north side of Iroquois at a future park in this area.	High	●	●	●	Staff time

Recommendation	Priority	Suggested Timing			Resource Implication
		2022 to 2024	2025 to 2027	2028 to 2031	
46. Subject to regular safety inspections, target playground replacement after a lifecycle period of 15 years. The development or redevelopment of playgrounds should incorporate creative playground designs and inclusive features such as barrier-free play components, ramps, accessible swing seats, and firm and stable surfaces.	High	●	●	●	\$750,000 (assumes replacement of two per year at \$125,000 per location)
47. As part of updating the Iroquois Commons Waterfront Park Plan, evaluate the feasibility and public support for a natural/adventure playground that features wood, logs, stones, boulders, ropes and landscaping, as well as incorporate a beach theme to create a unique destination for users.	High		●		\$125,000+
48. At the time of playground replacement, evaluate opportunities to relocate the play structure at J.C. Whitteker Park to a more prominent location within the site to ensure that a community-level playground is provided to serve the Williamsburg Community.	High	●			\$125,000+
Off-Leash Dog Parks					
49. Supported by community fundraising and partnerships, provide an off-leash dog park in Iroquois, potentially at the Iroquois Commons Waterfront Park or an alternative location.	Medium		●		Staff time and cost for materials
Outdoor Skating Rinks					
50. Additional outdoor skating rinks should only be provided if there is a willing group of volunteers coming forward to provide daily maintenance and upkeep. The Municipality should only be responsible for providing support including materials and initial set-up or removal.	Lower			●	Staff time and cost for materials

Recommendation	Priority	Suggested Timing			Resource Implication
		2022 to 2024	2025 to 2027	2028 to 2031	
Camping					
51. Continue to implement the Iroquois Campground Operations Plan , which includes providing an enhanced camping experience and heightened promotion and advertising to increase use, on the basis of maintaining a break-even or profit generating operating model.	Medium	●			Staff time and costs for implementation
Sand Volleyball Courts					
52. Continue with relocating the sand volleyball court at the Iroquois Beach within the site and add a second court.	Medium		●		\$20,000
53. Reintroduce the sand volleyball court at Morrisburg Beach and add a second court.	Medium		●		\$20,000
54. Monitor the use of the sand volleyball court at Matilda Memorial Park to evaluate the need for a second court at this location.	Lower			●	\$15,000
Outdoor Fitness Equipment					
55. Investigate strategic locations for outdoor fitness equipment, potentially at the Morrisburg and Iroquois Waterfront, Duncan Park and Matilda Memorial Park . Opportunities to incorporate outdoor fitness equipment at Neighbourhood or Local Parks should be considered at staff’s discretion, potentially at a time when other capital projects are being undertaken such as during playground replacement or pathway development.	Medium		●	●	\$160,000 (\$40,000 per location)
Lawn Bowling Greens					
56. Continue to work with the Iroquois Lawn Bowling Club to promote the sport to ensure long-term success.	Medium	●	●	●	Staff time

Recommendation	Priority	Suggested Timing			Resource Implication
		2022 to 2024	2025 to 2027	2028 to 2031	
Disc Golf Courses					
57. Continue to support the Iroquois Waterfront Committee in their efforts to study the feasibility of establishing a disc golf course near the waterfront .	Medium	●			Staff time and cost for materials
Other Recreation Facilities					
58. Requests for new indoor and outdoor recreation facilities should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis with consideration given to trends, examples in other municipalities, local demand, the feasibility of utilizing existing public space, the willingness of an organization to partner in providing the facility or space, and other factors.	Lower	●	●	●	Costs to be determined on a case-by-case basis
Recommendation	Priority	Suggested Timing			Resource Implication
		2022 to 2024	2025 to 2027	2028 to 2031	
Recreation Service Delivery Model					
59. Develop a Promotional Plan to list and advertise all recreation and parks programs and services that are offered within South Dundas and adjacent municipalities as they are about to begin the registration process including but not limited to print (e.g., newspaper) and social media avenues. Further, augment the online listing of opportunities per age group by including the community group activities for one complete listing by age group and track communication preferences by age group.	High	●			Staff time and cost for materials

Recommendation	Priority	Suggested Timing			Resource Implication
		2022 to 2024	2025 to 2027	2028 to 2031	
60. Engage community organizations on a regular basis to ensure that all representatives have a voice in promoting and raising awareness about the parks and recreation services that they provide. Discussion points may include participation data, improvements to service suggestions, policy development/review inputs, legislative and industry standard requirements, quality assurance models, training and volunteer recruitment, succession and recognition, new trends, coordinate activities and services, including underrepresented populations, explore opportunities to network and collaborate, and future plans at a minimum.	High	●	●	●	Staff time and cost for materials
61. Refine the Municipal Grants program to provide start up and special event funding to encourage community groups to assist in the provision of a robust spectrum of services. Grants could be offered where there are identified gaps and could also be offered over 3 years on a declining basis to assist with sustainability.	Medium		●		Staff time and costs for grants
62. Develop Shared Files for all groups to access and share information on funding/grant opportunities from other levels of government and philanthropic organizations to promote recreation and active living opportunities in South Dundas. Any additional information to groups on trends in recreation and culture, initiatives and plans by other levels of government and key agencies and links to key studies and best practises that could assist groups in the delivery of services should be included.	Lower			●	Staff time
63. Provide central resources on Governance and the formation and ongoing requirements of not-for-profit groups in the delivery of recreation and sport opportunities to keep community groups and agencies abreast of any changes and best practises.	Medium		●		Staff time

Recommendation	Priority	Suggested Timing			Resource Implication
		2022 to 2024	2025 to 2027	2028 to 2031	
64. Strengthen the ability to recruit volunteers to include the use of technology to match volunteer skills with opportunities, provide basic training on policies and track volunteer hours. Work with community groups to understand their difficulties in obtaining and retaining volunteers. Utilize the resources and standards as provided by Volunteer Canada .	Lower		●		Staff time and costs for materials
Increasing Physical Activity Levels in South Dundas					
65. Work to increase the physical activity levels in South Dundas by:					
a) Communicating the physical activity issue and what community groups and the Municipality can do to address this collectively;	High	●			Staff time and cost for materials
b) Promoting ParticipACTION's Active App;	Lower		●		
c) Introducing Physical Literacy to all age groups to better enable participation in active pursuits;	Medium		●		
d) Promoting the 24-Hour Movement Guidelines to all South Dundas residents; and	Lower		●		
e) Considering departmental and community capacity to enter the Community Better Challenge through ParticipACTION in 2024 to become Canada's Most Active Community.	Lower			●	

Recommendation	Priority	Suggested Timing			Resource Implication
		2022 to 2024	2025 to 2027	2028 to 2031	
Programs & Activities for All Age Groups					
66. Update the Municipality’s Recreational Programming Plan to recognize the need to be inclusive and welcoming of all residents, regardless of income, ability, background, orientation and gender, as well as to address activity gaps including STEM, creative programs, and general interest programs.	High	●			Staff time
67. Aim to achieve a collective satisfaction level of at least 80% for recreation programs and services through annual adjustments to provision, based on community input.	High	●	●	●	Staff time
68. Strive to engage at least 25% of a given age cohort in programs, services, and sports within South Dundas.	High	●	●	●	Staff time
69. Work with community partners to implement quality assurance frameworks in the provision of service including HIGH FIVE – Principles of Healthy Childhood Development, Youth Friendly Community Criteria, and the Principles of Healthy Aging.	High		●		Staff time
70. Develop a Special Events and Festivals Policy to outline Council’s commitments, partnership conditions, resource allocations including an evaluation metric. Further, that requirements for safe fire pits in special events be investigated.	Medium		●		Staff time
71. Commence discussions with the Upper Canada District School Board and the Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario to determine if there is a willingness to develop reciprocal use agreements with the Municipality of South Dundas.	Medium		●		Staff time

Recommendation	Priority	Suggested Timing			Resource Implication
		2022 to 2024	2025 to 2027	2028 to 2031	
Access & Inclusion					
72. Develop an Equity and Inclusion Policy with community partners to identify what actions South Dundas and partners are committed to, including underrepresented residents within Parks and Recreation.	High		●		Staff time
73. Provide and enable training and professional development opportunities for staff, partners, and volunteers with respect to equity and inclusion of all underrepresented populations in the delivery of services.	Medium		●		Staff time and costs for training and development
74. Organize and meet with underrepresented residents and organizations as well as leisure/sport service providers to determine what the Municipality is doing well and what could be done to be more intentionally inclusive of all residents facing barriers.	Medium		●		Staff time
75. Complete an analysis of the number of women and those identifying as women participating in recreation, and sport, pursuits by age group in South Dundas. Address gaps through community discussions with women and those who identify as women to address barriers to participation and increase equity. Work with other organizations to increase participation among women in active and sport pursuits.	Medium		●		Staff time
76. Summarize all funding sources that subsidize persons experiencing low income in South Dundas. Provide this information to Social Service personnel working with recipients of government funding and post this information on the website as a first step. Develop a Standard Access Policy for South Dundas residents experiencing low income to improve seamless access to programs, services, and sport.	High		●		Staff time
77. Meet with groups representing persons with disabilities to develop programs and approaches to include more persons with disabilities into recreation programs.	High		●		Staff time

Recommendation	Priority	Suggested Timing			Resource Implication
		2022 to 2024	2025 to 2027	2028 to 2031	
78. Ensure that all public spaces and facilities are safe and welcoming spaces for the LGBTQI2S community . Provide staff, volunteers, and partner training to better welcome and include these residents.	High		●		Staff time
79. Engage with the Indigenous community to listen and understand how they would like to be included to a greater extent and represented in parks, sport, and recreation within South Dundas.	High	●			Staff time
Parks & Recreation Capacity					
80. Demonstrate compliance with legislative and industry standards in the operations of the Parks & Recreation Department.	Medium	●	●	●	Staff time
81. That the South Dundas Waterfront be audited for compliance with legislation and industry standards through the Lifesaving Society Ontario Branch Water Safety Management Program to ensure that operations meet high performance standards in preventing water incidents.	Medium	●			Staff time
82. Develop a Sponsorship Policy to seek out alternate revenue sources to offset the cost to provide Parks and Recreation.	Medium		●		Staff time
83. Develop a standardized Partnership and/or Sponsorship Agreement or Memorandums of Understanding to apply to various partnership types and to standardize municipal and partner expectations	Medium		●		Staff time
84. Apply a consistent formula to better understand the costs to provide the various parks and recreation services and determine current cost recovery levels. Develop a fair minded and transparent Pricing Policy to ensure that fees are equitable and respect the value that each service provides to the community.	Lower	●			Staff time

Recommendation	Priority	Suggested Timing			Resource Implication
		2022 to 2024	2025 to 2027	2028 to 2031	
85. Utilize the data from the Complaints Management system to align staff assignments and to communicate in advance of annual concerns (e.g., grass cutting levels in the spring of each year).	Lower		●		Staff time
86. Develop a meaningful set of Performance Measures in Parks and Recreation that describe the inputs, outputs, efficiencies, and effectiveness measures employed in each discipline.	Medium		●		Staff time
87. Seek Council approval to make the Recreation Coordinator a full-time position as an addition to the staff complement to address the recommended actions for expanding programs for all age groups, community group liaison, volunteer recruitment, policy development, performance measurement etc.	High	●			New department staff and associated wages
88. Assess the need for a Recreation Programmer position in 2025 to address the increased recreation needs of a changing population with greater expectations.	Medium		●		New department staff and associated wages
89. Investigate the merits of introducing a skills and competency-based Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee to assist in the implementation of the Parks & Recreation Master Plan.	High	●			Staff time

Recommendation	Priority	Suggested Timing			Resource Implication
		2022 to 2024	2025 to 2027	2028 to 2031	
Monitoring & Updating the Master Plan					
90. Develop a system for regular monitoring and reporting for the Master Plan, which should include tracking activity patterns, facility usage, activity levels, trends and completed recommendations to provide status reports to Council.	High	●	●	●	Staff time
91. Undertake regular dialogue with community organizations to understand how groups are recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure long-term success and how organizations and the Municipality can work together to fully implement the recommendations of the Master Plan.	High	●			Staff time
92. Establish annual work plans that identifies Master Plan recommendations that staff seek to achieve within the short-term. Work plans should identify financial requirements and other resources required to implement recommendations such as involvement with other Municipal departments and partners (e.g., community groups, committees, etc.).	High	●	●	●	Staff time
93. Undertake a mid-cycle review around 2027 and a full review and update of the Master Plan by 2031. Timing may be adjusted based on the pace of implementation and changes in population growth, trends and other internal and external factors.	High		●	●	Staff time
Funding the Parks & Recreation Master Plan					
94. Where appropriate, evaluate alternative funding and cost-sharing approaches including (but not limited to) grants, fundraising, sponsorships, partnerships, and other forms of community collaboration to provide the best value to residents.	Medium	●	●	●	Staff time
95. Establish a capital reserve to fund future indoor multi-use facility development projects.	High	●	●	●	Costs for capital reserve

10.0 Appendix A – Community Survey Summary

1. How physically active has your household been during the COVID-19 pandemic compared to before? This includes leisure-time activities, such as participation in organized or in unorganized sports, physical activities, and play.

	#	%
More physically active than before the COVID-19 pandemic	88	14%
No change/the same level of physical activity	276	43%
Less physically active than before the COVID-19 pandemic	273	43%
Unsure	4	1%
Answered Question	641	

2. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, have you or anyone in your household participated in any of the following parks and recreation activities? By participation, we mean situations where you or a member of your household actively participated, either at home or in public. (Select all that apply)

	#	%
Walking or Hiking for Leisure	509	79%
Enjoying the South Dundas Waterfront	473	74%
Enjoying Parks and Open Spaces	415	65%
Use the Beach	324	50%
Dog Walking (on or off-leash)	246	38%
Use of Playground Equipment	236	37%
Boating (e.g., power boating, canoeing, etc.)	235	37%
Swimming (recreational)	221	34%
Aerobics, Yoga, Fitness or Weight-training	215	33%
Cycling or Mountain Biking	215	33%
Hockey, Ringette, Figure Skating or Ice Skating	195	30%
Use of Splash Pad	188	29%
Camping	159	25%
Jogging or Running for Fitness	103	16%
Soccer	89	14%
Baseball or Softball	82	13%
Curling	70	11%
Swimming (instructional or aquafit)	66	10%
Organized Children & Youth Programs (e.g., day camps)	50	8%
Pickleball	39	6%
Organized Seniors' Programs (e.g., cards, dancing)	39	6%
Lawn Bowling	39	6%
Basketball	36	6%
Tennis	33	5%
Volleyball	26	4%
Wheeled Action Sports (e.g., skateboarding or BMX)	21	3%
Other (please specify)	75	12%
Answered Question	642	

3. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, were you and members of your household able to participate in parks and recreation activities as often as you would like?

	#	%
Yes	447	70%
No	150	23%
Don't Know	44	7%
Answered Question	641	

4. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, why were you NOT able to participate in parks and recreation activities as often as you would like? (Select up three (3) options)

	#	%
Lack of personal time / Too busy	58	40%
Lack of desired programs or facilities	58	40%
Lack of information / Unaware of opportunities	51	35%
Program not offered at convenient time	50	34%
Lack of motivation / Not interested	17	12%
Lack of money / Too expensive	14	10%
Health problems / Disability / Age	13	9%
Lack of child care	9	6%
Lack of transportation / Facility too far away	7	5%
Language / Cultural barrier	0	0%
Don't know	4	3%
Other (please specify)	14	10%
Answered Question	145	

5. If applicable, list up to two (2) parks and recreation activities/programs that you (or members of your household) would like to see provided in South Dundas that were NOT available prior to the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Top 10 Requested Parks and Recreation Opportunities	
1. Fitness opportunities (e.g., yoga, pilates, tai chi, weight-training, etc.)	6. Skateboard park / BMX park
2. Indoor swimming and programs (e.g., lane swim, lessons, aquafit)	7. Tennis courts
3. Pickleball courts	8. Cycling trails
4. Walking pathways	9. Indoor walking track
5. Outdoor Pool	10. Cross-country skiing

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

	Greatly below expectations		Below expectations		Matched expectations		Exceeds expectations		Greatly exceeds expectations		Don't Know / Don't Use	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Recreational trails and pathways	2	0%	8	1%	9	2%	104	18%	443	77%	11	2%
Open space parks for unstructured use	7	1%	14	2%	40	7%	157	27%	340	59%	17	3%
Outdoor recreation facilities such as sports fields and playgrounds	19	3%	19	3%	33	6%	134	23%	338	59%	31	5%
Indoor recreation facilities such as arenas and gymnasiums	32	5%	23	4%	66	11%	153	26%	279	48%	29	5%

7. What is your level of satisfaction with the following parks and recreation facilities in South Dundas?

	Greatly below expectations		Below expectations		Matched expectations		Exceeds expectations		Greatly exceeds expectations		Don't Know / Don't Use	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Open space parks for unstructured use	12	2%	23	4%	107	19%	216	38%	182	32%	36	6%
Recreational trails and pathways	19	3%	56	10%	62	11%	274	47%	146	25%	20	3%
Outdoor recreation facilities such as sports fields and playgrounds	14	2%	49	8%	93	16%	219	38%	137	24%	65	11%
Indoor recreation facilities such as arenas and gymnasiums	44	8%	80	14%	118	20%	181	31%	66	11%	88	15%

8. For each age group listed below, what is your level of satisfaction with the parks and recreation activities in South Dundas?

	Greatly below expectations		Below expectations		Matched expectations		Exceeds expectations		Greatly exceeds expectations		Don't Know / Don't Use	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Preschool Children (0 - 4 years)	19	4%	27	5%	54	11%	82	17%	64	13%	250	50%
School-Age Children (5 - 12 years)	16	3%	41	8%	49	10%	119	24%	59	12%	219	44%
Teens (13 - 18 years)	55	11%	71	14%	45	9%	64	13%	17	3%	250	50%
Young Adults (19 - 39 years)	39	8%	60	12%	68	14%	106	22%	34	7%	186	38%
Adults (40 - 59 years)	26	5%	51	10%	71	14%	120	24%	39	8%	190	38%
Older Adults (60+ years)	35	7%	68	13%	74	14%	120	22%	75	14%	164	31%
Families	31	6%	65	13%	79	16%	145	30%	59	12%	106	22%

9. For the amenities and facilities listed below, to what degree do you support or oppose ADDITIONAL spending towards building new or improving the following indoor facility types?

	Greatly below expectations		Below expectations		Matched expectations		Exceeds expectations		Greatly exceeds expectations		Don't Know / Don't Use	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Swimming Pools	20	4%	16	3%	50	9%	107	19%	326	59%	32	6%
Indoor Walking Tracks	12	2%	24	4%	90	16%	128	23%	257	46%	45	8%
Community Halls	8	1%	25	5%	95	17%	183	33%	207	38%	34	6%
Arenas	12	2%	25	5%	81	15%	156	29%	222	41%	51	9%
Equipment-Based Fitness Centres	19	3%	31	6%	99	18%	153	28%	194	36%	50	9%
Gymnasiums	12	2%	27	5%	112	21%	142	26%	182	33%	69	13%
Fitness Studios	22	4%	28	5%	115	21%	152	28%	168	31%	60	11%
Indoor Artificial Turf Fields	37	7%	45	8%	148	27%	111	21%	112	21%	86	16%
Indoor Tennis Courts	48	9%	59	11%	173	32%	94	17%	74	14%	93	17%

10. For the amenities and facilities listed below, to what degree do you support or oppose ADDITIONAL spending towards building new or improving the following outdoor facility types?

	Greatly below expectations		Below expectations		Matched expectations		Exceeds expectations		Greatly exceeds expectations		Don't Know / Don't Use	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Nature Trails	3	1%	5	1%	25	5%	103	19%	398	73%	10	2%
South Dundas Waterfront	9	2%	6	1%	29	5%	96	18%	396	72%	11	2%
Beach	6	1%	3	1%	32	6%	97	18%	385	71%	23	4%
Paved Multi-Use Trails	10	2%	18	3%	50	9%	139	26%	311	57%	14	3%
Outdoor Ice Rinks	8	1%	15	3%	64	12%	151	28%	261	49%	38	7%
Playgrounds	4	1%	8	1%	76	14%	131	24%	262	49%	58	11%
Acquisition of Parks and Open Space	23	4%	27	5%	112	21%	145	27%	215	40%	16	3%
Community Gardens	10	2%	8	1%	107	20%	155	29%	214	40%	45	8%
Splash Pads	10	2%	18	3%	83	16%	133	25%	226	42%	64	12%
Outdoor Swimming Pools	29	5%	27	5%	83	16%	142	27%	205	39%	45	8%
Boat Launch	14	3%	9	2%	107	20%	115	21%	223	42%	68	13%
Marina	28	5%	21	4%	121	22%	104	19%	191	35%	76	14%
Soccer Fields	12	2%	24	4%	144	27%	162	30%	130	24%	67	12%
Outdoor Basketball Courts	13	2%	16	3%	123	23%	175	32%	136	25%	78	14%
Camp Sites	34	6%	31	6%	134	25%	116	22%	160	30%	57	11%
Outdoor Fitness Equipment	26	5%	30	6%	126	24%	144	27%	144	27%	62	12%
Baseball or Softball Diamonds	19	4%	35	6%	156	29%	143	26%	123	23%	64	12%
Sand Volleyball Courts	20	4%	15	3%	146	27%	164	31%	110	21%	77	14%
Off-leash Dog Parks	42	8%	55	10%	125	23%	111	21%	136	25%	70	13%
Skateboard/BMX Park	24	5%	31	6%	141	27%	120	23%	127	24%	89	17%
Pickleball Courts	19	4%	22	4%	162	30%	95	18%	132	25%	108	20%
Tennis Courts	24	4%	30	6%	153	28%	131	24%	96	18%	104	19%
Lawn Bowling Green	26	5%	31	6%	152	28%	124	23%	101	19%	104	19%

11. How willing would your household be to consider the following options to financially support additional investment in building new or improving existing parks and recreation facilities?

	Greatly below expectations		Below expectations		Matched expectations		Exceeds expectations		Greatly exceeds expectations		Don't Know / Don't Use	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Pay an increased fee for activities and sport registration	59	11%	39	7%	72	13%	239	44%	116	21%	24	4%
Donate to a capital fundraising campaign	59	11%	36	7%	93	17%	220	40%	107	20%	30	6%
Pay higher property taxes	161	29%	92	17%	98	18%	141	26%	41	7%	15	3%
Municipal debt / borrowing	124	23%	82	15%	129	24%	130	24%	40	7%	40	7%

12. Please indicate if the following items in the Municipality meets your expectations.

	Greatly below expectations		Below expectations		Matched expectations		Exceeds expectations		Greatly exceeds expectations		Don't Know / Don't Use	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Location of parks and recreation amenities.	11	2%	91	17%	318	59%	74	14%	26	5%	18	3%
Maintenance of parks and recreation amenities.	28	5%	114	21%	268	50%	73	14%	28	5%	26	5%
Affordability of parks and recreation programs.	10	2%	53	10%	312	58%	68	13%	28	5%	63	12%
Value of tax dollars spent towards facilities and recreation.	41	8%	152	28%	201	37%	30	6%	11	2%	103	19%
Inclusion of residents experiencing low income, persons with disabilities, residents of all backgrounds, and the LGBTQI2S+ community	47	9%	116	22%	148	28%	21	4%	18	3%	179	34%

13. Looking ahead, what lasting impacts – if any – might the COVID-19 pandemic have on your participation in parks and recreation activities?

Responses have not been presented but key themes have been considered in the development of the Strategy.

14. Please provide us with any additional comments.

Responses have not been presented but key themes have been considered in the development of the Strategy.

15. What is the total number of persons within your household that fall into the following age categories?

	#	# of persons	%
Under 10 years	121	216	13%
10 – 19 years	128	226	14%
20 – 34 years	134	224	14%
35 – 54 years	213	358	22%
55 – 69 years	240	388	24%
70+ years	143	216	13%
Total Persons		1628	

16. In what year were you born? (Optional)

Age	#	%
25 years or younger	8	2%
26-35 years	36	10%
36-45 years	67	18%
46-55 years	63	17%
56-65 years	79	21%
66-75 years	83	22%
76 years or older	39	10%
Answered Question	375	

17. Do you live in...

	#	%
Morrisburg	216	39%
Iroquois	139	25%
Rural area within South Dundas	75	14%
Williamsburg	42	8%
Brinston	24	4%
Outside of South Dundas	23	4%
Riverside Heights	12	2%
Winchester Springs	4	1%
Glen Becker	3	1%
Stampville	3	1%
Dixons Corners	2	0%
Dunbar	2	0%
Glen Stewart	2	0%
Hulbert	2	0%
Dundela	1	0%
Hanesville	1	0%
Irena	1	0%
Answered Question	552	

18. If you do not live in South Dundas, in which municipality do you live in?

- Ottawa (3)
- Edwardsburgh (3)
- South Stormont (3)
- Cornwall (2)
- Osgoode (2)
- Winchester (2)
- Montreal
- North Dundas
- Prescott